



## Press Release

18<sup>th</sup> October 2011

### **Manchester councillors join fight to tackle tobacco harm to save the city over £175.7million a year**

Cllr Glynn Evans, Cllr Pat Karney and Manchester's Director of Public Health, David Regan, attended a national conference on 11<sup>th</sup> October and pledged to join the fight to tackle tobacco harm in Manchester and make smoking history for children.

The conference was attended by Public Health Minister Anne Milton and leading local authority figures and discussions focused on how they can tackle tobacco in our local communities.

From April 2013 local authorities will be wholly responsible for public health and tackling tobacco will be a key priority. Smoking costs communities hugely, not only in terms of health impacts and costs to the NHS, but also in terms of fires, litter, lost days at work and productivity. A tool that has been developed to calculate the impacts estimates that the cost to Manchester is £175.7million. This cost broken down can be found at: <http://www.ash.org.uk/localtoolkit/R2-NW.html>.

The government's *Healthy Lives, Healthy People: a tobacco control plan for England* sets out clearly the need for a comprehensive approach to tackling tobacco. A range of measures have already been implemented or are being considered. These include:

- Cigarette vending machines legislation to stop easy access for young people (implemented 1<sup>st</sup> October)
- Point of sale displays legislation which comes in next Spring
- A commitment to consulting on plain packaging for tobacco products
- Preventing the promotion of tobacco through entertainment media

Cllr Pat Karney, Director of Smoke Free Greater Manchester, said: "Tackling tobacco across communities in Manchester needs to be a priority, not only to protect the health of children but also to make substantial savings and help our local economy."

David Regan, Director of Public Health for Manchester, went on to say "We now have a great opportunity to maximise the impact of public health measures when public health returns to local authorities in 2013. Local Authorities will have a key role to play in protecting their citizens from the harmful effects of tobacco by implementing comprehensive tobacco control action plans."



Minister for Public Health, Anne Milton said: “Smoking remains one of our biggest public health challenges. Much progress has been made but we need to re invigorate efforts at all levels including persuading people not to ever start smoking – local authorities are ideally placed to do this. The creation of Public Health England will also help achieve this. I congratulate the Local Government Group for putting this important conference together.”

**ENDS**

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