

## Executive Summary

1. There have been few periods of modern history, if any, where the role of tobacco, its consumption and its place in wider society has been so thoroughly debated as it has been for last few years in the United Kingdom. One of the most acutely debated areas of this wider topic is whether tobacco should be consumed within enclosed public places, where there is likely to be non-smokers in close proximity.
2. Exactly what has acted as the catalyst is very difficult to define, in all probability, there is a range of reasons as to why it is now so high on the national agenda.
3. Firstly, as scientific knowledge increases, it would appear that more and more knowledge is available to demonstrate the negative impact that the consumption of tobacco can have on the health of the human body.
4. Secondly, proportionately lower amounts of people consume tobacco now than have done so in the past. As a result of this, there is a perceived increase in the feeling that the non-smoking majority should not have to contend with passive smoke from those who smoke.
5. To reinforce it's validity, scrutiny should be seen to be investigating the important issues of the day and proposing solutions or ways forward in addressing them. Further to that, as the national debate into tobacco control in enclosed public places develops, it is widely accepted that the debate has distinct public health ramifications.
6. Further to that, however, is the emerging strand of discourse over the economics of tobacco control. Will it affect profits of pubs, clubs and therefore employment rates? Will it make town centres less vibrant on an evening? Will it affect the economic vitality of urban centres, endeavouring to regenerate, like Middlesbrough? It is, therefore, a much wider debate than a purely health related one, requiring the consideration of other factors. It is against this multi-layered backdrop that the Health Scrutiny Panel decided to conduct a review into Tobacco consumption within enclosed public places.
7. In its investigation of the topic at hand, the Health Scrutiny Panel's work was directed by the following terms of reference.
  - 7.1 To investigate the topic of tobacco control in enclosed public places in Middlesbrough.

### Specifically

- 7.2 To take evidence on the perceived health impacts of passive smoking

- 7.3 To establish the views of the local population in relation to tobacco control in enclosed public places
- 7.4 To investigate the economic impact on Middlesbrough's businesses of tobacco control measures
- 7.5 To investigate the views of local businesses regarding the potential scope of tobacco control
- 7.6 To investigate the views of interest groups as to the impacts of tobacco control
- 7.7 To consider any lessons from elsewhere in the UK where Tobacco control has been implemented.

## **Conclusions**

7. The Panel concludes that:
  - a) Following the ban's implementation, the Panel considers it would be highly beneficial for Middlesbrough to positively advertise itself as 'smoke free' in an effort to take full advantage of any upturn in business the hospitality trade experiences following the change.
  - b) Whilst Parliament has taken a lead on establishing that a total ban will be implemented and fines for those contravening the ban have been discussed, the Panel notes that there has been a distinct lack of national guidance as to how such a ban will be policed. The Panel would like to see that remedied.
  - c) Whilst the Panel notes a ban will ban smoking in enclosed public places, it is mindful of evidence it received which asserted that such a ban would merely displace tobacco consumption into the home and potentially increase children and other family members to second hand smoke. The Panel concludes that this would be an ironic and unacceptable consequence of the tobacco ban, that in seeking to protect hospitality workers and other customers, the home became a more dangerous place.
  - d) The Panel has received evidence to indicate that in the event of a total ban, de facto smoking areas may start to develop around entrances and exits to pubs, clubs, restaurants, shopping centres and the like. The Panel is mindful that this will, in all probability, increase the amount of tobacco associated litter being dropped in public places. Further to this, the Panel is mindful that this may cause an extra strain on the Council's street cleaning commitments.

## Recommendations

8. On the basis of the evidence received, the Panel recommends:
  - a) That following the imposition of the total smoking ban, Middlesbrough Council in conjunction with key partners actively seeks to promote Middlesbrough as 'smoke free', so that the town may capitalise on any upturn in commercial activity as a result of the ban.
  - b) That the Council lobbies the Government to publicly clarify exactly how the incoming ban will be policed and who will be responsible for its policing, including whom will meet the financial commitments of policing the ban.
  - c) That Middlesbrough Council, together with key partners, strenuously pursues a campaign to combat potential displacement of tobacco use into the home. Such a campaign should emphasise that smoking has been banned in enclosed public places for a reason and that reasoning applies equally to the home.
  - d) That the Council, together with key partners, consider providing more litter bins and other receptacles outside establishments likely to have people smoking outside of them in an effort to prevent increases in the amount of tobacco related litter dropped.
  - e) That the Council considers the likely ramifications of a smoking ban for street cleaning functions and devotes an appropriate level of resources to deal with the possible increase in tobacco related litter.
  - f) That the Council encourages local businesses in the hospitality sector to provide open-air areas upon their premises, where appropriate, where people can smoke.