



## The Tidy Britain All-Party Parliamentary Group

### Smoking related litter

8<sup>th</sup> July 2020, 15:00-16:00

Microsoft Teams

Minutes

#### Speakers

Kevin Hollinrake MP (Chair)

Rt Hon Rebecca Pow MP

Clive Betts MP

#### Present

Mark Logan MP (Vice-Chair)

Mark Pawsey MP (Vice Chair)

Lloyd Russell-Moyle MP

Richard Graham MP

Virginia Crosbie MP

Cherilyn Mackrory MP

Selaine Saxby MP

<b>15:00</b>	<b>Welcome and introduction</b> Kevin Hollinrake MP, Chair
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>KH welcomed the attendees to the meeting, and provided an introduction to the issue of smoking related litter.</li></ul>
<b>15:05</b>	<b>Panel presentations</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Richard McIlwain</b> – Deputy Chief Executive of Keep Britain Tidy – provided an overview of scale of the issue, cigarette butts are the number one item littered globally, KEEP BRITAIN TIDY’s surveys have found them across over 80% of sites, over 120m tons dropped per day. The British public are becoming increasingly</li></ul>

concerned but efforts to date to tackle the issue have largely been unsuccessful. Over the years, KEEP BRITAIN TIDY have worked in dialogue with industry with success in other areas of plastic pollution, however KEEP BRITAIN TIDY has found that the tobacco industry is unwilling to engage in conversations about change, often citing the WHO's FCTC. KEEP BRITAIN TIDY has been looking with interest at the progress of the EU's single use plastic directive as a mechanism to emulate and use to invest in infrastructure and prevention. KEEP BRITAIN TIDY's own work and research has shown that there are successful interventions which could be scaled up to create a difference if a long-term programme of change was to invest.

- **Dr Dannielle Green** – Senior Lecturer at Anglia Ruskin University – provided an overview of her research on the issue, having spent the last 8 years researching the impact of cigarette butts on the environment. 4.5 trillion littered every year, filters made out of a plastic called cellulose acetate containing thousands of chemicals which have a lethal impact on the environment. A recent study found that cigarette filters can remain toxic for up to five years, contaminating and impacting the growth of plants. She affirmed they should be classified as a single-use plastic, smoking banned from certain areas, and Extended Producer Responsibility will be very effective in reducing litter.

*[Dannielle's slides will be made available to attendees after the meeting]*

- **Minister Rebecca Pow MP** - Thanked KEEP BRITAIN TIDY for all the work they do on the litter agenda, and that she was very much looking to the Great British September Clean
- Minister Pow expressed her frustration that cigarette butts continue to be a littered item.
- The Minister provided an overview of the Government's litter strategy with ambitions to clean up the country, focusing on education infrastructure and enforcement. She confirmed that the government has been continuously trying to tackle this issue with the help and advice of KEEP BRITAIN TIDY.
- The Minister discussed the impact of falling smoking rates on litter and health with the aim to make Britain smoke free by 2030. Cigarette packets covered by current producer responsibility regulations which require producers to recycle a proportion of the packaging waste they place on the market. The government has outlined plans to reform that EPR system to ensure producers cover the full net costs of managing packaging at the end of their life, to ensure manufacturers take full responsibility. In the government's consultation last year, they proposed that producer fees covered the full cost for local authorities of dealing with littered and fly-tipped packaging waste. We have been working

	<p>very closely to understand the costs and will continue to engage with KEEP BRITAIN TIDY in working up those proposals for the next consultation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Minister discussed tobacco filters – she shared frustrations about the lack of engagement from the industry and that KEEP BRITAIN TIDY now think that it’s unlikely that the industry will agree to participate in the voluntary EPR scheme. The Minister confirmed that she hoped to see the tobacco manufacturers association and the companies it represents work proactively to deliver on the commitments it gave during the 2015 select committee inquiry to tackle the litter created by its products and users through developing a voluntary EPR scheme with KEEP BRITAIN TIDY.</li> <li>• The Minister confirmed that the government is prepared to host a roundtable discussion to include KEEP BRITAIN TIDY and industry to make progress.</li> <li>• The Minister confirmed that should lack of engagement by industry continue, the government will reflect on what steps they can take going forward to ensure that the industry does take increased responsibility for the litter that it creates. Powers in the forthcoming Environment Bill, such a scheme could go beyond what KEEP BRITAIN TIDY have proposed in their voluntary approach.</li> <li>• <b>Clive Betts MP</b> – Chair of the Communities, Housing and Local Government Select Committee – discussed the lack of change and engagement by the tobacco industry since the litter inquiry he held in 2015. Mr Betts also discussed the responsibility of industry to pay for cost of clean-up, and asserted the importance of enforcing the polluter pays principle on the tobacco industry, a principle reflected in the Environment Bill. Mr Betts confirmed that the lack of engagement by the industry has proven that the only way forward is now legislation and mandated action.</li> </ul>
<p><b>15:35</b></p>	<p><b>Open discussion</b> Kevin Hollinrake MP, Chair</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KH opened the discussion to Q&amp;A</li> <li>• During a question about taxes on tobacco products, Minister Pow confirmed that the Government will view all options and through the Environment Bill and EPR scheme.</li> <li>• The Minister also discuss the EU directive, and confirmed that the Government will deliver the same outcomes, but tailored to suit the UK’s needs.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Richard McIlwain discussed the merits of an EPR, a vehicle to work on prevention as well as clean-up. Acutely important as we enter the decade of change regarding environmental tipping points.</li> <li>• Dannielle Green discussed alternatives to plastics but confirmed that even with alternative materials, this does not solve the issue of littering.</li> <li>• The panel discussed the impacts of vaping and decreasing rates of smoking, Richard McIlwain confirmed that acting to tackle litter now is crucial to prevent its widespread impact.</li> <li>• The panel discussed the role of a government funded campaign to raise awareness and education. EPR would allow industry to pay into a government fund which could then be used for such purposes as prevention and clean-up. Richard confirmed that an EPR scheme would guard funds and mandate that money would go towards the necessary work. Clive Betts MP confirmed that a direct link should be made to prevent loss of funds due to disinterest in hypothecation by the Treasury.</li> <li>• The panel discussed potential recycling schemes and the lack of input by the industry - £70k investment compared to approximately a £1bn in UK profits. Clive Betts MP confirmed that although no plans are currently in place, should enough of the relevant organisations such as KEEP BRITAIN TIDY and Parliamentarians contact him regarding this issue, he will look again at bringing back cigarette companies in front of the Select Committee. At the very least, Mr Betts MP will encourage Government to revisit the recommendations made.</li> <li>• Richard McIlwain discussed using the Deposit Return Scheme model as a good example on how industry can come together with government and NGOs to make a positive difference, as well as looking to Europe's single use plastics directive.</li> </ul>
<p><b>15:35</b></p>	<p><b>AOB and close</b> Kevin Hollinrake MP, Chair</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KH thanked all panellists and attendees. He reminded attendees of KEEP BRITAIN TIDY's upcoming Great BritishSeptember Clean , with the new dates of 11<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> September, more details can be found on KEEP BRITAIN TIDY's website.</li> </ul>



**Keep Britain Tidy provides the secretariat for the Tidy Britain  
APPG**