

'Up in Smoke' Summary, Ash Scotland 10 November 2010

ASH Scotland Chief Executive **Sheila Duffy** today said the cost of smoking was too high a price for Scotland to pay, as a new economic document shows that tobacco costs Scotland close to £1.1 billion every year. [Up in Smoke: The cost of tobacco in Scotland](#) is a comprehensive report, reviewed by experts including academics and economists, which specifically analyses and updates the costs of smoking to Scotland. Publishing the document, Ms Duffy said the huge costs of tobacco should be compared to the small amount spent on stop-smoking services which are both effective and value for money. Commenting, Ms Duffy said:

"**Up in Smoke** shows that the cost of smoking is too high a price for Scotland to pay. Not only does smoking devastate our health with over 13,300 adult deaths every year and thousands of others affected by smoking-related illness, it also has a negative impact on our economy.

"**Up in Smoke** clearly shows that the price of smoking to Scotland is nearly £1.1 billion every year. Taking into account NHS costs, productivity losses, premature death, costs of smoking related fires in commercial properties, and clearing smoking-related litter, even on the conservative figures used, there is real cost of tobacco use to Scotland's economy of £1.1 billion. That is a huge cost for us to bear.

"When it comes to smoking, we often hear that the Chancellor couldn't afford to lose the tobacco duty from cigarettes, despite the impact tobacco has on our health. However **Up in Smoke** shows that this is not the case. The Scottish Government estimates it receives £940 million in tobacco-specific duty, leaving a deficit of at least £129 million. Revenues gained do not cover the costs of tobacco for Scotland and neither of course are they designed to.

"The cost of tobacco should be compared to what we spend on combating smoking. Scotland's Health and Wellbeing budget for 2009/10 was £12.5 billion but just £14.75 million was spent on NHS stop-smoking services, with approximately the same being spent this year. That's just a tenth of one per cent of the total health and wellbeing budget. Yet cessation services are both effective and good economic value with the cost to the NHS per quitter at around £550. Plus in terms of life years gained, smoking cessation is great value for money. For example, compare statins to prevent heart disease which cost nearly £25,000 in treatment per life year gained to smoking cessation treatment which costs £1000 or less.

"The profit-making tobacco industry spends vast sums on promoting its lethal product which kills one in two long term consumers. But it is taxpayers - smokers and non smokers alike - who have to pick up the tab.

"It is time we all realised that smoking is a drain on our finances and comes at a cost to all of us. We need to be tougher on the tobacco industry, increasing the duty on tobacco, holding tobacco companies to account and requiring greater transparency, and we must continue to fund prevention and cessation services to help smokers to quit and stop young people from starting.

"That is the only way we can stop the major costs of tobacco to our public health and our economy."

The costs of tobacco in Scotland each year are estimated at:

- £271m in direct NHS costs of treating smoking-attributable disease
- £692m in productivity losses due to excess absenteeism, smoking breaks and lost output due to premature death
- £60m in lost output to premature deaths due to second-hand smoke in the home
- £34m in cleaning cigarette litter from the streets
- £12m in fires caused by smoking in commercial properties