Office for Health Improvement & Disparities

Office for Health Improvement & Disparities
Department of Health & Social Care
39 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0EU

12th March 2025

To: Mark Ansell, Havering London Borough

cc. Michele Kemp, Alison Keating

Dear Colleagues

Re: Local Stop Smoking Services and Support Grant 2025-2026

This letter sets out:

- the conditions that will apply to that grant
- programme expectations
- a signature panel to accept the grant and its conditions

Background

The government has announced additional ring-fenced funding for local stop smoking services and support. This agreement pertains to the financial year 2025/26. Funding for subsequent years will be subject to spending review settlements, following the routine practice for all government expenditure.

The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care has determined that the grant will be paid based on the understanding that the funding will be used to:

- Invest in enhancing local authority commissioned stop smoking services and support, in addition to and while maintaining existing spend on these services and support via the public health grant. This should not replace other existing programmes which support smokers to quit, for example the tobacco dependency programme delivered within the NHS Long Term Plan;
- Build capacity to deliver expanded local stop smoking services and support;
- Build demand for local stop smoking services and support; and
- Deliver increases in the number of people setting a quit date and 4 week quit outcomes, reporting outcomes in the Stop Smoking Services Collection.

The grant will be ring-fenced for use on local stop smoking services and support.

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The Secretary of State has determined, pursuant to section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003, to pay grants to relevant authorities in the amounts indicated for the financial year 2025 to 2026.

This letter is accompanied by 4 annexes:

Annex A: Local stop smoking services and support ring-fenced grant determination including;

Appendix 1 - Grant conditions

Annex B: Programme expectations;

Appendix 1 – Local contribution to ambition

Annex C: Payment Arrangements

Annex D: Statement of Grant Usage (SOGU) Assurance Template example

The grant

The 2025 to 2026 grant will be paid in bi-annual instalments (see Annex C).

Pursuant to section 31(4) of the Local Government Act 2003 the Secretary of State has attached conditions to the payment of the grant, which are set out at Annex A.

The Department's presumption is that the grant will be spent in-year. The Grant Recipient will notify the Department as soon as is reasonably practicable should an underspend be forecast. The Department may consider reducing future grant amounts to local authorities that report significant and repeated underspends.

Enquires about this agreement should be addressed to stopsmokinggrant@dhsc.gov.uk

To accept the funding and conditions, please sign on page 13 and return to stopsmokinggrant@dhsc.gov.uk by 9th April 2025.

Yours sincerely

Elkie Symes

Director | Health Improvement | Global and Public Health Group

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Revenue Grant determination (ringfenced)

Section 31 local authority grants for the Local Stop Smoking Services and Support Grant 2025/2026
GRANT DETERMINATION 2025-2026: No 31/7714

The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care ("the Secretary of State"), in exercise of the powers conferred by Section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003, makes the following determination:

Citation

1) This determination may be cited as the Local Stop Smoking Services and Support Grant Determination 2025/26: No 31/7714.

Purpose of the grant

2) The purpose of the grant is to provide support to local authorities in England towards expenditure lawfully incurred or to be incurred by them in connection with the provision of local stop smoking services and support.

Determination

3) The Secretary of State determines the local authorities to which the grant is to be paid and the amount of grant to be paid in the Financial Year 2025 to 2026. The local authorities and the amounts for the Financial Year are available at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-stop-smoking-services-and-support-funding-for-2025-to-2026.

Treasury consent

4) Before making this determination in relation to local authorities in England, the Secretary of State obtained the consent of the Treasury.

Grant conditions

5) Pursuant to section 31(3) and section 31(4) of the Local Government Act 2003, the Secretary of State determines that the grant will be paid subject to the conditions in Appendix 1.

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UK Government Branding

6) The Grant Recipient shall at all times during and following the end of the Funding Period:

6.1 comply with requirements of the Branding Manual in relation to the Funded Activities; and

6.2 cease use of the Funded by UK Government logo on demand if directed to do so by the Department.

7) **Branding Manual** means the HM Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland 'Funded by UK Government branding manual' first published by the Cabinet Office in November 2022 and is available at https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/marketing/branding-guidelines/ including any subsequent updates from time to time.

Elkie Symes

Signed by authority of the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care

Director for Health Improvement, Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, Department of Health and Social Care

March 2025

Appendix 1

Grant conditions

1. In this Appendix:

- ‘a local authority’ means an upper tier or unitary local authority
- ‘the Department’ means the Department of Health and Social Care
- ‘Financial Year’ means a period of 12 months commencing on 1 April 2025 and ending 31 March 2026
- ‘grant’ means the amounts set out in the ‘Ring-fenced local stop smoking services and support grant determination 2025 to 2026’
- ‘upper tier and unitary local authorities’ means:
  - a county council in England
  - a district council in England, other than a council for a district in a county for which there is a county council
  - a London borough council
  - the Council of the Isles of Scilly
  - the Common Council of the City of London
- “the Programme” means those outputs, activities, milestones and targets identified in the programme expectations (attached at Annex B)
- “the Secretary of State” means the Minister of State for Health and Social Care

Use of the grant

2. Pursuant to section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003, the Secretary of State hereby determines that the local stop smoking services and support grant shall be paid towards expenditure incurred, or to be incurred, by upper tier and unitary local authorities in the Financial Year.

3. Subject to paragraph 4, the grant must be used only for meeting eligible expenditure incurred or to be incurred by local authorities for the purposes of providing local stop smoking services and support.

4. A local authority must, in using the grant:

- Invest in enhancing local authority commissioned stop smoking services and support, in addition to and while maintaining existing spend on these services and support from the public health grant. This should not replace other/existing programmes which support smokers to quit, for example the tobacco dependency programme delivered

within the NHS Long Term Plan which is undertaking work to support smokers within the healthcare system to receive support to quit. This includes commitments to support all inpatients who smoke to receive tobacco dependency treatment whilst in hospital and embed a maternity-led pathway of stop smoking support for all pregnant smokers.

- Build capacity to deliver expanded local stop smoking services and support;
- Build demand for local stop smoking services and support; and
- Deliver increases in the number of people setting a quit date and 4 week quit outcomes, reporting outcomes in the Stop Smoking Services Collection, an existing data collection and reporting system used to monitor the delivery of local stop smoking interventions. NHS England collects the data from local authorities and there is a requirement to submit activity for each quarter. NHS England publishes submission dates and local authorities can return activity and outcome data associated with quit support provided.

Eligible expenditure

5. Eligible expenditure means expenditure incurred by a local authority or any person acting on behalf of a local authority, between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026, for the purposes of carrying out stop smoking services and support functions referred to in paragraph 4.

6. If a local authority incurs any of the following costs, those costs must be excluded from eligible expenditure:

a) contributions in kind

b) payments for activities of a political or exclusively religious nature

c) depreciation, amortisation or impairment of fixed assets owned by the local authority

d) input VAT reclaimable by the local authority from HM Revenue and Customs

e) interest payments or service charge payments for finance leases

f) gifts, other than promotional items, with a value of no more than £10 in a year to any one-person

g) entertaining (entertaining for this purpose means anything that would be a taxable benefit to the person being entertained, according to current UK tax regulations)

h) statutory fines, criminal fines or penalties

7. A local authority must not deliberately incur liabilities for eligible expenditure before there is an operational need for it to do so.

8. For the purpose of defining the time of payments, a local authority shall account for its spend from the grant using the accrual basis of accounting (for an explanation of accrual accounting please refer to the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom).

Payment arrangements

9. Payments will be made during the Financial Year in Q1 and Q4 (as further detailed in Annex C). The Q4 payment made may cover forecast spend in Q4, up to the end of the Financial Year.

10. The local authority will notify the Department as soon as is reasonably practicable should an underspend be forecast. The Department reserves the right to alter the timing or amount of grants payments accordingly.

Reporting

11. The local authority will work with the Department to provide the necessary information and data to monitor and evaluate progress against the aims and outcomes of the Programme.

12. The reporting will take place through these delivery mechanisms:

- Stop Smoking Services Collection, the collection requires local authorities to submit cumulative counts of activity using a template, which you can request from the Strategic Data Collection Service (ssd.nationalservicedesk@nhs.net);

- The Department will financially monitor the grants provided to authorities on a quarterly basis using the supplied financial reporting template. This financial monitoring will ask local authorities to provide a breakdown of the payments to service providers and a breakdown by budget line of spend within the project delivery; and

- A final Statement of Grant Usage must be submitted to the Department (stopsmokinggrant@dhsc.gov.uk) on the 21st day of the month following the expiry of the Financial Year. The final Statement of Grant Usage must be certified by the local authority's Chief Executive/s Officer that, to the best of their knowledge, the amounts shown on the statement are all eligible expenditure and that the grant has been used for the purposes intended.

13. A local authority must notify the Department immediately in writing should it become aware of any circumstances that may cause delay in the delivery of the Programme.

14. The Secretary of State may require a further external validation to be carried out by an appropriately qualified independent accountant or auditor of the use of the grant where the return referred to in paragraph 12 above fails to provide sufficient assurance to the Secretary of State that the grant has been used in accordance with these conditions.

Financial management

15. The local authority must maintain a robust system of internal financial controls and inform the department promptly of any significant financial control issues raised by its internal auditors in relation to the use of the grant.

16. If a local authority identifies any overpayment of the grant, the local authority must repay this amount within 30 days of it coming to their attention.

17. If a local authority has any grounds for suspecting financial irregularity in the use of any grant paid under this determination, it must notify the Department immediately, explain what steps are being taken to investigate the suspicion and keep the department informed about the progress of the investigation. For these purposes 'financial irregularity' includes fraud or other impropriety, mismanagement, and the use of the grant for purposes other than those for which it was provided.

External audit arrangements

18. Appointed auditors are responsible for auditing the financial statements of the local authority and for reaching a conclusion on a local authority's overall arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources. The use of, and accounting for, this grant and the arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in doing so fall within the scope of the work that appointed auditors may plan to carry out, having regard to the risk of material error in the local authority's accounts and significance.

Records to be kept

19. The local authority must maintain reliable, accessible and up to date accounting records with an adequate audit trail for all expenditure funded by grant monies under this determination.

20. The local authority and any person acting on behalf of a local authority must allow a) the Comptroller and Auditor General or appointed representatives and b) the Secretary of State or appointed representatives free access at all reasonable times to all documents (including computerised documents and data) and other information as is connected to the grant payable under this determination, or to the purposes for which the grant was used, subject to the provisions in paragraph 22.

21. The documents, data and information referred to in paragraph 20 are such as the Secretary of State or the Comptroller and Auditor General may reasonably require for the purposes of the Secretary of State's or the Comptroller and Auditor General's financial audit or that any department or other public body may reasonably require for the purposes of carrying out examinations into the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which any department or other public body has used its resources. A local authority must provide such further explanations as are reasonably required for these purposes.

22. Paragraphs 19 and 20 do not constitute a requirement for the examination, certification or inspection of the accounts of a local authority by the Comptroller and Auditor General under section 6(3) of the National Audit Act 1983. The Comptroller and Auditor General will seek access in a measured manner to minimise any burden on the local authority and will avoid duplication of effort by seeking and sharing information with the Audit Commission.

Breach of conditions and recovery of grant

23. If the local authority fails to comply with any of these conditions, or if any overpayment is made under this grant or any amount is paid in error, or if any of the events set out in paragraph 24 occurs, the Secretary of State may reduce, suspend or withhold grant payments or require the repayment of the whole or any part of the grant monies paid, as may be determined by the Secretary of State and notified in writing to the local authority. Such sum as has been notified will immediately become repayable to the Secretary of State who may set off the sum against any future amount due to the local authority from central government.

24. The events referred to in paragraph 23 are:

a) the local authority purports to transfer or assign any rights, interests or obligations arising under this determination without the prior agreement of the Secretary of State;

b) any information provided in any application for grant monies payable under this determination, or in any subsequent supporting correspondence is found to be significantly incorrect or incomplete in the opinion of the Secretary of State;

c) it appears to the Secretary of State that other circumstances have arisen or events have occurred that are likely to significantly affect the local authority's ability to achieve the outputs, activities, milestones and targets set out in the bid;

d) the local authority's chief internal auditor is unable to provide reasonable assurance that the Statement of Grant Usage at Annex D, in all material respects, fairly presents the eligible expenditure in the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 in accordance with the definitions and conditions in this determination.

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Annex B – Programme expectations

PROGRAMME TITLE: Supporting people to quit smoking

In 2024/25, DHSC provided an additional £70million to Local Authorities (LAs) in England to increase the support available for smokers to quit. The new funding has supported a range of activities, including the recruitment of dedicated specialist staff, increased partnership working with agencies as part of local strategies to tackle health inequalities, and increased promotion and marketing of Stop Smoking Services (SSS).

On the 5th November 2024, the Tobacco and Vapes Bill was introduced to Parliament. The Bill will gradually phase-out the sale of tobacco products across the UK and put us on track for a smoke-free UK. To support smokers to quit, as part of a wider package of measures, the Government confirmed that it will provide an additional £70m for SSS in 2025/26. In December 2024, the government published funding allocations for each local authority.

The conditions found in this grant agreement remain the same as in 2024/25, in recognition that local authorities continue to commission and upscale local support to help smokers quit. We expect investment to translate into increased demand (set quit dates) and quality outcomes (4 week quits). Outcomes associated with quitting success (4-week quits) should be maintained or improved. Provision of SSS in England continues to be varied and significant investment is taking place based on the needs of local populations. In recognition of these factors, targets linked to funding will not be set in this year of the programme. This position will be kept under review for subsequent years.

This investment should not replace activity delivered as part of the NHS Long Term Plan or the public health grant. It is intended to allow local authorities to deliver more or enhanced SSS. For example, the funding can support building capacity to support smokers to quit and increase referrals from a range of community settings, such as primary care or mental health services. The funding can also be used to train more local healthcare staff to deliver smoking cessation advice and referrals. It should not be used for tobacco enforcement activity.

We are committed to evaluating the programme and have commissioned research led by King's College London (KCL). We strongly encourage participation in research requests associated with this evaluation. This research will evaluate how well the additional investment is achieving its intended outcomes, using quantitative and qualitative methods. Members of the research team will contact a sample of LAs for interviews and a survey will be circulated in Q1 of 2025/26.

Appendix 1: Local contribution to ambition

A methodology has been applied to support local understanding of what this ambition means. This approach takes the total number of additional quit dates and distributes them as a proportion across each local authority area. It also factors in a gradual increase of set quit dates with an expectation of what these numbers will look like over 5 years of the programme. These figures are for local authorities to measure their performance against, whilst scaling up services and delivering quits needed to meet ambition. Funding beyond 25/26 will be subject to spending review settlements.

For Havering London Borough, this is modelled into the following trajectory of set quit dates.

Year 1 Total 2024/25	Year 2 Total 2025/26	Year 3 Total 2026/27	Year 4 Total 2027/28	Year 5 Total 2028/29
295	508	1,147	1,360	1,360

Reported public health grant spend in 2022/23 was £36,040.

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Annex C: Payment Arrangements

Havering London Borough maximum funding allocation is £315,471 to be spent in financial year 2025 - 2026.

Payment Dates	Payment Amount
Quarter 1 – April to June 2025	**£220,830**
Quarter 4 – Jan to March 2026	**£94,641**
Total	**£315,471**

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Signed by Havering London Borough

(Grant Recipient)

…….

Authorised Signatory

PRINT NAME: …..…….….

DATE ……..…….

POSITION: ……..…….

Signed for and on behalf of the

Department of Health and Social Care ……

PRINT NAME: ……..

DATE: ……..

POSITION: Health Improvement Director