

SmokeFree Liverpool

**Survey of Second-Hand Tobacco Smoke
in Liverpool Workplaces**

A report for SmokeFree Liverpool

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Sophia Christakopoulou and Jon Dawson

Jon Dawson Associates

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Aims of the Survey

1.1.1 This survey of the prevalence and attitudes to second-hand smoke in Liverpool workplaces was carried out to support the Smoke Free Liverpool Group's¹ work to achieve the objectives of the Liverpool First for Health Strategic Partnership to make Liverpool a *Smoke Free City* by 2008, and to reduce smoking prevalence. The survey is the first of a series of periodic surveys that will provide evidence and information about smoking in workplace environments in Liverpool and attitudes to second-hand smoke at work. These surveys will identify trends over time and contribute to evaluations of the impact of interventions to progress Liverpool's smoke free agenda.

1.1.2 The survey had several specific aims. These were to:

- identify the proportion of Liverpool's workplaces where staff or customers are exposed to second-hand smoke;
- identify the proportion of workplace premises that are smoke-free;
- explore perceptions of the economic impact that making workplaces smoke-free has had on firms;
- identify expectations of the likely impact should firms who are not smoke-free introduce smoke-free policies;
- explore the amount of interest amongst workplaces in learning more about second-hand smoke at work and engaging with the smoke-free agenda.

1.2 The Smoke Free Liverpool Workplace Questionnaire

1.2.1 The questionnaire was designed to meet the above objectives. The development process involved a review of questionnaires related to second-hand smoke. It also drew on the experience of the Smoke Free Liverpool partners and was informed by public health experts and professionals working in the tobacco control field.

1.2.2 The questionnaire comprised a mix of closed and open questions to address the research objectives. It was structured around a series of themes. These were:

- business type and workforce;
- type of smoking policies;
- economic impact of implemented smoke-free policies;
- potential business impact of introducing smoke-free policies;
- perceptions of health effects of second-hand smoke;
- interest in Smoke Free Liverpool services and agenda.

¹ The Smoke Free Liverpool Group brings together a wide range of partners including the City Council (Environmental Health and Trading Standards), Central, North and South Primary Care Trusts (including the Tobacco Lead for the PCTs), Health @ Work, Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation and the Chamber of Commerce.

Business type and workforce

- 1.2.3 The questionnaire sought information about the type of business and the size of the workforce. It also asked for estimates of how many amongst the workforce were smokers.

Type of smoking policies

- 1.2.4 To identify the extent of smoke-free workplaces in Liverpool, the questionnaire asked whether workplaces had a smoking policy for staff and for customers. It also asked whether premises were smoke-free throughout. For premises that were not completely smoke-free, the questionnaire incorporated a series of follow-up questions to identify the extent that smoking was permitted in the workplace. For instance, whether smoking was allowed in designated areas or whether it was allowed throughout the premises.

Economic impact of smoke-free policies

- 1.2.4 To provide evidence of the economic impact of introducing smoke-free policies, the questionnaire explored perceptions of the extent that making premises smoke-free had affected businesses' sales turnover and productivity.

Potential business impact of introducing smoke-free policies

- 1.2.5 The questionnaire incorporated a question to explore whether businesses without smoke-free policies thought that creating a smoke-free environment would have a positive, negative or neutral effect on their business.

Perceptions of health effects of second-hand smoke

- 1.2.6 To explore the extent of understanding of the health effects of second-hand smoke, the questionnaire examined views about its effect on customers and employees.

Interest in Smoke Free Liverpool services and agenda

- 1.2.8 The survey provided an opportunity to identify businesses that would be interested in learning more about second-hand smoke issues and engaging in the Smoke Free Liverpool agenda. The questionnaire, therefore, tested interest in and identifying businesses who would:

- like to access smoking cessation services in the workplace;
- like to receive more information;
- consider joining a Smoke Free award scheme;
- allow their business to be part of publicity for a smoke free Liverpool.

1.3 The Survey Methodology

- 1.3.1 The questionnaire was piloted with 25 businesses. Following the piloting, a few modifications were made to the structure of the questionnaire.

- 1.3.2 The questionnaire was initially posted out to workplaces with an explanatory letter from the City Council's Environmental Health and Trading Standards. Businesses

were selected randomly from the *Environmental Health and Trading Standards database* (for the types of firms that fall within their remit – e.g. restaurants, pubs and shops). Other types of firms, such as factories, garages and construction firms, were selected randomly from the *yell.com* database. Respondents were asked to return the completed questionnaire by a set date. Where questionnaires were not returned, attempts were made to conduct interviews at the workplace or by telephone.

- 1.3.3 The questionnaire targeted people at the workplace with the capacity to answer all or most of the questions. Inevitably, this varied from workplace to workplace. Typically, respondents were business owners, workplace managers, personnel managers and health and safety representatives. For smaller firms, administrative staff often completed the questionnaire when the business owner was unavailable. A team of interviewers from Environmental Health and Trading Standards and from Health @ Work carried out the interviews.
- 1.3.4 The survey was carried out between December 2003 and March 2004. 310 questionnaires were completed. A 68 per cent response rate was achieved. The average length of completing the questionnaire was about 10 minutes.
- 1.3.5 Analysis was carried out using chi-square criterion and analysis of variance. The survey data was analysed according to a range of key variables, such as smoke free status and economic sector.

1.4 Report Structure

- 1.4.1 The rest of this report sets out the results of the survey. Section 2 highlights the key characteristics of the businesses that responded to the survey. Section 3 details the findings of the survey. It presents the results as they relate to the key research questions. Section 4 summarises the key conclusions of the survey. Frequency tables of the responses to the questionnaire are contained in the appendix to this report, which is available separately.

2. CHARACTERISTICS OF BUSINESSES RESPONDING TO THE SURVEY

2.1 This section presents a breakdown of the key characteristics of the businesses responding to the survey. It sets out information in terms of the type and size of the business.

Economic sector

2.2 Table 2.1 sets out the distribution of the economic sector that businesses responding to the survey operate in.

Table 2.1: Economic sector of surveyed workplaces

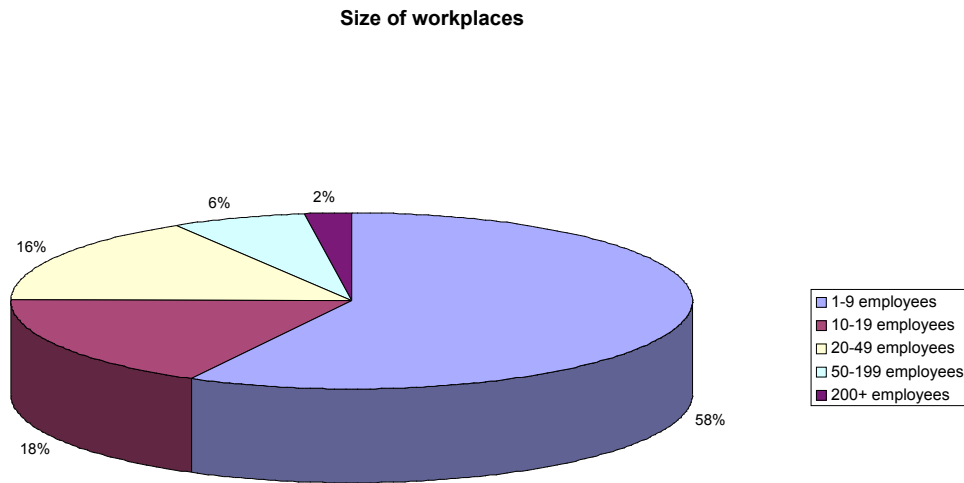
Economic Sector	Percent of workplaces
Manufacturing ²	13.1
Retail and wholesale	31.5
Repairs and Garages	10.1
Hotels and catering	18.8
Transport	0.7
Professional and other services	25.8

Size of workplace

2.3 Figure 2.1 shows the size of workplaces responding to the survey. It shows that over half of workplaces had less than 10 employees. 8 per cent of workplaces had more than 50 employees.

² In this report, reference to “manufacturing” refers to SIC codes D-F. This incorporates the publishing and construction sectors.

Figure 2.1



3. FINDINGS

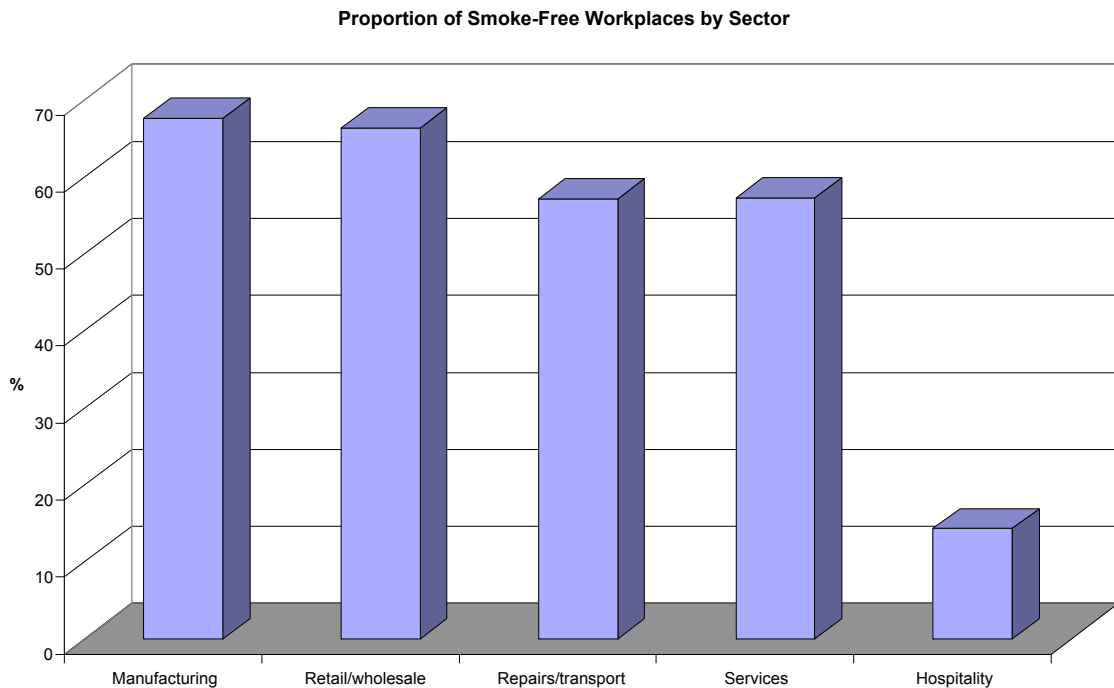
3.1 Second Hand Tobacco Smoke in Liverpool Workplaces

3.1.1 The survey aimed to identify the proportion of Liverpool workplaces that are smoke-free throughout. For workplaces that are not totally smoke-free, it sought to identify where smoking is permitted and whether employees and customers are exposed to second-hand smoke. It also asked whether or not workplaces had introduced smoking policies for staff and customers.

Smoke-Free workplaces

3.1.2 The survey findings showed that 53 per cent of premises are smoke-free throughout. Further analysis indicated that some types of workplace are more likely to be smoke-free than others. Figure 3.1 shows that, two-thirds of retail and manufacturing premises are smoke-free whereas just 14 per cent of hospitality sector workplaces are smoke-free. Within the hospitality sector, pubs and bars are the least likely to be smoke-free. No pubs or bars taking part in the survey were smoke-free compared to 16 per cent of restaurants and cafes

Figure 3.1

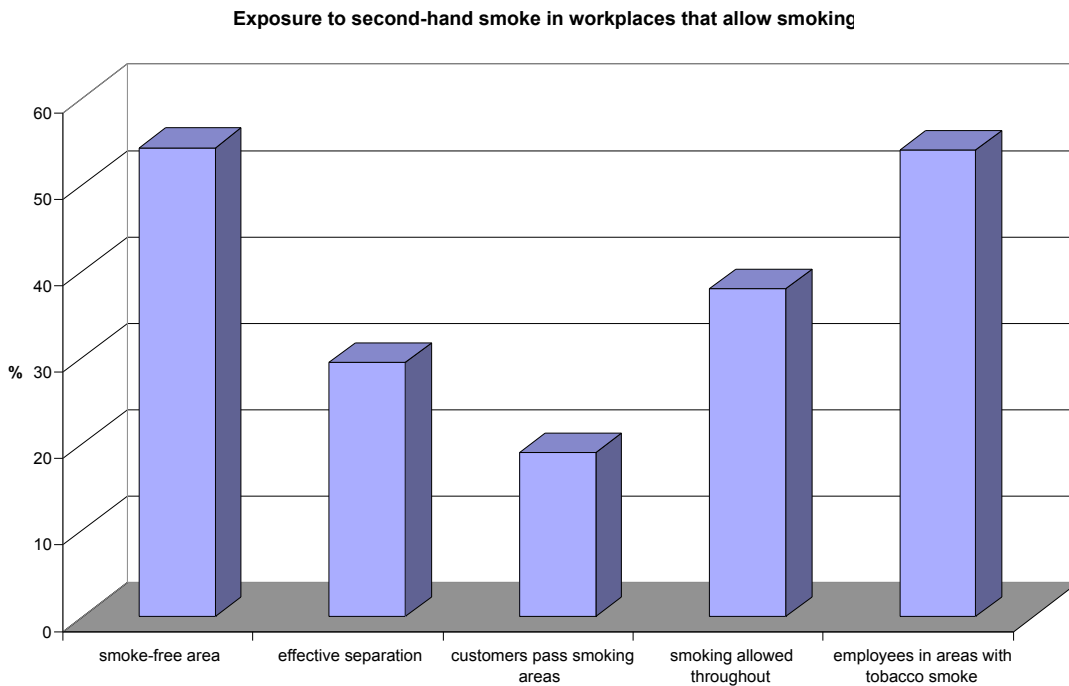


Workplaces where smoking is allowed

3.1.3 For workplaces where smoking is permitted, the survey sought evidence of how staff and customers are exposed to second-hand smoke. Figure 3.2 indicates that few workplaces that permit smoking have effective methods to prevent non-smokers being exposed to second-hand smoke. Whilst about half of workplaces that permit smoking have designated smoke-free areas, only a quarter of these stated that the smoke free area is effectively separate from smoking areas. In addition, where smoking is permitted in the workplace, the survey found that:

- customers have to pass through smoking areas to use amenities – such as toilets, play areas or bars – in 19 per cent of workplaces;
- there is no smoke-free area and smoking is allowed throughout 38 per cent of workplaces;
- employees are working in areas with tobacco smoke in 53 per cent of workplaces.

Figure 3.2



3.1.4 Further analysis indicated that workplaces in the hospitality sector are most likely to have no smoke free areas. 61 per cent of hospitality workplaces, that permitted smoking, have no smoke free areas compared to 22 per cent of service sector and 32 per cent of retail sector workplaces. Equally, in workplaces that permit smoking, hospitality sector workers are twice as likely to be working in areas with tobacco smoke. Employees in 80 per cent of hospitality sector firms, that permit smoking, work in areas with tobacco smoke compared to 39 per cent of other workplaces that allow smoking.

Smoking policies

3.1.4 74 per cent of workplaces stated that they have smoking policies for staff and, where applicable, 60 per cent said that they have smoking policies for customers. Not surprisingly, smoke-free premises are more likely to have smoking policies than workplaces that allow smoking. For instance, 86 per cent of smoke-free workplaces had smoking policies for customers compared to 48 per cent of workplaces that allow smoking.

3.2 Smoking Prevalence in Liverpool Workplaces

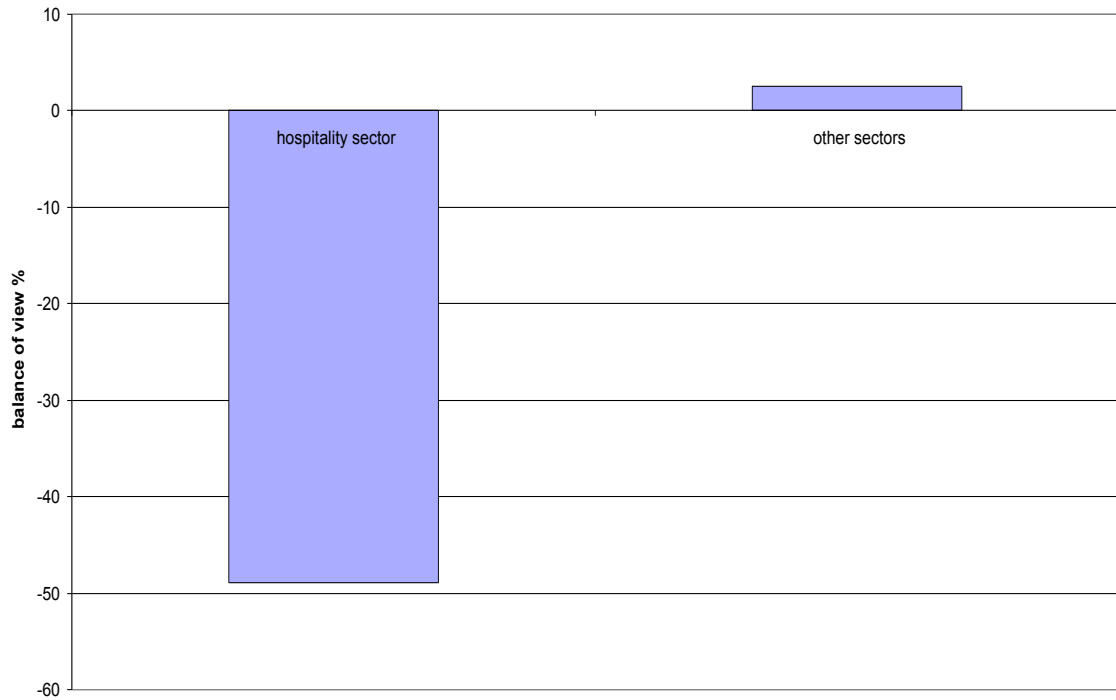
3.2.1 The survey data enabled estimates to be made of the smoking prevalence rate amongst employees in Liverpool workplaces. Based on the survey data, an estimated 28.8 per cent of the workforce smoke.

3.3 Economic Impact of Smoke-Free Policies

- 3.3.1 The survey explored perceptions of whether introducing smoke-free policies had impacted on workplaces' sales turnover and worker productivity. For workplaces that still permit smoking, it also sought to understand views about anticipated impacts should the workplace become smoke-free.
- 3.3.2 The survey indicated that few respondents thought that going smoke-free had made any impact on their sales turnover. 82 per cent of respondents reported that turnover had stayed the same, 14 per cent were not sure. Only one respondent (0.6 per cent) thought that introducing a smoke-free workplace had led to a decrease in turnover compared to 3 per cent who stated that sales turnover had increased a little or significantly.
- 3.3.3 There was a slightly more perceptible impact on workplace productivity. 72 per cent stated that the workforce's productivity had stayed the same, 3 per cent stated that it had decreased a little and 10 per cent stated that it had increased a little or significantly (8.5 and 1.5 per cent respectively) -15 per cent were not sure. Those that identified an increase in productivity mostly attributed it to people taking fewer smoking breaks. In contrast, those who observed a slight decrease in productivity attributed it to smokers taking longer smoking breaks.
- 3.3.4 Respondents from workplaces who still permitted smoking had stronger views about the likely impact on their businesses if they were to introduce smoke-free policies. On balance, negative predictions outweighed positive ones. 36 per cent perceived that it would have a negative effect on their businesses – compared to 26 per cent (neutral) and 20 per cent (positive).
- 3.3.5 Figure 3.3 indicates that this imbalance is largely attributed to negative expectations amongst the hospitality sector. It shows that, whilst in other sectors more respondents anticipated a positive than a negative impact, the reverse was the case for the hospitality sector. Specifically, 57 per cent of hospitality sector workplaces anticipated a negative impact compared to 8 per cent who thought that it could have a positive impact. Many stated that their business income would fall as they had many customers who smoke. In contrast, the picture for all other workplaces was more balanced. 23 per cent stated that the impact would be negative compared to 26 per cent who thought a positive outcome was more likely. However, those identifying positive impacts tended to emphasise improvements due to better, cleaner or healthier environments rather than increased economic or productivity benefits.

Figure 3.3

Balance of positive and negative views of the impact of smoke-free policies on the business

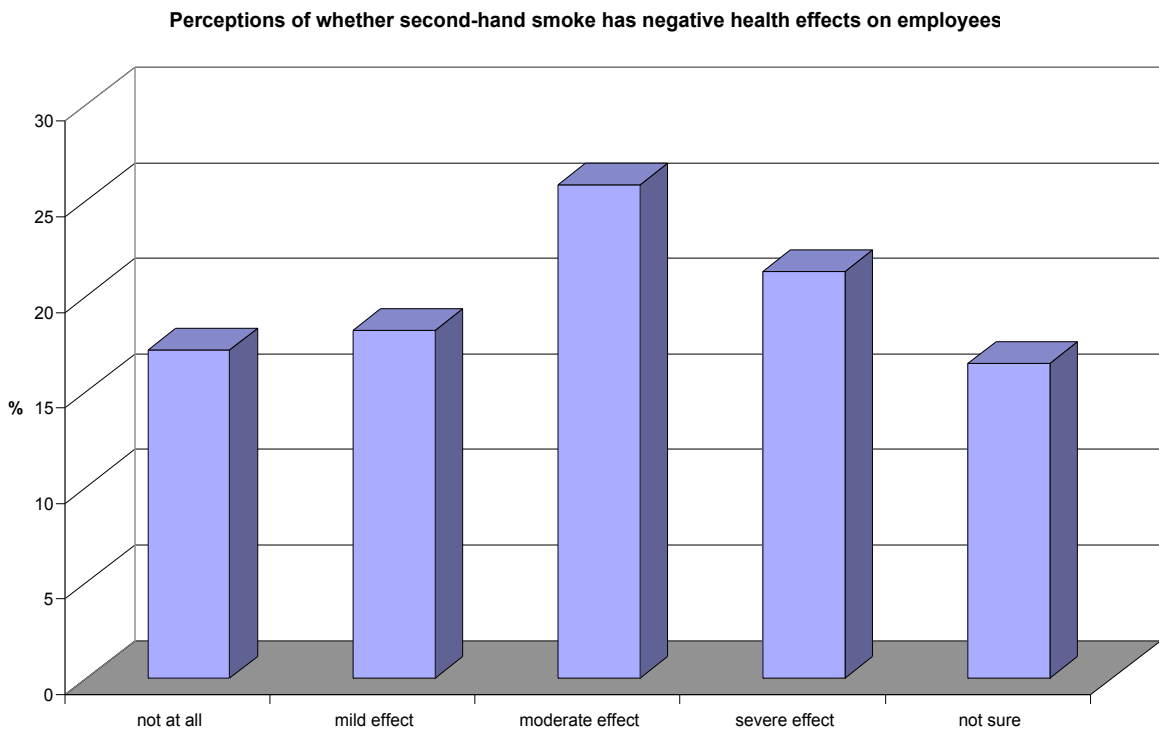


3.4 Perceptions of Health Effects of Second-Hand Smoke

3.4.1 The survey explored perceptions of the health effects of second-hand smoke on employees and customers. In both cases, a substantial majority – about two-thirds - stated that second-hand smoke had a negative effect on people’s health. Almost half stated that they thought second-hand smoke had a moderate or severe effect on the health of staff and customers.

3.4.2 Figure 3.4 shows that 21 per cent of respondents think that second-hand smoke has a severe effect on their own health and of employees compared to 17 per cent who think that it does not have an effect at all. Opinions about the effect of second-hand smoke on customers are broadly similar. Whilst these results indicate evidence of widespread understanding of the dangers of second-hand smoke, the percentage figures should be treated with caution. The completed questionnaires suggest that the question was sometimes interpreted in a general way and sometimes in relation to a specific workplace. Future questionnaires should resolve this ambiguity.

Figure 3.4



3.4.3 Notwithstanding this concern, further analysis suggested that respondents from smoke-free workplaces are more likely to think that second-hand smoke has a negative effect on health than are respondents from workplaces where smoking is allowed. For instance, 22 per cent of respondents from workplaces allowing smoking stated that they thought second-hand smoke had “no negative effect” on the health of their employees compared to 13 per cent of those from smoke-free workplaces. Equally, 58 per cent of respondents from smoke-free workplaces thought that second-hand smoke had a “moderate or severe effect” on staff health compared to 43 per cent from workplaces that allowed smoking. Uncertainty about the impact of second-hand smoke was also higher amongst workplaces that allowed smoking. 21 per cent stated that they were “not sure” whether second-hand smoke had negative health effects, compared to 12 per cent of respondents from smoke-free premises.

3.5 Interest in Smoke Free Liverpool Services and Agenda

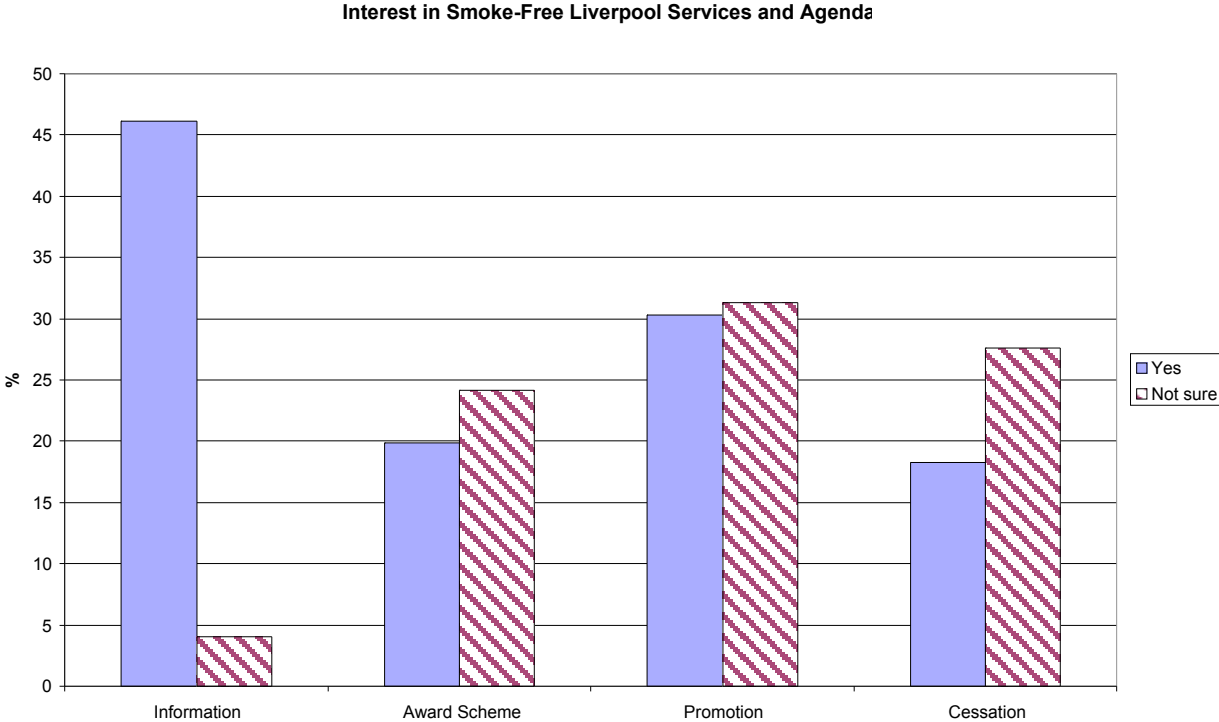
3.5.1 Smoke Free Liverpool activities include promoting the Clean Air Award Scheme, facilitating access to smoking cessation services and raising awareness about second-hand smoke in the workplace. The survey explored levels of demand for these services. It also asked about businesses’ interest in being part of smoke-free promotional activities. As a result, the survey has provided a valuable database that enables Health @ Work and EHOs to engage with workplaces that have expressed interest in the smoke-free agenda.

3.5.2 Figure 3.5 indicates levels of overall interest in Smoke Free Liverpool services and the smoke-free agenda. Broadly, there is considerable interest in learning more about second-hand smoke issues – 46 per cent stated that they would like to receive more information. Levels of firm interest in workplace smoking cessation services and the Clean Air Award scheme are lower. 18 per cent of respondents stated that they would like to have a smoking cessation service provided at their workplace. And 20 percent stated that they would be interested in joining a smoke-free award scheme. However, many respondents - about a quarter - stated that they were “not sure” whether they wanted to engage with these services. It could be argued, therefore, that raising awareness of the smoke-free agenda, the Clean Air Award scheme and how workplace smoking cessation services can be delivered would boost interest and potential take-up.

3.5.3 Further analysis highlighted differences between workplaces that are already smoke-free and those that still allow smoking. In particular, it found that:

- 24 per cent of workplaces with smoke-free premises are interested in joining a Smoke Free Award scheme compared to 15 per cent of those whose premises are not smoke-free. 25 per cent of all workplaces were not sure;
- 59 per cent of workplaces without smoke free premises expressed interest in receiving more information about reducing exposure to second-hand smoke;
- 25 per cent of workplaces that allow smoking expressed interest in accessing smoking cessation in the workplace services – compared to 12 per cent of smoke-free workplaces. A further 28 and 27 per cent, respectively, were “not sure”.
- 39 per cent of smoke-free workplaces (and 21 per cent of workplaces that are not smoke-free) were happy for their business to be promoted as part of “Liverpool Smoke-Free City of Culture” campaigns - a further third were “not sure”;

Figure 3.5



4 CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 This study set out to develop a profile of the current position in Liverpool concerning smoking policies within workplaces, the extent that workers are exposed to smoke and perceptions of the economic impact of smoke-free policies. This would provide important baseline information for Smoke-Free Liverpool. It also sought information that would help with the delivery of the Smoke-Free Liverpool agenda by testing levels of interest in services and second-hand smoke issues generally. It achieved these aims by developing a questionnaire and administering it through postal, face-to-face and telephone interviews with representatives of randomly selected workplaces across Liverpool.
- 4.2 The survey has generated a range of results that provide useful evidence for establishing baselines and advancing the smoke-free agenda. Specifically, key findings include:

Smoking in the workplace

- 53 per cent of premises are smoke-free, though only 14 per cent of hospitality sector workplaces are smoke-free.
- Half of workplaces that allow smoking have designated smoke-free areas though only a quarter of these have smoke-free areas that are effectively separate from smoking areas.
- Where smoking is allowed, 38 per cent of workplaces allow smoking throughout.
- Employees work in areas with tobacco smoke in 80 per cent of hospitality sector and 39 per cent of other workplaces that allow smoking.
- 74 per cent of workplaces have smoking policies for staff and 60 per cent for customers.

Smoking prevalence

- an estimated 28.8 per cent of the workforce in Liverpool's workplaces smokes.

Economic impact of smoke-free policies

- Few respondents thought going smoke-free made an impact on sales turnover – only one respondent (0.6 per cent) thought introducing a smoke-free workplace had led to a fall in turnover.
- 10 per cent thought workplace productivity had increased following the introduction of a smoke-free policy, compared to 3 per cent who thought it had fallen.

- In workplaces that still allow smoking, 36 per cent thought that introducing a smoke-free workplace would have a negative impact on their business whereas 20 per cent thought that the outcome would be positive. The hospitality sector was most likely to think that the business impact would be negative.

Perceptions of health effects of second-hand smoke

- Two-thirds of respondents stated that second-hand smoke had a negative effect on people's health – 16 per cent were “not sure”

Interest in Smoke-Free Liverpool services and agenda

- 24 per cent of workplaces with smoke-free premises and 15 per cent of premises that are not smoke-free expressed interested in joining a “smoke free award scheme” – 25 per cent of workplaces were “not sure”.
- 59 per cent of workplaces that are not smoke-free want to receive more information about reducing exposure to second-hand smoke.
- 25 per cent of workplaces that allow smoking and 12 per cent of smoke-free premises would like to access smoking cessation in the workplace services – a further 28 per cent were “not sure”.

Next steps

- 4.3 The survey's data and findings contribute to the range of baseline information that Smoke Free Liverpool is compiling. Specifically, it provides a profile of the current position concerning smoking in the workplace and attitudes to second-hand smoke at work. It also provides useful information for those responsible for delivering Smoke Free Liverpool's workplace agenda. It has provided the opportunity to follow-up workplaces that have expressed interest in smoke-free, second-hand tobacco smoke and smoking cessation issues and provides an indication of the likely levels of interest in these issues amongst firms in Liverpool.
- 4.4 Smoke Free Liverpool plans to follow-up this workplace survey in the final quarter of 2005/6. This will update the baseline and feed into a comprehensive review of the Smoke Free Liverpool programme. A second up-date is planned for 2007/8 and will inform the evaluation of Smoke Free Liverpool's impact.