

<b>Report on</b>	Correspondence to Council – October 2018
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Thursday 25 <sup>th</sup> October 2018
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	P Moffett, Head of Democratic Services
<b>Contact Officer</b>	P Moffett, Head of Democratic Services

<b>Is this report restricted for confidential business?</b>	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	x

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	Provide an update on correspondence received for attention of Council.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Background</b>
2.1	This paper refers to correspondence to be brought to the attention of Council. Items are referred to in 3.0 below.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	<p><b>Correspondence from Drugs Legislation Team, Home Office</b></p> <p>A response has been received from the Drugs Legislation Team of the Home Office following a motion carried by Council regarding the availability and accessibility of cannabis for medicinal purposes. The letter is attached as Appendix A.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Other Considerations</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b>
	Financial: not applicable
	Human: not applicable
	Risk Management: not applicable
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b>
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: not applicable
	Rural Needs Implications: not applicable
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
5.1	That Council notes and considers, as necessary, the correspondence received.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached &amp; References</b>

	Appendix A – The Home Office
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Appendix A



Cllr Sean McPeake  
Chair, Mid Ulster District Council  
Burn Road, Cookstown  
Northern Ireland  
United Kingdom  
BT80 8DT

Reference: TRO/0013044/18

Dear Sean McPeake,

Thank you for your e-mail of 20 August 2018, addressed to the Home Secretary, about the motion of Mid Ulster District Council on the availability and accessibility of cannabis for medicinal purposes. Your e-mail has been forwarded to the Drugs Legislation Team for a response.

Please take this letter as acknowledgment of Mid Ulster District Council's support for the use of Medicinal Cannabis when its use is assessed as beneficial to the quality of life and wellbeing of those with medical conditions.

The Government believes that people suffering from pain or illness should have access to the best possible treatment and recent cases have shown that we need to look more closely at the use of cannabis based medicine in healthcare in the UK. That is why, on 19 June, the Home Secretary announced a two-part review of cannabis and its scheduling under the 2001 Regulations. Part one of the review was led by the UK Government's Chief Medical Advisor, Professor Dame Sally Davies and considered the available evidence of the therapeutic and medicinal benefits of cannabis based products. The Chief Medical Advisor's advice is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cannabis-scheduling-review-part-1>

On 3 July, the Home Secretary commissioned the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) to carry out the second part of the review. This asked for a short-term review, which was published on 19 July, as well as a long-term review by July 2019. The ACMD considered how best to balance the potential risk of harm and diversion of cannabis and cannabis-related products. The review made four recommendations as follows:

- The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) to promptly develop a clear definition of a cannabis-derived medicinal product.

- Once the definition of a cannabis-derived medicinal product has been developed, the ACMD advises that only products meeting this definition be moved into Schedule 2 of the Misuse of Drugs Regulations 2001 (MDR) pending our further advice.
- In addition to the provisions of Schedule 2 of the MDR, the ACMD recommends that the DHSC, MHRA and Home Office should develop additional frameworks and clinical guidance for 'checks and balances' to maintain safe prescribing of cannabis-derived medicinal products.
- At present, synthetic cannabinoids should remain in Schedule 1 of the MDR pending the 'longer term' review by the ACMD.

The full report can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-on-scheduling-of-cannabis-based-medicinal-products>.

Following the short-term advice from the ACMD the Home Secretary announced that cannabis-based medicinal products will be rescheduled. We are aiming to make the necessary changes to legislation by the autumn.

On the 11 September, the ACMD published further advice on cannabis-derived medicinal products. For the full ACMD letter please see the follow link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-advice-on-scheduling-of-cannabis-derived-medicinal-products>

Drug policy takes a cross-government approach that reflects the need for coordinated action to tackle the problem in all dimensions. Given the strong link between drug use and offending, the Home Office has and will continue to provide the governance and accountability essential to the effective delivery of this cross-departmental approach. However, any proposal on a course of treatment must be clinically led and recommendations provided by clinicians based on scientific evidence. That is why we established an expert panel of clinicians who will advise ministers on individual cases.

As an interim measure, Specialist clinicians can apply to the independent expert panel on behalf of patients wishing to access these products. All licence fees for applications made to the panel will be waived, and no fees will be charged in respect of applications which have already been granted.

I hope that this letter demonstrates that the is committed to ensuring a long-term solution for patients who would benefit from treatment with cannabis-based products for medicinal use.

Your sincerely,

### **Drugs Legislation Team**

Drugs and Alcohol Unit  
Home Office

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