

13<sup>th</sup> November 2023

Rt Hon Steve Barclay MP  
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs  
2 Marsham Street,  
London  
SW1P 4DF

Dear Secretary of State,

## Environmental Health and Smarter Regulation

I extend my warmest congratulations on your appointment as Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) is the foremost professional body for environmental health practitioners in the UK, representing a diverse and skilled membership of over 7,000 individuals across various sectors.

At CIEH, we are united with Defra in our commitment to improving and protecting the environment and in stimulating a green economy. Our professions share a crucial mission – one where our collective efforts can lead to meaningful advancements in public and environmental health.

It is within this context that I wish to address the prevailing narrative that positions deregulation as an economic catalyst. The CIEH asserts, as detailed in our [Manifesto for Environmental Health 2023](#), that robust public health protections are not only fundamental to societal wellbeing but are also intrinsic to a resilient economy. The prosperity of our country is inextricably linked to the health of our citizens and the quality of our environment.

Environmental health practitioners play a pivotal role in upholding these protections. They are the unsung heroes who ensure our air and water remain clean, our food is safe to consume, and our workplaces and homes are healthy spaces. This workforce is critical in preventing disease, reducing health inequalities, and in turn, promoting economic productivity by ensuring a healthy population.

We challenge the assumption that 'Smarter Regulation' will unilaterally result in economic growth, especially if it leads to a reduction in public health standards. Our manifesto highlights the need for regulations that are not only smart but strong – capable of safeguarding environmental health without compromising the rigour required for long-term sustainability and public safety.

As we move forward, I urge Defra to closely consider the integral role that environmental health practitioners play in the fabric of public health protection, and to recognise that the true measure of

a prosperous economy is one where public health and environmental safeguards are enhanced, not eroded.

The CIEH is committed to engaging in constructive dialogue and action with Defra to ensure that our shared goals for a healthier environment and a robust economy are realised in a way that benefits all.

Yours in collaboration,

Louise Hosking  
Executive Director of Environmental Health, CIEH

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Louise Hosking". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'L'.

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