



Department  
of Health &  
Social Care

From Steve Brine MP  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Public Health and Primary Care

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The Lord Gilbert of Panteg  
Chairman of the House of Lords Select Committee on Communications  
By email to: [pembroket@parliament.uk](mailto:pembroket@parliament.uk)

03 SEP 2018

Dear Lord Gilbert,

Thank you for your letter of 30 July to Matt Hancock about the advertising of junk food.

I note the Committee's concerns.

Obesity is one of the biggest challenges to public health. As you will know, evidence shows that it is a complex and far-reaching problem that will not be solved by one action alone.

With regard to the effectiveness of restricting TV advertising of high in fat, salt or sugar (HFSS) products in reducing childhood obesity rates, evidence shows that children's exposure to HFSS product advertising does affect what children want to eat and what they choose to eat. This can happen both in the short-term, increasing the amount of food children eat immediately after being exposed to a HFSS advert, and in the long-term by shaping children's food preferences from a young age. Therefore, by reducing children's exposure to this advertising, we can reduce children's calorie intake.

Through the consultation, to be launched before the end of the year, we will explore options for implementing a 9pm watershed to ensure that any restrictions are proportionate, help to incentivise reformulation in line with the aims of the sugar and calorie reduction programmes. Those products that children consume and that most contribute to the problem of childhood obesity will be a focus in the consultation.

The evidence we are using for the consultation can be found at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) by searching for 'Childhood obesity: a plan for action, chapter 2'. Further evidence will be published later this year through the consultation process and accompanying Impact Assessment.

I hope this reply is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Brine". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'S'.

**STEVE BRINE**