



Notices of Motion

Date: 20 September 2023

Notice of Motion – Banning the sale of single-use vape products

Proposer: Councillor Zahir Mohammed

Seconder: Councillor Mark Winn

Introduction

Using an e-cigarette is known as vaping. Vape devices fall into two types: multi-use (rechargeable and refillable) and single-use disposable vapes ready-filled with liquid that may contain nicotine.

Vaping is generally considered a helpful aid to assist people stop smoking and less harmful than smoking cigarettes. However, the long-term effects of vaping are unknown and there is concern in the health community about the escalating popularity of vaping amongst non-smokers, especially children.

Selling vaping products to anyone aged under 18 and buying vaping products for anyone under 18 is illegal. Disposable vapes are often sold at “pocket money prices” and marketed to be attractive to children.

The council is actively discouraging children from vaping through a range of “smoke free” initiatives, information for parents and schools; and extra investment in Trading Standards to focus on underage sales (of vapes, tobacco, alcohol and nitrous oxide) and support prosecutions.

The Local Government Association is calling for the sale and manufacture of all single use vapes to be banned by 2024. In addition, without such a ban, there is also a strong risk that the UK will become a targeted disposable vape market as bans are rolled out in European countries.

Health concerns about vaping in children and young people

Research from NHS Digital in 2021 and the charity Action on Smoking in 2023 found that there has been a significant uptake of vaping amongst children. Children experimenting with

vaping has grown by nearly 50% since 2022, and the use of disposable vapes is most favoured by children. In June this year, the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH) called for a ban on disposable e-cigarettes to prevent an "epidemic" of under-age vaping.

Environmental concerns about disposable vapes

There are also environmental concerns about disposable vapes – they are generally just thrown away. This creates a fire risk and environmental harm from the lithium batteries, as well as litter in public spaces. Lithium is a material that is critical to the Net Zero transition, and the 10 tonnes of lithium discarded from disposable vapes each year is the same as that needed for 1,200 electric cars.

Regulation

The marketing of single use vapes to children makes enforcement against under-age sales very challenging. Nationally the intelligence is that underage sales went up in the 100s of percentage points in a few months after disposable vapes came into the UK market demonstrating that this is not a problem about all vapes, but specific to disposable vapes.

This Council therefore resolves:

1. To support a full ban on the sale of all single-use vape products to the general public due to the disproportionate use among children and young people and their detrimental impact on the environment; and to continue proactive measures to tackle underage vaping alongside similar measures for smoking.
2. To call on the Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to request that disposable vapes are banned.