

**13 March 2023****Agenda Item: 5****REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND PUBLIC  
HEALTH****THE ROLE OF ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES (VAPES) IN TOBACCO  
CONTROL AND PUBLIC HEALTH****Purpose of the Report**

1. At the meeting of the Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee held on 12 December 2022 members of the committee received a report that provided information on Public Health Outcomes in Nottinghamshire. At the meeting it was agreed that a report be brought to a future meeting of the committee regarding tobacco control and the potential public health impacts of vaping.
2. To examine the benefits and risks, use and prevalence of e-cigarettes in the UK, including as a tobacco quitting aid, and address concern about youth vaping and the use of vapes in Nottinghamshire schools.
3. To highlight how the authority is looking to address the use of e-cigarettes in Nottinghamshire.
4. To identify any specific recommendations for tobacco control for consideration by the Cabinet member for Adult Social Care and Public Health.

**Information**

5. Tobacco is one of the nine priority areas of the [Nottinghamshire Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2026](#). At a Health & Wellbeing Board workshop in July 2022 partners (including Nottinghamshire County Council) agreed the vision '*To work with our local partners to create a smokefree generation for all communities in Nottinghamshire by 2040*'.
6. Smoking remains an addiction that predominantly develops in childhood. Much progress has been made to reduce smoking prevalence, but smoking is still the leading cause of preventable illness and premature death in England and is one of the largest causes of health inequalities across Nottinghamshire. It remains a significant public health challenge and accounts for almost half the difference in life expectancy between the richest and poorest in England.

## Prevalence of tobacco related harm in Nottinghamshire

7. Smoking and tobacco use is estimated to kill 1,124 people in Nottinghamshire every year.<sup>1</sup> Despite a continued decline in smoking, 14% of adults in Nottinghamshire smoke, which is above the current average for England (13.5%) and varies across the county rising to 19.8 % in Mansfield and 18.8% in Ashfield with the lowest rate of 5.9% in Rushcliffe.
8. In Nottinghamshire, smoking rates are particularly high among routine and manual workers (27.9%). In addition, 13.3% of pregnant women smoke at time of delivery with higher rates in Mansfield (19.2%) and Ashfield (17.1%) An estimated 1,000 young people took up smoking in Nottinghamshire in 2018.<sup>2</sup>

## What are e-cigarettes (vapes)?

9. Electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) also known as vapes, are battery powered devices that stimulate the sensation of smoking. These devices heat a liquid to generate an aerosol or a vapour which the user then inhales. The liquids typically contain flavours, additives, and nicotine. In most recent generation devices, the user activates heating by pressing a button, to vaporise the liquid, before inhaling. Refillable e-cigarette devices mean that users can choose the strength of nicotine in the liquid they use up to the legal limit of 20mg/ml<sup>2</sup>. E-cigarettes deliver nicotine in a vapour rather than in smoke.

## The evidence base for the use of e-cigarettes as a quit aid

10. The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) commission an annual [Vaping in England evidence review](#).<sup>3</sup> The evidence and research in the 2021 review provided assurance that vaping is significantly less harmful than smoking. The key findings are that:
  - It has been estimated that e-cigarettes are 95% less harmful than ordinary cigarettes
  - There is negligible risk to others from second-hand e-cigarette vapour
  - Almost all e-cigarette users in Britain are either ex-smokers or current smokers
  - Public understanding of the relative harms of e-cigarettes have worsened over time and are less accurate today than they were in 2014
  - E-cigarettes are the most popular method for giving up smoking
11. The [2022 OHID evidence review](#) provides evidence from researchers at Kings College London that “the switch from smoking to vaping cuts health risks substantially”. It says smokers who switched to vaping would experience a ‘substantial reduction’ in their exposure to toxic substances that cause cancer, lung, and cardiovascular disease, but it strongly urges non-smokers not to take up either habit. It recommends that adults are given the right support, including provision of how vaping can help them to stop smoking, whilst providing information to non- smokers and young people to discourage them from starting to vape, in addition to better reinforcement of age of sale and advertising restrictions.

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<sup>1</sup> Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, ‘Local Tobacco Control Profiles’, accessed at: <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/tobacco-control/data>

<sup>2</sup> Nottinghamshire Insight, ‘Tobacco Control Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2020’, accessed at: <https://www.nottinghamshireinsight.org.uk/research-areas/jsna/cross-cutting-themes/tobacco-control-2020/>

<sup>3</sup> [Vaping in England evidence review](#)

12. [Guidance](#) from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) identified that at the service level providing systematic behavioural support plus pharmacotherapy, nicotine replacement therapy or e-cigarettes provide the most effective way to support people to quit smoking.
13. All smokers should be offered [behavioural support](#) (individual and group) regardless of which option they choose to help them stop. NICE identify the following options:
- Bupropion (Bupropion is currently unavailable in the UK)
  - [Nicotine replacement therapy](#) - short and long acting
  - Varenicline (Varenicline is currently unavailable in the UK)
  - [Nicotine-containing e-cigarettes](#)
14. The guidance highlights that there is a lack of long-term evidence about e-cigarette usage. However, the effects of e-cigarettes are monitored by the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulation Agency (MHRA) who have not evidenced any major concerns. E-cigarettes are also regulated as consumer products under the UK Tobacco and Related Products Regulations 2016.<sup>4</sup>
15. NICE reached the decision on the use of e-cigarettes because many of the harmful components of cigarettes are not present in e-cigarettes. Therefore, switching to nicotine-containing e-cigarettes was likely to be significantly less harmful than smoking. Evidence suggests that there is negligible risk to others (including children and young people) from second-hand e-cigarette vapour.
16. A major UK clinical trial<sup>5</sup> found e-cigarettes, when combined with face-to-face behavioural support, to be twice as effective, and one fifth of the cost, for quitting smoking as other nicotine replacement products such as patches or gum.
17. [The Khan review: Making Smoking Obsolete](#) (June 2022) recommends 15 interventions to give the government the best opportunity of meeting its national target to be smoke-free by 2030. One of the 4 key critical interventions highlighted by the review included: the promotion of vapes as an effective 'swap to stop' tool to help people to quit smoking.
18. The [Cochrane Living Systematic Review on E- cigarettes](#) for smoking cessation recommends that 'Clear and consistent messaging' regarding use of e-cigarettes is needed. It states that:
- E-cigarettes should only be used as an aid to stop smoking completely, but if you've never smoked, don't use an e-cigarette.
  - For children and young people, e-cigarettes are not recommended.
  - E-cigarettes are far less harmful than smoking but are not without some risks.

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<sup>4</sup> [e-cigarettes briefing \[ 2 \] v4 \(ncsct.co.uk\)](#)

<sup>5</sup> National Centre for Smoking Cessation and Training (NCSCT), *Incorporating e-cigarettes into your Stop Smoking Service: Making the Case and Addressing Concerns*, December 2021, p.2, accessible online: <https://www.ncsct.co.uk/usr/pub/NCSCT%20service%20guidance%20on%20e-cigarettes.pdf>

- Evidence still shows that e-cigarettes carry a small fraction of the risk of smoking which kills 220 people in England each day.
- Using an e-cigarette that contains nicotine is more likely to result in a successful quit attempt than willpower alone.
- It is important to use regulated e-liquids and never risk adding substances. People who wish to use e-cigarettes should be advised that although these products are not licensed drugs, they are still regulated.

## Evidence of use of e-cigarettes by young people

19. In the recent [Action on Smoking \(ASH\) and Health and YouGov's Smokefree GB Youth survey](#)<sup>6</sup> (July 2022) there is no evidence that use of e-cigarettes is leading to an increase in smoking in young people. In 2013 64% of 11–17-year-olds were aware of e-cigarettes compared to 90% in 2022. The majority, 92.2% in total, of 11–17-year-old never smokers have either never used an e-cigarette (83.9%) or are not aware of them (8.2%)<sup>7</sup>.
20. Both the latest [Smoking, Drinking and Drug Use survey 2021](#)<sup>8</sup> and the ASH and YouGov's survey show that the vast majority of young people have never vaped (78% SSDU and 90% ASH/YouGov) and use among never smokers is rare.
21. The prevalence of young people who have ever used<sup>9</sup> e-cigarettes has increased in all age groups; it is highest in the older age groups with 10.4% of 11–15-year-olds ever having vaped compared with 29.1% of 16–17-year-olds and 40.8% of 18-year-olds.
22. Local intelligence from Nottinghamshire Trading Standards indicates that there are some shops in Nottinghamshire that are selling vapes to underage children and young people. Trading Standards reported 230 complaints about the sale of tobacco and vapes to underage children and young people over the last 12 months, three of these complaints were from schools.
23. Requests from schools in the County who require support re vaping has increased over the last 12 months with 11 schools seeking support, this includes primary, secondary, special needs schools and alternative provision.

## Local context

24. The evidence set out above has been considered in the local context alongside local issues, to understand the local landscape. For this purpose, the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Smoking & Tobacco Control Alliance has used the evidence based CLear (Challenge, Leadership Results) process to identify 7 key priority themes including 'To improve the understanding of e-cigarettes/ vapes'.
25. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) chapter on Tobacco Control reported to the Nottinghamshire Health and Wellbeing Board in 2020. This identified the need to include

<sup>6</sup> [ASH and YouGov's Smokefree GB Youth survey](#)

<sup>7</sup> Current smokers/ users - defined as usually smoking at least one cigarette per week/using an e-cigarette at least once per week); Former smokers/users - defined as previously smoking at least one cigarette per week/using an e-cigarette at least once per week; Non-smokers/non-users – defined as not smoking/vaping

<sup>8</sup> [Smoking, Drinking and Drug Use among Young People in England - NHS Digital](#)

<sup>9</sup> Ever smoked /users – defined as having smoked/used a e-cigarette at least once

the utilisation of popular novel technologies such as e-cigarettes, as an adjunct to Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) and behavioural support to help people quit smoking. The subsequent recommendation identified the need for a clear position guided by current evidence in the use of e-cigarettes as an effective quit method. This recommendation is in line with the updated NICE guidance and the Khan Review.

26. In October 2022 the Nottinghamshire Health & Wellbeing Board endorsed the following consensus statement on e-cigarettes: *'Nottinghamshire Health and Wellbeing Board supports the safe and regulated use of e-cigarettes as a choice of a route out of smoking for adults without becoming a route into smoking for young people and non-smokers.'* The purpose of the statement, detailed in Appendix 1, is to help provide a Nottinghamshire consensus on electronic cigarettes to help organisations develop their own policies and practice, ensuring a similar approach and communication messages on their promotion, regulation, and advice.
27. A Better Life (ABL Health Ltd) through Your Health Your Way (YHYW) provide an integrated wellbeing service for Nottinghamshire residents. The service provides evidence based smoking cessation support. Smokers can self-refer or be directly referred into the service which combines behavioural support plus pharmacotherapy/ Nicotine Replacement Therapy. The service is e cigarette friendly so an individual wishing to quit with an e-cigarette will purchase the product themselves and the service will provide the behavioural support for this quit attempt.

**Balanced approach to the use of e-cigarettes in Nottinghamshire-** this is a list of the actions and activities that will be undertaken in the next year

28. **A phased approach to the provision of e-cigarettes** (to be used as a quit aid) will be implemented from February 2023, initially with smokers who have substance misuse disorders and to smokers accessing the Lung Health Check programme (in Mansfield, Ashfield, and Bassetlaw). The service delivery model will be evaluated to inform service wide provision. The provision of e- cigarettes as a quit aid will potentially increase the number of smokers in Nottinghamshire quitting smoking.
29. **Age Restricted sales** – Trading Standards to target businesses who are selling age restricted products, engage with partner agencies and to raise awareness amongst businesses of the legislation surrounding age restricted products, with a particular focus on vapes, tobacco and alcohol. The aim is to reduce the selling of vapes, tobacco and alcohol to minors, and therefore reducing the detrimental health impacts.
30. **Behavioural Insights and Health Related Behaviour Survey** – Public Health are working in partnership with Nottingham City Council's Public Health team to commission a creative/marketing agency to research, plan, deliver and evaluate a phased behavioural insights research and social marketing campaign focusing on smoking/vaping in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. This will include behavioural insights into why young people vape. The Behavioural Insight work will be complemented by a **Health-Related Behaviour Questionnaire/Survey** – which will provide the opportunity for year 6 pupils and year 10 students in participating schools to complete a Health-Related Behaviour Questionnaire, this two-year project will commence in March 2023. The questionnaire will include validated questions about vaping from the ASH YouGov GB survey, in addition to questions about other health related behaviour. This will provide a rich source of data and

will help to provide accurate prevalence data for vaping among children and young people in Nottinghamshire. This data will help us to use a 'social norm' approach and to provide targeted support for young people who wish to quit vaping. The expectation is that up to 70% of schools in Nottinghamshire will participate in the survey over the two-year project period and the first set of data will be available in August 2023.

31. **The Intent Smoking Prevention Programme for Secondary Schools** - 12 Secondary Schools in the County have signed up to participate in the programme for this academic year. Public Health have been working with 'Evidence to Impact' (the provider of the Intent Programme) to develop lessons on vaping which will complement the lessons on smoking. INTENT is a smoking/ vaping prevention programme. INTENT reduces smoking/ vaping initiation by first getting adolescents to engage with anti-smoking messages, then creating Personal Plans (or "Implementation Intentions") about how to refuse an offer of cigarettes/ vapes.
32. **A Whole School Approach to Vaping** - Schools Health Hub colleagues are working with County schools to encourage them to implement a whole school approach to vaping (this will include policy development, curriculum resources, pupil/ student voice and targeted support for young people wishing to quit vaping and/or smoking.) A Whole School Approach provides schools with a coordinated framework to prevent the uptake of vaping by children and young people attending the school whilst supporting those young people who already vape to quit. A whole-school approach involves all parts of the school working together and being committed. It needs partnership working between senior leaders, teachers, and all school staff, as well as parents, carers, and the wider community.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

33. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **Financial Implications**

34. There are no financial implications within the report.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

That the Adult Social Care and Public Health Select Committee:

1. examine the benefits and risks, use and prevalence of e-cigarettes in the UK, including as a tobacco quitting aid, and address concern about youth vaping and the use of vapes in Nottinghamshire schools
2. review how the authority is looking to address the use of e-cigarettes by children and young people in Nottinghamshire and the potential public health related impact.

3. Identifies any specific recommendations for tobacco control for consideration by the Cabinet member for Adult Social Care and Public Health.

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### **Constitutional Comments (SF 24/01/2023)**

35. The content of and recommendations within the report fall within the remit of the Adult Social Care and Public Health Select Committee.

### **Financial Comments (DG 24/01/23)**

36. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

37. Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- 'None' or start list here

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

- 'All' or start list here

