

Council

7 March 2023

Keep Vapes ‘Out of Sight’ of Children

This Council notes with concern;

- The increased use of vaping products by children in the UK. Recent data from the ASH Smokefree GB Youth Survey 2022 found that the prevalence of vaping amongst 11-18 year olds is increasing – from 4% in 2021 to 8.6% in 2022 – and a significant number of children buy these vaping products directly from newsagents or supermarkets;
- There has been an increase in the number of local authorities who have recently had to take enforcement activity against shops illegally selling vaping products to youngsters;
- The marketing of certain vaping products – with bright coloured packaging and flavours such as bubblegum – undoubtedly appeal to children; and
- The significant increase in availability of disposable and single-use vaping products which are cheaper and easier for children to access.

This Council acknowledges the role vaping products play in aiding adults to stop smoking, and that vaping products carry a small fraction of the risk, and exposure to toxins, that are associated with cigarettes. However vaping is not risk free; particularly for those who have never smoked. Vaping products contain nicotine and research shows that most children who use them have never smoked.

This Council recognises the Local Government Association has raised concerns about the sale of vaping products to children and calls for vaping products to be regulated in a similar way as tobacco products, with plain packaging and a requirement for products to be kept out of sight behind shop counters.

Council resolves to bring a report to Licensing Committee and the Health and Wellbeing Board detailing enforcement activity and strategy within Torbay related to the illegal sale of vaping products to children and exploring opportunities for engagement with local schools to inform young people of the potential dangers of vaping.

In the meantime, Council calls for the Chief Executive to write to Stephen Barclay MP, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, to express the Council’s demand for the greater regulation of vaping products including:

- Vaping products being in plain packaging and kept out of sight behind the counter;
- Mandatory age-of-sale signage on vaping products (this is currently voluntary); and

- A ban on free samples of vaping products being given out to people of any age.

Proposer Councillor Law
Secunder Councillor Stockman