

# Impact of Vaping on Children & Young People

Date: 5 July 2023

Report of: Head of Democratic Services

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Children and Families)

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

## Brief summary

The Children and Families Scrutiny Board has agreed to look into the impacts of vaping or electronic cigarette usage on children and young people.

This follows a work item that was raised at the meeting of the Board on 7 June 2023 and correspondence from concerned members about the health impacts of vaping and potentially increased usage amongst children and young people.

The Board agreed to consider an initial item at today's meeting to determine if any future scrutiny actions should follow. To assist with this at Appendix 1 is a briefing note from the Public Health Service that sets out the issues associated with electronic cigarette usage and how they are impacting children and young people.

## Recommendations

The Board is asked to:

- a) Note the information on vaping usage and its impacts on children and young people contained in Appendix 1 to this report.
- b) Consider any future scrutiny actions to be undertaken in light of this information

## **What is this report about?**

- 1 This item responds to concerns raised by elected members about the impact of vaping on children and young people and follows agreement by the Board to consider additional information on this at a future public meeting.
- 2 Vaping amongst children and young people has been the focus of significant media attention in recent months and has also been subject to comment from both the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health and the Charity ASH (Action on smoking and Health).
- 3 The recent ASH report (produced in June 2023) highlights a number of concerning trends not least that in March/April 2023 the proportion of children experimenting with vaping had grown by 50% year on year, from one in thirteen to one in nine.
- 4 The ASH report highlights concern about promotion of vaping to children and young people, with awareness of vaping promotional material significantly increasing. The report highlights growth in awareness of e-cigarette promotion between 2022 and 2023 with more than half of all children (53%) aware of promotion in shops, and nearly a third (32%) online. Only one in five (20%) say they never see e-cigarettes being promoted, down from 31% last year.
- 5 In June of this year, the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health called for disposable vapes to be banned because of their popularity amongst children and young people. This concern is mirrored in the ASH report that found that in 2023 69% said the most frequently used device was a disposable (single use) vape, up from 52% in 2022 and 7.7% in 2021.
- 6 The Vision for Scrutiny agreed by full Council sets out the nationally agreed four principles of good scrutiny. Within these is a commitment to 'Promote Scrutiny as a means by which the voice and concerns of the public can be heard.' Given the recent focus on vaping in the media and from health professionals this item seeks to respond to both elected member concern and recent coverage that has raised the profile of this issue in Leeds and nationally.

## **What impact will this proposal have?**

- 7 This item is brought before the Board to determine if any further actions might be taken given the concerns raised by elected members and the increased profile this issue has gained in recent months and years.
- 8 The Board is asked to consider the information at Appendix 1 and also consider what further actions might be taken to address this issue in Leeds.

## **How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?**

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

- 9 The terms of reference of the Council's Scrutiny Boards promote a strategic and outward looking Scrutiny function that focuses on the priorities of the Best City Ambition.
- 10 This item has a stronger focus on the Health and Well-Being pillar, seeking to understand and challenge the health impact that vaping is having on children and young people in the city.

## What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?       Yes                       No

- 11 Children and Families Scrutiny Board discussed this issue at its meeting in June and agreed to consider it as part of its work programme in 2023/24.
- 12 The Adults, Health and Active Lifestyles Board also discussed this at its June meeting, identifying the impact of vaping on children and young people as an area of concern. Initially, it has been agreed that this Board will lead on this work and will involve Adults, Health and Active Lifestyles depending on how the work develops.

## What are the resource implications?

- 13 There are no specific resource implications associated with this item.

## What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 14 There are no specific risk management implications associated with this item.

## What are the legal implications?

- 15 There are no specific legal implications associated with this item.

## Options, timescales and measuring success

### What other options were considered?

- 16 This is an information report it is possible that, depending on the views of the scrutiny board, further consideration of this issue could take place which may include different options.

### How will success be measured?

- 17 Not applicable at this stage.

## What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?

- 18 This is an initial exploratory item on the impact of vaping on children and young people. Any future planning will take place following this initial consideration at which point a programme of work, including timescales could be developed if deemed to be appropriate by the Board.

## Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Impact of Vaping on children and young people briefing note.

## Background papers

- None