

COUNTY COUNCIL – 20 JULY 2023

NOTICE OF MOTION

Underage Vaping

Proposer: Councillor Bill Withers, Chairman of the Health & Social Care Select Committee

Seconder: Councillor Neville Penman, Chairman of the Children & Young People Select Committee

Background:

Smoking is the leading preventable cause of premature death in Hampshire, and vaping can be a useful aid to help adult smokers quit. There is clear national advice that vapes should not be used by children and young people and by people who do not smoke, because the long-term risks are not yet known and because nicotine vaping products are addictive.

While the law bans the sale of nicotine vaping products to under 18s, underage vaping has become a growing concern within our community due to the addiction and potential harm both long term and in extreme cases in the short term. The increased use of underage vaping is in line with the national picture, and many organisations are now facing challenges with managing the presence of vapes within their settings.

Motion:

I propose that the council take further action to combat underage vaping and safeguard the well-being of our young residents. This motion seeks to strengthen targeted work in education settings, as well as strengthen enforcement of underage sales restrictions at retail outlets. The aim is to create a comprehensive framework that educates and protects our youth from the dangers associated with vaping.

Supporting Information:

In our 2021/22 Hampshire School Survey:

- 29% of Year 10s had tried vaping and 7% of Year 10s were regular users.
- 4% of Year 7s had tried vaping and >1% of Year 7s were regular users.
- At least 1 in 5 secondary school students were unaware of information relating to vaping.
- Teachers had lower confidence teaching about vaping than other PSHE subjects (e.g. knife crime, personal safety), believing they lacked the necessary knowledge.

Recommendations:

1) Strengthening work Primary and Secondary Schools:

The council shall strengthen work to tackle underage vaping in collaboration with local schools, educational authorities, and relevant health organizations. This work will focus on educating students, parents, and teachers about the risks, health consequences, and legal implications of underage vaping. The aim is to empower individuals with knowledge and equip them with effective strategies to prevent and combat this issue.

2) Strengthen Enforcement of Underage Sales Restrictions:

To curtail the visibility and accessibility of vaping products the council shall continue to ensure that retail outlets do not sell vapes to under 18s and that retail outlets are fully compliant with strict national regulations on product standards, packaging requirements, and responsible advertising practices.