

MOTION BY COUNCILLORS L BARRETT AND R WATTERS

Single-use Vapes in Perth & Kinross

Council notes:

- “Disposable vapes”, also known as nicotine vapour products (NVPs), are battery operated single-use devices to provide puffs of nicotine to users. Although currently believed to be safer than cigarettes, vapes still contain nicotine and many on sale contain more than the legal limit. Compared to reusable vapes, which are rechargeable and refillable, single-use vapes only last for around 600 puffs, at which point they require complete replacement. PKC Trading Standards Officers have found illegal vapes on sale with up to 3500 puffs, containing significantly more than the 2ml of liquid allowed by the legislation.
- It is widely reported that the popularity of brightly coloured and sweetly flavoured single-use vapes is increasing among those who have not previously smoked, including younger generations. Action on Smoking and Health Scotland have warned that their marketing and widespread availability is driving a huge increase in youth experimentation with vaping. They have pointed out that nicotine is highly addictive and many single-use vapes include toxic chemicals that have not been safety tested for inhalation and could seriously damage health over time – a particular risk for young people whose lungs are still growing.
- Under Scots law, it is illegal for anyone under 18 to buy e-cigarettes or vapes. This also means anyone buying NVPs for those underage will also be breaking the law.
- Vapes are made of plastic and powered by a lithium battery containing corrosive and flammable chemicals. These should be disposed of under small waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) regulations, to mitigate risks of fire in waste facilities, but are usually put into general waste or dumped as litter.
- Cigarette litter in general makes up the biggest chunk of litter recorded by Keep Scotland Beautiful across Scotland, and they advise that that single-use vapes are increasing as a new, unnecessary litter type. The shift from reusable vapes to single-use versions is also worrying for marine life, as single-use vapes are being littered on streets and beaches, finding their way into the sea and polluting our marine environment.
- Last year, Waitrose announced it could no longer justify selling single-use vapes and removed two types of e-cigarettes from its stock. Keep Scotland Beautiful, ASH Scotland, Marine Conservation Society are urging retailers to follow Waitrose in a ban of the single-use products.
- The Scottish Government is currently conducting a review, led by Zero Waste Scotland, of the environmental impacts and management of single-use vapes. This includes consideration of a ban.
- Several local authorities in Scotland, including Dundee, Falkirk and Glasgow, have voiced support for a ban.

- The UK Government has recently announced a crackdown on the supply and sale of vapes, and the Department for Health and Social Care has pledged £3m funding to support Trading Standards to tackle the issues of non-compliance.

Council resolves:

- To instruct the Council Leader to write to the Scottish Government (a) to express Perth & Kinross Council's support for the introduction of new legislation banning the sale of single-use vapes in Scotland due to the impact on the environment of the resources used in their production, on the future health of young people, the rising environmental impact of littering, and the risks associated with their safe disposal; and (b) to provide additional funding to Scottish local authorities to support Trading Standards to tackle the issues of non-compliance with legislation on the supply and sale of vapes.
- Through our schools, to continue to educate pupils and their parents and carers about the dangers of vaping, and the fact that it is illegal to purchase vapes for those under 18.
- Through social media and other communication channels, to highlight the risks to health and the environment, and to ask those who do use a vaping product to switch to a reusable option and always ensure they dispose of vaping products correctly through takeback schemes or designated WEEE recycling points.