

# BRIEFING TO HEALTH SCRUTINY

**Report Title:** Council Motions

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**Date:** 30<sup>th</sup> January

**Background:** There has been one Council meeting since the last time the Health Scrutiny Committee met. The following health related motions were discussed and agreed at that meeting.

## Youth Council Motion

Vaping or the use of e-cigarettes is becoming a more and more common sight. More and more people can be seen using these products. I'm sure we all know someone who vapes, and I'm sure most of us saw someone vaping today.

Some people welcome vaping as a 'safer' alternative to smoking tobacco products but let's be honest the jury is out on that one. We do not know how safe these products are Cancer research UK have published reports calling for further research into the effects of vaping on health and to increase our knowledge on how 'safe' these products are.

We at Oldham Youth council have concerns that vaping is becoming an attractive activity for young people. We know anecdotally of young people who began vaping without ever having been a smoker. These are not just alternatives to tobacco but are becoming a nicotine addictive habit for non-smokers too.

We strongly believe this is in large part due to the advertising and promotion of e-cigarettes and vaping. We believe that E-cigarette companies and the tobacco industry are targeting young people;

- They present their marketing in such a way that it uses attractiveness, coolness, colours and innovative packaging – with a wide range of 'fun' flavours that is particularly aimed at a youth market. With flavours like candy apple and tutti fruity with bright packaging that looks like confectionary how can this not be aimed at the youth market?
- They use social media and celebrity inspired styling and endorsements
- They sponsor big sports events
- They portray their products as socially attractive

All this is particularly appealing to a younger audience and to non-smokers.

Over recent years we have seen the regulation of tobacco promotion with the introduction of smoke free public spaces, advertising bans, age restricted sales, a de-normalisation of smoking industries, plain packaging and point of sale restrictions. Vaping products however are not controlled in this way. And this great work at reducing the likelihood of young people (and older people) from smoking) is being undermined by this.

These control policies were introduced to prevent people from taking up smoking and rightly so. But if we don't want people to smoke and we certainly don't want young people to take up smoking would we want them to start vaping.

In November 2017 Committees for Advertising Practice have introduced some new rules that will prevent e cigarette advertising from targeting non-smokers including children and young people, these restrictions will also prevent TV advertising attempting to tap into youth culture. We are particularly pleased to see that an emphasis has been placed on protecting young people and we welcome these new rules but they don't go far enough.

A study by Moreon et al found that flavoured e cigarette liquids such as fruits and alcohol flavours are most frequently used by young people. And studies in the US have found that young people who vape are far more likely to smoke. Studies like these and the fact that the 'safety' of vaping is yet to be truly determined causes us great concern

We want to prevent young people from these potentially harmful practices and we feel more needs to be done to prevent vaping from being seen as fun, acceptable and a 'cool' thing to do. We would like to see the same controls on vaping as there are on tobacco products. We would like to see advertising banned, we would like to see plain packaging controls in place and we would like to point of sale restrictions. We believe that these restrictions on the promotion of vaping will further reduce the likelihood of people taking up vaping and in turn smoking.

The Youth Council ask Council to resolve:  
That the Chief Executive writes to the minister of Health and asks for these restrictions to be put in place for vaping products.

### **Motion of Opposition Business**

Councillor Williamson MOVED and Councillor Turner SECONDED the following motion:

This Council notes that:

- Childhood obesity has risen to epic proportions. In October 2017, the medical journal, The Lancet, reported one in every ten young people, aged 5 to 19, in the UK are classed as obese:
- In Oldham, sadly the situation is even worse. The Public Health England profile for the Borough, published July 2017, reported that 21.9% of children at Year 6 (660 in total) were classed as obese;

- Obese children are more likely to become obese adults, putting them at risk of developing serious health conditions (such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke and certain types of cancer);
- Takeaway food, where it is unhealthy, so called junk food, is undoubtedly a contributing factor in the increase;
- Although the Oldham School Meals Service is a Gold standard provider, regrettably some pupils chose to eat at or from takeaways;
- In June 2016, the Royal Society for Public Health called for a ban on the delivery of takeaway meals to school gates. A survey conducted by the RSPH amongst young people found half had ordered takeaways on their smart phones and a quarter had paid for fast food to be delivered to the school gates;
- At least 22 local authorities have adopted Supplementary Planning Document and Local Plans that include a prohibition on new fast food takeaways within 400 meters of local schools (a buffer zone);
- In July 2012, Oldham Council adopted a Supplementary Planning Document which placed restrictions on the density of hot food takeaways, but which did not include any restriction on new takeaways within a specified buffer zone.

Council resolves to ask the Planning Committee to investigate the desirability and practicality of:

- Introducing a prohibition on new takeaways within a 400 metre buffer zone as part of the Local Plan; Council shall also contact all schools within the Borough to seek reassurances they:
- Enforce a 'stay-on-site' policy at lunchtimes;
- Ban the delivery of takeaways to the school gates for collection by pupils; And ask them to do so; if they do not."

Councillor Moores MOVED and Councillor Jabbar SECONDED that under Council Procedure Rule 8.4(d) the motion be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Board. On being put to the vote, that the MOTION be REFERRED to Overview and Scrutiny was CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. RESOLVED that under Council Procedure 8.4(d) the motion be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

### **Response**

Provided by Katrina Stephens, Interim Director of Public Health

Officers in Planning and Public Health are working together to compile relevant information to assist members in considering the desirability and practicality of limiting new takeaways near schools. This will include information on the current locations of takeaways and schools, alongside information about overweight and obesity in children. Information about the experience of other authorities which have introduced similar restrictions on takeaways is also being gathered. Discussions are underway with the Chair of Health Scrutiny about including a workshop on tackling overweight and obesity as part of the Health Scrutiny work programme within the next few months. With the Board's agreement, further discussion about the desirability and practicality of restricting new takeaways could form part of the agenda for such a workshop.

Most Oldham schools have a stay on site policy (all primary schools, most secondary) during breaks/ lunch times for safeguarding reasons, which is promoted as good school management practice from the DfE.

Whilst on site, many schools do offer a varied healthy option menu for snack and meal choices. The Education Catering Service provides high quality, high nutritional healthy options to 78 primary schools, which has been recognised nationally (Gold Food for Life Catering Mark and the prestigious Best OF Organic Market – BOOM award), which serves circa 13000 meals per day. In addition, most schools do not allow the delivery of takeaways to the school gates, however this will be raised that the next primary and secondary head teacher meetings, to confirm that this is the case.