

2nd March 2023**Vaping – Call for Change by LGA and ASH**

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Purpose of the report

To inform the Committee that in early February, the Local Government Association issued a press release calling for changes in the way vapes are packaged and sold in shops. The full release can be read here, <https://www.local.gov.uk/about/news/vapes-need-be-out-sight-and-out-reach-tackle-underage-sales-lga>

Background

1. As Committee have often said before, vapes need to be ‘out of sight and out of reach’ to tackle underage sales.
2. The Committee have also become concerned over the marketing of vapes with designs and flavours that could appeal to children, in particular those with fruity and bubble gum flavours, and colourful child-friendly packaging, so your views are supported by LGA.
3. LGA are seeking strict new measures to regulate the display and marketing of vaping products in the same way as tobacco to crack down on a rise in stores selling to children.
4. LGA is calling for:
 - Vapes to be in plain packaging and kept out of sight behind the counter.
 - Mandatory age of sale signage on vaping products – it’s currently voluntary.
 - A ban on free samples of vaping products being given out to people of any age.
5. Sanctions should also be in line with those breaching the rules similar to penalties handed out under the tobacco display regulations.
6. In a survey by the Chartered Trading Standards Institute, 60 per cent of local trading standards services said high street shops selling illicit vapes or vaping products to children was the enforcement issue that most concerned them. Teams reported a significant rise in underage vape sales last year.

7. Data from the ASH Smokefree GB Youth survey of 11 to 18-year-olds in England showed that current vaping prevalence was 8.6 per cent in 2022, compared with 4 per cent in 2021.
8. It also found that over a fifth of youngsters bought vaping products from newsagents while 16.3 per cent bought them from a supermarket.

Recommendation

9. The Committee is asked to note the information contained in the report and officers will update once further work has been carried out.

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