

## Update Paper

### Purpose of Report

For information.

### Summary

This report sets out other updates relevant to the Board, and not included elsewhere.

**LGA Plan Theme:** Putting people first

### Recommendation(s)

**That Members of the Community Wellbeing Board are asked to:**

**Provide oral updates on any other outside bodies / external meetings they may have attended on behalf of the Community Wellbeing Board since the last meeting;**

**and Note the updates contained in the report.**

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## Update Paper

### Vaping and disposable vapes

1. The LGA strongly believes that vapes should only be used as an aid to quit smoking. Many councils have effectively used vapes as a means of encouraging people to quit smoking, alongside a range of public health measures and stop smoking services.
2. Due to the wide-ranging impacts of vaping, a cross-board policy approach is being taken on this important policy issue.
3. While research has shown vaping poses a small fraction of the risks of smoking, it is deeply worrying that more and more children – who have never smoked – are starting vaping. The LGA welcomes work by the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) on tackling youth vaping. We endorse the advice from England’s Chief Medical Officer, Sir Chris Whitty: “If you smoke, vaping is much safer. If you don’t smoke, don’t vape.”
4. An area of growing concern in relation to vaping is the effect on the environment, particularly “disposable” vapes. In the UK, [1.3 million single-use vapes thrown away every week](#), amounting to 167.5 million per year. Single use vapes include brands such as Elf bars, Lost Mary and Juul.
5. Single use vapes are designed as one unit so batteries cannot be separated from the plastic, making them almost impossible to recycle. Councils report they are experiencing pollution from vapes in the form of plastic materials, electronic waste and hazardous chemicals. In particular, the lithium batteries inside the plastic can sharply increase in temperature if crushed (for example in a waste collection vehicle) and can become flammable. This all comes at a cost to the council taxpayer through fire damage to equipment and the specialist treatment needed to deal with hazardous waste.
6. Vapes come under the WEEE producer responsibility scheme for electrical items. Vapes are classified with toys and other battery-operated items and the producer fee does not reflect the environmental risk from the item or the true cost of recycling. [Recent research has found](#) that more than 90% of smaller UK vape and vape juice producers are not registered under waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) regulations.
7. If retailers sell less than £100,000 of electrical and electronic items per year, they are not required to provide takeback/return facilities on their own premises. Instead they can discharge their duty by paying money to the distributor takeback scheme.

8. At the time of writing, we are aware of calls from councils in England and Scotland calling for a complete country-wide ban on the sale of disposable vapes, for the sake of the environment and protecting young people's health. Examples from England include the [Champs Public Health Collaborative](#), led by the nine Directors of Public Health in Cheshire and Merseyside, whilst examples from Scotland include [Argyll and Bute Council](#), [South Lanarkshire Council](#) and [West Lothian Council](#).
9. Many local areas have noted an increase in shops selling vapes to young people, and subsequently have stepped up enforcement activity to deal with the issue. Councils are especially concerned by 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. Strict new measures to regulate the display and marketing of vaping products in the same way as tobacco are needed.
10. The LGA strongly believes that vapes should only be used as an aid to quit smoking. The LGA has welcomed work by the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) on tackling youth vaping.
11. The LGA believes that vapes should be in standardised packaging and kept out-of-sight behind the counter to restrict the appeal of youth vaping. Additionally, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) should liaise with other government departments dealing with other age-restricted products and align their policies/messages to stop confusion amongst consumers and businesses.
12. The LGA has called for the Environment Agency to proactively enforce retailer duties on paying into a producer compliance scheme and reform of the producer responsibility scheme. The LGA has also argued that the government should also look at ways to encourage take-back of vapes through a deposit return scheme funded by producers. The LGA believes that the 'polluter pays' principle should apply, and that e-cigarette manufacturers and vendors should be required to do more to ensure consumers dispose of their waste in a more environmentally friendly way.
13. Sanctions need to be reviewed and more robust measures should be introduced to tackle the significant number of retailers who persistently sell vapes to under-age children. Councils should be able to issue fixed penalty notices as prosecutions can be resource intensive, and consideration should be given to being able to issue fines on a scale in accordance with the issues identified, for example number of under-age sales, age of recipient, and the number of times the retailer broke the rules.
14. It is welcome that the Government is providing £3 million in new funding to trading standards, but to support trading standards teams in the long term, [the LGA continues to call on the Government](#) to boost the future pipeline of qualified trading standards officers

through a dedicated apprenticeship fund, investing in regional support networks, and enabling councils to recover more of the costs of running regulatory services.

15. The LGA has produced an options paper on disposable vapes which is currently being deliberated by Lead Members of the Community Wellbeing Board (CWB), Children and Young People's (CYP) Board, the Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport (EEHT) Board and the Safer and Stronger Communities Board (SSCB). This will determine the LGA's future policy direction on disposable vapes.

### Veterans and Armed Forces

16. The Armed Forces Covenant Network will be reinstated imminently with the first meeting themed on housing. The network will discuss the implementation of the Ministry of Defence guidance published in November 2022, local progress of Op Fortitude, and updates from the Royal British Legion and the Armed Forces Covenant Trust (AFCT). There's also been some discussion around how local authorities are working with small charities in their area and whether there is some scope to work better with the AFCT when it comes to grant funding meeting the needs of local plans.

### Older people's Housing

17. The Older People's Housing Taskforce had its inaugural meeting in May which was chaired by Professor Julienne Meyer and attended by Cllr James Jamieson. Our priorities for this taskforce which is due to last one year is for the taskforce to launch a strategy for England to create the range of housing options and opportunities required to meet the housing needs of an ageing population. This should lead to stronger local strategies that are well embedded and evidenced in local plans. We would also like the taskforce to produce guidelines that clarify the different housing models/typologies for older people with recommendations on how planning can help address local need.

### Right Care, Right Person – National Partnership Agreement (NPA) on mental health and policing

18. DHSC are developing 'Right Care, Right person' a agreement on mental health and policing. The agreement aims to clarify the role of Police in responding to mental health crises. The Metropolitan Police recently announced that they will not respond to mental health crises after 31st August 2023.
19. To reflect concerns received from the sector in July 2023 the Community Wellbeing Board and Children and Young Peoples Board Lead Members have agreed a joint LGA, ADASS and ADCS letter to be sent to Maria Caulfield, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Mental Health), Claire Coutinho, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Children, Families and Wellbeing) and Chris Philp, Minister of State (Minister for Crime, Policing and Fire). The letter will shortly be sent and will ask to delay

the introduction of the National Policing Agreement until further evidence of its impact is established - in particular its impact on community services.

## Social Care

20. Last month, the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) published their annual survey on the state of adult social care (<https://www.adass.org.uk/media/9751/adass-spring-survey-2023-final-web-version.pdf>).
21. As in previous years, the survey contains a wealth of valuable insights and information. Key findings from this year's survey include the following:
- 19.1 care markets remain unstable with more people being impacted by provider closures.
  - 19.2 directors are becoming less confident that their budgets are sufficient to meet all of their legal duties.
  - 19.3 unpaid carers are coming forward with increased levels of need, to the detriment of their own wellbeing.
  - 19.4 fewer people are now waiting for an assessment of their needs or a package of care (or direct payment) to begin, but the number remains high at more than 430,000.
  - 19.5 directors are planning savings of £806 million for 2023/24, up from £597 million in 2022/23.
22. We are hoping that a senior member of the ADASS Presidential Team will attend the Board's awayday in September, where we would expect the findings of the survey to be discussed in more detail.

## Major Conditions Strategy

23. The LGA has submitted evidence to the Major Conditions Strategy: <https://www.local.gov.uk/parliament/briefings-and-responses/lga-evidence-major-conditions-strategy>. The Government will publish an interim report in the next few weeks and the final report by the end of 2023.

## Hewitt Review

24. The Government have published their response to the **House of Commons Health and Social Care Committee and the Hewitt Review** enquiries into the autonomy and accountability of Integrated Care Systems: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-response-to-the-hscc-report-and-the-hewitt-review-on-integrated-care-systems>. The report is largely positive with the

Government accepting many of the recommendations from both of the enquiries, though they rejected call for a 1 per cent increase in ICS spending on prevention. The Government's response to the call for a national peer led approach to improvement support for ICSs is also disappointing.