

# North Yorkshire Council

## Health and Adult Services

### Executive Member Meeting

6<sup>th</sup> March 2026

**REPORT TO** Director of Public Health in consultation with the  
Executive Member for Health and Adult Services

### E-cigarette procurement

#### 1.0 Purpose Of Report

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to commence a procurement process for the provision of e-vouchers for e-cigarettes and associated products to help people in North Yorkshire to quit smoking through the Living Well Smokefree service. Following the procurement process, the selected company will provide access to e-cigarettes and associated products via a voucher scheme to individuals who choose to adopt this method of quitting. This will contribute to work towards the Smokefree Generation targets for North Yorkshire, thereby addressing health inequalities and improving population health.

#### 2.0 Summary

- 2.1 The North Yorkshire Council provides the Living Well Smokefree Service (LWSF) to individuals who want to quit smoking. The current service offer includes using proven quit aids like nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) and e-cigarettes, alongside behavioural support provided by trained stop smoking advisors, to help to break individuals' reliance on nicotine. Smoking remains the biggest preventable killer in the UK, contributing to a wide range of health conditions and costing North Yorkshire an estimated £400m per year on health, social care and other costs ([ASH Ready Reckoner, 2025](#)). Therefore, ensuring that support is in place to help as many people quit is important to ensuring people live as long and healthy life as possible.
- 2.2 Nicotine vapes are effective cessation aids and are recommended as a first choice stop smoking aid with an evidence rating of A and a quit rate boost of x2. While vaping is not risk-free, the latest review of evidence concludes that vaping, in the short and medium term, is significantly less harmful than smoking cigarettes and poses a small fraction of the risks of smoking. E-cigarettes are not recommended or should not be sold to people who are younger than 18 years old and they should also not be used by non-smokers. The Chief Medical Officer for England is clear that "if you smoke, vaping is much safer; if you don't smoke, don't vape"<sup>i</sup>. New legislation in 2025 brought in a ban on the sale and supply of single-use (disposable) vapes<sup>ii</sup>, and the forthcoming Tobacco and Vapes Bill<sup>iii</sup> will introduce new regulations around flavours, packaging, and advertising for e-cigarettes as well as licensing for tobacco/vape retailers. Additionally, from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2026 a new Vaping Products Duty (VPD) will be introduced<sup>iv</sup>.
- 2.3 The Department of Health and Social Care have provided additional funding over 5 years 2024-2029 to support the aims of creating a smokefree generation. To support this ambition in North Yorkshire, the Living Well Smokefree service is working to ensure that any smoker wishing to quit has access to as many of the most effective quit aids as possible, including e-cigarettes.
- 2.4 The proposal is to commence a procurement exercise to ensure continuity of an e-cigarette offer as part of the LWSF service to support individuals to quit smoking. The arrangement is proposed to run from July 2026 until July 2029 (2 years + 1 year extension option) to align with Smokefree Generation funding. The maximum total contract value for this proposal is £477,000 including

VAT over 3 years, which will be capped. The proposed arrangement will be a demand-led contract with no guarantee of spend.

### **3.0 Background**

- 3.1 North Yorkshire has received the second year of five years of additional investment of £70million for local stop smoking services across England to support people to stop smoking in an effort to achieve a 5% national prevalence by 2030. Smoking remains the biggest preventable killer in the UK, contributing to a wide range of health conditions and costing North Yorkshire an estimated £400m per year on health, social care and other costs ([ASH Ready Reckoner, 2025](#)). Therefore, ensuring that support is in place to help as many people quit is important to ensuring people live as long and healthy life as possible.
- 3.2 Funding per Local Authority area has been calculated based on local smoking prevalence – with £642k being identified for North Yorkshire Council for 2025/26. The funding allocations are based on the average smoking prevalence over a 3-year period between 2021 and 2023.
- 3.3 To support the work of the Living Well Smokefree service, it is vital to have a range of effective options of pharmacotherapy available alongside behavioural support to help smokers accessing the service to quit. This is particularly important with the smoking prevalence in North Yorkshire sitting at around 9%, as the remaining smokers are likely to be from population groups that have found it harder to access stop smoking services in the past and may require multiple quit attempts and/or multiple types of pharmacotherapies to best meet their individual needs.
- 3.4 In recent years, e-cigarettes have become a very popular stop smoking aid in the United Kingdom. They are less harmful than cigarettes and they can help adults quit smoking for good. They are not recommended or should not be sold to people who are younger than 18 years old. They should also not be used by non-smokers. Local Stop Smoking Services like Living Well Smokefree are encouraged provide access to e-cigarettes by the National Centre for Smoking Cessation and Training (NCSCCT), Office of Health Improvement and Disparities, (OHID) National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) and Action on Smoking and Health (ASH), all of which are bodies seeking to reduce the harm caused by smoking.
- 3.5 An e-cigarette is a plastic electric cigarette with a heating element that allows you to inhale nicotine in a vapour rather than a smoke. E-cigarettes do not burn tobacco and do not produce tar or carbon monoxide, two of the most dangerous elements of tobacco smoke. An e-cigarette holds a nicotine cartridge containing liquid nicotine which, when heated, changes the nicotine into a vapour. The nicotine and other ingredients are inhaled into the body.
- 3.6 Many thousands of people in the UK have already stopped smoking with the help of an e-cigarette. A 2021 review found people who used e-cigarettes to quit smoking, as well as having expert face-to-face support, can be up to twice as likely to succeed as people who used other nicotine replacement products, such as patches or gum. Using an e-cigarette can help people who smoke to manage their nicotine cravings<sup>v</sup>. In Living Well Smokefree, since e-cigarettes were introduced in July 2023, 487 have used e-cigarettes as part of their quit journey to set a quit date with 363 going on to achieve a success 4-week quit, which is a quit rate of 75%. Beyond 4 weeks, 72% of those who used an e-cigarette as part of their quit attempt remained quit at 12 weeks, 67% remained quit at 26 weeks and 33% remained quit at 1 year (52 weeks). This helps to demonstrate the longer-term impact of people using e-cigarettes as a quit aid in terms of health benefits and they are metrics that LWSF routinely collect and can regularly report on as access to e-cigarettes continues.

### **4.0 Detail of Substantive Issues**

- 4.1 While vaping is not risk-free, the latest review of evidence concludes that vaping, in the short and medium term, is significantly less harmful than smoking cigarettes and poses a small fraction of

the risks of smoking. Most e-cigarettes contain nicotine, which is highly addictive, as well as other ingredients such as propylene glycol, glycerine and flavourings. However, it is important to recognise that the evidence suggests e-cigarettes, as a harm reduction tool, are significantly less harmful than smoking standard cigarettes in the short and medium term<sup>vi</sup>. It is important to note that research still needs to be conducted in regards to their long-term impact that e-cigarettes can have on health. However, LWSF use e-cigarettes in the short term only, as part of a structured quitting regime where levels of nicotine are reduced to very low levels towards the end of the standard treatment programme (up to 12 weeks), as with all other stop smoking medications used by the service. It will be some time before studies will show the long-term impact and any unforeseen risks of using e-cigarettes. More is known about the safety and effectiveness of other stop smoking medications. Further information about the approach to managing and mitigating the risks of using e-cigarettes within Living Well Smokefree can be found in section 11.

4.2 In the UK, e-cigarettes have been tightly regulated for safety and quality by the government since May 2016. It has been illegal to sell e-cigarettes to, or buy them for, under 18s since April 2017. New legislation in 2025 brought in a ban on the sale and supply of single-use (disposable) vapes<sup>vii</sup>, and the forthcoming Tobacco and Vapes Bill<sup>viii</sup> will introduce new regulations around flavours, packaging, and advertising for e-cigarettes as well as licensing for tobacco/vape retailers. From 1<sup>st</sup> October 2026 a new Vaping Products Duty (VPD) will be introduced at a flat rate of £2.20 per 10 millilitres of vaping liquid, regardless of how much nicotine is contained in the product. This is in order to reduce the affordability and appeal of vaping products, particularly among young people and non-smokers, while maintaining the financial incentive for smokers to switch to less harmful alternatives<sup>ix</sup>. Compliance with current and forthcoming legislation will be assured through the procurement process and subsequent contract management as required.

## 5.0 Performance Implications

5.1 As part of the additional Smokefree Generation grant funding via the Department of Health and Social Care, there are ambitions for each Local Authority to be able to support more people to stop smoking. As a result of the investment the Government wants to increase access to evidence-based behavioural support to quit and targeted support to people more likely to smoke, to reduce health inequalities.

5.2 The Government’s ambition for this investment is to see 360,000 people set quit dates, with 198,000 successful quits (measured as 4-week quits) in England each year. This approach takes the total number of additional quit dates and distributes them as a proportion across each local authority area. It also factors in a gradual increase of set quit dates with an expectation of what these numbers will look like over 5 years of the programme. A methodology has been applied to support understanding of what this ambition means for local areas. For North Yorkshire Council, this is modelled into the following trajectory of set quit dates (SAQD):

Year 1 Total 2024/25	Year 2 Total 2025/26	Year 3 Total 2026/27	Year 4 Total 2027/28	Year 5 Total 2028/29
1,592	2,030	3,345	3,783	3,783

5.3 Ensuring access to a full complement of evidence-based quit aids, including quit aids such as e-cigarettes which are known to be effective, should have a positive impact on smokers receiving support via local stop smoking services. This is anticipated to have a positive impact on the number of referrals and people seen by Living Well Smokefree, which, in turn, should contribute to the overall ambition of the additional grant funding to

- Increase the number of quit dates set
- Increase 4 week quit rates

- Increase 12 week quit rates
- Overall decrease the smoking prevalence

5.4 As part of the procurement exercise, modelling has been undertaken to project the anticipated demand for e-cigarettes as a quit aid through Living Well Smokefree based on historic activity within the service as well as consideration of how we are continuing to work towards the Smokefree Generation targets in future years. LWSF will also be regularly monitoring and managing the numbers of people coming through the service and what medications they are using to ensure that we are working within the cost envelope that we have. Regular monitoring of performance is in place through service and directorate meetings to ensure that stop smoking interventions delivered through Living Well Smokefree are as efficient and effective as possible within the available resources.

## 6.0 Alternative Options considered

6.1 The option to discontinue the e-cigarette offer for people accessing support to stop smoking via Living Well Smokefree has been discounted due to the evidence base for e-cigarettes as an effective quit aid. Each individual accessing the service is offered a range of effective available stop smoking aids including e-cigarettes, Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) and stop smoking medications which will become available during 2026. This is complemented by behavioural support from a trained stop smoking advisor who can help each individual to make an informed choice about the best quit aid for them, considering a range of factors and the available options.

6.2 The selection of a company to provide access to e-cigarettes and associated products via a voucher scheme to individuals who choose to adopt this method of quitting through Living Well Smokefree will be managed via North Yorkshire Council procurement processes. This will include evaluation of any submissions received against agreed price:quality criteria.

## 7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 The e-cigarettes provided through this proposed arrangement will be accessed free-of-charge by individuals working with the Living Well Smokefree service. The contract for the provision of e-cigarettes will be funded through the ring-fenced Smoking Cessation total envelope within the indicative published ring-fenced Public Health Grant<sup>x</sup> from 2026/2027 to 2028/2029 following Local Government Funding Simplification. Provisional allocations for North Yorkshire<sup>xi</sup> are as follows:

Year	Provision allocation of ring-fenced Public Health Grant for North Yorkshire (£m)	Provisional Smoking Cessation ring-fenced amount within overall Public Health Grant ring-fence (£m)
2026/2027	28.59	1.43
2027/2028	29.40	1.43
2028/2029	30.20	1.45
Total	88.18	4.31

It is assumed that the Public Health Grant allocation will continue in 2029/30 to cover the full length of the proposed 3-year contract term (ending July 2029)

7.2 The indicative Smoking Cessation ringfenced funding (2026-2029) comprises

- Existing spend on stop smoking services within the Public Health Grant as set out in the 2025-26 Local Stop Smoking Services and Support Grant (LSSSG) grant agreement of £642,891 in 2025/2026. The baseline Public Health grant spend which must be maintained above is £611,406 in North Yorkshire (reported actual spend in 2022/23 on the delivery of Stop Smoking Services and the total cost of pharmacotherapies)
- Local Stop Smoking Services and Support Grant funding – a needs-based allocation using local adult smoking prevalence (2022-2024)

- Swap to Stop scheme – continuation of funding for provision of e-cigarettes to support adult smokers with free vape starter kits and behavioural support to help them quit tobacco

7.3 The full terms, conditions and guidance for the ring-fenced smoking cessation grant within the overall Public Health Grant have not yet been received. Colleagues from Public Health, Finance and Legal will check these once received to ascertain whether there is likely to be any financial risk to North Yorkshire Council and/or other implications for this procurement and advise accordingly.

7.4 The contract for e-cigarette provision is proposed to run from July 2026 until July 2029 (2 years + 1 year extension option) to align with Smokefree Generation funding. The maximum total contract value for this proposal is £477,000 including VAT (£397,500 excl. VAT) over 3 years, which will be capped. The proposed arrangement will be a demand-led contract managed within the budget allocation. This is supported by robust operational control measures, together with regular performance reporting through service and directorate processes.

7.5 Based on national evidence base and local data, e-cigarettes are a cost-effective quit aid. Additionally, the economic impact of people quitting smoking is well-documented. Smoking remains the biggest preventable killer in the UK, contributing to a wide range of health conditions and costing North Yorkshire an estimated £400m per year on health, social care and other costs ([ASH Ready Reckoner, 2025](#)).

## **8.0 Legal Implications**

8.1 The procurement procedure shall be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules and the Procurement Act 2023, as applicable.

## **9.0 Consultation undertaken and responses**

9.1 Engagement will be undertaken with the potential supplier market ahead of the procurement exercise.

## **10.0 Contribution to Council priorities**

10.1 This funding supports the delivery of the North Yorkshire Council plan, in particular the ambition around health and wellbeing for residents of the county.

## **11.0 Risk Management Implications**

11.1 The risks associated with having an offer of e-cigarettes through the LWSF service have been mitigated by:

- End users will be issued with a disclaimer which confirms that it is within the sole discretion of the end-user to determine whether they are suitable for them and further confirms that in absence of any negligence or other breach of duty by the Council, the Council assumes no responsibility or liability for any end users use of any e-cigarette or vaping product including any adverse effects they may suffer, and that the Council assumes no responsibility or liability for injury or damage to a person or property as a result of the ownership, possession or use of the e-cigarettes or vaping products. End users will be required to sign the disclaimer form prior to being admitted on to the Scheme. This is consistent with current practice in the service.
- The successful supplier must be licensed and comply with regulations and ensure that the products meet certain criteria. The Council will ensure that this is the case through the procurement and evaluation process.
- The Council is not promoting e-cigarettes as a 'medical device'
- The Terms and Conditions proposed by the preferred supplier which would apply between themselves and the end user will be reviewed by legal services as part of the evaluation process

## **12.0 Human Resources Implications**

12.1 Staff training within LWSF will be refreshed as required in order to ensure safety and quality within the service as part of implementation of the new offer.

## **13.0 Equalities Implications**

13.1 An Equality Impact Assessment screening has been completed for this proposal and can be found at appendix A. This proposal will support work in an area where there are known inequalities. Priority population groups such as those living in social housing, those with severe mental illness, people who are homeless and routine and manual workers, will be targeted as prevalence is higher within these groups and leads to poorer health outcomes as a result. Pathways and service delivery are specifically designed to ensure a person-centred approach to anyone using the service including those from priority populations. The e-cigarettes procured through this arrangement will only be available via the local stop smoking service Living Well Smokefree as part of an assessment by a trained advisor and treatment pathway with the aim of quitting smoking. For this reason, the majority of people with protected characteristics would experience a positive impact as a result of continuing provision of e-cigarettes as one of a range of quit aids through Living Well Smokefree. Neutral impact is noted for people who are pregnant and under 18s as the e-cigarette offer is not available to them through Living Well Smokefree currently, and it is proposed that this would continue to be the case. These groups have access to Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) through the service as an alternative quit aid to support their quit attempt. The Equality Impact Assessment Screening process has confirmed that no full assessment is required.

## **14.0 Climate change implications**

14.1 A Climate Change Impact Assessment (CCIA) screening has been completed for this proposal and can be found at Appendix B. The screening has concluded that a full CCIA is not proportionate, however it does note a small increase in greenhouse gases as a result of scaling up delivery of Living Well Smokefree in line with Smokefree Generation targets to reach more people, which will lead to an anticipated increase in the number of people accessing e-cigarettes, thereby increasing emissions from postal delivery of these products to clients and production of the devices. E-cigarettes do not involve combustion in the way that smoking cigarettes does, and therefore use of e-cigarettes directly has a negligible impact on production of greenhouse gases, and switching from a conventional cigarette to an e-cigarette should have a positive impact. Only reusable, rechargeable and refillable devices will be provided through this arrangement. LWSF are in discussion with colleagues from the Environment Directorate regarding the production and distribution of information about the safe disposal of e-cigarettes to LWSF clients. As part of the tender process for procuring an e-cigarette provider, potential suppliers will be asked to detail how they will ensure (where possible) that products are recyclable and/or sustainable to support the Council's commitment to Net Zero.

## **15.0 ICT implications**

15.1 People accessing e-cigarettes via LWSF under this contract would agree the relevant products with their LWSF advisor and would then be directed to the supplier's website to order the products using an e-voucher code. Appropriate data governance provisions will be included in the contract.

## **16.0 Reasons for recommendation/s**

16.1 The recommendation is to continue to provide an e-cigarette offer via LWSF through procurement of suitable supplier to ensure continuity of access to e-cigarettes within LWSF as an effective stop smoking aid for people in North Yorkshire in support of Smokefree Generation ambitions.

## 17.0 Recommendation/s

It is recommended that the Director Public Health in consultation with the Executive Member for Health and Adult Services approves the procurement of the provision of e-vouchers for e-cigarettes and associated products to help people quit smoking through the Living Well Smokefree service.

### Name and title of report author

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19<sup>th</sup> February 2026

Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.

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<sup>i</sup> [Vaping: what you need to know - ASH](#)

<sup>ii</sup> [The Environmental Protection \(Single-use Vapes\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)

<sup>iii</sup> [Tobacco and Vapes Bill - Parliamentary Bills - UK Parliament](#)

<sup>iv</sup> [Introduction of Vaping Products Duty from 1 October 2026 - GOV.UK](#)

<sup>v</sup> **References:** [Association of e-Cigarette Use With Discontinuation of Cigarette Smoking Among Adult Smokers Who Were Initially Never Planning to Quit](#). Kasza KA, Edwards KC, Kimmel HL, Anesetti-Rothermel A, Cummings KM, Niaura RS, Sharma A, Ellis EM, Jackson R, Blanco C, Silveira ML, Hatsukami DK, Hyland A. *JAMA Netw Open*. 2021 Dec 1;4(12):e2140880. doi: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2021.40880. PMID: 34962556

<sup>vi</sup> Public Health England: Vaping in England: an evidence updates including vaping for smoking cessation, February 2021

A report commissioned by Public Health England

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/962221/Vaping\\_in\\_England\\_evidence\\_update\\_February\\_2021.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/962221/Vaping_in_England_evidence_update_February_2021.pdf)

The Khan review: making smoking obsolete: Independent review by Dr Javed Khan OBE into the government's ambition to make England smokefree by 2030. [The Khan review: making smoking obsolete - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

National Centre for Smoking Cessation and Training (NCSCT), [https://www.ncsct.co.uk/publication\\_electronic\\_cigarette\\_briefing.php](https://www.ncsct.co.uk/publication_electronic_cigarette_briefing.php)

Action on smoking and health (ASH) <https://ash.org.uk/resources/view/electronic-cigarettes>

National Health Service [What are the health risks of smoking? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

<sup>vii</sup> [The Environmental Protection \(Single-use Vapes\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)

<sup>viii</sup> [Tobacco and Vapes Bill - Parliamentary Bills - UK Parliament](#)

<sup>ix</sup> [Introduction of Vaping Products Duty from 1 October 2026 - GOV.UK](#)

<sup>x</sup> [Explanatory note on Funding Simplification: consolidated grants and draft conditions](#)

<sup>xi</sup> [Allocations tables for all consolidated grants from 2026-2027 to 2028-2029 - GOV.UK](#)