

North Lanarkshire Council Report

Environment & Climate Change Committee

Does this report require to be approved? Yes No

Ref PB/MM

Date 30/04/25

Update report on vape recycling

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Executive Summary

On 30 October 2024, a report was submitted to the Environment & Climate Change Committee, in response to composite motion No. 7 raised at full Council on 20 June 2024, detailing an investigation into the potential for a vape recycling scheme, using Council facilities such as One Stop Shops, Libraries and Leisure Centres as drop off points.

This report provides the requested 6-month update on increasing consumer awareness of vape recycling and what we have done to drive up retailer compliance and increase the availability of vape takeback facilities in retail premises legally bound to comply with the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Regulations 2013.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Environment & Climate Change Committee:

- (1) Notes and endorses the continued actions of the Trading Standards team in respect of these matters.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority Improve the health and wellbeing of our communities

Ambition statement (17) Ensure we keep our environment clean, safe, and attractive

Programme of Work Sustainable Futures

1. Background

- 1.1 On 30 October 2024, a report was submitted to the Environment & Climate Change Committee, in response to composite motion No. 7 raised at full Council on 20 June 2024, detailing an investigation into the potential for a vape recycling scheme, using Council facilities such as One Stop Shops, Libraries and Leisure Centres as drop off points.
[Document.ashx](#)
- 1.2 The investigation concluded that the logistical requirements for integrating these recycling points into Council facilities such as First Stop Shops, Libraries and Leisure Centres was not feasible due to the liability, cost and risks associated with collecting vapes in a non-retail environment. The investigation also highlighted that in January 2024, vape take back became a legal responsibility of retailers in accordance with The Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Regulations 2013 and that the Office of Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) is the UK enforcement agency responsible for ensuring retailer compliance with the WEEE Regulations.
- 1.3 In response to the report submitted in October 2024, the Committee:
- Supported a consumer campaign to increase awareness of vape recycling, including improvements in the current signage and information available at civic amenity sites (HWRCs) to improve visibility and accessibility of vape recycling points;
 - Endorsed a targeted campaign to drive up retailer compliance and increase the availability of vape takeback facilities in retail premises legally bound to comply with WEEE Regulations. This should be done in partnership between the Council Trading Standards team and OPSS; and
 - Agreed that an update report be submitted to Committee in 6 months.
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2. Report

- 2.1 As part of the consumer awareness raising in respect of vape recycling, the Council published information for North Lanarkshire residents, warning about the risks involved in the careless disposal of single-use vapes, urging vape users to recycle them responsibly, advised that all vape sellers are legally required to provide a free takeback service, and that vape disposal points are available at the Council's Household Waste Recycling Centres.
[Fire risk warning on single-use vapes | North Lanarkshire Council](#). In addition to publishing this on our website, the information was sent out via the GovDelivery email system to over 21,500 subscribers, and it was highlighted on Facebook and X.
- 2.2 Zero Waste Scotland ran a 'Recycle Week' publicity campaign in October 2024
[Recycle Week 2024 | Zero Waste Scotland](#). To coincide with that initiative, the Council issued a number of consumer awareness social media posts across nlcpeople, Facebook and X, which included a number of graphics and associated text which we had obtained from Materials Focus, reinforcing the vape recycling message, as shown in Appendix A to this report.
- 2.3 The signage at our HWRCs has been increased to improve the visibility of our vape recycling repositories. Further improved signage is being planned to be devised, produced, and implemented, in conjunction with colleagues in the Council's graphics team.

- 2.4 In September 2024, to assist with the assessment of vape recycling facilities across North Lanarkshire, a vape takeback project was initiated by the Trading Standards team. Utilising the information held on the Scottish Government's mandatory Register of Tobacco and Nicotine Vapour Product Retailers, we identified 322 premises that were registered to sell NVPs across North Lanarkshire. Unannounced, covert visits were subsequently undertaken to 101 retailers to enquire about the availability of vape recycling bins. The findings revealed that only 24 out of 101 businesses visited provided vape takeback within their retail premise, indicating a compliance rate at that time of just 23.7%.
- 2.5 In recent months, further overt checks have been undertaken at 59 vape retailers' premises, during business advice and guidance visits which are routinely programmed and undertaken by the Trading Standards team to retail suppliers of tobacco and vaping products. 31 of these premises offered a vape take-back facility, which equates to a compliance rate of 53%. The 28 retailers which did not offer a vape take-back facility were provided with the appropriate advice, including the WEEE guidance leaflet provided as Appendix B to this report. We will revisit these businesses to ensure that they have been brought into compliance with vape recycling requirements and continue to undertake these checks to all vape retailers in North Lanarkshire as we undertake underage sales advice and guidance visits.
- 2.6 We continue to submit regular reports to OPSS to refer details regarding retailers that we have identified that are not operating a takeback scheme following advice and guidance, in contravention of the WEEE Regulations.
- 2.7 On 1 June 2025, the Environmental Protection (Single-use Vapes) (Scotland) Regulations 2024 will come into force. [The Environmental Protection \(Single-use Vapes\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2024](#) Whilst the Scottish Government had originally intended for these Regulations to come into effect from the beginning of April 2025, it was subsequently decided to postpone implementation to June, in order to introduce the ban at the same time as the rest of the UK. Our Trading Standards team will be responsible for regulatory enforcement of compliance with these measures.
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3. Measures of success

- 3.1 Increased consumer awareness around vape recycling.
- 3.2 Improved availability of vape takeback facilities within retail premises across North Lanarkshire, as we continue to work with partners in OPSS to deliver 100% compliance with this duty.

4. Supporting documentation

- 4.1 Appendix A Vape recycling graphics used in social media messaging.
- 4.2 Appendix B WEEE guidance leaflet on vape recycling.



Lyall Rennie
Chief Officer (Community Operations)

5. Impacts

<p>5.1 Public Sector Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty Does the report contain information that has an impact as a result of the Public Sector Equality Duty and/or Fairer Scotland Duty? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p> <p>If Yes, has an assessment been carried out and published on the council's website? https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/equalities/equality-and-fairer-scotland-duty-impact-assessments Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>5.2 Financial impact Does the report contain any financial impacts? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant financial impacts been discussed and agreed with Finance? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
<p>5.3 HR policy impact Does the report contain any HR policy or procedure impacts? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant HR impacts been discussed and agreed with People Resources? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
<p>5.4 Legal impact Does the report contain any legal impacts (such as general legal matters, statutory considerations (including employment law considerations), or new legislation)? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant legal impacts been discussed and agreed with Legal and Democratic? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>
<p>5.5 Data protection impact Does the report / project / practice contain or involve the processing of personal data? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, is the processing of this personal data likely to result in a high risk to the data subject? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, has a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) been carried out and e-mailed to dataprotection@northlan.gov.uk Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>5.6 Technology / Digital impact Does the report contain information that has an impact on either technology, digital transformation, service redesign / business change processes, data management, or connectivity / broadband / Wi-Fi? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?</p>

Where the impact identifies a requirement for significant technology change, has an assessment been carried out (or is scheduled to be carried out) by the Enterprise Architecture Governance Group (EAGG)?

Yes No

5.7 Environmental / Carbon impact

Does the report / project / practice contain information that has an impact on any environmental or carbon matters?

Yes No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

5.8 Communications impact

Does the report contain any information that has an impact on the council's communications activities?

Yes No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

5.9 Risk impact

Is there a risk impact?

Yes No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the key risks and potential impacts, highlighting where the risk(s) are assessed and recorded (e.g. Corporate or Service or Project Risk Registers), and how they are managed?

5.10 Armed Forces Covenant Duty

Does the report require to take due regard of the Armed Forces Covenant Duty (i.e. does it relate to healthcare, housing, or education services for in-Service or ex-Service personnel, or their families, or widow(er)s)?

Yes No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the provision which has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the particular needs of the Armed Forces community to make sure that they do not face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public services.

5.11 Children's rights and wellbeing impact

Does the report contain any information regarding any council activity, service delivery, policy, or plan that has an impact on children and young people up to the age of 18, or on a specific group of these?

Yes No

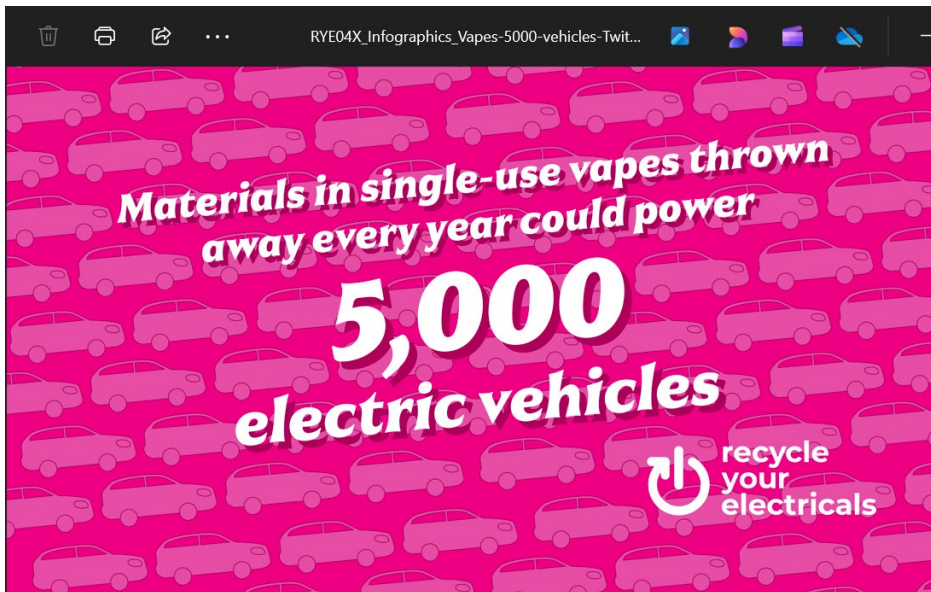
If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact and the provision that has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the relevant Articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

If Yes, has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) been carried out?

Yes No

Appendix A Vape recycling graphics used in social media messaging.





Did you know vapes contain batteries? When they're binned, they can get crushed in the bin lorry and start fires. So never put vapes in your household bins.

[#NeverBinVapes](#) [#RecycleYourElectricals](#)

Take them to our Household Recycling Waste Centres or find the nearest recycling point at www.recycleyourelectricals.org.uk/electrical-recycling-near-me/

Half of single-use vapes are thrown in the bin - that's over 5 million per week. Binned vapes are part of the fastest growing sources of waste in the UK: electrical waste. Anything with a plug, battery or cable can be recycled, so make sure you never bin your vapes. [#NeverBinVapes](#) [#RecycleYourElectricals](#)

Recycle all vapes separately from your household waste. Find a local recycling point at: www.recycleyourelectricals.org.uk/electrical-recycling-near-me/

[#NeverBinVapes](#)

Single use vapes contain precious materials, like lithium, in the battery. In the UK, we needlessly throw away enough vapes to power 5,000 electrical vehicles each year. Never bin them, recycle all your vapes separately at our Household Recycling Waste Centres or find the nearest recycling point at:

<https://ow.ly/bU1k50TLvwF>

Appendix B WEEE guidance leaflet on vape recycling.



Do you comply with WEEE?

If you sell vapes, you must provide your customers with a way of sending back used devices.

All retailers who sell vapes from a physical shop are required to provide recycling facilities for customers to bring back used or unwanted vapes on a one for one, like for like basis.

Some vape suppliers have their own schemes to collect vapes for recycling, so it is worth contacting them for further information.

Alternatively, you can check the Government's [Registers of electrical and electronic equipment \(EEE\) producer compliance schemes](#) for details of schemes who can arrange for the waste to be recycled.



Please note: legislation is currently going through Parliament which will ban the sale of disposable vapes. This is likely to be in force in early 2025.

businesscompanion
trading standards law explained

Free, up to date guidance for businesses that sell vapes is available from [Business Companion](#).

Under the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Regulations 2013, any business that sells electrical and electronic equipment (EEE), including vape products, directly to the UK customers must provide a process of takeback on waste electrical and electronic equipment, on a like for like basis.