

23.09.12

**5 Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M. Porée of St. Helier South of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding the sale of single-use vapes (OQ.172/2023)**

Will the Minister clarify what steps, if any, she has taken to stop the sale of single-use vapes in Jersey and the marketing of single-use vapes aimed at children and young people?

**Deputy K. Wilson (The Minister for Health and Social Services):**

I thank the Deputy for her question. Further to ongoing work to address the health prevention strategy 2023-27, I can advise the Assembly that the Public Health team are producing a revision of the latest evidence of the consequences of vaping on health, alongside recommendations of initiatives to reduce uptake and use of vapes by children and young people. My fellow Ministers and I certainly share concerns about the impact of vaping on children and young people in the Island, as well as its broader environmental impact, and we eagerly await the recommendation from the public health review to take matters further.

**Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:**

Sorry, I did not quite fully hear the full answer. Did the Minister actually say there is a review that is taking place, with herself included? I did not really understand, sorry.

**Deputy K. Wilson:**

With regards to the policy around public health, it will be looking at the health impact, and I am working with other Ministers on the much broader issue of vaping in general.

**5.5.1 Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:**

Would the Minister be able to give us an indication of what timescale she is looking into starting this review and perhaps we could follow it?

**Deputy K. Wilson:**

Yes, the work is almost coming to a completion and I am yet to be briefed on the output of that review. But once I am in a position to be able to clarify the actual date of that work being completed, I can then advise the Deputy of the timescales we will be working to.

**5.5.2 Connétable K.C. Lewis of St. Saviour:**

I think we passed the point of reviews and more consultations. What adults do is a matter for adults. But when children have access to flavours of vapes such as bubble gum, vanilla and popcorn, it is no stretch of the imagination these are designed to get children hooked on vapes and maybe carry on to other stronger flavours. Will the Minister use her best endeavours to stamp out this practice?

**Deputy K. Wilson:**

Yes, I can assure the Constable that this is really an important matter for us to take some urgent action around. As I have said, we are currently working to review the current arrangements and to be advised of the plans that we need to take in order to address the issue.

**5.5.3 Deputy A. Howell:**

I was just wondering, can the Minister for Health and Social Services confirm that the Minister for the Environment and the Minister for Infrastructure sent us a message to say that they were considering banning these?

**Deputy K. Wilson:**

Yes, we do have some shared concerns about the matter and any developments would take account of the different responsibilities over this subject. We have already made moves to make it illegal to sell and supply e-cigarettes, vapes and products to under-18s, and we do intend to explore the best available options for regulations as part of a revised tobacco and vaping strategy.

**5.5.4 Deputy A. Howell:**

I was under the impression that they were banned already.

**The Bailiff:**

I am not sure that is a question. I think that is a statement about the impression you were under.

**Deputy A. Howell:**

I was under the impression that we were told that ... is it right that they are already being banned by the other 2 Ministers?

**Deputy K. Wilson:**

I think the Deputy would need to direct the question to my colleagues on that matter. But the advice that I have received is that we have shared concerns on the matter - I will repeat what I have just said - and we have already moved to making it illegal to sell and supply products to under-18s.

**5.5.5 Deputy M. Tadier:**

Does the Minister recognise that it would be somewhat inconsistent and perhaps ludicrous if single-use vaping was to be banned, the sale of single-use vapes, but the sale of single-use cigarettes was not also banned, given that there are no doubt much more significant health impacts from single-use cigarettes than there are from single-use vapes?

**The Bailiff:**

I am minded to ask what a single-use cigarette is as opposed to any other kind of cigarette, Deputy.

[10:15]

**Deputy M. Tadier:**

The penny dropped, Sir, and it is something I thought of yesterday and shared with my Reform colleagues. That is exactly the point. There are only single use cigarettes and we know that cigarettes for decades cause serious harm both to adults and children. When you throw cigarette butts on the floor, as we know that many people do on a daily basis in Jersey, they often find their way into the sea. Are we talking about an issue with vaping here or an issue with cigarettes more generally?

**Deputy K. Wilson:**

I think we are talking about a whole host of issues in relation to this habit, if I could call it that. There are clearly health impacts. There are clearly environmental impacts in terms of the plastic composition of these items. There are also health and safety issues. I think, as I have mentioned previously, we need to be working together as a group of Ministers to confirm our position on this and address the issues of concern that people have raised.

### **5.5.6 Deputy M.R. Scott:**

With respect to the use of vapes generally, I just wondered whether ... and their use in people giving up using cigarettes. I might mention I used to, when I did smoke long ago, I would relight them and reuse them, to inform Deputy Tadier. But could you please advise about any advice being given for those who are trying to transition away from smoking cigarettes using vapes and what has generally been published in that respect? I am sorry, and how to get off vapes.

### **Deputy K. Wilson:**

I think in response to that question, there has been a considerable amount of research focusing on the issue of vaping as a gateway to smoking. Colleagues in this space continue to state that the evidence is unclear that there is a strong causal relationship between the 2. Much of the evidence is pretty poor and concludes that vaping is not a gateway to smoking. I think the best I can offer at this time, again until we have completed the revision, is to assure the Assembly that our public health strategy and the work that we are doing to reduce the tobacco and vaping consumption on a more general basis hopefully will address some of the concerns that the Deputy has in terms of education and support for people who want to give up.

### **5.5.7 Deputy M.R. Scott:**

I thank the Minister for her reply. Just trying to clarify, she mentioned that vapes do not necessarily lead to smoking but, insofar as smoking, people wanting to give up cigarettes use vapes. I was seeking clarity in terms of the advice that has been given to, if you like, complete removing from smoking cigarettes and then vapes and that journey.

### **The Bailiff:**

I just received a note that Deputy Ward wished to ask a question, but I had already called final question from Deputy Scott and final supplementary Deputy Porée. No, thank you. All right.

### **Deputy M.R. Scott:**

Sorry, I did not actually have an answer to my supplemental question.

### **The Bailiff:**

I am sorry, I am afraid I stopped focusing a little bit after you just thanked the Minister for an answer. My fault, I am sure. In which case, an answer then, Minister. I apologise.

### **Deputy K. Wilson:**

I cannot profess to be any expert on this but I think the relationship, as officers have indicated and advised me, between vaping and smoking, if I can put it that way around, demonstrate that there is not a causal link or the evidence suggests that there is no causal link, but also that the evidence is poor in that regard. The Deputy is quite right, is that people use vaping in reverse to help them stop smoking, and I hope that clarifies the position for the Deputy.