LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

MODEL SCHOOL SMOKE AND VAPE FREE POLICY (REVISED MAY 2026)

1 Purpose

This policy sets out the county council's response to smoke-free legislation. In addition, this policy contributes to one of the council's corporate objectives of improving health and wellbeing.

Lancashire county council now encompasses Public Health, and one of the key Public Health priorities is to reduce smoking prevalence rates across Lancashire, improving the health and wellbeing of all employees, contractors, visitors and residents in order to achieve a smoke-free Lancashire.

Lancashire County Council's smoke-free and vape-free policy therefore supports this approach. The requirements of this policy are to be adhered to for any lit tobacco product and vaping. Vaping is defined as the use of a nicotine vaporising device (commonly known as a vape, or an e-cigarette).

2. Scope

The policy applies to:

- all employees of the council
- other workers including casual workers, agency workers and volunteers
- visitors to council owned or controlled premises, buildings and workplaces
- people who use the council's services
- elected members
- contractors

3. The Councils' smoke- free and vape-free policy

- Smoking and/or vaping is not permitted at any time when employees or workers; including those who work outside, are at work, or elected members who are attending council establishments on business, or who are involved in civic functions on council owned or controlled premises.

- Smoking and/or vaping is not permitted when driving whilst on duty or travelling to and from meetings in any council vehicle. No smoking and vaping signs should be clearly displayed within council vehicles at all times.
- Smoking and/or vaping is not permitted in any council owned or controlled premises, establishments and vehicles, and private or hired vehicles when used for transporting people who receive council services or employees or workers.
- Smoking and/or vaping, by employees or others, is not permitted on land owned or controlled by the council e.g. car parks, playing fields and playgrounds. This applies whilst on duty and off duty (for example the policy applies to someone smoking in their car on a council owned or controlled car park at lunchtime).
- Smoking and/or vaping is not permitted near any windows or entrances to council buildings at any time.
- Staff and visitors are reminded that the council is a smoke-free local authority and are requested not to smoke or vape near any access point, doorway or window fronting onto public roads or land that the council does not own.
- Staff choosing to smoke or vape must do so in their own time for example before or after work, or during their break.
- Employees are not entitled to take specific smoke and/or vaping breaks during paid working hours.
- Employees who choose to smoke or vape for example before or after work, or during their unpaid break must ensure that any identifiable badges/logos are removed or covered up whilst doing so.
- This smoke-free and vape-free policy will be brought to the attention of:
    - partnership organisations
    - businesses providing services
    - other stakeholders who may interact with the council's employees (or workers)
    - services or people who receive council services

Their co-operation in implementing both the spirit and letter of the policy is requested and accepted as part of the partnership, business or working arrangements.

- Any special arrangements in place with regards to private individuals living in council owned or controlled residential establishments must comply with both the legislation and guidance

from the appropriate regulatory bodies. These arrangements must be updated in accordance with changes to the legislation or guidance. Managers with responsibility for employees or volunteers working with people who receive council services in residential properties, or who live in council provided facilities, should refer to the relevant guidance.

- All council owned or controlled buildings and vehicles must display the appropriate smoke-free and vape-free signage.
- Enforcement of the council's policy is by management action and disciplinary procedures.
- The council actively supports the Tobacco-free Lancashire strategy in reducing the prevalence of smoking.
- Details of this policy will be included as part of the induction process for new starters.

4. Vapes (previously referred to as electronic cigarettes)/electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS)

Vapes and tobacco are distinct from one another. A lit tobacco cigarette contains tobacco and produces carbon monoxide, tar and smoke whereas a vape does not contain tobacco and heats up the nicotine liquid as opposed to burning it.

As an organisation the council will not support the use of vapes indoors as the council has a responsibility for the health and wellbeing of its employees. The long-term health effects of vapes are currently uncertain and bystanders expect no risk increase from any product in the air they breathe.

The current position of the council is in accordance with Public Health England (PHE), acknowledging that vapes are substantially less harmful to health than smoking but are not risk free. An independent review commissioned by PHE and endorsed by the Royal College of Physicians estimates vapes are around 95% less harmful than tobacco cigarettes.

At present there is no vapes which has been medically approved by the Medicines and Healthcare Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and these are not available on prescription.

5. Battery care and charging

Charging any personal devices including vapes in county council buildings is not normally permitted unless in exceptional circumstances with approval from the line manager due to the potential risk of overheating or fire. Where charging of such devices is permitted, a risk assessment must be carried out and appropriate control measures put in place and monitored.

6. Implementation

Managers should ensure that appropriate arrangements exist for implementing the policy within their own service areas and/or areas of responsibility.

7. Information and support for employees

The council is committed to protecting the health of its employees and promoting healthy behaviours and will provide support to those employees who want to stop smoking. With support from the local specialist stop smoking service, tobacco and nicotine users are three times more likely to quit than going it alone. They can help with one-to-one support and access to licensed medicines that can be used to help to beat the cravings.

Information on smoking cessation is available on the **NHS Quit smoking** website and from district council's locally. The council will promote and support (in conjunction with the county council commissioned service) campaigns to discourage people from smoking and provide information and support from the local service.

For help to quit smoking and/or the use of vapes call Smoke-free Lancashire, your local county council commissioned service:

By telephone: 0808 1962 638

By website: www.smokefreelancashire.org.uk

NHS smoking helpline: 0300 123 1044 or go to **www.nhs.uk/smokefree**

NHS pregnancy smoking helpline 0300 123 1044 or go to **www.nhs.uk/smokefree**

As recommended by PHE (2018) the service provides behavioural support to smokers who use a vape. If you are looking for advice to purchase a vape please access a reputable retailer.

8. Breaches of the Policy

Managers need to take action if an employee or worker smokes in contravention of this policy. A record of any action taken should be recorded.

Breaches of the policy by employee may lead to disciplinary action.

Visitors who are smoking or vaping on council premises/grounds will be informed of the smoke-free and vape-free work policy and asked to stop smoking/vaping. If this is not acted upon immediately the visitor will be asked to leave.

9. Monitoring of the Policy

The operation of this policy should be monitored by individual managers and supervisors within their own team and areas of control to ensure compliance.