



August 2021

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about vaping and e-cigarettes.

While e-cigarettes are not risk free, and for smokers quitting altogether remains the best way to improve health, I do welcome evidence which indicates that they are considerably less harmful to health than cigarettes.

Moreover, I recognise the important part which e-cigarettes can play in helping smokers to quit, with ONS figures showing that around half of e-cigarette users vape as an aid to stop smoking. In 2017, over 50,000 smokers stopped smoking with a vaping product who would otherwise have carried on smoking.

International peer-reviewed evidence indicates that the risk to the health of bystanders from e-cigarette vapour is low and is insufficient to justify the prohibition of e-cigarettes. The ban on smoking in enclosed public places is based on strong evidence of harm from exposure to second-hand smoke, and the health benefits of preventing that exposure. Given that no evidence of comparable harm from exposure or benefit from protection exists in relation to exposure to e-cigarettes, they are not covered by this same legislation.

That said, I completely appreciate that the use of e-cigarettes in public places can be a nuisance. That is why I am glad that Public Health England (PHE) has produced guidance for employers and organisations looking to introduce policies around e-cigarettes and vaping in public. This guidance stipulates several considerations which it recommends be taken into account by employers and organisations when forming their policy on e-cigarettes. These include the fact that vaping can be a nuisance or distraction for people nearby, and that people with asthma and other respiratory conditions can be sensitive to a range of environmental irritants such as e-cigarette vapour.

Regarding the concerns many have about the World Health Organisation's comments on vaping, please be assured that Ministers are aware of these, ahead of the virtual Ninth WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control Conference.

The Government will use the opportunity of the Conference to speak about the UK's progress on the implementation of tobacco control policies. This will include, where relevant, the important role that nicotine replacement therapy and e-cigarettes can play in supporting smokers to quit.



Chris Heaton-Harris

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The Government is currently carrying out a consultation to review the effectiveness of the Tobacco and Related Products Regulations 2016, which regulates tobacco and e-cigarettes in the UK. All the feedback is being analysed, and a response will be published in due course, which I look forward to reading.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Chris".

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY