# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **TITLE** | **Four nations consultation - Creating a smoke-free generation and tackling vaping among young people: your views** |
| **DATE** | **20October 2023** |
| **BY** | **Lynne Neagle, Deputy Minister for Mental Health and Well-being** |

On 4 October, the Prime Minister announced the UK Government’s intention to create a smokefree generation and plans to tackle youth vaping. I whole-heartly support measures to address the devastating impacts of tobacco in Wales and am determined to do all we can to prevent young people from starting smoking in the first place. If introduced, the smokefree generation policy will make it an offence for anyone born on or after 1 January 2009 to be sold tobacco products – effectively raising the smoking age by a year, each year, to stop children born after this date from ever legally being sold cigarettes. Javed Khan OBE recommended this change, as well many other progressive and far-reaching proposals to make smoking obsolete in his [independent review](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-khan-review-making-smoking-obsolete), published last year. I wrote to the UK Government following the publication of the Khan review last year to make clear Welsh Government’s support for measures to tackle youth vaping and tobacco use.

Members will also be aware of my views on youth vaping and my deep concern over the increases in the number of children and young people using these products. Vapes have no place in the hands of children and young people and I have long advocated for firm action to prevent these being used inappropriately and creating a new generation of nicotine addiction. On single use vapes, I am pleased that the nations of the UK have agreed to work together to tackle these products which not only are associated with increased use amongst children and young people, but are also incredibly damaging to our environment.

I am therefore pleased that the Wesh Government is working closely with the other UK nations to ensure we progress these measures together where possible. The [consultation published today](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/creating-a-smokefree-generation-and-tackling-youth-vaping) sets out details of the measures we would like to take to create a smokefree generation and tackle youth vaping. I will be ensuring this consultation is shared widely with interested stakeholders across Wales and I hope Members will also encourage participation as we seek views from across the UK in how these policies are shaped.

If these measures are successful, I firmly believe we are on the cusp of ending the tobacco epidemic and of keeping e-cigarettes out of the hands of our children and young people.