

Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee
Wednesday 29 October 2025
16th Meeting, 2025 (Session 6)

PE2033: Introduce a full ban on disposable vapes

Introduction

Petitioner Jordon Anderson

Petition summary Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to legislate for a full or partial ban on disposable vapes in Scotland and recognise the dangers that these devices pose to both the environment and the health of young people.

Webpage <https://petitions.parliament.scot/petitions/PE2033>

1. [The Committee last considered this petition at its meeting on 5 March 2025.](#) At that meeting, the Committee agreed to write to the Scottish Grocers' Federation.
2. The petition summary is included in **Annexe A** and the Official Report of the Committee's last consideration of this petition is at **Annexe B**.
3. The Committee has received a new written submission from the Scottish Grocers' Federation, which is set out in **Annexe C**.
4. The single-use vape ban in Scotland came into force on 1 June 2025. The Scottish Government's official announcement has been included at **Annexe D**.
5. [Written submissions received prior to the Committee's last consideration can be found on the petition's webpage.](#)
6. [Further background information about this petition can be found in the SPICe briefing](#) for this petition.
7. [The Scottish Government gave its initial response to the petition on 4 July 2023.](#)
8. Every petition collects signatures while it remains under consideration. At the time of writing, 294 signatures have been received on this petition.

Action

9. The Committee is invited to consider what action it wishes to take.

Clerks to the Committee
October 2025

Annexe A: Summary of petition

PE2033: Introduce a full ban on disposable vapes

Petitioner

Jordon Anderson

Date Lodged

20 June 2023

Petition summary

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to legislate for a full or partial ban on disposable vapes in Scotland and recognise the dangers that these devices pose to both the environment and the health of young people.

Previous action

I have written to all of my MSPs, with Douglas Lumsden and Maggie Chapman responding in support of the concerns I raised around disposable vapes.

I have also written to my ward councillors; they didn't want to take action at a local level and instead urged me to write to my MSP.

Background information

Research suggests [1.3 million disposable vapes are thrown away every week in the UK](#). That is 62.4 million vapes every year going to UK landfill, or being washed up in our oceans, rivers and canals. These vapes and their lithium batteries are extremely dangerous to our wildlife and environment. They are a fire hazard and can explode.

There is not enough health research being done to know how dangerous these devices really are. However according to [Edge Vaping](#), they can cause bleeding from the throat or nose, inflammation of the airways, shortness of breath and possibly Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). Manufacturers suggest the nicotine content of vapes is similar to 20 cigarettes; with some young people getting through 3-4 vapes a week, that could be like smoking 60 cigarettes a week.

I believe that vapes have no place in supermarkets or any retailer. They are intended only to be a mechanism to stop smoking, not an alternative to cigarettes. We need a ban, and we need it quickly!

Annexe B: Extract from Official Report of last consideration of PE2033 on 5 March 2025

The Convener: The next petition is PE2033, which was lodged by Jordon Anderson and calls on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to legislate for a full or partial ban on disposable vapes in Scotland and to recognise the dangers that those devices pose to both the environment and the health of young people.

We last considered this petition at our meeting on 17 April 2024, when we agreed to keep the petition open until such time as regulations to ban the use of single-use vapes were introduced, or at least until we had a clear indication of when they would be introduced.

As members will be aware, in September last year, Parliament voted to approve the Environmental Protection (Single-use Vapes) (Scotland) Regulations 2024, which were expected to come into effect on 1 April 2025. However, commencement is now expected to take place a little later, on 1 June 2025. The intention is that that will ensure alignment with similar regulations being introduced across all four nations of the United Kingdom.

We have received a submission from our MSP colleague, Maggie Chapman, who commends the petitioner, Jordon, and others for their work on that issue and calls on us to keep the petition open until the regulations are in force. How do colleagues feel about that?

Fergus Ewing: As it happens, convener, I had an informal meeting on Monday this week with someone who is involved in the grocery business in Scotland. He expressed a number of concerns about the possibility that the proposed ban, although it is welcome, will not go far enough, because it will not prevent the importation of vapes, which will therefore continue to be imported and sold—and they will be sold on the black market. He said that they are already being sold in such a manner, that they are being sold in an unauthorised way by various groceries and that, in particular, there are no penalties enforced other than the recovery of tax in respect of the particular number of vapes that have been identified as having been wrongly sold.

I am no expert on this matter. However, I find myself in somewhat unusual agreement with the Green MSP, as there is perhaps more that might be done in addition to what has already been done. I am told that the illegal vapes that are being sold are very often injurious to health.

Before we close the petition—and it may be that that is what we will do at a later date—I suggest that we write to the Scottish Grocers Federation, which represents more than 5,000 small convenience stores that employ more than 50,000 people. Its representatives are probably the people on the front line who are dealing with the sale of vapes and who are under huge pressure through physical attacks on their members of staff, which are often associated with the sale of such items. I suggest that we ask for their views on whether the ban will go far enough.

I agree with Maggie Chapman that this is a matter of profound concern. We have taken all sorts of action on smoking and, to many people, vapes are just smoking through the back door.

The Convener: Hell must have frozen over—I never thought that I would live to see the day that you said that, Mr Ewing.

In Mr Ewing's paeon of praise to his Green colleague Maggie Chapman, who called for the petition to remain open, I think that he makes an important point that we could write to the Scottish Grocers Federation. At the moment, I suppose that the issue that Mr Ewing raised is too anecdotal to draw to the attention of the Scottish Government, and it might be better to first see whether we get something more formal from the Scottish Grocers Federation.

Are we content to keep the petition open on that basis—and to advise Maggie Chapman that the petition has been kept open on the motion of Fergus Ewing?

Members *indicated agreement.*

Annexe C: Written submission

Scottish Grocers' Federation written submission, 3 April 2025

PE2033/K: Introduce a full ban on disposable vapes

As a key issue for our members, SGF has, wherever possible, supported the aims of the proposed restrictions on the marketing, naming, and packaging of vaping products. However, we also note several areas of concern, highlighting the potential unintended consequences of the ban, and its impacts on business operations, illicit trade and retail crime.

Background

Being able to offer a 'good deal' on the 'full basket' of items customers intend to purchase is essential for local stores. However, prohibitions on items in demand could encourage customers to search out harmful illicit products, undermining many local businesses and the services they provide. ([Scottish Local Shop Report 2024](#))

Nevertheless, many convenience stores are facing an extremely challenging trading environment. As well as contending with their own pressures such as cost-of-living crisis, retailers are still trying to cope with higher-than-normal energy costs, high inflation and food inflation, higher interest rates, continued supply chain disruption and a substantial rise in retail crime. This is in addition to the burden of further regulation from government across a range of issues.

Potential unintended consequences and operational concerns regarding a ban on single use vaping products

It is essential that careful consideration be given to how such a ban will work at an operational level, in-store.

- Illicit trade:

Restrictions on disposable vapes will inevitably and significantly fuel illicit trade in cheap and unregulated products, harming the wellbeing of communities, which continues to be a significant issue. This will exacerbate the recent surge in retail and organised crime and undermine both the UK and Scottish economies. This is already a major factor contributing to youth vaping and the environmental impact, and we note that the current regulations are only enforced to a limited extent and both Police Scotland and Trading Standards appear to have very limited resources to mitigate the rise in illicit goods that will result from the ban. Hence, enforcement agencies, SCOTSS, Trading Standards, Police Scotland & HMRC, will need to be provided with significant extra resource to ensure that they are proactive in dealing with any escalation of this problem.

The vast majority of convenience retailers have substantial experience implementing robust measures to prevent underage sales. Using good practice, such as Challenge 25, and instore procedures such as a refusal register and till prompts. This will not be the case after the product moves onto the illegal market, potentially risking harm to users and customers who previously sourced these goods from legitimate traders.

SGF has consistently worked alongside Trading Standards, and authorities across Scotland, to ensure full and active compliance with the regulations on the sale of tobacco products and e-cigarettes. [Our updated retailers guide Regulations for NVPs and Tobacco Compliance in Scotland](#), a refresh of our previous version published in 2016, is widely distributed by Trading Standards offices across the country.

Nonetheless, as highlighted, Trading Standards presently do not have the resources to properly enforce the current regulation and that has created the situation leading to the problems highlighted. As a result, compliant businesses that are meeting all their requirements are being targeted for tighter restrictions even though they are already part of the ongoing solution.

SGF is of the view that government and enforcement bodies must take a more proactive approach to clamping down on bad practice and repeat offenders. In addition, it is our view that the Scottish Government and enforcement agencies should be significantly more active in calling out the impacts and scale of illicit trade.

Those who wish to continue to use disposable vapes will be encouraged to access illicit and unregulated goods. Now a significant proportion of the vaping products used by consumers in the UK, which are more likely to be harmful and non-compliant to the current safety regulations in place in the UK.

According to studies carried out by colleagues in the convenience sector (ACS), the disposable vapes ban will lead to more customers (24% of current users of disposable vapes) moving to the already burgeoning illicit vape market, costing legitimate Scottish businesses £67m in lost sales and millions more in the value associated with footfall loss, threatening the viability of some stores.

- Operational concerns and potential policy implications:

As stated throughout, SGF promotes responsible community-based retailing and we support the objective of reducing use of Nicotine Vaping Products among underage people, while also protecting the natural environment from the impact of litter. Nonetheless, nicotine vaping products are a critical cessation aid for those who wish to quit smoking.

Balancing the potential harms of vaping for young non-smokers against the clear benefits of vaping to adult smokers is an exceptionally difficult public policy issue. [SGF's Healthier Choices, Healthier Communities campaign](#) aims to send a clear message that if you smoke and wish to quit, then consider vaping, but if you don't smoke, don't vape.

Scotland was the first part of the UK to ban smoking in public places, which has led to a reduction in smoking rates, either directly or indirectly. However, more than one-in-seven people in Scotland still smoke. To take the next step towards a smoke-free generation, there needs to be a nuanced debate about vaping.

Therefore, the ban and using the powers set out in the Tobacco and Vapes Bill to further restrict access to affordable vaping products risks an increase in cigarette consumption. According to research conducted by our members, of 1,000 Scottish

adults in June 2023, more than half of Scottish smokers had tried using vapes as an alternative source of nicotine.

SGF is of the view that if the measures that are currently in place had been sufficiently enforced, there would be no need for a ban on single use vapes or further restrictions to vaping products proposed in the Tobacco and Vapes Bill (currently in process in the UK Parliament).

With approximately 222 restricted and age restricted products on the Scottish market, the vast majority of convenience retailers are very familiar and experienced with using measures to ensure compliance. SGF also recently provided Challenge 25 posters, and an example refusal register to stores across Scotland, which were distributed to approximately 8,000 subscribers of Scottish Local Retail magazine.

Hence, SGF has called for manufacturers and suppliers to rename and redesign the packaging of products to make them less appealing to children and young people, whilst not limiting their value as a cessation tool for adult smokers who wish to quit.

SGF encourages full compliance with the current Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) regulations and recycling policy aimed at reducing waste and litter. SGF do this by sharing information and providing essential guidance with our members on complying to the WEEE legislation. Indeed, we have previously developed a Retailers Guide ensuring full compliance with the regulations relating to the sale of tobacco and vapes in Scotland. SGF also launched a campaign in October 2023, with members, to provide 1,000 free vape recycling bins to convenience retailers in Scotland, which were delivered in the spring of 2024.

A lot of emphasis has been placed on the environmental impact but there has been little public communication aimed at educating vapers on returning their used vapes. This also applies to retailers and their provision of vape take-back which is also being stepped up under the reform of WEEE. We are also concerned that our members may still be expected to take-back illegal vapes into their stores if required to provide in-store bins.

Annexe D: Scottish Government announcement on single-use vape ban, 1 June 2025

Single use vape ban comes into force

Single-use vapes will no longer be stocked or sold in Scotland under new legislation which comes into force today (Sunday 1 June).

The UK-wide ban has been introduced to prevent the environmental damage disposable vapes cause and to address health concerns associated with vaping as Scotland moves towards a tobacco-free generation by 2034.

An estimated 26 million disposable vapes were thrown away in Scotland in 2023. Of these, more than half were not recycled properly and around 10% were littered. The batteries used within disposable vapes are difficult to recycle, leak harmful waste and can cause fires in waste facilities.

Acting Net Zero Secretary Gillian Martin said: "Scotland was the first nation in the UK to commit to taking action on single use vapes.

"It's estimated that over half of disposable vapes are incorrectly disposed of each year in Scotland – creating a fire risk and littering our beautiful environment. They also contain nicotine which is highly addictive.

"This change to the law fulfils a Programme for Government commitment and will help tackle the threat that single-use vapes pose to our environment as well as to our public health.

"We have worked closely across the four nations to ensure a consistent approach to a ban on the sale and supply of single-use vapes and will continue to work with regulators regarding enforcement once in force."

Moves to raise the age of sale of tobacco products and regulate the displays, flavours and packaging of reusable vapes, are being taken forward separately through the 4-nations Tobacco and Vapes Bill.

Background

The ban on single-use vapes has been taken forward using powers under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. This approach has been used in the past to ban other items such as microbeads, cotton buds and single use plastics.

A ban on single-use vapes was recommended in the four nation consultation 'Creating a Smokefree Generation and Tackling Youth Vaping' which ran in 2023.