

Health Improvement Board (HIB)

February 2022

Update on Tobacco Control and Prevention in Oxfordshire

Purpose / Recommendation

1. HIB members are asked **TO NOTE** the latest updates on Oxfordshire County Council's tobacco control activities

Executive Summary

2. Reducing tobacco-related harm is a priority for Oxfordshire County Council (the 'Council') and for the HIB. This paper provides an update to HIB on the Council's tobacco control activities covering the four key areas of the county-wide smokefree strategy: preventing people from starting to use tobacco, creating smokefree environments, enforcement, and supporting smokers to quit

Background

3. The most recent figures (2020) from the Office for Health Improvement and Disparity (OHID) for smoking prevalence in adults in Oxfordshire is 11.5%. For adults working in a routine and manual occupations in Oxfordshire, it is 23.2%. Both these figures are slightly lower than the previous year's figures¹. The percentage of people smoking at the time of delivery was 5.7% in Quarter 2 2021/22 and for the first time has now been <6% for two quarters in row (slightly up from 5.4% in Quarter 1 2021/22). Note there will be some quarter-by-quarter variation given this represents relatively low numbers of individuals.
4. In May 2020, County, City, and District Councils across Oxfordshire as well as local NHS organisations signed up to a County-wide ambition to be smoke free by 2025² (defined as an overall smoking prevalence of <5%) five years earlier than the national target, as outlined in the Government National Tobacco Control Plan for England 2017-22.³ The Oxfordshire Tobacco Control Strategy has four key pillars:
 - Prevention
 - Creating smokefree environments
 - Local regulation and enforcement
 - Supporting smokers to quit.
5. In May 2021, a paper was presented to HIB members providing a high-level summary of proposed Council key areas of activity in 2021/22.⁴ These include working closely with our NHS colleagues, communities, and workplaces to help create smokefree environments, at the same time as providing quit support to people in our communities who need it most.
6. In June 2021, the Oxfordshire Tobacco Control Alliance (OTCA) met to propose actions supporting these key areas of activity. The OTCA is an officer-led alliance of organisations signed up to Oxfordshire's ambition to be smoke free by 2025.

¹ Local Tobacco Control Profiles accessed 20/1/2022n <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/tobacco-control/data#page/1>

² [Public health ring-fenced grant 2021 to 2022: local authority circular - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

³ [Towards a Smoke free Generation - A Tobacco Control Plan for England 2017-2022 - 2 .pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

⁴ [Agenda for Health Improvement Partnership Board on Thursday, 27 May 2021, 2.00 pm \(oxfordshire.gov.uk\)](#)

7. In September 2021, the HIB agreed the 2021/22 OTCA Action Plan.⁵ Progress against this action plan will be reported at the OTCA meeting in March 2022 and will form part of the tobacco data deep-dive planned for at the May 2022 Health Improvement Board. See Appendix 1 for the OTCA 2021/22 Action Plan.
8. NHS-led Tobacco Dependency support services are also being developed and rolled out, funded as part of the NHS Long Term Plan ambitions to prevent tobacco-related harm and support NHS patients to quit. As these services develop, it will be important to support their integration with the existing community stop smoking service, Stop for Life Oxon.
9. This paper provides an update to the Health Improvement Board on the Council's tobacco control activities since September 2021. Appendix 2 provides a full summary.

Key Issues

10. COVID-19 pressures, on staff resources and service providers, have resulted in some proposed tobacco control activities being delayed. For example, returning to face-to-face smoking cessation support and the roll out of plans to support smokefree school gates.

Budgetary implications

11. Funding for the Council's tobacco control activities comes from the ringfenced public health grant.⁶ Other partner organisations fund their smokefree work directly, with NHS organisations receiving additional NHS funding for supporting in-patients, pregnant women smoking at the time of delivery, and long-term users of specialist mental health services to stop smoking. This is through the Buckinghamshire Oxfordshire and Berkshire West (BOB) Integrated Care System (ICS) as part of the NHS Long Term Plan commitments on smoking.⁷

Equalities implications

12. Smoking rates are not equal between different groups, for example smoking prevalence among people with mental ill health is in excess of 30% and people experiencing homelessness have smoking rates close to 80%. People with mental health conditions die on average 10-20 years earlier than the general population and smoking is the single largest factor accounting for this difference⁸. Whilst working to reduce the overall smoking prevalence in Oxfordshire for all residents, initiatives are focussed on groups and areas where smoking prevalence is known to be higher.

Sustainability implications

13. The growth of tobacco by the tobacco industry can cause irreparable damage through deforestation, water consumption and the use of pesticides. This deforestation is devastating for local wildlife and ecosystems, but also contributes to climate change, soil erosion, reduced soil fertility and disrupted water cycles. It also damages the communities that depend on this crop, threatening sustainable development as it takes up valuable land for arable crops for local communities. Anything that reduces tobacco consumption can reduce these harmful environmental consequences.

⁵ [Minutes \(oxfordshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/minutes)

⁶ [Public health ring-fenced grant 2021 to 2022: local authority circular - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-health-ring-fenced-grant-2021-to-2022)

⁷ [NHS Long Term Plan » Smoking](https://www.nhs.uk/longtermplan/long-term-plan/2019-2025/10-smoking)

⁸ <https://ash.org.uk/category/information-and-resources/health-inequalities/smoking-health-inequalities/>

Risk Management

14. There is a national supply issue with a stop smoking medication (Varenicline) meaning that the Local Stop Smoking Service provider is currently only able to offer nicotine replacement therapy (i.e., patches, gum) alongside behavioural support to people wanting to quit. Efforts are ongoing to provide an alternative pharmacotherapy to Varenicline and we are introducing the provision of electronic cigarettes (commonly referred to as 'vapes') through the Local Stop Smoking Service in 2022/23.

Communications

15. A recent survey of smokers in our highest prevalence wards has been commissioned and the first phase has been completed. This has provided some valuable early insights into the desire for local residents to want to quit, what support may help, and whether the Council led tobacco control activities are having their intended reach. The second round of the survey is due in May 2022 which will be followed by a report on insights, lessons learned, and potential actions.

16. The following communications campaigns have been delivered or are currently running:

- Stoptober (from mid-September to October 2021),
- The 2022 New Year New You campaign, which includes a refreshed workplace toolkit⁹ and a toolkit promoting smokefree homes and families¹⁰
- A three-month campaign started in January 2022, capitalising on new year resolutions where free nicotine replacement therapy is available in certain Community Pharmacies where the local smoking prevalence is higher than the average¹¹.
- The Healthy Hearts Grant¹² is open until the 14th February 2022 for the voluntary sector to bid for projects to address smoking and physical activity in groups at higher risk of cardiovascular disease.

Key Dates

17. The next OCTA meeting is on the 10th March 2022, where progress from all partners against the 2021/22 Action Plan will be reviewed.

18. A deep dive on smoking is planned for the May 2022 Health Improvement Board meeting.

Report by SRO Tobacco Control, Oxfordshire County Council
Contact Officer Adam Briggs, Consultant in Public Health, Oxfordshire County Council.
Adam.briggs@oxfordshire.gov.uk

January 2022

⁹ https://www.stopforlifeoxon.org/media/1091/oxon-workplace-toolkit-stop-smoking-10pp-a4-01_22-final.pdf

¹⁰ <https://www.stopforlifeoxon.org/media/1089/oxon-sfl-smokefree-family-homes-toolkit-10pp-a4-final.pdf>

¹¹ <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/social-and-health-care/health-recovery-and-wellbeing/smoke-free-oxfordshire>

¹² https://oxfordshire.gov.uk/ocf_grants/healthy-hearts/?dm_i=1OSY,7OKEK,422ZF,VB2MX,1

Appendix 1. Oxfordshire Tobacco Control Alliance Action Plan, 2021/22

#	Action:	How will progress be measured:	Who:	Due by:
City, District, and County Councils				
1	<p>Work with HR and estates to ensure that staff policy on tobacco control includes no smoking indoors or outdoors on Council owned property, with exemptions for e-cigarette use outdoors (as per the South East Position Statement on E-cigarettes (see Action 4)).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide appropriate signage to ensure that staff and visitors are aware that sites are no-smoking indoors and outdoors. - Support managers, estates, and front-of-house staff to be trained in providing very brief advice (VBA) to people who wish to smoke, including signposting to support for quitting (training provided for free by Oxfordshire County Council) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HR tobacco policies reviewed (and updated where necessary) to ensure they include smokefree Council owned estate - Proportion of Council-owned sites with smokefree signage - Number of managers, front of house, facilities, and estates staff trained in VBA and in signposting to quit support 	All Councils	Oct-21
2	<p>Make Council-owned playgrounds voluntarily smokefree areas, including checking and updating signage where necessary and supporting council-staff working in playgrounds to undergo very brief advice training for tobacco use. Where playgrounds are not Council-owned, this will involve working with local parish and town Councils (training provide for free by Oxfordshire County Council, small scale community smokefree funding will be available to help with costs i.e. signage).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proportion of all playgrounds denoted no smoking - Proportion of all playgrounds with smokefree signage - Number of staff trained in VBA 	City and District Councils	Mar-22
3	<p>Support people working in routine and manual occupations to be smokefree.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of employers of routine and manual staff adopting smokefree HR policies - Proportion of all smokers that stop smoking that are from routine and manual occupations 	Oxfordshire County Council (with support from City and District Councils)	Mar-22

4	Improve understanding across Oxfordshire in the role of e-cigarettes as a route to reducing tobacco-related harm as per the South East Position Statement on E-cigarettes and increase the availability of regulated e-cigarettes to those residents who wish to quit smoking tobacco.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regulated e-cigarettes added to Local Stop Smoking Services as part of their nicotine replacement offer for those wishing to quit - Number of organisations attending training on the role and provision of regulated e-cigarettes as part of tobacco-harm reduction - Number of vape-shops partnering with the Local Stop Smoking Services and number of staff trained in VBA 	Oxfordshire County Council	Mar-22
5	Supporting prospective and new parents, and their partners, to be smokefree during pregnancy and during early years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of a strategy around how to work with system partners to support prospective and new parents, and their partners, not to smoke during pregnancy and in early years 	Oxfordshire County Council	Mar-22
Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group				
6	Encouraging Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group commissioned services to support Oxfordshire's smokefree ambition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identification of future contracts where include tobacco-related harm reduction measures are included as part of contract KPIs - KPIs related to tobacco use to be considered as part of contract reviews, aligned to Oxfordshire smokefree ambitions (e.g. smoking at time of delivery) 	Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Oxfordshire County Council	Mar-22
7	Maximise opportunities for Oxfordshire primary care to support people to quit smoking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual message from primary care to all registered smokers advising them to quit and how to access Local Stop Smoking Services - Agree an approach between Oxfordshire County Council, Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, and other relevant stakeholders about role of 	Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Oxfordshire County Council	Mar-22

		primary care in referral to Local Stop Smoking Services, practice staff attending VBA training and future prescribing of Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) /pharmacotherapy		
Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust				
8	Increase staff training in providing advice to quit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have a staff member trained in providing advice to quit and in prescribing NRT on every inpatient mental health ward - Number and proportion of mental health inpatients who smoke having received advice to quit and offered NRT 	Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust	Mar-22
9	Relaunch a smokefree Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of organisational smoke free policy - Conference for inpatient staff on smokefree 	Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust	Oct-21
10	Development of patient pathway for smoking cessation	- Development and implementation of smoking cessation pathway for all adult mental health admissions, including transfer to community-based Local Stop Smoking Services	Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust	Mar-22
Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust				
11	Approve new Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust smokefree policy	- Publication of a new smokefree policy	Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	Sep-21

12	Implementation of the Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust smokefree policy through smoke free working group, including commitment of relevant resources to support patients, staff and visitors to remain smoke free	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of staff trained in providing VBA - Implementation of smoking cessation pathway for inpatients, including provision of NRT and transfer to community-based Local Stop Smoking Services - Number of inpatients with smoking status recorded and proportion who smoke offered advice to quit and access to NRT 	Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	Mar-22
----	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------	--------

Appendix 2 – Update on Oxfordshire County Council tobacco control activities since Sept 2022

2021/2022 OTCA Action Plan Updates

- Smokefree signage is currently being refreshed with a more positively framed message, in consultation with the Councils Facilities Managers. Supporting publicity material to facilitate conversations with those who do smoke on site is also being developed.
- The Council managers, front of house, facilities and estates staff have all been offered very brief advice training, which includes signposting to quit support.
- Approaches have been made to BMW mini plant, Ubico, Stagecoach and two MOD sites to offer public health expertise in adopting smokefree policies.
- Work is progressing with the Stop Smoking Service provider to make e-cigarettes available alongside the nicotine replacement.
- Three training sessions on the role and provision of regulated e-cigarettes as part of tobacco-harm reduction have been delivered, six organisations have attended.
- Conversations are progressing with the Family Nurse Partnership and the Early Intervention Hub services to support prospective and new parents and their partners not to smoke during pregnancy and in early years. A smokefree toolkit for childcare providers has been developed and shared with the Children and Families Service.

Campaigns

- The PHE Stoptober campaign was delivered by the local stop smoking service provider, with an accompanying opinion piece in local press from Cllr Mark Lygo.
- National Health Harms and New Year's Resolution campaign, supported locally by a refresh of Workplace toolkit and development of toolkit for childcare providers by the local stop smoking service.

Free NRT in Pharmacies

- With the support of the Thame Valley Local Pharmaceutical Committee, four independent pharmacies in areas of high smoking prevalence are providing free nicotine replacement therapy to residents. Posted flyers and targeted media campaigns have been used to raise awareness of the initiative as well as how resident can access local stop smoking services.

Smokefree Survey of people who smoke

- To ensure campaigns and approaches are in line with the needs and preferences of smokers, a total of 300 smokers living in the most deprived parts of the County are being surveyed in two phases. Phase one was completed in October 2021 and phase two is planned in May 2022.

Healthy Hearts Grant

- Working with Oxfordshire Community Foundation and colleagues from across the public health directorate, a grant fund was launched to work with the local voluntary and community sector to tackle risk factors of cardiovascular disease, in particular smoking and low physical activity. The initiative aims to focus on the groups where cardiovascular health is poorest. Funding for the initiative comes from the budgets for wider tobacco control, NHS Health Checks and Inequalities.

Smokefree Communities

- Engagement has begun with local subgroups of health partnership boards (Rose Hill, Northway and Banbury) to offer support for community-led smokefree activities, including providing training in giving very brief advice to people who may want to quit.
- Smokefree Sidelines works with youth football leagues and Oxfordshire Football Association to encourage youth clubs to adopt a voluntary smokefree policy asking adults on the sidelines not to smoke whilst children are playing. It was launched in 2020 and has continued to expand with over 50 clubs now signed up.

Smokefree Homes

- Conversations with the Family Nurse Partnership and Early Intervention Hubs to develop a project to support pregnant women and their partners to quit smoking, using an evidence based scheme that includes the use of behavioural support and incentives to remain smokefree.

Smokefree Schoolgates

- The smokefree school gates project aim is to denormalise smoking, by working with schools and parents to create a smokefree environment around school gates when dropping off or collecting their children. A toolkit is being developed to help those schools who would like to participate in this voluntary scheme, to be launched with funding for signage available for schools in the most deprived parts of the county.

Tackling Tobacco Dependency in primary, secondary and community care

- OCC Public Health teams continue to support local NHS Trusts in delivering the tobacco dependency service ambitions of the Long Term Plan.

Trading Standards

- Public Health and Trading Standards continue to jointly fund Tobacco Control Officer post. There have been significant and well publicised seizures of illicit tobacco in Oxfordshire. For example, in October 2021, 44,000 illegal cigarettes and 24.5kg of illegal hand-rolling tobacco were seized from a residential property in Banbury, and in November 2021, 680,420 illegal cigarettes were seized from another residential property in Banbury.
- Public Health are also working with Trading Standards to ensure e-cigarette supply remains safe and legal, with 26 visits made to premises selling vapes so far and just

under 1000 non-compliant products seized. Many of these have been able to be returned to traders once labelling issues had been rectified.