



Borough of Telford and Wrekin

Cabinet

Thursday 6 November 2025

Annual Public Health Report 2025 Towards a Smoke Free Future

Cabinet Member:	Cllr Kelly Middleton - Cabinet Member: Public Health and Healthier Communities
Lead Director:	Helen Onions - Director of Public Health
Service Area:	Health & Wellbeing
Report Author:	Helen Onions - Director of Public Health
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Wards Affected:	All Wards
Key Decision:	Key Decision
Forward Plan:	Yes – 28 th August 2025
Report considered by:	SMT – 2 September 2025 Policy Development – 11 September 2025 Health & Wellbeing Board – 18 September 2025 Cabinet – 6 November 2025

1.0 Recommendations for decision

- 1.1 Cabinet is requested to endorse and support the recommendations of the Director of Public Health's 2025 Annual Report, which are aimed at reducing the impact of smoking and vaping-related harm in the borough.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 The 2025 Annual Public Health Report focusses on a smoke free ambition for Telford & Wrekin. It covers the health and financial impacts for individuals who smoke, the affects on children and young people and vulnerable adults, and the wider impacts on our communities. The report introduces key local actions we need to take in Telford & Wrekin to make a smoke free ambition a reality.

3.0 Background

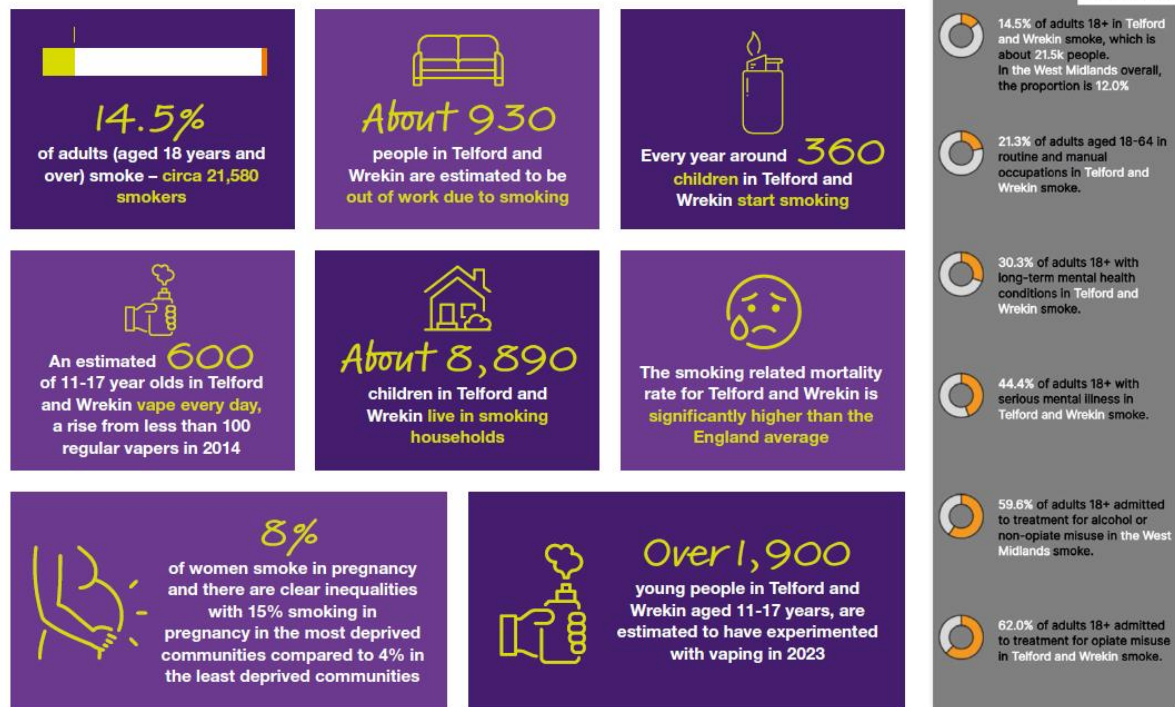
- 3.1 Despite the decades of public awareness campaigns and regulation, smoking remains one of our most significant public health challenges. Tobacco-related harm is the single largest driver of health inequalities, and contributes to reduced life expectancy due to smoker's increased risk of a wide range of chronic diseases. Smoking in pregnancy negatively impacts on a range of outcomes for mother and baby.
- 3.2 The consequences of smoking extend far beyond individual's health and personal spending, it causes significant cost burdens on local authorities, the NHS, and economy and society more broadly. The overall financial burden of smoking in our borough is estimated to be a staggering £171 million per year by ASH (Action on Smoking and Health).
- 3.3 Vaping is much less harmful than smoking and can help to people quit, but the increase in vaping among children and young people who have never smoked is a major concern.

4.0 Summary of main proposals

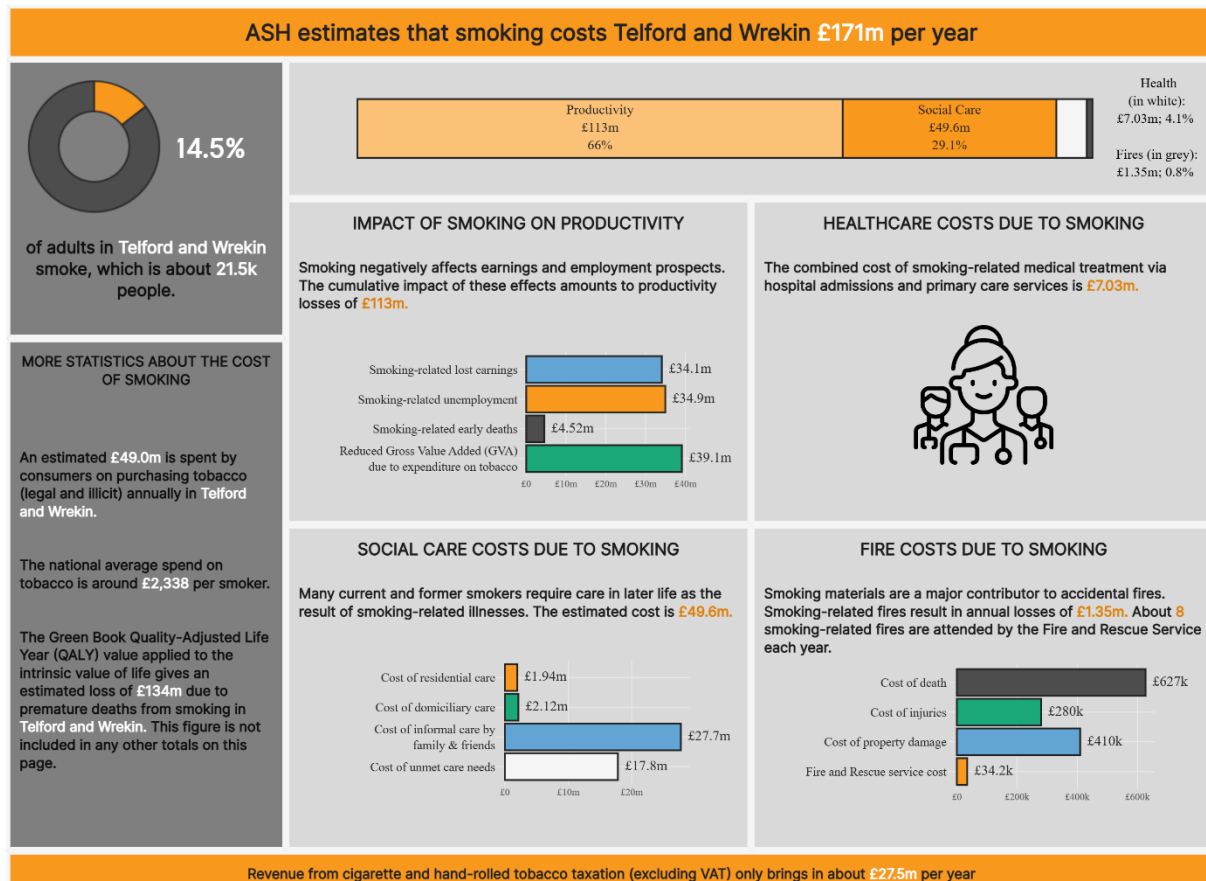
- 4.1 The Tobacco and Vapes Bill, which is progressing through the House of Lords, includes the following proposals:
- Generational Tobacco Ban - on tobacco sales to anyone born on or after 1 January 2009, to ensure future generations will never legally be sold tobacco products.
 - Licensing and Retail Regulation – introducing powers to establish a licensing regime for the retail sale of tobacco, vapes, and nicotine products.
 - Advertising and Packaging Restrictions – on branding, promotion, and advertising of vapes and nicotine products, especially those targeting children.
 - Expanded smoking restrictions - extending the smoking ban in public places to outdoor settings, where children and vulnerable people are present, including playgrounds, schools and hospital grounds, with strengthened enforcement of smoke-free policies in NHS settings.
 - Strengthening Enforcement Measures – against illicit tobacco and youth vaping, banning disposable vapes, ensuring the environmental costs of vape disposal are met by industry
 - Support for Smoking Cessation – through additional funding for local stop smoking services, introduction of Swap to Stop - free vape starter kits, introduction of pack inserts with positive quit messages, NHS opt-out smoking cessation interventions in routine care.

4.2 In Telford & Wrekin, smoking has a significant impact on health and wellbeing.

Smoking and vaping – local headlines



4.3 Alongside the health impacts, there are also major financial cost burdens associated with smoking.



Source: ashresources.shinyapps.io/ready_reckoner/

- 4.4 There are significant health benefits associated with quitting, and the majority of smokers wish they had not started in the first place. Engagement with local people who have quit smoking report very positive personal changes. The Council's Healthy Lifestyles Team offers a Stop Smoking Service for residents, and we regularly hear grateful feedback from clients on the support our Advisors offer.
- 4.5 The Council has been allocated additional funding through the Public Health Grant, to expand the number of people setting a quit date in Telford & Wrekin, and further Stop Smoking Advisors have been recruited. The new Neighbourhood Health approach launched in the NHS 10 year plan, provides a real opportunity to work with a range of NHS teams and voluntary and community sector organisations to improve proactive preventative care, such as stop smoking support, in our communities.
- 4.6 Locally, NHS Tobacco Dependency programmes offer stop smoking support in Shrewsbury & Telford Hospitals NHS Trust for inpatients and in maternity services. Midlands Partnership University Foundation Trust offers smoking cessation to patients with mental health issues. The NHS 10 year plan expects the expansion and further development of the NHS Tobacco Dependency programme, so quitting support in the NHS is: offered to patients staying overnight and in outpatient and community settings, personalised and tailored to individuals, and is targeted at the most disadvantaged people and high risk groups.
- 4.7 Smoking poses a range of risks to children and young people, including pregnancy outcomes and the development of asthma due to second-hand smoke. Parental smoking influences children, and the younger people start smoking, the greater the harm is and the lower chances of quitting. There is a worryingly large rise in vaping among young people, particularly those who do not smoke.
- 4.8 Telford and Wrekin Trading Standards Team in collaboration with Telford police, conduct multiple operations targeting the sale of illicit tobacco, and underage vape sales enforcement across Telford and Wrekin.
- 4.9 Smoking is a complex social and health issue which needs a multi-layered, comprehensive approach with residents and partner organisations working together in a coordinated way. The Government's smoke free generation ambition, the new Tobacco and Vapes Bill and recently published NHS 10 year plan all provide local opportunities now to effectively work towards a smoke free future.
- 4.10 The Director of Public Health makes the following recommendation for the Health & Wellbeing Board to support and approve:

A comprehensive plan to deliver Smoke Free Telford & Wrekin ambitions should be developed across Health & Wellbeing Board partners, and implemented through the Telford & Wrekin Place Integrated Partnership.

The Smoke Free delivery plan, which should draw on opportunities offered by the Tobacco and Vapes Bill and the new Neighbourhood Health approach, should be based on the following commitments:

- Reduce the number of people who smoke, by supporting more people to quit in community and NHS settings.
- Protect children and young people against smoking, vaping (and other nicotine products).
- Create more smoke free places to protect children and vulnerable people from second-hand smoke.
- Enhance enforcement and tackling of illicit tobacco and vapes.

5.0 Alternative Options

- 5.1 Producing an independent annual report is a statutory duty for the Director of Public Health and the local authority must publish the report, so not publishing a report would mean this duty is not complied with. Health and Wellbeing Board could decide to not endorse the recommendations of the Director of Public Health, but such a decision would be in spite of the wealth of evidence presented in the report.

6.0 Key Risks

- 6.1 Lack of local comprehensive collaboration on the smoke free agenda would likely mean smoking prevalence in our borough reduces more slowly than other parts of the country, and as such the harms and impact highlighted in the report would persist.

7.0 Council Priorities

- 7.1 Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community.

8.0 Financial Implications

- 8.1 The strategy included within the report will be delivered by Health and Voluntary Sector partner organisations and will be subject to resources available at a partnership level.
- 8.2 The Council reported expenditure of £466k in 2024/25 on stop smoking services and interventions.
- 8.3 The Council is receiving a Government grant of £274k in 2025/26, allocated on the estimated number of smokers over a 3 year period, described as “Smoking prevalence.” The grant is to support the Council to deliver a reduction in the number of people smoking, and has conditions attached, including maintaining original spending baselines such that the grant is additional spending power.

- 8.4 The Council will engage in the design and implementation of the multi-agency strategy within existing resources, however should there be additional resources required from the Council then this would be considered in accordance with the Council's Governance structure for setting future years budgets. RP 22/08/25

9.0 Legal and HR Implications

- 9.1 The Director of Public Health has a statutory duty to prepare an annual report on the health of the people in the area of the local authority under Section 73B(5) of the National Health Service Act 2006 (as amended). The report has to be published by the local authority under Section 73B(6). The attached report is produced by the Director of Public Health in order to meet these statutory responsibilities.

10.0 Ward Implications

- 10.1 Borough-wide impact, but particularly wards with highest levels socio-economic deprivation.

11.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications

- 11.1 Smoking increasing the risks of lung cancer, and other cancers, heart disease, stroke, respiratory disease and dementia. Half of the life expectancy gap between the most deprived and most affluent communities - 8.8 years for males and 6.4 year for females in Telford & Wrekin, are due to smoking. Second hand smoke exposure affects babies, children and young people, and vulnerable adults.
- 11.2 Smoking places significant financial costs burdens on statutory services, the economy and society more broadly, due to loss of productivity, unemployment, health and social care, as well as the impact of fires.

12.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

- 12.1 Smoking has significant implications for equality and diversity, particularly in how it reinforces health and social inequalities. It disproportionately affects individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds, including those with lower incomes, certain ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ communities, and people with mental health conditions. These groups often face higher smoking rates due to targeted marketing, social stressors, and limited access to cessation support. In the workplace, smoking policies that lack inclusivity can further marginalise these individuals, especially if they do not provide equitable access to quitting resources or accommodate cultural and social needs. Addressing smoking through an equality and diversity lens means recognising these disparities to ensure that local partnership action is inclusive, supportive, and tailored to the needs of vulnerable populations.

13.0 Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environmental Implications

- 13.1 Smoking has a considerable impact on climate change and the environment globally, contributing to: deforestation, pollution, and resource depletion. Tobacco

farming results in the loss of 100,000s of hectares of forest each year, reducing biodiversity and carbon absorption. Farming consumes vast amounts of water and depletes soil through heavy pesticide use. The Tobacco industry emits millions of tonnes of CO₂ annually through cultivation, manufacturing, and transportation processes. Cigarette butts, among the most littered items globally, release toxic chemicals and microplastics into ecosystems. The rise of disposable e-cigarettes has further added to electronic and plastic waste. Environmental harms are disproportionately felt in low-middle income countries where tobacco is grown.

14.0 Background Papers

None.

15.0 Appendices

A Annual Public Health Report 2025 Towards a Smoke Free Future

16.0 Report Sign Off

Signed off by	Date sent	Date signed off	Initials
Director	29/08/2025	21/08/2025	HO
Legal	21/08/2025	27/08/2025	RP
Finance	21/08/2025	28/08/2025	RP