



Science and Technology Committee

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From Rt Hon Norman Lamb MP, Chair

Professor John Newton
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26th September 2019

Dear Professor Newton.

You will be aware that in recent weeks there has been coverage of several issues relating to e-cigarettes, including:

- reports that some deaths in the United States have been linked to the use of e-cigarettes and vaping products;
- concerns that flavoured e-cigarettes are “luring” children into vaping and a call for flavours to be banned in the UK; and
- the introduction of a ban in India on the production, import and sale of electronic cigarettes due to concerns about the risks they pose to health and to the young, in particular.

You may remember that in my Committee's Report, *E-cigarettes*, published in August 2018, we shared PHE's view that e-cigarettes were less harmful than conventional cigarettes:

There is clear evidence that e-cigarettes are substantially less harmful than conventional cigarettes. Public Health England estimate e-cigarettes as 95% less harmful, although the evidence available does not currently allow a precise figure to be determined.

However, we noted that “There are uncertainties, nevertheless, especially about any long-term health effects of e-cigarettes, because the products have not yet had a history of long use”.

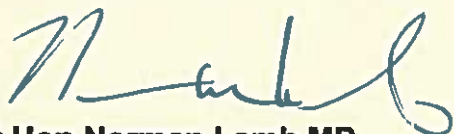
I know that PHE annually reviews the evidence relating to e-cigarettes—something that my Committee welcomes. However, given the recent coverage and actions taken by other countries, I would be grateful if you could set out:

- PHE's response to these recent reports;
- what review of the evidence on the effects of e-cigarettes PHE has undertaken in recent months and whether PHE plans to conduct any further research in light of recent concerns;

- what conversations PHE has had with other countries on:
 - their approach to e-cigarettes;
 - any recent changes they have made to that approach;
 - the evidence that led other countries to take the recent actions mentioned earlier in this letter; and
- whether PHE intends to issue any further advice to clinicians and the public on the use of e-cigarettes, including as a stop-smoking tool.

I would be grateful if you could provide a response to this letter by Wednesday 9 October. I will be placing a copy of this letter on my Committee's website in the coming weeks.

Yours sincerely,



Rt Hon Norman Lamb MP
Chair
