

Report on	Sunbed Test Purchasing Exercise
Date of Meeting	12 th October 2023
Reporting Officer	Kieran Gordon, Assistant Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing
Contact Officer	Melanie Patterson, Environmental Health Service Manager

Is this report restricted for confidential business? If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	Yes	
	No	x

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To provide information on the outcome of two sunbed test purchase exercises carried out on 3 rd August and 24 th August 2023 under the Sunbeds Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.
2.0	Background
2.1	The Sunbeds Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 came into effect in May 2012. The Act was introduced because of the growing evidence of the health risks associated with sunbed use, including skin cancer, with young people at particular risk.
2.2	District Council Environmental Health Departments have a statutory duty to enforce the provisions of the Act.
2.3	Regulation 1 of the Act prohibits the use/sale and/or hire of sunbeds to persons under the age of 18. The Public Health Agency has set a target for all premises operating sunbeds to be subject to test purchasing at least once every two years.
2.4	Sunbeds for use by the public have been identified in standalone tanning salons, hairdressers, beauty salons and gyms within the district.
2.5	Test purchase exercises using child volunteers under the age of 18 are considered an appropriate means of assessing the level of compliance with Regulation 1.
2.6	The Environmental Health Service undertakes all test purchase exercises in accordance with most up to date guidance produced by the Northern Ireland Sunbed Working Group (NISWG).
3.0	Main Report
3.1	Prior to the test purchasing exercise all sunbed premises owners within the Mid Ulster District Council area were reminded in writing of their responsibilities under the provisions of the Act and informed that a test purchase exercise would be taking place within the next 12 months.
3.2	A test purchasing exercise for sunbeds involves sending a young person under the age of 18 years into a sunbed premises to ask to purchase a sunbed session. On this occasion a 13-year-old child was used, and the young person received training prior to the test purchase exercise.

3.3	<p>For the purposes of the test purchase exercise, a total of 25 sunbed premises were identified and visited. The outcome of the test purchasing exercise was that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 premises refused a sale to the child volunteer, • 3 premises made a sale to the child volunteer, • 2 premises confirmed that they no longer offered sunbeds • 2 premises were closed at the time of the exercise.
3.4	<p>In line with section 12 of the Sunbeds Act, the three sunbed owners where a sale had taken place were each issued with a £250 fixed penalty notice. Th fixed penalty notice offers the opportunity to discharge any liability to conviction for the offence. All 3 notices were paid within the specified timeframes.</p>
3.5	<p>A further test purchase exercise will be conducted later in the year to capture those sunbed premises that were closed and retest those who failed this exercise.</p>
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	<p>Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications</p> <p>Financial: Officer time</p> <p>Human: Officer time</p> <p>Risk Management: Considered in line with relevant policies and procedures.</p>
4.2	<p>Screening & Impact Assessments</p> <p>Equality & Good Relations Implications: N/A</p> <p>Rural Needs Implications: N/A</p>
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	<p>To note the contents of this report.</p>
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	<p>N/A</p>