



Report of:	Meeting	Date
Councillor Henderson, Leader of the Council and Mark Billington, Service Director People and Places	Council	3 October 2019

Single Use Plastics Policy

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1** To seek approval for the implementation of a single use plastics policy for the council (Appendix 1).

2. Outcomes

- 2.1** A reduction in the council's reliance on single use plastics.
- 2.2** Improved recycling of materials purchased by the council to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill.
- 2.3** Collaboration with our partners to respond to climate change issues.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1** That the council encourages officers to ensure that single-use plastics are phased out or reduced across all council locations.
- 3.2** That where possible improved recycling at council facilities be introduced regarding plastics and other materials.
- 3.3** Event organisers be required to reduce or eliminate single-use plastics and provide improved recycling opportunities at events held on council land.
- 3.4** Encourage strategic partners to adopt single use plastic policies.
- 3.5** Share best practice and information about plastic free initiatives, to residents, businesses and visitors through the council's communication channels.

- 3.6 That the council joins forces with external organisations who champion cleaner greener environments.
- 3.7 Communicate the importance of protecting our urban, rural and marine environments, and support and promote positive initiatives, campaigns and actions for reducing plastic waste
- 3.8 Continue to support communities, beach cleans and litter-pick initiatives to ensure our parks, beaches and open spaces are free from plastic litter.

4. Background

- 4.1 Single Use Plastics (disposable plastics) are intended to be used only once or a few times before they are disposed of.
- 4.2 It is estimated that the amount of plastic waste generated annually within the UK is around 5 million tonnes. This is having a catastrophic effect on the environment, particularly our marine environment as most plastics do not biodegrade but photodegrade. This means that they slowly break down, often over hundreds of years, into small fragments known as microplastics.

5. Key issues and proposals

- 5.1 On 11 July 2019 Council declared a Climate Change Emergency and as such is committed to reducing its impacts on the Environment through its activities.
- 5.2 An audit of the council’s reliance on single use plastics is currently being undertaken, led by a cross-directorate working group, to help establish the level of use and early options for reduction.
- 5.3 Progress in the reduction of Single Use Plastics to be monitored as part of the work under taken by the Climate Change Policy Group.

Financial and legal implications	
Finance	There are no immediate financial implications as a result of the adoption of a Single Use Plastics Policy. As the policy evolves and alternative products are sourced there may be financial implications which will need to be considered as part of the process for reducing single use plastics.
Legal	There are no current legal implications regarding the adoption of the Single Use Plastics Policy.

Other risks/implications: checklist

If there are significant implications arising from this report on any issues marked with a ✓ below, the report author will have consulted with the appropriate specialist officers on those implications and addressed them in the body of the report. There are no significant implications arising directly from this report, for those issues marked with a x.

risks/implications	✓ / x
community safety	x
equality and diversity	x
sustainability	✓
health and safety	x

risks/implications	✓ / x
asset management	x
climate change	✓
ICT	x
data protection	x

Processing Personal Data

In addition to considering data protection along with the other risks/ implications, the report author will need to decide if a 'privacy impact assessment (PIA)' is also required. If the decision(s) recommended in this report will result in the collection and processing of personal data for the first time (i.e. purchase of a new system, a new working arrangement with a third party) a PIA will need to have been completed and signed off by Data Protection Officer before the decision is taken in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

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List of background papers:		
name of document	date	where available for inspection
None		

List of appendices

Appendix 1 - Single Use Plastics Policy

SINGLE USE PLASTIC POLICY

Introduction

The amount of plastic waste generated annually in the UK is estimated to be nearly 5 million tonnes, which has a catastrophic effect on our environment, particularly our marine environment. Most plastics do not biodegrade, but instead photodegrade, meaning that they slowly break down, often over hundreds of years, into small fragments known as microplastics. If plastic products are made to last, are reused again and again, and then recycled at the end of their usefulness, they can be a sustainable option. The problem unfortunately is how prolific the everyday use of single-use plastic items has become. Wyre Council wants to help address the problem by reviewing its use of single use plastics leading to the reduction and eventual elimination of their use.

What are single-use plastics?

Also often referred to as disposable plastics, single use plastics are intended to be used only once or a few times before they are thrown away or recycled. This includes plastic packaging, grocery bags, plastic drinks bottles, body buffs, containers, straws, cups, dispensing containers for cleaning fluids, disposable items and materials used for packaging and marketing use.

Our policy

The issue of single-use plastics and how to reduce, reuse and recycle will be very much a part of the Authority's work going forward and we will start by looking at our own business first. The ultimate goal is to achieve a single use plastic-free organisation across our workforce, operations and assets.

Wyre council commits to:

- Engage with staff to ensure that single-use plastics are phased out across council locations;
- That where possible improved recycling at council facilities be introduced regarding plastics and other materials;
- Work with event organisers to reduce single-use plastics and provide improved recycling opportunities at events held on council land;
- Use government legislation that regulates against the use of single use plastics to support our efforts;
- Work with our supply chain to raise awareness and minimise the use of single-use plastics in service provision and seek sustainable alternatives;
- Where single use plastic is unavoidable, encourage the use of recycled plastics and pursue pioneering recycling opportunities;
- Encourage strategic partners to adopt single use plastic policies;
- Share best practice and information about plastic free initiatives, to residents, businesses, visitors and beyond, through the council's communication channels;
- Join forces with external organisations who champion cleaner, greener environments;
- Communicate the importance of protecting our urban, rural and marine environments, and support and promote positive initiatives, campaigns and actions for reducing plastic waste; and
- Continue to support communities, beach cleans and litter-pick initiatives to ensure our parks, beaches and open spaces are free from plastic litter.