

Place Scrutiny Committee

30 January 2020

Single Use Plastic Policy

For Recommendation to Cabinet

Portfolio Holder: Cllr R Bryan, Highways, Travel and Environment

Local Councillor(s): **Relevant to all Dorset Council Members**

Executive Director: John Sellgren, Executive Director of Place

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Report Status: Public

Recommendation: That members of the committee consider and comment on the Single Use Plastic Policy and recommend to cabinet for adoption.

Reason for Recommendation: Bring consistency of approaches to reducing Single Use Plastic (SUP) throughout Dorset Council offices and services

1. Executive Summary

Single use plastics are any disposable plastic item that is designed to be used only once. Single-use plastics are often used in packaging, consumer products, cosmetics and healthcare. Examples include: plastic bags, disposable utensils, beverage containers, balloons and wet wipes. It is estimated that around 50% of plastic waste we produce globally is packaging that is used just once.

There are two key issues linked to this policy:

- a. Plastic pollution is litter which is linked to damaging the environment and wildlife (especially marine and coastal wildlife)
- b. Plastic is a major contributor to climate change because chemicals derived from fossil fuel production are used to make almost all plastics.

The Single Use Plastic (SUP) Policy commits Dorset Council to act to remove and reduce the use of Single Use Plastic from Dorset Council's operations

and services as well as working towards finding positive solutions for reducing unnecessary waste across Dorset.

The work to implement this policy will be undertaken in two phases. Phase 1 will look at reducing single use plastic in all the 14 Dorset Council offices. Phase 2 will look at reducing single use plastic in Dorset Council services and operations

A Single Use Plastic task group has been established to focus on making changes within Dorset Council. This group is concentrating on phase 1

A SUP audit has been carried out to inform the work.

A SUP action plan (phase 1) supports this policy setting out what, how and when this will be achieved. Implementing this policy Dorset Council will:

- Lead by example
- Work with our suppliers and contractors
- Support Dorset communities

The work to reduce SUP is being coordinated by the Dorset Council hosted partnership Litter Free Dorset.

2. Financial Implications

It is difficult to clarify whether there will be any financial savings or costs related to this policy as it will depend on what actions are being carried forward to reduce SUP. There could be potential savings related to this policy for example the number of water bottles procured by Dorset council could be reduced. It is important to note that all actions within the SUP Action plan will look at the financial, carbon footprint, environment, health and safety implications.

3. Climate implications

Plastic is a major contributor to climate change - Chemicals derived from fossil fuel production are used to make almost all plastics. The more plastic made, the more petrochemicals are required, and the more petrochemicals required, the higher the demand for gas, oil and even coal. By reducing or removing SUP this will mean Dorset Council are helping to reduce the demand for fossil fuels, thereby reducing the CO₂ in the atmosphere. This will support the Dorset Council climate change emergency work.

4. Other Implications

Plastic pollution is both a global and local issue that affects the natural and urban environment, the oceans, beaches and links to people's health and wellbeing. Dorset has some of the most beautiful countryside in Britain, numerous designations including the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site, the Dorset and Cranborne Chase Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and a highly designated coast and marine environment. All of which contribute

greatly to the local economy and support a diverse range of habitats and species which are at risk due to plastic pollution. Plastic pollution from SUP found in our towns and villages impacts aesthetically but is also costly to remove and dispose of.

5. Risk Assessment

Having considered the risks associated with this decision, the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk: Low

6. Equalities Impact Assessment

An EqIA screening has been carried out which has indicated that the policy does not require a full EqIA,

7. Appendices

- Appendix 1 - The Single Use Plastic Policy
- Appendix 2 - The Single Use Policy Action Plan
- Appendix 3 - The Single Use Plastic procurement data

8. Background Papers

9.0 Introduction

9.1 Litter Free Dorset is made up of a group of local organisations, local authorities, charities and community groups. They all work together to reduce the social, economic and environmental impacts of litter. This is done by trying to stop littering behaviour in the first place through implementing campaigns, policy and co-producing projects to reduce waste and litter in Dorset.

9.2 Litter Free Dorset are creating a Resource Hub with policy templates for organisations and businesses wanting to reduce their single use plastic, and are supporting Dorset Council to reduce Single Use Plastic by coordinating the work, facilitating discussion and offering advice.

10. Single Use Plastic Policy

10.1 Dorset Council has a designated SUP task group to focus on making changes within the Council. This group includes key representatives across the authority including procurement, facilities, communications, Sustainability, property, estate & assets, waste (DWP) and environmental advice. The group also has three Councillors within the membership. It has worked on delivering the SUP policy and phase 1. A new group will be established for phase 2.

10.2 The first step in developing the single use plastic policy and action plan was to carry out an audit of the council office buildings. The audit identified what single use plastic items are in Dorset Council offices and helped the task

group identify which items will be easy or difficult to remove or find alternatives for. This has been used to create the SUP action plan. The audit details what single use plastic was found in all 14 DC offices. It was used by the task and finish group to see the inconsistencies across DC offices and determine what actions need to happen to ensure a fair and consistent approach to reduce SUP across all the council offices.

The Single Use Plastic Audit – Key Findings are:

Milk

- Plastic Milk pots 12ml are used in County Hall and Princes House
- Plastic Milk containers were found in 13 out of 14 council offices

Water

- The only place where plastic water bottles are sold or provided is at the café in County Hall
- Plastic water cups were found at 3 council offices - Westport House, Allenview & Nordan

Cutlery

- Plastic Stirrers were found in Westport House & Nordan
- Plastic Cutlery was found at County Hall

Cleaning

- Wet wipes were found in Allenview House & Nordan for cleaning
- Plastic Bottles for cleaning products (1 time use) were being used in 6 council offices

A summary of what SUP has been procured over the last two years can be found in a background paper.

10.3 The Single Use Plastic Policy has been put together by the SUP task and finish group and is attached as a background paper.

10.4 A Single Use Plastic Action Plan has been produced to show the actions needed to reduce the amount of single use plastic across the Dorset Council offices. This action plan is a 'live' document which will be updated and reviewed regularly, and currently applies only to phase 1. This is attached as a background paper.

10.5 A Single Use Plastic communications plan for phase 1 has been written and will be delivered by the communications team. The key elements of the communications plan include:

- Core messages at key intervals prior to implementation will be sent out
- Use of existing internal communication channels will be used
- There will be a number of calls to action e.g. Staff to bring in their own cutlery and crockery
- It will link to the Climate Emergency work
- There will be FAQs – What do I need to do?

11. Conclusion

The Single Use Plastic policy presents a joint and consistent approach to managing Dorset Council's use of SUPs. The policy and action plan fit well with the Council's emerging Corporate Plan and our ongoing work around the Climate Change Emergency.

John Sellgren
Executive Director for Place

30th January 2020