

ENVIRONMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP

5TH MARCH 2019

Single use plastic update

Cabinet Member(s): Cllr Clive Eginton, Leader of Council
Responsible Officer: Kevin Swift, Public Health Officer

Reason for Report: To provide an update on the implementation of Motion 549 (Cllr B Evans - 8th June 2018), which aims to phase out the use of Single Use Plastics (SUPs) by the Council.

RECOMMENDATION: That the PDG notes the report.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: Priority: Environment
Aim 1 – Increase recycling and reduce the amount of waste

- Provide a high standard waste and recycling service for the benefit of all households
- Reduce the amount of residual waste produced
- Work with businesses, especially pubs and restaurants, to encourage recycling to improve business efficiency and reduce commercial waste going to landfill
- Increase understanding of environmental sustainability and recycling initiatives through education and promotional activities

Financial Implications: Potential increase in revenue from recycling

Legal Implications: None

Risk Assessment: Degradation of environment, increase costs associated with cleaning up discarded SUPs.

Equality Impact Assessment: Not applicable to this report.

1.0 Review of Mid Devon District Council's SUP usage

1.1 The main source of single use plastic used by the Council comes from food and beverage packaging and tableware. This type of plastic is commonly found along our coastlines and discarded in our countryside. The impact on animal and human health has been well documented and is of growing concern to the community. The potential for plastics to pass through the food chain is also a growing threat.

1.2 Mid Devon Leisure have a number of channels by which SUPs are purchased such as through vending machines or by suppliers to the cafes in operation at Exe Valley and Lords Meadow. Since the motion was passed Leisure management have engaged with the cafes to review their products and practices. Each operator provided a summary:

Camper Coffee (Lords Meadow)

Cups and lids are compostable.
Milk containers/plastic wraps are recycled.
Wooden stirrers are Biodegradable.
Discount offered for use of reusable cups.
Glass has to be taken off site but is recycled.

Elsie May (Exe Valley)

Using Veg ware take away cups, which are compostable.
Started to change all packaging recently to veg ware or similar.
Using paper bags/carrier bags with cardboard cup holders and wooden stirrers, paper straws, wooden knives, forks and spoons and some veg ware packaging.
Smoothie cups are still at this moment in time single use plastic but the supplier does have veg ware smoothie cups on their stock list.
The plastic cup lids and any plastic cutlery we have left, currently working through our stock but once they have gone they will all be bio gradable.
We do recycle our cardboard but don't recycle our plastic milk bottles, glass or plastic drink bottles.

Culm Valley Coffee Machine

Identified suppliers for compostable lids and cups. We would have to use up the current stock, but the price is very comparable to the lids currently in use.
Current cups in use can be recycled; however, there is no clear mention of them being biodegradable or compostable.

Mid Devon Leisure will continue to work with the companies and their suppliers in moving towards alternatives or replacements for SUPs.

2.0 Vending machines

2.1 The removal of SUPs in vending machines would rely on major national suppliers moving to more sustainable packaging. Though this may be desirable it is unlikely to happen in the short term. The recycling of drink bottles remains our most effect way of reducing the impact of SUPs. Producing energy from waste remains another alternative route. National and local initiatives to introduce refund schemes may also improve the recycling rate. Mid Devon Leisure are looking at ways of maximising the collection of drink bottles at their centres.

3.0 Program area initiatives

3.1 The following table outlines progress that has been taken by each program area. It should be noted that where possible general packaging of goods e.g. plastic wrap will be taken up by Procurement rather than by an individual program area.

Program	Actions
Finance/Procurement	Sent letter to all suppliers (approx. 180) asking them to complete a survey about SUPs. This will provide information about company plans and will hopefully encourage further positive dialogue between Council and companies on this issue.

Public Health and Regulatory services	Plastic specimen containers are now sterilised and re-used. Very little SUP used other than what can be readily recycled in Phoenix House.
Performance, Governance and Data Security	No SUPs used.
Building Services	Written to all building product suppliers explaining that we have signed up to a pledge to reduce single use plastics and asked them to support this fact. They have also asked them for a copy of their environment policy. No longer use or order plastic cups for the water cooler. Have taken steps to increase waste segregation in the yard, ultimately with a view to recycling as much plastic waste as possible e.g. PVC sheets now recycled.
Housing	No SUPs used.
ICT	No SUPs used.
Legal Services and land charges	No SUPs used.
Business transformation and customer Engagement	Removed plastic 'water' cups from all meetings. Staff and Member meetings now using china cups. Recyclable paper cups available for large public meetings.
Street Scene and Open Spaces	Worked with Public Health and Leisure to increase recycling. New bins provided.

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Circulation of the Report: Cllr Clive Eginton, Andrew Pritchard, Dir. Of Operations

List of Background Papers: Procurement letter