

Subject:	Phasing out single-use plastics		
Date of Meeting:	12 July 2018		
Report of:	Executive Director Economy, Environment & Culture		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Mita Patel	Tel: 01273 293332
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.1 This report proposes a new policy approach to phasing out single-use plastics (SUPs) across council buildings and services, and provides a progress update on work that has begun to pave the way for implementing this policy.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Policy, Resources and Growth Committee:

- 2.1 Note the report and work progress detailed in section 4.
- 2.2 Approve the draft Corporate SUPs policy Appendix 1.
- 2.3 Approve the recommendation that reporting on this will be brought to Environment, Transport and Sustainability Committee on an annual basis until such time that the committee is confident that the city council has done all it can to reduce and eliminate SUPs use in the city.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The passing of two Notices of Motion on 2 November 2017, triggered work to begin the process of phasing out SUPs across council buildings and services.
- 3.2 It was agreed that regular updates would be brought to Policy, Resources and Growth Committee to inform members of progress and achievements made.
- 3.3 Due to its contribution to marine plastic pollution, the Government has introduced new legislation in relation to microbeads. A ban on the manufacture of microbeads in rinse-off personal care products came into force in England on 9 January 2018 and a ban on the supply of any rinse-off personal care product containing microbeads came into force in England on 30 June 2018¹. Manufacturing or supplying such articles is an offence and may lead to a fine.

¹ The Environmental Protection (Microbeads) (England) Regulations 2017

Local authorities have been designated as the regulator for enforcing this legislation.

- 3.4 A petition calling for the banning of single-use plastics at all city events was brought to Tourism, Development & Culture Committee on 21 June 2018. The petition received 1,416 signatures.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 A programme board has already met to oversee, steer and influence progress in this work. The board is made up of officers from relevant departments that have an influence on the use of SUPs in council services including Procurement, Premises, Communications, Events, Public Health and City Services.
- 4.2 It is proposed that the following Corporate Policy position on SUPs is adopted by the city council (see Appendix 1).
- 4.3 The policy will be expanded upon by a more detailed guidance note that will set out key priority areas for action across council services for supporting work in phasing out SUPs. This guidance will be prepared in consultation with the Chair of the Environment, Transport and Sustainability Committee.
- 4.4 In advance of this policy being agreed, a lot of work has already been done since the unanimous agreement to the Notices of Motion to pave the way for the city council to reduce SUPs within its own activities and across the city.
- 4.5 The council has signed up to the city's Plastic Free Pledge² campaign and will work them, and other plastic free initiatives towards the common goal in eliminating SUPs across the city.
- 4.6 In response to the new legislation on the manufacture, or supply of any rinse-off personal care product containing microbeads as outlined in section 3.3, the Council's Trading Standards team will be accommodating this as follows:
- As part of their annual inspections of all cosmetics manufacturers within the city, production information files will be requested and checked to ensure that the banned materials are not present within the ingredients.
 - If inspectors come across a product sold but not manufactured within the city then they will request that it be removed from supply and a referral made to the manufacturers' local Trading Standards for the provision of advice or enforcement action. Decisions regarding enforcement action against the supplier of the product will be taken as appropriate.
 - Trading Standards are advising individuals to raise any complaints or concerns about non-compliant products through the Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 03454 040506. This information will be shared through various relevant council communication and social media channels.
- 4.7 The Procurement Team are progressing SUPs work in the following areas:

² <https://www.plasticfreepledge.com>

- The updated sustainable procurement policy has now been published on the BHCC website³, requiring suppliers to reduce the use of single-use plastics in their service provision and find sustainable alternatives (where appropriate).
 - SUPs related questions are being added to the tender selection questionnaire which bidders will be required to complete as part of their submission. This will be completed by mid-July.
 - Sustainability related quality questions around the use of SUPs are being added, in tenders where it is relevant to do so.
 - Requirements around the reduction of SUPs are being added to specification documents, where it is appropriate to do so.
 - All BHCC contract managers are being consulted on the use of SUPs in their contracts. This will help to identify areas of high impact, where there is significant use of SUPs in services provided to the council and where there are opportunities and challenges in reducing SUPs and finding alternatives. The survey aims to influence a reduction of SUPs across our supply chain.
- 4.8 Regular communications to encourage staff action on eliminating SUPs in our buildings is being promoted through the various channels including the council's Intranet, Buildings Users Group network and through other ways such as distribution of posters to all council buildings. Staff are being asked to no longer request disposable cups from their hospitality service providers, or that they are not purchased for meetings and events. But, rather, staff are being requested to use their own mugs, cups, glasses and crockery instead. This piece of work is being supported by the Communications Team and Premises Team but will rely upon the individual teams and members of staff committing to these new practices.
- 4.9 Special staff discounts have been secured with UK based manufacturers of reusable and sustainably made coffee cups, to encourage staff to invest and use these coffee cups instead of buying their coffee in disposables, benefitting from discounts offered at local coffee shops, and help to adhere by the council SUPs policy for having no disposables in council buildings.
- 4.10 A Biosphere/The Living Coast drinking water brand is being finalised for providing an overarching identity for supporting all drinking water and plastic reduction campaigns and initiatives in the city. The brand will aim to recognise positive actions working towards achieving similar aims. This will be used for engagement with businesses, venues and events and provide greater flexibility in which drinking water, reuse or plastic free pledge initiatives they chose to sign up to. It will provide a local identity for influencing and encouraging more positive engagement on plastics reduction from the business community. (More detail on work targeting events that has been progressed in close collaboration with the Council's Events Team is provided in section 4.15).
- 4.11 The Brighton & Hove Refill campaign continues to be rolled out with over 200 official water refill stations signed up across the city.
- 4.12 The council's Premises Team is leading on a project looking at the installation of 6 public water fountains across the city. This initiative is in collaboration with

³ <https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/council-and-democracy/contracts-and-tenders-council/sustainable-procurement>

other areas of the council including the Public Health team. Its success will depend upon securing funding and sponsorship and will support the wider Biosphere/ The Living Coast water drinking project that aims to promote greater public access to tap water, support local water refill campaigns and initiatives and help in the reduction of disposable plastic bottle litter in the city.

- 4.13 Offer of free tap water is part of the criteria of the Healthy Choice Award (HCA) scheme delivered by the Public Health team. This scheme is targeted at catering and food establishments across the city. To date approximately 109 food outlets have signed up to HCA – 55 of which received a full award in recognition for offering free tap water.
- 4.14 The recent staff Health & Wellbeing survey identified the need for providing greater access to filtered tap water in council buildings for supporting staff wellbeing at work. The council's Premises team is looking into how provision for this can be improved across all key council buildings for both staff and in publicly accessible areas.
- 4.15 The Events Team have been making good progress with influencing key city event organisers in reducing plastics at their events through improved sustainable events standards. These include the following:
- The Great Escape have adopted ambitious standards within their sustainability policy (Appendix 2) around reusable and compostable alternatives to single-use plastics, and better segregation and management of waste and litter.
 - The Spiegel tent Brighton Fringe worked closely with Sustainable Business Partnership in identifying practical actions for their event this year (Appendix 3). This work raised the importance of providing free tap water for preventing negative impacts on human health that can be a common risk at such outdoor events.
 - The council's TAKEPART festival 2018 have adopted a series of measures around reducing SUPs including: promotion of availability of free water drinking fountains during event and before event via festival social media; information provision to all exhibitors about reducing environmental impact; focusing on reducing and re-thinking giveaways; waste segregation and management; providing Healthy Lifestyles Team staff and volunteers with reusable drinks containers for use at the event.
 - The team have also been working closely with Pride and other key city events in taking practical action on SUPs during their 2018 dates.
 - The Brighton Yoga Festival 2018 is pledging to go plastic free by encouraging those attending to bring re-usable water bottles and making sure that there is good access to free tap water.
- 4.16 The Events team will work with partners and experts in the events sector at a national and local level, learn from best practice and apply locally, and continue on-going work with all city event organisers to eliminate plastics from city events into the future.
- 4.17 The Events team will also be including the ban on supply of products containing microbeads at events (as outlined in section 3.3) within its guidance documents to event organisers.

- 4.18 The Royal Pavilion and Museums service is re-assessing all products sold in museum shops with a view to discontinuing the sale of unnecessary plastic items, procuring products that are more sustainable in terms of materials used, ethical sourcing and increasing products that are produced more locally. They are also working closely with their suppliers to reduce packaging of products. Local experts are being consulted to support this work.
- 4.19 A project for reducing plastics and promoting greater access and drinking of tap water in schools is currently being developed by the BHCC Public Health team. This will build on existing healthy eating programmes delivered in schools, the council's SugarSmart campaign and existing anti-plastics initiatives, policies and awareness raising campaigns that individual schools are undertaking within their buildings. It will link to on-going waste and recycling education delivered in schools as part of the Brighton & Hove Environmental Education programme (BHee). This project is also collaborating closely with school caterers who have expressed a strong interest plastic reduction.
- 4.20 The council's #StreetsAhead programme for 2018 will include:
- Monthly beach cleans February-October with Pier2Pier Beach Clean group
 - 'A drop in the ocean': research and creative design project using plastic bottle tops from along the seafront. Tops will be collected via collection bottles hosted by businesses, via beach cleans, as well as Cityclean seafront staff during their cleans. Tops will be used to create an installation which will be displayed in Kemptown beach. More info: <https://www.adropintheocean.org.uk/>
 - Collaboration with Cityparks to deliver another silent disco park clean in a busy green space during the summer.
 - Continue to support beach clean groups and litter picking events in Brighton and Hove by arranging for the equipment and promotion of the events.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 On-going engagement and consultation with businesses, venues and events is being undertaken as part of The Living Coast tap water project.
- 5.2 Schools are being consulted to access their needs around improving access to free drinking water in their buildings.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Good progress to phase out SUPs across all areas continues to be made, with particular work in procurement and contract management underway that should enable further opportunities to be identified. The establishment of the programme board is helping to ensure work is being properly progressed and monitored. The board will also manage on-going updates and dissemination of the SUPs work.

- 6.2 It is recommended that reporting on this work will be brought to ETS on an annual basis until such time that the committee is confident that the city council has done all it can to reduce and eliminate SUPs use in the city.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report, however, the financial impact of using alternative materials and phasing out SUP's through the procurement of contracts will need to be considered within the award of each contract. The financial impact of using alternative materials for revenue services, agencies, and supply chains will also need to be considered within the scope of their respective revenue budgets..

Finance Officer Consulted: Rob Allen

Date: 15/06/18

Legal Implications:

- 7.2 There are no direct legal implications arising from the report. The legal implications in relation to future procurements will need to be considered in relation to each project and be conducted in accordance with the Council's Contract Standing Orders and the relevant Procurement Regulations. The new legislation in relation to microbeads is as set out briefly in paragraph 3.3.

Lawyer Consulted: Elizabeth Culbert

Date: 14/06/18

Equalities Implications:

- 7.3 The Biosphere tap water project supports greater promotion and improved public access to free drinking water.
- 7.4 Equalities impacts towards building users and members of the public will be considered for all the initiatives and work areas outlined in this report. An equalities impact assessment will be undertaken as and where identified.

Sustainability Implications:

- 7.5 This project supports sustainability through minimising SUP waste and litter reducing the negative impacts these can have upon the environment. Encouraging the reuse of bottles and materials and finding alternatives to SUPs will also reduce the amount of embodied energy that goes into production of SUPs.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 7.6 By taking leadership and being pro-active in its ambitions to phase out SUPs, where it can, the council is reducing its risk in getting negative publicity in its

response to a growing local and global problem. There are many positive initiatives that are currently being delivered in plastic waste reduction, both at a grassroots and national level. There is currently widespread public concern and a growing desire to take action on SUPs now. The council's strong position on tackling the SUPs problem supports this cause. Its efforts in engaging with wider stakeholders and the public in these efforts, demonstrates that it is making the most of this opportunity.

Public Health Implications:

- 7.7 A key element of this work is in the delivery of the Biosphere tap water project which aims to promote greater drinking of tap water, and the positive health benefits this can have for residents, workers, and visitors in Brighton & Hove.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 7.8 Activities are supported through the development of the BHCC SUPs policy document. There will be ongoing consultation with building and service users to ensure that any reduction in SUPs do not present a negative impact to staff and the working environment.
- 7.9 This report includes projects that aim to have a positive impact upon the wider public, businesses, and other city stakeholders. All projects will involve stakeholder engagement and consultation to ensure that any potential negative impacts to the wider city community are considered and mitigated against.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Brighton & Hove City Council Single-Use Plastics Policy
2. The Great Escape (2018) - Sustainability Policy
3. Spiegelent Brighton Fringe - The Living Coast Drinking Water Project consultation report produced by Sustainable Business Partnership CIC

