

CABINET
14 JUNE 2018**PLASTICS AND NON-RECYCLABLE CUPS – NOTICES OF MOTION FROM COUNCIL 15 FEBRUARY 2018**

Relevant Cabinet Member

Mr A P Miller

Relevant Officer

Director of Economy and Infrastructure

Recommendation**1. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Environment recommends that:**

- a. **Cabinet does not adopt Notice of Motion 1 given the content of this report and actions being taken but supports the general principles behind it;**
- b. **In relation to Notice of Motion 2 Cabinet recognises that the Council has already endorsed the importance of these issues to residents and employees and is actively engaged in identifying alternatives to single use plastics within its direct operations as referenced in this report; and**
- c. **it be Cabinet's intention that Council commissioners should use all reasonable endeavours to consider issues relating to the disposal of plastics in specifying, procuring and contracting for goods and services.**

Notices of Motion**2. The following Notices of Motion were moved and seconded at Council on 15**

February 2018:

Notice of Motion 1 – Discarded plastics and non-recyclable cups

Notice of Motion standing in the names of Mrs E B Tucker, Prof J W Raine, Mr M E Jenkins and Mrs F M Oborski:

"This Council recognises that discarded plastics and non-recyclable cups are a major environmental pollutant.

Council therefore resolved to:

1. Cease the use of single plastic water cups and replace them with washable, reusable alternatives
2. Request our caterers to replace all non-recyclable hot drink containers with suitable environmentally friendly alternatives."

The motion stood referred to the Cabinet for decision. Mrs Tucker and Prof Raine (as mover and seconder) and Mr Jenkins (the third signatory of the Notice of Motion) have been invited to the meeting.

Notice of Motion 2 – Single-use plastics

Notice of Motion standing in the names of Mr P M McDonald, Mr R M Udall, Mr R C Lunn, Mr P Denham, Mr C J Bloore and Mr L C R Mallett (subsequently amended and the following wording was agreed by Council):

"That this Council asks Cabinet to join others in the battle against single-use plastic by encouraging the use of alternative materials for cups, bottles, cutlery and straws at all its buildings, cafes and public events."

The motion was agreed by Council and Cabinet therefore is to consider the request. Mr McDonald and Ms Stalker (as mover and seconder) and Mr Udall and Mr Lunn (as second and third signatories of the Notice of Motion) have been invited to the meeting.

3. The Leader requested that both Notices of Motion were referred to the April Cabinet where a short report outlining the direction of travel relevant to the above Motions was presented. It was agreed that a more detailed report be presented to June Cabinet for discussion and decision. This report follows, with further information appended. It is to be noted that UK policy and Council supplier actions have raced ahead of the limited issue in the relevant Notices of Motion and the situation remains somewhat fluid.

Background

4. Members will be aware that, following the BBC Blue Planet II series highlighting the global problem of plastic pollution, there is a high level of public interest, both nationally and locally, in reducing the use of single use plastics (SUP). In response, many large organisations are moving to reduce or completely cease use of SUP, particularly in relation to catering. This includes other local authorities, such as Gloucestershire County Council who are seeking to eliminate SUP from Council-managed buildings and facilities by 2020, the BBC who also plan to ban the use of SUP across all their sites by 2020, and UK Parliament who plan to eliminate single use plastic from their catering facilities this summer. Major supermarkets are also vowing to reduce the use of SUP.
5. Government policy on this issue has moved forward. The Government's 25 year Environment Plan sets a target to achieve zero avoidable plastic waste by the end of 2042. Measures already introduced include the 5p charge for single use carrier bags, which has been responsible for an 83% reduction in use of single-use carrier bags from supermarkets. The Government has also recently announced proposals to bring in a national drinks bottle and can deposit scheme.
6. The main Council catering suppliers are also taking action on the issue, enabling the Council to make significant progress towards reducing the use of single use plastic (SUP) and non-recyclable coffee cups.

Actions already taken by suppliers to eliminate single use plastic in Council catering

7. Use of compostable cutlery and containers for all food made on site at County Hall and Wildwood. No straws provided. Soft drinks sold in cans and glass bottles only. Discounted hot drinks for those using reusable cups.
It is planned the following will shortly be introduced:
 - Pricing of hot drinks to include a surcharge if in a disposable cup (likely to be 25p more than if in reusable cup)
 - The use of compostable disposable coffee cups.NB 100,000 single use coffee cups are currently thrown away every year at County Hall.
8. Place Partnership have removed the cup holders from all water coolers at County Hall, making it clear that compostable cups are available at Reception, the café and the shop if required. So far there appear to have been no complaints following introduction of this measure.
9. The Hive café offers free refills for those using reusable cups. Plans are in place to use compostable coffee cups, lids, disposable cutlery and takeaway boxes.
10. Worcestershire Countryside Services' catering leases contain a term that relates to reducing packaging and waste, specifying that disposable items are to be avoided but that if they are used, they are to be biodegradable where possible. Compostable coffee cups are used.
11. Catering at indoor events is usually provided with ceramic crockery and metal cutlery. For events where plastic disposables are normally used, compostable disposables could be specified instead. For large outdoor events e.g. Redditch Tour Series, catering vans may be given the opportunity to buy a pitch. In this situation, beyond making a request for caterers not to use single use plastic, the Council has little control over what the caterers use.

Disposal of single use plastic, coffee cups and compostable items

12. Place Partnership are currently reviewing the waste management arrangements at County Hall and Wildwood, including the logistics of a composting collection for 'vegware', compostable coffee cups and food waste, and the introduction of comingled recycling for other materials (including plastic). This is in order to make it easier (& cheaper) for staff and visitors to dispose of waste correctly.

Financial Impact of measures taken

13. The increased use of reusable rather than disposable items will reduce the amount of waste produced. This should reduce the cost of waste disposal at County Council premises.
14. In the case of catering at cafes hosted in County Council buildings, any extra cost of using compostable 'vegware', instead of single use plastic, will be passed on to the customer.

15. The unit price of compostable cups used at County Hall campus is a third more than the plastic ones previously used, however, as far fewer cups should be used, it is expected an overall cost saving will be made.
16. In many cases, the impact of banning SUP from Council-run events at non-Council premises is unlikely to have a financial impact but it could in some cases increase costs slightly e.g. for outdoor events where disposables are normally used e.g. a potential 2% overall increase in costs was indicated by one caterer.
17. Early indications show the cost of the joint collection of 'Vegware', compostable coffee cups and food from County Hall and Wildwood as more a year than the current food waste only collection service. This arrangement will, however, reduce the amount of general waste collected, which should reduce the cost of general waste collection. The current cost of waste disposal for County Hall and Wildwood is c. £40,000 a year.

Future Action

18. The council will continue to discourage use of single use plastics through continued active management of existing contracts and through informed commissioning and procurement of new and renewed contracts.

Legal, and HR Implications

19. It is not anticipated this policy will have significant legal or HR implications.

Privacy and Public Health Impact Assessments

20. It is not anticipated this policy will have privacy implications.
21. There could potentially be an impact on public health from the tops of unwashed reusable bottles or cups coming into contact with the water spouts of water coolers. To date this has not arisen as an issue.

Equality and Diversity Implications

22. An Equality Relevance Screening has been completed in respect of these recommendations. The screening did not identify any potential equality considerations requiring further consideration during implementation beyond ensuring that any changes are clear to all regardless of protected characteristics.

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points

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Specific Contact Points for this report

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Director of Economy and Infrastructure) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

Agenda papers for the meeting of the County Council held on 15 February 2018

Agenda papers and supporting information for the meeting of Cabinet held on 19 April 2018

Appendix – Plastics and Non-recyclable Coffee Cups