

DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
RESOURCES DIRECTORATE	ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH AND HOUSING COMMITTEE	6 NOVEMBER 2018	4
APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER WORKING GROUP – PLASTIC CONSCIOUS FYLDE			

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

SUMMARY

The report outlines the proposal for the establishment of a cross party member working group: 'To investigate and consider the options to minimise the reliance on single use plastic items across the borough to become a 'plastics conscious' borough. This initiative will target all aspects of the supply chain for single use plastic options such as drinks bottles and straws, by educating producers, suppliers and consumers about the dangers posed to the natural environment from these items, encouraging the use of alternative options and ensuring that any single use items are recycled wherever possible or disposed of responsibly to prevent them being littered across Fylde.

The Marine Conservation Society recently reported that in 2017, during their annual beach cleans, there has been a 10% rise in plastic pollution on Britain's beaches over the past year and an overall increase of 28% since 2008. The situation in Fylde mirrors the concerns raised in other coastal areas, with the majority of discarded plastics related to 'on the go' plastic food and drink packaging, including plastic bottles, plastic and polystyrene food containers, coffee cups, drinks straws, plastic punnets, clingfilm and plastic bags.

By highlighting the amount of single use plastics items in circulation across Fylde and championing sustainable alternatives the authority will be able to influence the overall reliance on single use plastics with an associated impact on the amount of plastic found littered on and around our beaches, parks and open spaces, highways and other public areas.

The cross party working group will consider what steps the Council can take, in collaboration with Lancashire County Council as the waste disposal authority and other local partners, to bring about a significant change in historical practice with regards to single use plastics and will report back to the committee with recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The committee agree to establish a cross party working group: 'To investigate and consider the options to minimise the reliance on single use plastic items across the borough to become a 'plastics conscious' borough, which will report back to the Environment, Health and Housing committee and make any appropriate recommendations.
2. That the cross party working group established consists of five or six elected members from the Environment, Health & Housing and the Operational Management Committees.
3. That the Chairman of the Environment, Health & Housing Committee chairs the Working Group and that the other Members are nominated by the committee.
4. That the Chair of the Operational Management Committee is asked to nominate two or three representatives from their committee to be part of the cross party working group.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

There have been no previous decisions on this item.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

Spending your money in the most efficient way to achieve excellent services (Value for Money)	✓
Delivering the services that customers expect of an excellent council (Clean and Green)	✓
Working with all partners (Vibrant Economy)	✓
To make sure Fylde continues to be one of the most desirable places to live (A Great Place to Live)	✓
Promoting Fylde as a great destination to visit (A Great Place to Visit)	✓

REPORT

1. Across the UK and beyond, there is a growing appetite to reduce or eliminate single use plastics as a result of the BBC Blue Planet programme and other media coverage.
 2. For this report, single use plastics are defined as 'plastics which are only used once before they are thrown away or recycled'.
 3. The issue of single use plastics is high in the public consciousness and the council has a significant opportunity to influence reduced usage in Fylde – through its role as service provider, employer and advocate.
 4. The motivation for such change can be broadly summarised through the following perceived shortcomings within the plastics system:
 - Not all plastic packaging is designed in a way that they can be recycled, leading to a significant proportion going to landfill
 - Consumers are confused about what plastic packaging can and cannot be recycled, with varying recycling provision in different local authority areas
 - Plastics are entering the natural environment – for example through marine plastic pollution
 - The UK is very reliant on export markets for plastic recycling; in recent years, this reliance has been exposed through the Chinese ban on importing plastic waste.
 5. DEFRA in their 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment', have a target of achieving zero avoidable plastic waste by the end of 2042.
 6. In addition, the Waste and Resource Action Programme's (WRAP), 'UK Plastic Pact', seeks to bring together government, NGOs and businesses to transform the UK plastic packaging sector, by 2025, by meeting the following targets:
 - 100% of plastic packaging will be reusable, recyclable or compostable
 - 70% of plastic packaging will be recycled or composted
 - 30% average recycled content will be eliminated through redesign, innovation or alternative/reuse delivery models
- (Further information regarding the UK Plastic Pact can be found at: <http://www.wrap.org.uk/content/the-uk-plastics-pact>).
7. There are many reasons why the Council would wish to support a reduction in single use plastics, not least the environmental benefits of doing so and the significant costs associated with the disposal of plastic recycle.
 8. There are also numerous considerations which may limit what we are able to achieve, including the costs and availability of more sustainable alternatives.

9. Numerous Local Authorities across the country have recently considered the issue of single use plastics, with varying commitments to reduce or remove single use plastics resulting. Examples of commitments and action taken can be found at the following links:

www.plymouth.gov.uk/plastics;

<http://www.frometowncouncil.gov.uk/frome-town-council-go-single-use-plastic-free/>

<https://www.penzancetowncouncil.co.uk/community-information/plastic-free-penzance>

<http://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/2018/06/05/council-moves-closer-to-plastic-free-status>

10. In providing education about plastic consumption and recycling, it is important to recognise that Fylde Council is a Member of the Lancashire Waste Partnership (LWP). The LWP exists to forge closer working between Lancashire County Council (as Lancashire's waste disposal authority) and other Lancashire District Councils (as Lancashire's waste collection authorities). Given the commitment to working with waste partners in Lancashire it would therefore be beneficial to consider undertaking work in relation to plastic waste in collaboration with LWP partners.
11. The Chairman of the Environment, Health and Housing Committee has proposed that a cross party working group should be established with five or six elected members from the Environment, Health & Housing Committee and the Operational Management Committee with the scope: 'To investigate and consider the options to minimise the reliance on single use plastic items across the borough to become a 'plastics conscious' borough, which will report back to the Environment, Health and Housing committee and make any appropriate recommendations.

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.
Legal	There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.
Community Safety	There are no community safety implications arising directly from this report.
Human Rights and Equalities	There are no human rights and equalities implications arising directly from this report.
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	There are no sustainability and environmental impact implications arising directly from this report.
Health & Safety and Risk Management	There are no health and safety and risk management implications arising directly from this report.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
none		