



Fylde Council Commitment to

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1.

Introduction

The Fylde Council Corporate Plan 2020-24 includes a number of environmental priorities (set out below), and the development of a plastics reduction policy is one of these. This statement sets out the council's commitment to reducing the use of Single Use Plastics; sets out a number of initiatives introduced to date and suggests further actions for the Working Group to consider. These will be translated into a Single Use Plastics Reduction Plan which will act of the council's policy in this regard.

- *Implement carbon reduction policies including - plastics reduction, tree planting, energy efficiency and recycling;*
- *Design education and awareness programmes to support carbon reduction policies and actions;*
- *Work with partners to deliver the carbon reduction policy actions i.e., reduce, re-use, recycle, tree planting.*

Background

The Carbon Neutral Working group has been established to consider these priorities and make recommendations on how policy can be shaped to support carbon reduction for council led activities and initiatives to fulfil the actions within the Fylde Corporate Plan 2020/24. The Council's approach to reducing Single Use Plastics (SUPs) key to this.

Plastic is a very durable material and can last for hundreds of years. When it is not disposed of properly, plastic pollution can have a serious impact on the environment, entering the oceans and potentially harming marine wildlife and causing serious damage to the environment, for example:

- 8 million pieces of plastic go into the ocean each day;
- Single-use plastic bottles account for 40% of all litter by volume;
- 1 million seabirds a year die from plastic pollution; 1 in 4 fish caught for human consumption now contain plastic.

These issues are compounded by the fact that 50% of plastic produced is used only once and can then remain in the environment for up to 400 years. Plastics, which do not biodegrade but photodegrade (meaning they slowly breakdown into smaller fragments) are known as microplastics. During the breakdown the toxic chemicals used in their formation are released into the environment. These pass into water supplies, rivers, seas and through farmland, where they are absorbed by plants and animals, and thus enter the food chain which includes the human food chain.

In 2018, DEFRA published its 25-Year Environment Plan which outlined the Government's commitment to eliminating avoidable plastic waste by 2042. DEFRA's Waste and Resources Strategy 2018/19 (RAWS) also sets out a number of plastic waste reduction reforms to help the Government achieve its ambitious plans for a greener future. This includes proposals for further financial incentives to change consumer habits (Deposit Return Scheme) and greater responsibilities for retailers and manufacturers (Polluter Pays and Plastics Tax).

Although many plastic items can be collected for recycling (i.e., plastic bottles, pots, tubs and trays) there are numerous plastic products designed to be used just once, often for a matter of minutes or hours, before disposal in the general waste stream (i.e., plastic coffee cups, cutlery, food packaging and bags) without

recycling opportunities. The only way to reduce them is by avoiding their use completely and considering alternative sustainable products.

Fylde Council Actions

Fylde Council has stated its intention to reducing its reliance on plastic through its corporate plan, taking responsibility for its own impact on the environment, and thereby setting an example to local businesses and communities.

Initiatives to date include:

- Banning bins in individual offices and placing communal recycling bins throughout the council offices;
- Introducing paper cups at council water coolers as opposed to plastic cups;
- Investment in the installation of a series of hydration points so that visitors and residents can re-fill water bottles reducing the use of SUP's with a maintenance programme to be operated by the public toilet cleaning contractor DANFO;
- Bucket and spade trade units placed at the entrance to recycle plastic items;
- Promotion of WWF climate change calculator to both employees and elected members a part of which is around consumption incorporating the use of SUP's

These initiatives help us to replace avoidable SUPs with sustainable or reusable alternatives, while also ensuring we maximise our opportunities to recycle what we cannot eliminate and utilise any opportunities to recycle new materials wherever possible.

Potential Future Actions

However, there is more that could be considered to raise awareness amongst staff and eliminate SUPs across all Council offices and venues.

Other 'quick wins' to consider include:

- Eliminating the use of disposable plates, cutlery and paper napkins when organising external catering for council events;
- Further internal and external communications with all stakeholders around carbon footprints and the elimination of SUP's

Longer term options could include:

- Working with our suppliers to identify how they can support us in eliminating SUPs;
- Working with our events partners to identify how we can reduce SUPs at events, as well as trialling new recycling stations at our events to increase the amount of plastic that is recycled and not disposed of as general waste;
- Investigate a staff scheme in support of a local dairy to replace plastic-bottled milk for reusable glass-bottles.

Conclusion

These actions will be translated into an Action Plan concerning plastics reduction. It is clear that this will require the collective efforts of all stakeholders within the community. The council will continue to work with others to eliminate the use of SUP's and will collaborate with others as the opportunity arises to work collaboratively with businesses, community groups, local organisations, parish and town councils and schools to ensure the aspiration for a 'Plastics Free Fylde' is promoted across the borough.

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