

Report to:	TOURISM, ECONOMY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	John Hawkin, Chief Operating Officer, Community and Environmental Services
Date of Meeting	23 January 2019

SINGLE-USE PLASTICS (SUP) POLICY UPDATE

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To provide an update on the development of the ‘Single Use Plastics Policy’ and associated Charter for the Council and wholly owned companies to sign up to and implement.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To provide feedback on the draft policy and charter as well as the associated work and communication programmes.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 Reducing single-use plastics (SUP) is something our members have told us they expect and value. As a seaside tourist destination, we recognise that poorly managed waste plastics pose a threat to the global marine environment. Therefore, within the context of this Policy we commit to minimizing our use of plastics, in particular SUP’s, and to reducing its impact on the environment.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? Yes/No

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council’s approved budget? Yes/No

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 Do nothing, maintain the status quo.

5.0 Council priority:

5.1 The relevant Council priorities are:

- “The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool”

- “Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience”
- “Organisational resilience”

6.0 Background information

- 6.1 Following the initial report on single-use plastics in 2018, Cllr Humphreys tabled a motion for the Council to develop a policy in relation to the reduction of SUP’s within the organisation. He has also requested that a ‘Charter’ be developed for Council partners and wholly owned companies to signal their commitment to the policy. The attached policy, charter, Communications plan and timeframe documents will be referred to CLT for approval in late January/early February.
- 6.2 Central governments much anticipated Resources and Waste Strategy (RAWS) was finally published in late December, following a lengthy delay due to Brexit. In support of the government’s 25 year Environment Plan, the RAWS provides a clear focus on plastics, in particular SUP.
- 6.3 By introducing new incentives – regulatory and economic, along with better infrastructure and information, these measures help people do the right thing. Moreover, by protecting the natural world, and leaving it in a healthier state for the next generation, it will help uphold the core pledge of the 25 Year Environment Plan. The Strategy reflects that ambition. Leaving the European Union is an opportunity to refresh and renew our environmental policy, and show domestic and international leadership.
- 6.4 Secondly, these new measures support the commitments, in the Industrial and Clean Growth Strategies, to double resource productivity and eliminate avoidable waste, both by 2050.
- 6.5 Thirdly, and as importantly, we know there is an urgent need for new thinking to tackle avoidable waste, particularly plastic.
- 6.6 An estimated eight million tonnes of plastic waste enter the sea each year. Devastating evidence of the damage to wildlife and habitats has been shown in programmes such as Blue Planet II on the BBC, and Sky’s Ocean Rescue campaign. The government will consult on increasing the successful 5p plastic bag charge to 10p, and extending the scheme to small retailers.
- 6.7 It will also consult on introducing a deposit return scheme for drinks containers, to reward people for bringing back bottles and encourage them not to litter their empties. Government has also consulted on banning plastic straws (except for medical use), stirrers and cotton buds.
- 6.8 Plastic pollution is, however, far from the only threat to the environment. Radical

action is necessary to improve our use of resources and our handling of waste. Government moves to cut consumption of single-use plastics have paved the way for the fundamental reforms set out in the strategy.

- 6.9 Moving forward, the Council policy seeks to get our own house in order first. The policy will then seek to solicit the co-operation and commitment of local businesses, schools and the community – supported by a dedicated media and communications programme.
- 6.10 It is worth noting that some of the wholly owned companies have already made significant advancements. For example, The Sandcastle (BOCL) has already replaced all plastic cutlery with wooden and card alternatives, including paper straws. It is proposed to draw on the experiences of where successful implementation of sustainable alternatives have already taken place, in delivering the Councils solution.
- 6.11 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? Yes/No

7.0 List of Appendices:

- 7.1 Appendix 8(a) – Draft Policy
Appendix 8(b) – Draft Charter
Appendix 8(c) – Draft Work/Communications Programme
Appendix 8(d) – Draft Action Plan

8.0 Legal considerations:

- 8.1 None

9.0 Human resources considerations:

- 9.1 Implementing the draft policy and charter will require the co-operation and co-ordination of service heads across the organisation, particularly Procurement and Waste Management as well as the directors of the wholly owned companies.

10.0 Equalities considerations:

- 10.1 In the course of developing this policy, we have considered whether there could be unintended adverse impacts on people because of shared characteristics protected by the Equality Act. We believe the policy will not have any indirectly discriminatory effects.

11.0 Financial considerations:

- 11.1 There may be potential additional costs associated with sourcing suitable sustainable

alternative products.

12.0 Risk management considerations:

12.1 Potential reputational damage due to continued use of SUP's.

13.0 Ethical considerations:

13.1 The policy and charter supports the Councils ethical pursuit of corporate social responsibility and sustainability (including organisational resilience) as well as the Councils core values.

14.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:

14.1 None at this stage but will likely involve further consultations as the policy develops.

15.0 Background papers:

15.1 Our Waste, Our resources: A Strategy For England (2018)