

REPORT TO	ON
CABINET	11 September 2019



TITLE	PORTFOLIO	REPORT OF
Single Use Plastics Strategy	Environment	Director of Neighbourhoods and Development

Is this report a <b>KEY DECISION</b> (i.e. more than £100,000 or impacting on more than 2 Borough wards?)	<b>Yes</b>
Is this report on the <b>Statutory Cabinet Forward Plan</b> ?	<b>Yes</b>
Is the request outside the policy and budgetary framework and therefore subject to confirmation at full Council?	<b>No</b>
Is this report confidential?	<b>No</b>

## PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To request Cabinet adopt and support the Council's Strategy on the reduction of 'Single Use Plastics' within all Council operations, as part of the work of the Climate Emergency Task Group.

## PORTFOLIO RECOMMENDATIONS

2. That the Single Use Plastics Strategy be adopted and the Climate Emergency Task Group be given the lead to develop, implement and achieve the goals of the Strategy with a view to reducing the amount of single use plastics used in Council operations.

## REASONS FOR THE DECISION

3. It is estimated that 8.3 billion tonnes of plastic have been produced since the 1950s. Without urgent action to cut demand, this is likely to be 34 billion tonnes by 2050, the majority of which will either end up in landfill or polluting the world's continents and oceans.
4. Following the declaration of the Climate Emergency in July 2019, the Council committed to reducing its impacts on the Environment from all of its activities, including from the use of Single use Plastics (SUP's).
5. The strategy, to be developed, implemented and monitored by the Climate Emergency Task group will undertake a full review of the Council's use of Single Use Plastics and implement procedural and policy changes to minimise the SUP usage through the Council operations.

6. This strategy will support our plans to improve and safeguard the environment of South Ribble to be a place where everyone is treated fairly and our communities feel happy, healthy and safe.
7. We share the responsibility for safeguarding the environment in South Ribble. We all have a part to play and need the help and support from all across the community; our businesses and our residents. This strategy sets out ways we can encourage our community to reduce the amount of SUP's.

## CORPORATE PRIORITIES

8. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Excellence and Financial Sustainability	x
Health and Wellbeing	x
Place	x

Projects relating to People in the Corporate Plan:

People	x
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## BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

9. Single Use Plastics (SUP's) also known as disposable plastics, are commonly used for plastic packaging<sup>1</sup> and include items intended to be used only once before they are thrown away or recycled. These include, among other items, grocery bags, food packaging, bottles, straws, containers, cups and cutlery.
10. At the end of its useful life a product or packaging is recycled, incinerated, landfilled, dumped at uncontrolled sites, or littered in the environment. According to recent estimates<sup>2</sup>, 79% of the plastic waste ever produced now sits in landfills, dumps or in the environment, while about 12% has been incinerated, and only 9% has been recycled.
11. Plastics are predominantly composed of a complex mixture of various chemicals that are fossil-derived, although a growing number of biogenic sourced plastics are now being developed. Plastics, which do not biodegrade but photodegrade (meaning they slowly break down into smaller fragments) are known as micro-plastics.
12. During the break down of plastic, 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. Studies in Vienna have identified plastic waste in the digestive tract of humans from eight different countries including the UK<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> GESAMP, 2015a

<sup>2</sup> Geyer, Jambeck, and Law, 2017

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/oct/23/humans-contain-plastic-waste-drastic-banning-straws>

13. The prevailing problems associated with the use of plastics need to be addressed in order to protect the planet, environment and our own health. The internationally recognised waste hierarchy highlights that waste prevention is the most favourable option, with reuse and recycling following behind.
14. SUP's go against this hierarchy, encouraging the least preferred options of waste disposal.
15. South Ribble Borough Council are committed through its statutory and morale roles within the communities to prevent, reduce, reuse and recycle as much waste, including SUP's as possible in all our activities.
16. The proposed SUP's strategy will set out further aims and objectives to achieve this waste minimisation and to ensure the Council will take a leading role in protect the local environment and world ecosystems from the harmful impacts of single use plastics.

### **PROPOSALS (e.g. RATIONALE, DETAIL, FINANCIAL, PROCUREMENT)**

17. To adopt the draft Single Use Plastics Strategy.
18. Via the Climate Emergency Task Group, progress the aims and objectives of the strategy to minimise and ultimately prevent the use of single use plastics within all Council operations.
19. To discourage the use of single use plastics within the borough by residents, businesses and visitors.

### **CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT AND OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION**

20. Consultation will be considered by the Climate Emergency Task Group.

### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

21. The alternative to the adoption of the strategy is to not adopt it, and to decide not to take any action over the use of SUP's and the damaging harmful impact they are having on the environment and human health.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

22. The adoption of the Single Use Plastics Strategy will not have any direct financial implications at this time. As the aims and objectives are developed by the Climate Emergency Task Group some financial implications may occur and these will need to be considered at an appropriate level at the time.

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

23. There are no current legal implications with the adoption of the Single Use Plastics Strategy.

### **AIR QUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

24. There are no direct implications on air quality from adoption of the Single Use Plastics Strategy.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS**

25. There are no direct implications from adoption of the Single Use Plastics Strategy.

## **ICT/TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS**

26. There are no direct implications from adoption of the Single Use Plastics Strategy.

## **PROPERTY AND ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

27. There are no direct implications from adoption of the Single Use Plastics Strategy.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT**

28. There are no direct implications from adoption of the Single Use Plastics Strategy.

## **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPACT**

29. There are no direct implications from adoption of the Single Use Plastics Strategy.

## **RELEVANT DIRECTORS RECOMMENDATIONS**

30. That the Single Use Plastics Strategy be adopted and the Climate Emergency Task Group be given the lead to develop, implement and achieve the goals of the Strategy with a view to reducing the amount of single use plastics used by Council operations.

## **COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER**

31. Please see the Financial Implications section above.

## **COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER**

32. There are no legal implications arising from this report. Clearly the council as a responsible public authority ought to be setting a good example on environmental issues of this type. This of course also extends to influencing our partner organisations to take action in this regard.

## **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

<http://www.plasticfreechallenge.org/what-is-single-use-plastic>

## **APPENDICES**

Appendix A: Single use Plastics Strategy

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