



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CLIMATE CHANGE CABINET STEERING GROUP

16TH NOVEMBER 2020

**REDUCING THE USE OF SINGLE USE PLASTICS IN ALL COUNCIL
CONTRACTS AND PREMISES**

**INTERIM REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES, IN
DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET'S CLIMATE CHANGE CHAMPION
(COUNCILLOR RHYS LEWIS)**

Author: Gemma Ellis - Procurement Manager (Operations & Projects)

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to:

- 1.1 Provide members of the group with an overview and update of the work that is underway following the report presented to the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group in [December 2019](#).
- 1.2 Report on the progress made in respect of the in-depth audit on those categories of spend where single use plastics are currently in circulation.
- 1.3 Provide an Action Plan aimed at reducing or where it is practical to do so eliminating the use of single use plastics across the Council by the end of 2020.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that members of the Group:

- 2.1 Acknowledge the impact that Covid-19 has had since the previous report to the Group, on our ability to put in place and action tangible outcomes that aim to reduce the use of single use plastics within the timeframe set out in the previous report.
- 2.2 Agree the action plan provided in Appendix A that sets out the arrangements to eliminate/reduce the use of single use plastics across the Council.
- 2.3 Note the intention to remove all single use plastics from Council and School catering facilities by 31 March 2021 with an environmentally friendly alternative.



3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Within the previous report, the concept of the Waste Hierarchy was introduced. Those areas where single use plastics were identified as being in use were set out, along with some lessons learnt having identified some instances of alternative products having been piloted. The following actions were listed:

ACTION 1

Undertake a full audit of the categories of spend, with the aim of quantifying volumes.

ACTION 2

Review this data and overlay the Waste Hierarchy principles.

ACTION 3

Report back following the in-depth analysis, and propose appropriate solutions that support the objective.

- 3.2 Whilst the interruption that resulted from the Covid-19 outbreak has hindered the full implementation of the planned work, the intention of this report is to provide an interim update on the activity to date and plan for the future in respect of supporting the Council's ambitions to eliminate/reduce its use of single use plastics. In support of this, the main body of this report has been split into the following sections:

- Update on the audit of single use plastics
- Action Plan – including potential 'quick wins'
- The next steps

4. UPDATE ON THE AUDIT OF SINGLE USE PLASTICS

- 4.1 In order to deliver an effective strategy that aims to reduce the quantity of single use plastics within our systems in a pragmatic way, the first stage has been to undertake a full audit of where single use plastics are in use, through the analysis of purchases made by the Council's diverse range of service areas. Initially, we have focused our efforts on the food and catering sector of the Council's business, as this is considered to be an area of high usage.
- 4.2 The Council's e-procurement system was used to collate this information, to target order quantities and cross reference with reports directly from suppliers.
- 4.3 The service areas responsible for purchasing these items have also been engaged to determine the reason for purchase, and if the items can either be avoided, or a whether suitable (and sustainable) alternatives can be sourced.

- 4.4 As part of the work completed to date, engagement has also taken place with relevant Cabinet Members to inform them of the milk carton recycling scheme in primary schools, and to gather ideas from them in respect of the most effective way to engage with school children.
- 4.5 The results of our analysis are summarised in Tables 1a and 1b below (these figures relate to the 2019/20 financial year). Note that further work is required across all of the other categories.

TABLE 1a - top single use plastic items (non-schools, food and catering sector)

Non-Schools 19/20	
Item	Total
7oz Cold Water Cup	42,000
Std Plastic Knife	2,000
Std Plastic Fork	5,000
Std Plastic Stirrer	5,000
Food Box	1,800
4oz White plastic Dish	1,000
Oval salad Pack	3,000

TABLE 1b - single use plastic items being purchased by comprehensive schools (food and catering sector)

Comprehensive Schools 19/20	
Item	Total
Straws	4,000
7oz Cold Water Cup	63,000
Plastic Lids on food containers	35,250
Plastic Knife	35,000
Plastic Fork	305,000
Plastic Spoon	37,000
Plastic Tea Spoon	20,000
Clear Container with Lid	11,000
Clear Container no lid	37,000
Salad containers	5,000

- 4.6 This data has been used to focus our efforts on identifying potential quick wins / alternative products. Please refer to Section 5 and Appendix A.



5. ACTION PLAN – INCLUDING POTENTIAL QUICK WINS

- 5.1 The results of the audit now enables us to set out clear actions in respect of the food and catering sector. A draft Action Plan has been provided in Appendix A.
- 5.2 The Action Plan identifies those areas where more audit work is required, includes some 'quick wins' in respect of putting in place suitable alternatives and also includes a new area that has resulted from the impact of Covid-19, the use of plastics in PPE.
- 5.3 It should be noted that in some instances the impact of Covid-19 on our suppliers has slowed our progress on discussions to offer alternative products and packaging. This is because supplier's main focus during this time has been to ensure they can maintain their essential business.

6. THE NEXT STEPS

- 6.1 Having piloted the audit process, work will now commence to roll this approach out across all of the other categories listed within the action plan. In order to deliver this work and to implement change, the following next steps have been identified:

ACTION 1 – Target completion date of 31 December 2020

- Implement the actions listed in respect of replacing single use plastics in the food and catering sector of the Council's non-school business
 - We will work with the relevant service areas and suppliers with the aim of implementing suitable alternatives.
 - When we secure suitable alternatives, all the single use plastics will be immediately removed from use and appropriately recycled.

ACTION 2 – Target completion date of 31 March 2021

- Begin to tackle the practice of single use plastics as listed within this report in the comprehensive school sector (*note that the primary school sector will not be overlooked from this work*).
 - We will:
 - Work with schools and engage with their eco-committees with a view to establishing suitable alternatives.
 - Work with our suppliers to ensure suitable alternatives can be put in place.

ACTION 3 – Target dates will be set for specific categories, as environmentally friendly alternatives are sought

- Undertake work with the relevant service areas, schools and associated suppliers in respect of all other categories of single use plastics, as listed within Appendix A.



- We will set-up a working group including colleagues from Procurement, Amgen, Waste and Education to review alternative options.

ACTION 4 – Report on progress to a future meeting of the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no equality and diversity implications as a result of the recommendations set out in the report.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 There are no consultation requirements emanating from the recommendations set out in the report at this stage.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 9.1 Currently, there are no direct financial implications as a result of the recommendations made within this report.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 10.1 There are no legal or legislative implications emanating from the recommendations set out in the report.

11. LINKS TO CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

- 11.1 This report seeks to set out the arrangements required to support the Council in reducing its use of single use plastics, in doing so the recommendations to reduce the impact the Council and its residents and businesses have on the environment and respond to the issues set out in the Committee on Climate Change Report – Net Zero. The future actions that arise as a result of the recommendations in this report will be considered by the Council’s Cabinet and it will take full regard to the seven national wellbeing goals.

12. CONCLUSION

- 12.1 This report sets out the activity that has taken place, together with the planned activity which aims to reduce and eliminate (where practicable) single use plastics across the Council.

- 12.2 The Action Plan provided at Appendix A will now be used to track progress.



- 12.3 The Council is committed to addressing this important issue, and progress reports will be presented to the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group to ensure appropriate scrutiny.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1972

as amended by

THE ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT, 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

CLIMATE CHANGE CABINET STEERING GROUP

16TH NOVEMBER 2020

Report of the Director of Human Resources

Author: Gemma Ellis - Procurement Manager - Operations & Projects

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Background Papers: None.



APPENDIX A – ACTION PLAN FOR THE REDUCTION / ELIMINATION OF SINGLE USE PLASTICS

Examples of single-use plastics in use / area to be reviewed	Proposed actions	Possible alternatives or solutions	Timescale & Update on Progress
<p>Food and catering provision – non schools (for example hot & cold drink provisions at staff canteens, residential homes for the elderly, leisure centres, tourism establishments, internal and external events)</p>			
<p>Plastic Cutlery (knife, fork, spoon)</p>	<p>Help raise awareness of these measures across the procurement leads within the Council's business areas.</p> <p>Remove these items from the e-procurement catalogue.</p> <p>This will prevent staff from being able to order them in the future.</p>	<p>Help those service transition through the provision of steel cutlery for re-use and encourage staff to bring their own.</p>	<p>November 2020</p>
<p>7oz Cold Water Cup</p>	<p>Remove these items from the e-procurement catalogue.</p> <p>This will prevent staff from being able to order them in the future.</p>	<p>Encourage the use of glass and/or provide reusable polycarbonate tumblers/beakers.</p>	<p>November 2020</p>



Examples of single-use plastics in use / area to be reviewed	Proposed actions	Possible alternatives or solutions	Timescale & Update on Progress
		Encourage individuals to use their own reusable water bottles.	
Plastic Straw	Remove these items from the e-procurement catalogue. This will prevent staff from being able to order them in the future.	Review if absolutely necessary. If in the cases where straws are needed, change to Paper.	November 2020
4oz White plastic Dish	Investigate the potential to remove this item, and if a suitable alternative is available.	N/A	November 2020
Plastic salad bowls	Investigate the potential to remove this item, and if a suitable alternative is available.	N/A	November 2020
Food and catering provision – Comprehensive Schools			



Examples of single-use plastics in use / area to be reviewed	Proposed actions	Possible alternatives or solutions	Timescale & Update on Progress
<p>We now have all of the data relating to the purchase of single use plastics within the food and catering arrangements in comprehensive schools.</p>	<p>Use the data, and engage with Catering Services, suppliers, the schools and eco-committees at schools to establish all potential options in respect of suitable alternatives.</p> <p>Ensure that the Primary School sector is also included.</p>	<p>To be confirmed following in-depth consultation.</p>	<p>Target Date of 31 March 2021.</p>
<p>Vending Machines</p>			
<p>Vending machines are in use across a number of Council establishments, such as offices, leisure centres and schools.</p> <p>The drinks for sale within these machines are traditionally provided in plastics bottles.</p>	<p>Work with contractors and suppliers to find out more about their current packaging and to see if there are any plans to put in place a suitable replacement for plastic.</p>	<p>Not applicable at this stage.</p>	<p>To be confirmed.</p>



Examples of single-use plastics in use / area to be reviewed	Proposed actions	Possible alternatives or solutions	Timescale & Update on Progress
Cleaning / Janitorial Contracts			
<p>Our establishments are currently cleaned by either the Council's internal cleaning service, or an appointed contractor.</p> <p>Due to the nature of the cleaning products in use, they are often held within plastic containers.</p>	<p>Work with contractors and suppliers to find out more about their current packaging and to see if there are any plans to make them more sustainable</p> <p>Through discussion with suppliers identify opportunities, for return/reuse of containers.</p> <p>Introduce antibacterial spray as opposed to antibacterial wipes.</p>	<p>Not applicable at this stage.</p>	
The Delivery of Packaged Supplies			
<p>The Council receives delivery of supplies ranging from:</p>	<p>Working with suppliers to reduce packaging wherever practicable.</p>	<p>Not applicable at this stage.</p>	



Examples of single-use plastics in use / area to be reviewed	Proposed actions	Possible alternatives or solutions	Timescale & Update on Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food • Stationery • I.T equipment • Office furniture 			
Construction Projects			
All waste on construction projects is currently managed by appointed contractors.	A full review of the Council's standard terms and conditions, particularly around the management of waste in general is required to take place.	Not applicable at this stage.	
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)			
Due to COVID19 the use of Personal Protective Equipment has significantly increased.	A review of how items are currently being disposed of will be undertaken and reported.	With the current Covid 19 situation, it is not currently practical to review this matter.	Currently in progress with reusable face coverings being provided to all school staff and pupils and Council staff.



Examples of single-use plastics in use / area to be reviewed	Proposed actions	Possible alternatives or solutions	Timescale & Update on Progress
In most cases, these supplies single use plastic in nature, such as gloves and aprons.	In place of disposable TypellR masks, the Council is currently putting in place re-usable face coverings where appropriate to do so.		