

## **Environment and Communities Committee**

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| <b>Date of Meeting:</b>     | 7 <sup>th</sup> March 2022                  |
| <b>Report Title:</b>        | Notice of Motion – Single Use Plastics      |
| <b>Report of:</b>           | Jayne Traverse, Executive Director of Place |
| <b>Report Reference No:</b> | EC/34/21-22                                 |
| <b>Ward(s) Affected:</b>    | All Wards                                   |

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### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1. At the full council meeting of 15<sup>th</sup> December 2021, a notice of motion was proposed that the Council leads by example by banning single use plastic from its operations. This report responds to that notice of motion.

### **2. Executive Summary**

- 2.1. On 15<sup>th</sup> December 2021, a Notice of Motion was submitted to Council proposing: *This Council will lead by example by banning single use plastic from its operations.* The motion was proposed by Cllr Kate Parkinson and seconded by Cllr Tony Dean. Council resolved to refer the Notice of Motion to the Environment and Communities Committee.
- 2.2. At a previous Council meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2018, a notice of motion was proposed to eliminate use of all single use plastic within Cheshire East Council managed buildings and facilities by 2020 and seek to encourage the elimination of single use plastic within its supply chain by 2025. This motion was referred to Cabinet on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2018 and it was agreed that the Council should aim to eliminate all single use plastic within CEC managed buildings by 2020 and to eliminate single use plastic within its supply chain by 2025.
- 2.3. Following the previous Notice of Motion, all parts of the Council are seeking to reduce the use of single use plastics. The Council also launched a campaign and community toolkit to provide information on how to reduce plastic use in everyday life.
- 2.4. It is important to note that there are instances when plastic is the best material to use and that it is often the disposal of the plastic, rather than the material itself, that causes the issue. For example, food that is plastic wrapped is preserved for longer and therefore care needs to be taken when replacing this since it could lead to greater food waste.

- 2.5.** The Government is introducing a Plastic Packaging Tax from 1 April 2022 on plastic packaging that has less than 30% recycled content. In addition, an extended producer responsibility measure is being introduced through the Environment Act that will require any producers of packaging to pay for the whole lifecycle of its materials. These changes will contribute to a changing landscape of waste management where plastics will be seen as a valuable resource that can be reused and recycled.

### **3. Recommendation**

- 3.1.** The committee decide what action, if any, they wish to take in response to the Notice of Motion.

### **4. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 4.1.** The Cheshire East Council Constitution sets out the procedure for Notices of Motion submitted to Council. A motion referred to the relevant decision-making body must be considered within two meeting cycles. At the meeting to which the motion has been referred for consideration, the proposer of the motion if present shall be invited to speak first, followed by the seconder. The matter will then be opened up to wider discussion.

### **5. Other Options Considered**

- 5.1.** None. The Constitution sets out the procedure for responding to Notices of Motion.

### **6. Background**

- 6.1.** In response to a notice of motion proposed at the Council meeting of 26<sup>th</sup> July 2018, Cabinet resolved on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2018 to:
- 6.1.1.** Endorse the National Federation of Women's Institutes campaign to reduce micro plastic fibres in our oceans – 'End Plastic Soup'
- 6.1.2.** Agree that the Council should aim to eliminate all single use plastic within CEC managed buildings by 2020 and to eliminate single use plastic within its supply chain by 2025; and
- 6.1.3.** That a progress report be brought to Cabinet in 6 months and to include consideration of the use of cars, cheap fashion, milk containers and retail packaging and raising awareness with Town and Parish Councils.
- 6.2.** It should be noted that the progress report was not brought to Cabinet after 6 months.
- 6.3.** All parts of the Council are seeking to reduce the use of single use plastics. Some of the actions taken to date include:
- 6.3.1.** Procurement - The [Social Value Policy](#) and [Social Value Framework](#) that apply to the Council's commissioning and procurement activities includes the following example measures that could be included within contracts:
- Plastic recycling rate on the contract (e.g., to reduce microplastics)

- Single-use plastic packaging eliminated through reusable packaging solutions or schemes on the contract
- 6.3.2. Facilities Management – prior to 2018 some single use items were available as part of the catering service and at the drinks stations but these have now been removed. Most plastic containers have been removed.
- 6.3.3. School catering – the pandemic has disrupted the plans to go plastic free but once the new normal is resumed there are plans to: not accept unnecessary packaging for fruit and veg; use larger yogurt pots and decant into bowls rather than have individual pots; use jugs of fresh milk rather than individual milk jiggers; use metal spoons that can be washed rather than using plastic cutlery; serve sandwiches on plates rather than in a plastic-coated bag.
- 6.3.4. Leisure Centres – the majority of single use plastic materials have been removed, those that remain serve important purposes such as items in the first aid kits, chemical bottles and overshoes for going onto poolside.
- 6.4. To engage with residents and local communities a campaign and community toolkit was developed to provide information on how to reduce plastic use in everyday life. The Council’s website gives examples of what has been done [Life with less plastic \(cheshireeast.gov.uk\)](http://cheshireeast.gov.uk) and has the downloadable toolkit readily available [A Life with less plastic - Toolkit](#)
- 6.5. It is important to note that there are going to be instances where plastic is the best material to use and that it is often the disposal of the plastic, rather than the material itself, that causes the issue. Food that is plastic wrapped is preserved for longer and therefore care needs to be taken when replacing this since it could lead to greater food waste.
- 6.6. The introduction of ‘on the go’ recycling bins will enable residents to manage their plastics better when in our green flag parks.
- 6.7. In the wider national context, the government are introducing a Plastic Packaging Tax from 1 April 2022 that will apply a £200/tonne levy on plastic packaging that has less than 30% recycled content.
- 6.8. In addition, an extended producer responsibility measure is being introduced through the Environment Act that will require any producers of packaging to pay for the whole lifecycle of its materials.
- 6.9. Historically councils have been the ones to bear the financial burden of managing packaging materials, but these changes mean producers will have to pay for this. The changes will contribute to a changing landscape of waste management where plastics will be seen as a valuable resource that can be reused and recycled.

## 7. Implications

### 7.1. Legal

- 7.1.1. There are no legal implications in rejecting the notice of motion

## **7.2. Finance**

7.2.1. There are no financial implications in rejecting the notice of motion. Actions carried out to date and ongoing work on reducing single use plastics is funded from individual service revenue budgets e.g., Facilities Management.

## **7.3. Policy**

7.3.1. The removal of single use plastics aligns with our Environment Strategy and Carbon Neutral Action Plan, and the priority within the Cheshire East Corporate Plan 2021-25 to reduce our impact on the environment.

## **7.4. Equality**

7.4.1. There are no equality implications arising from this report.

## **7.5. Human Resources**

7.5.1. There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

## **7.6. Risk Management**

7.6.1. There are no risks identified in this report.

## **7.7. Rural Communities**

7.7.1. There are no implications for rural communities.

## **7.8. Children and Young People/Cared for Children**

7.8.1. There are no implications for children and young/cared for people.

## **7.9. Public Health**

7.9.1. There are no implications for public health.

## **7.10. Climate Change**

7.10.1. The removal of single use plastic will encourage greater use of more sustainable materials.

| <b>Access to Information</b> |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| Contact Officer:             | Andrew Dunstone, Waste Contract Manager  |
| Appendices:                  | None   |
| Background Papers:           | <a href="#">NOM - Single Use Plastics - report final.pdf</a><br>( <a href="http://cheshireeast.gov.uk">cheshireeast.gov.uk</a> ) |