

Report to Cabinet

17 January 2024

Subject:	Single Use Plastics Policy
Cabinet Member:	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and WMCA Peter Hughes
Director:	Director of Regeneration & Growth Tony McGovern
Key Decision:	Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an executive decision that is likely to be significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards of the Borough;
Contact Officer:	Principal Lead Energy & Climate Change Phil_kingston@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

That approval be given to adopt the Single Use Plastic Policy as provided in Appendix 1 in order to meet and exceed our requirements under the Government's Single Use Plastics Ban.





2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 To ensure Sandwell MBC are compliant with the Government [Single Use Plastics Ban](#) (SUP) which came into force on the 1st October 2023
- 2.2 The SUP Ban only addresses some SUPs and many others such as packaging, drinks bottles or plastic lined coffee cups are not included. This policy enables SMBC to exceed the minimum requirements of the ban and take a positive lead in reducing the harmful impact of single use plastics across the city.



2.3 To increase recycling rates within corporate services and reduce the volume, and impact of non-recyclable waste from our operations.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>The Best Start in Life for Children and Young People: Tackling Climate Change in Sandwell takes a positive step towards sustaining our planet for the next generation. Reducing the use of SUPs in Sandwell will help create a resilient Borough, with targets to limit the global temperature rise to 1.5°C and help safeguard the future for our young people.</p>
	<p>People Live Well and Age Well Reducing pollution and the use of plastics will help mitigate the impacts of climate change and associated impacts on health and wellbeing.</p>
	<p>Strong Resilient Communities The policy provides leadership and direction on the specific environmental issue of reducing plastic waste in Sandwell, contributing to the reduction of litter and waste in our streets</p>
	<p>A Strong and Inclusive Economy The Policy supports the use of local business offering alternatives to SUPs through our procurement procedures</p>

4 Context and Key Issues

4.1 According to DEFRA “the UK uses around 2.7 billion items of single use cutlery, mostly plastic, a year, and 721 million single use plates”. Plastic pollution does not break down like other waste and can take decades or even centuries to decompose, leading to a mounting problem that ends up in our streets, waterways, and natural environments. This is causing lasting damage to both human and animal life and there is increasing concern over the volume of microplastics that are present in our water supplies and foods. Coupled with the release of greenhouse gas from their production, manufacture and final disposal, the use of plastic is one of the most significant environmental issues of our time”.

4.2 The Government ban will include single-use plastic plates, trays, bowls, cutlery, balloon sticks, certain types of polystyrene cups and food containers, although there are exemptions outlined in the [Government guidance](#) and there are certain circumstances in which they may still be used.



- 4.3 Many single use plastics such as drinks bottles, packaging and coffee cups with a plastic lining are not included in the ban and could continue to be used unless alternatives options or restrictions are put in place.
- 4.4 Awareness around recycling and alternate options to SUPs can be limited. The policy provides the framework to assess, reduce and monitor our use of plastics.
- 4.5 Reducing the amount of waste within our offices will help reduce disposal costs.
- 4.6 Reducing plastic waste can lead to fewer carbon dioxide emissions, a safer environment for wildlife and better human health.
- 4.7 Implementation of the Single Use Plastics Policy will contribute towards commitments laid out in the Climate Change Strategy.
- 4.8 SMBC needs to lead by example if we are to work with communities and businesses in helping them reduce their use of plastics, increase recycling rates and mitigate the impacts of climate change.
- 4.9 The exemptions to the SUP Ban means single use plastics can still be used in some circumstances. For example, you can still supply food or drink in polystyrene containers if it needs further preparation before it is consumed whereby, further preparation could mean:
- adding water
 - microwaving
 - toasting

This policy will help ensure any use of exemptions is minimised or eliminated in SMBC sites.

5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 Rejecting the policy would increase the risk of sites not being compliant with the Single Use Plastic ban and limit compliance with the Climate Change Strategy and our ability to show leadership on this issue.
- 5.2 Aspects of the policy outside the Single Use Plastics Ban could be removed, limiting compliance with the Climate Change Strategy.



6 Implications

Resources:	No additional staff will be required to implement this policy. There may be costs as a result of implementing the Government Ban and switching from single use plastic items.
Legal and Governance:	Compliance with the Single Use Plastics Ban is a requirement from the 1 st October 2023
Risk:	Potential increases in cost through a change of product will need to be factored into procurement.
Equality:	There are no equality implications to this report in relation to those with protected characteristics
Health and Wellbeing:	The proposals within the policy will benefit the health and wellbeing of residents through reducing pollution and mitigating the impacts of climate change.
Social Value:	The proposals will support local businesses to be able to provide alternatives to SUPs through the procurement process.
Climate Change:	The SUP Policy will specifically support commitments made in the Climate Change Strategy.
Corporate Parenting:	There are no specific implications for corporate parenting responsibilities.

7. Appendices

Appendix 1: Single Use Plastics Policy

8. Background Papers

[Government guidance: Single-use plastics ban: plates, bowls, trays, containers, cutlery and balloon sticks](#)

