

Appendix 4 Single Use Plastic Action Plan 2023/24

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council recognises that single use plastics (SUP) are a threat to our natural environment and reducing such plastics are a key factor in reducing the Council's impact on the environment. This work is being aligned with the Council's Climate Change Action Plan as a reduction in single use plastics will also reduce the Council's indirect (scope 3) carbon emissions. This workstream also looks at recycling and waste management and as such this is not included within this plan. It is also recognised that some single use plastics may need to remain within certain services as suitable, economically viable replacements may not exist. For example, where PPE is used in caring for those in need. In these cases the Climate Change Team will document and continue to research these products so that innovations can be captured and brought into use at the earliest feasible opportunity.

The Council will therefore work towards:

- Ending the provision of unnecessary single use plastics across council buildings and events
- Providing a supportive internal policy environment to allow appropriate purchasing with reducing single use plastics in mind
- Using recycled or re-usable plastics where complete removal of plastic is currently unfeasible
- Developing internal and external awareness campaigns to reduce the use of single use plastics across the Borough
- Supporting our residents to take action
- Working in partnership with our supply chain and partners to develop innovative solutions to reduce single use plastic use.

Key progress 2022/23

- Asset management have undertaken an audit of all single use plastic within all 68 Council buildings.
- Replacement of plastic cups for paper alternatives throughout key locations within Council Buildings. Examples already implemented include paper cups for water at the Town Hall and re-usable cups at the Civic Theatre.
- Options for alternative products are currently being assessed for Rotherham's events.
- At present reducing single use plastic may be included within procurement activity if identified as a priority ad hoc by individual service areas. This is not currently monitored or reported upon as this is managed by individual services.
- Initial investigation into current the policy landscape has been undertaken.
- A Climate Change Communication Plan has been developed which will support work to increase awareness and communication across the Council in relation to SUP use.
- Work has been undertaken throughout 2022 via the BDR Community Education and Liaison Officer program to increase community awareness of various topics relating to recycling and reducing waste.

The action plan below sets out the longer term objectives, and actions planned for 2023/24.

COUNCIL USE			
Objective	Key actions 2023/24	Service	Target Date
Understand the Council's SUP provision.	Extend audit of buildings to include Council services and analyse results to identify specific departmental targets for reduction and removal.	Climate Change Team/ Service Leads	August 2023
Remove use of any unnecessary SUP where feasible from Council use.	Set targets and monitoring for immediate removal or run down of specific unnecessary single use plastics where feasible alternatives exist. There may be situations where it is not yet feasible to remove some types of SUP e.g., PPE. These should be documented, justified and periodically reviewed.	Climate Change Team/ Service Leads	March 2024
Work towards Council events being SUP free.	Work with supply chain to identify suitable options for replacement and calculate impact. Options available for delivery of this target may be limited by suppliers available and their supply chains.	Climate Change Team/ Events	March 2024
Council contracts are free from unnecessary SUP provision	Work with individual services and suppliers to review and implement changes to new contracts where SUPs are provided e.g. vending machines through Facilities Management. Procurement support may be required for advice on altering existing contract terms and conditions and on the best way to improve moving forward.	Climate Change Team/ Service Leads / Procurement support	March 2024
	Ensure single use plastic plates, trays, bowls* are no longer procured through Council contracts by October 2023. *Excluding pre-packaged food items at present.	Climate Change Team/ Facilities	October 2023
POLICY			
Objective	Key actions 2023/24	Service	Target Date
Council policies complement our ambition to eliminate SUPs	Integrate SUP into Climate Change Plan, ensuring that SUP objectives are embedded into other relevant policies and plans.	Climate Change Team	August 2023

	Develop and allow for consultation on a Single Use Plastic Policy to enhance measures already recommended within the Council's Social Value Policy.	Climate Change Team/ Policy	March 2024
INTERNAL ENGAGEMENT			
Objective	Key actions 2023/24	Service	Target Date
Ensure staff understand the impact of SUPs	Develop an e-learning module / toolbox talk for all staff about the impact of SUPs and how to minimise their usage.	Climate Change Team	December 2023
Encourage staff to make informed decisions about what they use, and what they bring to their working environment	Create an internal Single Use Plastic Campaign to support staff to reduce their SUP use at home and at work.	Climate Change Team/ Communications	March 2024
	Keep staff informed of best practice and initiatives through internal communications, e.g., by taking part in WRAP Recycling campaigns.	Climate Change Team/ Communications	March 2024
ENGAGEMENT WITH OUR COMMUNITIES			
Objective	Key actions 2023/24	Service	Target Date
Promote awareness of sustainable waste management practices	Continue to work with schools to provide educational workshops relating to waste and SUPs through linking into existing programmes	Waste via BDR Partnership	Ongoing
	Encourage schools to commit to reductions in single use plastic through awareness raising and signposting to appropriate schemes e.g., 'Plastic Free Schools' or 'Eco-schools'.	CYPS	March 2024
Encourage communities to develop Single Use Plastic-free initiatives	Continue to promote community initiatives such as Love Where You Live.	Neighbourhoods	Ongoing
	Continue to utilise the BDR Community Education Liaison Officer (CELO) initiative.	Waste via BDR Partnership	Ongoing
	Develop a programme of works to encourage local businesses to sign up to go plastic free, ready for roll out in 2024/2025.	Climate Change Team	March 2024