

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

COUNCIL – 25 JULY 2018

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND THE
PUBLIC REALM

POSITION AND PRINCIPLES STATEMENT FOR SINGLE USE PLASTICS

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

Purpose/Summary of Report

- The purpose of this paper is to set out the council's position on single use plastics and the principles that the council will follow in order to reduce, reuse and recycle such plastics.

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL: That:</u>	
(A)	the position and principles statement be adopted by the council; and
(B)	officers develop actions and incorporate them into future Medium Term Financial Plan proposals.

1.0 Background

- 1.1. Recent years have seen a considerable increase in the focus on the negative aspect of single use plastics and their impact on the environment.
- 1.2. Both the UK and the EU have published environmental strategies and both aim to reduce single use plastics.

- 1.3. There is also an increased impetus on 'reducing' rather than solely 'recycling' waste more generally. Of note, China banned the import of foreign waste in January 2018 which has closed off a major destination of recyclable material from the UK.
- 1.4. Single use plastics are not explicitly covered in East Herts Council's Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-2024. As such a policy update is being made to the council's approach to the issue.
- 1.5. A number of councils have already adopted positions on reducing single use plastics such as Mendip District Council, Brighton and Hove City Council, and many others.
- 1.6. A cross services working group has been established to address the council's council response to this issue.

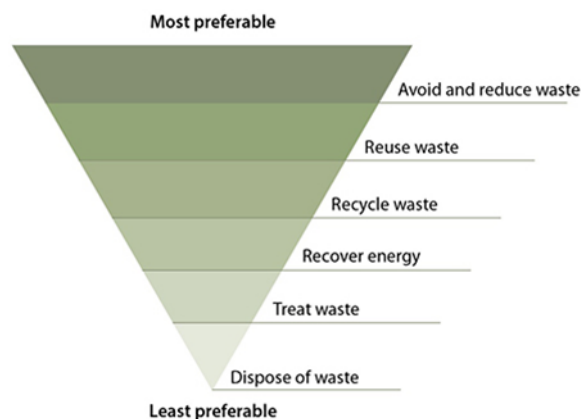
2.0 Report

- 2.1 **Essential Reference Paper 'B'** outlines the council's proposed position on single use plastics.
- 2.2 It outlines what our position on the issue could be, proposing that, where this is within its means, the council will:
 - recognise the waste hierarchy and promote and publicise the message that we and others should endeavour to reduce, reuse or recycle plastics wherever possible
 - continually challenge ourselves to move up through the waste hierarchy by recycling plastics rather than throwing them away, reusing plastics wherever possible rather than recycling and maximising a reduction in plastics use in the first place
 - use our influence with partners, including licensing, to assist them move up through the waste hierarchy,

especially at public events, providing practical support wherever possible

- embark on direct actions and projects to reduce the single use plastic usage
- support national campaigns to reduce plastics use
- recognise that the benefits of reducing single use plastics go hand-in-hand with greater recycling and less use of other materials such as paper, glass and metals.

2.3 The position statement aligns the council's position on the use of single use plastics to the principles of the waste hierarchy (see diagram below).



2.4 The waste hierarchy is the principle that rather than just recycling waste and sending the rest to landfill one should attempt, in this order, to reduce use, reuse objects once purchased, recycle objects that cannot be reused, and recover use for example incineration converting waste into carbon captured energy.

3.0 Implications/Consultations

3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

3.2 No significant financial implications are anticipated in moving away from single use plastics.

3.3 Officers will also consider whether reducing plastics use could also provide efficiencies for the council and, if so, will reflect this in future MTFP reports to members. For instance switching from plastics cups throughout the building to biodegradable cones in reception will produce a saving of £202 per year.

Background Papers

None

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