

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL****CABINET****DATE: 30 OCTOBER 2018****REPORT OF: MR MIKE GOODMAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT****LEAD OFFICER: JASON RUSSELL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT & ENVIRONMENT****SUBJECT: NEW POLICY AND ACTION PLAN FOR SINGLE USE PLASTICS****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

This report presents the Single Use Plastics (SUP) Policy for approval. The SUP policy:

- provides a framework for reducing and working towards zero avoidable SUP use across the Council's estate;
- encourages proactive partnership working with key stakeholders such as districts and boroughs, businesses, schools, communities, partners and beyond in order to find positive solutions to reducing plastic pollution county-wide; and
- sets out the activities to deliver this within Surrey County Council in the short-term action plan.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. approve the new policy and note the short-term action plan set out in Annexes 1 and 2;
2. note that further work is being undertaken with all districts and boroughs to develop a joint Surrey strategy and a long-term county-wide action plan that will support Surrey to become a SUP free county in line with national policy; and
3. delegate to the Executive Director for Highways, Transport & Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport to approve the joint strategy and the long-term action plan once finalised in March 2019.

**REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

A motion was passed on 20 March 2018 calling for the Council to make the Council a single-use-plastic-free authority. The introduction of the SUP policy is one of the primary steps required to deliver the motion. It also supports the Council's new draft vision for Surrey in 2030 to enable residents to "live in clean, safe and green communities, where people and organisations embrace their environmental responsibilities".

## **BACKGROUND:**

1. The issue of single use plastics has been the subject of increasing public consciousness since the BBC's Blue Planet II series highlighted the environmental impacts at the end of last year.
2. In January 2018, DEFRA in the "[A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment](#)" announced a target of achieving zero avoidable plastic waste by the end of 2042.
3. The Council welcomed the Government's commitment to tackle the plastic pollution and passed a Motion on 20 March 2018 (Annex 3) calling for the Council to make the Council a single-use-plastic-free authority.
4. The Council has a significant opportunity to reduce usage in Surrey - through its roles as service provider and employer and as an advocate. The work to deliver this has been divided into two phases:
  - a. **Phase 1:** Development of a policy to phase out internal SUP usage and to implement quick wins. For example, running a campaign to raise awareness amongst the Council's own staff, reviewing the offer from Commercial Services and revising procurement procedures to require necessary changes from suppliers and contractors. The details of current position and work on progress can be found in Annex 2.
  - b. **Phase 2:** Developing a strategy and programme of activities to deliver the full commitments of the Motion county-wide. The Council has established a SUP Task Group involving representation from each district and borough under Surrey Waste Partnership (SWP) sponsorship. Work is undergoing to create a joint Surrey strategy and long-term action plan.
5. Surrey was joint top of a recycling league table in 2016-17 based on data from Defra which highlighted that Surrey residents recycled 57.7% of their household waste which is the highest recycling rate of the 32 two-tier authorities in England. The primary objective of SUP policy is to reduce the amount of plastic waste generated in the first place, however, on occasions where this is not possible, the new policy will encourage that any plastics and its alternatives are recycled at a higher rate.

## **Proposal**

6. The SUP Policy (Annex 1) sets out the response to the issue of plastics accumulating in the environment and the plans for tackling it. The Policy focuses first on tackling single-use food and beverage packaging and tableware, due to the prominence of this type of waste in marine plastic litter. Cabinet is asked to approve the new policy set out in Annex 1.
7. The SUP Action Plan (Annex 2) illustrates the current status of the work undertaken and includes future plans: 1) to reduce and work towards zero avoidable SUP across the Council's estate and operations; 2) ensure appropriate recycling routes are available to capture plastic and its alternatives.
8. The Motion agreed by Council is ambitious and requires extensive engagement with partners as well as districts and boroughs in order to develop a Surrey-wide strategy. It is anticipated that the strategy will be agreed by March 2019.

**RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:**

9. The following key risks have been identified:

Category	Risk description	Mitigation
Reputational	Lack of engagement by partners in developing and delivering the Surrey-wide strategy reduces ability to deliver the motion.	Effective engagement strategy and Surrey Waste Partnership sponsorship
Financial	Delivery of some elements may require additional funding – e.g. water fountain infrastructure.	Utilisation of grant funding where available.

**Financial and Value for Money Implications**

- 10. Council services (who use the SUP products predominantly such as Commercial Services) are content with the commercial implications of providing alternatives to SUP as set out within the scope of this policy.
- 11. The cost implication of SUP reduction requirements from the new suppliers and contractors cannot be precisely identified at this stage as this would vary from contract to contract depending on what SUPs are being replaced and with which alternative, therefore this will be identified at the tender stage of procurement procedures. However, the intention is to be cost neutral.
- 12. Some actions delivered under this initiative has already achieved financial savings. For example, Surrey Fire and Rescue Service saved c£3,000 this financial year by switching to reusable water bottles issued as part of their fire fighters’ kit. There may be some future requirement for minor funding to implement the joint strategy which will be identified as the strategy is being developed. However, the principles applied are that change should be cost neutral or result in a saving.

**Section 151 Officer Commentary**

13. Although the exact financial consequences of approving the SUP Policy cannot be known at this time, it is not expected to have significant financial implications for the Council.

**Legal Implications- Monitoring Officer**

14. The public sector equality duty (Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) applies to the decision to be made by Cabinet in this report. There is a requirement when deciding upon the recommendations to have due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity for people with protected characteristics, foster good relations between such groups and eliminate any unlawful discrimination. These matters are dealt with in the equalities and diversity paragraph of the report.

**Equalities and Diversity**

15. The initiative will have no negative effects on equality considerations and has been designed with the objective of improving environment outcomes. This will have

positive benefits for health and happiness of Surrey residents and improve the flow of natural resources into the local economy.

#### **WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:**

16. Once approved, the SUP Policy will be published on the Council's external website.
17. Further measures in line with policy objectives will be implemented.
18. SUP Policy objectives will be embedded in procurement policies requiring new contracts being subject to SUP reduction criteria.
19. Launch of the SUP Policy to Surrey businesses & schools.
20. Continue to work closely with districts and boroughs to develop a joint Surrey strategy and action plan.

#### **Contact Officer:**

Gulcin Polat, Project Manager and 0208 541 9792.

#### **Consulted:**

Environment Select Committee, Trade Unions, SUP Members Reference Group (Mike Goodman, Mary Angel, Jonathan Essex, Saj Hussein, John Beckett), Surrey Waste Partnership, ORBIS Procurement and its partners (Brighton and Hove City Council & East Sussex County Council)

#### **Annexes:**

Annex 1- SUP Policy  
Annex 2- SUP Action Plan  
Annex 3- Motion

# Single-Use Plastics (SUP) Policy

Plastic waste is one of the greatest environmental challenges facing the world today. The UK government estimates that there are currently more than 150 million tonnes of plastic in the world's oceans, and 100,000 sea mammals and one million birds die from eating or becoming tangled in plastic waste each year.

DEFRA has published its [25 Year Environment Plan](#), presenting their target of "achieving zero avoidable plastic waste by the end of 2042". Surrey County Council (SCC) is strongly committed to take responsibility for tackling the plastic waste problem both within the local area and across the UK. With this in mind, SCC have urged the Government to bring the 2042 date forward.

SCC will reduce and work towards zero avoidable SUP across its own operations and services. SCC will also pro-actively work with partners, district & borough councils, schools, and businesses to find positive solutions to reduce unnecessary plastic waste countywide.

## What are single-use plastics (SUP)?

- The definition for SUP according to the Institute for European Environmental Policy: "single use plastics can include any disposable plastic item which is designed to be used only once". Single use items are often used in packaging, consumer products, cosmetics and healthcare. Examples include: light-weight plastic bags, disposable utensils, stirrers, beverage containers, coffee capsules, and wet wipes.
- This policy targets to eliminate the avoidable plastic waste. SCC will initially focus on eliminating the use of the plastic drinks bottles, plastic food takeaway boxes, plastic cutlery, disposable coffee cups, plastic drink bottle caps, straws, stirrers and plastic lids- these are avoidable and have viable alternatives: therefore they are immediately actionable.

## What is our commitment for supporting Surrey to become SUP free?

1. End the sale and provision of SUP products in order to phase out SUP use across SCC estate and operations wherever possible.
2. Ensure that our procurement policy and procedures require all of our suppliers to reduce and work towards zero avoidable SUP use (wherever possible) including jointly with partners through ORBIS and at SCC run events.
3. Support greater awareness and action from our suppliers and contractors in finding sustainable SUP replacements wherever appropriate and encourage higher recycling rates across SCC estates.
4. Share best practice, raise awareness, and support SCC staff, members, partners, communities, schools, district and borough councils, businesses and beyond towards making their own locations avoidable plastic-free zones.
5. Work with all stakeholders including district and boroughs, schools, communities and businesses to promote, support and innovate to reduce SUP across Surrey.

Further details can be found in the SUP action plan.

Annex 2- SUP Short-Term Action Plan (please note this is a working document which is continually edited and updated)

Objective	Key Outputs	Actions	Target Date	Status	Progress Comments
<b>ONSITE PROCUREMENT &amp; COMMERCIAL SERVICES</b>					
1. End the sale and provision of SUP products in order to phase out SUP use across SCC estate and operations wherever possible.	End the sale and provision of SUP products such as plastic drinks bottles, plastic food takeaway boxes, plastic cutlery, disposable coffee cups, plastic drink bottle caps, straws, stirrers and plastic lids in our buildings where possible.	Stop purchasing plastic cups for water stations and place posters by water stations to encourage staff to bring their own bottles.	Apr-18	achieved	Currently using up the remaining stock in the main SCC offices.
		Provide water jugs & glasses at large events eg meetings, trainings etc.	Jun-18	achieved	
		In our canteens: . Sell water in glass bottles including vending machines. . Remove 1 pint milk cartons from kitchens & use milk pergal's instead of plastic cartons. . Replace sauce sachets with reusable bottles (and free). . Replace plastic cutlery with metal. . Serve jam & butter in foil and washable dishes rather than plastic packets. . Replace take-away containers with recyclable cardboard boxes.	Jul-18	achieved	Currently using up the remaining stock for plastic cutlery, stirrers, and take-away salad boxes. Expecting to finish the existing stock by 1 Jan 2019.
		Stop provision of disposable cups at canteen & Lavazza café.	Jan-19	on plan	Waiting for formal approval of SUP policy before implementation. Staff to bring their own mugs. However there will be reusable mugs on sale (priced £1.50 each) for occasions staff and/or visitors have no mugs with them and need to take away.
	Work with our colleagues to ensure that the single-use plastics are reduced across our offices.	Design, procure and promote reusable mugs & bottles across SCC.	Jan-19	on plan	Obtained quotes from external suppliers to purchase reusable mugs & bottles with SCC logo printed. Due to its cost, this has been put on hold. Secured a special discount for staff from Library Service who sell eco-friendly reusable coffee mugs & water bottles for general public. Decided to promote those instead.
		Stop daily provision of bottled water to Fire Fighters (600) & purchase reusable bottles to refill instead.	Sep-18	achieved	The reusable bottles have been purchased & received (03.09.18). Has been launched in mid Sept. (Saving 29,515 plastic bottle waste annually)
		Phasing SUP use from Community Learning Centres.	Aug-18	on plan	Met with lead managers to support phasing SUPs in Adult Learning Centres. Final stocks of plastic cups being used currently, going forward paper cups will only be purchased to replace these. Posters have been displayed at all water machines informing everyone to bring a refillable water bottle and a communication was included at the Annual Tutor Meeting to capture all 350 approximately Bank Tutors and was followed up in the September Staff Newsletter. An article will be included in the Autumn Learner Voice which goes to all learners. Depending on affordability, consideration is being given to replacing plastic takeaway containers with paper sandwiches boxes or paper bags in the cafés (currently using existing plastic stock).
		Phasing SUP use from Registration Offices.	Aug-18	achieved	Met with the lead manager. Registration Offices only used the plastic cups at water-stations for visitors. These are now replaced with cone shaped paper cups. More glasses to be supplied for staff.
		Phasing SUP use from Surrey Arts.	Aug-18	achieved	Met with the lead manager. No provision of SUP at SA office in Guildford. Discussed possibility of commissioning art work on SUPs- this will be further explored (implementation would depend on affordability).
		Phasing SUP use from from Libraries.	Sep-18	achieved	Met with the lead manager. Replaced plastic cups with paper cups. No other provision of SUPs. Discussed possibility of installing water stations for public use at each Surrey library entrance - this will be further explored (implementation would depend on affordability).
		Phasing SUP use from from Surrey History Centre.	Oct-18	on plan	Meeting with the lead officer on 17.10.2018.
		Phasing SUP use from Gypsy and Traveller Sites.	Oct-18	on plan	Meeting with the lead officer on 19.10.2018.
		Phasing SUP use from SCC Children Centres.	Nov-18		Currently trying to arrange a meeting.
		Phasing SUP use from Older Persons Homes.	Nov-18		Currently trying to arrange a meeting.
Phasing SUP use from SCC Youth Clubs.	Nov-18		Currently trying to arrange a meeting.		

Annex 2- SUP Short-Term Action Plan

Objective	Key Outputs	Actions	Target Date	Status	Progress Comments
<b>ORBIS PROCUREMENT</b>					
2. Ensure that our procurement policy and procedures require all of our suppliers to reduce and work towards zero avoidable SUP use (wherever possible) including jointly with partners through ORBIS and at SCC run events.	Require all our suppliers to minimise the use of SUP in their service provision and find sustainable alternatives (where appropriate).	Work with ORBIS partners collaboratively (BHCC & ESCC) and adopt a common SUP approach to influence procurement activities in a stronger way.	Jul-18	Achieved	Meeting with colleagues from BHCC & ESCC on a regular basis and share good practice. BHCC passed their SUP policy through it's committee. ESCC hasn't yet.
		Remove SUP items from SCC office supply catalogues.	Jul-18	Achieved	
	Where the use of plastics is unavoidable, we will encourage the use of recycled plastics, where practicable, and encourage manufacturers that make products from locally sourced waste plastics.	Embed to the SUP Policy (once formally approved) to SCC's Sustainable Procurement & Ethical Procurement policies.	Nov-18	on plan	
		SUP reduction criteria will be added to Procurement's Social Value Charter (SVC).	Nov-18	on plan	Currently procurement team is calculating the financial number to specify on the SVC. The number determines whether a supplier win or not so it has to be auitable and robust. This will be ready by 30th Nov.
		"Environmental Standards" section will be added to ORBIS Suppliers Code of Conduct.	Nov-18	on plan	Emailed the draft wording to MG for review and approval on 08.10.18.
	Ensure where contractually possible that no SUP cups, bottles, straws, plates, cutlery etc. are used by contractors at SCC run events.	Events contracts will be monitored by Procurement team to phase out SUP use.	Nov-18	on plan	A note to be added on the catering catalogue to state "please be aware SCC has got a SUP policy now and forces reduction of SUP use at SCC run events. Therefore your services should be delivered in line with this requirement." Waiting for policy approval.

Annex 2- SUP Short-Term Action

Objective	Key Outputs	Actions	Target Date	Status	Progress Comments
<b>FACILITIES</b>					
3. Support greater awareness and action from our suppliers and contractors in finding sustainable SUP replacements wherever appropriate and encourage higher recycling rates across SCC estates.	Improve recycling facilities across SCC estate and encourage our employees, residents and partners to use our recycling facilities effectively.	Make it easy to recycle: refresh posters by each recycling bins to help staff to understand what can and can't recycled.	Mar-19	on plan	SCC's current Waste Collection contract with Suez is expiring by the end of this financial year. The new contract has now been awarded to Veolia and will cover both ESCC & SCC. Working closely with ESCC colleague to influence improvements and positive changes at the early procurement stage with the new service provider.
		Make it easy to recycle: labels on the bins can be improved by adding pictures to attract attention.	Mar-19	on plan	
		Make it easy to recycle: consistently keep general waste bins next to the recycling bins (including small general waste bins in the offices)	Mar-19	on plan	

## Annex 2- SUP Short-Term Action Plan

Objective	Key Outputs	Actions	Target Date	Status	Progress Comments
<b>COMMUNICATIONS</b>					
4. Share best practice, raise awareness, and support SCC staff, partners, communities, schools, district and borough councils, businesses and beyond towards making their own locations avoidable plastic-free zones.	Raise awareness of our employees and encourage behaviour changes needed to support Surrey become a single use plastics free workplace.	Create a "Tackling Single-use Plastics" webpage for S:Net & Public website.	Jul-18	achieved	Will be updated to launch our new policy & explain work undergoing for the joint Surrey strategy.
		Create a "Tackling Single-use Plastics" JIVE Community page.	Oct-18	behind plan	Due to technical system issues, however these have now been resolved and we are in process of creating our JIVE community page to be ready for our policy launch in November.
		Prepare a presentation to launch the new policy and define what we expect from our staff to do differently and/or to continue supporting our objectives. This is to be circulated to all SCC managers and they will be required to discuss it with their team members at their team meetings.	Nov-18	on plan	Will include: the sale of discounted reusable cups & bottles, dates for upcoming litter picking events, improve knowledge on recycling facilities, using your own mug at Lavazza when buying coffee.
		Promote eco-friendly local events as well as national initiatives for our staff via JIVE to help raise awareness.	Jan-19	on plan	This is an ongoing item. What we promoted so far are the River Mole Discovery Day event (organised by Mole Valley BC) celebrating the Worlds River Day on 30th Sept in Leatherhead; Plastic Free July,.Recycling week 2018, and Bookham Litter Pick events.
	Share best practice and information about plastic free initiatives, to residents, businesses, visitors and beyond through the council's social media and communication channels.	Work with D&Bs for a joint approach.	Mar-19	on plan	Planning a shared communication campaign with D&Bs as part of joint Surrey strategy once finalised in Dec 18. The intention has been discussed at Surrey Waste Partnership SUP Task group on 20 Sept and has been approved by SWP Senior Officers on 1 Oct.
	Support communities and litter-pick initiatives to ensure our parks, riversides and open spaces are free from plastic litter.	Organise and promote litter-picking events for SCC staff.	Jan-19	on plan	Agreed with the external faciliator to run four events per annum. Trying to organise a trial one initially in Jan 19. Wish to propose a Cabinet or CLT member to attend these events on a rotating basis to support this initiative. There will be a small cost to cover basic equipments such as bin bags, hi vis, goggles, gloves
	Embed our SUP objectives into other key council strategies, policies and plans.		Jan-19	on plan	

## Annex 2- SUP Short-Term Action Plan

Objective	Key Outputs	Actions	Target Date	Status	Progress Comments
<b>PARTNERS, D&amp;Bs, BUSINESSES &amp; COMMUNITIES</b>					
5. Work with all stakeholders including district and boroughs, schools, communities and businesses to promote, support and innovate to reduce SUP across Surrey with a particular focus on Surrey's busy public locations where local authorities have control or influence.	Use government legislation that regulates against the use of single-use plastics to support our efforts where we can.	Engage with businesses during inspections and through Trading Standards Primary Authority Partnerships to: assess product information files where our Trading Standards can look for banned materials; to make businesses aware of the new requirements; and to advise businesses how they can comply.	Jul-18	Achieved	A ban on cosmetic product containing microbeads came into force in England on 30 June 2018 and local authorities have been designated as the regulator for enforcing this legislation. Discussed and agreed with Trading Standards lead managers on these actions (July 2018).
		Raise general awareness of the need to reduce SUP and relevant legislation through using TS's social media channels and the weekly e-newsletter (called TS Alert).		on plan	Discussed and agreed with Trading Standards lead managers.
	Work closely with colleagues from Surrey's 11 D&Bs to develop a joint approach towards tackling SUP waste.	Establish a task group involving 11 D&Bs via SWP sponsorship.	Jun-18	Achieved	SWP task group is currently working towards a joint Surrey strategy and action plan.
		Agree on a common vision, strategy and an action plan that are fully supported by Surrey Waste Partnership at the top level.	Oct-18	on plan	The proposed approach (to develop a joint Surrey strategy) has been approved by SWP Senior Officers on 1st Oct. This also requires SWP Councillors' approval which will be discussed at their meeting on 31 Oct.
	Work with partners in joint ventures and innovative projects for reducing single-use plastic waste.	Explore opportunities for wider partnership-working with businesses eg Coca Cola European.	Aug-19	on plan	Coca-Cola European is currently piloting a new innovative scheme with Reading University aiming to reduce the amount of drink packaging. They designed a bespoke and customisable refillable bottles which contains an electronic chip underneath to recognise the payment made & track how many times the refillable bottle is used. Explored with their Sustainability Manager to expand this piloting scheme to SCC, however they were contracted to run this scheme with Reading University until summer 2019 and they would not have sufficient machinery/resources to expand this further until next summer. Agreed to discuss this possibility again next year.
		Sign up #StirCrazy national campaign (supported by high-profile government officials e.g. Michael Gove, Zac Goldsmith)	Dec-19	on plan	Met with Director of Future Without Rubbish. Our SUP policy launch will be included in #StirCrazy's nation-wide press release. Liaised with the Head of Plastics initiative in Brussels (the EU Commission) on 05.10.18 to inform him of our upcoming SUP policy. On approval, they would like to acknowledge our efforts in their press release/ video/ press conference events as appropriate.
		Meeting with Surrey Choices.	Jul-18	Achieved	The use of SUPs are generally related to medical reasons. Eg: gloves, straws. Agreed to share communication materials on SUP as well as helping each other when promoting eco-friendly events.
	Support our schools and communities in their efforts to make their buildings plastic	Organise awareness raising activities for Heads of Schools in Surrey.	Jan-19	on plan	Currently exploring the most cost-friendly routes for reaching out to Head of Schools.
	Through various channels, communicate the importance of protecting our urban, rural and waterways in Surrey, and support and promote positive initiatives, awareness raising campaigns and actions for reducing plastic waste at a wider level.	Work with Suez to support waste audits & campaign to reach wider community and influence consumer behaviour.	Dec-18	on plan	Suez agreed to extend their waste audit offer to 11 districts and boroughs in support to help us to develop the joint Surrey strategy.
		Explore ways of working together with Surrey Chamber of Commerce to reach their connections (55,000 businesses in Surrey) to promote SUPs initiative.	Jan-19	on plan	Arranged to publish an article on Surrey Chamber of Commerce magazine to launch our SUP policy to businesses. Also agreed with the event coordinator and the chair to announce our SUP policy launch at the Business Sustainability-Make Your Business Smarter event on 14 Nov 2018.

**MEETING OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL  
20 MARCH 2018  
MOTION AS AGREED**

Council notes that according to recent research, eight million metric tons of plastic waste ends up in the world's oceans each year, endangering marine life, and that there is a growing understanding of the risks posed to human health by toxic chemicals present in plastics.

Council further notes that six months after the introduction of the 5p bag charge, use of single-use plastic bags had already dropped by 85%, while the TV programme Blue Planet II has raised public awareness of the problems of our throwaway culture. Norwich, Brighton and other councils in the UK have already passed motions committing to phase out the use of single-use plastic products where it is reasonable to do so and to encourage local businesses and other local public agencies to do the same. The Council also welcomes and supports the publishing of the Government Our 25 year plan to improve the Environment. Council resolves to:

1. Continue to develop its plastic use strategy to make Surrey a single-use-plastic-free authority by working with the Environment Agency, Districts and Boroughs, businesses, E&I Select Committee and other partners and to bring back that strategy to Council
2. Immediately start the process to reduce the sale and provision of single-use plastic products such as bottles, cups, cutlery and drinking straws in Council buildings where it is reasonable to do so.
3. Investigate the feasibility of requiring pop-up food and drink vendors at large council events to avoid single use plastic as a condition of their contract and work with tenants in commercial properties owned by Surrey County Council to encourage the phasing out of single use plastic cups, bottles, cutlery and straws where it is reasonable to do so.
4. Include the reduction of single use plastic items in the list of corporate priorities for Surrey County Council.
5. Write to the Secretary of State for the Environment asking for more information on how the Government is to eliminate single-use plastics by 2042 and how this could be brought forward.

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