

SINGLE USE PLASTIC STRATEGY



The aim of our single-use plastic (SUP) strategy is simple. Where feasible, we want to make Solihull a SUP free authority by the end of 2020.

Whilst there are a number of definitions, we are adopting the following broad definition:-

"SUP includes all products that are made wholly or partly of plastic and are typically intended to be used just once and/or for a short period of time before being disposed of, for example, takeaway boxes, disposable coffee cups, stirrers, plastic wrap, polystyrene packaging and cigarette filters." (1)

THIS STRATEGY IS PART OF A WIDER PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITY - OUTLINED IN OUR GREEN PROSPECTUS - THAT AIMS TO MAKE OUR BOROUGH MORE SUSTAINABLE



Appendix 1

"Between 2015 and 2025, if we do not act, marine plastic pollution is set to treble world-wide to 150 million tonnes." (3)

"Latest estimates suggest that around 12 million tonnes of plastics enter the oceans each year" (4)

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

The UK uses 5 million tonnes of plastic a year, nearly half of which is packaging (2). Whilst plastic is a significant contributor to the UK economy and as a material it is incredibly useful, if leaked into the environment its durability ensures it remains for hundreds, if not thousands of years. Too often it is not recycled and ends up littering the streets or polluting the natural environment.

Whilst our aim is to eliminate SUP there are some practical issues to consider:

- Lack of adequate sorting infrastructure currently in UK
- Lack of end markets and lack of incentives to buy recycled plastic over new plastic
- Lack of catering/food companies that supply food in sustainable/non-plastic packaging

THE NATIONAL CONTEXT

The Government has set out its ambition in its strategy 'Our Waste, Our Resources: A Strategy for England(2). This sets out how they will preserve our stock of material resources by minimising waste, promoting resource efficiency and moving towards a circular economy. This will support the elimination of avoidable plastic waste over the lifetime of the Government's Environmental Plan (4).

Key targets and ambitions are contained within these, and include:

- All plastics on the market being recyclable, reusable or compostable by 2025
- Eliminate avoidable waste of all kinds by 2050

Other emerging proposals (5) include:

- Moving the cost of disposal to producer - reform of waste packaging regulations
- Encouraging use of recycled plastic through taxation
- Encourage recycling - introduce deposit scheme for drinks containers
- Simplify recycling across the country - introduce a consistent set of recyclables
- Drive resource efficient product design - standards for ecodesign

WHAT IS OUR APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM?

In delivering our strategy we will:-

- Adopt an evidence based approach based on a clear understanding of our procurement activity.
- Follow the waste hierarchy of reduce, reuse, recycle. Meaning where possible we will eliminate or reduce use. If that is not possible we will look to see if there are any ways we can encourage people to reuse plastic items and finally we will look to ensure the item is recycled (or at least made from recycled material to encourage these markets) .
- Work collaboratively with our suppliers to reduce the amount of SUP procured.
- Take an innovative approach, learning from best practice and partners.
- Not only work to 'put our own house in order' but also play our part in encouraging others to do the same.

WHAT SUP ARE WE CURRENTLY USING?

We undertook an audit which revealed that over 1.5 million items are used and then disposed of. The top five included those we expected, such plastic cutlery, food packaging, cups and lids, but also less obvious ones such as gloves. More detail of the audit can be found in the SUP Summary of Audits.

WHAT ARE WE ALREADY DOING ?

Encore Café have replaced SUP glasses with reusable ones, installed a water fountain and signed up as 'water bottle refill station', use metal cutlery and takeaway wooden disposable cutlery, and serve drinks with paper straws. In the Council House plastic cups are no longer supplied, and where disposable cups are offered in public areas, they are paper. In other areas such as Sans Souci Training Centre, hot beverages are served in biodegradable paper cups. Procurement Team consider the reduction of SUP and unnecessary packaging when tendering for contracts. 'Dry mixed recycling' is collected at schools and Council offices for recycling. The remaining waste is sent to a local energy from waste plant. Love Solihull work with schools and community groups, including organising a 'Blue Planet' plastic competition.

1) "Tackling the Plastic Problem: Using the Tax system or Charges to Address Single-Use Plastic Waste" - <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/tackling-the-plastic-problem>

2) "Our Waste, Our Resources: A Strategy for England" - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/resources-and-waste-strategy-for-england>

3) "Foresight Future of the Sea" - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/future-of-the-sea--2>

4) "A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment" <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan>

5) "Resources and waste strategy" - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/resources-and-waste-strategy-for-england/resources-and-waste-strategy-at-a-glance>



Solihull
METROPOLITAN
BOROUGH COUNCIL

SUP ROAD MAP

THEMES & OBJECTIVES

GETTING OUR OWN HOUSE IN ORDER

Objective 1. Remove all single use plastics food and beverage packaging and tableware where feasible by 2020

Objective 2. Work towards the elimination of other single use plastics used by the authority

Objective 3. Ensure appropriate recycling routes are available to capture plastic

Objective 4. Encourage staff to make sustainable food and beverage packaging and tableware choices and ensure use of the workplace recycling systems

Objective 5. Ensure as far as is practicable that events delivered on council land support our SUP strategy

Objective 6. Ensure strategy is working

WORKING WITH SUPPLIERS & CONTRACTORS

Objective 7. Ensure our procurement activity supports a reduction in the use of SUP

ENCOURAGE, EDUCATE, ENGAGE & ENABLE

Objective 8. Support schools to reduce their use of SUP

Objective 9. Support the public to reduce their use of SUP and waste in general

Objective 10. Work with Solihull's business community to encourage action and raise awareness

ACTIONS

- 1a - Review pre-made sandwich service , potentially eliminating the need for SUP packaging
- 1b - Review food handling practice to reduce use of SUP and introduce new best practice
- 1c - Investigate a 'bring your own cup' incentive scheme for takeaway business
- 1d - Eliminate the use of non-recyclable single use plastic cutlery
- 1e - Investigate reusable, recyclable and compostable alternatives to non-recyclable materials, and their suitable disposal route
- 1f - Eliminate the use of the remaining items of non-recyclable SUP, which are:
 - Polystyrene food packaging
 - Black plastic - e.g. drinks cups lids
- 1g - Review food handling practice to reduce use of SUP and introduce new best practice
- 2a - Begin to audit other sections of the Council
- 3a - Consider approach to plastic bottle recycling, which could include segregated or deposit scheme, as informed by Government Policy
- 3b - Investigate extending the use of manufacturers recycling schemes in both corporate buildings and schools
- 4a - Waste Team, working with Facilities Management, to continue rolling out wider waste and recycling facilities across corporate sites ensuring opportunities maximised through refurbishments and in new offices
- 4b - Continue the engagement and education campaign addressing waste reduction and good recycling practices
- 4c - Use the Council's internal communications to support other teams deliver effectively their communications
- 4d - Have in place an SUP Strategy Communications Plan
- 4e - Ensure the proposed 'sustainability e-learning module' supports the aim of our SUP Strategy
- 5 - Ensure the revised Events Policy supports the aim of our SUP Strategy
- 6a - Undertake annual audit
- 6b - Produce an annual public statement of activity
- 6c - Report progress to the Sustainability Group quarterly
- 6d - Report progress towards target " elimination of SUP by December 2020" to Cabinet member
- 7a - Promote the reduction of single use plastic and waste reduction and recycling in general via the emerging Social Value activity
- 7b - Include standard question around single use plastic in the Invitation to Tender document
- 8a - Understand current activity relating to SUP education and awareness in schools and the consider how best the Council can support schools in reducing their use of SUP
- 8b - From this—develop a Council-wide action plan to support and encourage schools to reduce the use of SUP
- 8c - Further embed education and awareness of the SUP issue into Love Solihull Strategy and related activities for schools, such as workshops and environmental improvement activities
- 9a - Use the Council's communication mechanisms to encourage the public to reduce their use of SUPs. See SUP Strategy Communications Plan
- 9b - Further embed education and awareness of the SUP issue into Love Solihull Strategy and related activities for the public, such as workshops and environmental improvement activities
- 10a - Work with partners and networks such as Solihull Sustainability Visioning Group, Solihull BID, Solihull Chamber, Tourism Forum to encourage activity that supports a reduction in the use of SUP



Mar 2020
Jan 2020
Jan 2020
June 2020
Jan 2020
Jan 2020
April 2020
June - annually
June - annually
In progress
In progress
Dec 19 onwards
Dec 19/Jan 20
Dec 2020
June - annually
June - annually
Dec 2020
First review date - Dec 2020
Jan 2020
April 2020
June 2020
Dec 2020
June 2020
March 2020

LEAD



ENCORE CAFE

CAT

SUST

W&R for FAM

W&R ESD

W&R FAM - HR

COMMS

COMMS

HR

COMMS

SUST

PROC

ESD

ESD

Lov Sol

COMMS

Lov Sol

SUST

K E Y CAT - Schools and Corporate Catering ESD - Education for Sustainable Development Officer Group FAM - Facilities & Asset Management Team
Lov Sol - Love Solihull Team SUST - Sustainability Team W&R - Waste and Recycling Team