

Council – 16 December 2020

Motion submitted by Councillor Serjeant

“For Chesterfield Borough Council to be a single-use-plastic free Council

The Council notes:

- The production of plastic is a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions globally^a which is exacerbating climate change.
- Most plastic does not decompose. As of 2015, approximately 6,300 Million tonnes of plastic waste had been generated globally, an estimated 79% of which has accumulated in landfills or the natural environment^b.
- This has a significant impact on marine^c and terrestrial^d ecosystems and is expected to affect both the services we get from these environments and human health^{e, f}.
- While a wide range of governance mechanisms have been implemented globally to control plastic pollution, these have been inconsistent (and further undermined by the widespread use of plastic PPE during the Covid pandemic^g).
- CBC has a strong track record of environmental policies and is currently implementing an ambitious Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP). Single use plastic does affect our indirect carbon emissions but is not specifically mentioned in the CCAP. It would, however, be included under item 34 (introduction of climate change impact assessments) and item 37 (introduction of sustainable procurement conditions for suppliers).
- While CBC does not use a great deal of single-use-plastic, usage is often prominent and can be interpreted as a visible indicator of an organisation’s environmental credentials.

The Council therefore commits to:

1. Undertake a review of our internal use of single-use-plastics to provide a closer estimate of the quantities currently being ordered and used.
2. Where possible, seek to remove single use plastic from council operations by 2023 through engagement with suppliers and switching to alternative products.
3. Encourage and promote plastic free initiatives including the Plastic Free Chesterfield campaign.
4. Offer the support of the Council’s Climate Change Officer in an ex officio capacity on the steering group of Plastic Free Chesterfield.”

References

- ^a Zheng, J. and Suh, S., 2019. Strategies to reduce the global carbon footprint of plastics. *Nature Climate Change*, 9(5), pp.374-378.
- ^b Geyer, R., Jambeck, J.R. and Law, K.L., 2017. Production, use, and fate of all plastics ever made. *Science advances*, 3(7), p.e1700782.
- ^c Beaumont, N.J., Aanesen, M., Austen, M.C., Börger, T., Clark, J.R., Cole, M., Hooper, T., Lindeque, P.K., Pascoe, C. and Wyles, K.J., 2019. Global ecological, social and economic impacts of marine plastic. *Marine pollution bulletin*, 142, pp.189-195.
- ^d Chae, Y. and An, Y.J., 2018. Current research trends on plastic pollution and ecological impacts on the soil ecosystem: A review. *Environmental pollution*, 240, pp.387-395.
- ^e Lehner, R., Weder, C., Petri-Fink, A. and Rothen-Rutishauser, B., 2019. Emergence of nanoplastic in the environment and possible impact on human health. *Environmental science & technology*, 53(4), pp.1748-1765.
- ^f Vethaak, A.D. and Leslie, H.A., 2016. Plastic Debris Is a Human Health Issue. *Environmental Science and Technology*, 50, pp.6825-6826.
- ^g Silva, A.L.P., Prata, J.C., Walker, T.R., Campos, D., Duarte, A.C., Soares, A.M., Barcelò, D. and Rocha-Santos, T., 2020. Rethinking and optimising plastic waste management under COVID-19 pandemic: Policy solutions based on redesign and reduction of single-use plastics and personal protective equipment. *Science of the Total Environment*, 742, p.140565.