



# Avoidance & Reduction of `plastics' in Denbighshire County Council offices

# Avoidance & Reduction of 'plastics' in Denbighshire County Council Offices

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## Context

Notice of Motion: The notice of motion brought to the meeting of full Council in July 2018 stemmed from:

1. Global and local environmental concerns regarding the use of plastic.
2. The duty under the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act for public bodies in Wales to act in a manner which is globally responsible.
3. The Environmental Priority contained within Denbighshire's Corporate Plan.

RESOLVED that the Council supports in principle the reduction in the use of plastic but asks that it be referred to Scrutiny for detailed consideration and a further report back to Council.

Full Council – 3rd July 2018

## Introduction

It was recognised that Denbighshire County Council is broadly in support of showing leadership to the rest of the County in its use of plastic; however, there was a lack of understanding of the impact that any decision on the use of plastics within the Council might have on the delivery of a range of Council services, including budgetary and other implications.

In-depth work was required in order for informed recommendations, in the form of an Action Plan, to be made to Scrutiny and to full Council, based on robust evidence regarding potential alternatives to plastic.

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## Task & Finish Groups

A Member Use of Plastics Task & Finish Group informed by an Officer Task & Finish Group was established as it was important for this Group to set realistic ambitions and goals, as well as ones which do not have unintended consequences e.g.

- Replacing plastic with materials that are significantly more expensive leading to increased costs that could result in having to cut existing valued services.
- Replacing plastic with alternative products that cannot be recycled so end up in landfill or energy from waste facilities.
- Replacing plastic with alternative products that result in an inferior service delivery, particularly in areas of health and wellbeing.

As an initial action, we understand that further short, medium and long-term actions to achieve a 'reduction in plastics' within the council will need to be progressed and these are proposed below:

1. An Action Plan, including SMART objectives, for a reduction in the use of plastics within Denbighshire Council, to be implemented within Denbighshire County Council.
2. Achievement of objectives contained within this Action Plan will demonstrate that the Council is taking a lead in Denbighshire in reducing the use of plastics.
3. A reduction in the use of plastics by Denbighshire County Council will contribute towards the Environmental Priority contained within the Corporate Plan.

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## Timetable:

| <b>TIMETABLE</b>   |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| <b>Group/Committee</b>   | <b>Title</b>                              | <b>Date</b>   | <b>Proposed action</b>   |
| Use of Plastics Task & Finish Group                                      | Use of Plastics Task & Finish Group       | 10 <sup>th</sup> October 2019   | To consider proposed action plan for Scrutiny Report   |
|  |   | 14 <sup>th</sup> November 2019  | Finalise action plan   |
| Scrutiny Report outlining the following Actions/ Recommendations         | Performance Scrutiny Committee            | 28 <sup>th</sup> November 2019<br><br>(paper deadline 14 <sup>th</sup> November 2019) | “the Council supports in principle the reduction in the use of plastic but asks that it be referred to Scrutiny for detailed consideration and a further report back to Council.”<br><br>Agree recommendations to Full Council |
| Update to SLT  | SLT                                       | 5 <sup>th</sup> December 2019   | To provide SLT with update on 'plastics'   |
| Scrutiny Report - Full Council   | Full Council                              | 28 <sup>th</sup> January 2020<br><br>(paper deadline 14 <sup>th</sup> January 2020)   | To agree proposed Scrutiny recommendations on how the Council can reduce its use of plastic in a deliverable and sustainable way   |
| Business Case – Action Plan to Environment & Communities Programme Board | Environment & Communities Programme Board | February 2020   | Develop agreed proposed actions into a Business Case   |

# Avoidance & Reduction of 'plastics' in Denbighshire County

## Council Offices

| Proposed Action Plan: Proposed Action Plan: Avoidance & Reduction of 'plastics' in Denbighshire County Council offices |   |  |   |
|--|---|--|---|
| ACTION   | WHERE   | WHEN   | IMPACT  |
| Stop the provision of blue plastic water cups at water coolers within council buildings                                | County Hall<br>Russell House<br>Caledfryn   | Recommendation :<br>with immediate effect  | Avoidance of use/purchase of blue plastic water cups<br>14,000 (baseline) per annum<br>£532 (baseline) per annum                |
| Encourage the reuse of water bottles to refill at water coolers  | County Hall<br>Russell House<br>Caledfryn   | Recommendation:<br>Phased approach as existing stock of blue plastic water cups are utilised             | Encourage re-use of water bottles   |
| Remove water coolers altogether  | County Hall<br>Russell House<br>Caledfryn<br>And any other satellite sites, eg. Kinmel Park Depot | Recommendation:<br>with immediate effect<br><br>Carbon filters to be fitted to water taps (minimal cost) | No provision of water coolers<br><br>Tap water available<br><br>£9,000 rental (baseline) per annum<br><br>Carbon reduction      |
| Stop the provision of cups at refreshment points within council buildings  | County Hall<br>Russell House<br>Caledfryn   | Recommendation:<br>Phased approach as existing stock is utilised   | Avoidance of use/purchase of single use cups that contain plastic<br>25,270 (baseline) per annum<br>£1,616 (baseline) per annum |
| Staff Campaign to 'bring your own cup' to work/office/meetings   | County Hall<br>Russell House<br>Caledfryn   | Messages on LINC<br>Amendment to refreshment booking form to encourage 'bring a cup'                     | Avoidance of provision of cups that contain plastic   |

# Avoidance & Reduction of 'plastics' in Denbighshire County

## Council Offices

| Proposed Action Plan: Avoidance & Reduction of 'plastics' in Denbighshire County Council offices                                       |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| ACTION   | WHERE                                     | WHEN  | IMPACT  |
| Remove refreshment stations altogether from council offices  | County Hall<br>Russell House<br>Caledfryn | Recommendation:<br>with immediate effect            | Return to 'flasks' if applicable<br><br>Carbon reduction<br><br>Baseline : £4,078 per annum   |
| Reduce provision of plastic milk containers 'jiggers' at refreshment points<br><br>Plastic stirrers (not applicable) – wooden stirrers | County Hall<br>Caledfryn<br>Russell House | Explore options with FMU suppliers re: refreshments | Avoidance of use of plastic milk containers<br>50 boxes per annum,<br>120 per box<br>6,000 (baseline) per annum<br><br>£212.50 (baseline) per annum   |
| Promote behaviour change to either avoid or reduce plastic use to all council staff  | All staff via LINC                        | Recommendation:<br>with immediate effect            | Raise awareness of 9 ways of reducing plastic use in work/personal situations<br><br>'Making just a few small changes can have a big impact on the amount of plastic we use on a day-to-day basis.' |
| Stop purchase of plastic stationary wallets in all services  | County Hall<br>Caledfryn<br>Russell House | Recommendation:<br>with immediate effect            | Reuse supplies within services  |

# Avoidance & Reduction of 'plastics' in Denbighshire County

## Council Offices

| Proposed Action Plan: Avoidance & Reduction of 'plastics' in Denbighshire County Council offices                             |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| ACTION   | WHERE   | WHEN   | IMPACT   |
| Remove vending machines completely   | County Hall<br>Caledfryn<br>Russell House   | Recommendation :<br>to remove vending machines   | Reduction in availability of plastic items<br><br>Reduction in energy use<br><br>Carbon reduction<br>Health benefits |
| Arrange consultation to challenge 'avoidance and reduction of plastics' in our council offices                               | Challenge for:<br>County Hall<br>Caledfryn<br>Russell House   | Once action plan approved – arrange challenge around actions – prior to Council<br>(December 2019) | Involvement in project   |
| <b>NEXT STEPS</b>  |   |  |  |
| The Member Task & Finish Group to explore and investigate options to avoid and reduce plastics in other areas of the council | Next 12 months – focus on initial priority area:<br>School catering   | 2020-2021  | Avoid and reduce plastic throughout the wider council  |
| All staff through their management structures to look at how to avoid or reduce plastics within the council                  | All services<br>Via all communication channels eg. Visiontime, payslips, etc<br>Considered and monitored by SLT | Recommendation:<br>all staff to consider   | Ideas to be considered to avoid and reduce plastics throughout the wider council                                     |



# Avoidance & Reduction of 'plastics' in Denbighshire County Council Offices

## Officers' Task & Finish Group

It is noted that many other areas of the council were explored and investigated in the preparation of this report, which included all services. In particular,

- FMU (Schools Catering and Café R)
- FMU (1891, North Wales Bowls, Nova)
- FMU (Council Buildings)
- HES (Waste Management)

## Future of Member Task & Finish Group

It is acknowledged that there are many other areas of the council for the group to explore, investigate and make further recommendations for action. It should be noted that polystyrene boxes in schools have been phased out and replaced with a cardboard substitute. Sandwich container options have been investigated in detail, however, it has been identified that replacing plastic would be with materials that are significantly more expensive leading to increased costs that are not currently feasible. However, the Group as a next step are proposing to look at 'School Catering' over the next 12 months.

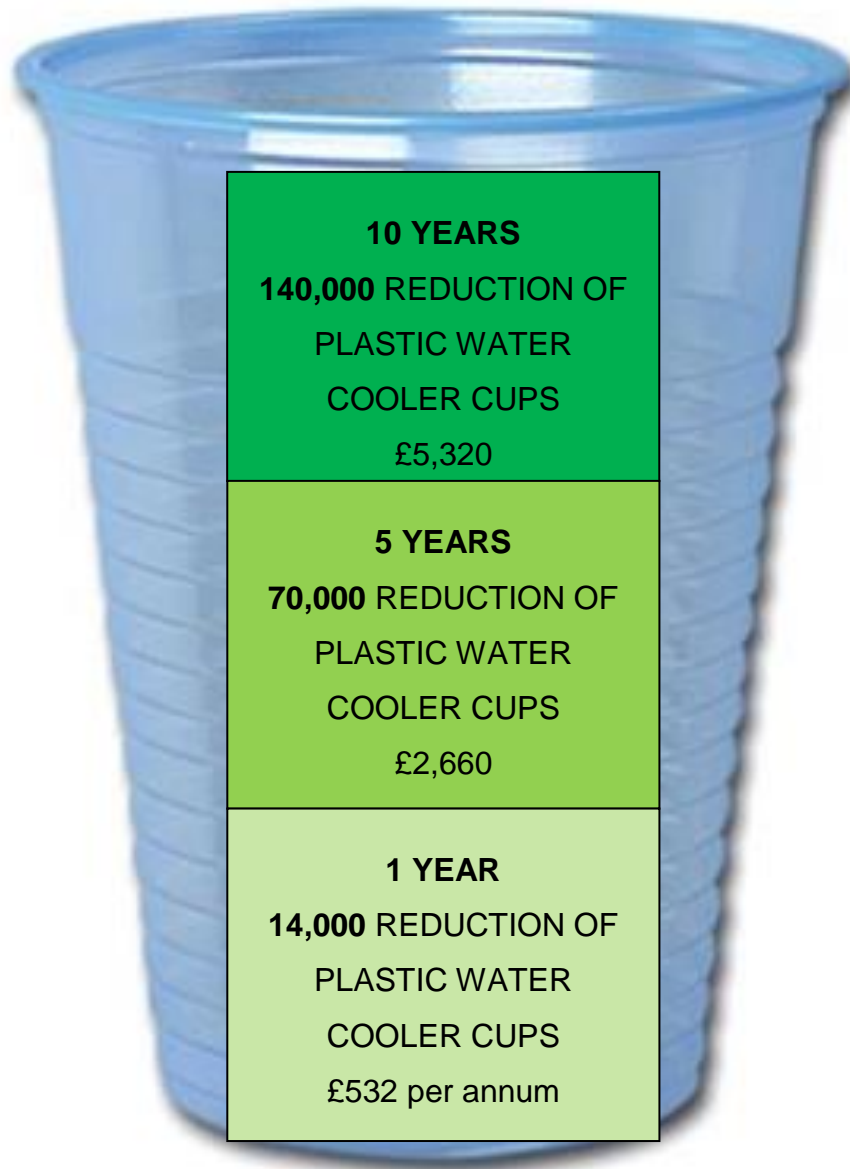
## Recommendations are:

1. The proposed Action Plan be approved.
2. The Members' Task & Finish Group to continue their work on avoiding and reducing plastics for a further 12 months to look at the following specific area:
  - a. School Catering
3. The 'avoidance and reduction of plastics within council offices' be a work stream linked to the wider Climate Change and Ecological Emergency response.

# Avoidance & Reduction of 'plastics' in Denbighshire County Council Offices

## EXAMPLES

**Indication of impact of proposal:** By no longer supplying 'single use' plastic water cooler cups within our 3 main council buildings – County Hall, Caledfryn and Russell House the following reductions in 'single-use plastic' use would be achieved:



# Avoidance & Reduction of 'plastics' in Denbighshire County Council Offices

## Think your daily coffee habit at work has no impact?

Think again. It may not seem like a big deal, but single-use coffee cups have a significant, negative impact on the environment.

Many paper cups are coated or have a plastic liner between the paper layers to prevent leakage, or they are made of non-recyclable Styrofoam and therefore cannot be recycled.

## So what can you do?



Bring a ceramic coffee cup or travel mug from home to use in work/office

Use a reusable coffee cup when you get coffee 'to go' – either on your way to work or when you're out and about – many coffee shops offer a discount when you do this.

Most of us already have reusable hot beverage containers – find yours in your kitchen cabinet!

## 9 ways to reduce your plastic use

Making just a few small changes can have a big impact on the amount of plastic we use on a day-to-day basis.

### 1. Carry a reusable bottle

In the UK we use over 35 million plastic bottles every day! Carrying a reusable bottle is a great way to cut your plastic use and save money too!

### 2. Say no to plastic straws

Plastic straws are bad news for our oceans. Next time you order a drink, think about whether you need a straw – and if you don't, just say no! You can also ask your local pub to stop adding straws to drinks as standard and offer paper straws to those who want one

### 3. Take a reusable coffee cup

2.5 billion coffee cups are thrown away every year in the UK – and less than 1 in 400 are recycled. Carry a reusable cup with you – some cafes even offer a small discount if you use your own cup (and if they don't ask them why not!)

### 4. Avoid excessive food packaging

Whether it's making different choices in the supermarket or choosing a different place to shop, we can all try and cut down the plastic we buy. And as an added bonus, loose fruit and veg is often cheaper than pre-packaged alternatives!

### 5. Use refill stations for detergents

There are some products where it's difficult to avoid a plastic container (for example washing up liquid or laundry liquid) – the good news is that there are an increasing amount of places where you can refill your old bottles.

### 6. Say no to disposable cutlery

We've all been there – caught out in a cafe or at a train station when we've bought a salad or a yogurt but the only cutlery on offer is plastic! Whilst it's hard to plan for every opportunity, consider carrying a spoon or fork (or spork!) in your bag or keeping cutlery at work.

### **7. Get your milk delivered**

Although the early morning sound of a milk float is not as common as it used to be, there are still lots of places in the UK where you can get milk delivered in glass bottles – which are then collected and reused.

### **8. Avoid microbeads**

The good news is that the UK government announced a ban on microbeads! However, the ban came into force in 2018, there may still be products on the shelves, so keep checking those labels before you buy and avoid products containing polyethylene (PE), polypropylene (PP), polyethylene terephthalate (PET), polymethyl methacrylate (PMMA), polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE) and nylon.

### **9. Carry a shopping bag**

Since the plastic bag charge was introduced, there's been a massive 85% drop in their use. Many of us are used to carrying an extra bag with us – if you still find it hard to remember, try a foldaway one that you can carry in your normal day bag.

# Avoidance & Reduction of 'plastics' in Denbighshire County Council Offices

## Members' Task & Finish Group:

### List of Councillor Members:

- |  |       |                                  |
|--|-------|----------------------------------|
| • <a href="#">Councillor Emrys Wynne</a>     | Chair | Plaid Cymru - The Party of Wales |
| • <a href="#">Councillor Martyn Holland</a>  |       | Welsh Conservatives              |
| • <a href="#">Councillor Hugh Irving</a>     |       | Welsh Conservatives              |
| • <a href="#">Councillor Melvyn Mile</a>     |       | Independent                      |
| • <a href="#">Councillor Merfyn Parry</a>    |       | Independent                      |
| • <a href="#">Councillor Paul Penlington</a> |       | Labour                           |
| • <a href="#">Councillor Glenn Swingler</a>  |       | Plaid Cymru - The Party of Wales |
| • <a href="#">Councillor Graham Timms</a>    |       | Labour                           |