

<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet	<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	25 July 2019
<b>Subject:</b>	Single Use Plastics -Update		
<b>Report of:</b>	Head of Corporate Resources	<b>Wards Affected:</b>	(All Wards);
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Cabinet Member - Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services		
<b>Is this a Key Decision:</b>	Yes	<b>Included in Forward Plan:</b>	Yes
<b>Exempt Confidential Report:</b>	/ No		

### Summary:

This report provides Members with an update on the progress made to date in fulfilling the Council Motions 19/7/2018 & 25/4/19 in relation to both single use plastics (SUP) and intentional balloon and lanterns, the areas that have been identified as delivering an immediate impact over the next 2 years and the subsequent work that is planned.

### Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet

1. Note the approach taken to the Council motions in respect of Single Use Plastics and intentional balloon and lanterns;
2. Note the progress made to date and specifically the approach the Council will take to those Single Use Plastics that are to be the subject of an EU ban in 2021; and
3. Approve that work continues across the council to further meet the requirements of the 2 council motions.

### Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

These recommendations will start the work towards the council meeting the requirements of the :-

- Council Motion on Single use plastics 19 July 2018;
- the Council Motion on Intentional balloon and Chinese/sky lantern release 25 April 2019; and
- The desire to protect and enhance Sefton's unique environment

### Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: (including any Risk Implications)

#### Do nothing

This was not considered an option as plastic waste in our oceans and waterways is a real threat to the unique coastal environment in Sefton. Balloon and lantern releases pose a threat to livestock and wildlife, as well as being a source of litter across our local habitats. The Council believes that the reduction of single-use plastic would benefit health in Sefton, reduce waste and ultimately help protect our coast.

## What will it cost and how will it be financed?

### (A) Revenue Costs

The councils approach to Single Use Plastics is being led by the Energy & Environmental Management Section together with the Communications Team. The teams are utilising officer time and materials available without incurring additional cost to the Council.

There is currently no income derived from balloon or lantern release events organised through Sefton's tourism team or Green Sefton, therefore no loss of income associated with this strategy.

### (B) Capital Costs

None

### Implications of the Proposals:

<b>Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):</b>
There are no resource issues arising from the work undertaken to date
<b>Legal Implications:</b>
There are no legal issues arising from the work undertaken to date
<b>Equality Implications:</b>
There are no equality implications

### Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable: n/a
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: This will help the local community to protect their local environment, become more environmentally aware and sustainable.
Commission, broker and provide core services: n/a
Place – leadership and influencer: The Council will be acting to protect the local environment through the actions which will come from this strategy.
Drivers of change and reform: The Council will be changing the way that it acts across a number of areas to achieve a positive environmental outcome.
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: n/a
Greater income for social investment: n/a
Cleaner Greener: The Council will be acting to protect its unique coastal and marine environment, as well as the many habitats and species that exist across Sefton.

## What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

### (A) Internal Consultations

The Head of Corporate Resources (FD.5701/19) and Chief Legal & Democratic Officer (LD4825/19) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

### (B) External Consultations

Not applicable

## Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Cabinet meeting.

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Stephanie Jukes
Telephone Number:	Tel: 0151 934 4552
Email Address:	Stephanie.jukes@sefton.gov.uk

### Appendices:

There are no appendices to this report

### Background Papers:

Council Motion 19/7/2018 Single Use Plastics

<http://modgov.sefton.gov.uk/moderngov/ieIssueDetails.aspx?IId=54071&Opt=3>

Council Motion 25/4/19 Intentional balloon and Chinese / sky lantern release

<http://smbc-modgov->

[01/documents/s89507/Motion%20submitted%20by%20Councillor%20Roscoe%20-%20Balloon%20Releases.pdf](http://smbc-modgov-01/documents/s89507/Motion%20submitted%20by%20Councillor%20Roscoe%20-%20Balloon%20Releases.pdf)

## 1. Introduction/Background

1.1 In July 2018, Council considered a motion to tackle the issue of single use plastics, in order to address the ecological problems particularly relevant to Sefton's unique coastal environment.

1.2 It was determined that 'reducing single use plastic is a key priority with a focus on interventions and stewardship to help reduce the quantity of plastic waste generated by society and the associated release of litter to the ocean.'

1.3 It was resolved that;

*'The Council believes that the reduction of single-use plastic would benefit health in Sefton, reduce waste and ultimately help protect our coast.'*

*Council therefore directs Officers to report to Cabinet on:*

1. *Development of a robust strategy to ensure Sefton Council works towards phasing out single-use plastics (SUP) in its activities and buildings within the next two years;*

2. *Work with partners and other large institutions to encourage them in developing similar strategies to reduce SUP: and*

3. *An ongoing Communications plan to inform the public of Sefton of the reasons for phasing out SUP and encourage them to switch to alternatives.'*

1.4 In addition to this Motion, a second motion in April 2019, specifically relating to intentional balloon and lantern releases was made, which supplements the SUP actions, namely that;

*'There is wide ranging evidence of the 'fallout' from such releases posing hazards to wildlife and livestock causing injury and death. The Council believes that all Sefton residents should be discouraged from releasing balloons and lanterns due to the damage that is caused to our environments, (particularly to marine life).*

*Council therefore directs Officers to report to Cabinet on:*

1. *The drawing up of a policy of not permitting the release of balloons and Chinese Lanterns from Council-owned land e.g. parks, open spaces, and beaches; and any potential financial implications arising from this Motion*

2. *The Council not endorsing events where balloon and lantern releases are to take place.*

3. *Where Council property is leased to a third party, e.g. schools, the leaseholder is written to asking them to observe the ban on balloon and Chinese lantern releases.*

4. *When leases or licences are renewed, an explicit clause banning balloon and lantern releases is added.*

5. *An ongoing communications plan to inform Sefton residents and visitors on the dangers of balloon and lantern releases and informing them of the alternatives such as sponsoring a tree or a lighting candle event.'*

## 2.0 **Vision**

2.1 The Sefton coast is a very special place for nature and one of the most important sites in Great Britain, according to Nature Connected <http://www.natureconnected.org/the-sefton-coast/>. The 22 miles of coastline provides a home for many very rare/endangered plants and animals with the sand flats and estuaries providing safe refuge for over 350,000 birds from the Arctic each autumn, winter and spring.

- 2.2 The Council continues to recognise that this special environment needs to be protected from the growing problem of plastic waste appearing due to littering, poor waste management and the pollution of water courses.
- 2.3 As such the Council believes that the reduction of single-use plastics (SUP) would benefit health and wellbeing in Sefton, reduce waste and ultimately help protect the coastline. Additionally, the mass intentional release of helium filled latex balloons (one form of SUP) and Chinese/sky lanterns pose hazards to wildlife and livestock causing injury and death. Lanterns can also cause injury to humans, damage to buildings and cause false callouts to the coastguard.
- 2.4 Whilst the Council recognises that there are limitations in its powers to ban single use plastics across the borough, the overall vision is to eliminate the use of SUP wherever possible across its assets, and encourage staff, communities, businesses and partners to reduce the avoidable use of SUPs too.
- 2.5 In accordance with the 2 council motions, the Council will therefore aim to phase out avoidable single use plastics in Council buildings and activities by 2020 wherever possible. This will include a ban on intentional balloon and lantern releases from Sefton controlled land.

The Council will also commit to raising awareness of the issues associated with SUP use, the Council's stance on SUP & balloon lantern releases, and will encourage the public, businesses, and partners to act responsibly.

### **3. Progress to date-July 2019**

- 3.1 The Energy & Environmental Management Section has taken responsibility for progressing the Council motions. Officers have undertaken some initial research on the use and amounts of single use plastic (SUP) across the council, and based upon these initial findings, will adopt a staged approach to tackling the various types of SUP the Council handle.
- 3.2 Enquiries regarding balloon and lantern releases suggest that teams across the Council, including tourism and green Sefton, do not hold or encourage balloon or lantern releases from their land. Work will continue to ensure that all users are aware of the ban and that this reflects the council policy as set out in the motion of April 2019.
- 3.3 In light of the limited activity in relation to balloon and lantern releases, work has focussed initially on the use of Single Use Plastics both within the Council and those used by partners. This is a comprehensive piece of work as would be expected, therefore the Council has taken the decision to initially focus on those Single Use Plastics that are to be banned across the EU from 2021.

This list is considered to represent **avoidable** Single Use Plastics and are as follows ;

- Cutlery
- Straws
- Drink stirrers

- Plates
- Sticks for balloons (and balloons)
- Cups and lids

- 3.4 As protection of our coastal and marine environment is a key focus to this initial work, priority has been given to activity in and around the coastal and natural locations in advance of the 2019 summer season. This will then move to core council operations. As such targeted work has been undertaken in relation to the concessions that operate under Sefton licences, namely;
- Food outlets (including take-away) through our food safety teams and business investment districts
  - Events on the coast and in our parks
- 3.5 This has led to the Council prohibiting the use of avoidable Single Use Plastic in concessions awarded in Spring 2019, with progress also being made in prohibiting Single Use Plastics in our events. This work is obviously at an early stage and progress and impact is currently being monitored through the regular beach and park clean up's that occur in those areas. This will support an initial evaluation exercise in late 2019. Members should note that income from concessions was not affected by the inclusion of the SUP clause.
- 3.6 As stated, the drive to align with the EU ban on avoidable Single Use Plastics will continue and annual reports will be provided to members on progress, however in addition during 2019/2020 work will continue in order to;
- Start to eliminate those avoidable Single Use Plastics that are detailed in this report from council operational activity
  - Develop a network of partners around these issues in order that a Borough wide approach can be undertaken where possible
  - Gather and improve our evidence of usage of SUP across the Council
  - Gather and improve our evidence of locations and plans for balloon & lantern releases
  - Review waste management in key locations (key coastal sites)
  - Continue the inclusion of avoidable SUP requirements in our food concession tenders and event licences
  - Promotion of SUP issues to schools and partners as part of year of the environment
  - Raise awareness with partners and the general public; and
  - Report back to members on progress and impact at the end of 2019/20
- 3.7 In order to support this, the Councils communications team is in the process of developing a Single Use Plastics communications plan and this is anticipated in August 2019.
- 3.8 Officers have responded positively and quickly to put some key actions into effect, with a focus on protecting our coastal environment. Although this work has focussed on avoidable Single Used Plastics it is considered that this approach will allow the council to demonstrate its intent and commitment to the issue and provided the basis to move forward.

- 3.9 On the rise of the summer 2019 season, Officers will then move to the next stage of the work that will ensure that the requirements of the council motions are fulfilled. This will include a comprehensive council wide review of all use of Single Use Plastics and the development of plans to eliminate their usage and understand the impact on both service delivery (including potentially cost) but most importantly the environment. As stated this work will continue to be the subject of annual reports to cabinet.