

GM WASTE AND RECYCLING COMMITTEE

Date: 14th November 2019

Subject: Plastic Free GM Campaign Update

Report of: Sarah Mellor, Head of Sustainable Consumption and Production

PUPOSE OF REPORT

To update the Committee on the work being undertaken with local authorities to join the movement to move Greater Manchester (GM) away from avoidable single use plastics by committing to the Public Sector Plastic Pact along with on-going work on the PlasticFreeGM campaign.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is recommended to:

- i) Note and comment on the work being undertaken on the Public Sector Plastics Pact to eradicate single use plastics by 2024, along with on-going work on the PlasticFreeGM campaign.

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Equalities Implications – Not applicable

Risk Management – Not applicable

Legal Considerations – Not applicable

Financial Consequences – Revenue – Not applicable

Financial Consequences – Capital – Not applicable

Number of attachments to the report: 1 Appendix A

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

TRACKING/PROCESS		
Does this report relate to a major strategic decision, as set out in the GMCA Constitution		Yes / No
EXEMPTION FROM CALL IN		
Are there any aspects in this report which means it should be considered to be exempt from call in by the relevant Scrutiny Committee on the grounds of urgency?		
GM Transport Committee	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At the last Green Summit, the Tourism & Hospitality sector pledged to be avoidable single-use plastic free by 2020. Since then work has been ongoing to gain momentum and move Greater Manchester (GM) forward by exploring the potential of other initiatives.

2. PUBLIC SECTOR PLASTICS PACT

- 2.1 Since the Green Summit and the launch of the #PlasticFreeGM campaign, the GMCA has been approached by a number of public sector organisations for advice on moving away from avoidable single use plastics to more sustainable options. Currently Bury, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside and Trafford Councils have signed the PlasticFreeGM pledge. The wording of the pact is set out at Appendix A.
- 2.2 On 7th March 2019, the first Public Sector workshop was held and brought together procurement, sustainability and waste management officers from all 10 Districts to map out what potentially could be achieved in reducing the level of avoidable single-use plastics from our public estates.
- 2.3 The workshop received excellent feedback and identified that after internal audits were undertaken by each districts, a roadmap and plastic pact could potentially be agreed.
- 2.4 Moving forward, we will be reconvening that group to agree which of the proposed recommendations within the report we want collectively to work on.

3. PLASTICFREE GM CAMPAIGN

- 3.1 Over 180 Tourism and Hospitality businesses in GM have pledged to take action to eliminate avoidable single-use plastics. Pledges have also been made by the general public and other businesses totaling over 520 pledges.
- 3.2 The Manchester Bee Paper Straw was launched as one of the first steps to eradicate avoidable single-use plastics in our city-region alongside the launch of a dedicated PlasticFreeGM campaign website and volunteer support.
- 3.3 Over 275 businesses have ceased the use of plastic straws for the more sustainable 'paper bee straw'; with over half a million sold to date. A new 'paper bee sip straw' will be launched later this year in response to requests from the Tourism and Hospitality sector.

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- 3.4 The national Refill scheme has been launched in Greater Manchester to prevent plastic pollution by connecting people with free tap water. The initiative coordinated by Refill, United Utilities and the GMCA has seen the installation of five public bottle refill fountains in Bury and Stockport as part of a pilot scheme. It marks the start of a growing network of free indoor and outdoor water refilling stations across the region to reduce the number of plastic bottles going into our waterways.
- 3.5 The Greater Manchester Green Carrier Scheme launched early this year which offers retailers in the region the opportunity to purchase cost neutral compostable carrier bags for use in their own stores. This will help to reduce unsightly litter and harm to animals and marine life by keeping plastic out of the environment. The bags have a dual use as a carrier bag and as a food waste caddy liner. The bags are available to all retailer’s operating within the ten boroughs of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority.
- 3.6 In partnership with the NUS, Universities and Further Education Colleges across Greater Manchester have pledged to work together towards a shared vision of eradicating avoidable single use plastics from catering, labs and stationery by 2022. This is part of a wider commitment to lead the way on sustainability and achieve carbon neutral campuses across Greater Manchester by 2038.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The Committee is recommended to note and comment on the work being undertaken on the Public Sector Plastics Pact to eradicate single use plastics by 2024, along with on-going work on the PlasticFreeGM campaign.

Appendix A
DRAFT Local Authority Plastic Pact
March 2019

Greater Manchester Local Authorities Plastic Pact

As part of building a thriving and sustainable city region, the Public Sector needs to show leadership in eliminating avoidable waste. Local Authorities can offer a real opportunity for a long-term shift of attitudes and leader supported action on avoidable single-use plastic. Through collaboration, engagement and in the delivery of its services Local Authorities can make a significant and positive impact on the environment, reducing plastic pollution and improving our carbon footprint - transforming Greater Manchester into a world-leading greener, cleaner, climate-resilient city region.

Pledge: As a Local Authority we will help to eradicate the use of avoidable* single-use plastics from the public sector in Greater Manchester by 2024. With support, we will review our practices, and make more sustainable choices about the products we use, and the way we deliver our services.

Key Commitments:

1. Demonstrate personal leadership by supporting and implementing reductions in avoidable single-use plastics, working towards their elimination across the public estate by 2024;
2. Share data, insights and best-practice on avoidable single-use plastics to aid in the development of a roadmap that sets out the journey (with step by step actions) towards a single-use plastic free public estate;
3. Share knowledge, information and look to review procurement processes to drive forward the elimination of single-use plastics across Public Sector organisations;
4. Look to embed environmental sustainability criteria in social value procurement mechanisms;
5. Support new initiatives to reduce the use of avoidable single-use plastics and increase recycling and re-use;
6. Look to provide carbon literacy training to all staff involved in procuring activities; and
7. Raise awareness of this intent amongst staff, suppliers and the wider community to influence and change behaviour.

**We talk about waste being 'avoidable', when the plastic could have been re-used or recycled, when a reusable or recyclable alternative could have been used instead, or when it could have been composted or bio-degraded in the open environment.*

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