



**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CLIMATE CHANGE CABINET SUB COMMITTEE**

**7<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2024**

**THE COUNCIL'S COMPLIANCE WITH THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
(SINGLE-USE PLASTIC PRODUCTS) (WALES) ACT 2023**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES IN CONSULTATION  
WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE CHANGE & CORPORATE  
SERVICES (Cllr C. LEYSHON)**

**Author: Marc Crumby – Head of Procurement**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on the Council's compliance with the Environmental Protection (Single-use Plastic Products) (Wales) Act 2023.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Review the content of the report and be satisfied that the Council complies with the Act.
- 2.2 Note the Council's upcoming work to ensure compliance with future phases of the legislation.
- 2.3 Note the work that is progressing to reduce other single-use items that are not specifically listed within the Act.

**3. THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (SINGLE-USE PLASTIC PRODUCTS) (WALES)**

- 3.1 The Environmental Protection (Single-use Plastic Products) (Wales) Act 2023 became law in Wales during 2023. The Act makes it a criminal offence to supply or offer to supply (including for free) certain single-use plastic products to consumers in Wales.
- 3.2 This law bans the sale or supply of certain single-use plastic products in Wales, unless an exemption applies (details of the exemptions are provided with the Statutory Guidance supporting the Act). Plastic straws can be used in a care home environment for example but cannot be used in other areas of the Council's business such as Theatres and Schools for example.

- 3.3 The ban will be introduced in 'phases' to allow businesses and organisations time to use existing stock and to buy or make alternative arrangements.
- 3.4 The first phase of the ban came into force on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2023, and banned of the following items:
- Single-use plastic plates (including paper plates with a laminated plastic surface)
  - Single-use plastic cutlery
  - Single-use plastic drinks stirrers
  - Cups made of expanded or foamed extruded polystyrene
  - Takeaway food containers made of expanded or foamed extruded polystyrene
  - Single-use plastic balloon sticks
  - Single-use plastic-stemmed cotton buds
  - Single-use plastic drinking straws
- 3.5 The second phase of the ban is expected to come into force during the Spring of 2026. This will include a ban on the following items:
- Carrier bags – with exemptions including carrier bags for raw fish, meat or poultry and unpackaged food.
  - Polystyrene lids for cups and takeaway food containers.
  - Oxo-degradable plastic products.
- 3.6 Any organisation that does not comply with the Act will be committing a criminal offence and will be subject to a financial penalty.

#### **4. THE COUNCIL'S COMPLIANCE WITH THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (SINGLE-USE PLASTIC PRODUCTS) (WALES)**

- 4.1 The Council has prepared well for these changes. Work in respect of reviewing and removing single use items has taken place for the past 3 years by the Council's Procurement Service.
- 4.2 Members can be reassured of the following:
- All items listed within 'Phase 1' of the legislation were removed during 2020. Exceptions are in place such as plastic straws, but the criteria adheres to the Act.
- 4.3 Over and above those items listed in 'Phase 1' of the Act, the Council has endeavoured to remove as many single use items (not just plastic) from its services as possible. Table 1 provides a summary of those items removed from the electronic catalogues that service areas use, the Table also provides an indication of the previous number of items ordered, for context.

#### **Table 1**

<b>Item Description</b>	<b>Quantities previously ordered in a financial year:</b>
7oz Cold Water Cup	42,000
Std Plastic Knife	2,000
Std Plastic Fork	5,000
Std Plastic Stirrer	5,000
Food Box	1,800
4oz White plastic Dish	1,000
Oval salad Pack	3,000
Paper Plate	8,000
Trifle Dish White	3,000
Single Use Cups	6,500
Wooden Stirrers	2,000

- 4.4 Those items listed in paragraph 3.5 (Phase 2 of the Act) have also been taken out of circulation, where relevant.
- 4.5 As a result of this work being carried out, the Council was well prepared and will not be impacted by the introduction of the ban on these products. Over and above the requirements of the Act, Section 5 of this report provides examples of work that is taking place across the Council to make it more sustainable.

## **5. ADDITIONAL PROGRESS ON REDUCING ALL SINGLE-USE PRODUCTS**

### School Catering

- 5.1 The Council's Catering Service has been keen to review the use of single use items. Table 2 provides a summary of the current pilots that have taken place, a further rollout is planned once the lessons learned from these pilots have been reviewed. The use of water fountains and reusable bottles is also being encouraged.

Table 2

<b><u>Piloting of Plates &amp; Cutlery - 2023/24</u></b>	
Bryncelynnog Comprehensive	Pilot complete. Re-usable plates and cutlery in place.
Ysgol Rhydywaun	Pilot complete. Re-usable plates and cutlery in place.
YG Cwm Rhondda	Pilot complete. Re-usable plates and cutlery in place.
Ysgol Nantgwyn	Pilot complete. Re-usable plates and cutlery in place.
Y Pant	Pilot complete. Re-usable plates and cutlery in place.
Ysgol Afon Wen (Hawthorn High)	Piloting underway. Review to take place in the financial year.

Ysgol Garth Olwg	Piloting underway. Review to take place in the financial year.
St John Baptist CIW	Piloting underway. Review to take place in the financial year.
Porth Community School	Piloting underway. Review to take place in the financial year.
Aberdare Community School	Piloting underway. Review to take place in the financial year.
Mountain Ash Comprehensive	Piloting underway. Review to take place in the financial year.
Cardinal Newman	Piloting underway. Review to take place in the financial year.
Ferndale Community School	Piloting underway. Review to take place in the financial year.
Ysgol Bro Taf (Ponty High)	Piloting underway. Review to take place in the financial year.

#### Facilities Cleaning

- 5.2 The Facilities Cleaning Service has trialled the use of disposable pods, as an alternative to the 750ml single-use plastic cleaning bottles. Products were diluted into trigger spray bottles and tested by the mobile cleaning team. The trial is now complete with the products effectiveness as recorded. The outcome from this work will now be used to inform the upcoming janitorial supplies contract.

### **6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS / SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY**

- 6.1 There are no equality and diversity or socio-economic implications as a result of the recommendations set out in the report.

### **7. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no Welsh Language implications as a result of the recommendations set out in this report.

### **8. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT**

- 8.1 There are no consultation requirements emanating from the recommendations set out in the report.

### **9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)**

- 9.1 There are no direct financial implications as a result of the recommendations made within this report.

### **10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

10.1 Under The Environmental Protection (Single-Use Plastic Products) (Wales) Act 2023, Welsh Ministers also have powers to add or remove products from the list of banned single-use plastic products.

10.2 The Council will need to monitor any Welsh Government changes to the list of banned single-use plastic products and ensure ongoing compliance.

## **11. LINKS TO CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT**

11.1 This report sets out the Council's compliance with the new Environmental Protection (Single-Use Plastic Products) (Wales) Act, in respect of the ban on certain single-use plastic products. It also highlights the wider work that is being undertaken to reduce the use of single-use items further. Our compliance and additional work supports the Council's ambitions to be environmentally responsible, helping contribute towards the Council's 'Making a Difference: Corporate Plan', specifically 'Section 4 – Places' by aiming to reduce the use of plastic products.

11.2 Additionally, this supports the Well-being of Future Generations Act by contributing to the goal – 'A Globally Responsible Wales'.

## **12. CONCLUSION**

12.1 The Environmental Protection (Single-Use Plastic Products) (Wales) Act came into effect on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

12.2 The new law makes it a criminal offence to supply specific single-use plastic products to consumers in Wales.

12.3 Due to work undertaken prior to the Act coming into effect, the Council was well prepared and will not be impacted by the introduction of the ban on these products.

12.4 In addition to its compliance with the new legislation, the Council is aiming to further reduce the use of 'other' single-use items. This is over and above the items listed within the Act.



**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**AS AMENDED BY**

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT FOR CLIMATE CHANGE CABINET STEERING GROUP**

**7<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2023**

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