

Council 27th Sept 2017

Motion on reduction of use of plastic bottles in our District

Council notes the amount of plastic that ends up in landfill and in our oceans, and is a growing hazard to marine life. Every year millions of single use plastic bottles, nationally are disposed and estimated only 7% are recycled. Council also notes the fact that 2.5 billion coffee cups are thrown away every year in the UK – 10,000 in just 2 minutes. To protect the environment and in furtherance of our Clean and Green Places priority under the Corporate Plan,

Council resolves to

- 1] promote public awareness of the issue and take steps to reduce plastic bottle use. This could include our partner agencies in primary health care, and local education.*
- 2] Request officers to prepare a report on the practicalities and costs of installing drinking water fountains at key city centre locations in Morecambe and Lancaster.*
- 3] Support a scheme where our local food and drinks provide refills or free drinking water*
- 4] investigate the viability of the city council launching a promotional Lancaster refillable water container to sell at tourist outlets.*
- 5] Work with businesses and other organisations to promote the use of reusable coffee cups including investigating the viability of a Lancaster district reusable cup, and encouraging businesses to use genuinely recyclable or eco-friendly cups.*

Officer Advice

The motion identifies the problems caused by non-recyclable plastic/ paper drinks cups and plastic bottles

The problem is a global one. Tackling it effectively requires effective policy from central government and the cooperation of producers and consumers.

Giant retailers have a responsibility. One chain launched a scheme giving customers a 25p discount for bringing their own cup. But reusable cups made of silicone and rubber have not really caught on, probably because they need washing up. Overall, a 25p charge on disposable cups increased the use of reusable coffee cups by 3.4%, environmental messaging in cafes increased the use of reusable coffee cups by 2.3%, the availability of reusable cups led to an increase of 2.5% and the distribution of free reusable cups led to a further increase of 4.3 %.

There are some examples of where efforts have been made to tackle this at a local level (e.g. City of London). This example required the cooperation of Network rail and several large businesses.

To achieve the aims of this motion (which is effectively an ongoing project) would require considerable officer capacity and resource. This would need to be diverted from other essential activities e.g. the existing household waste collection service, regeneration and economic growth.

Officer advice is that at this stage of the financial year diversion of capacity would impact on essential work already planned.

If Council consider that this is a key priority then in this financial year capacity could be identified to do outline work to identify the level of resources that would be required to manage

the project described. The financial implications could then be fed into the 18/19 budget process.

Chief Officer (Environment)

Monitoring Officer Comments

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments

Section 151 Officer Comments

The s151 Officer has been consulted and has nothing further to add; she simply reiterates the comments above