

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 03/03/2025

Subject: Hammersmith and Fulham's Plastic Free Policy Refresh

Report of: Councillor Harcourt, Cabinet Member for Climate and Ecology

Report author: Clare Lynch-Watson, Sustainability Officer

Responsible Director: Bram Kainth, Executive Director for Place

SUMMARY

This report refreshes the objectives and actions set out in Hammersmith and Fulham's Plastic Free Policy Proposal published in 2018 (Appendix 1). Cabinet approval is sought for the updated policy and accompanying action plan so that we can eliminate non-essential single-use plastics from the Council's operations and facilitate a reduction in single-use plastic consumption across the borough.

H&F Council will engage with stakeholders in our own operations, across the borough and London-wide to deliver this policy. The Council will participate in the One World Living (OWL) programme's Single-use Plastics Pledge Working Group to contribute meaningfully to the development of London-wide single-use plastic reduction targets.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To approve the revised version of Hammersmith and Fulham's Plastic Free Policy statement and accompanying action plan.
 2. To commit to the OWL programme's Single-use Plastics Pledge in collaboration with London boroughs.
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Wards Affected: All

Our Values	Summary of how this report aligns to the H&F Corporate Plan and the H&F Values
Building shared prosperity	The action plan in this report includes initiatives to engage with local businesses to support the growth of a local circular economy.

Creating a compassionate and inclusive council	The action plan includes initiatives to work with and support local charities and community organisations.
Doing things with local residents, not to them	The action plan includes projects to actively work with residents to reduce consumption of single-use plastics and raise awareness of this issue.
Being ruthlessly financially efficient	The action plan recommends that the Council reviews spend on single-use plastics, enabling identification of potential cost-efficiencies.
Taking pride in H&F	The policy's goal to reduce plastic pollution is aligned with the Council's ambition for H&F to be the 'greenest borough'.
Rising to the challenge of the climate and ecological emergency	By reducing the emissions and pollution generated by consumption of single-use plastics, this policy will help the Council to meet the objectives of the Climate and Ecology Strategy.

Financial Impact

There is no cost to H&F for joining the One World Living programme's working group. The expertise to deliver the policy aims of the action plan exist in-house.

Additional funding may be required to deliver some of the actions in collaboration with external partners such as the water refill campaign and returnable cup schemes. However, these are not core deliverables and these unbudgeted actions will only be progressed if external sources of funding are secured.

Giles Batchelor, Finance Manager (Place), 21 November 2024

Kellie Gooch, Head of Finance (Place), 28 November 2024

Legal Implications

H&F has the legal power to approve the revised version of Hammersmith and Fulham's Plastic Free Policy statement and accompanying action plan and to commit to the OWL programme's Single-use Plastics Pledge in collaboration with London boroughs.

Joginder Bola, Senior Solicitor (Contracts & Procurement), 28/01/2025

Background Papers Used in Preparing This Report

None.

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Proposals

1. This policy seeks to eliminate non-essential single-use plastics from the Council's operations. The policy defines 'non-essential single-use plastics' as those included in the [Government's single-use plastic bans and restrictions](#), and where applicable, packaging in the scope of the [UK plastic packaging tax](#).
2. The policy also seeks to achieve a reduction in single-use plastic consumption and increase in recycling across the borough.
3. The policy sets out actions to deliver these objectives and metrics with which we can measure our progress. These are aligned with:
 - H&F's Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan (RRP), which sets out key actions for minimising waste and increasing recycling locally.
 - London-wide actions and targets established by OWL's plastics working group.
4. The following action plan sets out the initiatives we will implement to deliver the policy objectives, as well as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to monitor our performance.

Aims	Actions	KPIs
Keep council buildings free of non-essential single-use plastic and have the best recycling facilities in place.	Ensure there is no non-essential single-use plastic at the Civic Campus and council buildings.	Quantity and # of material avoided
	Review spend across the Council to eliminate non-essential single-use plastics from catering and other expenses.	£ saved
	Reduce our reliance on clear sacks for recycling collections in offices.	£ saved, quantity (kg/t) of plastic avoided
Work with our suppliers to reduce plastic from contracts and identify opportunities for suppliers to support plastic reduction in the community.	Embed single-use plastic reduction initiatives in specifications for our procurement activities, through the H&F Low Carbon Procurement Policy.	Quantity (kg/t) of plastic avoided
	Encourage suppliers to deliver their Sourcing Strategy added value obligations in line with National TOM NT88, to 'reduce waste through reuse of products and materials'.	# of resources offered
Eliminate single-use plastic from council events.	Facilitate water refill and recycling points at park events and markets.	# of bottles reduced x litre of water
	Explore providing reusable cups for events where appropriate.	# of bottles reduced x litre of water

Improve recycling infrastructure across the borough.	Reduce the collection of clear sacks used for kerbside recycling.	£ saved, quantity (kg/t) of plastic avoided
	Work with market traders to reduce their use of single-use plastics and encourage recycling.	Quantity and # of materials reduced
	Reduce plastic pollution in our canals and rivers.	
Deliver and facilitate plastic reduction incentives and support tools for residents.	Support and facilitate plastic free community events and clean ups.	# of events
	Raise awareness of the ways individual actions can tackle plastic pollution.	# of participants engaged
	Deliver refill campaigns designed to change behaviours around single-use plastics.	
Encourage and support businesses and organisations to reduce single-use plastics.	Develop a single-use plastics pledge for local businesses to sign up to; promote the pledge amongst suitable venues, e.g., hospitality venues currently using single-use plastic cups.	# of businesses signed up to the pledge
	Use inspections by Licensing as an opportunity to raise venues' awareness of single-use plastics and encourage them to make reductions, e.g., by distributing communication materials.	# of businesses receiving communications
	Leverage the Climate Alliance and Business Enterprise team to support businesses to reduce single-use plastics, including by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoiding single-use cups. • Reducing product packaging. • Setting up zero waste shops. • Offering free tap water to the public. 	# of events, webinars and initiatives
	Deliver projects and initiatives that promote the circular economy in collaboration with public sector services and charities.	Quantity of material reduced
Work with schools to reduce single-use plastic consumption.	Encourage schools to join the Pupils' Profit Eco Refill scheme to facilitate action to reduce single-use plastics and raise awareness of the issue.	# of schools onboarded

5. The OWL programme, in partnership with ReLondon, is forming a London-wide Working Group and Single-Use Plastics Pledge to develop achievable 2030 single-use plastic reduction targets for boroughs and a methodology for

boroughs to report their plastic purchasing and track progress in achieving the targets.

6. By signing the pledge, H&F agrees to:
 1. Participate meaningfully in the Working Group, dedicating time to attend meetings and engaging senior colleagues in the process as needed; and
 2. Take action towards the targets that are agreed by the group, and to report on our progress to help us measure the collective impact of the borough's actions.

Analysis of Options

Option 1: Do nothing

7. The Council could decide not to update its plastic free policy. This would mean that we continue without a policy establishing a clear definition of the plastics that we are trying to eliminate from our operations. It would also mean that we continue without relevant actions and metrics with which we can deliver our policy and measure our progress, including those developed in partnership with OWL's plastics working group.
8. This option is not recommended as it will impede our elimination of non-essential single-use plastics from our operations. This is a problem because non-essential single-use plastics generate greenhouse gas emissions and pollution, both of which are contributing to the climate and ecology crises. The Council has adopted targets to address these crises and therefore has a responsibility to reduce single-use plastic consumption.

Option 2: Adopt the revised Plastic Free Policy

9. The adoption of the revised Plastic Free Policy will provide the Council with a clear definition of the non-essential single-use plastics that we are seeking to eliminate from our operations. It will also set out actions and metrics to facilitate effective delivery and monitoring of the policy.
10. The policy will ensure our work to reduce plastic consumption is aligned with broader organisational objectives and our contributions to the OWL programme.

Reasons for Decision

11. The revised policy improves upon the Plastic Free Policy Proposal approved in 2018 by setting out the objectives and scope of the policy and updating the actions required for its delivery. Moreover, the refreshed policy is aligned with our work with the OWL programme to develop London-wide single-use plastic reduction measures and targets.
12. The adoption of this policy is therefore recommended as it will support the delivery of the Council's Climate and Ecology Strategy by reducing the emissions and pollution caused by single-use plastic consumption.

Equality Implications

13. The Council has considered how this policy will impact people with protected characteristics, as per the Public Sector Equality Duty introduced in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. We do not anticipate that the policy will have an adverse impact on people with protected characteristics. Single-use plastics that are required due to protected characteristics, such as a person's age or disability, are by definition 'essential' and therefore fall beyond the scope of this policy, which only seeks to eliminate 'non-essential single-use plastics' from our operations.

Risk Management Implications

14. Whilst this initiative adheres to the stated aim of being the "greenest London borough" there remains a financial risk that unbudgeted hidden costs may incur an increased financial burden to LBHF. This includes resource costs, campaign costs and the costs of establishing recycling schemes. Expenditure may also be increased if external sources of funding are not identified with and engaged with.
15. It is therefore recommended that a full costing is developed including that of all initiatives and schemes, staff overheads and publicity. These costs can be offset by identified savings elsewhere.

Jules Binney, Risk and Assurance Manager, 22nd January 2025

Procurement Implications

16. [Contract Standing Order](#) 37.4.12.6 (page 52-53/63) requires all Procurement Strategies to report on securing wider social, economic and environmental benefits for the community for all contracts (services, works, supplies, concession etc). Including specifically for service contracts how the proposed tender documents meet the statutory requirements contained in the [Public Services \(Social Value\) Act 2012](#) and the Council's policy on social value (which the Council brands as Added Value). This can be linked to environmental requirements associated with the TOM System measures, established by the Social Value Portal (SVP) used by the Council to establish and measure Added Value commitments.
17. Where external frameworks, Dynamic Purchasing Systems (DPSs), or Dynamic Markets are used (i.e., those established by organisations such as Crown Commercial Service (CCS), Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO), etc.), the requirements of the framework will take precedence to ensure compliance with its use. In such cases, the Council may be unable to allocate evaluation criteria and/or weightings to social value and/or environmental requirements.
18. It would be appropriate to identify a model whereby environmental requirements are proportionate to the contract. Whilst the Council rightly has a drive to deliver its environmental commitments, it must be careful not to make obligations on its suppliers so onerous or costly that it discourages them from bidding; especially considering requirements under the [Procurement Act 2023](#)

and [Procurement Regulations 2024](#) to remove or reduce barriers to participation in its procurement activities, for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs).

Summary of Procurement Implications:

19. The incorporation of environmental requirements in the Council's procurement activities and subsequent suppliers' contracts is strongly encouraged as this will support the Council's delivery of its ambitious net zero commitments. LBHF suppliers can support the delivery of this policy by choosing relevant environmental TOM measures as part of their Added Value offer. Environmental requirements must meet statutory requirements to ensure compliance and be proportional to the contract to comply with legislation requiring removal or reduction of barriers for SMEs.

Chris Everett, Category Lead, Procurement and Commercial, 19th December 2024

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – [The Hammersmith and Fulham Plastic Free Policy Proposal](#)