


Agenda Item No:	12	
Committee:	Cabinet	
Date:	9 January 2020	
Report Title:	Waste and Environmental Statement of Intent	

1 Purpose / Summary

To report to Cabinet on the further stages of the Motion on Single Use Plastics, and specifically elements 3, 4 and 5 of the motion; "adhering to the Reduce, Reuse and Recycle principles (often called the '3Rs')", agreed by Council on 23 May 2019 and initially reported to Cabinet in July 2019.

2 Key issues

- 2.1 This report, as requested in the original Council motion of May 2019, provides Members with an update on how the Council adheres to the 3R's principles - Reduce, Reuse and Recycle via the proposal of a Statement of Intent to support the existing waste strategy, and in keeping with the council's existing energy management and business plan commitments.
- 2.2 In July we heard that plastic is a durable, light, cheap and versatile material that has made huge technical innovations possible, making consumer products more affordable and efficient and that this durability of plastic present challenges. That when littered, it can last for centuries in the natural environment. Plastic litter blights the countryside and waterways, is a threat to wildlife and is dominated by single use items containing plastic, such as cigarette butts and food and drink related litter.
- 2.3 The Government published its 25 Year Environment Plan in 2018 which includes targets to reduce waste and to achieve zero avoidable plastic waste by the end of 2042. The national waste strategy consultation has focussed on reducing waste and increasing the amount of recycling taking place, especially packaging and 'on the go' waste.
- 2.4 The first stage of the agreed actions within the Motion was for the Council to audit the disposal of single use plastics used by the Council. The audit of the "disposal of single use plastics used by this Council" was reported to Cabinet in July 2019 including the opportunities to reduce the amount of single use plastics within Council buildings and facilities.
- 2.5 Importantly, for Fenland District Council, all collected plastic waste through our own operations, domestic and business blue bin recycling collections are sorted at the Waterbeach Materials Recycling Facility by contractor Amey LG Ltd before it is sent to plants in the UK for further processing/reprocessing in to new products. We have received reassurance from our contractor that plastics that the Council is disposing of should not be entering our seas or oceans.
- 2.6 This Statement of Intent draws existing and new commitments together in support of the Council's commitment to "Reduce, Reuse and Recycle when considering all of its activities" as agreed in the Council Motion.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 Note the contents of this report in relation to the existing waste and energy commitments.
- 3.2 Agree the Statement of Intent, at appendix 1, in relation to the application of the Council's current and future business plans and that this be published on the Council's website.

Wards Affected	All
Forward Plan Reference	
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Peter Murphy, Portfolio Holder for Environment (Operational) Councillor Steve Tierney, Portfolio Holder for Environment (Strategic)
Report Originator(s)	Mark Mathews, Head of Environmental Services mmathews@fenland.gov.uk Carol Pilson, Corporate Director cpilson@fenland.gov.uk
Contact Officer(s)	Mark Mathews, Head of Environmental Services mmathews@fenland.gov.uk Carol Pilson, Corporate Director cpilson@fenland.gov.uk
Background Paper(s)	Council Motion 23 May 2019; Single Use Plastics

1 Background / introduction

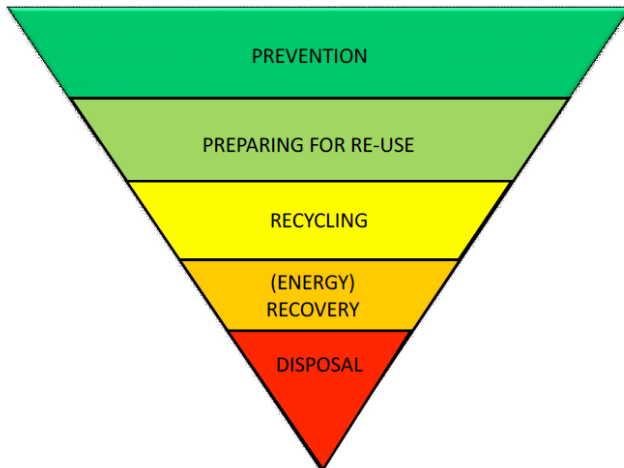
2 National and Local Government Action

- 2.1 The national policy and legislative framework is changing rapidly. In 2017 members of the United Nations signed a resolution to reduce marine pollution of all kinds by 2025. The 2017 Litter strategy for England placed a greater emphasis on education, enforcement and infrastructure to change littering behaviour.
- 2.2 The UK Government published its [25 Year Environment Plan](#) just over a year ago, which includes targets to reduce waste and increase recycling, such as to “achieve zero avoidable plastic waste by the end of 2042”. Defra’s new [Waste and Resources Strategy](#) supports this ambition and the consultation discussed a range of options to reduce waste and increase the amount of recycling taking place, especially packaging and ‘on the go’ style waste.
- 2.3 The Strategy states that in future the costs of disposal and treatment of packaging waste will be paid for by the producer rather than be a burden for the local authority.
- 2.4 The Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) proposed for all single use drinks packaging will place a levy on the product charged to the consumer only refunded by returning the packaging to a defined collection point.
- 2.5 To promote the recycling industries in the UK, the Government plans a new tax from 2021 on produced and imported plastic packaging that does not include a least 30% recycled content.
- 2.6 The collection authorities across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough have a contract for the transport and onward sale of recycling collected from domestic and business premises with Amey LG at their Waterbeach Waste Management Park
- 2.7 The company says, “Plastic packaging sorted at Amey’s Waterbeach Materials Recycling Facility is sent to plants in the UK for further processing/reprocessing into new products.”
- 2.8 Further to this, Amey LG advise that, "The further processing is conducted in the UK and these are activities that are regulated and controlled by the UK’s Environment Agency (EA) which has a robust and exhaustive permitting and monitoring regime."

3 Fenland District Council

- 3.1 In supporting the recent Single Use Plastics Motion, the Council agreed that “the Council should in absolutely no way be responsible, either directly or indirectly, for plastic waste entering our seas and oceans”, and should be applying the waste hierarchy (see image below) to the Council’s activities – Reduce, Reuse and Recycle.

Image 1 Waste Hierarchy



4 Reduce, Reuse, Recycle (3Rs)

- 4.1 Fenland Council is committed to protecting the environment and supporting businesses, volunteers and our staff to do the same. Our business plan priorities of Environment, Communities and Economy reflect this.
- 4.2 Having reached out to staff through team meetings there is a range of ideas for short to long term opportunities for the Council to consider.
- 4.3 In recent years there has been a growing commitment nationally and internationally to tackle wider waste and environmental issues such as plastic pollution. The statement of intent, attached as appendix 1, is the Council's commitment from the perspective of the 3Rs to consider and address the impact of our actions and positively influence others in this regard. This statement, and action plan, have been developed through work with staff and volunteers in order to focus on important and impactful areas.
- 4.4 This initial version of the action plan will be reviewed and updated as actions develop and to reflect the Council's business plan commitments and projects.

5 Recommendations

- 5.1 Note the contents of this report in relation to the existing waste and energy commitments.
- 5.2 Agree the Statement of Intent and action plan, at appendix 1, in relation to the application of the Council's current and future business plans and that this be published on the Council's website.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Statement of Intent

Introduction

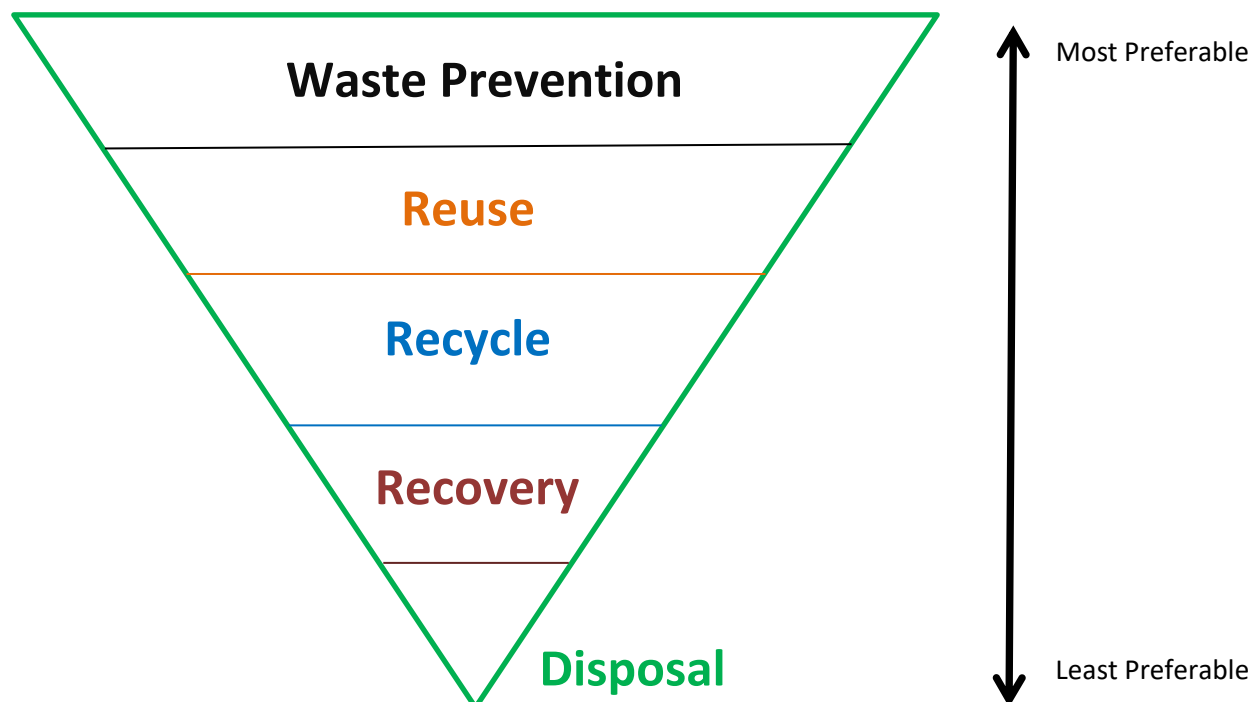
Fenland Council is committed to protecting the environment and supporting businesses, volunteers and our staff to do the same. Our business plan priorities of Environment, Communities and Economy reflect this.

In recent years there has been a growing commitment nationally and internationally to tackle wider waste and environmental issues such as plastic pollution. This statement of intent is the Council's commitment to broaden the good work we do and to consider and address the impact of our actions and the actions or inactions of others. This statement and action plan has been developed through work with staff and volunteers in order to focus on the areas of most importance and impact.

Background

The national policy and legislative framework is changing rapidly. In 2017 members of the United Nations signed a resolution to reduce marine pollution of all kinds by 2025 as part of the 17 Global sustainability goals. The 2017 Litter Strategy for England placed a greater emphasis on education, enforcement and infrastructure to change littering behaviour. In 2018 the UK's 25 year plan to improve the environment set out how the use of plastics can be reduced and recycling levels improved, alongside better use of resources overall, aiming to eliminate avoidable plastic waste by 2042. The government are consulting on the Waste and Resources Strategy 2018 which commits to significant changes around packaging and the waste/recycling lifecycle as illustrated in Figure 1. The Waste Hierarchy.

Figure 1. The Waste Hierarchy



Fenland

The Council’s business plan has long committed to environmental actions which are purposeful to the residents, businesses and visitors of Fenland communities.

With growing concerns for the environment -both nationally and locally- this document has been developed as a fresh commitment to reduce, reuse and recycle as much of Fenland District Council’s in-house waste and to develop these principles across council activities.

Key areas covered in relation to the business plan (2020-21) are as follows:

Environment	Work with partners, the community and volunteers to divert at least 50% of Cambridgeshire’s household waste from landfill
	Maximise the value of materials collected for recycling including through Getting It Sorted Recycling Champions
	Work with key stakeholders to deliver an effective waste partnership and to update the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough waste strategy, aligned to the developing national Waste and Resources Strategy
	Use education, guidance and Council powers to fairly enforce environmental standards and tackle issues such as fly tipping, dog fouling, and littering
Communities	Work with partners to build capacity and resilience so that residents can support themselves and their community including volunteering initiatives and environmental funding to support sustainability
	Work collaboratively with partners, including in new and emerging networks, to deliver our Health and Wellbeing Strategy in order to tackle local health priorities and reduce health inequalities
	Create healthier communities through activities developed by Active Fenland and community partners
Economy	Work with partners, local businesses and the Combined Authority to attract inward investment and establish new business opportunities
	Provide responsive business support to encourage business growth, job diversity, skills development and increased grant applications, including for local environmental projects and volunteering opportunities.
	Promote and enable housing growth, economic growth and regeneration across Fenland including sustainability and reducing protected habitat loss
	Promote sustainable road, rail and concessionary transport initiatives to improve access to employment and local services to improve links to employment and access to services for the community and staff.

Quality organisation	Sustainably deliver required savings, whilst pursuing transformation and commercialisation opportunities
	Meet our Public Sector Equality duty by delivering the requirements of the 2010 Equality Act and 1998 Human Rights Act through our core service delivery and publication of a statutory Annual Equality Report
	Ensure our asset base is sustainable, suitable and fully utilised to maximise income opportunities and financial efficiencies
	Deliver our adopted Capital Programme in line with our Corporate Asset Management Plan to maintain the integrity and safety of our assets
	Equip our workforce with the right skills to effectively deliver our priorities
	Support and empower our staff to make effective decisions within a pleasant working environment

What have we been doing to date? The Council’s focus has been three fold;

1. Delivering our work as a waste collection authority and working in partnership to reduce energy use and facilitate access to better value energy,
2. Supporting and encouraging positive behaviours in relation to environmental matters and,
3. Challenging behaviour which is detrimental to the environment.

Examples of this work include:

Recycling	The Getting It Sorted Volunteers , helping customers understand the links between getting recycling right and reducing our impact on the local environment.
	Low cost recycling collections to local businesses and schools – removing barriers for remote businesses. Collecting more than 9,000 tonnes of domestic metals, glass, paper, cardboard and plastics for recycling each year. Working in partnership with Recap, Fenland’s customers contribute to the overall recycling rate for Cambridgeshire which remains above 50%.
	Bring banks -Collection and recycling of 166 tonnes of textiles generating an income of more than £12,000 and ensuring this material is reused or recycled.
	The garden waste service has reduced the amount of organic material that is transported around the County and treated through encouraging home composting and waste reduction, alongside the garden waste service.
Local Communities	Community funds from Section 106 agreements – environmental grants for Glassmoor, Ransonmoor and Whitemill help local communities to deliver more environmentally friendly projects and to deliver environmental education.
	Street Pride / In Bloom / Friends Of – FDC’s highly successful volunteer groups undertaking community focussed environmental projects and enhancements.
	Tidy Fenland – awareness of littering and other environmental blight and enforcement campaigns to support this message. Delivering more than 1000 hours of enforcement patrols and served more than 1000 fixed penalty notices for littering and other environmental offences over 2 years.
	Rapid response and Streetscene - tackle environmental crimes like fly tipping quickly to reduce the environmental impact along with effective enforcement for all offences. Work with partners such as Highways Agency when possible on trunk roads to tackle litter and reduce the environmental impact of this waste

	<p>Parks and Open spaces – Implemented sustainable planting & implementation of a lantern policy on council land.</p>
Resources	<p>Vehicles - All of the frontline refuse vehicles have electric bin lifts fitted as standard to reduce fuel usage and noise levels of operations</p>
	<p>Travel - Refuse routes are reviewed using specialist logistics software at least twice yearly to reduce miles travelled and ensure that development is integrated within the service in the most effective manner. Staff are encouraged to car share or cycle to work. Flexible working policies and technology could reduce work travel miles & time.</p>
	<p>Energy - the council’s energy reduction plans have successfully reduced and managed energy consumption within our assets over a number of years (2009 to date). Technology has been used to reduce lighting costs, power down PC’s, monitors and to manage heating and cooling in key areas of council buildings. Upgrade of ICT to A rated efficiency and recycling of WEEE and batteries from FDC offices. Support for householders (particularly vulnerable groups) to stay warm in winter and reduce energy cost through partnership with PECT (Peterborough Environment City Trust) and partnership working with Cambridgeshire Energy Partnership. iChoosr – community energy switching scheme – saving money on energy costs.</p>

What will this plan focus on?

This new plan has been developed through consultation with staff and by taking account of the comments and actions of our volunteers. We know there is more we can do and this plan reflects our commitment to reduce, reuse and recycle across all Council areas and in relation to all resources.

In 2019 an audit of council services was undertaken which aimed to identify where improvements could be made. Staff reviewed their purchasing behaviour and their local waste infrastructure and came up with many ideas for positive change which are included in the action plan below. There are clearly significant challenges and the plan is broken down into short, medium and long term aims.

This first stage of the plan is internally focussed; next steps will be to develop actions with volunteers, community groups and businesses to facilitate access to support, grants and training.

How will this plan be monitored?

The plan will remain the responsibility of service leads and the 3R’s officer working group. The plan will be constantly reviewed and refreshed along with reflecting future business plan priorities as they evolve.

Performance will be reported following usual portfolio holder briefing reports.

Please see Annex 1 for Action Plan.

Annex 1 - Action Plan – internal actions

Recycle	
Quick Wins	Recycling information and facilities for all FDC buildings and business areas. Improved bin provision for staff and visitors consistent with our domestic waste messaging including wider provision available in the community e.g. Household Waste sites, textile recycling etc.
	Commercial waste recycling facilities for all FDC business premises.
Mid-term wins	Review procedures for disposal of WEEE, batteries, other large equipment disposal, scrap metal from FDC premises and potential improvements that can be made and investigate re-use and onward sale of items; including establishing relationships with the third sector. Encourage good behaviours - re-establish staff champions - encouraging staff to make the most of resources and recycling.
Aspirational wins	Public recycling bins in parks and open spaces. Previously this has not been successful due to high contamination rates. Focus on getting domestic recycling and business recycling to a higher standard. This change will then be revisited and a further trial in target locations with segregated material bins.
	Separating recycling from litter picked / fly tipped materials some volunteers groups currently do this. Investigate if there are ways to enable staff to do this efficiently.
Reduce	
Quick wins	Cease the use of single use plastics (SUP), where possible, by replacing with sustainable options -plates, straws, balloons, single use banners for co-ordinated FDC led events.
	Address waste and SUP through the procurement process - to reduce waste such as non-recyclable packaging from suppliers.
	Reduce promotional material that is 'single use' items that people don't need and are only used once and then throw away.
	Staff communications and champions to lead on change Continue regular spring cleans and managing energy usage.
Mid-term wins	E-conference calls – improve offer and access for staff including webinars.
	Reducing electricity use - re-establish staff champions- encouraging staff to turn off all equipment when it is not in use.
	Investigate better collection points for cigarette waste at FDC sites to reduce the chance of littered cigarettes. Promote smoking cessation.
Aspirational Wins	Energy reduction – refresh our commitment to the Cambridgeshire Energy Partnership- access to grants and Cambridgeshire REFIT4 renewable energy programme.
Re-use	
Quick Wins	Provide reusable cups for staff and offer water filling points for visitors
	Continue to encourage paperless working – Give staff the option to use laptops in meetings to take notes and edit reports to save printing costs and reducing paper kept information to compliment GDPR and the data retention policy.
	Use recycled paint from CCORN, for general maintenance at FDC. Supporting a local facility and reusing high grade branded paint which would have been disposed of.
Mid-term	Create a provision which will allow staff to clean equipment, clothing and PPE

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Statement of Intent

wins	lent to volunteers reducing staff time getting these ready and reduce single use waste going to landfill.
Aspirational wins	Investigate food waste collection for FDC sites and business customers. Explore water saving options within Council buildings.