

To consider any motions by Members under paragraph 20 of Part 2 (The Council and District Council Members) of the Constitution, notice of which have been duly given.

1. Motion from Cllr Manston (Ash and New Ash Green)

“Plastic Free Communities is an initiative by the marine conservation charity, Surfers Against Sewage (SAS), to tackle avoidable single-use plastic, from beaches, rivers, and green spaces all the way back to the brands and businesses who create it.

On shore, inland, in urban and rural communities, high-tide or high-rise, SAS are uniting communities in the **fight against single-use plastics**. It’s not about removing all plastic from our lives. It’s about kicking our addiction to avoidable single-use plastic, and changing the system that produces it.

Plastic pollution has sadly become synonymous with any outdoor activity, from walking or climbing to surfing or swimming to wildlife watching – it is simply a predictable part of the experience. It is an issue that connects the environment with all parts of society. It is something that **we can all take action on at every level**. In fact, it is only through concrete, collective, positive action that will we be able to stop the flood of plastic pollution from overwhelming our world.

Councils are in a unique position to lead change. They act as consumers, using single-use plastics in canteens, meetings and during the daily running of all their premises. They are influencers, many having direct access to the running of local schools, businesses, community organisations and waste management. They work as a political body, often with cross-party members, and by showing unity on an action they can instil confidence and determination to succeed.

This Council pledges to:

- **lead by example and remove single-use plastic items from its premises and operations, wherever it has the power to do so,**
- **encourage plastic-free initiatives in Sevenoaks, promoting the campaign and supporting events that aim to raise awareness of single-use plastics and reduce the use of them, and**
- **support Cllr Manston in convening and chairing a cross-party Plastic Free Community Steering Group and establishing appropriate terms of reference, KPIs and reporting.**

Statistics

1. 38.5 million plastic bottles are bought every day in the UK. Around half end up in landfill, being burnt or in the environment.
2. In the UK, we use 7 million disposable coffee cups every day.
3. Food and drink-related plastic items now make up one in every five pieces of litter.
4. Plastic straws are in the top 10 items polluting the ocean and harming marine life. As of April 2020 these are banned.
5. UK Supermarkets distribute 112,000 pieces of plastic packaging per minute.
6. Plastic bags can kill marine wildlife by unintentional ingestion or inhalation.
7. 28 wet wipes are found per mile of beach. 93% of sewer blockages are made up of wipes.
8. It's thought that between five and 13 million tonnes of plastic end up in the ocean every year.
9. Sachets can take 300 years to break down.
10. 1 in 3 seabirds which die are found to have balloons in their stomachs.

Steering Group

A local group of stakeholders will meet at least twice per calendar year to discuss the progress of Plastic Free Communities locally; agreeing and setting direction, meeting objectives, and completing the application for Plastic Free Communities Approved status.

The Steering Group will amplify our Plastic Free Communities work and ensure it becomes a whole community effort. It will help embed action in the community and get projects, events and initiatives off the ground. An agreed strategy will keep the operation on track and ensure objectives are successfully met.

The objectives of the group will fall into these categories:

- 1) Creating opportunities for community action and events
- 2) Building relationships with community allies
- 3) Identifying business champions

Plastic Free Community Status

Once we have completed the Steering Group objectives, we can apply for Plastic Free Community Status which will provide us with:

- a Plastic Free Communities Approved Certificate,
- a locator on the SAS Plastic Free Communities website,
- a national announcement on SAS channels and advice on local press coverage, and
- an official Plastic Free Communities Approved logo to use on correspondence and comms, such as those shown below.”

