Exmouth Town Council

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Single-Use Plastic Policy

Plastic waste is one of the greatest environmental challenges facing the world today. The UK government estimates that there are currently more than 150million tonnes of plastic in the world's oceans, and that some 100,000 sea mammals and one million birds die from eating or becoming entangled in plastic waste each year.

With Exmouth being the gateway to the UNESCO-designated Devon Heritage Jurassic Coast, Exmouth Town Council is committed to taking leadership on tackling the plastic waste problem by taking responsibility for its own impact on the environment and society, both within the local area and across the globe.

The Council will work towards minimising use of single-use plastics across its own operations and services and by all staff and proactively work with partners to find positive solutions for reducing unnecessary waste plastics across the town.

What are single-use plastics?
Single-use plastics can include any disposable plastic item which is designed to be used only once e.g. plastic bags, disposable utensils, beverage containers, coffee capsules, wet wipes, razor blades, plastic drinks bottles, food packaging, plastic sacks, bottle tops, straws, stirrers and plastic lids.

To support Exmouth becoming a single-use plastics-free town, Exmouth Town Council commits to:

- Ensuring that all decisions of the Town Council and its Committees, Working and Partnership Groups take this policy into account;
- Where possible, Councillors and staff representing the Town Council on Outside Bodies to encourage the organisations to take action to reduce single-use plastics in their operation;
- Supporting and encouraging relevant learning and training initiatives in the local community;
- Working with staff to ensure that single-use plastics are eliminated across our offices;
- Supporting our schools and communities in their efforts to make their buildings plastic-free zones;
- Through Surfers Against Sewage communicating the importance of protecting our urban, rural and marine environments, and supporting and promoting positive initiatives, campaigns and actions for reducing plastic waste;
- Working with our event organisers to eliminate single-use plastics across all our events and sharing guidance for this more widely;
- Supporting communities and litter-pick initiatives to ensure our parks, beaches and open spaces are free from plastic litter;
- Using government legislation that regulates against the use of single-use plastics to support the Town Council's efforts where possible;
- Requiring all our suppliers to minimise the use of single-use plastics in their service provision and finding sustainable alternatives (where appropriate);

- Where the use of plastics is unavoidable, the Council will encourage the use of recycled plastics, where practicable, and support manufacturers that make products from locally sourced waste plastics;
- Working with partners in joint ventures and innovative projects for reducing single-use plastic waste;
- Working with partners in carrying out waste audits to encourage reducing of single-use plastic waste;
- Sharing best practice and information about plastic-free initiatives to residents, businesses, visitors and beyond through the Council's social media and communication channels. The Council will work to embed these commitments into the sustainable events guidance, sustainable procurement policy, and into other key council strategies, policies and plans;
- Supporting any other relevant action in relation to REDUCE, RE-USE RECYCLE campaign within the Town Council's legal and budgetary constraints.

Reaffirmed 18th May 2026
Review date: May 2027