



PRESS RELEASE

Waterford Council ends Single Use Plastics

A **Single Use Plastics Policy** was adopted at the recent meeting of the Plenary Council [on 13th February](#). This policy will result in the elimination of single use plastics from all Council buildings, hired venues, catering and all events organised by Waterford City & County Council.

In addition, all events licensed or funded by Waterford City & County Council will be required to demonstrate measures to eliminate single use plastics and segregation of waste during and after the event and their subsequent disposal.

Following a draft prepared by the SPC for Environment, Climate Action and Biodiversity, the policy was brought to the Plenary Council where it was adopted, with immediate effect.

“Plastic is designed to last forever but is often used just once. Single-use plastic includes products such as straws, bottles, cups and cutlery; any plastic item that’s made for temporary use”, said Fergus Galvin, Director of Services for Roads, Water and Environment.

“Although we might not think much of it when we buy bottles of our favorite drink or buy a sandwich in a plastic box, these choices have a serious impact on the health of our planet and ourselves. This policy enables us to say a firm ‘no’ to single use plastics in our organisation. We are now building on the existing ban on single use bottles and cups in the Council Chambers by extending a ban on all single use plastics across the range of Council buildings and events.”

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Background: In January 2018, the European Commission adopted the first-ever Europe-wide strategy on plastics. The strategy envisages that all plastic packaging on the EU market will be recyclable by 2030, the consumption of single-use plastics will be reduced and the intentional use of micro plastics will be restricted. This strategy will transform the way products are designed, produced, used, and recycled in the EU. One of the first key legislative proposals to emerge on foot of the EU Plastics Strategy was the "Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the reduction of the impact of certain plastic products on the environment", which was published on 28 May 2018.

In January 2019, the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and the Environment, Minister Richard Bruton T.D. announced that government departments, public bodies, and schools will lead the way in the response to cutting down on single use plastics, with a number of measures, including no longer purchasing single-use plastic cups, cutlery and straws for use within their offices.

The single-use plastics directive which was adopted in May 2019 builds on the EU's existing waste legislation but goes further by setting stricter rules for those types of products and packaging which are among the top ten most frequently found items polluting European



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beaches. The new rules ban the use of certain throwaway plastic products for which alternatives exist. In addition, specific measures are introduced to reduce the use of the most frequently littered plastic products. Ireland has supported the ambition of this proposal throughout all the negotiations.