

Manchester City Council

Single Use Plastics Policy

Manchester City Council has made a commitment to eradicate avoidable single-use plastic (SUP) on the public estate, along with influencing in order to change behaviour across the city.

Plastic waste is problematic because:

- It contributes significantly to global pollution, as well as climate change (as often plastics are made using fossil fuel).
- Items such as plastic bags can block waterways and sewers, leading to an increased risk of local flooding.
- It causes a major risk to many marine species who mistake plastic objects for food and/or can become entangled in plastic waste, which can be fatal.
- Plastic items are often difficult to recycle, so often end up as landfill or burnable waste

Plastic waste isn't biodegradable, so will take hundreds of years to decompose into tiny pieces known as microplastics. This also releases embedded chemicals and carbon into the ground and the atmosphere.

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

What are single-use plastics?

Single-use plastic (SUP) items are designed to be used only once before being thrown away. This includes (but is not limited to) hot and cold drinks cups and lids, drink bottles, cutlery, bin bags, and PPE (for example gloves and aprons). Packaging on many products can also involve a large amount of SUP such as bags, polystyrene, bubble wrap.

To support Manchester becoming an avoidable single-use plastic free city, the council commits to:

- Work with staff to ensure that single-use plastics are eliminated across our offices and operations
- Support our schools and communities in their efforts to make their buildings avoidable SUP-free
- Work with our event organisers to eliminate avoidable single-use plastics across all city events held on council land and share guidance for this more widely
- Support communities and litter-pick initiatives to ensure our parks and open spaces are free from plastic litter through the Keep Manchester Tidy campaign
- Use government legislation that regulates against the use of single-use plastics to support our efforts
- Require all our suppliers to minimise the use of single-use plastics in their service provision and find sustainable alternatives (where appropriate)
- Where the use of plastics is unavoidable, the council will encourage the use of recycled plastics (and strive for this to be made using a minimum of 30% recycled plastic), where practicable, and support manufacturers that make products from locally sourced waste plastics
- Work with partners in joint ventures and innovative projects for reducing single-use plastic waste
- In collaboration with partners, including the Manchester Climate Change Agency, communicate the importance of protecting our city environment, and support and promote positive initiatives, city campaigns and actions for reducing plastic waste

The council will work to embed these commitments into the sustainable procurement policy, the sustainable events guidance and into other key council strategies, policies and plans.