

To consider support for environmentally-friendly initiatives within the Town Council

Background

Inspired by the recent Sustainability Fair held in Angus Wood, the Town Council wants to ensure it promotes the reduction of its environmental footprint. The aim is to lead by example, raising awareness of being environmentally friendly, help to inspire people to rethink and reduce their use of single use plastic and to promote recycling. It is important to be realistic and to set the bar to an achievable level within the Council's capabilities.

Additional Information

The Town Council has already introduced several measures to show its commitment to helping to protect the environment and these are listed below:

- The office recycles all waste paper, (except confidential papers), and recyclable plastic items via DWP.
- Using glasses instead of plastic cups, as well as avoiding where possible the use of plastic plates and cutlery.
- All water meter readings are monitored, and action is taken immediately to identify the reasons when they are high, minimizing water loss if there is a leak
- Staff try, where possible, to bring in their own lunch therefore reducing the use of single use packaging
- Straws are not used in the office or at events (unless required for assistance with drinking)
- No usage of single use condiments sachets
- Soap dispenser in the bathroom is refillable
- The use of re-usable bags
- Re-using paper for scrap paper
- Installation of water dispenser connected to mains.
- New heating systems and boilers in council buildings are chosen to be environmentally friendly where possible.
- All woodchip produced is either reused or sent for recycling if possible.

The office recycles paper, cardboard, plastic, and tins, after events staff take home glass bottles so these can be recycled too.

For refreshments at meetings the measures include:

- Use of crockery
- Use of metal teaspoons
- Use of loose tea and coffee where possible
- Depending on the event, the use of glasses instead of plastic cups

The Town Council introduced reusable market bags which are sold by the Market Manager to help reduce the use of plastic bags and help advertise the market. Goods are purchased locally, where possible, to reduce mileage and packaging. In addition, we try to combine meetings with picking up goods from local suppliers, i.e. specialized printer in Dorchester and all invitations to Town Council events, apart from Remembrance, are sent via e-mail.

The Town Council aims to further reduce the use of single use plastic and paper wherever it can and to make use of further initiatives to reduce its carbon footprint. These could include emailing the summer and winter flyer's to schools and e-mailing agendas and minutes to Councillors. The use of coffee and sugar sachets for serving refreshments could also be reduced. Furthermore, the hand soap dispenser and washing up liquid in the kitchen could be refilled using a local shop, therefore reducing the number of plastic bottles used.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Councillors support Officers in their aim to be environmentally friendly in a positive and practical way, leading by example and showing commitment to the environment and the community.

Sybille Maddock
Assistant Town Clerk
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