

## **Proposal for Pickmere Parish Council (PPC) to support the Pickmere Community on the journey to Plastic Free Accreditation.**

### **Background**

Surfers Against Sewage - Plastic Free Communities (SAS) run an accreditation scheme that provides a framework for UK communities to reduce their plastic footprint. Established in 1990, SAS has grown from a grassroots movement into one of the UK's most active and successful environmental charities.

Whilst the initial focus of SAS was on cleaning up raw sewage in UK seas and on UK beaches, the world has changed and plastic is the new threat.

Further information is available at [www.sas.org.uk/plastic-free-communities](http://www.sas.org.uk/plastic-free-communities)

### **Plastic Free Communities**

Currently, 50+ communities have achieved accreditation, including City of Chester. A further 475+ UK communities are working towards accreditation, including Manchester City, Nantwich, and Hazel Grove. Birmingham City Council have just passed the resolution for the whole of Birmingham. SAS has a goal of 120 accredited communities by 2020.

In most instances, the drive for accreditation is council led and SAS report that no community has ever been turned down by a council.

### **Achieving Accreditation**

5 objectives need to be achieved and evidence provided. Objectives are tailored to fit the size of the community:

- Local governance - the local council must pass a resolution that it supports the community in its plastic free journey – see next section
- Formation of a steering group – at least one member must be a local councillor. The Plastic Free Pickmere (PFP) steering group had been set up for 3+ months, with the requisite council representation.
- Local businesses - local businesses must replace at least 3 single use items (used frequently) in order to become Community Champions. All local businesses have been approached by members of the steering group. One business has already been given the Community Champion award and a number of others are carrying out audits in order to work towards championship. The target for Pickmere is 2 Community Champions – but we expect more. All businesses (with one exception) have welcomed the initiative.
- Community groups – other groups within the community must be engaged in order to spread the plastic free message and seek support. Most community

groups have been contacted. Presentations have been given or are planned. Positive support has been forthcoming from all groups approached to date.

- Plastic-free rallies. Pickmere has a target of 2 rallies in a 12 month period to provide information and raise support. We have planned the following:
  - Pickmere clean-up day - 2nd June,
  - PAP teas by the lake - 14<sup>th</sup> July,
  - Supermarket rally - date in July,
  - Stand at Pickmere Funday – end August.
  - Annual parish meeting – October
  - Local papers have also been advised of our goals and objectives.

### **Local Governance Expectations**

“Local councils (town or parish) must pass a resolution supporting the journey to Plastic Free Community status, committing to plastic free alternatives and plastic free initiatives within the community.” This is broken down as follows:

- Councils to lead by example to remove single-use plastic from their premises.
- Councils to encourage plastic free initiatives, promoting campaigns and supporting events. This is already being achieved through HS and SR.
- A representative of the council must be named on the Plastic Free Community steering group. This has already been achieved.

### **Benefits for Pickmere and PPC**

- Kudos in the achievement of a nationally recognised award.
- All written communications from Pickmere Businesses and PPC can display the Plastic Free Pickmere logo.
- United community – working towards a common goal.
- Pickmere becomes an exemplar in the broader Cheshire community.
- Positive publicity will be gained from the accreditation – this is a newsworthy event.
- We will be part of a UK network of plastic free communities which is rapidly expanding. We do not want to be playing catch-up at a later date.
- Environmental benefits – both locally and globally.
- Aligns with broader Government aspirations and issues such as the recently declared Climate Emergency.

### **Other Information**

Communications regarding this motion have been muddled over the last few months due to confusion between Pickmere Against Plastic (PAP) and Plastic Free Accreditation. PAP was originally set up to encourage households to reduce their plastic usage and was supported by PPC at inception early in 2018. PFP is a brand new, broader initiative which requires separate support.

## **Support Required**

Plastic free accreditation cannot be achieved without the support of PPC. All other objectives have already been either wholly or partially achieved and we expect to submit our application for accreditation towards the end of July.

Therefore it is proposed that PPC pass a resolution stating that:

“PPC will lead by example by removing single-use plastic from its premises;

PPC will encourage plastic free initiatives, promoting campaigns and supporting events;

A PPC councillor will continue to be named on the Plastic Free Pickmere Steering group.”