

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Amgylchedd a Materion Gwledig
Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-750
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/00640/17

Mike Hedges AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
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16 April 2017

Dear Mike

Thank you for your letter of 27 March 2017 regarding the petition P-05-750 for single use items: introduce a Deposit Return System for drink containers and make fast food containers and utensils compostable.

The issues relating to single use and compostable food and drink packaging are many and complex. I believe that to achieve a long term solution, and to achieve our goal of a globally responsible Wales, we need to look at the issues in the round. We intend to do this as part of the evaluation and refresh of *Towards Zero Waste*, our waste strategy for Wales.

An objective outlined in our Industrial and Commercial (I&C) sector plan is to ensure products, including food and drink packaging, use fewer resources (reducing especially those which are non-renewable), are more durable and/or have an extended life. Products should also generate less waste at end of life, be more recyclable, and have a higher recycled content.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

The I&C plan also states the producer should take more extended responsibility for the product's management at end of life, including in respect of the costs of end of life management. I have now called for research into the extended producer responsibility (EPR) of such materials. This will include analysis into compostable packaging.

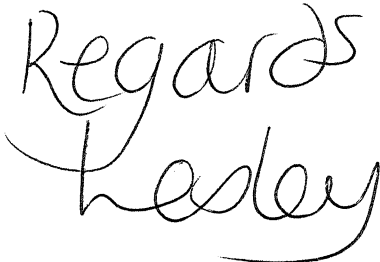
True EPR means producers taking direct responsibility for the full net cost of the collection, sorting, recycling and other treatment of separately collected waste derived from the products and packaging they put onto the market. Full costs theoretically also include the collection, transport and treatment costs for non-separately collected waste, the costs for public information and awareness raising to ensure participation of consumers within the scheme; costs related to waste prevention, and costs for litter prevention and management.

Potential products which could be considered for an EPR approach include disposable food and drink related packaging, including plastic cutlery.

We shall be commissioning a study to fully appraise the feasibility, including costs and benefits, of the options to increase waste prevention of products and packaging, increase recycling and reduce litter under EPR schemes in Wales. The study will include options to increase recycling rates and the reduction of the littering of food and drink packaging.

We have carried out the evaluation of Towards Zero Waste the results of which will report in the summer. The EPR research will be commissioned shortly and will also report in the summer. The consultation of the refresh of Towards Zero Waste will be published during the summer of 2018.

We will consider the results of the evaluation, the EPR study and will evaluate the evidence presented. We will carry out comprehensive stakeholder engagement as part of the consultation process to ensure we seek the views of all sectors ahead of the refresh of Towards Zero Waste.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Regards Lesley". The word "Regards" is written in a cursive style on the top line, and "Lesley" is written below it, also in a cursive style.

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM

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