

Mark Drakeford AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gyllid
Cabinet Secretary for Finance



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-822
Ein cyf/Our ref MD/00428/18

David John Rowlands AM
Chair - Petitions committee.
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28 August 2018

Dear David,

I am writing in response to your letter of 27 July to the Minister for the Environment, regarding Petition P-05-822, in relation to plastic straws. The letter was passed to me for response as the matters you raised fall within my portfolio.

I am pleased to see the children at Ysgol y Wern taking such an interest in environmental matters and playing such an active role with their petition.


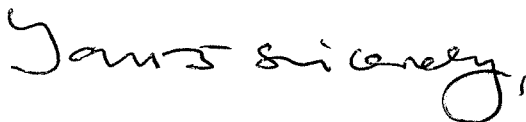
I have provided below a response to each of the points raised in turn.

- Public bodies in Wales are encouraged to avoid using single use plastic products where possible, in order to reduce waste and help us reach our 2050 one planet resource use goal. The Well-being of Future Generations Act ways of working and national goals are embedded in our procurement considerations. My officials are working with local authorities and suppliers to explore the issues associated with plastic straws and try and find practical alternatives. Through this work, we will establish what milk cartons / straws the schools are buying and what alternatives are available, and the associated costs. In progressing this work, careful consideration is being given to avoid any unintended consequences which may have an adverse effect in another area and to ensure that we work with Welsh business to prepare for any change in requirements. My officials have recently started exploring this further by engaging with the Waste and Resources Action Programme, the Welsh Government's Waste and Strategy Branch and Future

Generations Commissioner's office, and are working out a timeline for this activity.

- Value Wales is currently working with several local authorities on pilot projects aimed at demonstrating how the Well-being of Future Generations Act can be practically applied to procurement. Pembrokeshire County Council is trialling a switch from plastic milk bottles to glass and other materials with seven schools in their authority and this is likely to result in a reduction of straws in the process. The outcome of this pilot project, which will conclude in December 2018, will be made available for other public bodies to share.
- The National Procurement Service (NPS) has consulted with suppliers on its new Key Performance Indicator tool, which will enable suppliers to measure and monitor their carbon footprint. A workshop was held on 23 July, with ten of its suppliers and a further consultation is scheduled for September.
- The NPS is currently working with its framework suppliers and local authorities in Wales with a view to reducing / eliminating the use of plastics – including straws - in the future. The NPS is committed to embedding sustainability into its frameworks and is signed up to the Courtauld Commitment 2025, a voluntary agreement that brings together producer and consumer to make food and drink production and consumption more sustainable.

The UK Government is currently looking at how charges, or changes to the tax system could tackle the problems associated with single-use plastic waste. We will work closely with them in relation to any action to ban specific single use plastic items and feeding in views from Wales. The interest of the children from Ysgol y Wern provides helpful input to this work.



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