

Hannah Blythyn AS/MS
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Tai a Llywodraeth Leol
Deputy Minister for Housing and Local Government



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-1023
Ein cyf/Our ref HB/00583/20

Janet Finch-Saunders MS
Chair, Petitions Committee

24 September 2020

Dear Janet Finch-Saunders MS,

Thank you for your letter of 4 September in relation to recycling at education settings in Wales. Our aim is to move to a circular economy in Wales, where waste is avoided and the things we use are kept in use as long as possible. This is an important part of the action needed on climate change and brings many new opportunities as part of the move to a low carbon economy.

As a Government, we are working to apply the approach that has been so successful for the recycling of household waste in Wales to non-domestic waste, including the material generated in schools. The aim is to increase the amount of materials recycled from businesses and other non-domestic organisations, not only to deliver key environmental benefits but also in order to improve the quality of materials available and to ensure that the materials that can be recycled aren't wasted.

In order to support schools and other publicly funded bodies to prepare, a £6.5m Circular Economy Fund for local authorities and publicly funded bodies was launched alongside the consultation on the Circular Economy Strategy, Beyond Recycling, in December 2019 to support this and other actions within the strategy. The results of this consultation can be found online at <https://gov.wales/circular-economy-strategy>.

Grants of up to £500,000 have been offered in recognition of the importance of supporting publicly funded bodies such as schools and universities to adapt their processes and to transition to a circular economy driving further increases in recycling and decarbonisation. In the first of two rounds 82 applications were received totalling £12m representing a breadth of projects from a wide range of organisations including local authorities, universities, schools, colleges and the NHS.

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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.

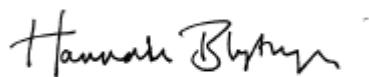
£3.7million of funding has been allocated to date to 34 projects. In total 91 applications have been received for the second round of the Circular Economy Fund, including applications from numerous schools and universities. The benefits realised across the 34 projects supported to date include; improved recycling rates; improved quality of recyclates; reduced single use plastics; revenue efficiency savings for local authorities; and reduced vehicle movements therefore reduced emissions of carbon and pollutant.

The petition highlights the issue of the costs of recycling and where those costs fall. We are currently working in partnership with the other governments in the UK to introduce an Extended Producer Responsibility Scheme (EPR). EPR's ensure that producers bear the cost of disposal of the products they place onto the market. This is in line with the 'polluter pays' principle.

The scheme will make producers who place packaging on to the market responsible for paying the full net costs for the waste management activities once the packaging has been used.

This will cover the costs for collection and handling of packaging and costs for the clear up of packaging that is littered or fly tipped. As well as this, the fees producers pay will be designed to incentivise packaging design to ensure it is easy to recycle. Currently in the UK it is estimated that producers pay approximately 10% of the overall costs of recycling their packaging waste. EPR proposals will shift this to 100% and a consultation of the detailed design of the scheme is planned for next year.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hannah Blythyn'.

Hannah Blythyn AS/MS

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