

Dear Dame Meg,

Thank you for your email. Sir Charles has asked me, as Clerk of the Committee, to respond to you on his behalf.

Sir Charles has spoken to the Director of Catering Services and the Environment Team, who have passed on the below information:

*Compostable disposable items were introduced in catering outlets in October 2018 as part of the initiative to reduce single use plastics. Since that date, we have successfully sent nearly 22 tonnes to be composted.*

*In the first 8 months following the move to compostable products there was some contamination identified but we are unable to determine a percentage figure. However since June 2019 all the waste collected through the compostable bins is sorted at the point of final disposal and therefore all compostable products in the waste stream are processed correctly. In terms of process, the compostable items are collected in dedicated bins, collected by our waste management contractor and taken to a specialist facility where the waste undergoes sorting to avoid contamination of this waste stream, prior to final disposal.*

*Parliament's awareness campaign 'right waste, right bin' was launched when these compostable items were introduced. This helped reduce contamination by providing guidance on which items should be disposed of in each waste stream. Our compostable bins are capable of taking equivalent items from external retailers and similarly some of our packaging may be disposed of in suitable external bins away from the Estate.*

*With regards to the reintroduction of reusable cups and products we are currently waiting on any further changes to the roadmap and relaxation of social distancing before we reintroduce greater touchpoints back to the service.*

The Committee has not had any specific discussions with Vegware, as a supplier, but the Committee does receive regular updates from Catering Services covering sustainability issues.

Best wishes,

Alison

**Alison Groves**

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