**17th June 2025**

**Sustainable Plastics APPG IGM**

Attendees:

* Baroness Grender
* Earl Russell
* Andrew Cooper MP
* Laurence Turner MP
* Sadik al Hassan MP
* Earl of Leicester

1. Welcome and Introduction - Professor Andrew Dove (Professor of Sustainable Polymer Chemistry) & Professor Fern Elsdon-Baker (Professor of Science, Knowledge and Belief in Society)

Professor Andrew Dove introduced the University’s research on plastics and his own academic background on plastic degradability. He then discussed the limitations of individual academics influencing policy and the necessity of the University to form the Birmingham Plastics Network and the policy commission in 2024 - to speak with a united voice on the issue.

He added that, following the Policy Commission’s launch, the University has been looking for ways to utilise partnerships to grow the impact of their research and implement some of their key recommendations. This work, he suggested, had led to the idea to form the APPG with the kind support of Laurence Turner MP.

Professor Fern Elsdon- Baker agreed with Professor Dove and added that there was keen interest from members of the public on the issue of plastic pollution across the political spectrum.

1. Election of Parliamentary Officers and Members

* Sadik Al-Hassan MP proposed that Laurence Turner MP should Chair the Group -a move which was agreed by all in the room.
* Baroness Grender proposed that her Liberal Democrat colleague Earl Russell should Co chair the Group – which was unanimously agreed by all in the room.
* New Chair of the APPG Laurence Turner MP proposed Andrew Cooper MP and the Earl of Leicester as the other Officers. This was again, unanimously agreed.
* The newly elected officers then agreed that the Group’s purpose should be: To further evidence-based discussions regarding the positive and negative impacts of plastics across their full life-cycle, and influence policy towards achieving a sustainable future, and circular economy, for plastics.

**Sustainable Plastics APPG Members are as follows:**

* Laurence Turner MP
* Jess Asato MP
* James Asser MP
* Tracy Gilbert MP
* Polly Billington MP
* Julia Buckley MP
* Dan Aldridge MP
* Sadik Al-Hassan MP
* Linsey Farnsworth MP
* Michelle Welsh MP
* Deirdre Costigan MP
* Jo Platt MP
* Andrew Cooper MP
* Baroness Bakewell of Hardington Mandeville
* Baroness Golding
* Baroness Grender
* Earl Russell
* The Earl of Leicester
* Gurinder Singh Josan MP
* Tahir Ali MP
* James Naish MP
* Bradley Thomas MP

1. Upcoming events programme discussion

Baroness Grender highlighted that she is is interested in the societal impacts of plastics and the initiatives in place to tackle plastic pollution without shifting costs onto consumers and small producers. She also added that she’d like to see discussion on the issue of public trust in recycling and academic forecasting of legislation that could be introduced to induce this trust.

Earl Russell added that he was interested in mitigating environmental waste from the clean energy sector. To this end, he said that it would be beneficial to understand the range of blockers to effective Government action that were currently in place and the kind of policy solutions that could be trialled to overcome them. He also pointed to DEFRA’s work on the circular economy and suggested that policies should be discussed around non degradable plastics and the biodiversity impacts of microplastics.

Andrew Cooper MP flagged that his constituency was the home of plastic engineering firm ICI. As a result many businesses in the supply chain had moved to Northwich including Ørsted with their first ever anaerobic digestor facility. He also noted that in Winsford there is a leading plastic manufacturer who are working on creating a recyclable version of cereal plastic bags. These initiatives, he argued, highlight that local authority waste contracts are not flexible enough to account for the innovation in the sector. For example, he noted that new plastic bags can only be recycled at supermarkets, something consumers are unlikely to do. He suggested the APPG should become a forum to discuss policies which overcome these issues and hurdles.

The Earl of Leicester flagged that even if we reach net zero by 2050, we will still be deriving significant energy from hydrocarbons. He also highlighted the necessity that plastics have in certain industries and the need to shift the perspective in public discourse away from the idea that all plastics were innately evil. For example, he pointed to their vital role in pharmaceuticals and the innovations that farmers in his area had made towards the reuse of plastic across their industrial processes.

The Secretariat and new Co-Chair of the Group then outlined their planned schedule for the year detailing that events would be held in October, January, March, and June.

1. AOB

Laurence Turner MP, upon no further business being raised, thanked those present before closing the meeting.

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