**Notes from ‘Plastic Free Swansea’ Meeting 14th June 2018**

There were 19 people present.

1. Delyth Higgins gave a brief background to the group and outlined how the agenda would pan out.
2. The first part of meeting was given over to updates on actions taken and invited contributions, as follows:
	1. Chris Evans updated on the Green Party’s supermarket audit on plastic. The questions have been finalised for 2 out of 3 of the tick box surveys and will start undertaking them in July.
	2. Susan Rodaway (from Swansea Community Rural Voice project and VocalEyes) spoke about the Plastic Free Pennard project, which came about as a result of a project idea on VocalEyes, signposting to Surfers Against Sewage’s ‘Plastic Free Coastlines’ scheme (which is now known as Plastic Free Communities). Bishopston ward discussed and unanimously wanted to support it. A beach clean took place in April with more than 20 people attending. Estimated that 35% of that collected was single use plastic. Local businesses were approached to make changes, including Pennard Stores who have an action plan. Pennard School will shortly be signing up to join Plastic Free Schools. Pennard Comm. Council held a fundraising event which included a 30 sec. digital film competition for children on the subject, a 2D and 3D art competition using recyclables. 13th October will be another event, WI will be crafting with single use plastics, and lots of other information. Kittle WI, youth group and school are also on board and keen to do stuff. Plastic Free Pennard hope to have accreditation by the end of the year!

The communities of Oxwich and Port Eynon are also thinking about joining the SAS scheme.

* 1. This led to queries about the ‘Refill’ initiative which Welsh Government has recently backed and its links to this area, coastline etc. Whilst it seems a great idea, some issues have come to light such as businesses being on water meters, and health & hygiene issues with washing and filling bottles. More water fountains was suggested as a way around this or outside taps.
	2. Laura Trulove, Swansea SAS rep. (voluntary role) then spoke about the Plastic Free Aberystwyth campaign she helped to run stating that the scheme is accredited according to population, so doing it on a smaller area basis has its advantages whilst building up to the whole of Swansea.
	3. Geraint Davies, MP for Swansea West, spoke about the Bill he is taking through parliament which was published on Monday (11th June). There are several elements to it, including:
1. A duty to report on the reduction and recycling of plastics targets.
2. All plastics should be recyclable by 2025 (UK-currently by 2040, EU by 2030).
3. Producer should pay. 90% of costs of plastic recycling are paid by tax payers.
4. Establish a levy on plastic bottles alongside Refill campaign to help footfall.
5. Establish a Plastics Agency-to monitor and enforce plastic production and consumption targets.

He continued by stating that plastic is cheap because we are already paying for it in oil production, recycling etc. If it was not subsidised in this way it would not be so cheap. There is merit in banning the production of virgin plastic, because this would encourage/force businesses to trawl the oceans and recycle plastic from there. More harmful plastics such as black plastics and hybrid packaging need tackling too. Full Bill can be viewed [here](https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/2017-2019/0207/18207.pdf).

1. Delyth showed the PlasticfreeSwansea website on the screen and thanked Mary for having set it up. There is much more work to be done on it and Delyth will do as much as possible as joint administrator. There is an issue over the actual web domain name and this will hopefully get sorted soon. Twitter and facebook profiles have also been set up by Phil Brophy and Peter Anderson.
2. Delyth then did a short presentation on examples of projects or campaigns undertaken elsewhere in the UK as inspiration for us before the meeting opened up to discussion. The main one highlighted was from #StreetsAheadBrighton where the core message was 'litter dropped on the street or left on the beaches ends up in the sea'. Lots of different methods were used to highlight the issues including a giant fish made out of litter, a bright banner on Paradise Pier, three pieces of grate art, and bin vinyls all over the beach and City Centre. Also held a silent disco beach clean and a Trash Convertor system. Full details can be found [here](https://www.hubbub.org.uk/streetsahead-litter-campaign-in-brighton-and-hove).
3. General discussion ensued from this as follows:
* Suggestion of a protest at a supermarket where we all take our plastic packaging back to them and leave it there. Also a flashmob event?
* Showing the Plastic Ocean film
* Brecon has become the first plastic free town in Wales
* Should we try and get Swansea Council to officially back our campaign with a pledge? Laura will look for the copy of the pledge from Ceredigion CC about the Aberystwyth campaign.
* Welsh Water were offering up to £1,000 match funding-not sure if this is still going?
* Council members in Swansea have a budget to spend in their ward-we could ask some individuals to do it
* We could apply to the Landfill Disposals Tax communities Scheme for funding
* There is a Plastic Free School project
* There is a Plastic Free July facebook page

**Conclusions and Actions:**

* Twitter, Facebook and website will be further updated and populated
* We support the Bill by Geraint Davies
* We need to pull together information on beach cleans and other litter picks etc. to put on website and facebook
* Refill campaign- organise a meeting to move this forward
* Keep abreast of the supermarket audit by the Green Party
* All to keep an eye out for places/ shops/ business etc. where you can shop plastic free or where they have alternatives. Inform Delyth of them so that they can be put on the website.