

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
(By email)

Our Ref: MGLA250419-1305

20 May 2019

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request for information which the Greater London Authority (GLA) received on 25 April 2019. Your request has been dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Your request refers to 'councils' so I should clarify that the GLA is London's strategic government and does not operate in the same way as local councils. In London you would need to contact the Borough Councils, including the City of London if you have not already done so: <https://www.london.gov.uk/in-my-area>.

Please find below the information we hold within the scope of your request:

Does the Council have a specific policy relating to single-use plastic usage at premises owned or leased out to 3rd parties? If so, please provide further details.

Does the Council have a specific policy relating to single-use plastic usage among Council staff and elected officials? If so, please provide further details.

City Hall

We have a policy commitment within the [London Environment Strategy](#) (page 425) to work with catering contractors to provide access to tap water for all staff and visitors to mitigate the need to sell water in plastic bottles.

Within the [Implementation Plan of the Strategy](#) (page 37) we have the commitment to "cut unnecessary use of single use plastic bottles and disposables across the GLA". As part of that commitment, we have taken several actions within City Hall:

- We now use 100% recyclable cups and sell reusable coffee cups in the cafe at City Hall. We've also put into place incentives for staff to use reusable cups.
- We now sell reusable water bottles in the café at City Hall.

- We have removed all plastic bottles for water and fizzy drinks – (and we are working with catering contractors to mitigate the need to sell other single-use plastic containers – e.g. some juices).
- We have removed all single-use plastic cutlery and other plastic disposables (e.g. plastic cups, straws) within City Hall.

Trafalgar Square café

We have not been able to phase out plastic bottles at the café in Trafalgar Square. Our licence at Trafalgar Square stipulates no glass bottles for alcohol are permitted on the premises (this is for safety). Similarly, we have no glass bottles at the Café in the Square to avoid all safety risks with glass within the space.

Is the Council engaged with any local initiatives to reduce single-use plastic? If so, please provide further details.

The Mayor launched a programme of work to focus on reducing the impact of single-use plastic bottles. This includes:

- Refill London is a scheme where shops and businesses offer the public free water refills. There are over 2200 of these refill stations across the city (www.refill.org.uk).
- New drinking water fountains have already been installed across the city through a partnership with Zoological Society of London's #Oneless campaign (<https://www.onelessbottle.org/fountainfund/>).
- We are now working in partnership with Thames Water to install over 100 more drinking fountains.

More information on our work on plastic bottle reduction can be found <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/waste-and-recycling/single-use-plastic-bottles>

Does the Council currently provide ample refill water stations for use by staff and visitors at premises owned or leased out to 3rd parties? If so, please provide further details.

Yes – at City Hall, all staff have free use and access to both hot and cold drinking water at designated points on all floors within City Hall. For clarity – The water comes from filtration units sourced from the mains and we do not have water points with plastic bottles.

There is a free drinking water point on our lower ground floor for the visiting public. As above, this does not use plastic refill bottles.

Within the City Hall café on the lower ground floor, we also provide drinking water in self-service urns.

Trafalgar Square has a drinking water fountain. In addition, tap water is available from the Café on the Square upon request.

If you have any further questions relating to this matter, please contact me, quoting the reference MGLA250419-1305.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Information Governance Officer

If you are unhappy with the way the GLA has handled your request, you may complain using the GLA's FOI complaints and internal review procedure, available at:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/governance-and-spending/sharing-our-information/freedom-information>