



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

September 2017

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about plastic microbeads and micro plastic fibres.

I understand and share your concerns about the impact these ingredients can have on the marine environment and fish. I am pleased to tell you that Ministers have confirmed that the use of microbeads in rinse-off cosmetics and personal care products will be banned, regardless of whether they are used as exfoliants, cleansers or otherwise.

In England, the ban on manufacture is expected to apply from the 1st January 2018, and on sale from the 30th June 2018. The Devolved Administrations will need to introduce their own legislation. Ministers will also be working with the Hazardous Substances Advisory Committee to review evidence about solid plastic particles in other products, and their likelihood of entering the marine environment. I have been assured that they will review the position in the light of the Committee's advice.

Global action is needed on this issue so I am pleased to say that the UK, along with several of our neighbours, is party to an organisation known as the Oslo and Paris Convention for the Protection of the North East Atlantic (OSPAR), which is taking international action on microplastics. The Government has said it will share the results of its consultation with OSPAR and continue to support its work.

I understand that manufacturers are exploring natural alternatives to plastic microbeads, including nut shells, salt and sugar. These have the same exfoliating properties but do not threaten the environment, so the products that contain them should perform just as well.

Once again, many thanks for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chris'.

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY