



## PAPER CUP

Recovery & Recycling Group

### **RESPONSE TO DISPOSABLE PACKAGING: COFFEE CUPS GOVERNMENT RESPONSE**

*Further to the Government's announcement today (8<sup>th</sup> March 2018) that it has chosen to recognise and support voluntary commitments the Paper Cup Recycling and Recover Group make the following response.*

*Comments attributable to Neil Whittall, Chairman PCRRG.*

The PCRRG today welcomes the recommendations made by the Government to support the continued, efforts of the industry through the Paper Cup Manifesto and the Group's objective that "by 2020 the greater majority of the UK population will have access to information, schemes and facilities that enable used paper cups to be sustainably recovered and recycled". The PCRRG since its formation has been committed to working across the paper cup supply chain to increase the recovery and recycling of paper cups and believes that only by cross industry collaboration that this will be achievable.

#### **Latte Levy**

The PCRRG remains committed in its belief that improvements to infrastructure, alongside changing consumer behavior through education and conveniently located collection and recycling points are key factors in creating a more sustainable paper cup supply chain, and firmly believes that a consumer tax will not be effective in driving the change required. The PCRRG will await the release of DEFRA's Voluntary and Economic Incentives working group consultation on coffee cups, but is confident it can demonstrate the impact and commitments being made already by the industry to address the challenge of increasing the recovery and recyclability of paper cups.

In the last 12 months, the PCRRG and its members have focused efforts on increasing paper cup "binrastructure" to make recycling cups on the go more convenient, there are more than 4000 collection points through the activities of collaborative and individual organisations across the market and this focus will continue to add hundreds more in 2018.

As part of this in January a new UK collection system was launched in collaboration with the beverage carton industry, adding an additional 415 bring bank recycling points in 105 local authorities across the UK.

The beverage carton industry has successfully implemented carton collection in over 92% of local authorities and the aim to replicate this success with paper cups.

#### **Banning disposable cups by 2023**

The PCRRG concurs with the Government view point that a 100% recycling target is unachievable. PCRRG members, representing the entire paper cup supply chain, are already committed to delivering the Manifesto Goal that by 2020 the greater majority of the UK population will have access to information, schemes and facilities that enable used paper cups to be sustainably recovered and recycled. The Group has already demonstrated that paper cups can and are being

recycled in the UK and is supportive of working across the industry to calculate a realistic, fact based environmental target, and believes that such a target will be successful in creating further change.

Banning material outright unless 100% recycled is simply not realistic, understanding the current market performance and then setting stretching yet challenging targets would be far more pragmatic. But this needs to be considered in the wider packaging sector. Simply targeting one product over another will lead to burdensome legislation and red tape to cover all waste streams - some markets will be unfairly penalised over others

The PCRRG continues to explore innovative design and materials for paper cups, but emphasizes, as the government response alludes to, that solutions must work for the whole supply chain, the environment as a whole and consumers.

### **Consumer Messaging**

The PCRRG is fully supportive of the recommendations for consistent consumer communication and recognises that it is a vital element of influencing consumer behaviour. The Group is already working with a number of organisations such as Keep Scotland Beautiful and Keep Wales Tidy as well as its retail members to develop consistent messaging and to educate consumers about the right behaviors when it comes to disposal and recycling of paper cups.

Getting the infrastructure in place must be a first priority and to combine this with consumer education and engagement as we move forward. For example, Consumers need to understand why using their used cup as a mini bin will negatively impact the recovery and recycling process. Consumers now have more options than ever to recycle their used paper cups and this will continue to grow. The PCRRG understands the concerns around consumer confusion when it comes to recycling and is already working with members and stakeholders to improve consumer awareness.

### **Producer Responsibility**

The PCRRG welcomes the debate about the Producer Responsibility system and Packaging Recovery Note reform being led by the Foodservice Packaging Association. The PCRRG believes the benefits of this will lead to a holistic system across all packaging materials.

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### **Note to editors:**

The Paper Cup Recovery and Recycling Group (PCRRG) is a voluntary body dedicated to increasing the recovery and recycling of paper cups. It has more than 40 members from across the supply chain including paper board manufacturers, paper cup manufacturers, distributors, coffee retail brands, waste, recycling and reprocessing companies, local authorities and NGO bodies including litter organisations.

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