



## **NEWS RELEASE**

**10 September 2018**

### **THE FOODSERVICE PACKAGING ASSOCIATION (FPA) AND PAPER CUP RECOVERY AND RECYCLING GROUP (PCRRG) JOINT STATEMENT**

#### **CHALLENGE TO BIRMINGHAM'S PROPOSED SINGLE USE PLASTIC BAN**

We are pleased Birmingham City council is eager to play a part in eradicating the scourge of marine pollution. Indeed as the trade associations representing the manufacturers, distributors and trade users of on the go packaging and paper cups, we do not want to see our members' packaging littered anywhere and there should be no reason for it being so. The proposal before the council seeks to cut the sale of a range of products including paper cups, but it's important to remember that foodservice packaging exists to enable food and drink to be consumed safely and hygienically on the go. It has also helped to create a vibrant retail takeaway sector, one which provides a clearly needed public amenity and one which helps promote our high streets by making them more attractive (cafe culture) and so helping to draw in shoppers.

With any actions on packaging we need to be sure they will achieve the result you seek, will not unintentionally exacerbate matters and that the local economy is not damaged, particularly in terms of the potential threat to jobs in the take-away and retail coffee sectors and manufacturing jobs based in the Birmingham area. Rather than pass a motion which is unlikely to answer the problems you wish to solve, we urge the City's councillors to work with the packaging industry and its customers to enable Birmingham to be an exemplar for other cities by leading the way on developing a long-term plan that enables its businesses to continue to flourish, for consumers to continue to enjoy spending their leisure time in Birmingham and for all the packaging used to be captured and recycled so making Birmingham the UK's first packaging neutral city.

A great example of this that could be built on is the used coffee cups collections that are now taking place across the city, instigated by the major coffee retailers. Veolia is Birmingham's waste partner and is also the partner in this initiative, collecting used cups from schemes such as those at Costa Coffee. The UK now has capacity to recycle *every* coffee cup used in the UK, so expanding this scheme across Birmingham to ensure every used coffee cup is collected from both retail chains and independents, would be a significant first step. This would mean wherever you are out and about there would be somewhere to return your cup.

Most of the public wants to do the right thing so we need to create the facilities needed and to put in place the logistics that will enable ALL the packaging mentioned to be recycled so ensuring Birmingham plays its full part in achieving the goals of the circular economy.

Other cities that have considered similar banning motions have found themselves road blocked by legal complications and to be in conflict with national laws. Rather than take negative actions that might not get off the ground, let's work together to produce positive results and make a real impact on cleaning up our environment. We are happy to meet Councillors and discuss in detail the work

the industry is doing to improve recovery and recycling and to better understand these developments and how they can be applied to Birmingham.

Ends

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