

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Cross Party Group on Food held on June 5<sup>th</sup> in  
Committee Room 4 of the Scottish Parliament**

**Present**

Mark Ruskell	MSP (Chair)
John Scott	MSP
Gail Ross	MSP
Linda Fabiani	MSP
David Thomson	FDF Scotland
Derek Robertson	Keep Scotland Beautiful
Jim Fox	Coca Cola
Mary Lawton	CPG Food Secretariat
Eve Keepax	Keep Scotland Beautiful
Iain Clunie	Zero Waste Scotland
Graeme Findlay	SQA
Lorna Dawson	SEFARI Gateway *
Howell Davies	Interface
Rachel Mirfattahi	Interface
Lesley Stanley	Independent
Alistair Trail	SAC Consulting
Gordon King	Scottish Craft Butchers
Kathryn Halliday	Scot Gov RESAS
Liz Barron-Majerik	Lantra
Claire Mackay	Dawnfresh
Jackie McCabe	REHIS
Pat Abel	Transition Edinburgh South
Nigel Lack	Food Train
Ewan Macdonald –Russell	Scottish Retail Consortium
Athina Tziboula-Clarke	Abertay Uni
Christine Fraser	Food Training Scotland
Sara Smith	Royal Highland Ed Trust
Daniel Gotts	Scottish Natural Heritage
Kelly Wright	The Refillery*
Caroline de Rouffignac	Scotland Food and Drink
Kirk Hunter	Dairy UK
Leslie Clark	Halogen Communications
Elizabeth Milton	Scot Older People Assembly*
Craig McCormack	Greencity
Dawn Hinnigan	Macsweens of Edinburgh

To meet requirements of CPGs organizational non-members (as submitted on re-registration) are denoted by an asterisk.

1. **Apologies for Absence**

These were received from Jonathan Wilkin, Brenda Black, Chris Peace, Ann Packard, Julie McGarvey, Iain Stewart, Steve Brown, Debbi McCall, Rhoda Grant MSP, Ray Lorimer, Martin Meteyard, Kevin Thomson, Tony McElroy, Angus MacDonald MSP, Uel Morton, Polly Jones, Ruth Watson, David Lonsdale, Lou

Evans, Phil Thomas, Martin Morgan, Willie McLeod, Moyra Burns, Sue Whittle, Rosa Holt, Wendy Wrieden, Gemma Richardson, Lynne Stevenson and Colette Walker.

## 2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

These were agreed.

## 3. Matters Arising

Following on from previous meetings;

- COSLA (members of CPG Food) had been asked about local procurement, answer awaited
- Letters had been sent to Ministers regarding issues raised at the joint meeting with CPG on Older People and Ageing, answers awaited
- **Mary Lawton** reported there was now a [Brexit Food Hub](#) contingency planning site in the case of no deal. Partners included Quality Meat Scotland, Scottish Assn of Meat Wholesalers and the Food and Drink Federation (FDF). The Scottish Parliament recently debated the [implications for Scotland's food and drink industry of Brexit](#). Good Food Nation had been mentioned many times in the debate, there was no news yet on results of the consultation.

## 4. Plastics and Packaging

**Mark Ruskell (MR)** introduced the speakers. There were presentations from; David Thomson, CEO, Food and Drink Federation Scotland on why does the food and drink industry uses plastics, Derek Robertson, CEO, Keep Scotland Beautiful (KSB) on the problems and what was happening and Jim Fox, Head of Public Affairs, Coca-Cola European Partners PLC gave a case study. These presentations are attached to the minutes.

**David Thomson (DT)** emphasised the role of plastic in cutting food waste (Scotland has a target to cut this by a third by 2025), keeping food safe and resource efficiency. Removing plastic was therefore a fine balancing act and changes to packaging materials had to meet stringent legal criteria – so there is a high bar to finding effective replacements and their environmental impact must also be considered.

FDF and several members are founding signatories of the [UK Plastics Pact](#) which has the following targets for 2025;

1. Eliminating problematic or unnecessary single-use plastic packaging through redesign, innovation or alternative delivery models (such as reuse)
2. 100 % of plastic packaging to be reusable, recyclable or compostable
3. 70 % of plastic packaging effectively recycled or composted
4. 30 % average recycled content across all plastic packaging

A roadmap gives April 2019 as a first target and a [May progress report](#) published.

**DT** said they supported the Industrial Challenge Fund Wave 3 submission 'Smart Sustainable Plastic Packaging' which aims to develop a new generation of advances and sustainable plastic packaging and FDF have [a sustainability checklist](#) for businesses with advice on packaging.

**Derek Robertson (DR)** looked at the littering of food and drink packaging. He noted the role of charities in winning hearts and minds and also their reach, for KSB this was to 1 in 5 in the population.

To monitor issues, and in partnership with Scotland's local authorities, KSB carry out [annual local environmental quality surveys](#) at a random selection of sites across Scotland every year using the Local Environmental Audit and Management System (LEAMS) and the audits collect information on litter types and source. This covered all litter and food and drink was not separated out. It was evident that the throwaway culture was getting worse and had seemed to become a social norm with more food and drink littering in deprived areas.

KSB has several projects ongoing including,

- [Upstream Battle](#) on the River Clyde and its tributaries. It highlights the part we can all play in protecting our oceans by preventing litter's journey from land, where it ends up in rivers and is then carried out to sea.
- [Cup Movement](#) an innovative city-wide collaboration to transform Glasgow's relationship with single-use cups.
- [Give your Litter a Lift](#) a campaign to stop road side litter.
- [Beach Awards](#) that celebrate clean, well-managed and sustainable beaches

**DR** said changing behaviour was the key. Campaigns were important and needed funding and so they worked with business partners to help change minds and there was always the opportunity to do more.

**Jim Fox (JF)** said sustainability was critical for them and referred to their global action plan [World Without Waste](#) and the more specific action plan for Western Europe [This is Forward](#).

Their aim is to collect all of their packaging, so more can be recycled and none ends up as litter or in the oceans. He said plastic is an excellent food packaging material and less energy is needed to manufacture plastic bottles than metal or glass. Plastic needed to be used better with negative environmental impacts avoided.

Coke's bottles are now lighter and in GB contain 25% recycled material which should increase to 50% by 2020. The target was to get 100% recyclability by 2025 (currently it is 98% -challenges due to secondary packaging). On collection they are committed to recycle all packaging (currently at 74%) and to this end, were involved in the deposit returns scheme (DRS) discussions. It was important that there was one single scheme which was simple and clear for the consumer to use.

He noted that they were involved in many GB Litter partner ships including with Give Your Litter a Lift with KSB and the Moray Firth partnership [SCRAPbook](#). They also had global partnerships including with the [Global Plastic Action Partnership](#), [Ellen Macarthur Foundation](#) and [Ocean Conservancy](#) who were all active in this area.

### Open Debate

**John Scott MSP (JS)** asked about the cost of the deposit return machines which shops would have to install and also what the solution was for contaminated plastics now China would no longer take these. **JF** said it was difficult to give costs as there were different machines. Some schemes lent money to buy them. He pointed out that small retailers should not buy one unless needed. Shops would get a retail handling fee and for some shops the machine price (estimated at £12-15 K) would not be justified. **MR** had observed on his trip to Oslo, that small shops did not have a machine. **Iain Clunie, Zero Waste Scotland (ZWS) (IC)** said that the debate was still ongoing regarding the DRS system and advised caution in discussing machine costs. **Ewan MacDonald –Russell, Scottish Retail Consortium** said that the current consultation covered glass containers which would be significantly more expensive.

**Kelly Wright, The Refillery (KW)** asked what happened to the plastic in the system. **JF** said that plastic bottles were infinitely recyclable. In a DRS system with good quality returns, not much plastic would be lost. In the recycling hierarchy, plastics that degraded were recycled to a lower level and could be reused such as in carpet backing. Local Authorities collected mixed recycling so this could not be food grade. **KW** said that the infrastructure was not there, hence plastics were being sent to China and Malaysia. **JF** agreed there was a tension and that the law could be ahead of infrastructure but there was time to build it. **IC** said ZWS was supporting [Project Beacon](#) which combines existing and innovative mechanical and chemical recycling to create a world-first Advanced Plastics Reprocessing facility in Perthshire. The aim was for Councils to collect all plastic in one bin from consumers at the kerbside and for this all to be recycled.

**Christine Fraser Food Training Scotland** thought more innovation was needed such as the edible liquid capsules made from seaweed that help rehydrate marathon runners in a bid to cut down on plastic waste. **DT** agreed and said the [Industry Challenge Fund](#) had several projects looking at plastics and money was available. **JF** applauded innovation and noted the timescales in finding solutions. He mentioned one programme they had tried with students selling them a cup for a year with a computer chip so they could refill.

**JS** asked about whether there would be a reduction of choice if for example cucumbers were no longer wrapped in plastic. **DT** said that he thought there would still be a choice but more food waste as the cucumber would not last as long. **KW** thought that when cucumbers were in plastic this dictated how much the consumer could buy. If they were unwrapped, they could buy less and hence less food waste. **Nigel Lack Food Train Scotland** agreed and pointed out the amount of single person households in Scotland had increased and this should be considered. **IC** noted 60% of food wasted is at home and there needed to be a seismic behaviour change.

**DR** said that much of the packaging waste was down to the convenient life styles we now led with more snacking and eating on the go. Shifting behaviour was not easy and he thought we needed to look at extending the Producer Responsibility System (PRS) with industry paying higher fees if its packaging is harder to reuse or recycle.

**Daniel Gotts Scottish Natural Heritage** noted that even though there was the Climate Change Emergency a recent poll had shown 58% of people were not interested in changing habits. **DR** said that if the PRS was extended then money raised could be used to engage with the public and help change behaviour. **JF** thought one issue was the Local Authorities all having different recycling kerbside schemes which confused consumers. The system needed to be consistent and easy and then people would do it. He referred to the recent The Grocer/PWC white paper [Beyond Plastics: Grocery packaging in a Sustainable Future](#).

**MR** said that extending the PRS should not lead to more incineration of waste. **DT** did not want a disjointed approach between the rest of UK and Scotland where 96% of manufacturers are small businesses. Different interventions were being discussed and this led to confusion for future planning.

**Liz Barron-Majerik Lantra** asked what was happening in schools. **DR** said that young people had the appetite and aspirations for the issue but teachers did not have materials or comprehensive training in Learning for Sustainability. KSB has a schools programme, Eco-Schools Scotland, and could work with partners to build capacity to develop an awareness and understanding of Learning for Sustainability in our current and future teachers.

**KW** asked why there were not more water points available on our streets. **DR** said Scottish Water had a campaign to “top up from the tap” and more restaurants were offering tap water. **JF** agreed more were needed and thought this was a public health issue too.

#### 5. AOB

There was none.

#### 6. Date of the Next Meeting

This will be the AGM on Wednesday 18 September in Committee Room 4 at 6pm.