

EXPERT PANEL ON ENVIRONMENTAL CHARGING AND OTHER MEASURES
Minutes of Fourth Meeting Held on 15th March 2019

Attendees

Dame Sue Bruce (Chair)
Professor Kate Sang
Professor Liam Delaney
Roger Kilburn
Mike Barry (via telecon)
Gemma Stenhouse (via telecon)
Professor Aileen McHarg (via telecon)
Terry A'Hearn, SEPA
Iain Gulland, Zero Waste Scotland
Don McGillivray, Scottish Government (SG)

Apologies

Professor Dame Theresa Marteau
Professor Margaret Bates

In attendance:

Callum Blackburn, Zero Waste Scotland
Jack Barrie, Zero Waste Scotland (Secretariat)
Janet McVea, SG (Secretariat)
Chris Dodds, SG Rural and Environment Science and Analytical Services (RESAS)
Gita Anand, SG (RESAS)
Rhys Howell, SG (RESAS)
Andrew Forsyth, SG (Secretariat)
Anne Dagg, SG (Secretariat)
Aster de Vries Lentsch, SG (Secretariat)
Lucinda Fass, SG (Secretariat)

Also attending:

Professor Wouter Poortinga, University of Cardiff, by invitation of the Panel.

Agenda Item 1 – Welcome, Apologies, Minutes of last meeting and Action Log

1. Dame Sue Bruce welcomed the Panel to its fourth meeting, and also welcomed Aster and Andrew who have recently joined the SG team and will provide Secretariat support, and Callum Blackburn who joins the meeting as the Head of Policy, Research and Evaluation at Zero Waste Scotland. Apologies were noted from Professor Margaret Bates and Professor Theresa Marteau. The Panel approved the minutes of the last meeting and the action log.

Agenda Item 2 – Chair's Scene Setting

2. Dame Sue Bruce reported that she had met with the Cabinet Secretary for the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform in December to update her on progress, scope and timeline of the Panel's work. The Cabinet Secretary was keen to see outputs from the Panel, and requested that the Panel focus on single use plastics, with other priority items, as tyres and mattresses, being considered through other established mechanisms.

3. The Chair emphasised the importance of making vital progress at the meeting to enable the Panel to end its first year with a set of recommendations to put to Ministers on single use disposable beverage cups.

4. There was some discussion about terminology, the Panel noted that papers for this meeting and beyond will refer to **single use disposable beverage cups**. Earlier activities, such as the literature review, refer to disposable coffee cups reflecting the terminology used at that time. The Panel agreed that terms used should be accessible and inclusive and avoid unnecessary confusion; and that, where appropriate, any legal definitions would be considered if required for legislative purposes.

Agenda Item 3 – Panel Public Outputs and Introduction to Engagement Plan

5. The Panel considered Paper 4.1 which outlined key next steps regarding stakeholder engagement for the period March to May 2019.

6. The Panel reaffirmed its commitment to transparency and accountability and approved:

- **publication of the minutes and agendas of Meeting 1-3 on the EPECOM webpage**
- **publication of an infographic summarising the Panel’s General Principles** (subject to optimising the infographic’s design for accessibility) and the associated Paper for publication on the Panel’s webpage.
- **publication of a condensed and user friendly summary of the evidence base** on single use disposable beverage cups, to accompany the publication of the full **knowledge account and the independent review of evidence** produced by Professor Poortinga’s team at the University of Cardiff.
- a series of sector specific stakeholder engagement events to enable the Panel to hear from and test their emerging recommendations with key sectors/partners including youth; industry and retail; and environment and NGOs. The condensed summary of available evidence would be circulated to stakeholders to inform discussions.

7. Panel Members noted that given the range of UK wide consultations running concurrently with this engagement effort, it is important to clearly communicate how the Panel’s work fits within the wider architecture of the proposed policy changes, notably in relation to Deposit Return Scheme and Extended Producer Responsibility.

Action 1: Secretariat to optimise Infographic design & colours for accessibility, and publish with General Principles on Panel’s website.

Action 2: Secretariat to produce user friendly/summary version of knowledge account and Wouter Poortinga report and publish on Panel webpages/circulate to stakeholders.

Action 3: Secretariat to firm up dates for stakeholder engagement event subject to Panel Members’ availability.

Agenda Item 4 – Key developments in Scotland, UK & EU: Implications for the Panel's Work (Paper 4.2)

8. The Panel received a brief update on wider developments, including environmental measures agreed in the Scottish budget; ongoing UK wide consultations on proposed reform of packaging producer responsibility arrangements and the proposed introduction of a 'plastics tax' ; and the EU Single Use Plastics Directive.

9. In relation to the EU Single Use Plastics Directive, the Panel spent some time considering the proposed ban on plastic straws and its implications for groups with disabilities. The Panel noted the importance of delivering a solution that would not be stigmatising, and discussed how the work of the Panel can help navigate these issues within the Scottish context. The Panel acknowledged that the evidence base in this area is limited and concluded it would be useful to have a separate paper highlighting some of the challenges and alternatives.

Action 4: Secretariat to collate short paper together with Professor Kate Sang on the social model of disability and potential implications of waste reduction measures for groups with disabilities

Agenda Item 4 – Case studies on Disposable Beverage Cups Closed Loop Interventions (Paper 4.3)

10. Panel Members considered Paper 4.3 which highlighted lessons learned from three initiatives to reduce single use disposable beverage cups consumption in 'closed settings'. The Panel noted that the case-study on the SG estate is a particularly interesting example, and that it would be worthwhile to collect more data on its efficacy and acceptability among staff. Learning could be shared with public sector organisations looking to undertake similar bans of single use disposable beverage cups on their estates.

Action 5: Secretariat to collate evidence and prepare a paper on SG Estates ban on disposable beverage cups to share learning

Agenda Item 6 – Presentation by Wouter Poortinga, 'Rapid Review of Charging for Disposable Coffee Cups and Other Waste Minimisation Measures: Summary Research Findings' (Paper 4.4)

11. Dame Sue Bruce welcomed Professor Wouter Poortinga from the University of Cardiff, and the team of researchers from SG Rural and Environment Science and Analytical Services who have commissioned the independent review on the Panel's behalf. Professor Poortinga presented the main findings from the rapid literature review. The main outcomes highlighted were:

- All studies reported an increase in reusable cups
- A charge is effective in changing behaviour
- Size of change in the trials varied considerably, and there are a number of factors influencing the size of the success:
 - use of messaging and social marketing

- presence of other measures (e.g. distributing reusable cups for free)
- the location (campus, organisation, high-street)
- size of the charge
- A charge would need to be a minimum of £0.06 for it to be economically rewarding for the average coffee shop consumer to use a reusable cup; and a minimum of £0.20 for it to reflect the environmental costs of a DCC in comparison to a reusable cup.
- It would take a minimum of £0.20 to change behaviour of 49% of the population (25% £0.05, 14% £0.10, and 10% £0.15-0.20)
- There are indications that consumers with high on-the-go coffee consumption have higher WTP (willingness to pay)
- Therefore, a low charge may only change behaviour of consumers who don't use DCCs
- A cost neutral charges is unlikely to affect sales, as no trial saw decrease in sales attributable to the charge.
- Lessons from other charges (plastic bags in particular)
 - plastic bag charges are highly effective in short term
 - even small charge can maintain behaviour change
 - national charges more successful than local charges
 - act as a 'habit disruptor' (and easy to adapt to)
 - results are not directly transferable: changing on-the-go coffee consumption requires more advance planning
 - but: a national charge is more likely to be effective
 - 1) consistency across the high-street
 - 2) communicates a social norm of using a RCC
- Discounts do not change behaviour (as clearly evidenced by current high-street discounts)
- Mug-share and cup rental schemes are quite popular and successfully introduced at local, regional and national levels, and can help with a DCC charge as they deal with the practicalities associated with on-the-go coffee consumption, but no formal evaluations exist at present
- Bans (or: voluntary removal of DCCs) are highly effective, but may affect sales if implemented by individual retailers. Bans have a 'place' in reducing environmental burden of DCCs, but are unlikely to be sufficient.
- Final conclusions;
 - a mandatory charge is likely to be effective
 - but significant uncertainty about the degree of change and about public receptiveness to a charge (*although responses to interventions generally favourable*)
 - greatest uncertainty due to on-the-go consumption (*are consumers able and willing to adapt to a charge*)
 - symbol of wasteful 'on-the-go' consumption culture, but also has positive connotations (*cosmopolitan, fast*), which may make it more resistant to change
 - may require a portfolio approach, to address with symbolic meanings and practical issues
 - A charge should be of a sufficient size to leverage behaviour change, but ideally not exceed existing discounts to avoid any potential economic impacts

- the decision to implement a charge would benefit from:
 - 1) an independent cost-benefit analysis of its economic and environmental impacts (*what costs for what environmental benefit?*)
 - 2) a more detailed understanding of behavioural responses of different coffee-consumer groups to differently-sized charges

Agenda Item 7 – Q&A with Professor Wouter Poortinga

12. Chair thanked Professor Poortinga for his presentation and invited questions from the Panel. Panel Members commended the review, noting the sparsity of evidence. The Panel agreed that any recommendations should emphasise the importance of building in evaluation to any future interventions to ensure maximum learning.

13. The Panel noted that the evidence from the rapid review confirms the importance of adopting a portfolio approach so that a range of measures can work in conjunction to maximise overall impact and support a cultural shift and behaviour change.

14. Panel Members noted the finding that charges are unlikely to substantially affect hot drink sales where they can be implemented in a cost-neutral way and sought further clarification on this and separating the price of coffee from the purchase of the cup. ZWS officials provided further explanation and tabled an infographic setting out a break-down of different approaches to charging.

15. The Panel confirmed it was content to publish the literature review and summary findings.

Action 6: Panel members unable to attend to be sent cups infographic produced by ZWS for comment, and to provide any comments on the presentation by Professor Poortinga.

Action 7: Publish literature review and summary on Panel’s dedicated webpages (see above, Agenda Item 3)

Agenda Item 10 – Roadmap and Key Propositions (Paper 4.5)

16. Janet McVea introduced Paper 4.5 which summarised the core propositions and the ‘menu’ of potential measures which have emerged to date from the Panel’s consideration of available evidence regarding single use disposable beverage cups. The Panel reviewed each of the five propositions, considering the strengths and weaknesses and potential barriers or risks.

17. *Proposition 1 - “A culture of responsible consumption”*

The Panel noted that unsustainable consumption goes beyond single use cup use, and agreed it is critical to raise awareness of why a throw away culture is a problem, to facilitate a change in attitude and redefine what is socially acceptable. Language should promote a culture of responsible production and consumption. Panel Members requested that the heading be changed to ‘A culture of sustainability’, to signal its grounding in a wider shift in behaviour across the supply chain There was

some debate about value of national targets on responsible consumption; the Panel agreed that, as this is a direction of travel set out in the forthcoming EU Single use Plastics Directive, there was value in retaining it in the draft framework, but recognised that this will require further detailed consideration.

18. The Panel approved Proposition 1 and the menu of potential measures, subject to changing the heading.

Action 8: Secretariat to rephrase heading of proposition to ‘culture of sustainability’

19. *Proposition 2 – “Prevention”*

The Panel concluded this proposition provides a fair summary of their discussions, as long as it’s couched appropriately and existing uncertainties in available evidence are highlighted. Wording should leave options open for voluntary or mandatory measures for now, which can be revisited later. Economic impact, acceptability to consumers and wider risks or unintended consequences should be explored in engagements with stakeholders; and would be considered in detail as part of any future formal consultation, if recommendations are progressed. The Panel recognised that competence issues would also need detailed consideration in relation to any proposed ‘levy’.

20. The Panel agreed to Proposition 2 and the menu of potential measures.

21. *Proposition 3 – “Promoting Reuse”*

Panel Members note that an equality impact assessment would have to be carried out, taking account not only of physical impairments but also executive functions and neurological issues, that may make it challenging to remember to bring a reusable cup.

22. Panel Members expressed interest in reusable cup schemes, but noted uncertainties and limited available evidence; it suggested that recommendations could be explicit that this approach should be tested within the Scottish context. Panel Members note that in line with the popularity of bike share schemes the sharing economy model might also be applicable to cups. The Panel noted that Secretariat is seeking further information on how this works in Germany with Recup. The Panel also expressed interest in the Murrayfield stadium’s model cup rental scheme, and requested that contact be made with Murrayfield stadium to request further details.

23. The Panel approved Proposition 3 and the menu of potential measures, subject to changing terminology to refer to cup rental scheme to avoid confusion with deposit return schemes and explicit reference to testing this approach within a Scottish context.

Action 9: Rephrase ‘reusable cup schemes’ to cup rental schemes

Action 10: Secretariat to contact Murrayfield stadium to request data on their cup return reuse scheme.

Action 11: Secretariat to collate paper on cup rental schemes

24. *Proposition 4 – “Recycling”*

The Panel noted and welcomed the improved recycling rates reported by the most recent industry-led UK wide study; but requested further clarification and verification of data specific to Scottish context. It agreed that recycling opportunities should be promoted, but that the focus of Panel recommendations should continue to be on prevention and promoting reuse, in line with the waste hierarchy principles.

25. The Panel approved Proposition 4 and the menu of potential measures, subject to minor rewording of the reference to EPR to reflect its focus on promoting recyclability.

Action 12: Verify full data/data sources/methodology in PCRRG report on recycling rates and Scottish-specific data

26. *Proposition 5 – “Evidence and Analysis”*

The Panel noted that little is known about the implications on different groups e.g. by age, equalities, income. Similarly, there might be some useful data being collected but not published within industry, which could be drawn out during the engagement process.

27. The Panel approved Proposition 5 and the menu of potential measures.

Agenda Item 12 - Agreeing propositions and potential key measures

28. The Panel agreed that the emerging propositions and ‘menu’ of potential measures should be tested with stakeholders at the forthcoming engagement sessions. The Panel was happy for its emerging views to be shared with stakeholders, noting any information shared in advance would need to be succinct and accessible. The Panel also debated whether ‘Roadmap’ is the correct name for the information presented, the alternative agreed was ‘Summary of emerging recommendations’.

Action 13: Rename ‘Roadmap’ ‘summary of emerging recommendations’, Secretariat

Action 14: Refine & recirculate ‘Roadmap’, Secretariat

Action 15: Secretariat to create easy to digest version of summary of emerging recommendations to share with stakeholders

Agenda Item 13 – Forward plan and next steps

29. The Panel agreed to the content of the engagement plan, and confirmed its willingness to attend stakeholder sessions where possible. The secretariat undertook to progress detailed plans and to circulate dates.

Action 16: Firm up dates and proposals for stakeholders engagement

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 29th May 2019