# Waste Management TSN
# Minutes

**Attendees:**

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| Trudy Cunningham | TC | University of Dundee (Co-Convenor) |
| Paulo Cruz | PC | Glasgow Caledonian University (Co-Convenor) |
| Matt Woodthorpe | MW | EAUC-Scotland |
| Scott Thomson | ST | EAUC-Scotland |
| Graham Kerr | GK | SEPA |
| Dr Maddy Berg | MG | Fidra |
| Christopher Osbeck | CO | University of Aberdeen |
| Pauline Donaldson | PD | Forth Valley College |
| Steven Giannandrea | SG | City of Glasgow College |
| Vicky Shanley | VS | APUC |
| Al Clark | AC | University of St Andrews |
| Kate Fitzpatrick | KF | University of Edinburgh |

| | SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS | ACTIONS |
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| 1 | **Welcome and Introductions**<br>*Paulo Cruz, Glasgow Caledonian University*<br><br>Everyone was welcomed to the event. | |
| 2 | **Deposit Return Scheme Update**<br><br>*Graham Kerr, Principal Policy Officer, SEPA*<br><br>Graham Kerr presented an update on the upcoming Deposit Return Scheme (DRS).<br><br>The **Deposit and Return Scheme for Scotland Regulations 2020** were passed by the Scottish Parliament on 13 May 2020.<br><br>**Scotland's DRS – the basics:**<br><br>- Go-live date July 2022<br>- The scheme covers any drink container made of PET, plastic or glass between 50ml and 3l in volume;<br>- Flat-rate 20p deposit;<br>- Return points include all retailers of drinks containers (including online) and voluntary return points (total est. of 17,000 points across Scotland);<br>- Producers finance the scheme, including brand owners in the UK or importers (est 4,100); | |

- Producers legally obligated to meet recycling targets of 90% by year 3 of operation (achieving 76,000 extra tonnes of recycling per year);
- SEPA is the enforcement authority

**DRS Timeline:**

- 13th May 2020 – Regulations passed;

- 22nd June 2020 - applications open to be a Scheme Administrator;

- 1st Jan 2021 – retailers exemption applications;

- 1st Jan 2022 – producers register with SEPA;

- 1st July 2022 – Scottish DRS scheme goes live.

**Next steps:**

- SEPA has carried out discovery meetings with various groups likely to be involved with the scheme – moving into sense making;
- Planning rules have recently been changed to remove the need for planning permission for a Reverse Vending Machine (VRM);
- SEPA working on position statement to ensure no extra waste permissions needed for RVMs involved in deposit return;
- SEPA working on guidance for producers and retailers regarding DRS;
- Scheme Administrator will begin and make companies aware – timescale unknown.

**Pertinent points for institutions with retail activities. Retailer obligations include:**

- Only selling drinks from registered producers;
- Charge the deposit;
- Display the deposit separate from the price of the drinks article;
- Provide information to consumers on how to return items;
- Act as a return point (unless exempt)
- Refund deposits;
- Store containers safely for collections;
- Provide consumer information on how to complain.

*Group discussion*

Participants welcomed the update and supported the scheme's rollout. Questions and discussions focused on operational considerations for institutions including:

- safe storage of returned containers (particularly with regards to deterring theft and storage space limitations);
- the need to change internal signage (which currently promotes disposal of plastic bottles and cans in mixed recycling bins);
- waste management contract implications (would costs increase as waste contractors lose out on collecting high-value materials);
- require adequate collection services to suit institutional needs;
- what are the considerations for vending machines;
- how to manage the system with multiple retailers on campuses;
- funding available to deliver the changes needed.

Graham welcomed the questions and highlighted that SEPA guidance for retailers is being developed, and that it was useful to hear these issues. For vending machines the DRS obligations lie with the company stocking the vending machines. If there are multiple potential return points on site, there is flexibility in how to manage the system e.g. there can be one central collection point in a food hall with multiple retailers.

For any questions or further details on SEPA's role on deposit return scheme we have an email address: depositreturn@sepa.org.uk

EAUC-Scotland will share any updates and guidance release with the network.


**Additional questions to/responses from Graham after the TSN:**

Will there be one or more scheme administrators?
There is likely to be one but there is nothing in the regulations that restricts it to one, but the level of coverage of the scheme and the approaching of retailers and producers means that it looks like it will be one scheme administrator.

Who will fund RVM (this is a big one for all of us).
The funds towards RVMs will be based on the retailer fees which will be supplied by the scheme administrator. Whilst not an area under SEPAs remit, it is possible that the RVM manufacturers and/or the scheme administrator will provide information about funding of these items in the period prior to the scheme launching.

What are the criteria for retailer exemptions?
There are two broad categories which are proximity exemptions and there is a danger of breaching other obligations (health and safety, fire etc.) I have copied out the relevant bit of the legislation here.

22.—(1) Subject to paragraph (2), the Scottish Ministers may grant an exemption to a retailer (whether or not an application under regulation 24 is made to them) from the obligation specified in regulation 19(1)(b) in relation to retail premises in one of the following circumstances—

    (a) where the following criteria are met—

        (i) they consider that there is an alternative return point located within reasonable proximity to the premises, and the operator of that return point has agreed to accept the return by consumers of items of scheme packaging on behalf of the retailer,

        (ii) they consider that, if the exemption is granted, this will still provide consumers with reasonable access to a return point, and

        (iii) they consider that, if the exemption is granted, it would not significantly impair the ability of a producer (or a scheme administrator on their behalf) to meet their collection targets,

    (b) where they are satisfied that the location, layout, design, or construction of the retail premises does not permit, or cannot be reasonably altered to permit, the operation of a return point on the premises without significant risk of the retailer being in breach of a legal obligation relating to any of the following—

        (i) food safety,

        (ii) health and safety,

        (iii) fire safety,

        (iv) environmental protection,

        (v) public health.

| 3 | **Microplastics losses and solution for 3G sports pitches** | |
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| | *Dr Maddy Berg, Project Manager, Fidra* | 4 |

**Microplastics losses and solution for 3G sports pitches**

*Dr Maddy Berg, Project Manager, Fidra*

Dr Maddy Berg presented on Fidra's work on microplastic losses and solution for 3G sports pitches.

Microplastics are defined as being plastic or rubber with a diameter <5mm. These plastics are increasing in our environment and entering food chains with consequences on animal and human health.

**Sources of microplastics and losses routes**

The vast majority of microplastics losses from 3G pitches is through loss of performance infill – 90-95% of this is currently made from ground up end-of-life vehicle tyres.

Infill is lost through a number of routes, including:

- Being washed away with rain water
- Clinging to footwear
- Removal from the pitch during maintenance activities (e.g. leaf blowing, snow removal)
- During installation and removal
- Through compaction

It is estimated that 400 – 1,800 tonnes of microplastics from 3G sports pitches are lost to the environment each year in Scotland (1 – 5 tonnes per pitch per year).

**Managing microplastic losses from 3G pitches**

1) Change how the pitch is used and maintained – for example installing kickstands to remove infill from footwear; limiting leaf blowing activities
2) Use barriers to minimise losses – for example installing filters on drains; adding a pitch boundary along the perimeter
3) Go microplastic free – when renovating new pitches alternative performance infill materials such as cork can be used

**End of life pitch disposal**

Recycling is the most environmentally friendly option when removing 3G pitches. Re-use does not solve the problem of final disposal and currently there are over 2-years' worth of pitches stockpiled to meet current low demand for reuse material.

**Available resources**

Fidra has developed its Pitch-In campaign with resources available for pitch users, facilities managers and pitch designers to reduce microplastic losses.

There is also the CEN Technical Report 17519: Guidance on how to minimise infill dispersion into the environment.

If you have any queries please contact Maddy via madeleine.berg@fidra.org.uk

| 4 | **In-service credits within waste management contracts** | |
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| | *Paulo Cruz, Glasgow Caledonian University* | |

Paulo Cruz presented on the use of in-service credits within waste management contracts as a means to improve service performance.

**Why and how:**

- In-service credits can be used to help the contractor focus on service delivery
- They can also reduce the time spent administering the contract as well as duty of care
- This has been achieved by drawing on monthly management reports and standardizing the internal admin processes (e.g. producing an email template for service requests – this has created an 'audit trail'). This has meant there is the potential that the process and KPIs can be fully managed by the Admin Team.

**KPIs within contract:**

- Completion of all scheduled service visits (98%)
- **Collections completed within 24 hrs of request being made (90%)**
- Justification for missed collection provided by 9am next business day (75%)
- **High quality, legible scans of Waste Transfer Notes to be received by the 15th of the following month (100%)**
- Monthly Management and Information Reports by the 15th of the following month (95%)
- **Invoicing (100%)**

Particular focus on those in bold and use the KPIs to focus the waste contractor on service delivery rather than penalize them. KPIs were established in collaboration with waste contractor e.g. if a failed collection is logged after noon, then this does not go against the KPI as it doesn't allow the contractor enough time to adapt pick-up routes for the following day.

**Impact:**

- An element of manual processing has remained, such as checking invoices and legibility of WTNs
- Reduced time managing contract e.g. asking for collection after failed pick-up
- More focused and responsive service from waste contractor including increased collections within required timescale, legible waste transfer notes and fewer invoice errors
- Not had to implement any non-compliance clauses

**Wider considerations**

- GCU's Procurement Team wasn't familiar with in-service credit processes so it took time for them to research and become comfortable with the process. Now GCU is looking at how the process can be implemented in other service delivery contracts such as travel management

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| **5** | **Roundtable discussion on how COVID has impacted sector waste management**<br><br>*Group discussion*<br><br>TC: coming back after 4 months of furloughing. Lots of waste management issues presently due to Covid including:<br><br>- over charging of service delivery<br>- reviewing invoicing<br>- PPE littering on campus<br>- Unable to make use of campus Free Shop (student halls clear-out items and community donations)<br>- Fly-tipping on site due to reduced council services<br><br>AC: same issue with initiatives that were previously ran now being stopped or changed. Observed that Sports department were managing to get things done different to other parts of the University – this relates to legislation for Sports being different. As a result, we've adopted the Sports and Welfare model and for example when hiring out bikes to people we classed that as a sports initiative, not an environmental initiative. Reuse scheme – BHF mentioned to take and store items from student hall clear out, but there are challenges to redistributing items.<br><br>University launched Can Do initiative – trying to get activities done through Can Do, included creating a marquee space in which spaces can be booked out for activities. Will try do a pop-up shop in this space.<br><br>Disposable items that were phased out in the past are now back in use – trying to go back to reusable items. Research is being done on the difference between disposable vs reusable items in terms of carrying viruses. Welcomed viewpoints.<br><br>TC: Big issue at Dundee too. Raised issues around disposable coffee cups use as previously 95% of cups being used were reusable, that has now gone back. Issue with pop-up events as Dundee City Council classify those as events and are currently banning them [not an issue at St Andrews]. One positive change has been the shift from paper straws to bio-degradable straws which helps people with specific needs – and no complaints!<br><br>PC: been cautious at GCU and only allowed back students and researchers who have to use specific equipment. This has meant that of 7 food retail areas on campus, only one is now running on a click-and-collect basis. Also retracted coffee cup charge, but given the very little footfall this will hopefully not have a significant impact long term. When we are able to be back to fully operational, we can then switch back to previous processes. | | |

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| | MW: If institutions are wishing to do campus litter picks, Keep Scotland Beautiful are providing communities with equipment and have readily updated guidance based on Scottish Government updates. These can be accessed here. | 7 |
| | AC: Found through Transition team that many students are motivated to do town litter picks. It's an activity they want to do as they are otherwise stuck in halls. Looking to do a trial after Christmas in halls to see about phasing out disposable items – currently it's all VegWare and St Andrews are looking to get waste collections directly from VegWare now because of the volume of waste. | |
| | TC: Wash and Go – machine that sanitises cups before they are served. Weren't ready to launch earlier in the year but they are now looking for trialling partners. | |
| | AC: Is there any guidance or support from SEPA that supports the use of reusables to stop issues of flytipping? | |
| | GK: SEPA has seen a huge increase in flytipping from all types of waste. No guidance known that supports use of reusable items as a response to this trend during Covid. | |
| 9 | **Close and Thanks** *Paulo Cruz and Trudy Cunningham* | |

Minutes prepared by Matt Woodthorpe, EAUC-Scotland, October 2020