

# Kent Resource Partnership

## Statement on Aylesford Newsprint

### 27<sup>th</sup> February 2015

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The KRP Members Board (comprising of the portfolio holders for recycling and waste of all 13 Kent councils) met on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2015 in a scheduled meeting. The following statement was agreed by councillors. It is attributed to the KRP as a whole and not to a specific councillor or officer.

**The KRP statement is as follows: -**

‘The events this week of Aylesford Newsprint entering administration came as a shock. Our first thoughts are with the 300 employees and families whose livelihoods are impacted devastatingly, including the 233 employees who have been made redundant with immediate effect. Everything must be done to support the 300 families at this time of shock for them, and in the aftermath, from local and national perspectives.

Several Kent councils had deliveries of paper to Aylesford Newsprint. Impacted councils are currently implementing urgent arrangements to ensure paper collected from Kent households continues to be recycled.

Aylesford Newsprint has been a well-established Kent business for many decades. Indeed, it was in the business of recycling long before the country as a whole adopted recycling as a day-to-day norm. The company was a major employer and the impacts on the local economy are significant.

In terms of the wider UK recycling industry, the KRP is very concerned a national trend may be developing where recycling businesses are facing such intense pressures that they either diminish operations or cease to continue as going concerns. Several materials recycled across the UK appear to have been impacted recently including the four prescribed in EU and national legislation – paper, plastic, glass and metal. Whilst there seems to be a wide range of pressures on each material stream which need to be better understood, the common goal must surely be to ensure that recyclates collected by councils have outlets to be recycled. Without a thriving UK recycling industry the KRP believes local economic growth and jobs may be at risk, especially in communities across the country hosting major recycling facilities such as those at Aylesford. In addition, achieving the national recycling target of 50% by 2020 would seem to be more within reach with a thriving UK recycling industry than would otherwise be the case.

The KRP recommends the new Government after 7<sup>th</sup> May 2015 receives urgent advice and guidance on the reasons for current industry pressures across all recycled materials, what it may need to do to strengthen the resilience of the UK recycling industry, and actions to ensure local economies where major facilities are located are supported. Moreover, the KRP believes the growth and jobs benefits highlighted in the recent WRAP and Green Alliance report titled [‘Employment and the Circular Economy’](#) may be harder to achieve if the UK is passive in managing current challenges to the recycling industry.

The KRP recommends the incoming Government seeks views from sector experts, and takes appropriate action using whatever levers are appropriate to ensure UK recycling industry resilience. Such experts may wish to begin preparing their views now and may include the Government’s Advisory Committee on Packaging (**ACP**), the Waste & Resources Action Programme (**WRAP**), the Chartered Institution for Wastes Management (**CIWM**), the Environmental Services Association (**ESA**), the Resource Association (**RA**), the National Association of Waste Disposal Officers (**NAWDO**), the Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee (**LARAC**), the Local Government Association (**LGA**) and individual councils.

We emphasise our shock for the local community in Aylesford, and the national need to understand current pressures on, and support, a resilient UK recycling industry.

**END**