

DS Smith Plc – pre close trading statement

DS Smith Plc today issues a pre-close trading update in respect of the year ended 30 April 2018.

Trading

The business continues to perform in line with our expectations, with the industry and business trends consistent with our trading update of 7 March. Volume growth has remained strong with our focus on sustainable solutions and the accelerating e-commerce sector. This and continued growth in multi-national customers has resulted in further gains in our market share. Recovery of increased paper prices, which have risen throughout the year, has continued as expected and we expect return on sales to be in line with the prior year.

Volume growth in the US has been excellent, and we are very pleased with the positive reaction from local and global customers. Integration of Interstate is also progressing well and we now expect synergies to reach an annualised rate of \$35 million by the end of the third full year of ownership (a further increase of \$5 million on our expectations), driven principally by further anticipated global supply chain benefits.

Our acquisition of Ecopack and Ecopaper completed on 6 March 2018, further building our European network, and we are pleased with the initial progress made, driven by our proven expertise in integration.

Miles Roberts, Group Chief Executive, said:

“We are very pleased with the performance in the year, in particular in the step-up in volumes that we have delivered, and in the successful integration, customer reaction and volume growth within Interstate.

Our success is underpinned by our commitment to sustainable packaging that is innovative and adds value to our customers, throughout their global supply chains and also by a focus on our own global supply chain efficiency. This approach, together with momentum in our business and opportunities to further strengthen our customer offering, gives us confidence in the future.”

Forthcoming Dates

Results for the full year to 30 April 2018

28 June 2018

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**Cautionary statement**

This announcement contains certain forward-looking statements with respect to the operations, performance and financial condition of the Group. By their nature, these statements involve uncertainty since future events and circumstances can cause results and developments to differ materially from those anticipated. The forward-looking statements reflect knowledge and information available at the date of preparation of this announcement and DS Smith plc undertakes no obligation to update these forward-looking statements. Nothing in this trading statement should be construed as a profit forecast.