



environmental
services
association

ESA PRESS STATEMENT

ESA welcomes opportunity to reshape the way waste and resources are managed

LONDON, 18 February 2019: The Environmental Services Association (ESA), the voice for the UK's resource and waste management industry, today welcomes the Government's ambition to recast the way waste and resources are managed to cut plastic pollution, move towards a more circular economy and get packaging producers to pay the full cost of dealing with their waste.

The proposals set out for Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) should help put sustainability at the heart of packaging design, reducing waste in the first place and ensuring that more can be recycled. Greater consistency in collections and a Deposit Return Scheme should complement EPR in boosting recycling rates. However, collecting more for recycling is futile if there are no end markets for the material, and we believe a tax on plastic packaging is a step in the right direction to drive demand for more recycled content, enabling a truly circular economy for plastics. We believe these four initiatives have real potential to deliver the desired outcomes, but it's crucial that they work together in harmony.

Critical to the success of achieving higher recycling rates is having the right infrastructure to recover and recycle materials. ESA will be pressing the government to make sure the UK recycling industry has the certainty it needs to invest in new infrastructure.

Following the launch ESA's Executive Director, Jacob Hayler, said:

***“By reshaping the way waste is managed we have a real opportunity to incentivise producers to do the right thing, inject funding into the system, and reduce the confusion about what can be recycled. Not only this but it also has the potential to create up to 50,000 jobs and £10 billion private sector investment in new UK recycling and Energy from Waste plants. Get it right, and this will be a win for the environment and the economy.*”**

“However, we mustn't be complacent. These are very complicated areas and we must be careful to avoid unintended consequences, such as increased waste crime. This will be at the forefront of ESA's mind as we work to shape and influence the Government's proposals over the next few weeks to maximise this opportunity, and we would urge everyone across the sector to engage.”

ENDS

Notes to editors:

1. The **Environmental Services Association** (ESA) is the trade association representing the UK's resource and waste management industry, which is leading the transformation of how the UK's waste is managed.
2. We work with all levels of government, regulators and the public to deliver a more sustainable waste and resource management solution for the UK. ESA's recent Circular Economy report '*Going for Growth – A practical route to a circular economy*', which outlines how a Circular rather than a linear economy can help manage resources sustainably, can be downloaded [here](#).
3. ESA's Members manage waste on behalf of the whole of society and we are recovering more than ever before. For example, the industry has helped quintuple the UK's household recycling rates over the last decade.
4. **The sector at a glance**
 - Total turnover: **£11 billion**
 - Direct Employment: **106,000 people** (*including waste collection, treatment and materials recovery*)
 - Municipal waste handled each year: **27 million tonnes**
 - Energy generated (across landfill gas, anaerobic digestion and energy from waste) each year: **approximately 11,867 GWh**, which is 3.5% of the UK's electricity
 - **9,083 GWh of that was renewable electricity** (taking out non-biodegradable portion of EfW) which is **11%** of UK's renewable electricity
 - Greenhouse **gas emissions down by 70% since 1990**.
 - The **top seven companies account for approximately 40% of turnover**. Many hundreds of SMEs provide either localised or more specialised services
 - Waste & recycling is the **most highly rated of all council services** by the public (2016 survey)

For further details please visit www.esauk.org

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