



scottish
environmental
services
association

PRESS STATEMENT

Scotland jumps the gun with deposit return

Edinburgh, 9 May 2019: the Scottish Government has announced details of proposals for a deposit return scheme, with a 20p refundable deposit levied on all glass and plastics bottles and drinks cans. Any retailer which sells drinks will be required to accept returns, either by investing in reverse vending machines or 'over-the-counter' manual take back. The scheme will be run by retailers and manufacturers on a not for profit basis.

SESA Policy Advisor, Stephen Freeland said,

"We see considerable merit in a well devised and properly implemented deposit return scheme but are disappointed that the announced scheme bears little resemblance to the common, cross-cutting views expressed by many different sectors through last year's public consultation. We suspect that the Scottish Government has missed a trick: a scheme focused on 'on the go' drinks containers would target those containers most likely to be discarded as litter, while limiting the negative impacts on Scotland's existing, well established kerbside collections systems.

It is clearly unfortunate that the Scottish Government has opted to go it alone, with a single-UK wide scheme now a distant prospect. This is likely to increase scheme costs, reduce efficiencies and increase the likelihood of fraud. Rather than considered in isolation, it would also have been preferable if the Scottish Government had more fully considered deposit return in the context of anticipated reforms to extended producer responsibility.

The timescale for scheme implementation is incredibly ambitious and much stronger engagement with the waste and recycling industry is therefore needed to help ensure the practical steps are in place to help make a success of the scheme".

ENDS

Notes to editors:

1. The **Scottish Environmental Services Association** (SESA) is the voice of Scotland's waste and resource management sector. We work with our Members to transform waste and resource management across Scotland. This work helps enable our Members to turn Scottish waste into valuable resources, whilst continually protecting the environment.
2. We work with all levels of government, regulators and the public to deliver a more sustainable waste and resource management solution across the UK.
3. SESA's Members manage waste on behalf of the whole of society, recovering more than ever before and have helped Scotland achieve a 45% recycling rate.
4. For further details please visit www.esauk.org

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