



environmental
services
association



Joint Comment from ESA and FCC following their 'Plastic Fantastic' Bright Blue event at the Conservative Party Conference

LONDON, 01 October 2018: Speaking at today's Bright Blue event at Conservative Party Conference 2018, entitled "Plastic fantastic? Exploring the current debate on plastic waste", FCC Environment CEO, Paul Taylor, and ESA Executive Director, Jacob Hayler, commented:

"Discussions around how we reduce our reliance on plastic are undoubtedly a step forward, but it also needs to spur a broader discussion, which is about how the UK reduces the amount of waste it produces. From simplifying how we collect our waste, to PRN reform, which will inject funding into recycling and incentivise producers to design their products better – these are things that we can be working on implementing from today.

"But, our efforts will be hampered unless we tackle two issues in particular: infrastructure and residual waste. Our industry would be ready to invest in the necessary infrastructure to better tackle plastic recycling – if the framework was there to deal with it. And on residual waste, the waste that is left after it has been treated, if we continue to ignore it, we will be headed straight to a crisis.

"Although momentum is growing, at the moment it feels like words. What we need to see now is action from everyone – Government, producers, consumers as well as industry – if we are to drive meaningful change to protect our environment from further damage".

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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