



Press Release

18 December 2018

INCPEN STATEMENT: GOVERNMENT'S RESOURCES AND WASTE STRATEGY

Defra published its Resources and Waste Strategy for England on 18th December 2018. This followed a Defra meeting of industry leaders to preview the Strategy on 17th December in which INCPEN was present. INCPEN also contributed to the Defra News Release embargoed to 00.01 on 18th December.

Paul Vanston comments as follows.

“Substantial credit is due to Secretary of State Michael Gove, Environment Minister Therese Coffey and officials for the high quality and depth of their engagement work in the lead up to this Resources & Waste Strategy.

“The focus on whole-system changes is welcome including packaging reforms, consistency of councils' household collections, and ways to increase investment in recycling infrastructure.”

Consultations

“Much of the ‘hard yards’ in delivering the Strategy’s aims is scheduled to take place in early 2019 with the release of four major consultations: implementation of a deposit return system; packaging system reforms and packaging targets for 2020 onwards; consistency of councils’ recycling services to customers; and HM Treasury’s consultation on a tax on packaging items with less than 30% recycled content.

“It is essential the collaborative efforts of 2018 continue with even greater industriousness across the packaging supply chain and with our partners in councils, with the resources management sector, and with recyclers & reprocessors. With an anticipated injection of up to £1billion from producers, it’s vital this money is seen as additional, and turbo boosts recycling rates.

“That means the resources industry can’t afford for either HM Treasury or councils’ finance departments to see producer funding as an opportunity to reduce existing council recycling and waste budgets. The net effect of such detrimental moves would be to stifle the very performance uplifts in recycling and resource efficiency Defra’s Strategy seeks to achieve.

Culture

“The Strategy is an opportunity to electrify a renewed national culture that sees a 50% recycling rate for our country as a minimum threshold from which we have a clear plan to advance strongly towards 65%. Stimulating collective civic pride across all our communities is an essential component of squeezing the best performance from recycling collections, and maximising value from existing and new food waste collections.

“Shunting funds from producers to councils & others is not enough in itself to deliver the greenest UK economy we desire. Citizen involvement and buy-in is critical, and securing that is better done when public, private and civil society objectives and activities are unified by a galvanising strategy.”

END

Contact: Paul Vanston, CEO
Paul.vanston@incpen.org
0203 970 1926