

The Rt Hon Rishi Sunak  
Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street London  
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Dear Prime Minister

### **Urging Action on Packaging and Collection Reforms**

CIWM is the professional body for the resource and waste management sector with a purpose to move the world beyond waste. CIWM has over 5,600 members in the UK, Ireland and overseas, representing the complete spectrum of the waste and resources sector. This gives the Institution the widest possible view and, perhaps more pertinently, an objective rather than partial view, given that our goal is for improvement in the management of all wastes and resources.

We are writing to urge you to push ahead with the comprehensive and forward-looking reforms on packaging extended producer responsibility (EPR) and consistent collections that your Government introduced in the 2018 Resources and Waste Strategy. When published, the strategy was welcomed not only by the resources and waste sector, but producers and retailers that it would also impact. There was consensus that change was needed on producer responsibility on packaging and that the current ratio of 10% producer funding and 90% public sector funding had to change if we were to have the next step in recycling rates and moving to a more resource efficient economy.

There have been several delays in bringing these once in a generation reforms forward. The sector is ready and willing to introduce them and make them work. Despite the delays, it is pushing ahead with adapting and preparing for the changes. The trials on collections of plastic film are just one such example. However, there is only so much that can be done without the certainty that releasing your plans on consistent collections and announcing the next steps in the EPR policy will provide.

There have been recent reports that pausing EPR is under consideration. However, EPR work is already in train, producers are already working to produce the data on the packaging they produce as a result of the regulations that have already been laid. To pause it now would cause paralysing uncertainty and totally undermine confidence in these reforms. It would also mean that consistent collection plans would have to be scrapped given EPR is funding these. The step change in recycling rates will be lost, the public sector will continue to bear the costs of discarded packaging and the Resources and Waste Strategy will increasingly be seen as a white elephant.

CIWM is at the forefront of work on green skills and future jobs. These EPR and collection reforms are a catalyst to growth in skills and jobs in the green economy and will kick start job growth that will see the sector increase to an estimated 500,000 roles in the next six years. By not



pushing ahead with EPR this job growth will be stifled and potential investment in UK infrastructure, businesses and jobs will be at best delayed, and worst lost completely.

We understand the pressures facing the UK economy and households and the concerns that these reforms could impact household budgets. These reforms also create job growth, economic growth and contribute to moving towards a net zero UK. The UK showed strong leadership during its presidency of COP and demonstrated its commitment to lead on combatting climate change. Getting these policy reforms through back up that commitment and demonstrate the leadership that action on climate is needed now, that environmental costs must be added into the goods and services we consume if we are going to make the changes to our planet that are so desperately needed.

CIWM has been supportive of these reforms throughout, working closely with Defra officials to help mould them and move them forward. We continue in that manner and are here to support you in getting the job done. With your leadership on this we can move the world beyond waste, show the UK to be the environmental leader it can be, and grow the green economy with increased jobs and skills. So, we urge you to push on with the implementation on EPR and also publish the government plans on consistent collections. The sector is ready, willing and able to get them implemented and bring about the step change in recycling rates that they are designed to, assisting producers meeting their targets and obligations under the principles of producer responsibility that is a central plank of the Resources and Waste Strategy.

Yours respectfully



Dr Anna Willetts  
President  
Chartered Institution of Wastes Management

