

Press Release

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Waste Policy Review lacks bite

International waste management company Shanks Group Plc (“Shanks”) calls on Government to be more assertive if it is serious about making a zero waste economy a reality.

While Shanks welcomes the Government's efforts to reaffirm the principles of the waste hierarchy – putting waste reduction and recycling above recovery and disposal – and the underpinning theme of waste as a resource, overall the company feels the Waste Policy Review lacks bite.

“We feared the Review would be heavy on ambition and light on action, and unfortunately we were right,” said **Shanks Chief Executive Tom Drury**. *“By not introducing new regulation to ensure compliance and not shortening timescales to encourage pace of change, it is unlikely to deliver the environmental and economic outcomes required to achieve the zero-waste target.*

“There is a lot we could learn from our neighbours north of the border who are planning to adopt much tougher targets that make the vision for a ‘zero waste’ society a realistic possibility rather than just lofty ambitions. Outright bans on landfill for specific waste types, separate collection of food waste and restrictions on input to mass burn energy from waste facilities are just some of the measures planned in Scotland that England could adopt.”

Shanks believes waste should be reused, recycled and recovered to provide valuable resources including green sources of energy, a stance supported by today's Waste Policy Review. However, while the Review acknowledges the barriers to success on this front, it does little to remove them. As such, Shanks believes the Government needs to better address:

- The need for a coherent, cross-departmental approach that allows the waste sector to contribute to energy diversity and security. For example, by reviewing the regulations that currently class solid recovered fuel (SRF) as waste and instead classing it as a product, SRF could make a far greater contribution to the energy mix, thus increasing the economic value of waste.
- Long-term clarity about future waste policy to offer certainty, confidence and a more compelling case for investors. It is estimated that by 2020 some £10bn will need to be invested in new waste management infrastructure, mostly by the private sector.

· Separate collections of specific waste types, particularly food, to increase opportunities to recycle rather than landfill, and contribute to renewable energy targets.

Shanks looks forward to next week's launch of the Responsibility Deal between Government and the waste industry, which will set out agreed commitments to improve further the management of waste as a resource.

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Shanks Group Plc is Europe's largest listed independent waste management business with operations in the Netherlands, Belgium, United Kingdom and Canada.

The company provides a range of recycling and energy recovery solutions to customers in both the public and private sector. The Group employs 4246 employees and last year it handled 7.7 million tonnes of waste achieving an overall recycling and recovery rate of 77%. The Group has a significant organic waste treatment capacity of over 1 million tonnes.

Shanks is a FTSE 250 company listed on the London Stock Exchange. In May 2011 it reported annual revenues of £717 million and trading profits of £49.7 million. The company was established in 1880 and is based in Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire.

For more information visit www.shanksplc.co.uk.