

Lord Dafydd Elis-Thomas AM
Chair, Environment and Sustainability Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

19 November 2013

Annwyl Dafydd,

Thank you for your invitation to contribute to the inquiry to assess the effectiveness of WRAP Cymru.

As Natural Resources Wales, our purpose is to ensure that the natural resources of Wales are sustainably maintained, enhanced and used, with a view to benefitting the people, environment and economy of Wales in the present and in the future. We support the strategic direction within Welsh Government's strategy document 'Towards Zero Waste. We want to see less waste produced, less waste sent for disposal and more treated and recovered in ways that maximise its benefit as a resource – whilst minimising its impact on the environment and human health.

Within that context, we have statutory roles to advise Welsh Government and others, provide robust evidence on the adequacy of the waste infrastructure network and to regulate the waste sector, including reducing illegal activities that undermine legitimate economic activity. We have a remit to work broadly to unlock the potential from Wales' natural and man-made resources, including wastes, to support Wales' economy, jobs & enterprise. We help businesses and developers to understand and consider environmental impacts when they make important decisions. In this way, we have synergies with the portfolio of work that WRAP Cymru delivers.

I will shortly be meeting with Dr Liz Goodwin, CEO of WRAP to discuss those areas of work where our organisations may most fruitfully work together in the future. Currently, WRAP Cymru, run a number of funding programmes to develop new waste infrastructure and we have processes in place with them to ensure that operators with poor environmental performance records are no longer supported. We also welcome the work that WRAP delivers on, for example, quantifying the



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environmental impacts of food wastage in Wales and on the compositional analysis of household waste. We recognise that they provide a firm evidence base for Welsh Government policy making as the Towards Zero Waste agenda progresses. It is important that this evidence continues to be updated periodically to reflect, for example, the fast changing nature of municipal waste collection and increasing recycling rates. This will ensure that it remains fit for purpose in driving further change and identifying where local authorities and businesses should focus their efforts to maximise environmental and economic benefits.

WRAP Cymru also provide a range of guidance documents on many aspects of waste collection, recycling and reuse via their website. It is an organisation that we direct waste management operators towards so that they are able to identify opportunities for good practice in materials recycling, waste collection for recycling, and possible funding opportunities to develop their recycling services. Similarly, we signpost waste producers to the excellent guidance on designing out waste and maximising its recyclability.

One of our predecessor organisations (Environment Agency) jointly developed the Quality Protocols for aggregates, compost and anaerobic digestate, which established the criteria by which a waste becomes a product and no longer requires regulation as a waste. These are robust, evidence-led standards which give users confidence in the products and reduce any stigma against waste-derived products.

As regards the specific questions from the Committee, we have little direct contribution to make with regards the submission of evidence which would be relevant to your particular lines of enquiry. However, I trust this letter gives you an understanding of our connections and work with WRAP Cymru.

Yours sincerely

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Chief Executive

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Croesewir gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg / Correspondence welcomed in Welsh and English