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Question 1 - What are the key issues facing the NSW waste system?

Lack of trust in the recycling sector. Increasing confusing regarding what can be recycled and what cannot. Increasing problem plastics / packaging that cannot be recycled but have the chasing arrows on the packaging. Varying requirements across Council LGAs for how to correctly place items into the recycling bin. Waste levy funding should be invested to stimulate waste sector and create a circular economy. Serious consideration needs to be given to upgrade existing facilities and create new facilities including alternative waste technologies. NSW State Government to decide waste scheme for entire state, e.g. Western Australian Government have mandatory requirement for FOGO collection.

Question 2 - What are the main barriers to improving the NSW waste system?

No leadership, no direction, no mandatory targets i.e. no consequence if you do not achieve target. Energy for waste policy inhibits take off for planning and delivering state significant projects. Poor understanding in community of what modern facilities do and are. Cost effectiveness of disposal to landfill vs. the processing alternatives

Question 3 - How can we best reduce waste?

Minimum requirements for type of packaging that can be used to ensure that it can be recycled. Phase out the use of foam in packaging (eg. Appliances, food takeaway) as there is no easy way for the general community to easily recycle this product. Make it a mandatory requirement to remove food waste from the general waste red bin & reprocess into a compost / fertiliser eg. FOGO. State education campaign to deliver consistent message. Use free to air media outlets and social media platforms.

Question 4 - How can we recycle better?

Ensure packaging is appropriate for recycling, reduce the use of single use plastics. Create markets for recyclables on shore, e.g. regulate minimum requirements for recycle content, i.e. road construction. State or nationwide requirements / advertising campaign especially around the chasing arrows triangle. Mandatory introduction of the Australasian label. Suitable resources to check contamination.

Question 5 - What are the main opportunities for improving the NSW waste system?

- Build capability to process material in Australia.
- Change in consumer behaviour critical - correct recycling and disposal methods at kerbside
- Must build trust within the sector.
- Whole of system review and who is responsible for what e.g. targets, penalties, standards & accountability.
- Treat waste a resource. Do not think waste of something we get rid of or bury
- Need government leadership on waste
- Linear economy that disposes of >30% of our waste
- Modernise recycling infrastructure to support transition to circular economy (business ready to invest but government need to ease regulation).
- Not just about finding and building a facility, certainty around licensing and regulation once built.
- Update energy from waste policy. Need to think what we don't want now but in 40 years.
- State to establish our infrastructure needs and ensure it is delivered upon

Question 6 - Any other information that you would like to contribute to the waste strategy initiative?

Behind other countries, e.g. new figures from Statistics Finland show that just one percent of Finnish rubbish collected by municipal authorities now ends up at landfill sites. We are clearly lacking government leadership on this issue.