



## Briefing 16-16

### **Making Things Last: A Circular Economy Strategy for Scotland**

To: All Chief Executives, Main Contacts and APSE Contacts in Scotland

For information only to England, Northern Ireland and Wales

#### **Key Issues:**

The purpose of this briefing is to advise APSE members on Scottish Government's first Circular Economy strategy for Scotland which has been developed, and will be delivered, in partnership with Zero Waste Scotland, enterprise agencies and SEPA. The full publication can be accessed online by [clicking here](#)

This briefing includes information on:-

- The four priority areas of the strategy
- New Scottish food waste reduction target
- Scottish Government's ambitions

## **1.0 Introduction**

The recently published "Making Things Last: A Circular Economy Strategy for Scotland" sets out the strategy to move Scotland towards a more circular economy, building on the progress already made within the zero waste and resource efficiency agendas. Richard Lochhead, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Environment, states that for him "the circular economy is about the environment, the economy, and people. And above all it is about the moral imperative to reduce our demand on the planet's resources." This strategy sets out the ambitions of Scottish Government for delivering the economic, environmental and social benefits of a more circular economy.

This strategy compliments Scottish Government's "[Scotland's Economic Strategy](#)" which was published in March 2015 and set out a framework for delivering a more productive and fairer Scotland with a greater focus on investment and innovation. As well as the more recent "[A Manufacturing Future for Scotland](#)" which is supported by £70 million of investment including a Circular Economy Investment Fund, released in February this year. With both documents clearly outlining the importance of a more circular approach to the

Scottish economy, “Remanufacturing alone has the potential to create an additional £620 million turnover and 5,700 new jobs by 2020.”

The new strategy also highlights the importance of the circular economy on the environment and tackling climate change stating that “Zero Waste Scotland estimate that, by 2050, a more circular economy could reduce carbon emissions by 11 million tonnes per year”.

As outlined in this strategy, the pace and direction of Scotland’s circular economy progress will also be influenced by the EU. In December 2015, the European Commission released “[Closing the loop – An EU action plan for the circular economy](#)” which states that “Local, regional and national authorities are enabling the transition, but the EU also has a fundamental role to play in supporting it. The aim is to ensure that the right regulatory framework is in place for the development of the circular economy in the single market, and to give clear signals to economic operators and society at large on the way forward with long term waste targets as well as a concrete, broad and ambitious set of actions, to be carried out before 2020.”

## 2.0 Key Findings of the strategy

The strategy outlines the key benefits to a more circular economy, which are:

- the environment – cutting waste and carbon emissions and reducing reliance on scarce resources
- the economy – improving productivity, opening up new markets and improving resilience
- communities – more, lower cost options to access the goods we need with opportunities for social enterprise

However, in order to achieve these benefits it will be important to review how goods are supplied and used, as well as looking at what happens at the end of products’ lifetimes. Although action will be taken elsewhere, the strategy prioritises four areas which include:

- **Food and drink, and the broader bio-economy:** food waste is a significant source of carbon emissions; and a more circular approach to the beer, whisky and fish sectors, for example, could lead to potential savings of half a billion pounds per year
- **Remanufacture:** remanufacture is already contributing £1.1 billion per year to Scotland’s economy with potential to grow by a further £620 million by 2020
- **Construction and the built environment:** construction accounts for about 50% of all waste in Scotland and is a major influence on efficient use of resources
- **Energy infrastructure:** there are considerable opportunities such as the reuse of equipment from wind turbines and decommissioned oil and gas platforms

As well as these four priorities, the strategy also includes the new “Scottish food waste reduction target” which is the first of its kind in Europe. The target itself is to cut food waste by 33% by 2025, putting Scotland at the forefront of tackling food waste.

The strategy outlines a number of Scottish Government ambitions and priorities within the following:

### **Waste prevention**

This ambition is to reduce waste and use resources more efficiently in Scotland, delivering economic and environmental benefits. This ambition will focus particularly on preventing food waste, through a number of priorities including the introduction of the new reduction target. As well as working with the construction sector to highlight the importance of waste reduction, as waste from construction and demolition currently represents approximately 50% of all waste in Scotland.

### **Design**

This section highlights the ambition for Scotland to be at the forefront of design for a more circular economy, through forward thinking research and application. Scottish Government would like to see more Scottish products designed with longer lifetimes, ready to be disassembled, repaired, and then in time recycled. They are also keen to see an increasing number of companies reshape business approaches to keep hold of valuable products and components through various methods including leasing, servicing, repair and re-sale. Help and support will be provided from Zero Waste Scotland and Scottish enterprise agencies, enabling companies to implement these new approaches.

### **Reuse**

Scottish Government wants reuse businesses and community organisations to flourish, through a change in the way second hand goods are viewed. The ambition is for second hand goods to become an attractive, mainstream, good value option. As well as this they want the major industrial sectors in Scotland to learn from best practice to optimise the value of used equipment and infrastructure. In order to achieve this ambition Scottish Government will look to increase the availability of the Resolve standard, Scotland’s national reuse quality standard which aims to increase reuse by improving professionalism, customer experience and visibility of re-use organisations. As well as supporting local authorities and local businesses through all stages in the reuse process (collection and storage etc) and clarifying regulation.

### **Repair**

This ambition is to empower the repair sector to grow within both business and community organisations, in turn increasing the number of individuals with the required skills within this sector. With the focus on the first choice for an item that has developed a fault to be repaired. Scottish Government aim to achieve this by providing support to businesses and community organisations, increasing repair skills through self-repair workshops, looking at potential public procurement opportunities, as well as looking into the potential for a repair finding service.

## **Remanufacture**

Scottish Government would like Scotland's remanufacturing sector to expand and develop new markets, supporting Scotland's reputation for high quality remanufactured products. To achieve this [Scotland's Manufacturing Action Plan](#) will help to identify opportunities, with the Scottish Manufacturing Advisory Service and Zero Waste Scotland providing support. As well as taking advantage of the wealth of knowledge and skill within the Scottish Institute for Remanufacture which will help to increase innovation by co-funding collaborative projects between industry and higher education institutions, and develop a remanufacturing community with all.

## **Recycling**

This ambition is focused around recycling becoming regular practice for all, from business to householders alike with all sectors working together to achieve this. Scotland's targets with regards to recycling are to recycle 70% and send no more than 5% of all waste to landfill by 2025. With the challenge being "to increase the quantity and quality of materials recycled to support a more circular economy; while tackling contamination and working to remove poor quality and illegal activity from the sector." In order to achieve this aim Scottish Government has a number of priorities within this area which include:

- Exploring local authority views in relation to the way their duties are defined at the moment (as waste disposal and collection authorities, rather than resource management or similar authorities).
- Take a "whole supply chain" approach
- Review contamination within household and commercial collection systems which will help improve the quality of recyclate collected by local authorities
- Review the exemption for food waste collections in rural areas
- Support all small businesses including small food businesses in meeting the waste regulations
- Work collaboratively with packaging industries and others building on the work of the Scottish Household Recycling Charter
- Continue to learn from the experiences of others abroad
- Give further consideration to deposit return schemes

The strategy also highlights a number of other ambitions including producer responsibility for reuse and recycling, recovering value from biological resources, energy recovery, landfill, communication and engagement, skills for a circular economy and measuring progress.

## **3.0 APSE Comment**

APSE welcomes the first Circular Economy Strategy by Scottish Government which highlights the priorities Scottish Government feel are required to move to a more circular economy. As outlined throughout the document there are many benefits to moving towards a more circular economy including protecting our economy, job creation, reduction in waste going to landfill, increasing recycling and extending the life of products. The strategy as well as outlining the ambitions and priorities, highlights a number of

excellent case studies showcasing the innovative work already underway in Scotland. These include the Good to Go doggy back scheme for helping to tackle food waste, Edinburgh's tool library where members can borrow tools for tasks such as DIY and gardening, as well as Falkirk Council's 3 weekly residual waste collections which was the first of its kind in the UK.

The Ellen MacArthur Foundation highlights the 3 key principles to the circular economy which are to preserve and enhance natural capital, optimise resource yields and foster system effectiveness. Each of the ambitions of the strategy can be clearly linked back to these key principles and in achieving these ambitions local authorities will continue to play a key role along with Scottish Government and all other key stakeholders. It is important to continue to inform and communicate these ambitions and these potential benefits to the public in order that they can be effectively engaged.

Many of the areas outlined within this strategy have been discussed during our APSE Scotland Waste & Recycling advisory group meetings including presentations from Falkirk Council on their 3 weekly residual waste collections, North Ayrshire Council's partnership with Cunninghame Furniture Recycling Company and Cosla/ Zero Waste Scotland on the Household Recycling Charter. Previous presentations and minutes are available on the APSE website and can be accessed by [clicking here](#). APSE members can attend these advisory group meetings free of charge, please contact Garry Lee at [glee@apse.org.uk](mailto:glee@apse.org.uk) or by phone at 01698 459051 to register.

Our annual APSE Scotland Fleet, Waste & Grounds seminar will also cover some of the areas contained within the strategy including presentations from Zero Waste Scotland on the Household Recycling Charter and the next steps as well as a number of initiatives already under way within local authorities. Should you wish to book for this event please [click here](#) for full conference information.

Louise Melville  
Principal Advisor (Scotland)