



Briefing 22-32

August 2022

Delivering Scotland's circular economy: A Route Map to 2025 and beyond – Scottish Government consultation

To: All Chief Executives, Main Contacts and APSE Contacts in Scotland. For information only to England, Northern Ireland and Wales

Key Issues:

Scottish Government has released a consultation on their proposals for a route map to 2025 to deliver Scotland's zero waste and circular economy ambitions.

The consultation closes on 22 August 2022.

Link to the consultation

<https://consult.gov.scot/environment-forestry/scotlands-circular-economy-routemap/>

Link to the consultation paper

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/consultation-delivering-scotlands-circular-economy-route-map-2025-beyond/>

1.0 Background

The Scottish Government has released a consultation entitled 'Delivering Scotland's circular economy: A Route Map to 2025 and beyond' which has a deadline of 22 August 2022. The consultation seeks views on the feasibility of their proposals in order to achieve the waste and recycling targets in 2025, looking beyond to 2030 and to achieve net zero by 2045. The Route Map sets out the actions the Government and others must take to

accelerate progress, and the tools they will put in place to enable everyone to play their part.

While Scotland has made significant progress towards its' 2025 waste and recycling targets and target of achieving net zero by 2045, progress has slowed in recent years and more needs to be done if the targets are to be met. Around 80% of Scotland's carbon footprint stems from the consumption of materials, goods and services, and without large-scale, rapid system change for households and businesses, it is unlikely that the targets or emissions goals will be achieved. In Scotland the average person still uses 18.4 tonnes of resources which is well above the 6 to 8 tonnes per person that is considered to be sustainable. Almost one million tonnes of food and drink is thrown away each year; this is roughly 20% of all food purchased in Scotland by weight, costing households around £440 per year and generating 3.8% of the country's total carbon footprint in 2018. In 2019, households threw away over 1 million tonnes of waste at the kerbside of which up to 60% could have been recycled. Household waste makes up 55% of total waste carbon emissions.

Some studies suggest that circular actions could eradicate up to a fifth of Scotland's carbon footprint by 2050. This consultation is the beginning of a national conversation on how that circular economy vision can be delivered. It is imperative that we move from a "take, make and dispose" model to one where materials are kept in use if we are to tackle the climate and nature crises, and the circular economy can also provide a range of economic and societal benefits too. 10,000 tonnes of waste can create either: 296 jobs in repair and reuse, 36 jobs in recycling, 6 jobs in landfill or 1 job in incineration. This illustrates the potential for a circular economy to stimulate job creation and support communities.

The amount of work needed to meet targets and the opportunities that transitioning to a more circular economy could provide for Scotland illustrates why it is important that radical change to systems, processes, and looking into ways of promoting behaviour change is being considered by Scottish Government. The consultation closes on 22 August 2022.

2.0 Proposed priorities

The proposed priorities in the consultation involve:

- Promoting responsible consumption and production (e.g. encouraging reuse, reducing single-use item consumption)
- Reducing food waste and improving recycling from households and businesses
- Embedding circular construction practices
- Minimising the impact of disposal of waste that cannot be reused / recycled
- Improving data and evidence, skills and training and sustainable procurement practices

The proposals have been grouped into seven change packages:

- **Package 1: Promote responsible production, consumption and re-use**
 - e.g. introducing environmental charges to tackle consumption of problematic products, introducing a charge for single-use disposal cups by 2025, investigate the feasibility of a national reuse target
- **Package 2: Reduce food waste**
 - introducing mandatory public reporting of food surplus and waste, investigate the feasibility of food waste reduction action plans by 2024, developing a food waste behaviour change strategy, providing enhanced support for businesses to reduce food waste, and strengthening community food redistribution networks
- **Package 3: Improve recycling from households**
 - co-design high quality household recycling and reuse services, strengthen the monitoring and reporting framework for local authority waste services, place additional requirements for local authorities regarding household collection services and develop statutory guidance, introduce statutory recycling local performance targets for household waste services, and undertake a review of waste and recycling service charging
- **Package 4: Improve recycling from commercial businesses**
 - conduct a national compositional study of waste from commercial premises, review compliance with recycling requirements, co-design measures to improve commercial waste services provisions that drive waste prevention and reuse, research and pilot commercial waste zoning approaches

- **Package 5: Embed circular construction practices**
 - work with industry to accelerate the adoption of best practice standards, investigate options to incentivise refurbishment of buildings, coordinate a Scottish Programme for Reuse of Construction Materials and Assets, investigate the potential use of recycling bonds to divert material from landfill, consider how devolved taxes can incentivise the use of secondary aggregates and support circular economy practices, work with industry to identify ways to reduce soil and stones going to landfill, facilitate the development of a soil symbiosis programme
- **Package 6: Minimise the impact of disposal**
 - develop a Residual Waste Plan to ensure the best environmental outcome for materials and set strategic direction for management of residual waste to 2045, restrict the incineration of fossil materials, investigate fiscal measures to incentivise low carbon disposal
- **Package 7: Cross-cutting measures**
 - introduce duty to develop a Circular Economy Strategy, develop a monitoring and indicator framework, undertake a programme of research on waste prevention, behaviour change, fiscal incentives and material-specific, priorities, develop public procurement opportunities to reduce the environmental impact of public spending, and support greater uptake of green skills, training, and development opportunities

3.0 Local authorities

Recycling rates more than doubled in Scotland between 2004 and 2011 but progress has slowed in recent years with the rate remaining around 45%. The milestone target to recycle 60% of household waste by 2020 was missed. There are currently a large number of barriers for local authorities to achieving high rates of recycling, with local recycling performance varying considerably from 18% to 58%. Analysis done as part of the consultation report of recycling systems worldwide has shown that no one policy or practice is sufficient to achieve household recycling rates of 65% or more. There are weak cost-incentives for consumers to recycle, householders remain confused about what materials can be recycled, food waste recycling participation remains low with 27% participation in 2015 compared to the 80% of households that have the ability to recycle;

more support is needed to ensure that recycling is easy, cheap and convenient for households. The proposals include facilitating a process of co-designing high performing household recycling and reuse services by the end of 2023 in consultation with service operators and users, building on the Scottish Household Recycling Charter and the review of the Code of Practice. There are also plans to strengthen the monitoring and reporting framework for local authority waste services by 2025 and explore introducing a statutory duty for reporting publicly on the end destination of local authority household recycling. From 2030 there will be statutory recycling local performance targets for household waste with financial incentives and penalties to ensure compliance. There is also the potential for further powers for Scottish Ministers and local authorities to incentivise positive household behaviours. There will also be consideration of other materials not currently covered by kerbside recycling collections.

4.0 The Consultation

The consultation questions are listed below:

1. To what extent do you agree with the measures proposed in this package to promote responsible consumption, production and re-use?
2. Are there any further measures that you would like to see included in the Route Map to promote responsible consumption, production and re-use?
3. To what extent do you agree with the measures proposed in this package to reduce food waste?
4. Are there any further measures that you would like to see included in the Route Map to reduce food waste?
5. To what extent do you agree with the measures proposed in this package to improve recycling from households?
6. Are there any further measures that you would like to see included in the Route Map to improve recycling from households and incentivise positive behaviours?
7. To what extent do you agree with the measures proposed in this package to improve recycling from commercial businesses?
8. Are there any further measures that you would like to see included in the Route Map to improve waste recycling from commercial businesses?

9. To what extent do you agree with the measures proposed in this package to embed circular construction practices?
10. Are there any further measures that you would like to see included in the Route Map to embed circular construction practices?
11. To what extent do you agree with the measures proposed in this package to minimise the impact of the disposal of residual waste?
12. Are there any further measures that you would like to see included in the Route Map to minimise the impact of disposal?
13. To what extent do you agree with the measures proposed in this package to support action across the circular economy?
14. Are there any further measures that you would like to see included in the Route Map to support action across the circular economy?
15. To what extent do you agree with the principles proposed to underpin future circular economy targets?
16. Please provide any further information or evidence that should be considered in the accompanying Equalities Impact Assessment.
17. Please provide any further information or evidence that should be considered in the accompanying Fairer Scotland Assessment.
18. Please provide any further information or evidence that should be considered in the accompanying Island Communities Impact Assessment.
19. Please provide any further information or evidence that should be considered in the accompanying Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment.
20. Please provide any further information or evidence that should be considered with regards to the environmental impact of proposals outlined in the Route Map.

5.0 APSE Comment

APSE encourages our members to respond to the 'Delivering Scotland's circular economy: A Route Map to 2025 and beyond' consultation. Our members have been at the forefront of the many improvements to household recycling services, and a great deal of best practice has been shared through our APSE Scotland Waste & Recycling advisory groups and seminars in the past few years. It is important to respond to ensure that the expertise

of local authorities is considered fully so that councils can be fully supported in their journey to achieve the recycling and reuse ambitions of the Scottish Government.

Consideration should be given to funding and resource requirements as part of the consultation as these will be key to the success of adopting any new strategies / actions, particularly given the budget challenges already facing local authorities.

This consultation will provide part of the discussions at our upcoming Scotland Waste & Recycling advisory group taking place online via Teams on 19 August. To register to attend please complete the form [here](#)

Reminder: APSE has set up a COVID-19 Information Hub to deal with frontline service issues as they arise, ensuring greater resilience and learning between each other during this difficult time. You can access this hub by clicking [here](#) and you can also join our WhatsApp Support Network by clicking [here](#).

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