Item 3

11th April 2023

Glasgow City Council

Net Zero and Climate Progress Monitoring City Policy Committee

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UPDATE ON THE PLASTICS REDUCTION STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

Purpose of Report:

To provide Committee with an update on the Plastics Reduction Strategy and Action Plan.

Recommendations:

The Committee is asked to:
1) Note the contents of this report;
2) Continue to support the work of Neighbourhoods, Regeneration & Sustainability (NRS) in reducing single use plastic consumption and waste in the city.
3) Note that further updates will be provided on an annual basis.

Ward No(s): Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes ☐ No ☐ consulted: Yes ☐ No ☐

1 Introduction

1.1 In 2019, Glasgow City Council launched its Plastics Reduction Strategy and Action Plan. The strategy sets out a vision for a Glasgow that is free of all unnecessary plastics by the year 2030. With a direct focus on reducing the consumption of single use plastics; the action plan aimed to provide a short-term, targeted approach to city-wide action. The action plan focuses on the behaviours of a range of stakeholders including the Council, private sector and the public.

1.2 Further to the Glasgow Plastics Reduction Strategy and Action Plan being published, Scotland has become the first country in the UK to implement a ban on single-use plastics. The Environmental Protection (Single-use Plastic Products) (Scotland) Regulations 2021 came into force on 1 June 2022, and are intended to tackle plastic waste and to encourage businesses to make the switch to reusable alternatives, promote waste reduction and cut emissions.

1.3 From 12 August 2022, the single-use plastic items listed below are fully banned in Scotland unless an exemption applies. The ban means it is unlawful to make and supply commercially any of the following single-use plastic items:

- Cutlery (forks, knives, spoons, chopsticks and other similar utensils);
- Plates;
- Beverage stirrers;
- Food containers, cups and lids made of expanded polystyrene;
- Plastic straws; and plastic balloon sticks; subject to exemptions which allow them to be supplied in particular settings and circumstances. The regulations protect access to straws for those who need them to eat and drink independently or for medical purposes.

1.4 All the restrictions apply to both online and in-store sales, whether the above listed single-use plastic items are free or charged for. The ban excluded any of the listed items which were first imported or produced in another part of the UK.

1.5 In addition, the UK Government are reforming the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Packaging Waste, which will be introduced 2024, although exact timescale is to be confirmed. The proposal reforms existing regulation to introduce a full net cost (FNC) recovery system that requires producers to pay the full costs of household packaging they place on the market. Initial analysis by UK Government indicates this will not result in significant increases in consumer prices (including food prices).

2. Impact of Single Use Plastic Ban and Extended Producer Responsibilities

2.1 Data will become available in 23/24 that will allow us to understand the impact of the single use plastic ban and assess its effectiveness as well as that of the Plastic Reductions Strategy.

2.2 It is anticipated that the Extended Producer Responsibilities will in time lead to a reduction in plastic waste. Once EPR is introduced, associated actions will be added to future iterations of the plastic reductions strategy.

3. Progress to Date

3.1 There is positive progress on a number of actions in the Plastics Reduction Action Plan. A full update on the action plan is contained within Appendix 1 to this report. Some of the key highlights include:

i. **The Recycling Improvement Fund:** Residents across Glasgow are benefitting from an improved recycling service. The fund will support the introduction of a Twin Stream collection service for kerbside properties (own front/back door who present bins to pavement), which will be introduced later in 2023.

ii. **A New Material Recycling Facility (MRF):** This is being built at Blochairn and will be utilise improved technology to process higher volumes and more varieties of plastic.

iii. **"Plastic Free Schools":** This project, set up by Surfers Against Sewage, aims to increase awareness of the harm that single plastics can cause and support schools to achieve an accreditation to recognise their achievements in education to support plastic reduction. 17 schools across the city have signed up to work towards this accreditation.

iv. **Upstream Battle:** Co-ordinated by Keep Scotland Beautiful the project is entering its third phase focusing on changing littering behaviour to prevent marine litter at source along two rivers, the River Clyde and River Tay working along the entire length of both rivers and their tributaries, to raise awareness, gather evidence and inspire action.

v. **Scottish Water Top-Up Taps Initiative:** Scottish Water have continued to grow their "top-up tap" infrastructure across the city during 2022/23. Top Up Tap project which installs outdoor water bottle refill stations. There are now six taps installed across the city at the Botanic Gardens, Science Centre, Barclay's Campus, Cathkin Braes, Queens Park, and Buchannan Street for members of the public to use.

vi. **Best Bar None Awards:** Glasgow City Council delivers this National initiative that aims to promote good practice across licensed premises. The scheme took a renewed approach towards reducing the consumption of single use plastics in 2021/22 to allow additional points for premises who can demonstrate positive plastics action. The SEC Hydro won the award last year.

vii. **River Boom:** Glasgow City Council is working with Marine Scotland to install a litter fence 'boom' aimed at capturing waste from upstream on the river Clyde. In May 2023 a new MS fund will become available and

GCC will seek to progress this project and provide an update to Committee.

viii. **Procurement Tracker**: This is a GCC tool to reduce single use plastic. The tracker is derived from catering procurement data. The different types of plastics contained in a catering product have been assigned a risk category based on material and ease of recycling targeting the reduction of high-risk items across GCC all departments.

4. Next Steps

4.1 The next steps in the delivery of the Plastics Reduction Strategy will include;

- The development of the procurement tracker, which will allow us to measure the success of interventions across the Council's estate
- Monitoring progress of actions in response to the assessment of the data on the use of single use plastics
- Undertaking an annual review of legislation and policy in relation to plastics reduction.
- A revised strategy will be brought back to committee in 2024/ 25.

4.2 The debate on single use vapes is an area that will be further considered in the update of our strategy. Some councils are looking at calling on local retailers to consider a ban in advance of any action by the Scottish Government. Glasgow City Council supported a ban on the sale of single use vapes at the Environment & Liveable Neighbourhood's Committee in March.

5. Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

Financial:	There are no direct financial implications arising from the report.
Legal:	The report raises no legal issues.
Personnel:	The Plastics Reduction Strategy is managed within existing resource in the Sustainability team.
Procurement:	The purchase of any single use plastics will continue to be addressed by regular evaluation and reporting.

Council Strategic Plan: Specify which Grand Challenge (s) and Mission (s) the proposal supports. Where appropriate the relevant Commitment can also be listed.

	The plan supports Grand challenge 3: Fight Climate Emergency in a Just Transition to Net Zero; Mission 2, Become a Net Zero Carbon City by 2030.
Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:	
Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify.	Not applicable to this report.
What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?	An EQIA screening was undertaken during the development of the Plastics Reduction Strategy. A need has been identified to maintain the availability of plastic straws for some disabled citizens.
Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.	Not applicable to this report.
Climate Impacts:	
Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:	The proposal directly delivers on Action 45 within the Climate Plan. The Plastics Reduction Strategy will have a significant positive impact upon the environment by actively raising awareness and educating citizens and staff members about the need to reduce single use plastic consumption. It aims to eliminate unnecessary plastic in Glasgow by 2030.
What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal?	A reduction in the consumption of single-use or unnecessary plastics across the city.
Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?	Yes, this proposal will positively contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target.
Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:	None

6 Recommendations

6.1 The Committee is asked to:

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