



Glasgow City Council

Net Zero and Climate Progress Monitoring City Policy Committee

Report by Executive Director of Neighbourhoods, Regeneration & Sustainability

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UPDATE ON THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY ROUTE MAP AND ACTION PLAN

Purpose of Report:

To provide Committee with an update on the Circular Economy Route Map and Action Plan.

Recommendations:

The Committee is asked to:

- 1) Note the contents of the report;
- 2) Note the progress update provided on Circular Economy actions;
- 3) Note the next steps.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

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

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 In [December 2020](#), Glasgow City Council (GCC) published its Circular Economy Route Map and Action Plan which aimed to guide a change in city-wide economic practices from the current extractive system towards a regenerative system. Glasgow's Circular Economy Route Map addressed the need to move away from the "take-make-dispose" model to a circular system where waste and pollution is eliminated, materials and products stay in use, and nature is regenerated. The Action Plan focused on how to deliver this across a range of stakeholders including the Council, private sector, and civil society.
- 1.2 As activities progressed, the Circular Economy Route Map and Action Plan was updated to:
- i. align with current strategic priorities
 - ii. focus on fewer, tangible areas where most impact can be achieved, and
 - iii. integrate the Plastic Reduction Strategy Action Plan to better embed plastic reduction into the Council's Circular Economy strategy.

This was presented to the Net Zero and Climate Progress Monitoring City Policy Committee in [September 2024](#).

- 1.3 In [April 2025](#), the updated [Circular Economy Route Map for Glasgow 2025-2030](#) was brought to this Committee and then published.
- 1.4 This report presents the annual update on progress on Circular Economy actions.

2. Circular Economy Route Map and Action Plan for Glasgow 2025-2030

- 2.1 The Circular Economy Route Map for Glasgow 2025-2030 provides the most up to date strategic context and discusses the key drivers for a circular economy in Glasgow; the climate and ecological emergency, net zero commitments and the need for the City to be a resilient, thriving economy, within local environment and planetary boundaries. It presents a vision for Glasgow to be a circular city.
- 2.2 Central to the Circular Economy Route Map is the Action Plan. The Circular Economy Action Plan consists of 29 actions, grouped under seven themes Table 1 below presents the 7 themes and 14 priority areas.

Built and Natural Environment
Priority: Circular construction
Priority: Natural environment regeneration
Circular Hubs
Priority: Construction material reuse hub
Priority: Circular markets / Reuse hubs
Circular Practices

Priority: Support for circular businesses, organisations, and communities
Priority: Reduce, reuse, repair, remanufacture and recycling practices
Engagement, Communication and Skills
Priority: Engage with stakeholders
Priority: Develop ongoing communications methods
Priority: Skills for a circular economy and transition
Monitoring and evaluation
Priority: Baseline of circular economy activity
Priority: Metrics and indicators
Plastics
Priority: Single-use plastic usage reduction across Glasgow
Priority: Single-use plastic usage reduction within Glasgow City Council
Procurement
Priority: Circular public procurement

Table 1: Circular Economy Action plan themes and priorities

- 2.3 The delivery of Circular Economy Route Map 2025-2030 depends on bringing stakeholders together to deliver priorities highlighted within the Action Plan.
- 2.4 The Circular Economy Working Group meets on a quarterly basis to collaboratively drive the delivery of agreed actions and raise awareness for collaboration opportunities, including funding. Led by GCC Sustainability, regular members of the Working Group include GCC departments as well as external stakeholders that lead the delivery of specific Circular Economy Action Plan items.

3. Progress on Glasgow's Circular Economy Actions

- 3.1 The following section provides an update on progress made across Glasgow's Circular Economy Action Plan since the last action plan update report to the Net Zero and Climate Progress Monitoring City Policy Committee in [September 2024](#).
- 3.2 Of the 29 Actions:
- 20 Actions are Green (on track),
 - 3 Actions are Amber (minor delay/issues),
 - 1 Action is Red (major delay/issues),
 - 5 Actions have not started yet and are therefore marked as Grey.

A detailed update is presented in Appendix 1 of this report.

- 3.3 Some of the key highlights include:
- 3.3.1 **Support for CE activities:** Several circular economy initiatives, projects and communities have been supported over the past year through various GCC mechanisms.

- Glasgow City Council's [LEZ Community Fund](#) provided support to eighteen organisations with grants of between £20,000 and £50,000. Amongst the supported initiatives, there are three projects closely aligned with circular economy: [Plugged In](#) ([North West Glasgow Voluntary Sector Network](#)) upcycling donated IT equipment for reuse in the local community; [Build Your Own Bike](#) ([Common Wheel](#)) delivering a 10-week course that supports people with mental illness to build their own bike, using a combination of reused, recycled, used and donated parts; and [Bike Library](#) ([Govan Community Project](#)) supporting people to access bikes for 3-6 months via a bike library, including repair and maintenance assistance.
- Funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies and led by Economic Development with support from the Centre for Civic Innovation, the [Glasgow's Youth Climate Action Fund](#) (YCAF) aims at empowering young people (15 to 24) to design and deliver climate-focused projects within their communities. During the second round of the programme, grants of up to £3,900 have been awarded to 20 projects covering a range of activities, including projects focused on upcycling, repair and reuse (Wear the Change, 500 Bottles, Sketchy Youths Deliver 500 Bottles).
- Through [Glasgow's No Wrong Door Network](#), funded by GCC's Tackling Poverty Fund, led by [ApparelXchange](#) and supported [Merry-Go-Round](#), the [Preloved Initiative](#) offered high-quality, pre-loved clothing to 450 children aged 0–18 with the goal to assist families who often do not qualify for traditional support systems. The positively received initiative helped save thousands of kilograms of carbon through clothing reuse and reduced the environmental impact of clothing waste. It highlighted the value of pre-loved clothing and the links between circular practices, social inclusion and child poverty alleviation. [Glasgow Helps](#) continues to partner with ApparelXchnage and partners to deliver pre-loved clothing support to families in Glasgow.

3.3.2 Step Up to Net Zero: Fully funded by Glasgow City Council and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and delivered by Glasgow Chamber of Commerce, [Step Up to Net Zero](#) has been extended to deliver a fourth round of the programme for 2025/2026. With 78 participants to date, the project aims to support the city's net zero and circular ambitions and provides employability experience and upskilling opportunities for Glasgow's workforce.

3.3.3 Thriving Cities Initiative and City Change Makers: The [City Change Makers](#) programme, led by the Centre for Civic Innovation (CCI), supported two community-based organisations to prototype, test, and scale their ideas, and support neighbourhood action that builds resilience to the impacts of climate change. Through participation in the programme, [Make Do Grow](#) was able to access support to explore how they can scale the [Toy Library](#) in Govan to ensure families have equal access to support, resources and joy and a reduction in poverty.

3.3.4 Cities4Forests Wood Material Flow Analysis: Through the partnership with [Cities4Forests](#) and the [Partner Forest Programme](#), a [Material Flow Analysis \(MFA\) of wood in construction in Glasgow](#) and a [Sustainable Wood](#)

[Procurement Policy \(SWPP\) feasibility study](#) were undertaken. The MFA investigated how wood used in construction flows into the city throughout its lifecycle, how it is used, reused, recycled, and disposed, with the aim to support future circular policy and best practice. The SWPP study explored how the Council and ALEOs can address sustainability of procured wood, and waste wood generated within projects. A set of short-term and long-term recommendations were identified that could be implemented by stakeholders throughout the life cycle of wood under a sustainable wood procurement framework. NRS Sustainability is currently working to feed outcomes and recommendations into relevant teams, policies and areas of work, including the development of a Construction Material Reuse Hub (CMRH) in Glasgow.

- 3.3.5 **Reusable Coffee Cups:** GCC Encore venues participated in the [Borrow Cup](#) 12-week pilot, launched in January 2025. Led by Hubbub and reuse organisation Reposit, the Borrow Cup pilot was launched in January 2025 at more than 40 locations across Glasgow, including GCC Chambers Cafe and Kelvingrove Museum. The initiative aimed to reduce single-use coffee cups by offering an alternative deposit-return reusable coffee cup at participating locations. The scheme has been extended to Kelvinhall, Mitchell Library and Riverside Museum during 2025.
- 3.3.6 **Plastic Procurement Tracker:** GCC has developed a tool, built upon catering procurement data, to help monitor and reduce single use plastic. Catering products are assigned a risk category based on material and ease of recycling¹. The latest report, covering data from 1st April 2021 to 25th November 2024, demonstrated that (for all recorded purchases within scope) there has been a 100% reduction in the procurement of highest risk plastic (red), with 42% of all purchases being in the green category, 27% in the amber low, and the remaining 19% being in the amber high category. GCC Performance and Information Management Unity (PIMU) and GCC Corporate Procurement Unit (CPU) are currently exploring how reporting can be expanded to include food packaging to reflect a more detailed picture of plastic reduction in GCC catering.
- 3.3.7 **Food Waste Warriors:** GCC Catering and Facilities Management launched a Food Waste Warriors pilot at Blackfriars Primary School in Gorbals. The positively received pilot reduced food plate waste being disposed of in school dining halls by almost 12kg per day and encouraged young people to take the message home and make small changes in their own lives. The pilot will next be trialled at Thorntree Primary School. Consideration is also being given to a Food Waste Ambassadors programme for secondary schools.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1 NRS Sustainability will continue to lead the delivery of the Action Plan, with direct responsibility for some actions as well as facilitating delivery across the partners through providing technical and program management support.

¹ The risk categories are: 'red', which is the highest risk plastic (Plastic 6 – polystyrene or Plastic 7); 'amber-high', which is more difficult to recycle (Plastic 3 to Plastic 5); 'amber-low', which is composite items; and 'green', which is alternative material (non-plastic) easily recyclable.

- 4.2 Work will continue across the Circular Economy Action Plan themes and priorities by stakeholders. Activities for NRS Sustainability will specifically focus on:
- Circular construction and exploring a framework of embodied carbon targets for new development in Glasgow, working closely with the Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance, Zero Waste Scotland and NRS Planning.
 - Circular hubs (construction and consumer goods) and accessing resources and support to pilot and scale up reuse across the city, whilst supporting existing activity in local communities.
 - Completing the mapping of circular economy activity and initiatives.
 - Launching the Circular Economy Awareness training course on GOLD for GCC colleagues by end of 2025.
 - Working closely with the Net Zero Mission Cities team to identify possible funding and support and with Zero Waste Scotland to identify technical support for the delivery of circular economy actions.
 - Continuing to engage with Sustainable Glasgow partners to raise awareness of circular economy and showcase best practices.
- 4.3 Reporting on the progress on the Circular Economy Route Map and Action Plan will continue to be provided to the Net Zero and Climate Progress Monitoring City Policy Committee on an annual basis.
- 4.4 The Circular Economy Working Group will continue to meet and work collaboratively to deliver the agreed actions.

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 Circular Economy Route Map and Action Plan is managed within existing resource in the Sustainability team. A wide range of internal colleagues will continue to be involved in the project delivery.

Procurement: There are no direct procurement implications arising from the report.

Council Strategic Plan: The project supports Grand challenge 1, 2, 3 and 4:

- Reduce Poverty and Inequality In Our Communities; Mission 3: Improve the

health and wellbeing of our local communities, by embedding circular practices and values.

- Increase Opportunity and Prosperity for All Our Citizens; Mission 1: Support Glasgow residents into sustainable and fair work, by creating skills for a circular economy; Mission 2: Support the growth of an innovative, resilient and net zero carbon economy, by embedding circular practices and supporting the creation of reuse/repair hubs.
- Fight Climate Emergency in a Just Transition to Net Zero; Mission 2: Become a Net Zero Carbon City by 2030, by reducing consumption and waste.
- Enable staff to deliver essential services in a sustainable, innovative and efficient way for our communities; Mission 1: Create safe, clean and thriving neighbourhoods, by embedding circular practices.

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify.

The Circular Economy Route Map specifically supports positive action in relation to tackling inequalities and creating a positive socioeconomic impact through the promotion of circular practices and reskilling/upskilling people for a green and circular economy.

What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?

A positive impact – an EQIA screening has been undertaken on the Circular Economy Route Map. Climate Change impacts all of society. However, vulnerable communities can be disproportionately impacted. By implementing a low carbon, circular economy in a just and fair manner, we can work towards minimizing climate impacts.

Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.

Through taking action towards becoming a Circular City it is envisaged that socioeconomic disadvantage would be reduced and climate resilience would improve through changing our reliance on a take-make-dispose model to a regenerative economy.

Climate Impacts:

<i>Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:</i>	The project supports the following Climate Plan actions directly; Action 6: Net zero City Plan; Action 11: Just transition; Action 40: Adoption of circular practices; Action 45: Delivery of the Plastic Reduction Strategy; Action 59: Circular economy transition.
<i>What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal?</i>	Accelerating the transition to a circular, low carbon economy will result in reduction in overall levels of consumption, reduction in use of primary raw materials and support towards nature regeneration.
<i>Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?</i>	The Circular Economy Route Map seeks to enable the city to reduce its carbon emissions more rapidly and build resilience to the impacts of current and future climate change. A Circular Economy can support towards net zero by changing the way we consume and the way we make and use materials and food.

Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:

<i>Are there any potential Data protection impacts as a result of this report</i> Y/N	Not applicable to this report.
<i>If Yes, please confirm that a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) has been carried out</i>	N/A

7 Recommendations

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