



Glasgow City Council

Net Zero and Climate Progress Monitoring City Policy Committee

Report by George Gillespie, 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 change in city-wide economic practices from the current extractive system towards a regenerative system, moving 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 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.
- 1.3 In [April 2025](#), the updated [Circular Economy Route Map for Glasgow 2025-2030](#) was brought to this Committee and approved by the [City Administration Committee](#). An update on progress on Circular Economy actions was presented to this committee in [September 2025](#).
- 1.4 This report presents an update on progress on Circular Economy actions following the update in September 2025.

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 the 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, led by GCC, meets on a quarterly basis to drive the delivery of actions and identify collaboration and funding opportunities. The Working Group includes representation from GCC departments as well as external stakeholders that lead on the delivery of specific actions.
- 3. National policy landscape**
- 3.1 The [Circular Economy \(Scotland\) Act](#) was passed in June 2024. It was complemented by the [Circular Economy and Waste Route Map to 2030](#) published in December 2024 and setting the Scottish Government’s strategic plan to deliver Scotland’s sustainable resource and circular economy ambitions to 2030.
- 3.2 In January 2026, the Scottish Government consulted on the [draft Circular Economy Strategy for Scotland](#). The draft strategy sets out the rationale and benefits of a more circular economy within the wider economic framework and describes the overall vision to 2045 and the outcomes that the Scottish Government is working towards. It outlines the policy mechanisms that could be leveraged to create a circular economy and identifies five priority sectors for action. The strategy also proposes the first circular economy national-level monitoring and indicator framework. Glasgow City Council submitted a response to the consultation. A consultation analysis published by the Scottish Government can be found [here](#). The Circular Economy Strategy for Scotland was published in [March 2026](#).
- 3.3 The direction set by both the Scottish Government’s Circular Economy and Waste Route Map and Circular Economy Strategy is taken into consideration on an ongoing basis by Glasgow City Council.

4. Progress on Glasgow's Circular Economy actions

4.1 The following section provides an update on progress made across Glasgow's Circular Economy Action Plan since the last update report to the Net Zero and Climate Progress Monitoring City Policy Committee in [September 2025](#).

4.2 Of the 29 Actions:

- 20 Actions are Green (on track),
- 4 Actions are Amber (minor delay/issues),
- 0 Actions are Red (major delay/issues),
- 1 Action is Blue (completed),
- 4 Actions have not started yet and are therefore marked as Grey.

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

4.3 Some of the key highlights include:

4.3.1 **Mapping circular economy systems:** NRS Sustainability worked with Glasgow Caledonian University, and were supported by Zero Waste Scotland, to undertake mapping of circular economy initiatives in Glasgow. The project identified Glasgow's diverse ecosystem of initiatives, organisations and communities with the aim to use this to consider how they can be further supported. The systems mapping will help inform the wider actions associated with identifying financial and other support mechanisms need to enhance circular practices.

4.3.2 **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 fifth round of the programme during 2026. A further 12 individuals and allocated SMEs are currently participating in the programme contributing to the city's net zero and circular efforts, while providing employability and upskilling opportunities.

4.3.3 **Embodied carbon in built environment:** NRS Sustainability worked with the Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance (CNCA) and Zero Waste Scotland to explore a framework for embodied carbon targets for new buildings in Glasgow, including pathways to implementation and enforcement. The project was jointly funded through CNCA's Phase 2 "Dramatically Reducing Embodied Carbon in Europe's Built Environment" programme and Zero Waste Scotland and was delivered by an Arup and University of Strathclyde collaborative team. Findings and recommendations from the report are currently being fed into relevant services and workstreams, building on work around enabling circularity in Glasgow's built environment.

4.3.4 **Circular Economy training course:** Building on the successful development of the Climate Literacy and Energy Efficiency courses for GCC employees, the Circular Economy module has been developed by NRS Sustainability. The launch of the course is expected soon to align with wider climate communications and engagement and Glasgow's Climate Week in May 2026.

4.3.5 Reuse initiatives and hubs

- Led by NRS Waste Management and working with Cycling Scotland and St Paul's Youth Forum, a [bike reuse pilot](#) was launched across three Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC). Collected from Polmadie, Shieldhall and Dawsholm, and transported to HMP Barlinnie, the bikes are repaired and distributed to people who would otherwise be unable to afford a bike of their own. As presented at the [Environment and Liveable Neighbourhoods City Policy Committee](#), by the end of 2025 approximately 300 bikes had been collected for repair and redistribution for free in local communities.
- Enabling reuse within the Council has been a continued priority. NRS Sustainability are working with teams across the Council to re-launch [Warp It](#). This is an online platform, available to the public sector and third sector, that enables the redistribution of a wide variety of assets for reuse.

4.3.6 **Sustainable Glasgow Charter:** Launched in 2021, the [Sustainable Glasgow Charter](#) was developed to enable organisations to demonstrate commitment to take action within their own organisations and sectors to contribute to a green recovery and radically reduce the City's carbon emissions. Working closely with the Sustainable Glasgow Partnership, a review was undertaken to strengthen the awareness and promotion of circular approaches to climate and net zero actions. An update on the work of the Sustainable Glasgow Partnership will be presented to this committee in May 2026.

5. Next Steps

5.1 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.

5.2 Work will continue across the Circular Economy Action Plan themes and priorities by stakeholders. Activities for NRS Sustainability will specifically focus on:

- Circular hubs (construction and consumer goods) and accessing resources and support to pilot and scale up reuse across the city. The Sustainability team will continue to work with colleagues in GCC teams, such as the Financial Inclusion team and others, to explore opportunities to support existing activity in local communities through appropriate mechanisms in priority areas.
- Disseminate outcomes of the embodied carbon targets project.
- Launching the Circular Economy Awareness training course on GOLD for GCC colleagues in Spring 2026.
- Expanding the mapping of circular economy initiatives in the city and working with Council teams, the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce, and Zero Waste Scotland to explore how outcomes can be best disseminated and to understand systemic barriers and opportunities for potential support.

- Submitting the bi-annual Circular Cities Declaration report. This iteration of the report will focus on the social impacts of circular economy.
- Progressing with Circular Economy actions scheduled to begin in 2026.
- 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.

5.3 Reporting on the progress on the Circular Economy Route Map and Action Plan to the Net Zero and Climate Progress Monitoring City Policy Committee will continue on an annual basis.

5.4 The Circular Economy Working Group will continue to meet on a quarterly basis and work collaboratively to deliver the agreed actions.

6. 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 2025-29? 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 acting 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:

Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:

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.

What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal?

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.

Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target? 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:

Are there any potential Data protection impacts as a result of this report Not applicable to this report.
Y/N

If Yes, please confirm that a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) has been carried out N/A

7 Recommendations

7.1 The Committee is asked to:

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