



**Glasgow City Council**

**Environment and Liveable Neighbourhood City Policy Committee**

**Report by George Gillespie, Executive Director of Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability**

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**RESOURCE AND RECYCLING STRATEGY 2020-30 - UPDATE**

**Purpose of Report:**

To update Committee on the progress made to deliver the action plan set out in the Resource and Recycling Strategy 2020-30 and provide an overview of emerging policy changes within the resource industry.

**Recommendations:**

It is recommended that Committee notes:

- (a) The progress made in delivering the actions committed within the Resource and Recycling Strategy 2020-30 and detailed in Appendix A – Action Plan.
- (b) The strategic priorities for 2026, which are key to delivering the ambitions of the Resource and Recycling Strategy 2020-30.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

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

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Committee on the progress made to deliver the action plan set out within the Resource and Recycling Strategy 2020-30 and provide an overview of emerging policy changes within the resource and recycling industry.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 The Resource and Recycling Strategy (RRS) 2020-30 was presented to the [Environment, Sustainability and Carbon Reduction City Policy Committee](#) on 2nd February 2021 and subsequently approved by the [City Administration Committee \(CAC\)](#) on 3rd June 2021.
- 2.2 The RRS responds to the Climate Emergency and seeks to reduce the carbon impact of waste on the environment. This will be achieved by improving the quality and quantity of materials captured for reuse and recycling.
- 2.3 The RRS complements other carbon reduction strategies, such as the Circular Economy Route Map for Glasgow 2025-30 and the Climate Plan.

## 3. National Policy Landscape

- 3.1 During 2025, the resource and recycling industry has continued to undergo significant policy change and an update on some of the main policies is noted below.
- 3.2 The [Circular Economy and Waste Route Map to 2030](#), complimented by the [Circular Economy \(Scotland\) Act 2024](#), was published in December 2024 and key aspects which will directly impact household recycling, include:
  - Introduction of a statutory Code of Practice (CoP) for household waste services (aligning with the current CoP is voluntary) – currently in development with council officers participating in workshops
  - Introduce statutory recycling and reuse targets for household waste from 2030
  - Undertake a consultation on the collection of textiles from the kerbside – this was undertaken from March to June 2025. An [analysis of the responses](#) was published in November 2025
  - More powers for local authorities to support recycling and reduce contamination
  - Strengthen the householder's duty of care (DoC) obligations in relation to household waste – wider [consultation](#) on the DoC live from November 2025 – February 2026.
- 3.3 Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for packaging waste was implemented in 2025. This is complex legislation which will see the cost of managing packaging waste, including the collection, recycling and disposal, across all packaging material types, move from local authorities to the producers of packaging waste. A series of local and national parameters has

been used to calculate the payment due to each UK local authority and in December 2025, all UK local authorities received their first payments under the new EPR payment mechanism. The link provides details of the [EPR payment values](#) for each Scottish local authority in year 1 of the scheme. Going forward, local authorities will have to submit annual data to DEFRA and implement an 'effective and efficient' collection service to ensure future EPR payments are received. The changes to collection services noted in sections 4.2 and 4.6 contribute to this requirement.

3.4 Other pending policy changes which will impact how waste is managed, includes, but is not limited to:

- Ban on biodegradable waste disposed to landfill – due to apply from 1 January 2026 (now delayed until 1 January 2028)
- Digital Waste Tracking – due for implementation April 2026 (voluntary), and mandatory from October 2026
- Deposit Return Scheme for single-use drinks containers – due for implementation in October 2027
- Emissions Trading Scheme to include Energy from Waste facilities (including the GRREC) from 1 January 2028, however the Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) process started 1 January 2026. This will increase the cost per tonne of treating waste via this avenue.

3.5 Like many business sectors, the resource and recycling industry has had a challenging year. Volatile commodity markets and difficulties have been encountered with waste re-processor contracts as they seek to increase costs due to the financial climate while ensuring only high-quality recyclables are received.

## **4. Resource and Recycling Strategy Update for 2025**

4.1 Throughout 2025 progress has been made on some significant projects and a high-level summary on some of these are highlighted below.

### **4.2 Introduction of Twin Stream Recycling Service to Kerbside Properties**

4.3 Starting in March 2024, the introduction of a new twin stream recycling service for all houses (c.123,500 properties), was completed in February 2025. This included the provision of a new dark grey bin for the collection of 'containers' and expanded the number of items targeted for collection and recycling, including plastic pots, tubs, trays, film and cartons, in addition to, plastic bottles and food and drink cans, which were already targeted for collection. The blue bin is now used for the collection of 'fibres', namely paper, card and cardboard.

4.4 To support the introduction of the new service, a communication campaign was undertaken directly to households impacted by the service change. This involved the provision of a teaser letter, followed by a communication pack, including an instructional booklet and a hard copy of the new collection calendar. Geo-targeted social media messaging has also been utilised,

following service introduction, in addition to engagement at localised events as the service was introduced in each area.

- 4.5 Furthermore, provision has been made to offer householders access to food waste caddies and liners (provided free at local libraries) to increase participation in the food waste collection service.
- 4.6 Expansion of Twin Stream Recycling to Flatted Properties
- 4.7 From August 2025 the expansion of the twin stream recycling service commenced in the south west of the city. This expanded the pilot which started in July 2023, covering c.4,100 flats over four geographical areas, including Pollokshields, Haghill, Finnieston, and Paisley Road West.
- 4.8 At the end of 2025, 266 hubs had been installed across Linthouse, Govan, Elder Park, Ibrox, and Craigton serving c.10,600 properties. Not all properties have received bin hubs, although their bin configuration has changed to incorporate the new recycling service.
- 4.9 The new hubs are providing an opportunity for residents to recycle more materials than the previous dry mixed recycling service and has also re-introduced a food waste collection service to flatted properties.
- 4.10 Similar to the kerbside properties, residents received a teaser letter approximately four weeks and an instructional leaflet approximately two weeks prior to the service change. In addition, residents are provided with a food waste caddy, with a supply of liners, and also receive a re-usable bag to assist the transfer of recyclable material from their flat to the bins. In addition, drop-in events were held at Ibrox, Elder Park libraries prior to the service change in those areas, to allow residents to engage with the project team and receive further information as required.
- 4.11 Housing associations are a key external stakeholder and significant engagement and collaboration with housing associations in the south west, whose properties and tenants have been impacted by the service change, was undertaken. Furthermore, two housing associations have been 'early adopters' and have purchased bin hubs from the council, as they seek to implement service changes to some of their properties, prior to the scheduled roll out.
- 4.12 From an operational perspective, the service change to flats provides opportunity to implement a more effective and efficient collection service, with more properties serviced in a shorter timeframe, as collection routes are re-calibrated. Improvements to the quality of the material collected within the fibre and container bins have improved compared to the the previous dry mixed recycling service within the blue bins, although issues (graffiti, fly-tipping on some hubs) still present themselves and participation within the food waste collection service remains challenging.
- 4.13 Garden Waste Permits

- 4.14 The council introduced a garden waste permit scheme in October 2023 and the permits sold within the first 2.5 years of the scheme are noted below.
- Year 1 (October 2023 – September 2024) – 40,632
  - Year 2 (October 2024 – September 2025) – 46,357
  - Year 3 (October 2025 – January 2026) - 35,688 (part of the year - as of 4 January 2026).
- 4.15 All kerbside properties were written to in July 2025, outlining the renewal process for year three of the scheme.
- 4.16 Queenslie Depot Re-development
- 4.17 Progress continues to be made on the re-development of the council's Queenslie depot, which will incorporate a new Material Recovery Facility (MRF), transfer station, office and welfare building and a new household waste recycling centre.
- 4.18 Throughout 2024 a lengthy procurement exercise, involving various internal stakeholders, with support provided by external consultants, was undertaken to procure the equipment for the new MRF. A contract was awarded to Turmec in March 2025 and officers are now in regular liaison with the company planning the MRF construction on site.
- 4.19 Officers within the Property & Consultancy Services team have made significant progress with other developments on site. This has included the removal of but buildings on site, installation of the foundations for the transfer station/MRF and the award of a contract to City Building for the construction of the facility as noted within section 4.19.
- 4.20 Glasgow Recycling and Renewable Energy Centre (GRREC)
- 4.21 The GRREC continues to provide a valuable role as part of the RRS, extracting recyclable material and recovering energy from waste which would historically have been landfilled.
- 4.22 As the GRREC continues to treat the city's residual waste, the tonnage of waste sent to landfill has significantly fallen over the last decade and the council has not sent any waste direct to landfill since October 2023.
- 4.23 Viridor continue to work collaboratively with GCC to improve the facilities operating efficiently in line with changes within the industry and GCC transformation of its recycling services.
- 4.24 In light of the scheduled ban on landfilling biodegradable waste (due for implementation January 2026, now scheduled for January 2028), during periods of planned maintenance at the GRREC, the operator in 2025 diverted waste, which would previously have went to landfill, to other energy from waste facilities within their portfolio.

#### 4.25 Collaborative Agreement with West Dunbartonshire Council

4.26 Glasgow City Council and West Dunbartonshire Council signed a collaborative agreement where both parties will co-operate to achieve Net Zero by developing and implementing initiatives and programmes across four areas, one of which is waste and recycling.

4.27 Waste and Recycling officers from both councils met quarterly in 2025 to shape resource and recycling strategy through knowledge transfer and the sharing of lessons learned in respect of waste management and recycling services. Since the start of 2024, Glasgow has assisted West Dunbartonshire with the management of their residual waste which is sent to the GRREC for treatment.

4.28 Other aspects, where joint working is being implemented includes, frontline staff training, sharing of communication strategies and collateral, opportunities for collaborative procurement and management of street litter at the boundary between both authorities.

#### 4.29 Re-Use Initiatives

4.30 Officers engaged with Cycling Scotland to establish a scheme for the collection of bikes for re-use from the council's HWRC. Working in conjunction with St Paul's Youth Forum and HMP Barlinnie, waste bikes are repaired and distributed to people who would otherwise be unable to afford a bike of their own.

4.31 Collected from Polmadie, Shieldhall and Dawsholm, and transported to HMP Barlinnie, the bikes are refurbished as part of the prison's skills development programme, delivered by Barlinnie Bike Works in collaboration with St Paul's Youth Forum's On Bikes team. Training was provided for HWRC staff, to assist in segregating the bikes, with collections starting at the end of September and by the end of 2025, c.300 bikes had been collected for restoration and redistribution, for free, back into local communities.

4.32 This project assists the council to align with the Scottish Government Circular Economy and Waste Route Map to 2030, the council's Circular Economy Strategy and Active Travel Strategy.

4.33 The council has partnered with a [textile re-use](#) organisation in the city giving residents access to a package of clothing for children (from birth to 18 years old). This contributes to reducing waste and extending the life of quality garments.

#### 4.34 Neighbourhood Clean Teams

4.35 In 2025/26 the council invested over £7m to enhance [frontline environmental services](#) across the city. This included the creation of 150 new roles in street cleansing and the expansion of the commercial waste enforcement team.

4.36 Each of the 23 council wards now benefit from a dedicated Neighbourhood Clean Team who can respond quickly to issues like fly-tipping, littering and spillages.

#### 4.37 Challenges

4.38 During 2025, the council's contractor for the management of bulk waste, Levenseat Ltd., went into administration. The council spends c.50,000 tonnes per annum for treatment and this caused significant disruption to internal and external stakeholders and how this waste stream was managed throughout 2025.

4.39 After the GRREC contract, the treatment of bulk waste is the second largest contract, in terms of tonnage and value, and whilst Levenseat Resource Management continued operations through 2025, service was often fragmented, and contingency arrangements had to be enacted at additional cost to the council.

4.40 A new bulk waste contract is due to be awarded in the first quarter of 2026.

### **5. Strategic Project Priorities 2026**

5.1 Planning for the implementation of future national policy changes, as highlighted in Section 3, will be on-going, however, during 2026 the following key project priorities will be undertaken.

#### 5.2 City-wide Twin Stream Recycling Service

5.3 The roll out of the twin stream service to flats will continue, with the south west of the city due for completion by the end of March 2026. The next area due to receive the service will be the north west of the city, which is expected to commence April/May 2026 and finish approximately March 2027. This will cover council wards 10 – 17 and 23.

5.4 The twin stream recycling service will be introduced to all properties, however, not all flats will receive bin hubs. Where access is good and no challenges are presented to collection crews, bins will remain within current bin storage areas, but the configuration of the bins will change.

5.5 The implementation of this new service continues to be a multi-team project across NRS, including officers from the project team, waste collection, street cleansing, roads, health and safety, environmental health and the communication team. In addition, other key internal and external stakeholders, including teams within the council and housing associations to ensure different projects align and do not conflict e.g. cycle hubs, bike lanes. Residents and elected members impacted by any service change will be briefed prior to any changes being implemented within their area.

5.6 As more premises are converted in the city centre to residential properties, consideration is also being given to waste and recycling arrangements. Due to

the unique space and access restrictions for some properties, bespoke solutions may be required, and a review of waste and recycling services, within other UK and European cities, funded by Zero Waste Scotland, was undertaken by consultants, which noted bin hubs as the preferred option.

#### 5.7 Communications

5.8 Engagement with householders will continue for the twin stream service as this continues to be introduced to residents in flats. This will continue the process highlighted in section 4.10 and public events are scheduled for Pollok and Carnwadric in January and February respectively.

5.9 In areas where contamination issues have been encountered with the kerbside twin stream service, a campaign will be undertaken with residents in houses to re-affirm the target materials which should be placed within the respective recycling bins.

5.10 The management of household batteries and their subsequent disposal are a significant issue within the waste and recycling sector, due to the number of fire related incidents within vehicles and other waste infrastructure across the UK. The council experienced this with the occurrence of fires within refuse collection vehicles latterly in 2025. A communication campaign will be undertaken highlighting the correct disposal methods to members of the public, with the aim to protect the health and safety of collection crews, integrity of council plant and equipment and environmental protection.

5.11 To address, the specific issues of household batteries and vapes, officers have liaised with STV who have prepared communication collateral for use on television, radio and other communication avenues, including bus shelters, subway and using panels on the side of the council's refuse collection fleet. This campaign is due to go live in February 2026 with proposals to supplement the initial campaign with additional engagements later next year.

5.12 As the development of the council's Queenslie depot gathers pace, officers have liaised with Zero Waste Scotland concerning a strategy to communicate progress during site construction, in particular the new MRF, which will include an educational facility for visitors.

#### 5.13 Queenslie Depot Redevelopment

5.14 Significant progress will be made on site during 2026. This will include the demolition of the last building which formed part of the previous site, the administration block, following the removal of asbestos.

5.15 The Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) closed in November 2025 and a temporary facility is currently in operation. The new HWRC will be the first part of the development to open and is expected to be available for use by residents in April /May 2026. Options are being explored to establish a paint and waste electrical equipment re-use hubs at the site.



- 5.16 The construction of the building which will contain the transfer station and MRF is expected to be completed in November 2026. The building will then be available to the MRF equipment supplier to construct the MRF, which is expected to be operational in the second half of 2027.
- 5.17 The new MRF will have the capability to process up to 50k tonnes per annum of the fibre and containers material streams, collected as part of the new twin stream recycling service.
- 5.18 Impact of External Policies
- 5.19 As noted in Section 3, preparing, aligning and complying with new guidance and policies will be addressed by the waste and recycling team, with input from other council teams as required. The council will require support and collaboration from a range of stakeholders including residents, housing associations, contractors and, businesses using the council's transfer stations, which will enable waste and resources to be managed as effectively as possible.
- 5.20 Landfill Restoration
- 5.21 The council is responsible for the management of five closed landfill sites, and whilst these sites have not accepted waste for a number of years, monitoring and aftercare at all sites is required to ensure compliance with the waste management licences and pollution prevention control permits. The Cathkin and Summerston sites require the majority of resources and consultants progressed planning work to connect to the Scottish Water sewer network, which will assist in managing the leachate at Summerston. This will be developed further as a new consultant contract will be awarded early in 2026.

## 6. Policy and Resource Implications

### Resource Implications:

<i>Financial:</i>	There are no direct financial impacts in providing this update, although implementing actions within the strategy will require funding from internal and external sources e.g. Recycling Improvement Fund
<i>Legal:</i>	No legal implications on the update of the strategy, but compliance with existing and new legislation will be required throughout the duration of the strategy.
<i>Personnel:</i>	Opportunities will arise for temporary recruitment of staff implementing different aspects of the strategy and the development of existing staff through structured training.

<i>Procurement:</i>	The procurement of new contracts for the management of waste and purchase of infrastructure will be required throughout the duration of the strategy and subject to separate reports to Committee
<b>Council Strategic Plan:</b>	Supports Grand Challenge 3, Mission 2, Commitment 8 Supports Grand challenge 4, Mission 1, Commitments 3, 10, and 12
<b>Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:</b>	
<i>Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify.</i>	Yes. The implementation of the RRS applies to all Glasgow residents and service users will be afforded all relevant information.
<i>What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?</i>	Separate EQIAs will be required as different aspects of the strategy are implemented.
<i>Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.</i>	No negative impacts anticipated.
<b>Climate Impacts:</b>	
<i>Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:</i>	The strategy seeks to increase the quantity and quality of materials collected for recycling and reduce the impact of climate change.
<i>What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal?</i>	The strategy is seeking to reduce the impacts waste has on the environment.
<i>Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?</i>	Yes. Reducing waste, maximising the longevity of resources, and increasing recycling will contribute towards Glasgow meeting a net zero carbon target.
<b>Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:</b>	No data protection impacts identified.

## **7. Recommendations**

It is recommended that Committee notes:

- (a) the progress made in delivering the actions committed within the Resource and Recycling Strategy 2020-30 and detailed in Appendix A – Action Plan.
- (b) the strategic priorities for 2026, which are key to delivering the ambitions of the Resource and Recycling Strategy 2020-30.