

CE Bill and Routemap Consultation Jan 2024 Draft Response

1: Reduce and reuse

Question 1: To what extent do you agree with the priority actions proposed within the Reduce and reuse strategic aim? Please provide evidence to support your answer if possible.

Strongly agree

As a Council we strongly welcome and agree with the proposals set out, and in particular endorse the recognition that everyone has to play their part, but that this needs to be made easy and convenient to be successful. We have committed ourselves to meeting Net Zero by 2030, which is one of the three key priorities of our Council Business Plan.

However, as a waste management authority we're acutely aware that for too long this has been seen as a "waste management problem." It is not. We are just one part of a chain that encompasses manufacturers, retailers, consumers and reproprocessors. In the context of a circular economy we actually have very limited influence- we have to manage the waste (in our case primarily household waste) produced by others, in whatever bin they put it in, to the best of our ability, and with limited financial resources, while the majority of the environmental impact takes place higher up the chain. A whole system approach to consumption (and changing how we view and approach that) is absolutely required, and the recognition that actions need to be taken throughout this supply chain to deliver this is one we'd certainly support.

Question 2: To what extent do you agree with the further actions to 2030 listed across the Reduce and reuse strategic aim? Please provide evidence to support your answer if possible.

Strongly agree

Section 1: Reduce and Reuse

The range of actions is wide ranging, and we do recognise the complexities involved. The proposals to focus on specific products or materials are probably necessary as there is no one size fits all solution and the impacts of different products vary quite widely.

With textiles for example, we need to see less reliance on purchasing new occasional clothes- development and normalisation of more service based models such as rentals, increased use of reuse options, and more innovation and investment in the supply chain, so that ultimately we can see less reliance on downcycling into things like mattress stuffing, and export for low value and poor quality items, and move towards genuine reprocessing of fibres into new products.

We do recognise that a couple of the measures (around disposable cups and vapes) are arguably relatively small scale in the global sense. However, we would still support these on the basis that they are easily deliverable, and/ or can deliver other important societal benefits- in the case of vapes there would be health benefits as well as a reduction in the safety risks associated with fires from incorrect disposal. Where it's the case that a material can either be tackled relatively easily, or the measure will deliver wider benefits such as addressing health or

safety concerns, we'd encourage the Scottish Government take this into consideration in its prioritisation even where the resource use benefits might appear smaller.

We do support the proposal to set reuse targets but also caution that this will be extremely challenging. Much reuse takes place informally, within circles of friends or family. Some is via routes like donation to charity shops or third sector organisations, or sale through online routes, etc. Some is via the medium of tool libraries, toy libraries, etc. So this is very diffuse across society and difficult to measure.

An approach like that taken for recycling rates (where this is measured as a percentage of the household waste collected by local authorities) won't work. We would not have access to the data. Probably the best approach would be once again to focus on specific materials and seek to gather data across the relevant sectors who might be involved, on a case by case basis.

As a local authority we do seek to work with reuse charities but have experienced some barriers. The first is simply financial, as local authority funding is severely constrained and has greatly reduced our ability to provide financial support. We've also sought through various projects to divert reusable items at household waste recycling centres and have been unable to sustain this due to the quality of items deposited. This is quite a different experience from some other Councils and it would be interesting to understand why this is. We can hope that it's because people in our area are able to access alternatives to avoid disposing of quality items and do so, but we don't know if this is true. It's also possible that some items which are not directly reusable could potentially be repaired or upcycled and we'd love to see an expansion of projects to deliver this.

It was great to read of the work that the Scottish Government has undertaken to support sharing libraries and repair cafes. These are great initiatives, and we hope this can be continued and expanded. These need to become widely and easily accessible across communities and the Scottish Government could consider linking into the work that is being undertaken by a number of local authorities to develop 20 minute neighbourhoods to see whether this could be a viable model to spread the development of such reuse initiatives, and mainstream them. Clearly this will take time but if it became simple and cheap to get a minor repair carried out on a toaster or kettle this could play a role in reducing consumption of such carbon intense products and also link into the Government's social equity and community objectives as it could play a role in reducing isolation and loneliness, as well as supporting people in terms of cost of living pressures.

The proposal to develop and publish a Product Stewardship plan by 2025/26 sounds like a positive step forward. As set out above, as a waste management authority we believe we are too often left to trying to deal with problems created by others (the production, sale and use of disposable vapes again being a recent example) and do believe there is a need to place more responsibility on producers and consumers. We've previously suggested mattresses and textiles as areas for particular initial focus and so support the proposals for these (alongside tyres). For example, if mattresses were covered by producer responsibility and a free uplift was provided at the point of delivery, this would significantly reduce the fly-tipping of these, and more could be collected back in such a way (i.e. dry) as to make recycling more viable.

We've also previously suggested a similar approach for electricals and the Scottish Government will be aware that there are proposals of this nature in the UK Government led consultation on WEEE legislation reform.

Legislation to restrict the destruction of unsold consumer goods would certainly be a good idea, as this serves to provide a wide range of benefits to society beyond the purely environmental, such as potential to ease cost of living pressures. Clearly there could be challenges around matching goods with recipients, and there would need to be exemptions or safeguards for time critical materials or products like food, calendars, and so on but, in principle, this should happen.

Section 2: Reduce Food Waste

As a local authority we only collect household waste, and we definitely see food waste as a problem. We have citywide collections of food waste in place to more than 90% of households yet food remains the largest component in our residual household waste and the second largest component of our overall household waste arising (including residual and household waste) and we know that participation could be significantly improved.

In addition, there is also scope to tackle avoidable food waste so that it can be reduced at source.

It's very apparent from the national household composition analysis (which we participated in) that this is a universal problem. We actually have a good understanding of the barriers that exist and have had some success in tackling these through small scale, targeted interventions in both kerbside collection and communal bin areas. However, to make a real step change would require two things:

- A national campaign to raise awareness of the extent and impact of the issue; people tend to view their waste arisings through the lens of volume. Food waste is very heavy and dense and does not look like a lot of the bin's contents. It may also be thrown away in relatively small quantities, but often, so it adds up unwittingly.
- Funding to support the resource requirement to both scale up the intervention and to deliver this over a long enough time to embed the behaviour change. Local authorities have had to scale back much of their "soft" services as a result of financial restrictions and we've witnessed that with waste engagement in general it can quite common for engagement initiatives to deliver improvements at the time, but not to be sustained after the support is removed.

Although we don't manage business waste other than from our own buildings, as a Council we would of course support measures to tackle commercial food waste through mandatory reporting, and measures such as increasing donations of food (subject to hygiene constraints) as, like other measures, these have wider benefits than the purely environmental.

France could conceivably offer a model which the Scottish Government could consider replicating. There is an obligation to establish a partnership with a charity to donate unsold food products for supermarkets of more than 400 m² and mass catering (3000 meals + per day) and the food industry.

Food retailers are forbidden to destroy food products still fit for consumption (backed by fines), and there is an obligation to offer a "doggy-bag" style option for commercial catering

https://zerowasteeurope.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/zwe_11_2020_factsheet_france_en.pdf

Section 3: Embed Circular Construction Practices

Construction materials are a huge part of Scotland's overall waste arisings. In our role as a waste management authority this is not something we're significantly exposed to, but as the local government for a growing and constantly renewing city, we're very aware of the embedded carbon which exists in building materials such as concrete, steel and glass, as well as the wider extraction and resource use implications of all building materials.

For this reason we support in principle the initiatives and proposals set out to better understand this sector to stimulate and embed circular practices, ranging from refurbishing existing buildings to ensuring the sustainability of materials used.

The Edinburgh Home Demonstrator project uses offsite construction methods which can reduce waste and increase reuse and recycling rates. More information can be found at:

<https://edinburgh-home-demonstrator.org/> and <https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/area-regeneration/developments-far/4>

2: Modernise recycling

Question 3: To what extent do you agree with the priority actions proposed within the Modernise Recycling strategic aim? Please provide evidence to support your answer if possible.

Agree. As a Council, we'd support the direction of travel and the measures set out in the consultation. It's important that, where waste can't be avoided, that we make the best use of it initially by recycling, then deriving value from what remains. These are fundamental values of the waste hierarchy.

However, it's also the case that we can't stand still. New materials and products enter use, and new opportunities also appear for extracting value from waste. It's also clear that we're not achieving best practice now, so action on both household and commercial waste is required across a wide range of areas.

More detailed responses are provided in response to Question 4.

Question 4: To what extent do you agree with the further actions to 2030 listed across the Modernise Recycling strategic aim? Please provide evidence to support your answer if possible.

Agree

SECTION 1: MODERNISE HOUSEHOLD RECYCLING

Develop a statutory code of practice for household waste services by 2025/26, with a focus on recycling and reuse

Local authority waste collection services are currently operating in a very challenging framework, subject to a number of legislative and policy changes, including:

- The deposit return scheme for drinks containers,
- Reform of the extended producer responsibility legislation for packaging waste
- This Circular Economy Bill
- Reform of the producer responsibility legislation for waste electrical and electronic waste
- Future changes to legislation in relation to biowaste, textiles and items such as mattresses

These are all welcome and necessary but are happening separately and over different timeframes. As such it is becoming increasingly challenging for us to plan strategically for the future provision of services, at a time of growing financial constraints.

The co-design process to review the existing code of practice and make it statutory is therefore very welcome, to ensure that we have something to work towards, and we welcome that. Given the uncertainties that exist as a result of the above list of policy and legislative drivers, we do question how comprehensive and detailed it can be in the timescales proposed.

We are, however, committed to playing a full part in that process, and are particularly keen to ensure our experience and knowledge is utilised to support the delivery of practical solutions which serve the needs of all households, particularly those who live in flats as communal bin collections constitute around 50% of our households.

Introduce statutory recycling and reuse local performance targets for household waste services from 2030 onwards.

We agree that setting recycling targets is helpful, and we've previously supported this measure, but do believe that the way in which performance is measured requires significant reform. We agree with the Government that two years notice is not enough particularly given the range of policy and legislative changes which are ongoing in parallel.

The current system of measuring performance as a percentage of the weight recycled has been in place for many years and is widely used globally. When most waste was landfilled and there was limited recycling in place it served us well. However, this is no longer the case, and we agree that other metrics require to be investigated. It's also possible that the growing role of retailer takeback, textile collectors, etc in sectors such as electricals, textiles and plastics could make the local authority indicator less relevant.

Any targets set need to be achievable and realistic. The ability of a local authority to achieve a specific recycling rate is impacted by a number of factors. The range of services and their quality, the nature of the housing stock and the demographics of the population served all play a part. Therefore, we believe that the Scottish Government needs to take an extremely granular approach to setting targets to accommodate these differences so that the process is fair. SEPA's data demonstrates that there is, at the very least, an association between recycling performance and waste arisings. In Edinburgh, for example our recycling rate is mid-range, below the Scottish average, but we have one of the lowest per capita waste arisings in Scotland (which is arguably more important).

We were pleased to be one of the participant authorities in the national waste composition analysis. This has underlined that one of the largest single constituents of the overall waste stream (not specifically the non-recyclable waste stream) is garden waste and demonstrates the extremely high level of recovery of this material. At certain times of the year, it may even be the single biggest constituent. It's certainly the largest single contributing material towards the recycling rate for most local authorities.

However, even where that is the case, when a percentage based recycling rate is used as an indicator of local authority performance this serves to disadvantage authorities such as ourselves who have exceptionally high numbers of households living in flats (so with very small or no garden). That's one of the reasons that large urban authorities have lower than average recycling rates.

In the reduce and reuse section of this consultation the Government proposes taking a material by material approach, and this might be a fairer way to set individual targets. Moreover, our own non-recyclable waste no longer goes to landfill, and this will eventually be the case for most Councils, so we would encourage the Government to carry out analysis as to whether the environmental benefits of garden waste recycling are still the same as they were when waste was landfilled.

This is not to suggest that garden waste should not be recycled, as there are wider resource use benefits from the manufacture of compost, but this different approach in setting recycling rates could certainly be fairer than the current system for particularly urban authorities, and possibly for rural authorities who are not able to justify separate collections. As technology develops, and as disposal routes change, the Government should also consider whether composting

garden waste does remain the best option for that material or whether emerging treatments such as pyrolysis into biochar could also be equally as good or offer advantages.

We would again underline that 50% of our households are flats who receive communal bin collections. While we do support the Government's moves to reform legislation around a householder duty of care, we repeat the issue we have raised previously- as a local authority we can provide a service, and we can and do design the service to encourage people to sort their waste.

With our communal bin review, which has been supported financially by the Scottish Government we've gone to considerable lengths to design out barriers to recycling. We're aiming to have, at each bin hub, a fully integrated service capturing all the statutory materials including non-recyclable waste, mixed recycling, glass and food. That means it's no longer easier to dispose of non-recyclable materials than to recycle. We're aiming for a maximum walking distance of 50 metres, so that's no longer a reason, and this is backed up with bin sensors so if a bin fills we can empty it more quickly, again removing a reason not to recycle.

But in these circumstances we have, and always will have, a relatively limited ability to require or force people to recycle. We don't know who put which materials in the bins. Our recycling rate becomes as much a measure of householder performance as it is of local authority performance. In this context we would not support fining local authorities as discussed in the previous phase of the consultation- what we need at a time of severe financial constraints is additional support for engagement activities and service development, and would argue that our performance should be judged on the extent to which we comply with the Code of Practice, which by then will be statutory, rather than solely against an arbitrary recycling rate.

In setting reuse and recycling targets, the Scottish Government needs to be mindful that materials can only be recycled or reused if there are end users and markets to take them, and the consultation says little on this. It is acknowledged that this is not under the direct control of the Scottish Government and requires action across the supply chain, as well as engagement and collaboration with other administrations.

The markets for some materials such as tetrapak type cartons and plastic films are limited and still developing. In recent years, we've seen media reports about what were described as plastics being dumped overseas when in fact these were plastic films not collected at the time by local authorities. Linked to the supermarket collections of these materials we've had the collapse of a Scottish facility set up to process these materials and some controversy over where some supermarkets were sending the materials. These are global issues-there have been similar issues with the similar Australian scheme which underlines that it's not an issue that a single government can tackle.

While the risks of these market failures remain real, and can undermine public confidence and engagement in recycling services, more positively we've seen real improvements and investment in facilities for other types of plastics. What we need is cooperation between different administrations and businesses to build on these, using potentially a combination of voluntary action, direct financial support to attract business, fiscal incentives and recycled content legislation.

Supply chains have also been disrupted by Covid, as well as lifestyle and business practice changes but why do we accept products like toilet roll and paper tissues not having a high recycled content when this should be the norm?

For more complex materials, again taking the example of textiles, we need to see more innovation and investment in the supply chain, so that ultimately we can see less reliance on downcycling into things like mattress stuffing, and export for low value and poor quality items, and move towards genuine reprocessing of fibres into new products.

There are similar challenges with the development of reuse markets, but often these are more community focussed and a one size fits all approach won't work as the facilities available may vary quite widely across the country. So again, a granular approach to setting reuse targets which accommodate these variations would be required.

Strengthen Householder's duty of care in relation to household waste: making a breach of the householder duty of care a criminal offence and creating a new fixed penalty regime to enforce this duty, by 2025/26.

We support this measure, and certainly believe that more needs to be done to tackle fly-tipping. This needs to be accompanied by a comprehensive communications campaign as we know that in some cases people are disposing of waste materials in good faith, unaware of the rules around waste disposal, and the need to ensure they use properly licensed companies. There are also cases where companies operate without a licence but appear to have one.

In our area the common cause of fly-tipping is actually people leaving items like furniture or mattresses out in the street, particularly in flatted areas, which is probably quite different to the national picture, and is difficult to attribute to a specific household or person due the nature of the items. This can also sometimes be done in good faith- "if I leave it out, it might be useful to somebody else". Changing this culture won't be easy and may limit the impact of these measures locally.

Give local authorities more tools to ensure that households are properly using their recycling containers and to reduce recycling contamination by 2025/26

We do welcome this. Failure to use services correctly has consequences, not only for the local authority and the environment but also for other citizens who have to pay for the financial costs associated with this. To date a huge amount has been achieved through providing services and calling on goodwill but this is not effective in all cases, so placing a statutory duty on householders could help. However, there could be unforeseen negative consequences- people don't always like being told what to do.

We therefore note that:

- All measures taken need to be proportionate and so it's important that there is clear guidance in place to ensure that any powers are used equitably with enforcement taken as a last resort.
- As a local authority where approximately 50% of households use communal collection services (because of the nature of the housing stock), there is no direct relationship between a household and a bin. Accordingly, we would emphasise that these measures are likely to have a lesser impact in this area than elsewhere in the country, as it is more difficult to define who is using the bins incorrectly.
- There will be cases where people are genuinely unable to comply (for example as a result of medical conditions) and local authorities may require both guidance in identifying these situations and support to do so. That's extremely sensitive information

and even where the local authority holds this information it may not be able to share it across different services.

Undertake a review of waste and recycling service charging by 2024/25

As with the other measures we support the review of charges, not least because the funding framework is changing to increase the role of producer responsibility for some waste streams.

However, we do have concerns about this in the context of garden waste collections and note that a requirement to provide a service should not be seen as a requirement to make it free at the point of use. We previously highlighted that with our chargeable service we are able to demonstrate a service which diverts 85-90% of the material. There was no particular difference in the diversion rate before and after charging was introduced and, in fact, we used the charge to increase the collection frequency. We also noted that when the service was free to all, this was in effect a tax on all citizens regardless of whether they had a garden or not. This becomes an equity issue, if people who don't have a garden are less wealthy. This supports our comments above about the need to take a material by material approach in setting any recycling targets, and also to review the environmental benefits of recycling garden waste when it would not otherwise have been landfilled. To reiterate, this is not to suggest that it should not be a service which is provided and, in fact, the high uptake compared to other services would suggest that citizens find it convenient- but these factors should at least be used to inform the Government's review of charging for that service in particular.

Similarly, with fly-tipping, most authorities have had to -due to financial constraints- introduce charges for bulky waste collections which is perceived as a barrier to people doing the right thing. But again, when we introduced the charge we saw no change in levels of fly-tipping at the time. We do have research that shows that the key issue, particularly in our area where there can be significant turnover of residents from year to year is poor awareness of the correct thing to do (and not do). Our service charges £5 per item which is cheaper than the unlicensed alternatives which advertise online, for example, and we're also introducing a means tested element for the charge which should remove any suggestion that there is a financial barrier.

It's also the case that enforcement in this area remains challenging, In our area the common cause of fly-tipping is actually people leaving items like furniture or mattresses out in the street, which is probably quite different to the national picture, and is difficult to attribute to a specific household or person due the nature of the items. This is even sometimes done in good faith- "if I leave it out, it might be useful to somebody else". Changing this culture won't be easy. But fundamentally the issue is not about cost- if someone has spent hundreds of pounds (or more) on something like a mattress, the cost of disposing of the old one should not be borne by people who couldn't afford a new one in the first place.

Review the monitoring and reporting framework for local authority waste services by 2025/26, and subsequently strengthen where necessary

No comments

Develop options and consult on the introduction of a requirement on local authorities and others to report publicly on end destination of household recycling collected by 2027/28.

We already do this for the main streams of household waste and recycling and thought all authorities did so. However, we are regularly asked what happens to our waste by the public, particularly when there's a media focus around specific materials (such as plastics).

This suggests we have more to do to raise awareness of these issues ourselves, but what is really needed is an ongoing and sustained national campaign which works alongside local ones, to explain all the issues in really clear simple language. It's acknowledged that some campaigns have been delivered already but in general these have been relatively short-term- we need a much more sustained effort.

Issues covered need to go beyond purely the recycling ones, and could include:

- Everything you buy and use impacts on the environment and most of this happens before you throw it away (with examples of practical things people can do to help on a day to day basis);
- Promoting the benefits we all get from recycling- not just environmental but economic such as jobs, and cost savings which can be used to support other vital services;
- Tackling recycling myths such as the perception that everything just goes to landfill anyway, or that it all gets exported and dumped somewhere else;
- Continuation of the work already carried out to tackle contamination as we move closer to a national collection system or "basket of materials" and also myths and confusion around specific materials or items such as takeaway pizza boxes.

SECTION 2: COMMERCIAL RECYCLING

Support businesses in Scotland to reduce waste and maximise recycling

Co-design process

As a Council we don't operate a commercial waste collection ourselves, but clearly there are many businesses operating in our area, and it's vital for the successful operation of the city that there are efficient, cost-effective services available for businesses that both meet their needs and deliver high-performing environmental outcomes.

The proposal to include businesses in a co-design process analogous to that for household waste is absolutely critical. Businesses come in many shapes and sizes, Different types of business produce different waste streams, widely varying volumes of waste, operate different hours, and have a range of other requirements (perhaps because they operate in buildings not designed for their modern use, for example). Therefore, any service design needs to accommodate and respond to these, and that can only be achieved with their input.

It's proposed that consideration will be given to how any measures would impact waste reduction and reuse/repair efforts. Again, this is very important, both from the environmental and circularity perspective, and also because reuse could potentially create economic benefits to the businesses themselves.

Commercial zoning

It's noted that the Scottish Government has undertaken further research on this and has decided not to progress this as a result of concerns raised in the previous consultation, but will consider how voluntary approaches could be pursued as part of the co-design process. In our own response to that previous consultation we highlighted the benefits to the local environment as well as the risks associated. Given the feedback received more widely to that proposal there is still potential traction in this idea particularly for congested urban areas, so it will be interesting to see what emerges.

National compositional study of waste from commercial premises by 2025/26

It's really surprising that there is such limited data available on commercial waste arisings, although perhaps understandable as to date so much of the focus has been on household waste. But it's vital to understand what there is so that you can prioritise and design effectively so this seems the minimum that's required. We do have some waste analysis data but it's very limited, and very old. We'd be happy to share. But ultimately you really need to get more up to date data, and ensure it's done on a sector by sector basis- office waste and retail waste have historically been very paper and cardboard rich, although this has probably changed considerably. But they're often sited alongside food premises, which are quite different.

Completing that by 2025/26 in the level of detail required sounds quite optimistic, when there are various other sectors besides the three mentioned above. Even manufacturing facilities will produce quite a varied range of waste streams, depending on what it is they manufacture.

Investigate further steps to promote business-business reuse platforms by 2027

The consultation notes that there are good examples across Scotland of services which normalise lease, repair, purchase of second-hand products, and extension of product lifespan through commercial customers. Expanding these and normalising these behaviours, while not always simple to achieve, is a great way to combine the environmental, social and economic benefits of a circular economy for everyone, so this seems like a key piece of work.

3: Decarbonise disposal

Question 5: To what extent do you agree with the priority actions proposed within the Decarbonise disposal strategic aim? Please provide evidence to support your answer if possible.

Strongly agree

As a waste disposal authority we're both a big user of energy recovery from materials which can't be recycled, and at the same time seeking to contribute as a Council to the battle against climate change by delivering Net Zero 2030.

We absolutely agree that those managing waste have little control over the nature and volumes of waste streams; and the options available to manage these wastes depend heavily on geography, available capacity, and advancements in technology.

We're in the relatively fortunate position, as one of the few authorities who would have complied with the previous proposed landfill ban to have access to a relatively modern plant which was designed not to "crowd out" recycling and to maximise efficiency through the use of electricity production, heat capture (which is under development), and which delivers additional recycling (of metals).

We both recognise the importance of ensuring that facilities are in place to manage the waste which does arise effectively, and to ensure that that the capacity and location of these is correct.

We also would wish to see everything possible being done to ensure that maximum benefit/ minimum emissions are extracted from the plants. We would like to see an emissions trading scheme which recognises high performing facilities.

For these reasons we support in principle the proposals to develop and deliver a Residual Waste Plan to 2045 (by 2025/26) and facilitate the development of a Sector-Led Plan to minimise the carbon impacts of the Energy from Waste Sector (also by 2025/26)

Question 6: To what extent do you agree with the further actions to 2030 listed across the Decarbonise disposal strategic aim? Please provide evidence to support your answer if possible.

Agree

Support the inclusion of energy from waste in the UK Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS), and investigate other fiscal measures to incentivise low carbon disposal, from 2028.

Certainly in principle we do support this, although clearly it does provide us with financial challenges at a time when we are least able to absorb these. In theory it should stimulate measures to minimise the use of energy recovery, specifically, which is the intention but there is a risk that this could conflict with the wider principle of moving waste up the waste hierarchy. The waste which is sent for energy recovery would otherwise have to be sent to landfill- there are no current viable alternatives which can be used. In many cases it could have been avoided or recycled, but as set out earlier, that is not under the direct control of the local authority. That decision rests with the householder.

Moreover, as the consultation itself acknowledges we do not control waste arisings so the risk is that it removes money from local authority budgets (among others) and actually prevents positive actions. This is a fine balance, and the Scottish Government needs to consider this extremely carefully.

It remains the case that alternatives to energy from waste are in practice often producing materials which must be landfilled or are producing refuse derived fuel, so the alternatives for waste which can't be recycled are in reality quite limited. We would like to see an emissions trading scheme which recognises high performing facilities.

Review and target materials currently landfilled to identify and drive alternative management routes from 2024.

In principle yes.

It's not clear though whether the Scottish Government is again referring to a material by material approach or whether it simply means the overall volume of waste which is currently sent to landfill.

In particular, because of our own circumstances we are really keen to see measures to maximise value from incinerator bottom ash, but the general principle applies to all materials which are landfilled, as does recognition that there are materials such as asbestos for which landfill is the best environmental option for disposal.

Facilitate the co-production of guidelines for effective community engagement.

Our experience of developing an energy recovery plant in partnership with Midlothian Council was that community engagement was critical to the process, so this makes absolute sense.

Increase the capture of landfill gas by 2025/26

Agree

4: Strengthen the circular economy

Question 7: To what extent do you agree with the priority actions proposed within the Strengthen the circular economy strategic aim? Please provide evidence to support your answer if possible.

Strongly agree

The proposals are to develop a Circular Economy strategy every five years (from 2025) and to set new circular economy targets (determined from 2025).

As the consultation itself sets out, everyone has a role to play, and the Scottish Government is included in this. It needs to drive the changes, and as such needs to be accountable. For this to be successful, of course it needs to have a strategy, and have an idea of when things need to take place (which the targets would deliver).

Question 8: To what extent do you agree with the further actions to 2030 listed across the Strengthen the circular economy strategic aim? Please provide evidence to support your answer if possible.

Agree

Review and refresh Scotland's Waste Data Strategy's action plan

Maintain a programme of research on waste prevention, behaviour change, fiscal incentives and material-specific priorities.

Sustainable Procurement- Develop public procurement opportunities to reduce the environmental impact of public spending, including scoping new legislative circular economy requirements for contracting authorities under section 82 and 82A of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009.

Skills and training- Support greater uptake of green skills, training, and development opportunities.

All of these measures are laudable and need to happen, so in that sense they are supported. While some of these will be ongoing, there is a lack of timescales and little mention of developing materials markets so it would be beneficial to see more of this. However it may be that these will be addressed as they are developed, but the principles set out are laudable.

Question 9: Please provide any further information or evidence that should be considered in the accompanying Equalities Impact Assessment

As noted elsewhere it's really important that enforcement activity around measures takes into account personal circumstances. The example of health conditions is given but there are others such as language that can also be a barrier.

Question 10: Please provide any further information or evidence that should be considered in the accompanying Fairer Scotland Assessment

No further comments

Question 11: Please provide any further information or evidence that should be considered in the accompanying Island Communities Impact Assessment.

No comments

Question 12: Please provide any further information or evidence that should be considered in the accompanying Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment.

In the response to measures around commercial waste, we noted that businesses have extremely diverse needs. While the Government has stepped back from some of the previous Consultation's proposals this general point still needs to be made to ensure that services are able to accommodate the operational requirements of each business in a cost-efficient way, or they won't be successful.