
MAKING THINGS LAST –CONSULTATION ON CREATING A MORE CIRCULAR ECONOMY IN SCOTLAND

Report by Service Director Neighbourhood Services

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

12 November 2015

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 **This report proposes that Scottish Borders Council respond to the Scottish Government’s consultation entitled ‘Making things last’ as outlined in Appendix 1.**
- 1.2 The ‘Circular Economy’ and ‘Resource Efficiency’ is already playing an increasingly important role in the direction of European and National Waste Policy.
- 1.3 The European Commission has indicated that it is aiming to present an ambitious ‘Circular Economy Package’ in late 2015 with the aim of transforming Europe into a more competitive resource-efficient economy.
- 1.4 The Scottish Government’s consultation entitled ‘Making things last’ (see appendix 1) explores the priorities for building a more circular economy, where products and materials are kept in high value use for as long as possible.
- 1.5 A number of the proposals outlined within the consultation have the potential to have significant operational and financial implications for Local Authorities in relation to the waste services they provide.
- 1.6 It is important that Scottish Borders Council outlines its position in relation these proposals and responds to the consultation. Thus ensuring the Council has done all that it can to influence future national policy, particularly in relation to its statutory waste management duties.
- 1.8 The proposed consultation response suggests that Scottish Borders Council is, in principle, supportive of the Scottish Governments aspirations for a circular economy in Scotland.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **The Waste Management Plan - Member Officer Reference Group (MORG) recommend that Scottish Borders Council approve the consultation response as outlined in Appendix 2 for subsequent submission to the Scottish Government.**

3 The Circular Economy and Resource Efficiency

- 3.1 The 'Circular Economy' and 'Resource Efficiency' is already playing an increasingly important role in the direction of European and National Waste Policy.
- 3.2 In October 2013 the Scottish Government issued its programme to reduce waste and create a more productive and circular economy entitled "Safeguarding Scotland's Resources: Blueprint for a more resource efficient and circular economy".
- 3.3 The Scottish Government's programme aims to make today's model of production and consumption more resource efficient (doing more with less, and minimise waste), while also laying the foundations for a more circular model of resource use: circular economy.
- 3.4 At a European level the European Commission's 'Circular Economy Package' was first proposed in July 2014 and included a proposed 70% recycling and reuse target for 2030, as well as a requirement for Member States to recycle 80% of packaging waste by 2030. However, by December 2014 it had been withdrawn to be replaced by a 'broader more ambitious' waste package.
- 3.5 The European Commission has indicated that it is aiming to present the more ambitious 'Circular Economy Package' in late 2015 with the aim of transforming Europe into a more competitive resource-efficient economy.

4 Making things last – Consultation on creating a more circular economy in Scotland

- 4.1 The Scottish Government's consultation entitled 'Making things last' (see appendix 1) explores the priorities for building a more circular economy, where products and materials are kept in high value use for as long as possible.
- 4.2 Scottish Government suggest that the consultation builds on Scotland's progress in the zero waste and resource efficiency agendas, with a new focus on a much broader set of business and industry opportunities through reduced reliance on virgin materials.
- 4.3 It is further suggested that this matters because of the significant potential benefits:
 1. To the economy – improving productivity, opening up new markets and improving resilience;
 2. To the environment – cutting waste and carbon emissions; and
 3. To communities – more, lower cost options to access the goods we need.
- 4.4 A number of the proposals outlined within the consultation have the potential to have significant operational and financial implications for Local Authorities in relation to the waste services they provide including:

1. **Food waste services** – The Scottish Government want all households in Scotland to have access to a food waste service and are therefore proposing to review the rural exemption for food waste collection systems.
2. **Landfill** – The Scottish Government would like to see a managed retreat from landfill and improved management of landfill gas.
3. **Household Waste Charter** – Scottish Government would like to standardise household collection systems and this is to be achieved through the development of a Household Waste Charter and ultimately the commitment of Local Authorities to sign up to the 'Charter'.
4. **Waste Brokerage Service** – The development of a collaborative approach to procuring contracts for waste and recyclable materials
5. **Recyclate Quality** – The Scottish Government would like to improve recyclate quality which may involve separate collections of recyclables.
6. **Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) Code of Practice** – Scottish Government has introduced sampling procedures to improve quality of materials arriving for sorting.

The above list is not exhaustive and is purely a sample of the proposals outlined within the consultation document which have the potential to impact Local Authorities.

It is important that Scottish Borders Council outlines its position and responds to the consultation. Thus ensuring the Council has done all that it can to influence future national policy, particularly in relation to its statutory waste management duties.

In the broadest sense the Scottish Government aspirations to create a circular economy in Scotland where products and materials are kept in high value use for as long as possible makes sense.

It is for this reason that the proposed consultation response suggests that Scottish Borders Council is, in principle, supportive of the Scottish Governments aspirations for a circular economy in Scotland.

The Waste Management Plan – Member Officer Reference Group has reviewed and supports the proposed consultation response. However, they believe that achieving the Scottish Governments aspirations will be challenging particularly in relation to: -

1. The public's perceptions and attitudes towards remanufactured, reused or upcycled products.
2. The comparatively low cost of brand new products compared to remanufactured, reused or upcycled products.
3. The design, manufacture and retail of products.

Significant time, resource and investment will be required by the Scottish Government in the communication campaigns at a national and local level to address current behaviours.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial

There are no costs attached to any of the recommendations contained in this report.

5.2 Risk and Mitigations

Failing to respond to this consultation reduces Scottish Borders Council's ability to influence national policy development in relation to the circular economy and waste management.

5.3 Equalities

The consultation response is not relevant to the equalities duty and does not require an equality impact assessment (EIA).

5.4 Acting Sustainably

There are no economic, social or environmental effects attached to any of the recommendations contained in this report.

5.5 Carbon Management

There are no impacts on the Council's carbon emissions attached to any of the recommendations contained in this report.

5.7 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

There are no changes to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of the proposals in this report.

6 CONSULTATION

6.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Service Director Strategy and Policy, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Chief Officer HR and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

6.2 Others that have been consulted are listed below:

- Deput Chief Executive Place
- Service Director Regulatory Services
- Procurement Officer
- Chief Officer Economic Development

Approved by

Jenni Craig
Service Director Neighbourhood Services

Signature

Author(s)

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Ross Sharp-Dent	Waste Manager Ext 8857

Background Papers: Making things last – Scottish Government Consultation – August 2015

Previous Minute Reference: None

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Jacqueline Whitleaw can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at Jacqueline Whitleaw, Place, Scottish Borders Council, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose, TD6 0SA. Tel 01835 825431, Fax 01835825071, email eitransitionrequest@scotborders.gov.uk