Aberdeenshire
C O U N C I L **Infrastructure Services**

REPORT TO SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE – 22 MAY 2019

RESOURCES AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY COMMITMENT

1   Recommendations

      The Committee is recommended to:

      1.1   Consider and approve the draft Resources and Circular Economy Commitment (Appendix 1);

      1.2   Consider and comment on the output from officer and member engagement (Appendix 2); and

      1.3   Should the Sustainability Committee approve 1.1, instruct the Head of Economic Development and Protective Services to bring the Resources and Circular Economy Commitment before Aberdeenshire Council for formal adoption alongside a developed framework for implementation, following consultation, as detailed in section 2.8 of this report.

2   Background / Discussion

2.1   Scotland is pursuing a transition to a society and economy where we consume and waste far fewer resources. This is being supported by Scotland's Zero Waste Plan and Circular Economy Strategy which aim to facilitate a revolution in the way products are designed, used, reused, repaired and recycled.

2.2   Aberdeenshire Council has already committed to reducing its consumption of resources *'in support of circular economy principles and zerowaste'*, within its Environmental and Climate Change Policy. The Council also recognises that there are many additional benefits, in conjunction with reduced environmental impact and carbon emissions, including improved financial and operational performance, setting an example for the community, stimulating a regional transition to a circular economy, and inspiring the opportunity for creativity and innovation.

2.3   The Commitment (Appendix 1) has been developed to demonstrate the ways in which the Council can work towards improving the way it thinks about, purchases and manages physical resources. In addition, the Commitment is supporting the Circular North East project, which is being undertaken by Zero Waste Scotland and the Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce. The project has been working on a scan of the north-east region identifying Circular Economy opportunities for businesses.

2.4   Furthermore, the Commitment is supporting the current global concerns relating to single-use plastic and inefficient use of finite resources.

2.5   Following the request of the Sustainability Committee on 14 November, 2018 (Item 8), that the Head of Economic Development and Protective Services develop this Commitment further, a member workshop was arranged.. The member workshop took place on 22 April, 2019 (Appendix 2), and the response from councillors was positive, and ideas and feedback regarding the potential working out of the Resources and Circular Economy Commitment were discussed and recorded. In the time since the Sustainability Committee meeting on 14 November, 2018, further consultation has also taken place with a number of officers from various Services and feedback has been obtained.

2.6   The plan for the development of the Resources and Circular Economy Commitment is to undertake further consultation with senior Council officers and policy committees to ensure all relevant feedback can be captured before bringing the document before Full Council for approval.

2.7   Alongside the Resources and Circular Economy Commitment, a framework document is being developed 'to give principles, expectations and guidance to all staff and Services', as specified in the Commitment. This framework will be developed and brought to Full Council alongside the Resources and Circular Economy Commitment. It is anticipated that the draft framework will be reported to the meeting of the Sustainability Committee for comment on 28 August, 2019. Consultation will also be undertaken with policy committees, in advance of a report to Full Council.

2.8   The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this and their comments are incorporated within the report. They are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation. Commercial and Procurement Shared Services have also been consulted and will be involved in any further development.

3   Scheme of Governance

3.1   The Committee is able to consider and take a decision on this item in terms of Section S paragraph 1.1 (a) of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance, as it relates to monitoring the Council's work in respect of sustainable development and climate change.

4   Implications and Risk

4.1   An Equality Impact Assessment has not been undertaken at this time as we are awaiting feedback from the Committee on how to progress. An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken alongside the future development of the Commitment and Framework.

4.2   There are no direct staffing or financial implications arising from this report.

4.3   The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level – Risk ID ACORP010, as it relates to Environmental challenges within the Corporate Risk Register. The following Risks have been

identified as relevant to this matter on a Strategic Level – Risk ID ISSR004, as it relates to Climate Change in the Directorate Strategic Risk Register.

4.4   A Town Centre Impact Assessment has not been undertaken at this time as we are awaiting feedback from the Committee on how to progress. A Town Centre Impact Assessment will be undertaken alongside the future development of the Commitment/policy.

Stephen Archer
Director of Infrastructure Services

Report prepared by: Joel Evans, Internal Waste Reduction Officer
30 April, 2019

Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL

From mountain to sea

Resources and Circular Economy Commitment

Scotland is currently pursuing a transition to a 'circular economy' [1]. This is a revolution in the way products are designed, used, reused, repaired and recycled. It means that, through innovative new processes and standards, products and materials are kept in high value use for as long as possible. This transition to a society and economy in which fewer resources are consumed and wasted will benefit our environment, economy and communities.

Aberdeenshire Council, building on its commitments in its Environmental and Climate Change Policy, recognises that it has a duty to support and lead in the transition to a circular economy both locally and nationally. The Council will therefore strive towards greater sustainability and responsibility in the way it considers, purchases and manages physical resources, innovating and collaborating in support of a more circular economy.

To meet this commitment we will:

- Promote, effect and support circular economy principles and practice internally and in our external areas of influence such as events, contractors, partners, community and government.
- Develop an internal Resources and Circular Economy Framework to give principles, expectations and guidance to all staff and Services.

Smarter purchasing

- Promote circular purchasing options, such as sharing, reuse, leasing and purchasing of items that have been designed, manufactured or sourced with circular economy principles in mind.
- Support suppliers with circular economy principles, including circular design, reuse and repair, and the reduction of unnecessary use of resources.
- Avoid, where possible, the purchase of items which do not contribute to a more circular economy and do not represent a responsible use of resources, such as some single or limited use items.

Better resource management

- Establish reuse systems and processes that facilitate the efficient and effective internal sharing and reuse of all manner of council physical resources.
- Develop external links and arrangements, including with the third sector and community groups, to ensure that resources not needed within the council go to the most productive use possible, with disposal (recycling, landfill or burning) being the last resort.

Responsible disposal

- Ensure that verified, responsible disposal routes are used, and that appropriate recycling infrastructure and guidance is provided across council premises, covering all reasonably practicable materials, and that staff comply with recycling procedures.

[1] Scottish Government, 2016. Making Things Last: A Circular Economy Strategy for Scotland.

APPENDIX 2 – RESOURCES AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY COMMITMENT – MEMBER WORKSHOP

Resources and Circular Economy Commitment – Member workshop
(Monday 22nd April 2019)

Attendees

Councillor Alastair Forsyth (Skype)
Councillor Alison Evison
Councillor Andrew Hassan
Councillor Colin Pike (part)
Councillor Dominic Lonchay
Councillor Eileen Durno
Councillor Ian Mollison
Councillor Isobel Davidson
Councillor Martin Ford
Councillor Neil Ballie
Councillor Paul Johnston (part)
Councillor Richard Thomson (part)
Councillor Rosemary Bruce
Councillor Sarah Dickinson

Head of Economic Development and Protective Services
Team Leader Sustainability and Climate Change
Sustainability and Climate Change Graduate Intern
Internal Waste Reduction Officer
Sustainability and Climate Change Officer
Change Officer

Agenda

1. Introduction from Belinda Miller, Head of Economic Development and Protective Services

2. Presentation from Joel Evans, Internal Waste Reduction Officer

   - Context
   - Development
   - Resources and Circular Economy Commitment
   - Questions
   - Group discussion – Implications and future

3. Group discussions and feedback on the potential internal and external developments from adopting the principles of the Resources and Circular Economy Commitment

4. Thanks and close

Feedback and ideas
A selection of feedback and ideas from group discussions on the potential internal and external developments from adopting the principles of the Resources and Circular Economy Commitment.

Internal

Messages and leadership

- Need clear and consistent communication of the circular economy vision with appropriate language and explanation.
- It is important to engage with Services to understand their resources and circular economy challenges and opportunities.
- Continued, long-term education is needed for change.
- A change of language from 'waste' to 'resources' may help
- A circular diagram may be a better communication aid than the traditional waste hierarchy.
- Continued promotion of our Warp-It reuse portal, through a number of channels, would be beneficial.
- Examples of good projects would inspire and aid understanding
- This should be about genuine good stewardship of resources, not political gesturing.
- The council leading by example is essential

Business models and processes

- Incentivise Services to use fewer resources, such as by allocating charges in such a way that disincentivise production of waste, but also incentivise better use and recycling of resources.
- Develop internal disposal processes – similar to procurement processes – to ensure better management of resources and waste.
- Consider how financial benefits could be gained by Services through passing on their waste and resources to others.
- Investigate the potential for an internal market for materials within the council.

Initiatives

- Develop reuse hubs across the Shire for sharing resources, building on good examples of resource sharing from the Joint Equipment Centre and the Libraries central hub. Collection and transport of items would need to incorporated into any solution.
- Investigate changes in the materials we use, from our canteen cutlery to considering reusing waste plastic in repairing roads.
- Make more use of various recycling schemes (such as Terracycle).
- Consider how the council could make more money by segregating its internal waste.
- Use the induction process to set expectations on resource behaviours – for example by promoting or providing reusable cups.

<u>Procurement and purchasing</u>

- We could address ownership of resources within the council – moving to renting rather than buying. This could be set up internally, or via the establishment of a social enterprise to loan out resources.
- Avoid buying things that aren't designed for reuse and always consider the full life-cycle of purchases.
- Work with suppliers to reduce packaging, or don't order items with excess packaging.

External

<u>Messages and leadership</u>

- There needs to be a consistent message and understanding for all communities with regard to resources and the circular economy and this could start in schools.
- Using basic language and changing from talking about 'waste' to 'resources' would help bring change.
- Social media would be a key channel for communication.
- Local Authorities, government and government organisations (such as Zero Waste Scotland) should work together to ensure consistency across the country.
- The public need to be given confidence that their resources (e.g. recycling and waste) are dealt with appropriately, ethically and locally.
- Promotion of key projects and examples of good practice would help inspire others.
- How can we play a role in sharing information on circular economy opportunities and good practice, and facilitating partnerships?

<u>Industries and businesses</u>

- Hotels, restaurants and cafes are at the forefront of improving their management of resources and waste and are quite in-tune with public opinion with regard to sustainability.
- Inspiration can be drawn from a Stonehaven architect that is putting on pop-up shops, often with an upcycling theme, on it premises.
- The offshore industry is now valuing its 'waste'.
- Carbon dioxide could be a resource of the future, to be turned into useful products.
- A general pattern of working closer to home could reduce resource consumption.
- What to do with old tyres is a growing issue. Could tyres be used as a resource?
- The council supported the growth of the biomass industry in the North East. Could similar support be given to establish other sectors reprocessing resources into useful products? The council could use its capacity of create demand or supply to develop new markets.

- It should be made as easy as possible for social enterprises to get involved with the resources and circular economy scene.

<u>Initiatives</u>

Business Improvement Districts

- How can we support the creation of local rental economies?
- Is there an opportunity to improve waste collection from Business Improvement Districts by creating centralised points for waste collection? This could improve the BID experience as well as providing a financial saving.

Reuse centres

- Could the council support the development of pilot reuse shopping centres, where materials come in and are transformed on site into products for sale (e.g. tying in with Huntly's vision to become a craft/upcycling centre)?
- Could upcycling, repair or manufacturing hubs be sited near to waste sites or retail spaces?

HWRCs

- How can we encouraging reuse at our HWRCs and also stop resources coming to our HWRCs in the first place?
- How can we enable residents and organisations to buy materials for repurposing from HWRCs?
- Need to keep improving communications around the use of our HWRCs.

Developing local reprocessing facilities

- Develop more local facilities for dealing with our waste and transforming it into resources and products for use again
- Building confidence for resources industries to develop in the north-east (by guaranteeing provision of resources or by guaranteeing a market for transformed resources) – as we have done with the biomass industry.

Reuse map

- Develop a map of the reuse, repair and upcycling services and organisations across the Shire. For example, the local Men's Sheds, reuse organisations and community workshops.