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Monday 30 October 2023

Dear Mr Mountain

I am responding to your email to our Chief Executive Mark Dodson – sent by your committee assistant Euan McCulloch – in which you asked several questions re our reusable cups' initiative at Scottish Gas Murrayfield Stadium on international match days.

Please find our response below.

- What is your current assessment of how many single-use cups have been prevented as a result of the scheme's introduction?

The scheme was re-introduced at our Scotland men's Famous Grouse Summer Nations international matches against Italy, France and Georgia in July/August 2023 after a hiatus following the Covid 19 pandemic. An average of 35,000 single-use plastic cups have been prevented per game.

- What infrastructure was required for SRU to give the scheme full effect?

We have worked in hand with our Events and Hospitality teams to come up with following:

- Identified dedicated return points.
- Plan of clear and visible signage to the customers.
- Purchase of storage boxes, trolleys and recyclable cups.

- Have you noticed a change in consumer behaviour as a result of the scheme?

Yes. We have seen a reduction of litter in the stadium premises. The £1 levy /refundable charge encourages customers to return the cup(s) at dedicated return points.



- What have been the proceeds as a result of the scheme? How is any funding resulting from the scheme used?

The funding is invested back into the business to purchase more recyclable cups for future events. We are now planning to introduce the same scheme at Edinburgh Rugby games in the cross-border United Rugby Championship at Hive Stadium on the Murrayfield back pitches.

- How have you managed any associated risks relating to health and safety around the removal of single-use cups?

We use an accredited company to wash, dry and return these cups. Their machines recycle the water three times before it is drained from the machine. They also have a heat exchanger that captures the steam to pre-heat water entering the machine to reduce energy and lower the carbon footprint.

We would be pleased to keep the committee informed of our progress around ESG, much of which is being energised as a result of our principal partnership with Scottish Gas, which came into force earlier this past summer.

A key element of our partnership with Scottish Gas is to tackle carbon emissions across Scotland, starting with our 26-acre estate at Murrayfield, but also incorporating a landmark deal to give more than 130 rugby clubs a helping hand with energy bills, aimed at reducing energy consumption by over 50%, through a joint £2m Club & Community Net Zero Fund.

In more general terms, to demonstrate our appetite to be more environmentally aware and to align with our customers' expectations, we replaced general blue bins at our stadia – Murrayfield and Hive in Edinburgh and Scotstoun in Glasgow – with specific dry mixed recycling bins and general waste bins, thus enabling fans to recycle at source.

Our dry mixed recycling goes to be recycled at plant nearby in Broxburn, West Lothian. The remainder, general waste, is sent to be burnt and converted into fuel to power electricity plants/cement plants and is commonly referred to as 'refuse derived fuel' or 'waste to energy'.

All our glass is recycled. Food waste and grass cuttings are all composted through our waste provider BIFFA.

Three new battery powered lawnmowers at Murrayfield are also reducing our energy consumption and we have reduced our fungicide usage to an absolute minimum.

We replace fluorescent light fittings that are beyond repair with LED alternatives. Our temporary lighting generators with SON (Sodium lamps) are now LED, while more than 80% of our fleet holdings have been replaced with hybrid vehicles.

Working alongside our catering and banqueting provider, Scottish Rugby Hospitality, we have seen a 40% reduction in beef consumption – to reduce emissions associated with high-carbon animal proteins, achieved through redesign of menus.

There has also been a 25% reduction in food waste – working with Chefs Eye to increase awareness of waste and influencing behaviours to reduce this waste. Scottish Rugby Hospitality does not use single-use plastics



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within its operation, but we have still the ambition to eliminate single-use plastics in the various catering units/providers on a match-day.

We switched to Vegware plant-based disposable products some three years ago and we regularly make donations to food banks and Social Bite to further reduce food wastage.

We are proud to have sent zero waste from our operations/activities at Murrayfield to landfill since 2011.

As a result of the measures with reusable cups and other activities that we have planned, we would expect to see a further reduction in the waste we dispose of through BIFFA.

To reiterate, please don't hesitate to come back to me should you wish any further information.

Yours sincerely

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