**Evaluating alternatives to (single use) plastics – a workshop for Scotland Excel and Procurement Officers in Scotland**

**Workshop structure.**

1. Introduction – 10 minutes
   1. Need to reduce SUPs
   2. Lots of products on the market
   3. How do we navigate the maze? What is greenwashing and what isn’t? What works, and what is cost-effective?
   4. Talk about lifecycle analysis and understanding behaviour of materials at end of life
   5. Introduce activity
2. Imagine you’re looking at finding alternatives to a single use item purchased through Local Authorities – 20 min –   
     
   Attendees are grouped on tables (5-6 people)- each table is given one alternative material to evaluate for either, (A) Plastic packaging or (B) A single use plastic item such as cutlery.

Materials are: A- 100% recyclable SUP B- Compostable packaging C- Wooden/other natural biodegradable items D- Reusable (e.g. bring your own cups, deposit schemes, reusable trays etc.).

There could be 8 groups in total;

Groups 1-4 discuss the following alternatives to plastic packaging:

1: Recyclable

2: Compostable

3: Wooden/other natural biodegradable

4: Reusable

Groups 5-8 discuss the following alternatives to a single use plastic item such as cutlery:

5: Recyclable

6: Compostable

7: Wooden/other natural biodegradable

8: Reusable

The aim is to look in detail at how each alternative is made, used and later disposed of, i.e. looking at the FULL LIFECYCLE of each alternative to pinpoint challenges for its effective use.

Questions on big paper, with post-its to put answers.

Questions:

1. What are the advantages of this material?
2. What are potential disadvantages/challenges?
   * 1. Lifecycle Analysis questions: - How much energy is used to make it? Where does it come from? How much energy/time/cost during use? What happens at end of life?
     2. What are barriers to you using this alternative effectively? What changes could be made to your own processes to make sure the alternative is used effectively?
3. Are there any purchases you are making currently where you could effectively switch to this material?
4. What are the simple take-home messages you want to feed back to the rest of the group?
5. Feedback session at end to discuss lessons learned. – 10 minutes
   1. ‘take-away message’: It’s not straight-forward, but there are simple things we can do straight away.
   2. Easy wins – things that you can do straight away to reduce SUPs (e.g. education, encouraging people to bring own containers / reusables)
   3. Further Challenges – things that need changing on a broader / longer scale to make sure we use SUPs or alternatives appropriately. (e.g. making sure compostable packaging has a route to be composted, making sure 100% recyclable packaging is actually recycled)