

## **Waste and Recycling Committee**

Date: 23 March 2022

Subject: Contracts Update – Part A

Report of: Justin Lomax, Head of Contract Services, Waste and Resources  
Team

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To update the Committee on performance of the Waste and Resource Management Services and Household Waste Recycling Centre Management Services Contracts that commenced on 1 June 2019.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Members of the Committee are recommended to:

1. Note and comment on the matters set out in the report; and
2. Approve the commencement of a trial to allow high-sided vehicles to deliver household waste to eighteen HWRCs rather than requiring them to use transfer loading stations – see section 5.5.

BOLTON  
BURY

MANCHESTER  
OLDHAM

ROCHDALE  
SALFORD

STOCKPORT  
TAMESIDE

TRAFFORD  
WIGAN

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## **Equalities Impact, Carbon and Sustainability Assessment:**

### **Equalities Implications:**

There are no equalities impacts arising from the matters set out in this report.

## **Climate Change Impact Assessment and Mitigation Measures:**

A fundamental principle of the WRMS and HWRCMS contracts is the sustainable management of waste in order to reduce carbon emissions from landfill disposal. The carbon impacts of the contracts are monitored and provided annually by the contractor.

### **Risk Management**

Performance of the contracts and associated risks are captured in the GMCA corporate risk register.

### **Legal Considerations**

Activities set out in this report are in accordance with the terms of the WRMS and HWRCMS contracts.

### **Financial Consequences – Revenue**

Activities set out in this report are in accordance with the Waste revenue budget.

### **Financial Consequences – Capital**

Activities set out in this report are in accordance with the Waste capital budget.

**Number of attachments to the report:** None

**Comments/recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

N/A

**Background Papers**

19/1/2019 - Waste Procurement, Corporate Issues and Reform Committee

**Tracking/ Process**

Does this report relate to a major strategic decision, as set out in the GMCA Constitution

Yes

**Exemption from call in**

Are there any aspects in this report which means it should be considered to be exempt from call in by the relevant Scrutiny Committee on the grounds of urgency? N/A

**GM Transport Committee**

N/A

## 1. Introduction

This report provides the Waste and Recycling Committee with an overview of performance of the Waste and Resources Management Services (WRMS) and the Household Waste Recycling Centre Management Services (HWRCMS) Contracts, with updates on key issues currently affecting the waste management services during this period.

## 2. Contract Performance

This report uses cumulative data for the period up to the end of Quarter 3 (April to December) of the financial year 2021/22 (Contract year 3), for the two Contracts held by Suez. This is the latest verified data available at the time of writing of the report.

### 2.1 Cumulative Data

Data is also provided for comparison with the same period of the previous year, 2020/21:

<b>Year to Date Performance – 2021/22 - Qtr 3 Cumulative (April 21 to December 21)</b>	<b>2021 / 2022</b>	<b>2020 / 2021</b>
<b>OVERALL Combined Performance</b>		
<b>Total arisings (t)</b>	852,218.32	852,489.60
<b>Recycling Rate (%)</b>	46.75	46.41
<b>Diversion Rate (%)</b>	98.93	98.39
<b>HWRC Combined Performance</b>		
Recycling Rate (Household Waste) %	49.63	46.48
Diversion (Household Waste) %	97.24	97.42
<b>Longley Lane MRF</b>		
Rejected Kerbside Recycling Collections (t)	1,656.54	6563.45
MRF Contamination Rate (Commingled) %	13.15%	18.05%

## **2.2 Total Waste Arisings**

Total waste arisings for this period were over 850k tonnes(t), which is almost the same as for Quarter 3 of the previous year, with a marginal improvement in recycling levels, to c.47%.

## **2.3 Landfill Diversion**

Landfill diversion has also been maintained, remaining at a high rate, with almost 99% of material diverted away from landfill disposal.

## **2.4 HWRC Recycling Rate**

At the HWRCs (combined for both Contracts = 20 sites total, with 9 sites in the WRMS contract plus 11 in the HWRCMS contract) the combined recycling rate was almost 50% - an increase of c.3% compared to the same period of last year. For both contracts combined, the overall diversion of HWRC materials is over 97%.

## **2.5 Overall Recycling Rate**

In summary, during the period of April to December of 2021/22, the overall performance, combined across both contracts achieved a recycling rate approaching 47%, resulting in a diversion from landfill rate of almost 99%.

## **2.6 Contamination Levels**

Contamination levels of kerbside collected recyclate, from unacceptable materials extracted by the MRF process, have remained around 13% - with a reduction of c.5% less incorrect material needing to be extracted from this stream, when compared to last

year. For the tonnage of collected WCA loads rejected at the reception points across the Contract, the positive trend has continued downwards, with almost 75% less tonnage of rejected loads (nearly 5kt lower than for this period last year). Whilst this position continues to improve, over 1.6kt was still rejected due to contamination being above acceptable levels, requiring ongoing measures to reduce contamination and encourage accurate recycling by residents.

### **3. Health and Safety**

Health and Safety statistics are provided monthly in the Contractor Monthly Services Reports for each Contract and are considered at the monthly Suez Contract Management meeting.

#### **3.1 Reporting Categories**

Health and Safety data is reported in key categories, separating incidents involving the Contractor staff and operations, from those involving members of the public (MoP), plus a Near Miss category. Near miss, Incident and Notifiable Incident data is collected centrally and analysed to feed into local, regional and national lessons learned across the Contractor organisation and communicated to all staff.

#### **3.2 RIDDORS**

For the period up to the end of Quarter 3 (April to December) the total of RIDDOR incidents is now 2, both of which have been previously reported to the Committee. They related to an operative striking their finger whilst using a hammer and a scald injury following a vehicle overheating. In both cases, safe working practices and procedures were consequently reviewed, with alternative methods and guidance issued.

This is a reduction, by one, from the number that was last reported, which was as a result of an incident being recategorised. Following investigation, one report (a back injury in August 21) was discounted as a RIDDOR incident from the company statistics. This was due to confirmation of a directly related, pre-disposed medical condition, that affected the length of time absent following the incident but was not deemed to be a consequence of the incident. Therefore, the lost time absence period no longer qualified for RIDDOR status.

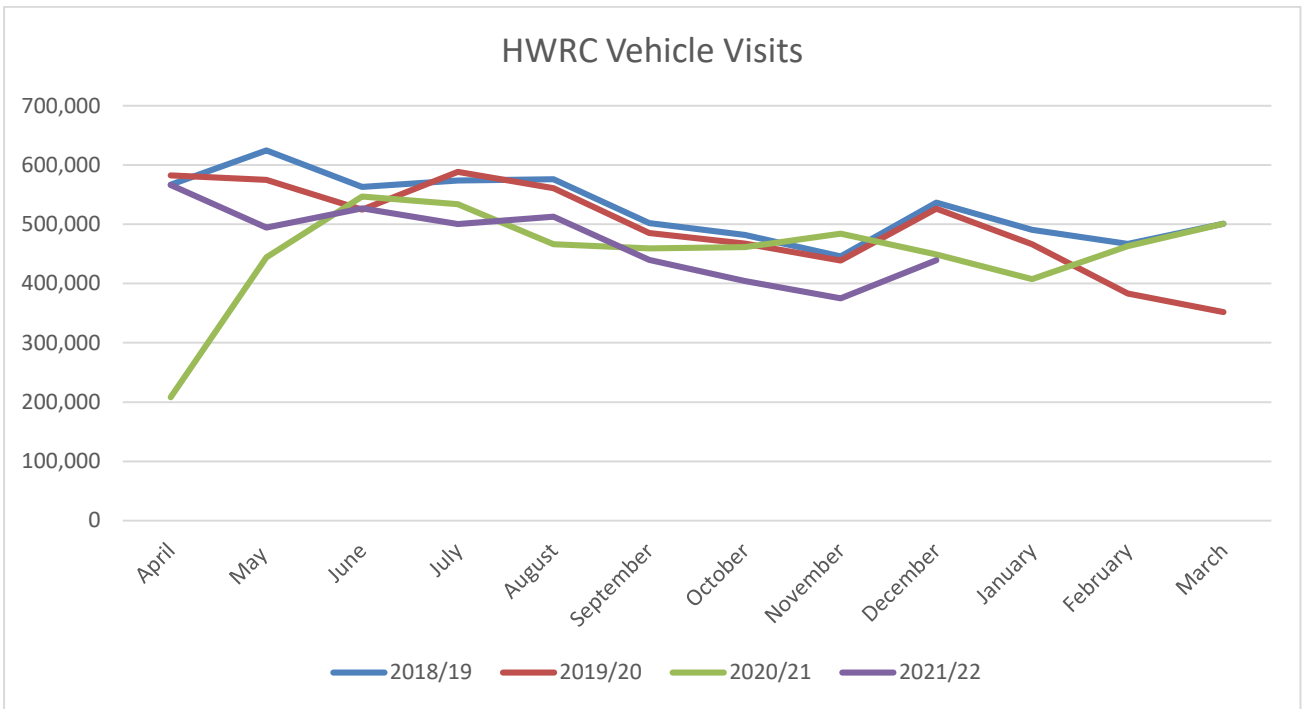
## **4. HWRC Overview**

### **4.1 HWRC Visit Levels**

The graph below shows monthly HWRC visit levels over the first 3 Quarters of the financial year 2021/22, covering April to December (purple line), compared to the three previous years.

Since July 21 the visitor numbers settled following Covid effects and have begun to follow similar seasonal trends to the previous two years before 20/21 (ie the data from years prior to the impact of Lockdown restrictions), although at a significantly lower level.

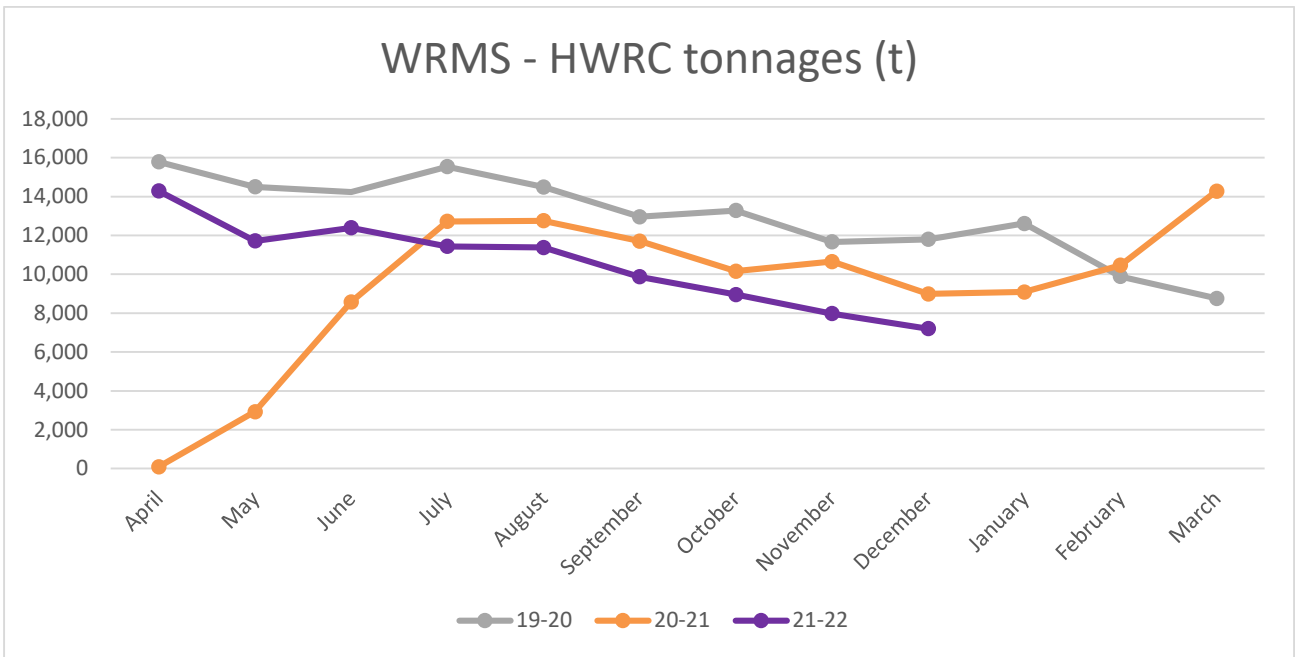
Overall, the HWRC visitor numbers have stayed below levels seen in the pre-Covid years, with over 4.25 million visits over the first 3 quarters of 2021/22, which is over 10% less visitors than in this period of 19/20.



## 4.2 WRMS Contract HWRC Tonnage Levels

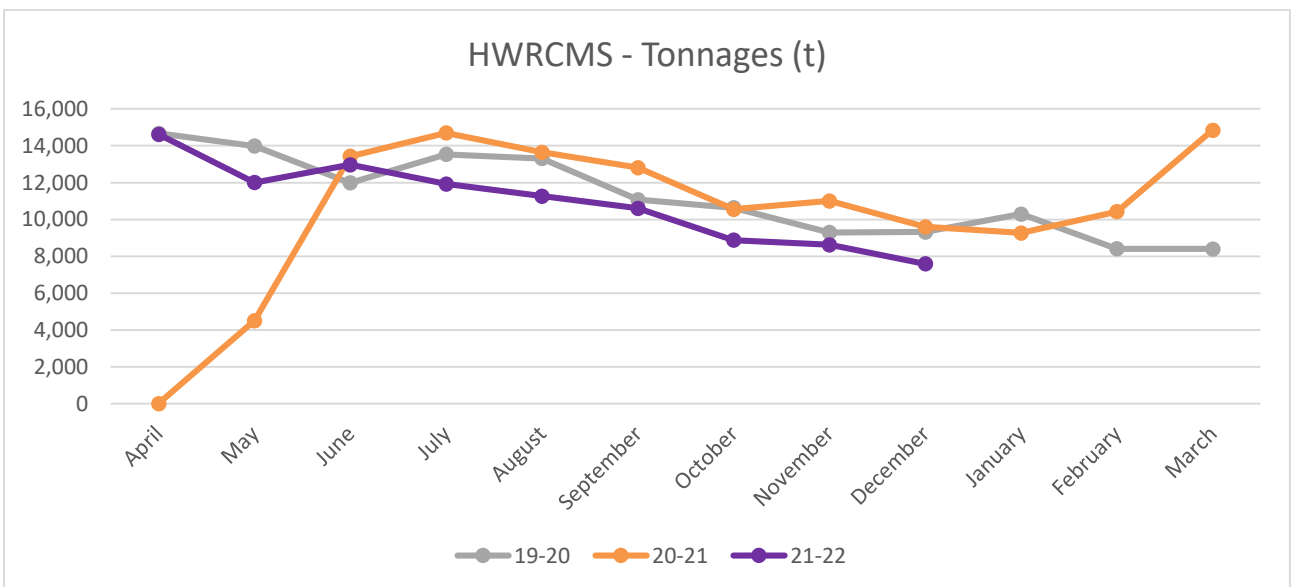
The data in the table below shows the tonnages received at the 9 HWRCs in the WRMS contract between April and December 21, with a month-on-month comparison for the previous two years. Last year's data was directly impacted by Covid restrictions, so a more indicative comparison is against the 2019/20 tonnage. Tonnage levels continue to fall against pre-Covid levels, with over 20% less material than in 2019/20.





### 4.3 HWRCMS Contract HWRC Tonnage Levels

The table below shows the tonnages received at the 11 HWRCs in the HWRCMS contract between April and December 21, with a comparison to 19/20 levels, as in 4.2. This also shows that this year's tonnages are remaining lower over the 9 months.



## **4.4 Overall Combined HWRC Tonnage Levels**

Overall, the cumulative figures up to the end of Quarter 3 for 21/22 show that the tonnages going through the 20 HWRCs across both Contracts are 16.5% lower than the same period of the 2019/20 (pre-Covid year) arisings. This equates to c.38k tonnes less material being delivered to these sites over the 9 months.

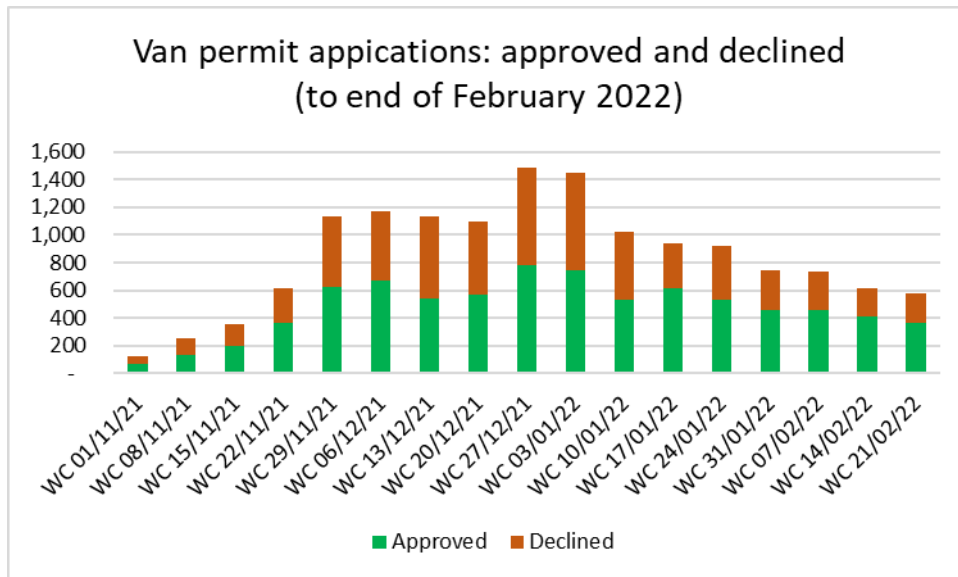
## **5. HWRC Van Permit Scheme Update**

### **5.1 Introduction**

The permit scheme to control access to the GMCA's HWRCs by vans, pick-ups and double-axle trailers has been fully launched with a 'soft' launch during November 2021 and the 'hard' launch from 1 December 2021. The scheme is part of the GMCA's actions to implement the HWRC Access Restrictions Policy approved in September 2019.

### **5.2 Permit Application Numbers**

Following Christmas, application numbers were levelling off with around 1,000 applications per week. However, since the start of February 2022 applications have stepped down again to an average of below 700 per week with the steady 57% approval level. Up to the 21 February 2022 14,145 applications had been made with 7,791 approved in total. See the graph below.



### 5.3 Application Experiences

As previously reported several common reasons for permit refusal have been identified. This gives an indication of how our sites were being used by those not necessarily entitled to previously. For example, the number of application attempts from van owners living outside GM has been a surprise as well as applications from residents who have access to a van but who cannot or do not wish to demonstrate permission from employers to use the vans for personal purposes. The impact of this is reflected in the reduction in van visits to our HWRCs (as shown in the following section).

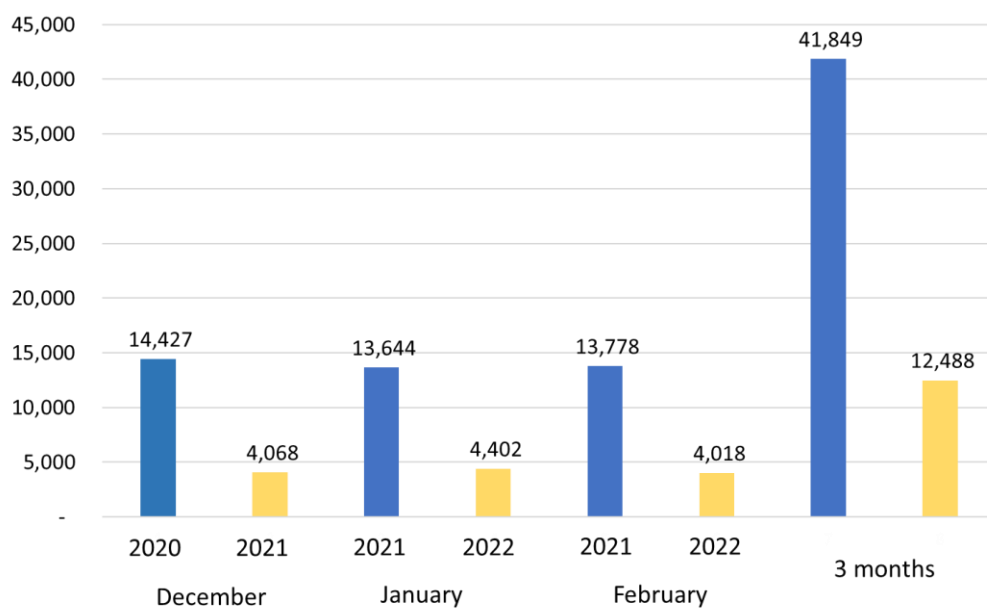
As the application process embeds and matures we are starting to see some novel examples of methods to try to circumvent the process. For example, vehicles that have been adapted for disabled users can have the characteristics and additional carrying capacity of a van but they are not required to apply for a permit as they are effectively a car. The example below shows how a disability adapted vehicle had been further adapted to become a van-like vehicle. The owners have been requested to apply for a permit if they wish to bring household waste to one of our HWRCs.



## 5.4 Impacts of the Permit Scheme

As the graph below shows, the permit scheme appears to be achieving its objectives. Visits by van owners have reduced substantially and the sites are receiving over one third of the numbers a year ago.

Van visits comparison



Subsequently the tonnages of waste being delivered are reducing. In comparing January 2021 with January 2022 Suez report that across all 20 HWRCs:

- Recycling reduced by 70 tonnes; and
- Residual waste reduced by 1,343 tonnes.

This had an overall impact of increasing the recycling rate by 3.4%.

A key measure of whether the permit scheme is a success in the wider context is the possible impact on fly tipping. The GMCA does not have access to data collected by the waste collection authorities but it is our understanding that any increases in linked fly tipping have not been reported by the districts. Suez has experienced a small number of incidents of fly tipping by disgruntled van owners at site entrances. These areas are covered by CCTV and staff wear body cameras and incidents have been reported to the relevant districts. In some cases, van owners refused entry have tried to walk waste onto site but this is stopped for health and safety reasons as well as to control traders.

## **5.5 Next Steps – Trial to Remove the Height Barrier at HWRC Sites**

With the reduction in the number of vans entering our HWRCs and the 'locking back' of the site entry height barriers (replaced by a low-level barrier that the meet and greet operative can deploy if they need to prevent access to the site by an unpermitted van) this presents the opportunity to review other aspects of HWRC usage.

For some time vehicles that could not fit under the 2.0 meter HWRC height barriers were redirected to the nearest transfer loading station to deposit waste (so called "high-sided" vehicles). There, the resident would need to wear the required PPE (which, prior to Covid Suez could lend) before tipping waste in operational tipping halls. The majority of the waste would not be recycled.

With the success of the van permit scheme and the relaxation in the use of the height barriers we now have an opportunity to assess the return of the high-sided vehicles to the main HWRCs. To that end Suez has proposed a trial to direct high-sided vehicles back to the nearest HWRC to consider how this works operationally and the approval of the Committee is sought to commence this trial. The van permit system will still apply to any relevant vehicles but the benefits are several:

- Site users:
  - will not have to travel as far to dispose of their household waste;
  - would not be exposed to the risks of depositing waste in busy operational transfer loading stations;
  - will be able to use a much greater number of sites across GM to deposit their waste;
  - would no longer have to provide PPE for their visits; and
  - would have the opportunity to maximise the recycling of their waste.
- Suez and the Authority:
  - would see the health and safety 'risk profile' of the transfer loading stations reduce;
  - would see a reduction in complaints relating to this measure; and
  - would see greater opportunity to capture recyclable materials at the HWRCs.

The proposal from Suez is to open up 18 HWRCs (the exceptions are Every St, Bury and Springvale, Middleton due to access arrangements that prevent the use of a drop down barrier) and redirect drivers of high side vehicles from the nearest transfer loading stations. There will be accompanying communications to alert site users to the new arrangements. The trial is proposed to run from 1 May 2022 to 1 September 2022 so that the findings can be assessed and reported to the October Committee meeting for, potentially, a request to make this a long-term policy change.

As the trial is a departure from the existing HWRC Access Controls Policy, Members are requested to consider and approve the commencement of the trial on the basis described above.

## **5.6 Summary**

Early indications are that the permit scheme is proving to be an important tool in the implementation of the GMCA's HWRC Access Policy and appears to be reducing the number of vans using our sites – vans that could have previously been delivering trade waste in an almost uncontrolled fashion.

We have made it clear that we are not restricting the delivery of household waste – we are controlling the use of a vehicle type that has the volume to deliver significantly greater quantities of waste than the average car.

We will continue to monitor the scheme and report back to the Committee. This analysis will include the assessment of the HWRC Access Policy and whether any changes can be identified that further contribute to its objectives.