

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE GMCA WASTE AND RECYCLING COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 17TH JANUARY 2024 AT THE MECHANIC INSTITUTE

PRESENT:

Bolton Council	Councillor David Chadwick
Bolton Council	Councillor Richard Silvester
Bury Council	Councillor Alan Quinn (in the Chair)
Manchester CC	Councillor Lee-Ann Igbon
Oldham Council	Councillor Josh Charters
Oldham Council	Councillor Pam Byrne
Salford CC	Councillor David Lancaster
Stockport Council	Councillor Dena Ryness
Stockport Council	Councillor Mark Roberts
Trafford Council	Councillor Stephen Adshead
Trafford Council	Councillor Tom Ross

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

GMCA Treasurer	Steve Wilson
GMCA Deputy Monitoring Officer	Gwynne Williams
GMCA Waste & Resources	David Taylor
GMCA Waste & Resources	Justin Lomax
GMCA Waste & Resources	Michael Kelly
GMCA Finance	Lindsey Keech
GMCA Waste & Resources	Michelle Whitfield
GMCA Waste & Resources	Paul Morgan
GMCA Environment	Sarah Mellor
GMCA Environment	Michelle Lynch
GMCA Governance & Scrutiny	Kerry Bond
GMCA Governance & Scrutiny	Kaja Davies – T Level Student

DISTRICT OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Bury Council	Daniela Dixon
Rochdale Council	Jo Oliver
Rochdale Council	Anthony Johns

WRC 23/21 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received and noted from Councillors Shaukat Ali (Manchester), Arnold Saunders (Salford) and Denise Ward (Tameside).

Apologies were also received and noted from Tom Ross (Portfolio Leader) and Eamonn Boylan, (Portfolio Chief Executive).

WRC 23/22 CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

There were no announcements or items of urgent business reported.

WRC 23/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED/-

1. That it be noted that Councillor Quinn declared an interest in Section 2 (City of Trees Planting Proposals) of item 7 – Capital and Asset Management Plan Project Update.

RESOLVED/-

That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2023 be approved as a correct record.

WRC 23/25 CONTRACTS UPDATE

Justin Lomax, Head of Contract Services and Paul Morgan, Head of Commercial Services, GMCA Waste and Resources Team introduced a report which provided an overview on the performance of the Waste and Resource Management Services (WRMS) and Household Waste Recycling Centre Management Services (HWRCMS) Contracts, and key issues currently affecting the waste management services.

The report presented cumulative annual data, for the period up to the end of September 2023 for the two contracts held by Suez. An overview of the cumulative data, total waste arisings, and contamination levels, landfill diversion, HWRC recycling rate, overall recycling rate, HWRC visit levels and tonnage rates were also provided.

The report outlined three events that had occurred between April and September 2023 that are reportable under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR).

A consultation to reform the 2013 Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Regulations was launched on 28 December 2023 in a bid to increase separately collected WEEE for recycling and re-use. Discussions are taking place with local authority officers around how this may impact districts collections of these types of waste.

Officers confirmed that links to communication and resources packages regarding kerbside recycling will be shared with local authority officers and Members.

Members were informed that the most recent verified local authority performance data issued by Defra, relating to the 2021/22 financial year, show that GMCA has a recycling rate of 50.9%, the 5th highest performance out of 29 disposal authorities.

Members requested that rejection rates data by district be shared.

Officers confirmed that separate checks on waste is carried out by Suez prior to the waste being sent to the recyclers.

DEFRA are carrying out a piece of work to analyse the amount of packaging in street litter bins, with payments for the management of packing starting in the 2nd scheme year (2026/27).

RESOLVED /-

1. That the report be noted.
2. To agree that the DEFRA Performance Figures for 2021/22 be shared with members.
3. To agree that links to communication and resources packages regarding kerbside recycling be shared with local authority officers and Members.

WRC 23/26 HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING CENTRE ACCESS POLICY REVIEW

Paul Morgan, Head of Commercial Services, GMCA Waste and Resources Team introduced a report presenting several strands of evidence to assess the impact of restricting access to the Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) on achieving the aims of the Policy, including:

- User visits analysis
- Reduction in tonnages
- Recycling performance
- Evidence that the policy is achieving its aims

Members raised concerns of staff safety at the recycling centres.

Officers confirmed that access to sites by community groups and voluntary groups can be arranged via districts officers.

Members requested a breakdown of data for access refusal to sites.

Officers confirmed that simpler and faster access to permit applications will be investigated at the next review of the system.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the report and the findings of the impact assessment be noted.
2. That the amendment of the Controlled Waste Regulations as regards “DIY waste” be noted.
3. To agree that officers liaise with districts to arrange access for community and voluntary sectors to recycling centres.
4. To agree that a breakdown of data for access refusal to sites be requested from Suez.

**GMCA 23/27 CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND ASSET MANAGEMENT
UPDATE**

Councillor Alan Quinn declared an interest in the report and vacated the Chair for the discussion.

Councillor Stephen Adshead, Trafford Council, took the Chair for this item of business.

Michael Kelly, Head of Engineering and Asset Management, GMCA Waste and Resources Team presented proposals for a new Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) and the City of Trees planting projects that are due to commence in 2024.

Due to new obligations under the Simpler Recycling element of the National Resources and Waste Strategy (RaWS) for all local authorities from 2026 to recycle pots, tubs, and trays (PTTs) and plastic films/soft flexible plastics from 2027. A review of the Longley Lane MRF has taken place confirming that the facility doesn't have the capacity or capability to capture the additional material types and would require significant modifications and additional third-party capacity would need to be sourced to process the additional recycling.

An appraisal has been carried out, considering four different options with a recommendation, approved at GMCA's December 2023 meeting, to implement a phased approach to refurbish Salford Road IVC, c.£2 to £3M, and install a new MRF, c.£15-£18m. Once construction is complete in January 2027, the Longley Lane Plant will be decommissioned creating operational space for alternative future uses, potentially, a washing and flaking plant.

The City of Trees (CoT) aim to tackle climate change through planting and woodland restoration across Greater Manchester (GM), they have an ambition to plant one tree for every resident in GM. The GMCA have offered the use of two areas of former landfill at Bredbury and Chichester Street that can be used to plant trees which will be managed by CoT for 3 years, following this and for up to 15 years CoT will make site inspections and carry out any remedial works. After 15-years, all trees will be the responsibility of the GMCA as the landowner to manage and maintain.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the planting proposals and arrangements with City of Trees for the Bredbury and Chichester Street sites be approved.
3. That officers make introductions between City of Trees and the Salford Brookhouse site owners.

Paul Morgan, Head of Commercial Services, GMCA Waste and Resources Team presented a report detailing the steps required to develop a strategy to manage kerbside collected biowaste from May 2026 and the process for the procurement of biowaste treatment contracts.

The GMCA will be requested to approve a strategy for procurement of treatment capacity for mixed garden and food waste and a market testing exercise for the potential development of dry anaerobic digestion (AD), following the suggested timeline:

April- June 2024: run a 2026-29 Biowaste Framework procurement process

July 2024: contract award, delegated to the GMCA Head of Paid Service in consultation with the GMCA Treasurer and the Portfolio Lead for Green Cities

April-June 2024: run market testing exercise of dry AD/IVC treatment capacity

July 2024: evaluation and dialogue of the market testing exercise

September 2024: evaluation findings to be presented to the GMCA for approval.

Members were advised that there is the option for further procurement for contracts from 2029-34.

Officers confirmed that a dry anaerobic digestion system can accept garden waste, it has a different process of how material is dealt with, producing less digestate but more solid fertiliser, when seeking market interest specific technologies will be stressed to ensure maximum carbon return from the material. Feedback from a visit to a dry AD facility will be shared with members.

Members agreed that more stability and vision is required from DEFRA and the government.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the content of the report and proposed strategy be noted.
2. To agree that feedback following an officer visit to an anaerobic digestion in-vessel composting facility will be shared with members.
3. To agree that update reports be brought to future meetings.

GMCA 23/29 THE MANAGEMENT OF CARBON EMISSIONS FROM NON-RECYCLABLE RESIDUAL WASTE

Paul Morgan, Head of Commercial Services, GMCA Waste and Resources Team updated members on the progress of the introduction of the UK Emissions Trading Scheme for carbon emitted from energy from waste facilities and the impact on the GMCA; a proposal for the capture and storage of carbon generated at the Runcorn thermal power station, and members approval to write a letter of support to Viridor to enable further discussions on how the scheme will operate and to identify risks and mitigations.

The government consulted on the inclusion of the energy from waste (EfW) sector in the existing UK Emissions Trading Scheme (UK ETS) – effectively a levy on the emission of fossil carbon to the atmosphere. From 2028 everyone that sends waste to an energy from waste facility will have to pay a fossil carbon element of the emissions trading scheme. The potential cost for the GMCA being modelled at up to c.£19m per annum based on current carbon trading prices. Waste from Raikes Lane will be subject to these levy charges.

Runcorn EfW facility is one of two facilities currently actively pursuing the possible construction of carbon capture and storage technology supported by the Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DESNEZ) which may provide an opportunity for GMCA to claim that CO₂ generated by its waste is not emitted to the atmosphere. Initial discussions with Viridor, the EfW operator and project developer for carbon capture have taken place.

Members supported the proposal for the capture and storage of carbon generated at the Runcorn thermal power station.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the report and the potential implications of the UK Emissions Trading Scheme on GMCA residual waste management costs be noted.
2. That the proposal for the capture and storage of carbon emitted from the thermal recovery of residual waste at the Runcorn thermal power station and the potential implications for the GMCA as a significant supplier of residual waste to that facility be noted.
3. That an in-principal letter of support for the carbon capture project and the exploration of the opportunities, implications and potential impacts be approved.
4. That further update reports be brought to this Committee to enable members gain a better understanding of carbon capture and storage.

**GMCA 23/30 BUDGET AND LEVY 2024/25 AND MEDIUM-TERM
FINANCIAL PLAN TO 2026/27**

Steve Wilson, GMCA Treasurer presented a report detailing the budget and levy for 2024/25 and the Medium-Term Financial Plan to 2026/27, delivered by:

A total levy requirement for 2024/25 of £174.3m, which represents a 3.1% average increase over 2023/24, the levy changes at a local authority level range from 1.3% to 5.0%, and the medium-term financial plan proposed levy charges of £180.8m in 2025/26 and £189.2m in 2026/27.

A c.£9m forecast underspend for the 2023/24 waste budget is predominantly driven by a reduction in tonnages across Household Waste Recycling Centres and forecast income from paper, card and commingled waste being above budget which is expected to continue into 2024/25.

Discussions are underway with district Treasurers regarding the possibility of returning reserves to districts.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the forecast outturn for 2023/24 be noted.
2. That the proposed 2025/26 trade waste rate of £138.93 to allow forward planning by GM Local Authorities be noted.
3. That the capital programme for 2024/25 as set out at Appendix A of the report be noted.
4. That the budget and levy for 2024/25 of £174.3m (3.1% increase) be noted.
5. That the risk position set out in the Balances Strategy and Reserves be noted.

GMCA 23/31 SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION UPDATE

Sarah Mellor, Head of Sustainable Consumption and Production and Michelle Lynch, Principal Sustainably Consumption and Production officer, GMCA introduced a report and presentation which provided an update on several key projects within the Greater Manchester (GM) Sustainable Consumption and Production Action (SCP) Plan, and on the development of the 5-year Environment Plan.

Key activities include:

1. Moving to a Circular Economy
 - a) Scope 3 Emission analysis due to be completed by the end of January with the toolkits developed by the end of March.
 - b) Food Waste, working with Manchester City Council to maximise redistribution of avoidable food waste out of the system in GM.
 - c) Single Use Plastic Pact, including refill projects and the commitment for GM to become a refill destination with a communication drive to raise awareness and

increase accessibility of refill and reuse options; a Schools Eco Refill Pilot will begin in February and two new e-modules on single use plastics and the GCMA Sustainability Strategy.

- d) The Foundational Economy Innovation Fund.
2. Managing Waste Sustainably: Interim Waste Strategy workshop to model an Interim Waste Plan.
3. New 5 Year Environment Plan structure and timeline to launch at the Green Summit towards the end of the year.

Members requested that details of the Refill Pilot in schools be shared with members.

Officers confirmed that Manchester Metropolitan University and the University of Manchester support with research evidence on various projects relating to circular economy, work is shared with district officers.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the progress of the key areas of activity currently being undertaken be noted.
2. To agree that the detail of the Refill Pilot in schools be shared.
3. That an update to the next meeting on behaviour insights be approved.

GMCA 23/31 DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Thursday 14th March 10am-12noon

RESOLVED /

1. That the date and time of the next meeting be rearranged.

GMCA 22/32**EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC****RESOLVED /-**

That, under section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public should be excluded from the meeting for the following items on business because this involved the likely disclosure of exempt information, as set out in the relevant paragraph 3 of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

GMCA 23/33**CONTRACTS UPDATE**

Justin Lomax, Head of Contract Services and Paul Morgan, Head of Commercial Services, GMCA Waste and Resources Team updated members on the updating on the performance and commercial issues relating to the Waste and Resources and Household Waste Recycling Centre Management Services Contracts and on the Rail Wagon Capital Replacement Programme.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the contract updates and key risks set out at sections 1 and 2 of the report be noted.
2. That section 3 of the report on the Wagon Capital Replacement Programme be noted.
3. That the capital expenditure of eleven replacement rail wagons be approved.

GMCA 23/34**PROVISION OF FUTURE WASTE DISPOSAL SERVICES**

David Taylor, Executive Director, GMCA Waste and Resources Team presented a report detailing the outcome of an options appraisal for the future provision of waste disposal services from June 2026.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the outcome of the contract procurement options appraisal for the Waste and Resources and Household Waste Recycling Centre Management Services Contracts be noted.
2. That the recommendation for the GMCA to not enter into procurement for a contract commencing in 2026 and the commencement of discussions with Suez on the extension of the contracts in accordance with contract clauses be noted.