

**Minutes of the Greater Manchester Waste and Recycling Committee held on
Wednesday 17 July 2024 at the Mechanics Institute**

Present:

Bolton Council	Councillor Richard Silvester
Bury Council	Councillor Alan Quinn (in the Chair)
Bury Council	Councillor Gareth Staples-Jones
Manchester CC	Councillor Lee-Ann Igbon
Manchester CC	Councillor Shaukat Ali
Oldham Council	Councillor Pam Byrne
Oldham Council	Councillor Ken Rustidge
Rochdale Council	Councillor Aasim Rashid
Salford CC	Councillor David Lancaster
Salford CC	Councillor Barbara Bentham
Stockport Council	Councillor Dena Ryness
Stockport Council	Councillor Mark Roberts
Tameside Council	Councillor Denise Ward
Trafford Council	Councillor Stephen Adshead
Trafford Council	Councillor Dylan Butt

Officers in Attendance:

GMCA Waste & Resources	David Taylor
GMCA Deputy Monitoring Officer	Sarah Bennett
GMCA Waste & Resources	Justin Lomax
GMCA Waste & Resources	Michael Kelly
GMCA Waste & Resources	Michelle Whitfield
GMCA Waste & Resources	Paul Morgan
GMCA Environment	Michelle Lynch
GMCA Environment	Sarah Mellor
GMCA Governance & Scrutiny	Kerry Bond

DISTRICT OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

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

1. APOLOGIES

Resolved/-

Apologies for absence were received and noted from Councillors Robert Morrissey (Bolton sub), Arnold Saunders (Salford sub), David Meller (Stockport sub), Hugh Roderick (Tameside sub).

Apologies were also received and noted from Tom Ross (Portfolio Leader), Caroline Simpson (Portfolio Chief Executive), Steve Wilson (GMCA), Lindsey Keech (GMCA).

2. Appointment of Chair

Nominations for the appointment of a Chair of the Committee for the 2024/2025 Municipal Year were sought. Members noted that any appointment of Chair will require endorsement by the GMCA.

The nomination of Councillor Alan Quinn was moved and seconded. No other nominations were received.

Resolved/-

1. Agreed to nominate Councillor Alan Quinn as Chair of the Greater Manchester Waste and Recycling Committee for 2024/25 for approval by the GMCA.

2A. Appointment of Vice Chair

Nominations for the appointment of a Vice Chair of the Committee for the 2024/2025 Municipal Year were sought. Members noted that any appointment of Vice Chair will require endorsement by the GMCA.

The nomination of Councillor Steve Adshead was moved and seconded. No other nominations were received.

Resolved/-

1. Agreed to nominate Councillor Steve Adshead as Vice Chair of the Greater Manchester Waste and Recycling Committee for 2024/25 for approval by the GMCA.

COUNCILLOR QUINN IN THE CHAIR

3. Membership of the GM Waste & Recycling Committee 2024/25

Resolved/-

1. To note the membership of the GM Waste & Recycling Committee for the 2024/25 municipal year.

4. Appointment to the Green City Region Partnership

The Chair sought nominations to the Greater Manchester Green City Region Partnership.

The nomination of Councillor Stephen Adshead was moved and seconded. No other nominations were received.

Resolved/-

1. To appoint Councillor Steve Adshead to the Green City Region Board for the 2024/25 municipal year.

5. Members Code of Conduct

Sarah Bennett, GMCA Deputy Monitoring Officer introduced a report reminding members of their obligations under the GMCA Members' Code of Conduct and the requirement to complete an annual declaration of interest form. Members noted that once completed, their respective declarations of interest will be published on the GMCA website.

Resolved/-

1. That the GMCA's Member Code of Conduct at Appendix A of the report be noted.
2. To agree to complete and return the annual register of interest form at Appendix B of the report.

6. Terms of Reference

Sarah Bennett, GMCA Monitoring Officer introduced the report detailing the updated Terms of Reference for the GMCA Waste and Recycling Committee with the addition of nomination a Vice Chair for the Committee.

Resolved/-

1. That the Terms of Reference at appendix 1 of the report be noted.

7. Committee Work Programme

David Taylor, Executive Director of Waste, GMCA, introduced a report that set out the Committee Work Programme for 2024/2025. Members were informed that the work programme is a live document and will be updated throughout the year.

Resolved/-

1. That the Committee Work Programme for 2024/25 be agreed.

8. 2024/25 Programme of Meetings

Resolved/-

1. That the programme of meetings for 2024/25 be noted.

9. Chairs Announcements and Urgent Business

Resolved/-

1. There were no announcements or items of urgent business reported.

10. Declarations of Interest

Resolved/-

1. There were no Declarations of Interest reported.

11. Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 March 2024

The minutes of the previous meeting of the committee, held on 13th March 2024 were submitted.

Resolved/-

1. That the minutes of the meeting held on 13th March 2024 be approved as a correct record.

12. Contracts Update

Justin Lomax, Head of Contract Services, GMCA Waste and Resources Team introduced a report which provided an overview of the performance of the Waste and Resources Management Services (WRMS) and the Household Waste Recycling Centre Management Services (HWRCMS) contracts that commenced on 1 June 2019.

The report presented cumulative annual data, for the period up to the end of March 2024 (Quarter 4) of the financial year 2023/24 (Contract year 5), 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 and HWRC visit levels were also provided.

The report outlined four events that had occurred over the last year that are reportable under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR).

Members were advised that the HWRC system across the conurbation has a capacity of over 300k tonnes which includes a contingency to accommodate the increase in recycling levels due to additional house builds.

Officers confirmed that standard operating procedures are in place across all sites to check and react to possible hazardous materials in the waste streams.

The impact of Cheshire East closing household recycling sites will be managed via the permit scheme and postcode checks across Greater Manchester.

Members were advised that the introduction of the permit schemes has not led to an increase in fly tipping across the conurbation.

Resolved /-

1. That the report be noted.

13. Communications & Engagement Behavioural Change Plan 2024/25

Michelle Whitfield, Head of Communications and Behavioural Change, GMCA Waste and Resources Team talked to a report and presentation updating Members on the Communications Plan and activities undertaken in the first quarter of 2024/25, including:

Fly Tipping Campaign - Your Waste, Your Responsibility was launched in May and was co-designed with and tailored to the nine districts to raise awareness and highlight residents' responsibility for disposing of their waste responsibly by using licenced waste removal companies.

Education Services and Visits:

In 2023/4 there were over 7,000 visits to the education centres.

The education team are liaising with schools and coach companies to overcome barriers they have in attending the tours and sessions at the Materials Recovery Facilities by subsidising coach costs and reducing the sessions to a half day, evening and weekend sessions are also being held to help other communities access the services.

Members were offered the opportunity to visit the education centres.

R4GM (Recycle for Greater Manchester) Community Fund

Biodiversity and City of Trees - approximately 800 trees have been planted across Bredbury Parkway in Stockport connecting to the existing woodland, and Chichester Street in Rochdale which will increase the biodiversity by attracting more wildlife to the areas.

A GMCA Biodiversity Duty Plan is being developed, outlining that public authorities must consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity on land owned by them, work is being carried out with SUEZ to identify other opportunities to improve biodiversity on waste sites.

Communications will highlight the tree planting as well as other ways we are improving biodiversity such as through the R4GM Community Fund projects.

The 2024 R4GM Community Fund received 71 applications of which 21 have been selected for funding for agreement.

Resolved/-

1. That the Communications & Engagement Plan and the progress updates be noted.

14. Waste Strategy and Policy Update

Paul Morgan, Head of Commercial Services, GMCA Waste and Resources Team introduced a report providing an update on the latest announcements by government on Simpler Recycling and policy including the consultation on the UK Emissions Trading Scheme.

Government has confirmed exemption of two methods of waste collection that can be adopted for the collection of dry recycling mixed in the same container and the collection of food waste and garden waste together in the same container, resulting in districts continuing to collect food waste and garden waste without the need to develop a robust economic, environmental and technical justification.

The Government has announced plans to publish statutory guidance on the collection of residual waste on a two weekly basis which will have significant impact on the four authorities that collect on a three-weekly basis. Following legal advice, the GMCA were advised that an authority may be in breach of its operative statutory duty to collect residual waste if it does not do so in accordance with the frequency set out in the guidance, to the extent that an authority could set out a lawful rationale for departing with the requirements in the guidance, it would not be deemed to be in breach of the operative duty, it is therefore imperative that those four authorities collecting on a three weekly basis seek their own legal advice in developing that lawful rationale.

The change in Government has delayed the publication of the statutory guidance, possibly providing an opportunity to lobby Defra on this subject with the view of allowing local authorities as much flexibility as possible.

The Government has announced that energy from waste (EfW) facilities used by the GMCA for the recovery of around 500,000 tonnes of residual waste annually would be included in the UK Emissions Trading Scheme (UKETS) from 1st January 2028, resulting in an additional cost per tonne on the carbon dioxide (CO₂) omitted by the incineration of the fossil carbon content of residual waste. The per tonne levy will vary as it operates on an open market, Government used a figure of £70/t for modelling work in 2023, applied to GMCA household waste the cost could be c.£17.5m per annum.

Consultation is being carried out by Government on aspects of the scheme, key areas for GMCA are the proposals for operations, monitoring, reporting, verification and guidance and the impacts and risks associated with the scheme. GMCA's response to the consultation on the key proposals will seek to argue that, whilst we support the drive towards net zero, the cost impacts on local authorities seems disproportionately high and government should work to reduce these where possible whilst still providing an incentive to reduce emissions of fossil-carbon from residual waste.

Members were advised that a comprehensive response was submitted to Defra around the fortnightly minimum service frequency for residual waste collections, stating the reasons why authorities should be allowed to retain 3 weekly recycling, including the detriment to residents and costs.

Officers confirmed that organics waste collections are expected at 100% of properties including apartments block and multi occupational households. There are six GM districts that don't have to make changes to their current collections until 2034 due to the transitional arrangements in place.

Members highlighted the challenges of the Emission Trading Scheme due to the statutory duty to accommodate and the payments that will fall to residents, they questioned whether the committee could lobby government requesting that GM retain funds generated through the UK's Emissions Trading Scheme from incinerated waste to be used as circular investment in localised decarbonisation. Officers agreed to include the suggestion in the GM Emission Trading Scheme Consultation response.

Members were advised that the proposed carbon capture usage and storage scheme at the Runcorn EfW would result in costs similar to those that would be incurred by the UKETS Scheme.

Resolved/-

1. That the update provided on strategic and policy matters be noted.
2. That any district seeking to continue to collect residual waste on a three weekly basis obtain their own legal advice as part of formulating their rationale for departing from any statutory guidance on the subject be agreed.
3. That officers, on behalf of the committee, write to Defra, the Secretary of State and the Local Government Association to request that statutory guidance on the frequency of residual waste collection is reconsidered giving local authorities the flexibility to determine their own waste collection frequencies be agreed.

4. That officers include in the GM Emission Trading Scheme Consultation response the request that GM retain funds generated through the UK's Emissions Trading Scheme from incinerated waste to be used as circular investment in localised decarbonisation be agreed.

15. GMCA Waste and Resources Budget Outturn 2023/24

David Taylor, Executive Director of Waste, GMCA introduced a report setting out the revenue and capital outturn for 2023/24 for the Waste and Resources Service.

The report highlighted the variance against the budget, including a tonnage projection underspend due to the budget setting forecast levels, income from recyclables due to income assumptions, and third-party income from the sale of electricity and steam which was lower than anticipated. These have resulted in an underspend that will be transferred into reserves before a decision is made later in the year on return of reserves back to districts.

Members were advised that elements of the National Waste Strategy (NWS) are enacted by law and dependant on changes within the waste stream, Suez will review their contract throughout the year and liaise with the GMCA on change of law claims. Changes to the NWS will also be monitored by the GMCA.

Resolved/-

1. That the report be noted.

16. Sustainable Consumption and Production: Avoidable Single-Use Plastics

Michelle Lynch, Lead Programmes Manager, Sustainable Consumption and Production, GMCA Environment Team talked to a report and presentation updating the Committee on the progress of the Single-Use Plastic Work Programme

undertaken as part of the Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) Priorities 1, 2 and 4 - Moving to a Circular Economy, Managing Waste Sustainably, and Moving to Sustainable Lifestyles. The update included:

- Highlights of the project delivery since the launch of the Plastic Pact in 2019.
 - Over 900 refill stations across GM saving over 48,000 bottles going to waste
 - Manchester signed up to be a refill destination, adding 100 new refill stations in the last 12 months
 - Work is undertaken by the Single-Use Plastic Working Group
 - Greater Manchester as a refill destination
 - 16 June #World Refill Day with over 300+ total visits to refill pages on the GM Green City website in that week
 - Plastic Free July will see the launch of several case studies
- Pupil Led Eco Refill Shops – along with reducing single-use plastics it also gives young people the skills and tools to play a part in tackling climate change.
 - 9 schools launched with 40 shop openings with 270 bottles refilled in term 1
- Climate Relay on 14th June ran through 9 GMCA schools – 2 Eco Refill Shops
- A Single-Use Plastics and Reducing Waste Plastics E-Module is in development with the first draft expected mid July 2024.
- Spend Analysis Public Estate – Catering
- Research Projects with the University of Manchester
- The launch of two Returnable Cup Scheme Pilots will be launched in Manchester in September for 12months.

Following the single use plastic ban in 2023, the GMCA established a Single Use Plastic Working Group to work with local authorities, a full communication toolkit along with information, advice and guidance on the Green City website has been shared with districts to enable work to take place with business owners. Officers confirmed that a further communication exercise could take place to reiterate the guidance for business owners following a review of the evidence base from the

previous communications to help identify why the behaviours of business owners aren't changing.

Officers confirmed that work has previously taken place with universities across GM and that additional work will be conducted in collaboration with colleges and universities.

Officers advised that additional work is being carried out with schools and the Learning and Education Partnership in readiness of the employment of Climate Change Leads in all schools by 2025, other resources along with the refill pilot are shared with schools.

Pupils Profit are working with the Greater Manchester and national schools to share learning on projects including the GMCA pilot.

The GMCA developed Climate Action Plans for schools in 2022, these were adopted by Government and rolled out nationally, additional funds for schools are being sought to help with the implementation of these plans.

Members were advised that the circular economy new directive didn't consider plastic water bottles due the significance of water for the economy and the availability of recycle outlets. Research will be carried out by GMCA officers on options other than plastic bottles that could be used for public events.

Officers confirmed that all schools that submitted an expression of interest to participate in the Eco Refill Pilot were chosen. The success of the pilots varies due to resources available and how often the shops can be open.

Six of the ten pilots are fully funded and receive c.£2k, initial products, resource and training packages and continuous support from pupil profit and the GMCA, the part funded schools receive the products, initial resources and training, this is being investigated to see what more can be offered.

Members were advised that the refill destination scheme encourages users to refill and reuse their own containers which should have a positive impact on the use of plastic packaging, work is also underway with universities on alternatives.

It was requested that the e-learning module be shared with the committee and that it also be shared with all GM decision makers via the Green City Regio Partnership.

Members requested that a letter be sent to the Secretary of State for Education and the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on behalf of the committee requesting the promotion and dissemination of national government direction, good practise and initiatives on single use plastics to schools.

Resolved/-

1. That the progress of the key areas of activities currently being undertaken as part of the Single-Use Plastic Work Programme be noted.
2. That officers include the request for resource and support from government on single use plastics in their letter to the secretary of state.
3. That the single use plastic e-learning module be shared with members of the committee and members of the GM Green City Region Partnership be agreed.
4. That a letter be sent to the Secretary of State for Education and the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on behalf of the committee requesting the promotion and dissemination of national government direction, good practise and initiatives on single use plastics to schools going forwards be agreed.

17. 2024-25 Capital Programme and Asset Management Update

Michael Kelly, Head of Engineering and Asset Management, GMCA Waste and Resources Team presented a report providing members with an update on key capital projects and lifecycle projects during quarter one of 2024-25 on three asset categories:

1. Reliance Street modification - providing a larger facility creating additional capacity to receive, manage, recycle and segregate commodities including a re-

use shop. Commencement of the project is Spring 2025, this will avoid starting works in winter which could incur further delays and unnecessary risk due to poor weather and will ensure that the existing facility is open during the peak Christmas period and early 2025.

2. A number of asset functions are being reviewed for repurposing, removal, or replacement following refurbishment of the Mechanical Treatment and Reception Facilities in 2022. Several projects have been undertaken to remove redundant plant and equipment, helping to reduce energy demands and making space available for future repurposing, including:
 - Removal of AD plant, equipment, and structures at Cobden Street in preparation for the installation of an anaerobic digestion system later in the year.
 - Bredbury site plant and equipment removal in quarter 2 of 2024-25, with discussions underway with Suez on how they could repurpose the area.
 - The anaerobic digestion plant at Reliance Street has been removed in readiness for the build of a new Household Waste Recycling Centre opening in 2025.
 - The build of a new Material Recovery Facility with a completion date of April 2026, within the former in-vessel composter (IVC) building at Salford Road Over Hulton, allowing the ability to receive more pots, tubs and trays along with flexible films and tetra cartons which local authorities are expected to collect and extract as part of the National Resources and Waste Strategy.

Resolved/-

1. That the report be noted.

18. Changes to MRF Recycling Sampling Requirements

Paul Morgan, Head of Commercial Services, GMCA Waste and Resources Team updated Members on the changes to the sampling requirements for dry recycling resulting from a change in the law and the impacts this will have on infrastructure

and costs.

Following the introduction and legal requirement by Government in 2014 to sample the composition of two or more products to monitor the quality and composition of recycling delivered to facilities and to improve transparency in the supply chain, procedures were put in place to comply at the Longley Lane Materials Recycling Facility.

New Regulations coming into effect in October 2025 strengthen the previous requirements, increase complexity by adding new materials categories, widen the scope of waste reception points and increase the sampling frequency which result in costs increase to the GMCA from c.£136k to c.£540k per annum.

To ensure compliance Suez has assessed various options and submitted proposals including the installation of a sorting facility at Longley Lane all of which will be challenged to ensure they are compliant, robust and necessary, the existing Change Protocol in the Waste and Resources Management System Contract will be applied to introduce the required changes.

Members were advised that the regulations have been put in place to gain further detail on the data and understanding of the packaging elements of our waste, particularly due to the deposit return scheme and end producer responsibility regulations.

Resolved/-

1. That the changes to the sampling of recycling required by the change and expansion in regulatory requirements be noted.
2. That the proposals provided by Suez for compliance with the Regulations and the verbal update given be noted.

19. Exclusion of 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.

20. Contracts Update

Justin Lomax, Head of Contract Services, GMCA Waste and Resources Team introduced a report which updated the Committee on performance and commercial issues relating to the Waste and Resources and Household Waste Recycling Centre Management Services Contracts that commenced on 1 June 2019.

Resolved/-

1. That the contract updates and key risks detailed in the report be noted.