

Greater Manchester Combined Authority

Waste and Recycling Committee

Date: 16 October 2024

Subject: Waste Strategy and Policy Update – Part A

Report of: Paul Morgan, Head of Commercial Services, Waste and Resources Team

Purpose of Report

To provide an update on the latest announcements by government on Simpler Recycling and other associated policy areas.

Recommendations:

The Committee is requested to:

1. Note the update provided on strategic and policy matters.

Contact Officers

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Equalities Impact, Carbon and Sustainability Assessment:

Risk Management

There are a number of risks that arise from Simpler Recycling relating to the collection of waste and these will be considered further as proposals become clearer.

Legal Considerations

To date there has been no formal announcement that the requirement to collect non-recyclable residual waste no less frequent than once every two weeks will change so this risk remains.

Financial Consequences – Revenue

There will be revenue consequences to both transition to and operation of the Simpler Recycling waste collection methodologies but until clarity is received it is difficult to calculate impacts precisely.

In both cases there may be some income from the Packaging Extended Producer Responsibility fund that will go a little way to offset increased costs. The extent of any offset is currently unknown.

Financial Consequences – Capital

As previous update.

Number of attachments to the report: None.

Comments/recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee

N/A

Background Papers

- [GMCA Part A Report Template \(greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk\)](https://greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk) – waste strategy update to the Committee July 2023
- [GMCA Part A Report Template \(greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk\)](https://greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk) - The Management of Carbon Emissions from Non-Recyclable Residual Waste 17th January 2024
- [Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Greater Manchester Waste & Recycling Committee, 17/07/2024 14:00 \(greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk\)](https://greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk) – waste strategy update to the Committee July 2024
- [UK Emissions Trading Scheme scope expansion: waste - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

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?

None.

GM Transport Committee

N/A

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

N/A

1. Introduction

Naturally one would expect a change in Government to result in a pause in the pace of change in some policy and strategy areas. This is the case in relation to the National Resources and Waste Strategy (RaWS) and Simpler Recycling.

2. National Resources and Waste Strategy/Simpler Recycling

Following the suspension of engagement with stakeholders in the pre-election period, Defra recommenced its programme of communications with local authorities and businesses. In these events Defra reconfirmed its commitments to the timelines relating to the introduction of the Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging (pEPR) – we should receive indicative funding allocations in November. Other work on fees and charges (applicable to packaging producers) has been forthcoming.

In terms of the waste collection aspects of Simpler Recycling (such as the introduction of consistent collections to businesses, the addition of pots, tubs and trays and plastic films to collections) Defra indicated they were still committed to timescales but were reviewing proposals – it is hoped this review will provide a more flexible approach to residual waste collection frequency, but we wait and see.

The new Secretary of State at Defra did announce that "creating a roadmap to move Britain to a zero waste economy" was one of his five core priorities. There has been no clarity on this, but Defra has said that it intends to start speaking to the industry and stakeholders to develop this. It has been announced that a Circular Economy Task Force will be created.

In comments at a conference Mary Creagh MP, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' under whom the government's oversight of the circular economy sits is reported to have said that progressing the pEPR would be a priority, that the introduction of the deposit return scheme for single use drinks containers was on track for introduction in 2027 and that the government could use an EPR to capture more critical minerals from electronic waste.

3. UK Emissions Trading Scheme

Members will recall previous reports to the Committee on the inclusion of energy from waste into the UK's Emissions Trading Scheme (UKETS). The UKETS is a scheme whereby larger emitters of carbon dioxide (CO₂) effectively pay a levy on the quantity of fossil-based carbon

(i.e. carbon from an oil source) they release into the atmosphere. The government recently announced that energy from waste (EfW - the route used by the GMCA for the recovery of around 500,000 tonnes of residual waste annually) would be included in the scheme from 1st January 2028.

At the last Committee it was reported that DESNZ (the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero) was consulting on aspects of the scheme as it applied to waste (as summarised in the previous update). GMCA responded to this sharing concerns about the additional costs that will arise and the arrangements for ensuring that local authorities only pay for the CO₂ they emit thereby benefitting from actions that reduce fossil CO₂.

GMCA is of the belief that a significant proportion of the costs of the UKETS should not fall onto local authorities and should more appropriately be directly born by those putting fossil carbon-containing materials onto the market. In this case, this particularly includes wastes such as packaging, nappies and textiles. GMCA will be seeking to make this, and associated, points to DESNZ directly and through sector groups.