GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

Waste and Recycling Committee Meeting

Date: 22 July 2020

Subject: HWRC Access Policy Report – Part A

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

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PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report sets out examples of van permit schemes in operation elsewhere and seeks approval for a fully developed scheme to be worked up and presented to a future meeting of the Committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Members of the Committee are recommended to :

   i.   Approve the development of a project plan for a potential van permit scheme and for this to be presented for consideration at a future meeting of the Committee.

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Comments and/or recommendation from the relevant Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Risk Management - considered in the body of the report

Legal Considerations – considered in the body of the report

Financial Consequences – Revenue - considered in the body of the report

Financial Consequences – Capital – considered in the body of the report

Number of attachments included in the report: 1 – Appendix A, Permit Schemes in Operation by other Local Authorities

BACKGROUND PAPERS: 0

TRACKING/PROCESS	
Does this report relate to a major strategic decision, as set out in the GMCA Constitution (paragraph 14.2) or in the process (paragraph 13.1 AGMA Constitution) agreed by the AGMA Executive Board:	No
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 AGMA Scrutiny Pool on the grounds of urgency?	N/A

1.   INTRODUCTION

1.1   Following a decision by GMCA in September 2019, the HWRC access restriction policy came into effect on Monday 10th February 2020. This involved use of the Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) system to track vehicle visits against specific annual thresholds depending on the vehicle type. These thresholds are as follows:

- Cars and cars with single axle trailers – threshold level of 52 visits per year;
- Cars with twin axle trailers and all vans and pick up trucks to be considered as trigger vehicles and subject to enhanced checks; and
- Trigger vehicle visit thresholds:
    - Up to 3.5t gross vehicle weight – 18 visits per year;
    - Above 3.5t gross vehicle weight – 12 visits per year; and
    - Car plus double axle trailer – 18 visits per year.

1.2   In the first month of operation the scheme was successful in driving trade waste out of the HWRC network. The total vehicle visits recorded were as follows:

Vehicle Type	Dec-19	Jan-20	Feb-20	March 20*
Car	511,828	445,941	371,038	350,324
Van	13,952	20,307	12,120	6,824
Vans as % of total	2.65	4.36	3.16	1.91
Total	**525,780**	**466,248**	**383,153**	**357,148**

* data for period 1st March to 23rd March only

1.3   Complaint levels relating to the access restriction scheme have been low with the following formal written complaints received by Suez since the publicising of the scheme in December 2019:

- December 19 – 6 complaints;
- January 20 – 5 complaints;
- February 20 – 13 complaints; and
- March 20 – 8 complaints.

1.4   The impact of the introduction of the access policy is demonstrated by the HWRC recycling rate, which increased from 34.76% to 41.81% for the WRMS contract and from 44.69% to 49.07% for the HWRCMS contract between February and March 2020. This is best demonstrated at the Reliance St facility on Newton Heath where an increase from 19% to 35% was observed between February and March. All sites closed on 24th March due to COVID 19 and reopened on a phased basis on 2nd May.

1.5   As set out in the Contract Update report to the March 2020 meeting of the Committee, it is evident that vans make up a significant proportion of the vehicles that are abusing the sites with trade waste. In some cases, individual vans were recorded as attending sites in excess of 50 times in a month and clearly cannot be depositing household

waste. It is for this reason that the implementation of a van permit policy will provide a greater degree of control over trade waste abuse at the HWRC facilities. The data also indicates that the number of vans using the sites is a low percentage of the total which makes a permit scheme a viable option for this type of vehicle.

2.0   SCHEMES IN OPERATION ELSEWHERE

2.1   Research has been carried out into van permit schemes operated by other local authorities to ascertain how a similar system could be developed and operated in Greater Manchester. The details are set out in Appendix A to this report.

2.2   The majority of schemes in operation elsewhere were developed a number of years ago and tend to use a mixture of web based application forms followed by paper based permit systems. Each time the resident visits site, they must hand in a paper permit which the contractor then passes to the council to update the system. These schemes all reported a significant administrative burden and issues with paper based permits being reported as lost and then reissued to residents thereby increasing the number of visits allowed, faking of permits was also identified as an issue. The risk of COVID 19 transmission has also been raised through the use of paper based permit schemes. There are also issues with compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) due to used data being passed from party to another and due to large amounts of personal data being stored for excessive periods of time.

2.3   There are two authorities, Cheshire East and North East Lincolnshire, that use an electronic system that goes some way towards resolving these issues and could be used as a basis from which a Greater Manchester system could be developed.

3.0   DEVELOPMENT OF A VAN PERMIT SCHEME FOR GREATER MANCHESTER

3.1   The introduction of the ANPR system across all of the HWRC sites in Greater Manchester provides the basis from which an electronic van permit system could be developed. This would be signposted on the R4GM website and administered by Suez on a bespoke system that links to the ANPR system.

3.2   The high level design principle for the scheme would be as follows:
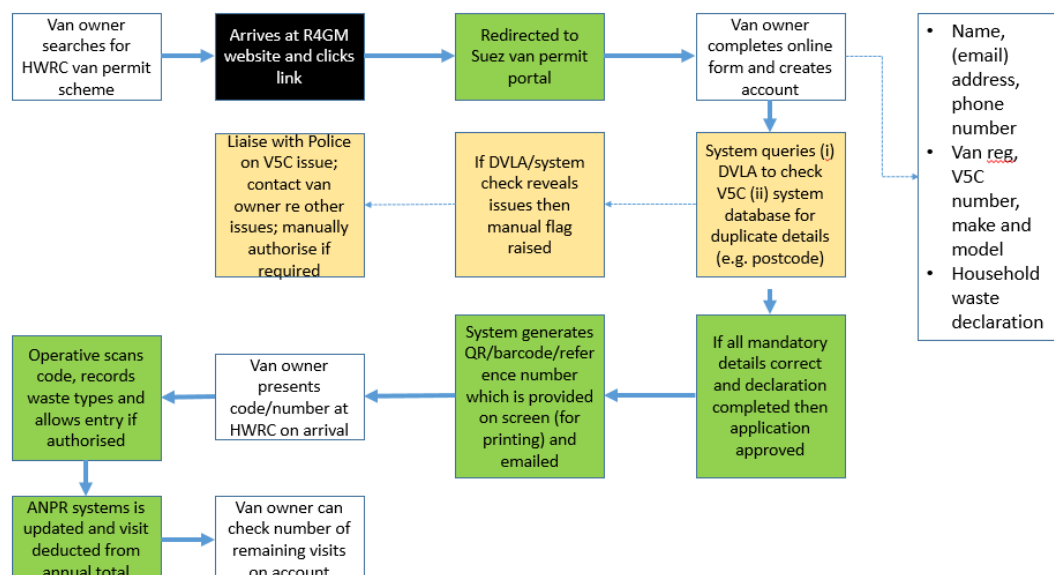
3.3   This type of system removes the administrative burden, reduces the need for manual handling of permits on sites and provides instant update of the data base for the user to see how many visits remain and for GMCA/Suez to monitor any problem vehicles. There are a number of areas that require development and confirmation before the scheme can be designed, costed and implemented. These include:

- Compliance with GDPR;
- How does a resident update their details? If eg they replace their vehicle;
- What if the van is sold and the new owner applies for a permit? But it's already on the system or grey listed;
- How does it work for those who use their work van to use the Recycling Centre? Potentially that van will have a weighbridge account and a van permit;
- How does the renewal system work? Does their permit/account expire and then they have to reapply again;
- How will hire vans be dealt with;
- What are system development and management costs for Suez; and
- What is development time and testing requirement before launch.

3.4   Given these areas that require further investigation, it is recommended that the Committee approve the development of a full project plan with Suez. This will then be presented to the next meeting of the Committee for review and potentially approval to implement.

Appendix A – Permit Schemes in Operation by other Local Authorities

Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority

Residents are required to request a permit via an online booking system; to successfully obtain a permit the first requirement is that residents only enter an address within Merseyside. The system sends warning messages if the vehicle is being used at multiple addresses. The permits team then approve/ decline the request and if approved they will post the permit to the resident. Merseyside do accept telephone bookings in which case they will take the postcode, house number, vehicle make, model and registration number and then post the permit to the resident. The permit allows for 12 visits a year with bulky/ domestic waste and unlimited trips with recycling. Borrowed/hired vans are limited to 3 tips at a time. Residents hiring vans are required to provide the hire documents. The permit is a book of 12 tickets (only 1 per household) which are individually removed by Veolia site staff as the resident enters the HWRC.

Merseyside are the controllers of the system and Veolia have an obligation to hand deliver the tickets to the Authority. Veolia submit a request under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) if they need any person specific information.

Cornwall Council

Vehicles over 3.5 tonnes are not allowed into the site and therefore fall outside the permit scheme. Cornwall Council have numbered paper permits which are posted out to residents. Residents apply online via the website; the information feeds into the Lagan back office system. A member of staff will carry out a council Tax check and post the permit to the resident. The Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) sits with Cornwall Council.

The permit allows for 12 visits per year but there is no fail safe for lost permits. The Council allow for one permit to be registered at each property.

Hull City Council

Hull city Council introduced the van/trailer permit scheme to help control the number of vans and larger trailers entering the HWRCs. The scheme is administered in-house by members of the customer relations team. The Council developed the original Microsoft Access database in-house for the permits back in 2001. The resident makes a request via the call centre, general email or enquiry form. Staff from the customer relations team assess the request and ensure they meet the criteria; the criteria is that the vehicle must be less than 3.5 tonnes in weight, trailers larger than 6 x 4 must have a single axle and the request must not have come from a business address. If a resident has acquired the van, they need to provide a copy of the V5 to prove this and then permits will be issued.

The resident details are entered into the Microsoft Access database and the paper permits are sent out via the post. Vehicles are issued one set of 12 permit vouchers in a calendar year and cannot apply again in the same year, but these do not have an expiry date. Lost or stolen permits will not be replaced. The Council maintains the database. The only role the

Contractor has is to collect the individual permit vouchers on site and return them to the Council. The ticket information is then recorded on the permits database.

Calderdale Council

The scheme is administered by SUEZ who operate the HWRC's on behalf of Calderdale Council. It is a purely paper based system currently. The van owner goes to the transfer station office and provides proof of address, and their vehicles V5 as well as some ID. They get a paper based permit which allows them 6 visits with general waste and unlimited visits with recycling. Every visit with general waste is signed off by a member of staff and they can only choose one site to use. They can get one permit per 12 months.

The contractor holds the information. The system has been in place for a long time and was developed by the contractor alongside Calderdale Council.

Sheffield City Council

Sheffield use a paper book with 12 tear off slips. Sat alongside this Sheffield allow 3 one-off visits for people who have access to a car but want to use a van.

The scheme is administered by Veolia through their call centre so any costs are picked up as part of this.

Doncaster Borough Council

Applications for a Van/ Trailer permit at Doncaster Council can be made online, by telephone or in person at the Civic Building or one of the three Council-run libraries. All applications are processed by Customer Service Advisors. Anyone applying for a permit needs to produce relevant supporting documentation dependant on vehicle type and ownership/registered keeper. Applications made online or by telephone are recorded onto the 'Waste Management' section of the Mayrise system and a letter is generated to the applicant requesting that they send in photocopies of the required supporting documentation. The supporting documentation is checked to ensure that the applicant is a resident within the Borough and that they are the registered keeper of the vehicle. The supporting documentation list accounts for anomalies e.g. the popularity of long-term personal lease hire plans, Mobility vehicles, vehicles provided by employers. Once all documentation has been received and checked then a permit is issued.

The online permit webpage is linked to the Waste & Recycling Privacy Notice which explains how the Council will use the information supplied. The information Doncaster require (name, address and phone number) is already held by the Council through the Council Tax system and is only required in order to allocate a permit to the resident.

The Council holds the data/administrator roles with no personal information being passed onto the contractor. A vehicle permit only shows the site name where it has been issued for, the expiry date and the vehicle registration number which is evident when the vehicle comes onto site.

The scheme has been in place since 2001 and the Council developed the system in conjunction with the contractor who installed height barriers on all HWRCs.

Wakefield Council

The scheme is administrated via an online permit portal. Wakefield Residents can apply for both Residential and Commercial type vehicle permits. Residents apply and upload ID as proof of address and if requesting a commercial type vehicle a copy of their V5. Staff at Renewi's head office then manage the approval of the permits. 12 permits are issued in total; 10 for Household Waste and 2 for Brick and Rubble. These are on a rolling 12 month and residents have to re-apply every year and have their account verified to be able to be re issued. The Council holds the data and the Contractor is the processor.

North East Lincolnshire Council

The customer needs to complete an online declaration form before they visit. The form takes the customer's name, house number and postcode, phone and email, vehicle details, and ends with the T&Cs and a declaration that they will abide by them. After the form is submitted the details are written to an Oracle database held by the Council. When a vehicle, that meets the criteria, arrives at one of the Recycling Centres the site attendant meeting and greeting enters the vehicle's registration number into a form on their mobile phone, which looks up against the database and returns the following:

- Whether they had registered the vehicle via the online form. If they have not they are given the benefit of doubt once and allowed onto the site after being given details of how to register before future visits. Future visits without registering will result in them being turned away;
- Whether the vehicle has been banned by the contractor. (This can be based on previous behaviour on site or because of activity that indicates they are operating commercially); and
- The Council can also add a note to the site attendants about the vehicle (for instance, not to let someone bring mattresses if they had previous form for trying to commercially dispose of them at the sites).

After the check of the registration plate has been completed, the site attendant will select buttons to indicate what types of wastes are being brought. There is also an option for the attendant to send a note back to management if there are any rule infractions. The customer will then be allowed onto site to dispose of their waste.

The system is hosted by the Council but is administered by the contractor. The contractor uses an application, written in Oracle APEX, which is partly dashboard displaying data on site usage (how many vehicles to each site daily, how many were of the sort than needed a permit, charts about types of waste, etc), and partly to manage bans, notes, etc. It also contains reports on vehicles that are bringing large amounts of a particular type of waste, vehicles that are the most frequent visitors, vehicles that use both our sites frequently in order to identify any suspicious behaviour.

There is no expiry data on the declaration until the resident moves house or changes the vehicle. North East Lincolnshire Council have said this is problematic as it rarely happens resulting in a large amount of open declarations carrying unused and unnecessary data.

The system was developed by the internal digital/service design team; work began in spring 2018 and it had a soft launch on 1st December 2018. The hard launch was 1st February 2019. The sites have the previous paper form as the contingency for network outages or other loss of the system and the management application has a form to enter the paper versions into the system when service is restored.

Leeds City Council

A permit scheme targeting vans, trailers and commercial type vehicles was introduced in 2013 to reduce the illegal disposal of waste from trade sources at the recycling centres. The permits database is a Microsoft Access database and a template set of permits with a covering letter.

Residents complete an application form either online or a paper version which can be returned via the post. Necessary supporting documentation is required. If an application is successful Leeds City Council issue 12 paper permits; the resident must present one of these on arrival to site staff before they are permitted to dispose of waste.

Cheshire East Council

The scheme is run via Dynamics CRM 2013 as the back office function that manages each individual permit that is submitted via the Firmstep online form. The form has a criteria built in that determines who can and can't have a permit (or who doesn't need one) based on how they answer the questions (e.g. what vehicle are they using, has it got a trailer etc.). This generates a permit from CRM associated to the case created, with expiry dates, number of uses as well as the identifiable information (name, car registration number etc.) which is recognised by the mobile app as it scans the barcode the user presents (which is sent to the user via email from CRM).

A successful scan and confirmation by the onsite operative of a permit confirms 1 single use and reduces the remaining amount on the CRM case and presents an error if no uses are remaining or if the expiry date of the permit has passed. All this information is transferred to and from the app (and the online application form) via an in-house integration system with Dynamics.

Blockers can also be placed for certain offenders if required with lookups to CRM from the form to check submitted vehicle registrations, residents names against a 'blocked list' the Council holds in Dynamics to avoid the automation letting it go through. These blocks are set by the service based on their own process and encounters. All data is held by the Authority who are responsible for the configuration of both the Dynamics functions and the mobile scanning app itself.

The Local Authority developed the system in regards to configuration of Firmstep form, Dynamics configuration, scheme and workflows and the mobile app. This required specialist CRM, .NET Integration and Web form developers to build the functions.

Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

The Local Authority ask Residents to apply for a van/trailer permit via their website. The information feeds from the webpage into SAP which is the back office system. The information displayed on SAP can also be viewed by the Contact Centre via Lagan if any enquiries are made. The system has not been set up for use as a waste permit system so the information is then put onto a Microsoft Access Database. The System allows the Authority to record the waste that the permit user brought in per trip which enables easy monitoring. The permit is a book of 12 tickets which can only be renewed after 12 months. Lost permits are renewable at a charge of £25. When a resident enters one of the 4 HWRCs in the Borough a member of site staff will remove a ticket from the book and write the waste types on the ticket. When a member of the Local Authority team visit site they will collect the tickets and then they will be input into the system.

All the data is controlled by the local authority and are identifiable between the Authority and the Contractor, FCC, only as a number.