

## Greater Manchester Combined Authority

### Waste and Recycling Committee

Date: 12 March 2025

Subject: A New Waste Strategy for Greater Manchester

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

Sarah Mellor, Head of Sustainable Consumption and Production

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#### Purpose of Report

This report presents the rationale and process for the development of a new municipal waste management strategy for Greater Manchester.

#### Recommendations:

The Committee is requested to:

1. Approve the commencement of work to develop a new municipal waste management strategy for Greater Manchester; and
2. Note the timetable for development and adoption.

#### Contact Officers

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# Equalities Impact, Carbon and Sustainability Assessment:

**Recommendation - Key points for decision-makers**

*Insert text*

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**Impacts Questionnaire**

Impact Indicator	Result	Justification/Mitigation
Equality and Inclusion		
Health		
Resilience and Adaptation		
Housing		
Economy		
Mobility and Connectivity		
Carbon, Nature and Environment	<b>G</b>	
Consumption and Production	<b>G</b>	

Contribution to achieving the GM Carbon Neutral 2038 target

The resultant waste strategy adopted later in 2025 will set a route map for the sustainable management of household waste for nine of the ten GM districts. For example, it will detail how plastics recovery will be further increased to remove them from residual waste (subject to markets) and assess methods to prevent the emission of CO2 to atmosphere.

Further Assessment(s): N/A

<b>G</b> Positive impacts overall, whether long or short term.	<b>A</b> Mix of positive and negative impacts. Trade-offs to consider.	<b>R</b> Mostly negative, with at least one positive aspect. Trade-offs to consider.	<b>RR</b> Negative impacts overall.
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## Risk Management

No risk arise from this report.

## Legal Considerations

There are no legal considerations within this report.

## Financial Consequences – Revenue

There are no financial consequences arising from this report.

## Financial Consequences – Capital

There are no financial consequences arising from this report.

## Number of attachments to the report:

None

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

N/A

## **Background Papers**

### **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

## **Bee Network Committee**

N/A

## **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

N/A

# 1. Introduction

Traditionally, waste strategies have tended to be long duration strategies covering 20 or 25 years. These often mirrored long contract terms and it was felt there was enough certainty (either within a local contractual framework or national policy landscape) to be able to fix strategic objectives. However, what the development and implementation of the national Resources and Waste Strategy (RaWS, originally published at the end of 2018) has shown is that some key proposals can and do take a long time to come to fruition. As a result, GMCA has delayed developing a strategy until such time as it was felt there was some certainty when it came to policy initiatives in the RaWS, particularly, Simpler Recycling and the Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging (pEPR).

Whilst some uncertainties remain (such as the level of New Burdens revenue support for weekly food waste collections, the impact of a Deposit Return Scheme and the future of funding support for biowaste treatment technologies), the government's confirmation of key requirements for Simpler Recycling before Christmas 2024 and the initial pEPR financial allocation estimates has now provided the certainty for GMCA to develop a new strategy for the management of municipal waste across Greater Manchester (not including Wigan).

In 2011 the Greater Manchester Waste Management Strategy was published and was designed to cover an extended period. It set aims, objectives and targets for reducing waste and increasing recycling and informed subsequent procurements and infrastructure developments. The strategy went through full consultation with residents of GM and stakeholders as it was a statutory document (no longer the case). The principles of the plan remain as is today, follow the waste hierarchy principles, reduce waste and maximise quality and quantity of recyclables and deliver research and innovation which was key to developing the infrastructure/technology which lead to the four bin collection system.

## 2. What will a new Strategy look like?

Whilst enough certainty has emerged in the key areas of Simpler Recycling and EPR payments, some doubts remain. Therefore, it is not proposed to draft a long-term strategy but one that covers the period 2025 to 2030. There are a number of reasons for this:

- it aligns with the GMCA's Five Year Environment Plan cycle;
- it gives time for the Deposit Return Scheme (something that could result in a significant reduction of materials collected at the kerbside) to develop, be introduced and bed in;

- for the treatment of Biowaste we were seeking to procure facilities to treat our tonnages from around 2029 but the current Green Gas Support Scheme (a key financial incentive for various technologies) comes to an end in 2028 and no successor scheme has been announced; and
- there is some lack of clarity over the introduction of the UK Emissions Trading Scheme for the thermal recovery of waste due to commence at the start of 2028 and we need to see how this and any alternative options develop.

A long-term waste strategy may be the culmination of a long process of:

- service review (both at the collection and disposal levels);
- options appraisals assessing different methods of collection, treatment, recycling, recovery and disposal;
- the undertaking of strategic environmental assessments; and
- extensive public consultations.

These are not proposed as GMCA's model of waste treatment, recycling, recovery and disposal fits exceedingly well with the government's announced 'default' method of household waste collection – namely a four stream system that is used already in Greater Manchester comprising the collection streams of:

- Paper and cardboard;
- Containers (a mixed stream of metals, plastics, glass and cartons);
- Biowaste (in our case mixed food waste and garden waste); and
- Non-recyclable residual waste.

Therefore, no change to this core methodology is proposed and the government is clear on what materials we are expected to collect so the need for extensive and costly support work to devise a strategy is not necessary.

The Strategy will contain:

- a summary of the services and infrastructure provided by GMCA and its partners;
- a backward look at how GMCA has performed compared to its previous strategy and any wider targets and obligations. It will paint a picture of the progress we have made to achieving a kerbside recycling performance of 50%, a HWRC recycling performance exceeding 60% and a level of landfill diversion that is in excess of 99.5%;
- a summary of external strategies, policies, legislation and schemes that are informing the development of the GM household waste management strategy;

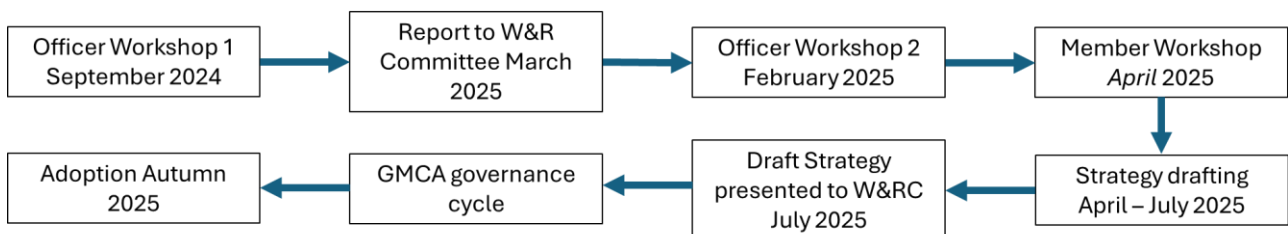
- an assessment of potential future waste arisings taking into account population/household growth and presenting estimations of the impact of initiatives such as the deposit return scheme;
- targets - on the horizon are a number of targets set by the national 25 Year Environment Plan so we will need to assess our progress towards contributing to the achievement of these targets; and
- the future challenges (such as textiles) and how they might be addressed in the strategy period.

With our industrial scale entry into reuse through the Renew Hub and shops we will want to review how that contributes to increasing resource circularity in Greater Manchester and consider how this can grow and potentially incorporate new waste streams and promote repair.

### 3. The Strategy’s Development Process and Timescales

Clearly this Strategy is of key importance and interest to the Waste & Recycling Committee. To that end its input is vital. GMCA and district officers met in the autumn of 2024 to start the thought process for the strategy. From this, key challenges and issues were identified – these have been incorporated into the thinking for the strategy.

A simplified timeline of actions is:



### 4. Summary and Decision Requested

With some clarity provided by the government on the management of waste we can develop a new household waste management strategy with some confidence. However, there are a number of issues that do cloud our ability to develop a longer-term strategy (even if that was considered the right thing to do) and we have the opportunity to bring this strategy into alignment with other related GMCA strategies.

To that end members are requested to:

1. Approve the commencement of work to develop a new household waste management strategy for Greater Manchester; and
2. Note the timetable for development and adoption.