

**Minutes of the Greater Manchester Waste and Recycling Committee held on
Wednesday 12 March 2025**

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 Barbara Bentham
Salford CC	Councillor Paul Heilbron
Stockport Council	Councillor Mark Roberts
Stockport Council	Councillor Dena Ryness
Tameside Council	Councillor Laura Boyle
Trafford Council	Councillor Stephen Adshead
Trafford Council	Councillor Dylan Butt

Officers in Attendance:

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

DISTRICT OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

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

WRC 25/13 Apologies

Resolved/-

Apologies for absence were received and noted from Councillors David Lancaster (Salford) and Tom Ross (Trafford)

WRC 25/14 Chairs Announcements and Urgent Business

Resolved/-

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

WRC 25/15 Declarations of Interest

Resolved/-

1. That Councillor Quinn declare an interest in Item 6 – SUEZ Social Value and Renew Programme Update, as a City of Trees board member.

WRC25/16 Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 January 2025

Resolved/-

1. That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 2025 be approved as a correct record.

WRC 25/17 Contracts Update

Justin Lomax, Head of Contract Services, GMCA Waste and Resources Team introduced a report which provided an overview on performance of the Waste and Resource Management Services and Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) Management Services Contracts.

The report presented cumulative annual data, for the period up to the end of December 2024 (Quarter 3) of the financial year 2024/25 (contract year 6), for the two contracts held by Suez including an overview of the cumulative data, HWRC combined performance and waste recycling contamination rates.

No events reportable under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) had occurred during April-December 2024.

Questions and comments included:

Officers confirmed that a breakdown of materials in the 219 tonnes of rejected kerbside recycling collections would be provided to members.

Members were advised that the impact of neighbouring authority's household recycling sites closures continue to be monitored and managed by increased postcode checks across Greater Manchester household waste recycling sites, with visitor numbers at sites close to cross boundary closures being closely monitored to understand if any variations in figures indicate changes to trends and cross border site visitors.

Officers stated that reducing contamination rates is a challenge, constant reinforcement of messaging and communications on accurate recycling does have

an impact. A reduction of contamination levels should be seen in quarter 4 figures due to the introduction of recycling of pots, tubs and trays.

Members stated that education and campaigns in districts has had a significant impact on contamination levels.

Officers confirmed that if the recycling levels continue above 62% by the end of year, Suez would be eligible for a bonus.

Resolved/-

1. That the report be noted.

WRC 25/18 SUEZ Social Value and Renew Programme Update

Michelle Whitfield, Head of Communications & Behavioural Change, GMCA Waste and Resources Team talked to a report and presentation updating members on the delivery of the social value programme including the Renew Hub and shops.

The update included:

- Key successes
 - 54 social value commitments
 - Social benefits
 - 45 apprenticeship roles created since 2019
 - Economic benefits
- Renew Hub and shops
 - Creating 20 new jobs and 2 apprenticeships
 - Environmental benefits
 - Renew Hub and shops sale increases and supporting the community fund and GM Mayors Charity
 - New services at the renew hub and shops
 - Review and future development of the renew hub and shops

The total amount of social value delivered by the GMCA in 2023/24 was £33m, 73% (£23m) of this has been delivered through the Suez contracts.

Comments and questions included:

Officers agreed to map out by district the social value delivered by the Suez contracts.

Members suggested that ways to increase accessibility to the education hubs to schools located in all areas across the conurbation be investigated.

Officers were asked whether the renew pop-up shops could be seen in areas other than town centres as some communities would benefit from shops in district centres and localities. It was confirmed that readily available free spaces are used for the renew pop-up shops and suggested that members advise officers of any free spaces available in their areas.

Members were advised that discussions began with Suez following the contract extension on what services are being delivered and other sources of waste that could be made available to expand their renew waste streams, once options have been investigated discussion will take place around their social value plan up to 2034.

Members asked whether the distribution of community funds could be considered for Mayors in localities and were advised that the distribution is managed by officers from Lancashire Wildlife Trust, GMCA and Suez. Suez have a commitment to donate £100k to the GM Mayors Chairity annually.

Officers agreed to circulate detail of where city of trees planting has taken place across Greater Manchester.

Members were advised that Suez has committed to align its social value commitments to the GMCA aims and objectives, one example is the future delivery of traineeships via the MBacc/T-Level approach.

Officers committed to incorporating an equality impact assessment and to verify BAME in future reports to the committee. Conversations are taking place with Suez on the GMCA Race Equality Framework and their EDI policies across the organisation.

Officers agreed to confirm with members what the sustainable alternative solution for treating weeds will be used across Suez sites.

An offer was extended to all members to visit all Suez sites including the energy from waste plant in Bolton.

Resolved/-

1. That the update and significant contribution the waste contracts are making to GMCA's overall social value delivery be noted.

WRC 25/19 A New Waste Strategy for Greater Manchester

Paul Morgan, Head of Commercial Services, GMCA Waste and Resources Team presented the rationale and process for the development of a new municipal waste management strategy for Greater Manchester.

It is proposed that a draft strategy for 2025 to 2030 be developed rather than a long-term strategy, the reasonings for this are:

- to align with the GMCA's Five Year Environment Plan cycle
- it would give time for the Deposit Return Scheme to develop, be introduced and stabilise

- there is currently no successor scheme when the current Green Gas Support Scheme comes to an end in 2028
- the lack of clarity of alternative options 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.

The new Strategy will include:

- a summary of the services and infrastructure provided by GMCA and its partners
- a look back at how GMCA has performed compared to its previous strategy and any wider targets and obligations, detailing the progress made in achieving a kerbside recycling performance of 50%, a HWRC recycling performance exceeding 60% and a level of landfill diversion 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 considering population/household growth and presenting estimations of the impact of initiatives such as the deposit return scheme
- assessment on progress towards contributing to the achievement of targets set by the national 25 Year Environment Plan
- the future challenges and how they might be addressed in the strategy period.

The Strategy will be drafted during April-July 2025, consultations will take place prior to agreement by the GMCA and adoption in autumn 2025.

A member workshop will be scheduled for April/May to discuss the priorities and strategic objectives of the new strategy.

Comments and questions included:

Officers confirmed that the GMCA do not use or have any control, influence or operational say on the Pilsworth site in Bury.

Members agreed with the strategic level approach across GM and requested that the priorities and challenges of each district be taken into consideration.

Officers confirmed that receptacles for the deposit return scheme are the responsibility of the scheme, there are options for local authorities under permitted development, details of this will be shared with planners by the scheme.

It is currently understood that the return scheme will work as reverse vending machines with apps/wallets that would build up money on returned cans and bottles that would be redeemed at retailers.

It was confirmed that discussions are taking place with Merseyside on textile recycling and that the government and the GMCA are looking into future recycling schemes for small electricals.

Resolved/-

1. That the commencement of work to develop a new municipal waste management strategy for Greater Manchester be approved.
2. That the timetable for development and adoption of the strategy be noted.

WRC 25/20 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 4 of 2024-25, including:

- Operational Waste Facilities
 - Redevelopment of Reliance Street Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC)

- Procurement of a principal contractor is live until the end of May with closure of the site expected by the end of June 2025 with construction work expected to take between 9-12 months.
- Longley Lane Recovery Facility (MRF) closure and new MRF build at Over Hulton is underway with current focus on plant specification prior to planning permission being sought by the end of the year with engineering works starting in 2026.
- Fire System Review and the successful installation of additional thermal cameras at 10 locations. A review is currently underway to evaluate the existing fire detection and suppression systems at MTR facilities.
- Buildings and Land – no significant updates
- Closed Landfill Sites
 - Manchester City Council (MCC) have requested the extension of the agreement to return Barlow Hall and Cringle Road closed landfill sites back into their portfolio at the end of March 2025 for a further 12 months. This agreement would transfer all responsibilities, costs and liabilities, and other associated operational costs to MCC from April 2024 with the GMCA providing a maintenance service for the remaining 12-month period.

Comments and questions included:

Communications are taking place on site and with residents in Manchester and Oldham on the closure of the Reliance Street site and alternative recycling centres that can be used.

Officers confirmed that an education centre at the new Over Hulton Recovery Facility (MRF) will be constructed and expanded to include renew shops.

Resolved/-

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the delegation to finalise the terms in the proposed extension agreement with Manchester City Council for 2 former landfill sites as set out in section 4.1

to the Executive Director, Waste and Resources in consultation with the GMCA Monitoring Officer be agreed.

3. That an update on the review to evaluate the existing fire detection and suppression systems at MTR facilities be brought to a future meeting be agreed.

WRC 25/21 HWRC Access Policy/Van Permit Scheme and HWRC Usage Update

Paul Morgan, Head of Commercial Services, GMCA Waste and Resources Team talked to a report and presentation detailing data on the usage of the household waste recycling centre network and reviews the HWRC Access Policy and Van Permit Scheme.

The update included:

- A summary of the current HWRC Access Policy
- HWRC visitor numbers – cars and vans
- HWRC tonnages visits and waste arising
- HWRC tonnages visits v recycling rates
- Complaints
- Possible amendments to the policy and permit scheme
- Cross border usage of GM HWRC's
- Conclusions and recommendations:
 - The Access Policy and Permit continue to address the issues highlighted and could be considered a success
 - Do not consider a need to change car or van visit allocations
 - Based on the analysis of complaints and outcomes, no changes to Access Policy or the Van Permit Scheme and its terms and conditions are recommended.

Questions and comments included:

Officers confirmed that vans above 5.3 metres are not permitted access to household waste recycling centres, there are options at other facilities for these vehicles that are classed as commercial.

Members suggested that stronger measures may need to be implemented to decrease the cross-boundary visitors to sites.

Members were advised that the position on homemade trailers has not changed, and those not primarily designed and constructed for the carriage of goods, waste etc are not allowed on sites. One complaint was received this year on this subject but the restriction was still felt to be justified and there are very few incidences of members of the public seeking to access sites with homemade trailers. Trailers larger than double axel are also not allowed on sites as they would be classed as agricultural.

Officers confirmed that discussions took place with cross-boundary authorities to allow residents to use GM sites at a cost, which was refused.

Resolved/-

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the recommendations to not revise the HWRC Access Policy and Van Permit Scheme be approved.

WRC 25/22 Future Meeting Dates

Resolved/-

To note the future meeting dates for the Committee:

9 July 2025

8 October 2025

21 January 2026

18 March 2026

WRC 25/23 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.

WRC 25/24 Contracts Update

Justin Lomax, Head of Contract Services, GMCA Waste and Resources Team introduced a report updating members on performance and commercial issues relating to the Waste and Resource Management Services contracts.

Resolved/-

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

WRC 25/25 Carbon Capture

David Taylor, GMCA Executive Director, Waste and Resources gave a presentation on carbon capture and residual waste.

Resolved/-

1. That the update be noted.