

Greater Manchester Combined Authority

Waste and Recycling Committee

Date: 2 July 2025

Subject: SUEZ Social Value Programme Council Updates

Report of: Michelle Whitfield, Head of Communications & Behavioural Change, Waste and Resources Team

Purpose of Report

To provide individual council updates on the outcomes of the social value programme delivered by SUEZ during the last financial year (April 2024 to March 2025).

Recommendations:

The Committee is requested to:

1. Note the update.

Contact Officers

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Equalities Impact, Carbon and Sustainability Assessment:

GMCA along with its partners are working together to have a genuine commitment and practical approach to reducing inequality through communication and engagement. We are working to agree a common set of standards for communications, defining minimum requirements and expectations on accessible information, enabling a consistent approach to translation, easy-read, sign-language, publication and social media. As a minimum, this means evidencing 'due regard' to the needs of all communities of Greater Manchester (as per the Public Sector Equality Duty).

The team are assessing what documents could be translated into other languages taking into account the diverse communities of Greater Manchester. An ESOL (English for Speakers of other languages) training package has also been created with Bolton College. The resources which are available on the website introduces words commonly associated with recycling at home.

The Recycle for Greater Manchester and GMCA websites have both been updated to meet accessibility requirements.

The accessibility regulations build on existing obligations to people who have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 (or the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 in Northern Ireland). These say that all UK service providers must consider 'reasonable adjustments' for disabled people.

At least 1 in 5 people in the UK have a long term illness, impairment or disability. Many more have a temporary disability.

Accessibility means more than putting things online. It means making content and design clear and simple enough so that most people can use it without needing to adapt it, while supporting those who do need to adapt things.

Risk Management

Successful and effective delivery of the social value programme and the Renew Hub and shops aim to increase repair and reuse and thereby reducing waste disposal. The social value programme has already demonstrated significant social, economic and environmental benefits for Greater Manchester.

Legal Considerations

The requirements for SUEZ to deliver the social value commitments and Renew programme are set out in the Waste and Resources Management Services (WRMS) contract and the Household Waste Recycling Management Services (HWRCMS) contract.

Financial Consequences – Revenue

The financial consequences of not delivering the social value programme are an increase in waste disposal costs. The latest GMCA's social value report for 2023 to 20224 shows that SUEZ have delivered £23.3 million of social value benefits in Greater Manchester.

Financial Consequences – Capital

There are no implications on the capital budget that arise from the activities set out in this report.

Number of attachments to the report:

One

Comments/recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee

N/A

Background Papers

N/A

Tracking/ Process

Does this report relate to a major strategic decision, as set out in the GMCA Constitution

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 relevant Scrutiny Committee on the grounds of urgency?

No

GM Transport Committee

N/A

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

N/A

1. Introduction/Background

The SUEZ/GMCA waste management contracts prioritise creating social value from Greater Manchester's waste. SUEZ has developed and continues to deliver 54 individual social value commitments with annual targets. These commitments aim to deliver a wide range of social, environmental and economic benefits across Greater Manchester. The commitments include creating apprenticeships, work placements and training opportunities, supporting schools by attending careers events and supporting universities with research projects.

SUEZ also have internal social value commitments including paying their staff the real living wage and are members of the GM Good Employment Charter. They also offer staff a range of accredited training and professional development opportunities as well as volunteering opportunities in the local community.

To put into context the value of SUEZ's social value contribution, the GMCAs Social Value Annual Report for 2023-2024, reported £32.015 million was generated by GMCA's suppliers. Nearly 73% of this, a total of £23.3 million was delivered by SUEZ through the waste management contracts.

Since 2021, over £1 million has been raised to support 90 VCFSE projects (Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise) that assist financially vulnerable families and creates opportunities for residents to learn new skills and improves community cohesion. £500,000 has also been donated to the Greater Manchester's Mayors Charity which supports A Bed every Night scheme.

2. Social Value Report by Council

The report attached as Appendix A breaks down the social value commitments delivered in the last financial year (April 2024 to March 2025) outlining the outcomes for each council area.

Reporting social value can be challenging due to its overlap with various agendas such as economic development, environmental sustainability, and social equity. There are various reporting platforms available such as the Social Value Portal used by the GMCA. This system uses the Themes, Outcomes, and Measures (TOM) System, which is the UK standard for social value measurement. SUEZ and other waste management companies use LOOP which has tailored metrics specific to the waste management industry. LOOP uses the National Social Value Standard (SVS) as the main measurement framework.

In terms of reporting on equality, diversity and inclusivity and how the 54 commitments can be targeted to address inequalities, a tailored approach to reporting and monitoring is required and it is not always possible to measure the impact of each social value interaction. This approach is being developed by GMCA and SUEZ and will be a feature of future reporting.

For example, of the 51 apprentices recruited by SUEZ, 10 are from an ethnically diverse background. Comparing this figure to the 2021 Census data which estimated that there were 821,801 Greater Manchester residents from an ethnic minority, this equated to 28.7% of Greater Manchester's population. Monitoring metrics in this way helps in understanding the impact of the initiatives and identifies areas for further improvement.

Other commitments that can't be measured so easily may benefit from a targeted approach; for example, one of the commitments is around supporting schools by attending careers events to raise awareness of the job opportunities in the waste industry in Greater Manchester. SUEZ could use demographic data to identify schools in ethnically diverse areas and collaborate with local education authorities to target schools who would benefit most from these events.

3. Future Development

The waste management contracts with SUEZ have been extended to 2034. SUEZ and GMCA are reviewing the current social value commitments to identify any areas of development and to update them in line with the objectives in the new Greater Manchester Strategy which is being launched in July.

Reporting the social value commitments by council areas also means that SUEZ can identify areas to prioritise which will be taken forward during this financial year.