

Greater Manchester Combined Authority

Waste and Recycling Committee

Date: 8 October 2025

Subject: GM Interim Waste Plan Update

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

Purpose of Report

To provide the Committee with an update on the programme for development of the Greater Manchester Interim Waste Plan 2026 - 30.

Recommendations:

The Committee is requested to:

1. Note the progress to date on the development of the Interim Waste Plan; and
2. Provide comments and feedback on the Implementation Plan and Action Plan.

Contact Officers

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

Paul.morgan@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

Equalities Impact, Carbon and Sustainability Assessment:

Recommendation - Key points for decision-makers

Insert text

Impacts Questionnaire

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

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

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

No risks arise from the 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 implications on the capital budget that arise from the activities set out in this report.

Number of attachments to the report:

N/A

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

Bee Network Committee

N/A

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

N/A

1. Introduction/Background

The 12 March 2025 meeting of the Committee received a report that set out the rationale for the development of a shorter-term Waste Management Strategy, known as the Interim Waste Plan. This rationale was based on the need to understand the impacts from the implementation of the various elements of the national Resources and Waste Strategy (RaWS) before long term targets and strategy could be set.

Whilst enough certainty has emerged in the key areas of Simpler Recycling and Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging (pEPR) payments, some uncertainty remains on key elements of the RaWS. Therefore, the recommendation was not to draft a long-term strategy but one that covers the period 2026 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 (DRS) 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 continued lack of clarity over the introduction of the UK Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) 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.

2. The Interim Waste Plan's Strategic Objectives

The waste officer and Member workshops held in February and April 25 respectively identified several strategic objectives to be delivered through the GM Interim Waste Plan by GMCA working collaboratively with partners, government, manufacturers, retailers, businesses, residents and NGO's. These strategic objectives are to:

- Develop and deliver innovative and inclusive services that reflect local challenges such as population growth, demographic changes and housing stock;
- Decarbonise household waste, services and infrastructure;
- Use our services and the waste collected to deliver social, environmental and economic value; and
- Ensure Greater Manchester's voice continues to be heard and to influence the development of waste policy.

Since the July meeting of the Committee, a plan on a page has been developed that sets out the high level actions that we will take to deliver these 4 strategic objectives. This plan on a page is set out at Appendix A and members are invited to provide feedback on the proposed actions.

A more detailed delivery plan is set out at Appendix B which sets out the more detailed actions for delivery against the 4 strategic objectives. Appendix C provides a timeline for delivery across the 4 year term of the Interim Waste Plan and also identifies how each action aligns with the priority workstreams in the Greater Manchester Strategy (GMS). Members are invited to provide feedback on the draft detailed delivery plan and timeline. These actions will be monitored, measured, reported and refreshed over the life of the Interim Waste Plan.

3. Engagement

In order to inform the development of the Interim Waste Plan public engagement has been undertaken over the summer using the Big Recycling Survey to gain insights into residents' attitudes to recycling and perceived barriers.

The survey included questions to establish which items are currently being recycled at home, those that are being missed, those that are causing contamination as well as asking people what motivates them to recycle and what their barriers are. Specific questions were included to understand how residents interact with key waste services like household waste recycling centres, textile banks and takeback schemes in retailers.

Responses were received from 7,825 residents to the Big Recycling Survey. Initial results show that 92% of respondents 'always recycle at home'. This suggests there's a real willingness from residents to engage with the recycling process, with many demonstrating high levels of confidence in managing their own household waste. Around 85% of respondents were motivated to recycle because of concerns about the environment, with 55% doing it out of a sense of civic pride.

Almost 1,400 residents have provided detailed information about challenges they face when recycling. Over a quarter of residents reported that they weren't always sure which items went in each bin and that their bins get too full too quickly.

Following completion of the survey, the second phase of engagement will identify gaps in those who responded to the survey to ensure the resulting data is statistically representative of the Greater Manchester population and demographics. This will involve telephone and face to face interviews targeted to those groups who are less motivated to recycle. The

survey and follow up interviews will then be analysed and a report produced which will be provided to members of the Waste and Recycling Committee once they are available

As well as providing useful data for the Interim Waste Plan, the survey results will help to shape future Recycle for Greater Manchester campaigns. Each council will receive a breakdown of their own results to help shape their own services. We intend to run the survey biannually to establish changes and trends in resident behaviour.

4. Process to Conclude

Feedback from members received at the Committee meeting will be incorporated into the draft documents as well as feedback from the interviews. The remaining sections of the Interim Waste Plan are being compiled, and the intention is to seek approval for the plan at the January 26 GMCA meeting. Working drafts of the document will be shared with members of the Waste and Recycling Committee in advance of this.