GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

Greater Manchester Combined Authority

Waste and Resources Recycling Committee

Date: 8 October 2025

Subject: Capital Programme and Asset Management Update – Part A

Report of: Michael Kelly, Head of Engineering and Asset Management, Waste and Resources Team

Purpose of Report

To provide the Committee with an update on key capital projects and lifecycle projects during quarter 2 of 2025-26.

Recommendations:

The Committee is recommended to:

1. Note and comment on matters set out within the report; and
2. Approve the capital budget for fire safety upgrades at key waste reception sites.

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Equalities Impact, Carbon and Sustainability Assessment:

Not applicable

Risk Management

Performance of the contracts and associated risks are captured in the GMCA corporate risk register.

Legal Considerations

Activities set out in this report are in accordance with the terms of the WRMS and HWRCMS contracts.

Financial Consequences – Revenue

Activities set out in this report are in accordance with the Waste revenue budget.

Financial Consequences – Capital

Activities set out in this report are in accordance with the Waste capital budget.

Number of attachments to the report:

None

Comments/recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Not applicable

Background Papers

Not applicable

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

Not applicable

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Not applicable

1. Introduction

This report provides members with updates relating to the Waste and Resources team asset portfolio. Updates are provided for key projects undertaken in quarter 4 of 2024-25. The waste estate is managed by the Engineering Team and comprises of the following three assets categories.

1.1. Category A - Operational Waste Facilities

- WRMS Contract Facilities – Lot 1

(28) waste processing and reception facilities across 11 locations.

- WRMS Contract – Lot 2

(11) Household Waste Recycling Centres HWRC's

1.2. Category B - Buildings and Land

- Land and building premises separate to operational locations.

1.3. Category C - Closed Landfill Sites

- 4 former dilute and disperse landfill sites now closed and requiring ongoing management.

2. Category (A) Updates – Operational Waste Facilities

2.1. Reliance Street Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC)

Background – Redevelopment of the existing HWRC at Reliance Street in Newton Heath, is required, due to the current facility being beyond its economic life span and the restricted layout which does not encourage high-levels of recycling. A new improved HWRC will provide a larger facility giving more capacity to receive, manage and recycle commodities by providing 16 individual containers to segregate materials like many of our other HWRC's across the region.

Current Position – Redevelopment work on the site commenced on Monday, 8 September 2025, following a successful tender process for contractor appointment. The HWRC site was closed to the public on the 30th of June to facilitate Suez and GMCA in demobilising operations ahead of handover to the selected contractor.

The redevelopment will include the following key components:

- Site clearance;
- Demolition of existing ground slabs and former structures;
- Ground remediation to stabilise conditions for the new, extended HWRC layout;
- Piling installation;

- Drainage and service installation;
- Construction of a new operational yard and container bay;
- Installation of a new staff welfare building, parking, and electric vehicle charging points;
- Installation of a new access road, road surfacing, and safety signage; and
- Establishment of a new Renew shop.

The project is expected to take 10 months and finish by late June 2026, subject to favourable conditions. Ongoing updates on progress and delivery will be provided at future Committee meetings.

2.2. Over Hulton – Mechanical Recovery Facility (MRF)

Background – GMCA plans to build a new materials recovery facility (MRF) facility at our former in-vessel composter (IVC) site in Over Hulton, Bolton. The plant will process dry mixed recyclables (DMR) including pots, tubs, trays (PTT's), flexible films, and tetra cartons, in line with the National Resources and Waste Strategy (RaWS). Designed to handle up to 140,000 tonnes per year, the new facility increases capacity for anticipated population growth and evolving DMR collection policies. This decision was approved at a previous Waste and Recycling Committee (WRC) in January 2024. Since then, the following key items of works have been achieved:

- Formed two working groups with GMCA, Suez, and district representatives for project oversight;
- Defined base design and master plan for the new plant and site improvements;
- Ceased waste operations at the IVC and redirected waste reception to the adjacent transfer loading station (TLS);
- Relocated mattress recycling from Salford Road to Arkwright Street, Oldham;
- Conducted ecology and biodiversity reviews and a RIBA Stage 1 architectural assessment;
- Completed demolition of redundant internal structures and leachate tanks;
- Undertaken a structural assessment of the existing building;
- Compiled a preliminary new internal floor design;
- Submitted pre-planning application to Bolton Council;
- Developed a plant specification and procurement package;
- Engaged UK suppliers and hosted site events with the market;
- Issued a tender package via Chest Procurement Portal; and
- Refined deliverables list to support project delivery.

Current Position – The plant specification and tender package have been finalised and issued through the Chest Procurement Portal as of Friday, 4th September. The tender process was designed under the new Procurement Act 2023 requirements, it aims for a robust technical solution emphasising whole life cost of the plant. The process is defined by three key stages designed to select between two final design bids, with the successful supplier appointed in April 2026 after a seven-month timeline.

Key tasks for Q3 2024-25:

- Review and define internal floor design;
- Review and define external works for the new site layout;
- Prepare and submit full planning application;
- Review procurement packages and schedule;
- Specify work packages for building repairs and upgrades;
- Finalise the education centre specification; and
- Review and submit and a new permit application.

Additional updates will be provided at future Committee meetings.

2.3. Fire System Review – Critical Assets

Background - Fire and ignition incidents within the waste stream continue to pose a significant risk to both the waste portfolio and operational personnel, with near miss events involving fire, smoke, and ignition occurring regularly. The capital expenditure required to replace critical infrastructure, such as Transfer Loading Stations (TLS), can exceed £10 million, underscoring the importance of safeguarding buildings, plant, and equipment through effective detection and suppression systems.

During 2023-2024, Suez and GMCA shared costs to install additional thermal cameras at ten strategic locations, prioritising critical assets including Mechanical Treatment and Recovery (MTR) plants and Transfer Loading Stations (TLS) facilities. All installations were completed successfully, enhancing early identification of ignition sources. This initiative is part of a comprehensive fire risk assessment conducted by GMCA across its asset portfolio, with an emphasis on critical sites and equipment. Consequently, GMCA and Suez have agreed to undertake a focused review of MTR facilities to evaluate current fire detection and suppression systems, noting that many installations are over 15 years old and comprise a variety of system types, age and condition.

It is anticipated that substantial system upgrades will be necessary to achieve standardised, like-for-like solutions at each site. To this end, Suez has appointed a consultant to conduct

an initial evaluation of the existing MTR systems at Bredbury, Cobden Street, and Longley Lane.

Current Position – Reviews of Bredbury, Cobden Street, and Longley Lane have been completed, with final reports issued in August. Each site review concentrated on identifying opportunities to enhance fire safety in accordance with the latest British Standards and best practice guidelines concerning the provision of fire detection systems.

The reports found consistent risks and recommendations at all three sites, the following table captures each recommendation.

No	Recommendation	Site	Priority
1	Replace the existing HSSD system with a fully functioning HSSD system	Bredbury, Cobden Street, Longley Lane	High
2	Provide a compressed air cleaning system to allow maintenance of the new HSSD system	Bredbury, Cobden Street, Longley Lane	Medium
3	Install infrared (IR) cameras	Bredbury, Cobden Street,	Medium
4	Install thermal imaging cameras in the MRF	Longley Lane	Medium
5	Install sprinklers to the Bio-TLS building with minimum density of 10mm/min	Bredbury, Cobden Street,	High
6	Confirm current sprinkler head activation temperature is acceptable with insurers	Bredbury, Cobden Street, Longley Lane	High
7	Installation of automatic water monitors	Bredbury, Cobden Street, Longley Lane	High
8	Consider installation of a deluge system to protect critical plant machinery	Bredbury, Cobden Street, Longley Lane	High
9	Confirm what guidance is acceptable for insurers	Bredbury, Cobden Street, Longley Lane	High
10	Ensure fire alarm panels are functioning adequately	Cobden Street	High

Based on the findings of the recent report, Suez has engaged with suppliers to obtain preliminary cost estimates for each recommendation. This initial assessment indicates a projected expenditure of £2.9 million; however, this figure excludes any enabling or civil engineering works required for implementation and does not cover recommended upgrades to the MRF at Longley Lane. Further reviews are now necessary to establish a more comprehensive understanding of potential costs. Additionally, a site review of Nash Road TLS and the Re-use Hub needs to be undertaken for consideration as the site at Nash Road requires fire safety improvements due to the introduction of the re-use Hub.

GMCA and Suez will focus on the following areas during the next phase of our review:

- Establish an order of priority across all three locations;
- Conduct an initial assessment of Nash Road for possible inclusion and recommendations;
- Explore a phased programme for project delivery;
- Formalise an agreement between GMCA and Suez regarding improvements and cost sharing; and
- Seek feedback from insurers on the report's findings and recommendations.

Suez has proposed a budget allocation of £2 million for fire safety enhancements at GMCA assets within the contract. Approval to match this contribution is sought, establishing a total initial budget of £4 million, which would enable commencement of the works within this financial year and into 2026–2027. Given the nature of the required upgrades, a phased approach over 2-3 years is anticipated. Further dialogue between GMCA and Suez will be necessary to finalise a phased order of priority and determine budget sharing arrangements. To facilitate progress, approval of the inclusion of an initial £2 million capital budget for the 2026–2027 capital programme is requested.

2.4. Cobden Street – Welfare Building Upgrades

Background - The existing welfare building at our Cobden Street facility is now more than 30 years old, it was previously upgraded more than 10 years ago and now requires a significant upgrade to ensure it meets current workplace health and safety requirements for staff at Cobden Street. The proposed upgrade includes a small extension to the front of the existing building to provide additional office space.

Current Position – The specification for the proposed extension and internal upgrade were finalised earlier this year. However, commencement was delayed due to building control approvals taking longer than expected, resulting in works beginning only in August.

Our appointed contractor has since established the site and compound and completed the excavation of the existing slab in preparation for the foundations. Work was subsequently halted after poor ground conditions were discovered in the extension area; the soil exposed was poorly compacted and inadequate to support the proposed extension. As a result, a revised structural solution is now required. A structural engineer has been engaged to develop an appropriate response to these ground conditions.

It is anticipated that work will resume by the end of September, subject to a final design approval and sign-off from Salford Council's Building Control Officer.

An updated position will be confirmed at the Committee meeting with further updates to follow at future meetings as work progresses.

3. Category (B) Buildings and Land

There are no significant updates against any Category B assets.

4. Category (C) Closed Landfill Sites

4.1. Waithlands Access Road

Background – Construction of a new ramped access road at Waithlands closed landfill in Rochdale is required to facilitate ongoing vehicular access to drainage infrastructure associated with the culvert beneath the site. This road will also support landscape management activities for the currently inaccessible area and the adjacent riverbank slope along the River Roch. Due to prolonged inaccessibility, future maintenance and repairs to the culvert are anticipated; providing a ramped access road will enable reliable, continuous access for these essential operations.

Current Position – The project was initially scheduled for 2024-25, however was delayed due ecology and habitat risks with the embankment area. Delays were incurred while ecology studies were undertaken to ensure local badger habitats were protected prior to any works being undertaken. This review delayed progress pushing works back to 2025-26. A Contractor was appointed following a successful tender process in 2025.

Work on site began in early August after additional contractor delays. The new access road was 50% complete at the time of writing, with completion expected by mid-October.

Once safe vehicular access has been established, surveys of the current culvert will be conducted to determine any necessary remedial actions for maintaining its serviceable

condition. Next year, the slope embankment will be reviewed as part of a risk assessment of the slope's stability. It is expected that some stabilisation work may be required to maintain the long-term stability of the slope.

Further updates will be provided at future meetings of the Committee as we progress our reviews next year.