

## Greater Manchester Combined Authority

### Waste and Resources Committee

Date: 21 January 2026

Subject: Contracts Update

Report of: Justin Lomax, Head of Contract Services, Waste and Resources Team

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### Purpose Of Report

To update the Committee on performance of the Waste and Resource Management Services and Household Waste Recycling Centre Management Services Contracts that commenced on 1 June 2019. An update is also provided on the Green Gas Support Scheme.

### Recommendations:

The Committee is requested to:

1. Note and comment on performance of the Waste and Resource Management contracts set out in the report; and
2. Approve the updating of the business case for development of dry anaerobic digestion treatment technology to reflect the extension to the Green Gas Support Scheme.

### Contact Officers

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## **Equalities Impact, Carbon and Sustainability Assessment:**

There are no equalities impacts arising from the matters set out in this report. A fundamental principle of the WRMS and HWRCMS contracts is the sustainable management of waste in order to reduce carbon emissions from landfill disposal. The carbon impacts of the contracts are monitored and provided annually by the contractor.

## **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**

N/A

## **Background Papers**

19/1/2019 - Waste Procurement, Corporate Issues and Reform Committee

## **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? N/A

### **Bee Network Committee**

N/A

### **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

N/A

## 1. Introduction

This report provides the Waste and Recycling Committee with an overview of performance of the Waste and Resources Management Services (WRMS) and the Household Waste Recycling Centre Management Services (HWRCMS) Contracts, with updates on key issues currently affecting the waste management services during this period.

## 2. Contract Performance

This report uses cumulative data for Contract year 7 (2025/26), Quarter 2 (April 2025 to September 2025), combined for the two Contracts held by Suez. This is the latest verified data available at the time of writing of the report.

### 2.1. Cumulative Data

Data is provided for Quarter 2 of Contract year 7, alongside a comparison for the same period of the previous year, 2024/25:

<b>OVERALL Combined Performance (WCA + HWRC)</b>	<b>2025 / 2026</b>	<b>2024 / 2025</b>
<b>Cumulative data (Year to date figures)</b>	<b>Qtr 2</b>	<b>Qtr 2</b>
Total arisings (t)	531,100	544,494
Combined Recycling Rate*	48%	49%
Diversion Rate	99%	99%
<b>HWRC Combined Performance</b>		
Recycling Rate (Household Waste)*	64%	65%
Diversion (Household Waste)	99%	99%
<b>WCA Recycling Collections</b>		
Rejected Kerbside Recycling Collections (t)	110	137
MRF Contamination Rate (Commingled)	17%	16%

\*This Recycling Rate relates only to tonnage handled through the Suez contracts, from both WCA collections and delivered to HWRCs. It is not the same as the nationally reported Waste Data Flow recycling rate which includes other WCA waste and recycling streams that do not flow through Suez contracts.

## 2.2. Total Waste Arisings

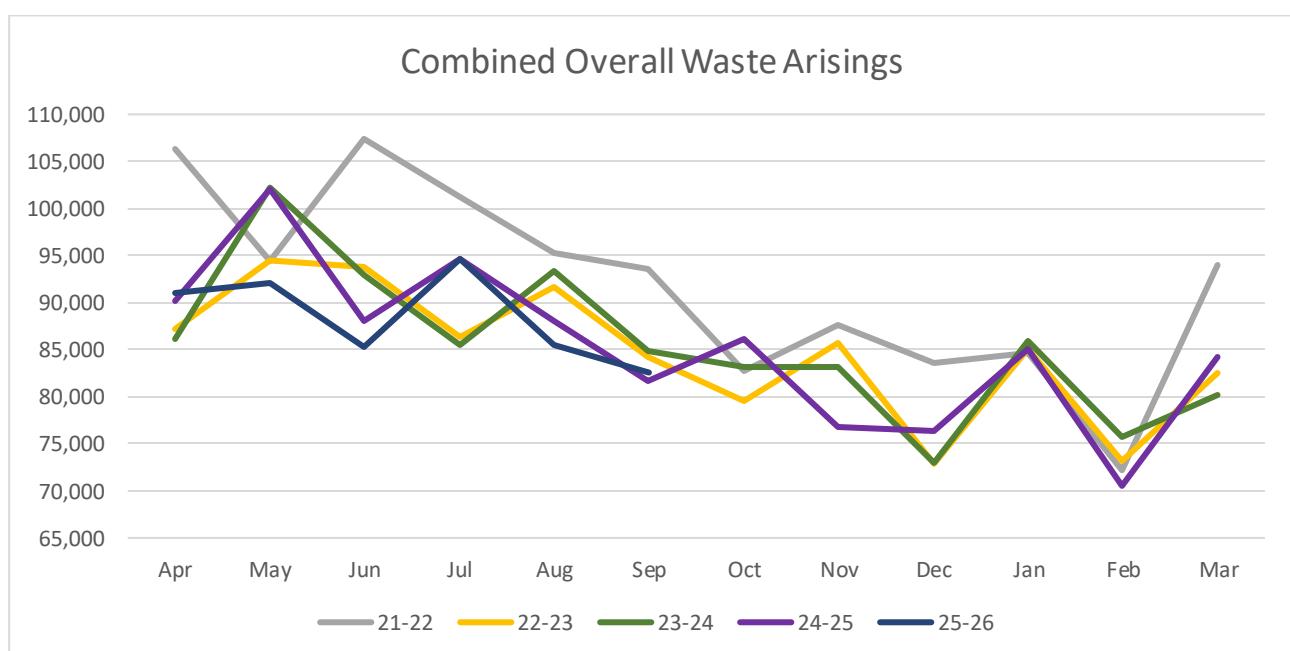
Total waste arising for Contract year 7, up to Quarter 2 (2025/26) was c.531k tonnes(t), which is slightly lower (-2.5%) than the levels in the same period of the previous year (c.13kt lower).

The combined (overall) Contract Recycling rate was c.48%, which is slightly lower than for Quarter 2 of last year (down c.1.7%). This rate has been particularly affected by lower biowaste tonnages (garden and food waste) in this period, which is likely to have been caused by the unusually dry and warm start to the summer season giving lower amounts garden waste.

Across the HWRC network, the high level of combined Recycling performance has been sustained, with a slight decrease (c.0.8%) resulting in a combined Recycling Rate of 64%.

The graph below gives a 5-year comparison, with the previous 4 years of the Contracts against the year 7 trend (dark blue line) for 25/26.

The Contract Year 7, Quarter 2, April to September, trend shows a slightly lower level of waste for this year to date against the same period of last year, without the seasonal peak seen around May in the two previous years. This was potentially due to the warm and dry conditions experienced during these months this year, reducing garden waste tonnages.



### **2.3. Landfill Diversion**

Diversion from landfill continued to remain very high, with almost all (over 99%) of residual (non-recycled) materials diverted to thermal recovery and away from landfill tonnages for Quarter 2 of Contract year 7. Although the Runcorn Energy Recovery Facility (ERF) had its planned major outage over July and August, contingency arrangements managed to maintain high levels of diversion. Looking forward to quarter 3, Bolton Thermal Recovery Facility (TRF) will be closed for the planned 6-month major upgrade works, from October 25 to March 26. Contingency options have been drawn up for this period, but it is known that some increase in landfill will be inevitable. Talks with Suez have indicated that, despite the increases, these tonnages will be kept within the contractual Landfill Cap levels.

### **2.4. Contamination Levels**

The contamination level of kerbside collected recyclate, from materials accepted on reception but extracted by the mechanical materials recovery facility (MRF) process, has remained at c.17%.

However, materials that had to be rejected on delivery at Contract reception points, due to excess levels of unacceptable materials in the delivered loads, meant c.110t were lost, which is c.28% lower than at this point last year. This continues the ongoing downward trend in non-target materials received in kerbside collections, which is a very positive position, whilst there is still room to improve the accuracy of materials presented for recycling.

### **2.5. Overall Combined Performance Rates**

In summary, the overall performance for Quarter 2 of Contract year 7, combined for both Contracts (incorporating WCA and HWRC tonnages), achieved an overall recycling rate of almost 48%, and a landfill diversion rate of over 99%.

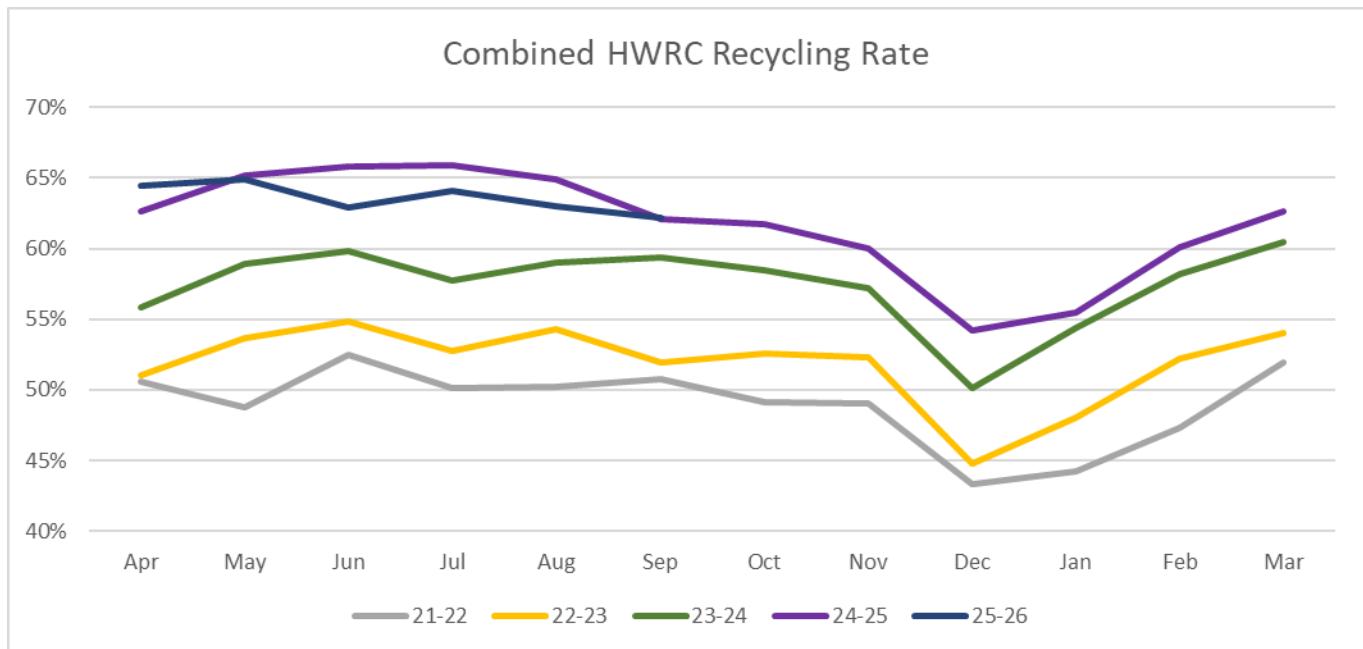
### **2.6. HWRC Recycling Rate**

At the 20 HWRCs, across both Contracts (WRMS has 9 sites, plus 11 in HWRCMS), the combined recycling rate for Quarter 2, Contract Year 7, 25/26, was over 64%.

Measures to maintain and increase recycling on the 20 HWRCs continue, combined with the prevention of trade and cross-boundary waste via the ongoing Access Policy controls

(meet and greet; ANPR system; van permit scheme), are having a positive impact by lowering overall levels of arisings whilst improving segregation for recycling.

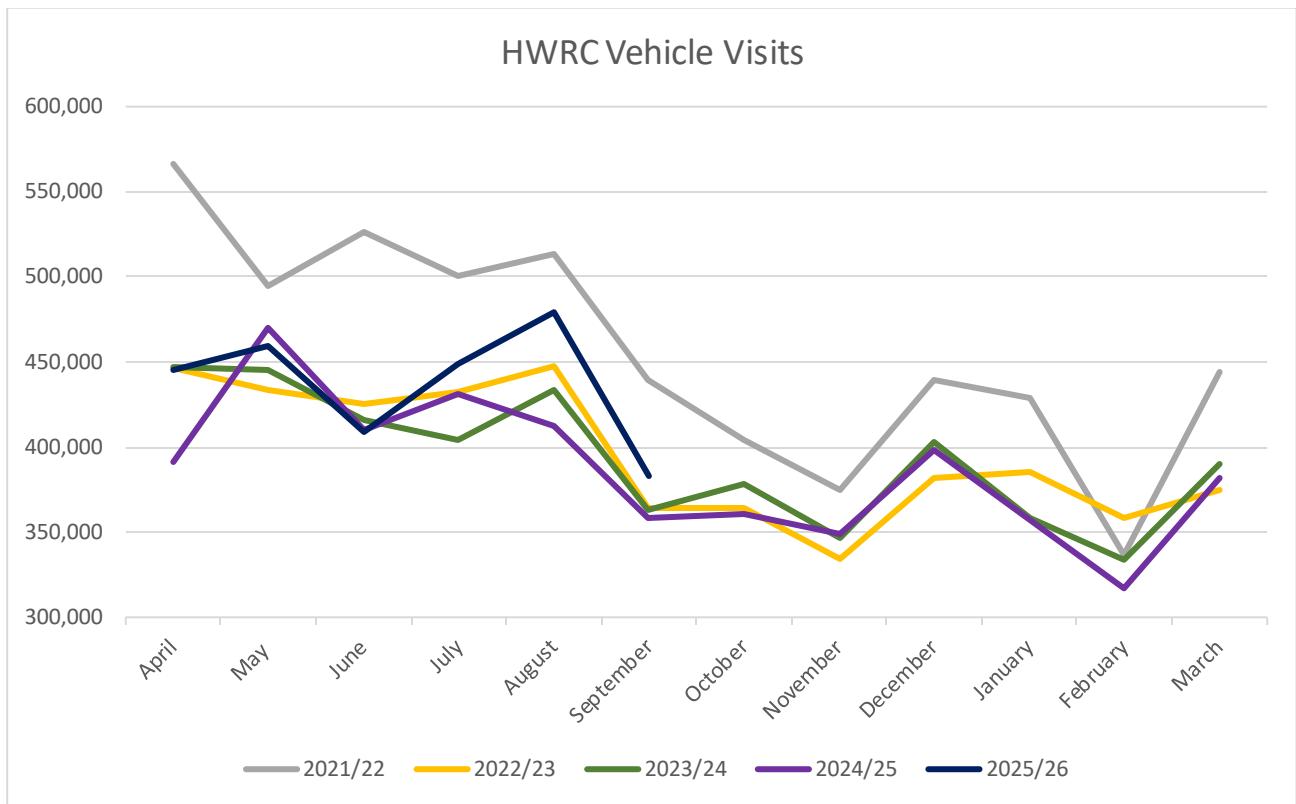
The graph below gives a rolling 5-year comparison of the combined HWRC recycling rates. The trend for 25/26 (dark blue line) shows the recycling rate across the HWRCs to Quarter 2 of this year. Whilst the level of recycling remains high, and above the Contract Target levels, Quarter 2 levels are currently slightly lower than the same period of last year. This is attributed to the dry and warm start to the year, reducing the usual levels of garden waste.



## 2.7. HWRC Visit Levels

The graph below shows monthly HWRC visit levels up to Quarter 2 of Contract Year 7, compared with the previous four Contract years.

There were over 2.6 million visits in this period – with the overall level of visits across the 20 sites increasing by c.6%. Overall visitor numbers have been falling since the start of the contracts, until this period. However, this has not been accompanied by a corresponding increase in tonnage levels, suggesting visitors are delivering smaller amounts of waste to sites.



Additionally, efforts continue to reduce the amount of cross-boundary waste, entering Greater Manchester sites from neighbouring Authority areas.

### 3. Health And Safety

Health and Safety statistics are provided in the Contractor Monthly Services Reports for each Contract and are scrutinised at the monthly Suez Contract Management meeting.

#### 3.1. Reporting Categories

Health and Safety data is reported in key categories, separating incidents involving the Contractor staff and operations, from those involving members of the public (MoP), plus a Near Miss category. Near Miss, Incident and Notifiable Incident data is collected centrally and analysed to feed into local, regional and national lessons learned across the Contractor organisation and communicated to all staff.

#### 3.2. RIDDORS

Unfortunately, since the last report to the Committee, there have been two further incidents reportable under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013.

Following a medical screening process, 2 cases of Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS) have been identified as part of Tier 4 assessment. This is an evaluation that diagnoses the condition and determines appropriate strategies to manage the condition. Current practices and procedures are in place to prevent the circumstances that can lead to these conditions.

### **3.3. Year on Year Comparison**

The table below shows a comparison of the number of RIDDOR incidents that have occurred by Contract year:

<b>Year End</b>	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	<b>25-26 - YTD</b>
<b>RIDDORs</b>	5	3	3	4	4	2	<b>3</b>

## **4. Green Gas Support Scheme**

Members will recall that GMCA Waste and Resources team ran a market testing exercise for expressions of interest in a design, build, finance, operate arrangement for 2 x 100ktpa treatment facilities with technology to be dry anaerobic digestion (AD) or in-vessel composting (IVC) with the bidder to provide sites (either their own or 3rd party, ideally located in the North West) with facilities to be available for operations by 2029. The business case underpinning the potential investment in facilities was based on the financial support from the Green Gas Support Scheme (GGSS) being available. At the time of the market engagement exercise the GGSS was due to end at the end of March 2028. To be eligible for the GGSS it was necessary for a facility to be operational and producing biogas by the 31st March 2028 and this was essential for the financial viability of GMCA developing dry AD capacity.

### **4.1. Market Engagement Event Concerns**

Attendees at the market engagement event raised concerns over:

- the lack of the availability of sites being a challenge to deliverability; and
- the timeframe to develop a facility being too short to meet the 31st March 2028 deadline for GGSS eligibility.

Due to these issues, GMCA paused the market engagement exercise and has been undertaking lobbying of the Department for Net Zero and Energy Security (DESNZ) to confirm what financial support will be available (if any) once the GGSS expires.

DESNZ announced on 10th November that the GGSS will now be extended to 31st March 2030, although facilities seeking funding will still have to be registered by 31st March 2028. Successful facilities will then need to be operational and producing biogas by 31st March 2030 and will receive 13 years of support to 2043.

To assess whether the business case for dry AD remains viable it will be necessary to rerun the business case developed by Walker Resource Management Ltd (WRM). It is recommended that the Committee approves the update of the business case and the results will be presented to a future meeting of the Committee.