

**SOUTH TYNE AND WEAR WASTE MANAGEMENT
PARTNERSHIP JOINT EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE AGENDA**

Friday, 30 April 2021 at 1.30 pm - <https://youtu.be/K31Bz8al34c>

From the Chief Executive, Sheena Ramsey

Item Business

1. **Apologies**

2. **Minutes** (Pages 3 - 16)

The Joint Executive Committee is asked to approve the minutes of the last meeting, held on 11 December 2020.

3. **Declarations of Interests**

4. **Contracts Update** (Pages 17 - 32)

Report attached

5. **STW WMP Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy 2021-2025**
(Pages 33 - 62)

Report attached.

6. **Waste Management Plan for England** (Pages 63 - 66)

Report attached

7. **Resources and Waste Strategy Consultations** (Pages 67 - 70)

Report attached

8. **Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Joint Executive Committee will be held on Friday 11 June 2021 at 1.30 pm.

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GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
SOUTH TYNE AND WEAR WASTE MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP JOINT
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Friday, 11 December 2020

PRESENT: Councillor Linda Green (Gateshead Council) (Chair)

Gateshead Council Councillor Angela Douglas

South Tyneside Council Councillor Mark Walsh, Councillor Jim Foreman

Sunderland Council Councillor Paul Stewart

IN ATTENDANCE:

Gateshead Council Colin Huntington, Marc Morley, Helen Conway

South Tyneside Council Andrew Whittaker

Sunderland Council Ian Richardson

South Tyne & Wear
Waste Management
Partnership Chris Wilson, Gary Smith, Fiona Swinburne

APOLOGIES: Brendan McNeany

97 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2020 were agreed as a true record.

98 MATTERS ARISING

The Committee wished to place upon record their thanks and appreciation to Colin Curtis who had recently retired from Sunderland City Council.

The Committee thanked Colin for his work on the Joint Executive Committee and wished him well for the future.

99 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

100 FUTURE KERBSIDE RECYCLING OPTIONS

The Joint Executive Committee received a presentation on the future kerbside recycling options for the partnership, including the delivery of updated market engagement exercise, the determination of the kerbside collection model from 2022 and the development of a timeline for the full procurement of the MRF contract from 2022.

- RESOLVED -
- i) That the information be noted
 - ii) That further updates will be brought to Committee for consideration in due course.

101 **CONTRACTS UPDATE**

The JEC received a report, advising the Joint Executive Committee of the latest position regarding the Residual Waste Treatment Contract and other ancillary waste joint contracts and activities managed by the South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership (STWWMP)

The joint partnership team continues to undertake several waste management functions on behalf of the partner authorities, including reviewing and verifying monthly contract reports, which detail materials processed and service issues. Once approved, invoices are processed and, where appropriate, apportioned between partner authorities within contractual timescales.

This is enabling, amongst other things, a proactive and timely approach to management of the RWTC which is operated under strict timescales. Similar benefits are also afforded to the procurement and management of other ancillary contracts, such as MRF, HWRC, and green waste composting.

RESIDUAL WASTE TREATMENT CONTRACT (RWTC)

During the ongoing COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic restrictions, household waste levels have continued to remain high. However, all partner authorities have been able to maintain residual waste collections from households across STWWMP without interruption.

COVID-19 contingency measures remain in place across all SUEZ RWTC sites and no significant staffing issues have arisen. The three waste transfer stations have continued to manage the waste levels received and the EfW facility continues to operate as planned and process the waste for energy recovery.

Where possible, home working for support services has been implemented.

SUEZ have advised that they are intending to apply for funding to pursue a ground-breaking carbon capture and storage project with project partners BP. Utilising the EfW facilities at Haverton Hill and Wilton, the project is aimed at neutralising carbon through liquification so it can be returned to gas reservoirs in the sea via underground pipelines. The partner authorities have provided a letter of support for the project.

EfW Service Update

Appendix A (which was attached to the main reports) highlights the 2020/21 contract performance for the period April-October. Plant availability has remained strong at 97.69% and turbine availability 94.88%.

Both contractual recycling and recovery performance continues to operate above target and the unprocessed landfill diversion rate remains at 100%.

The JEC were informed that the exercise to replace the Debt Service Reserve Account (DSRA) with a contingent Debt Service Reserve Facility (DSRF) was completed and closed in October. The financial model has been agreed which has resulted in a £1.69 per tonne reduction to the Band 0 price for all partner authorities. Over the remainder of the contract, this equates to an estimated saving per annum of Gateshead: £88,000; South Tyneside: £84,000; and Sunderland: £105,000.

The Annual Unitary Charge Forecast Monthly Payment has been amended for 2020/21 so the benefit can be realised immediately rather than being accounted for within the reconciliation process.

The third JICR was previously submitted by Willis Towers Watson and reviewed by STWWMP. A response from STWER is still awaited.

2020/21 Insurance Premium

Due to market availability, STWER requested another change in the insurance cover for the forthcoming insurance year (from 1 November). They advised that they expect the insurance premiums for Property and Business Interruption to increase by approximately 20% in comparison to last year and may rise further due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. STWER have completed the insurance cover exercise and the documentation for approval of the waiver is being reviewed by STWWMP with support from colleagues at the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

Waste Transfer Stations (WTS)

As highlighted above, all three of the WTS were fully operational between April and October. Recycling outputs from the sites include segregated street sweepings, wood, and scrap metals.

Routine maintenance of buildings, plant and control systems continues to be undertaken as scheduled at all three transfer stations.

Targeted Recruitment and Training (TR&T)

The RWTC affords provision for SUEZ to help to improve local prosperity across the partnership area by promoting vacant posts within their facilities. Local vacancies are circulated to partner authority economic development services for circulation to their client bases. Vacancies are also highlighted at

the Jack Crawford House and Campground Community Liaison Groups to enable opportunities to be circulated across community contacts.

As a result of a promotional opportunity, the Operations Manager role at the EfW plant is currently vacant and the recruitment process is ongoing.

Community Education and Engagement

STWWMP remains committed to an ongoing programme of community education and engagement, delivered by Groundwork North East & Cumbria (GNEC) at the visitor and education centre, the energy-from-waste facility, and through outreach activities held in local schools and community settings.

Interviews were recently held for the new Visitor and Education Centre Co-ordinator and the successful candidate commenced employment with GNEC on 19 October.

Following the suspension of all previously planned and proposed activities as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the programme is currently being reviewed to allow opportunities for virtual activities to be considered.

However, work has recently progressed on a competition for local school children to design a vehicle wrap for a WEEE contractor's vehicle to increase awareness of the danger of disposing batteries in both the residual and recycling waste streams.

In addition, a 'Twelve Days of Christmas Campaign' has also been launched with schools. Supported virtually by the new Visitor and Education Centre Co-ordinator, the campaign can be tailored by each school to meet their own requirements.

Community Liaison Groups

The pandemic also continues to impact both the Campground and Jack Crawford House Community Liaison Groups and meetings are still not able to be held.

MATERIALS RECOVERY FACILITY (MRF) CONTRACTS

Table A at Appendix B provides the latest 2020/21 performance for blue bin recycling (April-October). All partner authorities have continued to maintain the blue bin recycling collection service to households throughout the COVID-19 pandemic without interruption to service.

However, as with residual waste levels, the impact of the pandemic continues to see higher levels of recycling presented across the partner authorities as many residents continue to work from home.

Furthermore, the pandemic appears to be impacting on the types of materials that are being recycled and whilst the amount of paper continues to fall, there

has been an increase in cardboard packaging. For example, since the lockdown in Gateshead, cardboard materials have represented nearly a quarter of all the recycling that has been presented where previously, cardboard rarely made up more than 10% of all the recycling collected. Tonnages of glass and metals collected have also increased as consumer shopping habits have evolved during the COVID-19 restrictions.

The MRF contracts continue to be monitored closely by the joint partnership team. As highlighted above, recycling tonnages of commingled materials remain at above average levels. Therefore, frequent contract meetings/ calls are being held with contractors to discuss any mitigation that may need to be taken to ensure that the storage of material at the MRFs does not become an issue and that the sites are still able to process the additional tonnage that is being received. The contractors' updated business continuity plans have also been discussed with the joint partnership team.

Appendix B also contains Table B, which highlights MRF recycling and recovery rates (for comingled materials only) since Quarter 1 2019/20. Unfortunately, the pandemic has also affected contamination rates, which have increased in Gateshead and South Tyneside throughout this period and has resulted in a lower recycling performance in Quarter 2 2020/21. As sampling exercises are undertaken jointly, the results are the same for both partner authorities. STWWMP continues to work with the contractor to identify how performance can be improved, including ensuring material sampling methodologies are robust.

The recycling trial that commenced in February 2019 on a single collection round in both Gateshead and South Tyneside is enabling around 2,400 households to recycle paper and cardboard materials together in a separate, additional, wheeled bin. Table C at Appendix B provides details of the tonnage of paper and cardboard (known as mixed fibre) that has been collected since the start of the trial.

Tonnages collected through the trial have generally remained static throughout the pandemic with a slight increase in South Tyneside. The contractor has confirmed that there is a greater percentage of cardboard being collected and paper percentages have reduced.

Feedback from residents will be important when evaluating future service delivery models and benefit all three partner authorities in the longer-term.

The current partner authority MRF contracts expire at the end of March 2021 following the conclusion of the contract extension periods that were activated in 2018. The contracts cannot be routinely extended beyond this date.

Therefore, under normal circumstances the STWWMP preparation for a full tendering exercise leading to the award of a replacement MRF contract(s) for the partner authorities from 1 April 2021 would have begun soon after March 2020. Unfortunately, this was when the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic struck and the national lockdown was put in place. The unexpected disruption resulting from this public health emergency (such as the transition to remote working, realigned procurement priorities to ensure PPE could be sourced, the requirement for key staff

to maintain the delivery of frontline services, and restrictions on travel and social distancing etc.) immediately impacted on STWWMP's ability to move forward with the planned procurement exercise.

Household kerbside recycling collections are statutory waste collection services and it is critical that the partner authorities ensure that kerbside recycling collections are maintained without interruption from April 2021. Consequently, alternative options in relation to the provision of such services were considered. Following analysis of the options available and provisional discussions with a range of local MRF service providers, extending the existing contracts under the provisions of Regulation 72 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR2015) was identified as the most feasible option available to STWWMP.

Initial discussions with the current Sunderland MRF contractor, J&B Recycling, indicated that they would be prepared to enter into a new short-term contract. Unfortunately, the Gateshead and South Tyneside contractor, Palm Recycling, was not willing to accommodate such a provision.

However, the contract with Palm also includes sub-contracting arrangements with Ward Recycling Ltd (who operate the MRF at Teesside) and with Riverdale PLC at Team Valley (who operate the delivery point that receives the recycling collected by the partner authorities for onward transportation to the MRF). Both companies indicated that they would be prepared to undertake a new short-term arrangement with Gateshead and South Tyneside.

Therefore, each partner authority is in the process of finalising approval to utilise an urgent direct award under Regulation 32 (2) (c) of the PCR2015 to the existing MRF contractor for Sunderland and the current Gateshead and South Tyneside sub-contractors.

These contracts will commence on 1 April 2021 for a period of 12 months ending 31 March 2022. Initial preparations for a full tendering exercise leading to the award of a replacement longer-term MRF contract(s) for the partner authorities from 1 April 2022 have already commenced and regular discussions are being held with the Officer Project Board.

HOUSEHOLD WASTE AND RECYCLING CENTRE CONTRACTS

Table A at Appendix C highlights the latest HWRC recycling performance for 2020/21 (April-October). The new way of calculating HWRC recycling performance now excludes not only inert materials (such as rubble), but also electrical waste (WEEE), low grade wood, and dry mixed recyclables/textiles etc. This means that the performance of a site appears to be lower than that of previous years.

Discussions are ongoing with SUEZ regarding the impact of the COVID-19 restrictions (such as the national lockdown when all HWRC sites were closed to the public and the subsequent restrictions on materials that were accepted on site) on the contractual recycling targets.

Over the summer months, the partner authorities have continued to undertake a

gradual easing of the restrictions in the alternative service delivery models that were originally introduced because of the pandemic.

For example, in August, sites began to accept all of the materials that were previously able to be disposed at HWRCs, such as metals, rubble, textiles and large electrical appliances. To help maintain a safe social distance, access to the gantries overlooking the skips and the number of people allowed to leave their vehicle while on site is restricted to one person at any one time. In September, the HWRC vehicle permit scheme was re-introduced and this enabled residents to apply for a permit to dispose waste using a car with a trailer.

From early November, the restriction on large vans was also lifted after the numbers of people using sites continued to ease, which meant that all vehicles which had previously been allowed access to the sites prior to the pandemic are now able to do so again. As usual, vehicles such as large vans will require a permit before being allowed on site.

When the HWRCs reopened in May, to consider traffic management issues, Gateshead and South Tyneside introduced an odd and even number plate system to help manage traffic and reduce queuing. In Sunderland, an advance booking system was introduced. As allowing larger vans on site is likely to increase dwell times due to the quantities of waste that these vehicles typically contain, to help reduce queuing both systems will remain in place for the foreseeable future.

During the summer months, to help cope with the backlog of domestic waste and recycling after the original national lockdown, all STWWMP HWRCs reopened with extended opening hours of 8am to 8pm. From 1 October, all sites returned to the normal winter opening schedule, i.e. 9am to 5pm on weekdays and from 9am to 6pm on Saturdays and Sundays in Gateshead and Sunderland, and 8am to 6pm in South Tyneside.

However, despite the easing of some of the previous restrictions highlighted above, which are aimed at returning HWRC services to as near as normal as is possible within the current pandemic situation, STWWMP continues to monitor the ongoing COVID-19 situation very closely to ensure the strict 2 metre social distancing rules continue to be followed.

As highlighted above, the short-term extraordinary extension to the Sunderland City Council HWRC contract with SUEZ is set to expire at the end of September 2021. This coincides with the development and opening of a new HWRC located in Pallion. The joint partnership team is supporting the Council in the procurement of a replacement contract to manage the new site.

GREEN WASTE COMPOSTING CONTRACTS

All three partner authorities have now completed the 2020 kerbside garden waste collection season, which were extended into early December in South Tyneside and Sunderland.

No significant issues or significant contamination issues were identified during the course of collections.

Throughout the winter period, residents can continue to dispose garden waste free-of-charge at the household waste and recycling centres.

WASTE ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT (WEEE) CONTRACT

The extended WEEE Reduce and Reuse project delivery timetable has now been confirmed with the funders. The team returned on a full-time basis in September and began reviewing methods of engagement to identify new methods to collect material to redistribute to vulnerable residents. This now includes the provision of packs of working small WEEE for redistribution throughout the STWWMP area through the Changing Lives Charity and to young adults coming out of care and into their new homes.

Recently, STWWMP received notification that the organisation funding the kerbside WEEE project, Material Change, had changed its name to Material Focus. The contract has now been signed and a WEEE Behavioural Change Officer appointed to deliver project activities. This includes collections of small domestic WEEE and batteries from properties in targeted estates/ areas in each partner authority area.

The project will link to the Reduce and Reuse Project by providing working small WEEE appliances that have been collected and maximise reuse opportunities.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

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STWWMP JOINT MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2021-2025

The Joint Executive Committee received a report providing an update on the progress of the latest refresh of the South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy.

The Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS) was agreed by each partner authority Cabinet in 2007. It covers the management of municipal waste for the period 2007–2027 and includes:

- Waste collected from households
- Recycling collections
- Waste taken to recycling banks
- Collections of bulky waste
- Street sweepings
- Collection of household clinical waste
- Commercial/trade waste collected by the local authorities
- Fly-tipped waste

- Waste accepted at household waste recycling centres

It does not consider most industrial, commercial, construction, or demolition wastes, which are generally managed by the private sector.

Whilst there is no statutory requirement for STWWMP to produce a JMWMS, the Partnership considers the publication of a strategy as 'best practice' and has committed to undertaking regular reviews, the first of which was published in January 2013.

The JEC were advised that it is important that STWWMP can ensure that the partner authorities have a relevant, top-level, waste management strategy available to them. This will support flexibility in service delivery whilst continuing to meet key aims and aspirations.

However, the current JMWMS is now significantly out of date – largely because of the significant achievements successfully delivered by the partner authorities since its publication in 2013. This includes:

- The completion of the new residual waste processing and treatment infrastructure (including the construction of the STWWMP energy-from-waste facility) and service commencement of the 25-year residual waste treatment contract;
- The development of complementary household kerbside recycling services across all three partner authorities, including the introduction of additional recyclable materials;
- The introduction of a dedicated community education and engagement programme delivered by third sector environmental regeneration charity Groundwork North East & Cumbria from our new visitor and education centre at Campground;
- The establishment of a joint partnership team to provide the Waste Disposal Authority functions on behalf of the partner authorities through the day-to-day contract management functions for the range of waste treatment and recycling contracts with external service providers; and
- The development of close and effective working relationships at all levels with SUEZ, Groundwork North East & Cumbria, and other external recycling contractors.

The refreshed JMWMS structure previously agreed by the Joint Executive Committee was initially intended to provide strategic direction for the period 2018-2022 but, for the reasons highlighted above, it has not been possible to further progress the publication of the JMWMS.

However, as the uncertainty across the waste sector is likely to continue for the near future, to ensure that high-level guidance can be provided to support decisions on future service delivery issues and inform short-to-medium term budget planning cycles, it is important that further consideration is given to reconsider the work previously undertaken based on the latest information

available and realign the five-year strategy refresh to cover the period 2021-2025.

The refreshed JMWMS has been designed to:

- Be easy to understand, follow, and enable progress to be monitored.
- Consider the context of partner authority waste services within the current financial climate and other restrictions on service delivery.
- Be clear about the priorities and not commit partner authorities to deliver actions with unknown external outcomes and/or influences.
- Be proportionate and realistic about issues that STWWMP can directly influence at different levels, e.g. nationally; within their own operational activities; and across other services within their own councils.

It is proposed that a fully designed final STWWMP JMWMS 2021-2025 is presented for consideration by Joint Executive Committee on 12 March 2021 which, if agreed, will then be published online by each partner authority later in the same month.

- RESOLVED -
- i) That the information be noted
 - ii) The JEC agreed to receive the final design of the South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy 2021-2025 for approval prior to its publication in March 2021.

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ENVIRONMENT BILL PARLIAMENTARY PROGRESS - UPDATE

The Joint Executive Committee received a report which provided an update on the progress of the Environment Bill through Parliament following the delay caused by the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic.

The Environment Bill aims to ensure that England maintains and improves its environmental protections when the UK leaves the EU. It supports the delivery of the government's 25-year Environment Plan through:

- Provisions regarding targets, plans, and policies for improving the natural environment;
- The establishment of the Office for Environmental Protection (OEP);
- Provisions about waste and resource efficiency;
- Provisions concerning air quality;
- Provisions for the recall of products that fail to meet environmental

- standards;
- Provisions regarding water;
 - Provisions concerning nature and biodiversity;
 - Provisions for conservation covenants; and
 - Provisions about the regulation of chemicals; and for connected purposes.

The Bill was first introduced to Parliament in October 2019 and passed its second reading unopposed by MPs on 28 October. It subsequently progressed to the committee stage for further scrutiny and the next stages of the Parliamentary process for becoming law.

The Environment Bill Committee was due to reconvene to 'scrutinise the bill line by line' and table amendments with the aim of reporting back to Parliament on 1 December, but this process was paused following the dissolution of Parliament on 5 November for the General Election on 12 December 2019.

The Bill was subsequently reintroduced at the end of January 2020 but, once again, its progress was paused on 19 March due to the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic.

Committee discussions recommenced on 3 November 2020. Following the Bill's completion of Committee Stage, it will be further scrutinised by the whole House of Commons at Report Stage and Third Reading, after which it will then move to the House of Lords for further debate and scrutiny.

The JEC were informed that in terms of the waste and resource efficiency provisions, the Bill provides a legal framework to deliver many of the proposals identified in the national Resources and Waste Strategy (*'Our Waste, Our Resources: A Strategy for England'*), should government choose to do so. The introduction of new powers and amendments to existing legislation will have a number of implications for the resources and waste sector, especially local authority waste services.

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)

The Resources and Waste Strategy (RaWS) includes proposals to reform the UK packaging producer responsibility system, which is also known as Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR). This proposal will require packaging producers to pay for the full cost of managing materials at their end-of-life, i.e. the cost of collecting and sorting waste for disposal. The 'full net cost recovery' requirement of the Bill is aimed at incentivising packaging producers to eco-design products with sustainability or recycling in mind.

Under the current system, local authorities mostly meet the cost of the collection and disposal of packaging. However, recycling disposal costs fluctuate as market values fall or when material is not wanted by reprocessors on economic or market grounds. Although the Bill covers a range of topics - including packaging targets and labelling - the key aspects of EPR governance will

consider how financial contributions to the system will be redistributed towards collection services, which will likely significantly change the way that local authority waste services are funded.

Collection Consistency

Government consider that consistency in local authority recycling collections is also vital to ensuring that a new EPR system operates effectively and eliminates confusion by making the recycling process easier.

Therefore, the Bill confirms the RaWS proposal that stipulates that a consistent set of recyclable materials will be collected at the kerbside by all local authorities across England - namely glass, metal, plastic, and paper and card.

All of these materials are already collected at the kerbside as recycling by the STWWMP partner authorities.

However, feedback from across the waste sector has expressed some concern that this initial core set of materials could be further extended through the inclusion of additional, problem materials, such as plastic film. Traditionally considered as a difficult-to-recycle material, plastic film is not currently recycled by the STWWMP partner authorities but is expected to be featured in the second round of RaWS consultation exercises in 2021.

Furthermore, other collection consistency proposals will come at a cost to STWWMP. For example, the proposed mandatory introduction of separate food waste collections will require significant financial investment from the partner authorities and the potential reintroduction of free-of-charge garden waste kerbside collection services will remove a valuable income stream.

However, the RaWS states that government will fund the net costs of any new burdens on local authorities resulting from the implementation of its proposals.

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Deposit Return Scheme (DRS)

The Bill also allows for the introduction of a deposit return scheme where consumers will pay an up-front deposit when they purchase a drinks bottle or can, which is then redeemed on return of the used item. Depending on the DRS model selected ('all-in' or 'on-the-go'), whilst this will likely impact on littering, it will also have a significant impact on the recyclable materials currently disposed in most local authority kerbside recycling services.

In responding to the earlier RaWS consultation exercises, STWWMP highlighted that the UK local authority recycling collection system does well in terms of harvesting plastic bottles at the kerbside and that an 'all-in' model will redirect valuable materials that are already collected by the partner authorities and will impact on our recycling rates. Furthermore, the remaining 'blue bin' materials may be considered as low value recycling that are less

attractive to the market, which may impact on future procurement exercises and associated recycling reprocessing gate fees.

However, the continued media coverage regarding issues such as plastics in the sea or natural environment is likely to result in the implementation of DRS in England, although the unknown financial implications arising from the ongoing coronavirus pandemic may yet impact on the timeline associated with its introduction.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has already consulted on the three key areas of the RaWS proposals highlighted above and this has informed the publication of the Environment Bill. The pandemic has delayed a second round of RaWS consultations, which are now expected in spring 2021. It is anticipated that this will provide more detail on the specifics of these reforms and what the measures outlined in the Bill could mean for local authorities.

Therefore, at the current time, a number of key questions regarding the implementation of RaWS proposals still remain unanswered. However, as the consultation programme progresses, STWWMP will continue to work closely with the partner authorities and directly engage with government to ensure that STWWMP is best prepared for the impact of significant legislative and funding changes as recycling services and producer responsibility requirements are overhauled in the years to come.

- RESOLVED -
- i) That the information be noted
 - ii) The JEC agreed to receive further updates on the progress of the Environment Bill through Parliament, as appropriate.

104 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Friday 12 March 2021 at 1.30 pm venue tba

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South Tyneside Council



REPORT TO THE SOUTH TYNE AND WEAR WASTE MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP JOINT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

30 APRIL 2021

REPORT OF: Colin Huntington, Project Director, South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership

SUBJECT: Contracts Update

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To advise the Joint Executive Committee of the latest position regarding the Residual Waste Treatment Contract and other ancillary waste joint contracts and activities managed by the South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership (STWWMP).

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The Residual Waste Treatment Contract (RWTC) was awarded to a consortium led by SITA UK (through SITA South Tyne and Wear Ltd) on 20 April 2011. The contract comprises the energy-from-waste facility (EfW) at Teesside, fed by waste from three Waste Transfer Stations (WTS) situated for use by each of the partner authorities. The contract commenced service on 22 April 2014.

2.2 In March 2015, SITA UK's parent company announced a global rebrand, indicating that all its subsidiary companies would change their names to SUEZ. In December 2015, STWWMP received formal notification that SITA South Tyne and Wear Ltd would now be known as South Tyne and Wear Energy Recovery Ltd (STWER).

2.3 The previously agreed extension periods for both of the Materials Recovery Facility contracts (with Palm Recycling Ltd and J&B Recycling) expired at the end of March 2021.

2.4 However, the unexpected disruption resulting from the COVID-19 public health emergency impacted on STWWMP's ability to move forward with the planned procurement exercise for replacement MRF contracts. This required STWWMP to consider options to issue new, short-term contracts as an urgent direct award under Regulation 32 (2) (c) of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. Further information is provided in Section 4 of this report.

- 2.5 Gateshead and South Tyneside Councils' incentive-based joint contract for the management and operation of HWRCs from 1 April 2020 was awarded to SUEZ for a period of 36 months with an option to extend for a further three 12-month periods.
- 2.6 Under the joint HWRC procurement exercise, Sunderland City Council was unable to award a new contract as the bids received did not meet the affordability criteria. However, a short-term extraordinary extension that will end on 30 September 2021 has been agreed with the current service provider, SUEZ.
- 2.7 A joint procurement exercise awarded three separate green waste composting contracts for each partner authority. Although contracts were awarded to three different providers, the timing of the contract lengths has been structured to enable a joint partnership contract to be considered at the end of the current arrangements. The current contract providers are:
- Gateshead: A. Willey for 36 months from 1 April 2016
 - South Tyneside: SUEZ for 36 months from 1 April 2016
 - Sunderland: JBT (now delivered by Remondis following take-over of JBT) for 31 months from 1 September 2016
- 2.8 Following the expiry of the above contracts, all three partner authorities agreed to 24-month extensions from 1 April 2020.
- 2.9 The joint partnership team continues to undertake several waste management functions on behalf of the partner authorities, including reviewing and verifying monthly contract reports, which detail materials processed and service issues. Once approved, invoices are processed and, where appropriate, apportioned between partner authorities within contractual timescales.
- 2.10 This is enabling, amongst other things, a proactive and timely approach to management of the RWTC which is operated under strict timescales. Similar benefits are also afforded to the procurement and management of other ancillary contracts, such as MRF, HWRC, and green waste composting.

3. **RESIDUAL WASTE TREATMENT CONTRACT (RWTC)**

- 3.1 During the ongoing COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic restrictions, household waste levels have continued to remain high. All partner authorities have been able to maintain normal residual waste collections from households across STWWMP without interruption.
- 3.2 In recent months, the EfW has become a key facility for the management of waste arising from the new COVID-19 lateral flow test centres located in Gateshead, South Tyneside, and Sunderland. Guidance issued by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) confirmed that the waste should be classified as chemical, not clinical, waste. This enabled the separately collected material to be directly delivered to the EfW by the partner authorities on a weekly basis following temporary permission from the Environment Agency

(EA) for the facility to accept such waste, which must be processed within 24 hours of delivery.

- 3.3 The reopening of schools following the publication of the lockdown roadmap and easing of COVID-19 restrictions resulted in a change to the disposal guidance for lateral flow test waste arising from schools and businesses, which can now be disposed within the general residual waste stream. However, such material produced by universities and official COVID-19 lateral flow test centres must still be managed as per the original DHSC guidance.

EfW Service Update

- 3.4 Appendix A highlights the 2020/21 contract performance for the period April 2020 - February 2021. Average plant availability has remained strong at 97.73% with turbine availability of 87.76%.
- 3.5 Both contractual recycling and recovery performance continues to operate above target and the unprocessed landfill diversion rate remains at 100%.
- 3.6 No emissions breaches were reported during the period November 2020 - February 2021 and all incinerator bottom ash (IBA) samples returned compliant results.
- 3.7 Due to current COVID-19 guidance and restrictions, the planned annual maintenance shutdown originally scheduled for February has now been deferred until:
- Line 4: 20 June - 12 July 2021
 - Line 5: 3-25 July 2021

Line 4 Update

- 3.8 Line 4 experienced 100% availability during November, December, and February.
- 3.9 However, a significant unplanned event occurred on 20-21 January whereby 33.42 hours of availability were lost due to a bottom ash chute blockage.

Line 5 Update

- 3.1 Line 5 also experienced 100% availability throughout November, December, and February.
- 3.2 Following continual issues with furnace grate functionality and the deferral of the annual maintenance shutdown to summer 2021, Line 5 was taken out-of-service so urgent repairs could be conducted. This resulted in 63.63 hours of unavailability from 25 to 28 January. During this period, other key critical areas of the plant were also inspected and cleaned.

Turbine Availability

- 3.3 Throughout the period November 2020 - February 2021 turbine availability remained at 100%.

Joint Insurance Cost Review (JICR)

- 3.4 The third JICR was previously submitted by Willis Towers Watson and has been reviewed by STWWMP with support from colleagues at the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). A response from STWER is still awaited.

2020/21 Insurance Premium

- 3.5 STWWMP continue to review the previous request received from STWER for changes to the insurance cover.
- 3.6 STWER had already indicated that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in significant increases to insurance costs. Any potential issue around additional costs will be raised at the Liaison Committee meeting as further information from STWER is required.

Waste Transfer Stations (WTS)

- 3.7 All three of the WTS were fully operational between November and January. Recycling outputs from the sites include segregated street sweepings, wood, and scrap metals. Routine maintenance of buildings, plant and control systems was undertaken as scheduled during this period.
- 3.8 However, unfortunately, in recent months incidents of fires have become an increasing risk within all aspects of waste-related operations. The most serious incident occurred at the Campground WTS when an alarm was raised by the fire detection and monitoring company at 0225 on Sunday 28 February.
- 3.9 The Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS) were on site by 0240, assessed the fire, and determined that there was no threat to life. The dry riser deluge system was used to suppress the fire whilst establishing connection to mains water. However, TWFRS reported that the water supply from the mains had insufficient pressure to apply water to the fire so, supported by Northumbrian Water, alternative hydrants were located and a high-pressure pump unit was also deployed.
- 3.10 Unfortunately, the fire took hold during this delay, and TWFRS required a significant period of time to regain control of the situation.
- 3.11 Due to smoke and poor visibility in the WTS, the burning waste was removed and drenched outside. This process continued throughout the night and TWFRS did not leave site until 1330 on Monday 1 March, when it was deemed that the fire was extinguished and that the remaining waste could be removed from site.
- 3.12 During the incident, significant resources were required from a number of other agencies, including Northumbria Police, North East Ambulance Service, Salvation Army, EA, SUEZ, STWWMP, and Lead Authority Highways Service staff.
- 3.13 The exact cause of the fire may never be known, but initial feedback suggests that the fire broke out in some general waste that had been delivered to the WTS from the HWRC sites.

- 3.14 During the incident, urgent communications using social media and local press releases were issued to advise local households affected by the smoke and HWRC service users that the site would be temporarily closed.
- 3.15 Following further urgent meetings with SUEZ and partner authority communications colleagues, a four-stage approach to future communication activities to prevent potential waste-related fires from occurring was agreed. This includes:
- A series of further press releases and website updates regarding the safe disposal of batteries and small domestic electrical appliances (SDAs), referencing Material Focus and the Environmental Services Association 'Take Charge' campaign resources where possible;
 - Identifying operational actions and good practice in the management of SDAs that can be widely disseminated through a range of communications activities;
 - Development and delivery of a coordinated safe waste disposal social media campaign as services are restored and all shops and facilities reopen; and
 - Working with the TWFRS in the delivery of battery and SDA collection amnesties with local schools and supermarkets.
- 3.16 Obviously, this incident immediately placed the Campground WTS out-of-service. Business continuity plans were enacted to ensure that Gateshead and Sunderland refuse collection and street cleansing vehicles were able to continue to dispose of the material/residual waste collected from households in the days/weeks that followed. Alternative arrangements were, therefore, put in place, with Gateshead collection vehicles off-loading residual waste at either Middlefields WTS or the SUEZ WTS facility located at Byker, Newcastle. All Sunderland City Council operations were re-routed to the Jack Crawford House WTS, alongside Gateshead street cleansing vehicles.
- 3.17 In tackling the fire, the dousing of the burning waste subsequently created a significant amount of sludge and detritus outside of the WTS which needed to be collected and removed from site. Once cleared, this enabled the ad hoc area of the site to be re-opened on 24 March for Gateshead street sweeping vehicles to use the sweepings bay. Bulky waste, void clearance, and fly tipping vehicles are now also allowed on site to dispose their wastes. No other vehicles are currently allowed on site, but the situation remains under review as the repairs programme progresses.
- 3.18 In the immediate aftermath of the incident, a key task was to assess the structural integrity of the damaged WTS, which indicated that the main hot-rolled steel frame appeared to be in a satisfactory condition and that there are no immediate concerns regarding the structural integrity of the building.

3.19 Detailed feedback from the structural engineers highlighted that:

- The concrete walls have adequately protected the steel columns, their baseplates, and foundations from fire damage. However, it is recommended that the columns and associated baseplates should be further inspected upon removal of deteriorated concrete panels.
- The precast concrete walls to the perimeter of the structure have experienced extensive spalling due to fire damage, thus resulting in exposed steel reinforcement. It is generally assumed that concrete heated to above 300°C has lost a significant portion of its strength, and as such, it is recommended that the affected precast concrete panels are removed and replaced. This recommendation was later slightly amended to allow for concrete samples to be taken and for repair or replacement to be considered as options.
- The cold-rolled steel elements, such as the external cladding, rails, and roof purlins, have been evidently weakened due to high temperatures and were visibly distorted. Consequently, the cladding rails and roof purlins within the affected areas should be removed and replaced. The loss adjusters and internal insurance have agreed that three quarters of the roof and the cladding on the side of the building that was affected by the fire needs to be replaced.
- The ground floor concrete slab is assumed to be in satisfactory condition. However, it is recommended that repairs and reinstatement of the structural slab and/or screeding layer may be required in some areas.
- No signs of movement were observed to the external elevations or internal portal columns. Consequently, the substructure is assumed to have experienced minimal exposure to the fire and is anticipated to be in a satisfactory condition.

3.20 The WTS also controls the electricity supply to the Campground site, therefore, electricians installed temporary generators and emergency lighting to ensure the weighbridge and visitor and education centre office space remained operational. The site will be permanently rewired and the fire detection system and dry risers replaced.

3.21 SUEZ will now employ a project management specialist to work with construction companies to review the push walls and establish whether they should be repaired or replaced in addition to the roof and the cladding repairs. Replacement fast-action Marian Doors, which were destroyed to enable TWFS to access site, have been procured and will take approximately eight weeks to manufacture.

3.22 At the time of writing, the WTS remains closed and the contingency arrangements are operating effectively. Tipping away costs will continue to be met by SUEZ for all vehicles diverted to the contingency sites during the closure of the Campground WTS.

- 3.23 On 9 March, the Middlefields WTS also experienced a fire within the waste in the tipping hall. Fortunately, the fire started in late afternoon when the site was still operational and could be dealt with by the staff on site. In moving waste during routine operations, friction from the loading shovel vehicle bucket damaged a battery that had been disposed within the residual waste stream, which exploded and caused the surrounding waste materials to ignite.
- 3.24 During the observation process to identify non-conforming waste, staff noticed a flame in the waste and alerted the team leader by radio who immediately temporarily closed site access to all other traffic.
- 3.25 This enabled staff to use onsite water hoses to extinguish the fire quickly (within one minute) and no further damage was sustained.
- 3.26 Once extinguished, the small amount of waste was placed in the quarantine area over night in a bucket of water. An inspection of the material the following day revealed a mobile 'phone battery and charger.

Targeted Recruitment and Training (TR&T)

- 3.27 The RWTC affords provision for SUEZ to help to improve local prosperity across the partnership area by promoting vacant posts within their facilities. Local vacancies are circulated to partner authority economic development services for circulation to their client bases. Vacancies are also highlighted at the Jack Crawford House and Campground Community Liaison Groups to enable opportunities to be circulated across community contacts.
- 3.28 Following an interview process for the vacant role of EfW Operations Manager an internal appointment has now been made.

Community Education and Engagement

- 3.29 STWWMP remains committed to an ongoing programme of community education and engagement, delivered by Groundwork North East & Cumbria (GNEC) at the visitor and education centre, the energy-from-waste facility, and through outreach activities held in local schools and community settings.
- 3.30 Whilst both onsite and outreach activities remain suspended because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the visitor and education centre coordinator has designed a page to promote the community education and engagement programme on the North East Services for Schools website, which details a range of services that schools across the partner authority area can access.
- 3.31 The first in a regular series of newsletters was also issued in January. The first edition included: promotion of the programme and the visitor and education centre facilities; recent activities that have been delivered; and future opportunities to participate in programme activities. The second newsletter will be circulated in April.
- 3.32 The recent competition for local school children to design a vehicle wrap to increase awareness of the danger of disposing batteries in both the residual and recycling waste streams was judged by WEEE contractor, GAP. The two winning designs by pupils at Harton Academy, South Tyneside, will be printed on a GAP collection vehicle.

- 3.33 Work is ongoing to develop a programme of online activities that can take place whilst the current pandemic restrictions remain in place, which included a programme of Easter-related activities in which several schools participated.
- 3.34 Furthermore, St. Mary's RC Primary School in Sunderland were the first school to work on a new project making and distributing crisp packet blankets for those in need. This enabled the students to develop life skills and global citizenship competencies, and explore the 3Rs (reduce, reuse, and recycle). The blanket was then donated to the Open House homeless charity.
- 3.35 To further support the preparation of future engagement activities, a survey has been issued to seek views from local schools and community groups about the most effective methods of engagement as the route map to lift COVID-19 restrictions progresses. This will ascertain their future plans for recycling, waste management, and sustainability education.

Community Liaison Groups

- 3.36 The ongoing pandemic restrictions continue to impact both the Campground and Jack Crawford House Community Liaison Groups and no meetings have been able to be held.

4. MATERIALS RECOVERY FACILITY (MRF) CONTRACTS

- 4.1 The risk of fires within household recycling loads is also a significant issue and a small fire occurred in a Gateshead Council recycling collection vehicle (RCV) on 17 March. As cardboard materials were tipped into the rear of the vehicle, the collection crew became aware of a flash, which was immediately followed by flames from within the vehicle hopper. Fortunately, the crew were able to act swiftly and an onboard fire extinguisher prevented a more serious situation from occurring.
- 4.2 There was no impact on other material within the RCV or its transfer to the MRF contract delivery point. However, the actual cause of the fire could not be subsequently identified.
- 4.3 Table A at Appendix B provides the latest 2020/21 performance for blue bin recycling (April 2020 - February 2021). All partner authorities have continued to maintain the blue bin recycling collection service to households throughout the COVID-19 pandemic without interruption to service.
- 4.4 However, as with residual waste levels, the impact of the pandemic continues to see higher levels of recycling presented across the partner authorities as many residents continue to work from home. This has been compounded by the usual seasonal rise in recyclable materials that are presented over the festive period.
- 4.5 The MRF contracts continue to be monitored closely by the joint partnership team. As highlighted above, recycling tonnages of commingled materials remain at above average levels. Therefore, frequent contract meetings/ calls are being held with contractors to discuss any mitigation that may need to be taken to ensure that the storage of material at the MRFs does not become an

issue and that the sites are still able to process the additional tonnage that is being received.

- 4.6 Appendix B also contains Table B, which highlights MRF recycling and recovery rates (for comingled materials only) since Quarter 1 2019/20. Performance levels have improved within all three partner authorities during Quarter 3. STWWMP continues to work with the contractors to identify how performance can be improved, including ensuring material sampling methodologies are robust.
- 4.7 The recycling trial that commenced in February 2019 on a single collection round in both Gateshead and South Tyneside is enabling around 2,400 households to recycle paper and cardboard materials together in a separate, additional, wheeled bin. Table C at Appendix B provides details of the tonnage of paper and cardboard (known as mixed fibre) that has been collected since the start of the trial.
- 4.8 Tonnages collected through the trial have generally remained static throughout the pandemic with a slight increase in South Tyneside. The contractor has confirmed that there is a greater percentage of cardboard being collected and paper percentages have reduced.
- 4.9 In October 2020, the STWWMP Project Director was authorised by Gateshead and South Tyneside councils to enter into a short-term MRF household recycling contract with the existing sub-contractors Ward Recycling Ltd and Riverdale PLC using the negotiated procedure without prior publication of an OJEU Notice under regulation 32 (2) (c) of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.
- 4.10 However, STWWMP) received reports on 19 February 2021, that Ward Recycling were experiencing financial difficulties and would cease trading imminently.
- 4.11 This immediately impacted on both the current Gateshead and South Tyneside MRF contract with Palm Recycling and the 12-month 'direct award' recycling contract with Ward Recycling from 1 April 2021.
- 4.12 STWWMP urgently contacted a range of other recycling processing service providers to discuss capacity and availability to identify opportunities within the current situation to enter into either a short-term arrangement from 1 April 2021 and/or immediate opportunities to deliver the remainder of the current contract on behalf of Palm.
- 4.13 Following consideration of the results of the market engagement, a 13-month contract until 31 March 2022 with Re-Gen Waste, a recycling reprocessor based in Northern Ireland, was entered into under urgency delegation provisions of the councils' constitutions. The same arrangements were utilised to enter into a separate 12-month contract for the provision of a delivery point for Gateshead Council only was awarded to Riverdale Paper Plc from 1 April 2021.

4.14 These arrangements do not impact on the ongoing preparations of a full STWWMP tendering exercise leading to the award of longer-term MRF contract(s) from 1 April 2022.

5. HOUSEHOLD WASTE AND RECYCLING CENTRE CONTRACTS

5.1 The Campground WTS fire highlighted above also impacted on the availability of the HWRC, which is located at the same site. This meant that, unfortunately, access to the HWRC was unavailable and the site was closed to service users on both 28 February and 1 March.

5.2 Access to the HWRC reopened on 2 March. To prevent future occurrences of fires arising from the disposal of electrical and electronic materials at the HWRC, a number of site improvements have been agreed, including:

- Site reception staff advise all site users on arrival that batteries should be removed from all electrical and electronic items before they are placed in the SDA containers, and that the batteries should be placed in the separate battery boxes.
- Additional signage will be placed on the SDA containers reminding site users that all batteries should be removed from items before disposal. Signage will also be reviewed at the waste reception areas.
- Additional containers for the separate collection of 'vape' products will be placed on all HWRC sites.

5.3 Table A at Appendix C highlights the latest HWRC recycling performance for 2020/21 (April 2020 - February 2021). The new requirements for calculating HWRC recycling performance now excludes not only inert materials (such as rubble), but also electrical waste, low grade wood, and dry mixed recyclables/textiles etc. This means that the performance of a site appears to be lower than that of previous years.

5.4 The easing of some of the previous site restrictions, which were aimed at returning HWRC services to as near as normal as is possible, have remained in place throughout the current lockdown period. However, STWWMP continues to monitor the ongoing COVID-19 situation very closely to ensure the strict two-metre social distancing rules continue to be followed. To help manage traffic flows and reduce queuing, the Gateshead and South Tyneside odd and even number plate system and advance booking system Sunderland, also remain in place.

5.5 All HWRCs reintroduced summer opening hours on 1 April 2021. However, to manage the significant queues that were being experienced at both Campground and Cowen Road HWRCs, which were disrupting the public highway, Gateshead Council extended the opening hours at both sites ahead of schedule and from 24 March residents were able to access the HWRCs from 0800 to 2000.

- 5.6 To address increased queuing at the Recycling Village, South Tyneside, additional traffic management staff have been employed on a temporary basis and opening hours have also been increased (from 0800 each morning).
- 5.7 The short-term extraordinary extension to the Sunderland City Council HWRC contract with SUEZ is set to expire at the end of September 2021. This coincides with the development and opening of the new HWRC located at Pallion. The joint partnership team is continuing to support Sunderland City Council in the procurement of a new contract for the management of the new site.

6. GREEN WASTE COMPOSTING CONTRACTS

- 6.1 The 2021 garden waste kerbside collection services commenced for households that have subscribed to the service in late March/early April.
- 6.2 The 2021 collection season is the final year of the previously agreed extension period to the current green waste composting contracts. Therefore, new contracts are required from 1 April 2022 and the joint partnership team will lead in the delivery of a full procurement exercise later this year.

7. WASTE ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT (WEEE) CONTRACT

- 7.1 The WEEE Reduce and Reuse project delivery team were furloughed on a part time basis in February and returned full-time on 12 April. The team is reviewing methods of engagement to identify new methods to collect material for redistribution to vulnerable residents. This now includes the provision of packs of working small WEEE for redistribution throughout the STWWMP area by the Changing Lives Charity and to young adults coming out of care and into their new homes.
- 7.2 The kerbside WEEE project Behavioural Change Officer began the delivery of project activities in early November 2020. Using the Material Focus artwork, project stickers and bags have been designed to support the commencement of kerbside collections of SDA and batteries from households in key areas across Gateshead, South Tyneside, and Sunderland.
- 7.3 The project will link to the Reduce and Reuse Project by providing working small WEEE appliances that have been collected and maximise reuse opportunities.

8. RECOMMENDATION

8.1 The Joint Executive Committee is requested to note the contents of this report.

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Gary Smith, Contract Manager (Recycling), STWWMP Tel: 433 7480

2020/21 latest performance: April 2020-February 2021

Total contract waste	191,393 tonnes
Contract waste delivered to WTS: - Campground - Middlefields - Jack Crawford House	Gateshead 59,909 tonnes South Tyneside 43 tonnes Sunderland 18,806 tonnes South Tyneside 49,062 tonnes Sunderland 64,353 tonnes Gateshead 10 tonnes
Total contract waste delivered to EfW	184,740 tonnes
Line 4 availability Line 5 availability Overall EfW availability	97.82% 98.05% 97.94%
Average turbine availability	88.87%
Electricity generated Electricity exported Electricity imported	183,946 MWh 162,993 MWh 2,288 MWh
Recycling performance	Target 2.1% Performance 2.4%
Recovery performance	Target 95.5% Performance 97.6%
Unprocessed landfill diversion rate	100%
Health and safety: - RIDDOR - Injuries and accidents - Near misses - Property damage - Fires	0 12 71 33 1

MATERIALS RECOVERY FACILITY CONTRACTS

Table A: 2020/21 latest blue bin tonnage data: April 2020-February 2021

	Gateshead	South Tyneside	Sunderland
Comingled tonnage	14,976	11,133	21,289
Paper tonnage	1,370	809	1,105
Total tonnage	16,436	11,942	22,394
Comparison to April 2019 – February 2020 - comingled	21.6% increase	23.4% increase	23.8% increase
Comparison to April 2019 – February 2020 - paper	25.3% decrease	37.1% decrease	31.0% decrease
Comparison to April 2019 – February 2020 - all materials	15.5% increase	15.9% increase	19.1% increase

Table B: MRF recycling and recovery performance

Period	Gateshead		South Tyneside		Sunderland	
	Recycling	Recovery	Recycling	Recovery	Recycling	Recovery
Q1 2019/20	87.2%	12.8%	84.8%	15.2%	79.3%	20.7%
Q2 2019/20	87.5%	12.5%	83.6%	16.4%	77.1%	22.9%
Q3 2019/20	88.5%	11.6%	89.7%	10.3%	79.8%	20.2%
Q4 2019/20	88.6%	11.4%	89.0%	11.0%	82.7%	17.3%
Q1 2020/21	87.0%	13.0%	87.0%	13.0%	82.9%	17.1%
Q2 2020/21	81.1%	18.9%	81.1%	18.9%	83.1%	16.9%
Q3 2020/21	86.6%	13.4%	86.6%	13.4%	84.3%	15.7%

Table C: Mixed fibre separate collection trial

Month	Gateshead (tonnes)	South Tyneside (tonnes)
April 2019	8.00	8.00
May 2019	8.38	7.42
June 2019	8.00	7.68
July 2019	7.87	6.68
August 2019*	15.76	15.02
September 2019	8.16	7.26
October 2019	7.70	7.48
November 2019	8.56	8.10
December 2019	9.00	8.06
January 2020	10.02	9.84
February 2020	7.88	7.04
March 2020	8.02	7.46
April 2020	7.40	8.34
May 2020	5.18	8.36
June 2020	8.32	8.16
July 2020*	17.36	16.42
August 2020	7.92	8.24
September 2020	8.60	7.60
October 2020	9.22	7.60
November 2020	8.60	8.00
December 2020	9.80	8.88
January 2021	11.60	10.60
February 2021	8.94	7.16
Total	210.29	199.40

**NB: 2 fibre collections delivered during the months of August 2019 and July 2020.*

HOUSEHOLD WASTE AND RECYCLING CENTRE CONTRACTS

Table A: 2020/21 latest recycling performance rates

HWRC	Annual Target	Quarter 1 2020/21	Quarter 2 2020/21	Quarter 3 2020/21
Campground	48%	53.21%	51.25%	47.30%
Cowen Road	48%	59.35%	55.56%	50.34%
Beach Street	N/A	52.10%	53.27%	45.40%
Middlefields (Recycling Village)	50%	53.20%	50.61%	49.48%



South Tyneside Council



REPORT TO THE SOUTH TYNE AND WEAR WASTE MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP JOINT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

30 APRIL 2021

REPORT OF: Colin Huntington, Project Director, South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership

SUBJECT: STWWMP Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy 2021-2025

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To seek the approval of the Joint Executive Committee for the publication of the refreshed South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The twenty-year Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS) was agreed by each partner authority Cabinet in 2007. It covers the management of municipal waste including general (residual) waste collected from households; kerbside recycling collections; bulky waste collections; street sweepings; fly-tipped waste; and waste disposed at household waste and recycling centres.

2.2 Whilst there is no statutory requirement for STWWMP to produce a JMWMS, the Partnership considers it 'best practice' to do so and this includes a commitment to regularly reviewing its content. The first JMWMS review was published in January 2013.

2.3 However, as previously reported to the Joint Executive Committee, this review process has, unfortunately, been delayed for a number of reasons that were beyond the control of STWWMP. This includes significant delays to the publication of the new national resources and waste strategy (RaWS) and its subsequent consultation programme; the prolonged negotiations and implications of the UK leaving the EU ('Brexit'); the impact of the COVID-19 public health emergency on the further development of national waste policy; and the implications of the partner authority climate emergency declarations on all aspects of the services that they provide.

3. **JOINT MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2021-2025**

3.1 The previous review of the JMWMS was undertaken during 2012 for publication at the beginning of 2013. Therefore, the current JMWMS can now be considered as significantly out-of-date, largely due to the significant successes that have been achieved in recent years, such as:

- Service commencement of the 25-year residual waste treatment contract following completion of the construction of the STWWMP energy-from-waste facility and associated waste transfer infrastructure;
- The development of complementary household kerbside recycling services across all three partner authorities, including the introduction of additional recyclable materials;
- The development and introduction of a dedicated community education and engagement programme delivered by third sector environmental regeneration charity Groundwork North East & Cumbria from the new visitor and education centre at Campground; and
- The establishment of a joint partnership team to provide the Waste Disposal Authority functions on behalf of the partner authorities through the day-to-day contract management functions for the range of waste treatment and recycling contracts with external service providers.

3.2 Therefore, it is important that STWWMP can ensure that the partner authorities have a relevant, top-level, waste management strategy available to them to ensure that the Partnership's key aims and aspirations are being met. Despite the challenges highlighted earlier, further reflection in recent months has enabled the refresh to be completed. This will now ensure that high-level guidance can be provided to support decisions on future service delivery issues and inform short-to-medium term budget planning cycles.

3.3 Attached at Appendix A, the JMWMS 2021-2025 has been designed to:

- Be easy to understand, follow, and enable progress to be monitored.
- Consider the context of partner authority waste services within the current financial climate and other restrictions on service delivery.
- Be clear about the priorities and not commit partner authorities to deliver actions with unknown external outcomes and/or influences.
- Be proportionate and realistic about issues that STWWMP can directly influence at different levels, e.g. nationally; within their own operational activities; and across other services within their own councils.

3.4 The structure for the refreshed JMWMS was agreed by the Joint Executive Committee on 16 March 2018. This also confirmed a new approach to the strategy's presentation which retained, yet simplified, the previous strategic

objectives, and replaced commitments to specific actions and activities with over-arching service delivery themes. This approach is aimed at ensuring that the partner authorities can still achieve STWWMP's aims and aspirations with flexibility in how services are delivered and within the resources that are available.

3.5 The new structure incorporates the following sections:

- Foreword
 - Chair, South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership, Joint Executive Committee
- Introduction
 - Waste Framework Directive
 - Waste Sector Issues
- Waste Services Across South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership
- Successes, Achievements, and Challenges
 - Residual Waste Treatment Contract
 - Improved Recycling Services
 - Community Education and Engagement
 - Joint Working
 - JMWMS Challenges
 - Next Steps
- The National Picture
 - Environment Plan
 - Resources and Waste Strategy
 - Environment Bill
- South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership 'Green Agenda' – Environmental Commitments
- South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy 2021-2025
 - Objectives
 - Themes
- Appendix 1: Waste Data
 - Waste Arisings 2019/20
 - Municipal Waste Landfilled 2019/20
 - Residual Waste Treatment Contract Performance 2014/15-2019/20
 - Residual Waste Treatment Contract Composition Analysis 2014-2020
 - MEL Research Ltd: Average EfW Materials Composition, February 2020
 - Residual Waste Forecasting 2020/21-2021/22
 - Household Waste Reuse, Recycling or Composting Performance 2019/20
 - Household Waste and Recycling Centres Contract Performance 2019/20
 - Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Contract Performance 2019/20
 - Bring Site Network Performance 2019/20

3.6 The previously agreed refreshed JMWMS structure was initially intended to provide strategic direction for the period 2018-2022, but in light of the delays highlighted above, it is now proposed that the refreshed JMWMS will cover the period 2021-2025.

4. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.1 The Joint Executive Committee is requested to:

- (i) Note the contents of this report;
- (ii) Agree the final design and content of the South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy 2021-2025 as attached at Appendix A; and
- (iii) Agree that each partner authority publish online the South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy 2021-2025.

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South Tyne and Wear
Waste Management Partnership

Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy

2021-2025



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Foreword

Waste collection and disposal are two of the key services that our councils provide. Building on a history of collaboration within the waste sector, Gateshead, South Tyneside, and Sunderland City councils decided to work even closer together to tackle the growing environmental and financial issues that we were facing by continuing to landfill our waste. We created the South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership (STWWMP) and in 2007 agreed a twenty-year Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS) to support the further development and delivery of waste services across a total area of 34,300 hectares for a population of over 629,000 people.

There is no statutory requirement for us to produce a JMWMS...but we think its publication and our commitment to regularly monitoring and reviewing its delivery is 'best practice'. The JMWMS was first reviewed in 2012 and this document is the outcome of a review of progress against all aspects of waste collection and disposal services since 2013. It refreshes our aims and aspirations for the period 2021-2025.

Recently, around the world, we have all experienced unprecedented, difficult, and challenging times. This has impacted on every single aspect of our lives and also the services that local authorities have been able to deliver safely. But even before the coronavirus pandemic, the waste sector was already experiencing a prolonged period of uncertainty, which was impacting on our ability to undertake the scheduled review of the JMWMS. For example, the global waste sector has faced much stricter restrictions that challenged the quality of materials that could be imported as recycling in the Far East. As restrictions became more widespread, this even included outright bans on importing certain materials into popular Far East recycling outlets, which significantly impacted on the already-volatile recycling markets all around the globe, including in the UK.

Even now, the UK waste policy direction remains 'under development' despite the publication in late 2018 of the new, national, resources and waste strategy, 'Our Waste, Our Resources: A Strategy for England'. The anticipated 2020 consultation exercise to clarify the implementation of the final proposals - and therefore the long-term future about how and what waste services local authorities will be able to provide - was delayed by the pandemic and, therefore, the future remains unclear. Furthermore, the implications on the waste sector of the UK leaving the EU are not yet fully understood, and the long-term impact of the coronavirus pandemic on all aspects of local authority services is not yet known. The unknown implications

of such key issues have, somehow, still needed to be considered in carrying out this JMWMS refresh.

But, even within this ongoing uncertainty for the waste sector and the challenges that we all still face as we try to return our daily lives nearer to how they were before the pandemic, this JMWMS refresh will help to direct us through the interim period until things become clearer. We still want to do more to deliver the changes that we need to make as we continue to work towards our long-term ambitions. Our main aspiration is still to support people to reduce the amount of waste that we all produce, which will help us to protect our natural environment, sustain valuable resources for longer, and ensure waste materials can be managed properly at their end-of-life. In 2019, each of our partner authorities issued their own climate emergency declarations and STWWMP will be able to play a key role in supporting the move towards a carbon-free future, whether through the development of a more circular economy, or by considering the vehicles that we use to deliver our services, or by reviewing how our waste and recycling is reprocessed.

So we'll continue to find new ways to take our community engagement and education programme to local schools and community groups of all ages to raise awareness of the environmental impact of waste. We'll continue to encourage people to reduce 'unnecessary' waste by not always replacing items that could be serviced, and we'll ask our residents to think about re-using items whenever they can. We'll help our residents to understand what happens to their waste once it's been collected and help them to use our recycling services responsibly and as often as they can. For any waste that is left, we'll continue to generate low carbon energy at our dedicated energy-from-waste facility, where it will be incinerated as part of a process that generates electricity for use by the National Grid. By doing all of this, we'll be able to continue to divert our waste away from unsustainable, environmentally-unfriendly, waste disposal processes like landfill.



Councillor Linda Green

Chair, South Tyne and Wear
Waste Management Partnership
Joint Executive Committee

Introduction

Waste Framework Directive

Waste management in the UK originates from the EU Waste Framework Directive (WFD), which was revised in November 2008 (rWFD) and forms the basis of EU waste legislation and policy, setting the direction for all Member States. This was transposed into UK law through the Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011, (amended 2014).

For many years, the waste economy has been 'linear' - in the simplest terms: take, make, use, and dispose - where raw materials are used to make a product, and once the product has been used, whatever is left is simply thrown away. This approach is not sustainable. It produces far too much waste unnecessarily, which could be reduced if we make the products that we need more efficiently. If more materials were reused, the need for new, raw, virgin materials will be reduced, and damage to the natural and human environment will be avoided. A key element of the WFD and rWFD is the waste hierarchy, which introduces the concept of thinking about waste as a resource. The hierarchy manages the disposal of waste responsibly through preferential treatment routes, with the top priority being to prevent waste from occurring in the first place; followed by seeking to encourage the reuse of materials wherever possible; then promoting recycling of materials rather than disposal within the residual waste stream; then recovering energy from any genuine, unavoidable, residual waste; and, lastly, waste disposal (such as landfill) as a final resort. This 'circular approach' to the use of resources helps to 'design out' waste and keep materials in use at the highest point of value for as long as possible.

Therefore, where waste minimisation and reuse opportunities are no longer available, we must maximise the capture of any materials that can be recycled to ensure that they are not lost within the residual waste stream. Recyclable materials have

a market value and the effective management of their disposal not only protects the environment but can also provide local authorities and their recycling contractors with a reliable and potentially a high-value income stream. Therefore, in such challenging financial times for the public sector, the potential to generate additional income can help to offset the costs associated with service delivery and, potentially, protect the delivery of other, vital, local authority services.

Any materials that are subsequently remaining should, therefore, represent the true residual waste stream. The STWWMP Residual Waste Treatment Contract (RWTC) has enabled the general household residual waste collected from across Gateshead, South Tyneside, and Sunderland to be managed through our own dedicated, state-of-the-art, energy-from-waste facility. This means that since April 2015, **no STWWMP RWTC waste has been disposed by landfill.**

Waste Sector Issues

In recent years, the UK waste sector has experienced a prolonged period of uncertainty, which this review of the JMWMS must take into account. For example, Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) operators separate different recyclable materials and sell them for onward reprocessing. The revenue generated through the sale of these recyclable materials is used by operators to offset the cost of processing/separating the recyclate they receive from local authorities. However, in 2017, China (for decades, the world's largest importer of recycling) introduced much stricter regulations and restrictions on contamination levels, which challenged the quality of the materials that they were importing as recycling. This was subsequently extended to complete bans on importing a wide range of 'recyclable' materials and other countries in the Far East began to follow suit by introducing similar restrictions, which further impacted significantly on the already volatile global recycling markets. Consequently,

this has resulted in a major shift around the world in how and where materials people dispose as recycling can now be reprocessed and, therefore, the levels of risks that MRF operators are prepared to carry in terms of recycling commodity prices. This has subsequent financial implications for the MRF contracts that local authorities are able to negotiate.

In recent years, the management of waste has received increased scrutiny and heightened public awareness and this is helping to drive legislative change. In June 2018, the European Commission published the 'Circular Economy Package' (CEP) revisions to the rWFD, which sets out requirements for Member States and includes revised overall recycling targets for municipal waste of:

- 55% by 2025
- 60% by 2030
- 65% by 2035

Achieving these targets will be challenging for many local authorities. The UK government has retained the principles of the EU Framework following 'Brexit', which means that across the UK, recycling rates will need to improve significantly in the years to come.

Furthermore, in late 2018, the UK government published the resources and waste strategy '*Our Waste, Our Resources: A Strategy for England*', which aims to help to preserve material resources by minimising waste and promoting resource efficiency and the circular economy. This new, national, strategy includes a number of proposals that, if implemented, will significantly impact on local authority waste management. Further consideration of the implications of the resources and waste strategy proposals can be found in *The National Picture* section (see page 13).

The impact of austerity over recent years and the ongoing financial pressures have brought an unprecedented landscape to public sector services. Such constraints have extensively impacted on waste services and will likely to continue to do so in the foreseeable future, especially as all aspects of the public sector and beyond attempt to recover from the significant impacts and consequences arising from the coronavirus pandemic. It is clear that the waste

services provided by the partner authorities have changed significantly over recent years to meet these challenges, and this must also be considered in reviewing the JMWMS. However, the uncertainty around the further detail of how or which of the proposals highlighted within the national resources and waste strategy will be progressed, funded, or implemented is a key challenge that this JMWMS review must also consider.

Therefore, the JMWMS 2021-2025 needs to ensure that the partner authorities are provided with high-level guidance to support key decisions on future service delivery issues and models, which will ensure that short to medium term budget planning cycles are effectively informed in an appropriate timescale. The refreshed strategy must be:

- Be easy to understand, follow, and enable progress to be monitored.
- Consider the context of partner authority waste services within the resources that are available to them.
- Be clear about the key priorities and not commit partner authorities to deliver actions with unknown or unclear external outcomes and/or influences.
- Be proportionate and realistic about issues that together, as a partnership, the partner authorities are able to directly influence at a number of levels, e.g. nationally; within their own operational activities; and across other groups and services within their own councils.

Waste Services Across STWWMP

The municipal waste stream contains a range of materials - from common household dry recyclable materials like paper, cardboard, glass, plastic, and metals, to loose garden waste like grass cuttings and hedge trimmings, as well as general household waste (also known as residual waste), such as kitchen waste and non-recyclable materials.

Since the JMWMS was last reviewed in 2012, the context of the delivery of waste services across Gateshead, South Tyneside, and Sunderland has changed significantly, yet STWWMP partner authorities have continued to deliver the aims and aspirations of the JMWMS. The development of consistent approaches to waste management services across all STWWMP partner authorities has enabled the successful implementation of a number of JMWMS objectives (see Successes, Achievements, and Challenges section, page 11).

As Waste Collection Authorities (WCAs), Gateshead, South Tyneside, and Sunderland City councils are responsible for the collection of municipal waste. All three now deliver alternate, fortnightly, kerbside collections for household wastes, with residual collections being delivered one week, and dry mixed recycling the following. At the current time, household kerbside collection services consist of:

- 240-litre wheeled bin for residual waste.
- 240-litre wheeled bin for comingled recyclable materials with 40-litre inner caddy for the separate collection of paper-based materials.
- A range of communal recycling facilities for, e.g., high-rise flats etc., including 240-, 660-, and 1100-litre wheeled bins, as appropriate.

The partner authorities also operate a number of optional, chargeable kerbside services for residents. This includes:

- 240-litre wheeled bin for household garden waste.
- Bulky waste collection services for waste that is too big for the bin.
- Replacements bins for those lost or damaged by householders.
- Additional bins for larger families/ bin exchanges.
- House clearance services.

There are also four Household Waste and Recycling Centres (HWRCs) across STWWMP which enable residents to dispose small quantities of additional household waste free-of-charge.

The partner authorities also offer commercial/trade waste collection services to support businesses to meet their legal waste disposal obligations, including the provision of appropriate waste transfer documentation etc. The services also advise businesses about how to reduce the amount of waste they produce and, therefore, what they will need to dispose.

A dedicated joint partnership team based within STWWMP Lead Authority (Gateshead Council) now provides the Waste Disposal Authority (WDA) functions on behalf of the partner authorities. The team facilitates the disposal of the municipal waste collected by the WCAs through the provision of contract management functions with a range of external service providers. The disposal contracts that are in place as of 1 January 2021 are shown on page 7.

Waste disposal contracts in place across STWMMP as of 1 January 2021.

Contract	Contractor	Start date	End date
Residual waste treatment	SUEZ (through South Tyne and Wear Energy Recovery Limited)	22 April 2014	31 March 2039
Dry mixed recyclables			
Gateshead	Palm Recycling Ltd	1 April 2014	31 March 2021*
South Tyneside	Palm Recycling Ltd	1 April 2014	31 March 2021*
Sunderland	J&B Recycling Ltd	1 April 2015	31 March 2021*
Household waste and recycling centres			
Gateshead	SUEZ	1 April 2020	31 March 2023
South Tyneside	SUEZ	1 April 2020	31 March 2023
Sunderland	SUEZ	1 April 2020	30 September 2021
Garden waste			
Gateshead	Greentech Recycling	1 April 2016	1 March 2022*
South Tyneside	SUEZ	1 April 2016	31 March 2022*
Sunderland	Remondis JBT	1 April 2016	31 March 2022*
Waste electrical and electronic equipment	Valpak	1 January 2020	1 January 2023
Untreatable residues	SUEZ	1 April 2014	31 March 2023*

* Includes contract extension option previously agreed

A statistical evaluation of the 2019/20 waste levels produced across the STWMMP is provided at Appendix 1 (see pages 25-29).

Successes, Achievements and Challenges

Since the previous review of the JMWMS was published, STWWMP has ensured that many of the actions and activities that were agreed in 2012 have been taken forward and embedded into the day-to-day waste-related functions of the partner authorities or within the role and functions of the joint partnership team. Some of the key successes and achievements in recent years include:

Residual Waste Treatment Contract

In 2014, STWWMP delivered a major milestone which has significantly changed how the majority of waste disposed by Gateshead, South Tyneside, and Sunderland residents is managed.

Using PFI (Private Finance Initiative) Credits, a global procurement exercise had previously appointed SUEZ (through the 'special purpose vehicle' South Tyne and Wear Energy Recovery Limited) as contractor for the treatment of STWWMP general household waste through the Residual Waste Treatment Contract (RWTC). Since the JMWMS was last reviewed, the new waste processing and treatment infrastructure has been completed and the twenty-five year RWTC is now fully operational.

This process enabled three larger, modern, fit-for-purpose waste transfer stations (one in each partner authority area) to open to facilitate the transfer of household waste to a dedicated energy-from-waste facility (EfW) that has been constructed for STWWMP on Teesside. The RWTC formally commenced service on 22 April 2014.

Prior to the last JMWMS review, in 2012 in Gateshead, 54.33% of municipal solid waste collected was sent to landfill; 61.77% in South Tyneside; and 65.51% in Sunderland. The introduction of the RWTC now enables all household general waste collected by the partner authorities to be managed through the EfW. To date, the facility continues to exceed contractual

targets for both material 'recovery' (95.5%) and recycling (2.1%) and is continuing to deliver another significant achievement by diverting RWTC waste away from landfill - no STWWMP RWTC waste has been disposed by landfill since April 2015.

Improved Recycling Services

Since the 2012 JMWMS, STWWMP has successfully extended the range of materials that residents can recycle in their blue bins as part of the kerbside recycling collection service. Complementary kerbside recycling services have been developed across all three partner authorities, including the introduction of additional materials, such as drinks cartons and plastic pots tubs and trays. Communal recycling facilities for high-rise flats etc., have also been extended and now include the same range of materials as the blue bin household kerbside collection service.

The delivery of the management of all Household Waste and Recycling Centre (HWRC) contracts are now managed by the joint partnership team. Across STWWMP, the contracts are now incentive-based, where the contractor is rewarded for exceeding pre-agreed targets for recycling the materials that are disposed at HWRCs by residents. This has enabled new procedures to be established and additional recycling outlets to be secured for traditionally difficult-to-recycle materials, such as mattresses.

Community Education and Engagement

Alongside the service commencement of the RWTC, a dedicated community education and engagement programme was also introduced, delivered on our behalf by third sector environmental regeneration charity, Groundwork North East & Cumbria from our brand-new visitor and education centre at Campground. Although significantly impacted during recent months by the coronavirus pandemic, the programme is now well-established within communities across the STWWMP area and has engaged with over 32,000 children and young people, local residents, and a wide range of other community groups of all ages since its introduction in 2014. The programme aims to encourage local residents to become more responsible recyclers through the delivery of waste hierarchy-related activities with schools, colleges and universities, and different community groups across STWWMP. It utilises not only the visitor and education centre but also outreach activities in local schools and community settings themselves. Programme activities include waste awareness workshops and assemblies, specific waste minimisation projects and activities, reuse and upcycling craft activities, and site visits to the EfW itself.

The programme was further enhanced in 2017 with the development of an outdoor classroom at the visitor and education centre. This now enables a range of environmental activities to also be delivered including pond dipping, vegetable planting, and mini wormery making. The classroom also includes a greenhouse constructed from plastic bottles, some of which were collected from the Great North Run.

Joint Working

As highlighted earlier, the joint partnership team is now providing the WDA functions on behalf of the partner authorities. This includes day-to-day contract management functions for the range of waste treatment contracts that are in place with external service providers, including the RWTC, household kerbside recycling contracts - such as dry mixed recycling and garden waste - and other ancillary waste contracts such as HWRC

management and WEEE producer compliance scheme management. Working together in the delivery of joint contract management arrangements has also enabled a number of other benefits to be realised. For example, by pooling the knowledge and experiences of each partner authority, best practice has been identified and adopted across STWWMP to harmonise back office functions by removing unnecessary duplication. This has ensured improved data robustness and consistency, therefore improving how data can be analysed and enable more effective benchmarking opportunities across STWWMP to be undertaken.

Joint working is now embedded into ancillary waste treatment contract procurement processes through single, joint, exercises that are now undertaken across STWWMP on behalf of all of the partner authorities. When compared to the delivery of separate procurement exercises, working together in this way has clearly brought tangible financial savings to each partner authority. Where required, the subsequent contract management arrangements are still able to afford partner authorities the flexibility to let individual contracts to different suppliers to ensure that their specific needs are met and that contractual arrangements are fit-for-purpose. Contract management arrangements are then delivered by the joint partnership team.

In 2016, a joint communications group was established to develop a cross-partnership communications plan to support the development of timely and consistent waste-related communication activities and materials across STWWMP. The plan targets all communities across Gateshead, South Tyneside, and Sunderland by identifying different messages for different groups of residents (e.g. general public, existing recyclers, new recyclers etc.), and is aimed at increasing recycling rates by promoting the waste hierarchy's 'reduce, reuse, recycle' message utilising clear, easy-to-understand, information. A range of communication techniques are used to distribute advice and guidance, including social media posts, editorials press releases, and regular website updates. A dedicated South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership YouTube channel has also been created, which acts as a

central repository for a series of 'what happens to your waste' videos that have been developed by STWWMP and explain to residents how their waste is managed after it has been collected from the kerbside. A complementary series of 'how to recycle' videos have also been produced in-house, which provide practical advice on household recycling generally, as well as targeted information about recycling at specific holiday periods, such as Christmas and Easter.

STWWMP has also delivered successful submissions to external funding sources for the delivery of joint, targeted, waste-related projects and activities. In recent years, this partnership approach has led to funding being successfully accessed that may not have been available to the three authorities individually. For example:

- Funding from the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) to deliver a communications campaign across the STWWMP area targeting recyclable materials that residents were disposing within the residual waste stream.
- Funding from the WEEE Improvement Fund Distributer Takeback Scheme to develop and deliver projects that target the minimisation of WEEE waste and encourage residents to consider re-use and recycling options before replacing serviceable electrical and electronic items.
- WRAP funding to provide consultancy support for the development of the future STWWMP MRF contract specification and an options appraisal of the different kerbside collection models available to the partner authorities.

At an operational level, STWWMP has enhanced the mutual support arrangements to ensure service continuity across all partner authorities during any unforeseen circumstances. This not only includes sharing resources such as 'spare' vehicles, but also includes management support and staff expertise, staff training, and 'toolbox talks'. Furthermore, these arrangements also enable service issues to be considered against the experiences of an individual authority's actions, with all partners learning from the outcomes to develop consistent procedures and processes that meet common

goals. This includes consistent approaches to various operational practices, including bin tagging for contaminated kerbside bins, the development of collection vehicle over-loading reports, and ensuring site user authorisations and inductions are up to date.

JMWMS Challenges

Since the publication of the 2012 JMWMS review, the impact of the programme of austerity on local authority and the financial pressures that the partner authorities have faced has meant that several of the previously-agreed actions were subsequently considered as 'too aspirational' for the current financial landscape and service delivery challenges that STWWMP waste services have faced. For example, several actions were linked to the delivery of voluntary commitments or identified legislation/recommendations from national projects and issues that had not yet been published, and, ultimately, the final outcomes or implications were not as had been previously anticipated.

Other actions that considered potentially significant changes to the delivery of waste services - such as the introduction of separate food waste collection services - have been examined and discussed on several occasions in recent years. This included comparing the environmental impact of treating food waste by anaerobic digestion to that of energy-from-waste and developing cost estimates associated with facilitating the implementation of a separate kerbside food waste collection service for households. STWWMP subsequently concluded that, at the current time, in comparison to the existing kerbside collection services available to residents, it was not yet financially viable to introduce separate food waste collection services due to the considerable capital and revenue costs involved with its implementation and operation. However, one of the key recommendations identified in the recent national Resources and Waste Strategy (RaWS) proposes that, by 2023, all households in England should receive a separate weekly food waste collection service. In doing so, the RaWS also states that the net cost of its proposals will be met by government where 'additional burdens' are placed on local authorities. Therefore, STWWMP

eagerly awaits further clarification arising from the next stages of the RaWS consultation exercises and the preparation of legislation that will enable proposals such as the weekly separate collection of food waste to be appropriately funded and implemented by the partner authorities.

STWWMP aims to manage all waste as appropriately as possible within the waste hierarchy and, where appropriate, improve all aspects of recycling performance to successfully deliver relevant waste-related targets - whether at a local, national, or European level. However, both the 2015 (45%) and 2020 (50%) European recycling targets have not been achieved. The latest STWWMP recycling performance is provided at Appendix 1 (see pages 25-29). At a national-level, recycling performance has stagnated in recent years and although there has been an overall reduction in recycling levels across the STWWMP authorities since the last JMWMS review, this, in part, can also be attributed to a number of external factors, such as:

- Changes in the composition of recycling and increased levels of residual waste;
- The development of lighter-weight recyclable materials and changes in the materials that manufacturers choose to use, e.g. glass to plastic bottles, steel to aluminium cans etc.;
- Increased electronic communications which have resulted in a reduction in junk mail levels and traditional newspaper readership, meaning that less paper materials are now being recycled; and
- The introduction of chargeable schemes for discretionary recycling services, such as garden waste kerbside collections.

However, as highlighted earlier, STWWMP remains committed to delivering environmental education to ensure that, wherever possible, waste is managed appropriately within the waste hierarchy and recycling performance is maximised.

Across STWWMP, the majority of household recycling is collected through the kerbside 'blue bin' collection service. However, within this service, the partner authorities have not only focused on promoting recycling participation,

but also to support residents in improving the quality of the materials that they present for recycling. Wide-ranging communication activities have been developed and delivered to raise the profile of recycling with residents and reduce 'contamination' levels or the presentation of non-target materials. This includes editorials in council publications, recycling advice leaflets and stickers, and social media messaging.

A series of toolbox talks and training sessions for collection crews have also been developed to increase their vigilance and ensure that contaminated bins are 'red tagged' to inform householders why they have not been emptied – and that they will not be emptied again until the contaminated material has been removed. Furthermore, at the MRFs, the contractors have considered how to improve their processes to enable more recyclable materials to be captured. Additional council resources, working alongside contractor staff at the delivery points, have also been introduced so that, where possible, non-target materials are removed before transportation to the MRF. Grading sheets have been introduced to help to quantify STWWMP loads and agree those that should be rejected, which are also used to provide base data to inform further contamination analysis and help to identify the location of where such loads were collected.

Even within the RWTC, STWWMP has encouraged the contractor to implement additional opportunities to remove as much recyclable materials as is practicably possible at the waste transfer stations, prior to the transportation of materials to the EfW. However, within the RWTC, it should be noted that despite the significant success in diverting STWWMP waste away from landfill, materials that have undergone recovery operations such as energy-from-waste cannot be considered as recycling (excluding some metals) - even though the EfW incinerator bottom ash (IBA) that is produced by the process is used again in the construction industry as a direct replacement for quarried stone within road aggregates. Consequently, the STWWMP Joint Executive Committee has written to Defra in support of Project Integra (the Hampshire waste partnership), which is lobbying for the reclassification of IBA as a recyclable material.

The Next Steps

In carrying out this review of the JMWMS, all STWWMP partner authorities anticipate that there will be more challenges that will need to be overcome in delivering its objectives. A flexible approach to service delivery will be essential, so that key issues can be addressed and the most appropriate application of the waste hierarchy implemented.

However, the delivery of the JMWMS should be considered in the broadest terms possible, so that the conditions are created for enhanced, sustainable, levels of reuse and recycling across the partnership area by everyone. This may include identifying opportunities for the partner authorities to facilitate, wherever possible, additional support to local businesses and other private sector organisations to meet their environmental obligations in the sustainable disposal of their waste.

The National Picture

Environment Plan

Launched in January 2018, the '25-Year Environment Plan' sets out a wide range of goals and targets that aim to improve the environment 'within a generation'. It details how government will work with communities and businesses to target environmental issues such as cleaner air through improved air quality and reduced air pollution; enabling plants and wildlife to thrive; reducing the risks of natural environmental hazards, such as flooding, drought, and coastal erosion; managing exposure to chemicals; and enhancing biosecurity.

It also includes plans to minimise waste, reuse materials wherever possible, and manage materials appropriately at their end-of-life to reduce their impact on the environment. Commitments include:

- Working towards zero avoidable waste by 2050;
- Working towards the elimination of all avoidable plastic waste by the end of 2042;
- Meeting all existing waste targets (including those on landfill diversion, reuse, and recycling) and developing ambitious new future targets and milestones;
- Seeking to eliminate waste crime and illegal waste sites over the lifetime of the Plan;
- Delivering a substantial reduction in litter and littering behaviour; and
- Significantly reducing, and where possible preventing, all kinds of marine plastic pollution – in particular material that came originally from land.

Resources and Waste Strategy

Alongside the Clean Growth Strategy, the Industrial Strategy, and the Litter Strategy, the other key delivery mechanisms for the Environment Plan is the Resources and Waste Strategy (RaWS). Released in December 2018, officially titled 'Our Waste, Our Resources: A Strategy for England', this is the first significant waste-related statement from government since the 2011 Waste Review and the subsequent Waste Prevention Programme for England in 2013.

It contains proposals that clarify the government's long-term waste policy framework and aims to deliver actions that encourage England to recognise and maximise the value of resource usage by minimising waste and its impact on the environment.

Subsequently, the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) issued a series of consultation exercises in February 2019 which considered some of the key areas identified within the RaWS. Although separate consultation exercises were issued, many of the RaWS proposals are inter-linked and potentially impact on each other. The consultation exercises considered:

Introducing consistent household and business recycling collections in England

- Proposals targeting the promotion of householder and business participation in recycling, including key issues such as:
 - Ensuring that a core set of dry recyclable materials is collected from all households and businesses;
 - Ensuring that every household in England receives a weekly separate food waste collection by 2023;
 - Introducing free garden waste collections for all households with gardens;

- Developing statutory guidance on refuse and recycling service standards; and
- Increasing recycling for businesses that produce municipal waste, including the separate collection of food waste.

Introducing a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland

- Proposals to consider the appropriate principles behind introduction of DRS, as government seek to increase recycling rates and reduce littering, including:
 - The materials and drinks that should be in-scope of a DRS;
 - The most appropriate DRS model ('all-in' or 'on-the-go'); and
 - The design and management of a DRS, including the location of return points.

Reforming the UK packaging producer responsibility system (also known as Extended Producer Responsibility or EPR)

- Proposals that aim to ensure that when products are made, they are designed in a way that uses less material and achieves greater circularity when they are disposed at their end-of-life, including:
 - Invoking the 'polluter pays' principle by extending producer responsibility requirements for packaging disposal;
 - Supporting improved collections/ infrastructure, including payments to local authorities for the management of waste collected; and
 - Mandatory obligation on producers to label packaging as recyclable/not recyclable.

The initial consultation period ended in May 2019 and STWWMP submitted a joint response to each consultation exercise on behalf of the three partner authorities.

However, it is possible that not all of the proposals identified within the RaWS will be implemented.

Feedback published by Defra in July 2019 on the results of the above consultation exercises indicated strong and often contradictory opinions from different respondents to different proposals. Further consultation exercises are required to further clarify which proposals will be taken forward and legislated, which are expected to include how they would be implemented and funded. The original timeframe for the further development of the proposals was anticipated to be:

- **2020:** Second consultation period.
- **2021:** Legislation prepared.
- **2023:** Implementation of final proposals.

Unfortunately, the coronavirus public health emergency delayed the second round of RaWS consultations, which (at the time of writing) are now expected in spring 2021. It is anticipated that this will provide more detail on the specifics of these reforms, including which proposals will be implemented.

Therefore, at the current time, a number of key questions regarding the implementation of RaWS proposals still remain unanswered. However, as the consultation programme progresses, STWWMP will continue to work closely with the partner authorities and directly engage with government to ensure that STWWMP is best prepared for the impact of significant legislative and funding changes as recycling services and producer responsibility requirements are overhauled in the years to come.

However, the RaWS also states that all the proposals that will be legislated will be assessed for any new 'burdens' that would be placed on local authorities, who will be subsequently funded in meeting the 'net costs' of their delivery. Therefore, STWWMP eagerly awaits further clarification arising from the next stages of the RaWS consultation exercises and the preparation of legislation that will enable the implementation of proposals to be appropriately funded by central government and introduced into service delivery by the partner authorities.

Environment Bill

The Environment Bill supports the delivery of the Environment Plan and aims to ensure that England maintains and improves its environmental protections following the UK leaving the EU.

It was first introduced to Parliament in October 2019 and passed its second reading unopposed by MPs and progressed to the Committee Stage for further scrutiny and the next stages of the Parliamentary process before becoming law.

Initially, the Public Bill Committee was due to 'scrutinise the bill line by line' and table amendments with the aim of reporting back to Parliament on 1 December 2019, but this process was paused following the dissolution of Parliament for the General Election that was held on 12 December 2019. The Bill was subsequently reintroduced at the end of January 2020 but, once again, its progress was paused on 19 March due to the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic.

The Committee's discussions were not able to recommence until early November 2020 and following the completion of Committee Stage, the first day of the Report Stage was held in late January 2021. Once the Report Stage is completed, this will be followed by the Third Reading, before being passed to the House of Lords for further debate and scrutiny. However, government subsequently announced that the Bill will be carried over to the "next parliamentary session" and that its Royal Assent can now be expected in autumn 2021.

The Bill provides the legal framework to deliver many of the waste and resource efficiency proposals identified in the RaWS, should government choose to do so. The introduction of new powers and amendments to existing legislation will have a number of implications for the resources and waste sector, especially local authority waste services.

STWWMP 'Green Agenda'

– Environmental Commitments

The 'Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C', published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in 2018, described the enormous harm that a 2°C average rise in global temperatures is likely to cause when compared to a rise of 1.5°C. It also suggested that limiting Global Warming to the lower 1.5°C level may still be possible if ambitious action from national and sub-national authorities, civil society, and the private sector is undertaken.

Therefore, in May 2019, the UK government declared a climate emergency, which was subsequently followed by legislation and net-zero emissions targets for the whole of the UK by 2050. However, at the current rate of action, it has been predicted that the UK will miss these targets and the role of local authorities is now considered more crucial than ever.

The STWWMP partner authorities recognise the importance of our natural environment and agree that all levels of government (national, regional, and local) have a duty to act proactively to reduce the environmental impact of our operations to deliver urgent action to address this climate crisis. This is the biggest threat to our well-being and economic prosperity. All three partner authorities have now issued their own climate emergency declarations. These set their aspirations to lead by example by supporting local residents and businesses to do the same to deliver environmental improvements and establish themselves as champions for a carbon neutral future by balancing carbon emissions with carbon removal or even, where feasible, eliminating carbon emissions altogether. Where possible, they aim to achieve this ahead of any national targets that have been set. In doing so, this will create 'greener and cleaner' communities across Gateshead, South Tyneside, and Sunderland.

The climate emergency declarations issued by each partner authority commit them to tackle challenges corporately, such as:

- Identifying urgent actions that highlight the importance of taking the climate issue seriously.

- Reducing the emissions associated with their activities to net zero to ensure all our activities are, where possible, carbon neutral by 2030.
- Ensuring that all strategic decisions, policies and strategies, budgets, and approaches to planning decisions are in line with the shift towards the ambitious zero carbon emissions targets.
- Leading the way by being open and responsive in reacting to the climate crisis by guaranteeing that political and chief officers ensure that the carbon emission reduction aspirations are embedded in all areas of service delivery.
- Utilising advocacy roles to influence and support work with external partners to promote carbon reduction actions to raise awareness of the impacts of climate change. This includes inspiring all relevant agencies, businesses, and communities to help deliver this goal through all relevant strategies, plans and shared resources by developing a series of meetings, events, and workshops, such as 'Climate Emergency' summits.
- Working with external partners to ensure that steps are taken to proactively include young people in the process, ensuring that they have a voice in shaping the future.
- Lobbying the UK Government to provide the necessary legislation to provide the powers, polices, resources and funding support to deliver climate change goals.

- Following consultation with key stakeholders (including the voluntary and community sector), produce comprehensive Climate Change Strategies that will set clear unambiguous targets for carbon reduction.

STWWMP fully supports these aspirations and acknowledges that everyone must do what they can together to, wherever possible, stop the climate emergency from not only deteriorating further, but also ensure that carbon emissions can be reduced to improve our environment. In achieving these aspirations and the subsequent local benefits to health and well-being, one of the key issues to address will be to ensure that the changes that are required are fully understood and can be clearly communicated wherever necessary, so appropriate and proportionate actions can be developed and delivered - both now and for future generations.

The origins of managing waste lie in the protection of public health. In more recent times environmental protection and resource conservation have become increasingly important because the disposal of waste can have a huge environmental impact and cause serious problems. When waste is disposed in landfill sites some of it will eventually decompose, but during this process, the site may become smelly and methane gas, which is both explosive and a powerful greenhouse gas, could be generated. Therefore, poorly managed landfill sites can affect human health, primarily by air pollutants released in the atmosphere, but also if the leachate produced as waste decomposes causes pollution through the contamination of agricultural soils and freshwater sources. Such environmental issues were one of the key reasons why STWWMP decided to ensure that residents' household residual waste should be diverted away from disposal by landfill. Since April 2015, no STWWMP residual waste treatment contract waste has been disposed as landfill.

Although energy-from-waste and maximising recycling participation have been the main drivers of change so far, they have their own carbon footprint that should be considered and, where possible, reduced. Across the waste sector, efforts to reduce carbon emissions from energy-from-waste to date have largely focussed on increasing energy production and operational efficiency.

However, new techniques and technologies are now emerging, including carbon capture and storage (CCS) which presents an opportunity to significantly reduce carbon emissions from energy-from-waste plants. In recent months, this has enabled STWWMP to support the RWTC contractor, SUEZ, to investigate the development of a potential CCS solution which would - if external funding is successfully secured - neutralise carbon through liquification for return to gas reservoirs in the sea via underground pipelines. This would remove the CO₂ from the power plant flue gas streams before it is emitted into the atmosphere and significantly reduce the facility's carbon footprint.

However, it is clear that throwing things away wastes natural resources and the over-consumption of resources is creating a global crisis in unnecessary waste disposal. Therefore, STWWMP seeks to manage all waste appropriately within the waste hierarchy. In the first instance, the partner authorities will lead by example, seeking ways to reduce the waste generated through their own activities, but also encourage households and businesses across Gateshead, South Tyneside, and Sunderland to minimise the amount of waste that is being generated across the partnership area.

Encouraging households and businesses to think about the waste that they produce will likely reduce the amount of waste that they create and avoid unnecessary waste. This will not only reduce the environmental impact of waste by managing any waste that needs to be disposed higher up the waste hierarchy, but also support the partner authorities financially by utilising cheaper waste treatment options, such as recycling, or even by avoiding waste disposal costs completely - which could help to release resources elsewhere for the delivery of other vital local authority services.

In recent years, by working together, the partner authority waste services have enabled their residents to recycle more of their waste more easily, enabling our waste to continue to be successfully diverted away from landfill sites. The introduction of the alternate weekly collection model has also enabled the vehicle fleet to be reduced, which has improved carbon emissions across STWWMP.

Further improving the environmental impact of the waste vehicle fleets across STWWMP is an important and significant issue to address. There is a clear potential for alternative vehicle fuels to be used within the waste industry, which would reduce emissions associated with transport. The partner authority waste services have already begun to deploy new, environmentally-friendly, 'cleaner' technologies to 'green' the fleet by introducing electric vehicles in some service areas.

STWWMP is keen to consider new ways to further support the partner authorities' corporate plans to become carbon neutral. The potential acceleration of the transition from an internal combustion fleet to low and zero emission vehicles could realise tangible financial savings through lower fuel costs. Furthermore, most importantly, environmental benefits will be supported via noise impact reductions and reduced carbon emissions and associated pollutants, therefore, providing cleaner air for everyone across Gateshead, South Tyneside, and Sunderland.

In terms of waste disposal services, further clarification from government regarding the implementation of proposals arising from the RaWS could result in the use of alternative waste treatment technologies for the waste produced by residents and businesses across STWWMP. For example, the likely introduction of a mandatory separate weekly collection for food waste would likely see such waste treated by anaerobic digestion (AD). This process produces renewable energy by breaking down organic material by micro-organisms in an oxygen-free sealed tank called an anaerobic digester. Currently, STWWMP food waste is used for energy recovery through the energy-from-waste process.

STWWMP Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy 2021-2025

As highlighted above, service commencement of the 25-year STWWMP residual waste treatment contract (RWTC) began in April 2014. After further consideration of the ongoing uncertainty within the waste sector and the unknown implications of several external factors, such as the implementation of the RaWS proposals, at the current time it is not proposed to realign the longer-term JMWMS timeline to complement the RWTC timeline.

The existing JMWMS objectives and policies are still considered as relevant to the STWWMP aims and aspirations. However, to address some previous areas of duplication it is proposed to merge them into a new set of six simplified objectives for the period 2021-2025:

Objective 1: The South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership will continue to follow the waste hierarchy to prioritise the management of waste by providing opportunities to:

- Reduce the amount of waste that is generated;
- Reuse materials wherever possible;
- Recycle and/or compost waste responsibly, maximising participation and minimising contamination levels; and
- Recover energy from any waste that remains.

Objective 2: The South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership will continue to provide environmentally sustainable waste services and facilities that offer value-for-money, which are accessible to all who live, work, and/or visit Gateshead, South Tyneside, and Sunderland. This will ensure that waste can be managed in a way that avoids environmental damage or danger to human health and considers the potential needs of future generations.

Objective 3: The South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership will continue to develop and deliver a wide-ranging community education and engagement programme across all ages. This will raise awareness of waste management services and encourage behavioural change through the promotion of waste reduction, reuse, and recycling activities.

Objective 4: The South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership will continue to work with government, other local authorities, trade associations, and industry organisations to support the development of waste strategy and policy.

Objective 5: The South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership will continue to identify opportunities to access external funding to investigate and deliver service changes and share the costs and benefits in the delivery of the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy.

Objective 6: The South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership will continue to review the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy objectives as required and undertake ongoing monitoring of progress in the delivery of their aims and aspirations.

It is important to acknowledge that in reviewing the JMWMS and developing future service delivery plans, the partner authorities do not speculate on the delivery of specific actions or activities where the full implications are not yet known. Therefore, to enable the partner authorities to focus on the strategic aims and aspirations of STWWMP, it is not proposed to continue to identify specific actions within the JMWMS 2021-2025. This will support partner authority waste services to focus on delivering the key service issues and challenges within the resources that are currently available to them.

Furthermore, this approach does not 'second guess' the outcome of external actions or issues that may result in the partner authorities adopting unsuitable actions or commitments.

As an alternative, it is proposed that specific actions are replaced by five broad, over-arching, themes which encompass the aspirations of the

refreshed objectives. This will allow flexibility in delivering day-to-day services and activities, yet still provide opportunities to be considered to further joint partnership working or consider new ways of working through the development of trial activities or dedicated 'projects' targeting, for example, priority issues.

The JMWMS 2021-2025 themes are:

Community education, engagement, and communications

- To ensure more materials are moved further up the waste hierarchy to improve recycling performance/ material quality and ensure that more people have a better understanding of what happens to their waste and the services available to them.

Joint working opportunities

- To continue to deliver joint procurement exercises and day-to-day management of waste treatment contracts/ waste disposal authority functions;
- To work closely with contractors to improve services and identify further efficiencies;
- To investigate opportunities to further develop links with the Third Sector; and
- To consider the further development of joint operational opportunities, where appropriate.

Income generation and external funding

- To maximise opportunities for the partner authorities to further enhance trade waste services, such as commercial waste recycling services;
- To continue to support economic growth and local prosperity through the promotion of job opportunities within the waste sector; and
- To source additional external funding opportunities as appropriate to develop and deliver dedicated waste-related projects and/or trial new, alternative, service delivery models etc.

Environmental benefits

- To support the delivery of climate change commitments by enabling household waste to be managed in the most sustainable methods available including, where feasible, green treatment services;
- To eliminate the number of high value, high carbon materials (such as plastics and metals) disposed within the residual waste stream; and
- To reduce the carbon footprint and improve the energy efficiency of the waste service vehicle fleets.

Lobbying activities

- To ensure that, where it is appropriate to do so, STWWMP is able to engage with government, other local authorities, trade associations, and industry organisations, on the implications of changes to relevant waste-related legislation and/or issues affecting local authority waste services.

APPENDIX 1: Waste Data

Waste Arisings 2019/20

Partner Authority	Population	Households	Total municipal waste (tonnes)	Total household waste (tonnes)	Household waste per head (kg)	Household waste per property (kg)
Gateshead	201,592	92,970	95,665	86,911	430	630
South Tyneside	149,418	70,950	79,203	66,791	444	631
Sunderland	277,962	127,180	126,303	113,613	409	635
Total STWWMP	628,972	291,100	301,171	267,315	424	633

Landfilled Waste 2019/20

Since the commencement of the Residual Waste Treatment Contract, no contract waste has been directly sent for disposal by landfill. However, a by-product of the incineration process at the energy-from-waste facility called Air Pollution Control Residue (APCR) is produced from the flue gas cleaning process which utilises chemicals such as carbon and lime to manage the strict environmental controls that the facility operates under. Therefore, due to its hazardous nature, the APCR must be disposed by specialist landfill.

Partner Authority	Total municipal waste (tonnes)	Municipal waste sent to landfill (tonnes)	Percentage landfilled
Gateshead	95,665	436	0.46%
South Tyneside	79,203	442	0.56%
Sunderland	126,303	582	0.46%
Total STWWMP	301,171	1,460	0.48%

Residual Waste Treatment Contract Performance 2014/15-2019/20

Contract year	Recycling target	Recycling results	Recovery target	Recovery results
2014/15	2%	2.3%	95.6%	92.5%
2015/16	2%	3.1%	95.6%	96.7%
2016/17	2.1%	4.1%	95.5%	95.9%
2017/18	2.1%	4.1%	95.5%	95.9%
2018/19	2.1%	2.9%	95.5%	97.1%
2019/20	2.1%	2.8%	95.5%	97.2%

Residual Waste Treatment Contract Composition Analysis: 2014-2020

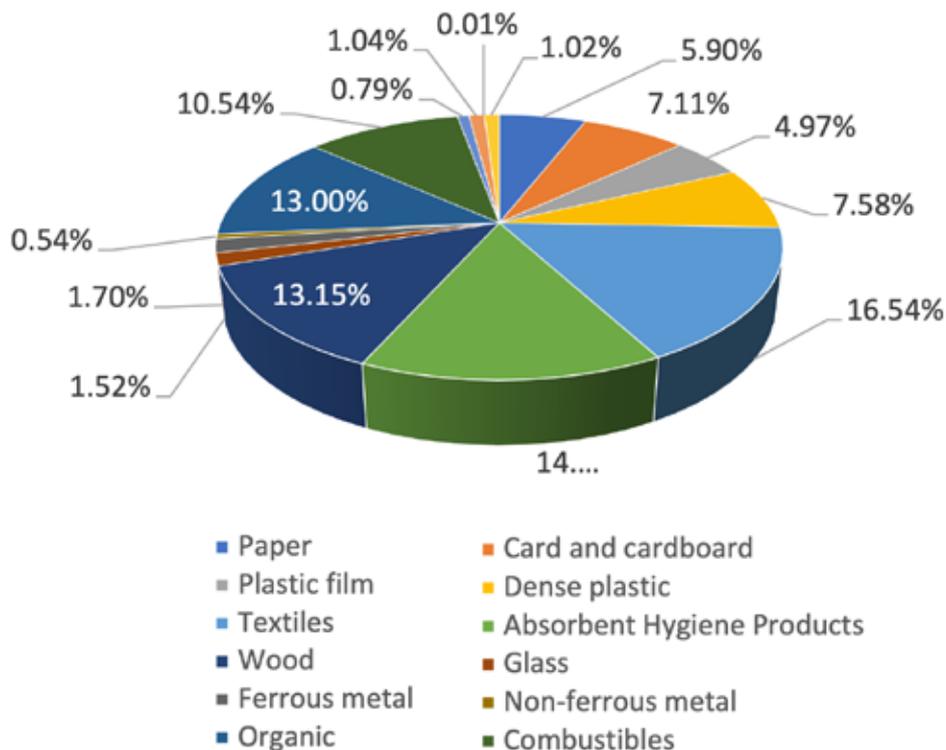
Since 2014, during January/February each year, the residual waste treatment contractor has appointed MEL Research to undertake an analysis of a small proportion of residual waste arriving at EfW Lines 4&5 to assess the:

- Compositional analysis of the material received;
- Biodegradable content (using predetermined values from Defra's Biodegradability of Municipal Solid Waste Report 2012); and
- Calorific value (and other gases and compounds), through lab-based chemical analysis.

The contractor also utilises third party waste to maximise the STWWMP EfW capacity, therefore, the samples for analysis can also include waste from outside of the STWWMP partner authorities:

EfW compositional analyses	February 2014	January 2015	February 2016	February 2017	February 2018	February 2019	February 2020	Average
Total sample size (tonnes)	0.54	0.52	0.39	0.45	0.51	0.46	0.51	0.48
STWWMP	0.38	0.31	0.39	0.30	0.40	0.32	0.35	0.35
Third party/not separated	0.16	0.21	0.00	0.15	0.11	0.14	0.16	0.13
STWWMP sample	70%	60%	100%	67%	78%	70%	69%	73%

MEL Research Ltd: Average EfW Material Composition, February 2020



Primary Category - February 2020	Average
Paper	5.90%
Card and cardboard	7.11%
Plastic film	4.97%
Dense plastic	7.58%
Textiles	16.54%
Absorbent Hygiene Products	14.59%
Wood	13.15%
Glass	1.52%
Ferrous metal	1.70%
Non-ferrous metal	0.54%
Organic	13.00%
Combustibles	10.54%
Non-combustibles	0.79%
Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment	1.04%
Household Hazardous Waste	0.01%
Fines	1.02%
TOTAL	100%

Residual Waste Forecasting 2020/21-2021/22

Every year, STWWMP forecast the projected waste levels for the forthcoming financial years. This is calculated by reviewing the latest waste information available (primarily tonnage data), the impact of any known changes to the future delivery of services (such as an increase in fees and charges or plans to expand or reduce service delivery), and the new additional housing stock scheduled for completion across the partnership area during the forecast period.

However, following the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on all aspects of daily life and waste services, further analysis has been undertaken to assess the current impact of increased residual waste levels arising from home working etc. Consequently, this may require further adjustment as the restrictions arising from the pandemic are lifted in the longer-term.

Period	Gateshead (tonnes)	South Tyneside (tonnes)	Sunderland (tonnes)	STWWMP (tonnes)
2020/21	65,339	53,210	89,993	208,542
2021/22	65,993	53,742	90,893	210,628

Household Waste Reuse, Recycling or Composting 2019/20

Partner Authority	Household waste not recycled (tonnes)	Household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting (tonnes)	Percentage reuse, recycling or composting	Household waste sent for dry recycling (tonnes)	Percentage dry recycling	Household waste sent for composting (tonnes)	Percentage composting
Gateshead	59,116	27,795	32.0%	18,589	21.4%	8,824	10.2%
South Tyneside	45,412	21,379	32.0%	14,279	21.4%	7,012	10.5%
Sunderland	82,572	31,041	27.3%	21,482	18.9%	9,269	8.2%
Total STWWMP	187,100	80,215	30.0%	54,350	20.3%	25,105	9.4%

Household Waste and Recycling Centres (HWRC) Contract Performance 2019/20

Four HWRCs are provided across STWWMP so that residents can dispose of small quantities of household waste free-of-charge, including items that are unable to be disposed of through the kerbside collection services.

Partner Authority	Total HWRC material (tonnes)	Total sent to EfW (tonnes)	Total sent directly to landfill (tonnes)	Total recycled/composted/reused (tonnes)	Percentage recycled/composted/reused
Gateshead	18,901	9,200	0	9,701	51.3%
South Tyneside	16,978	8,202	0	8,776	51.7%
Sunderland	20,205	11,067	0	9,138	45.2%
Total STWWMP	56,084	28,469	0	27,615	49.2%

Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Contract Performance 2019/20

Across STWWMP, a range of opportunities are provided to encourage residents to recycle WEEE materials.

Partner Authority	Total WEEE waste (tonnes)	Total HWRC WEEE (tonnes)	Total WTS WEEE (tonnes)	Total Household Batteries (tonnes)
Gateshead	714	543	171	3
South Tyneside	708	538	170	2
Sunderland	583	443	140	0
Total STWWMP	2,005	1,524	481	5

Bring Site Network Performance 2019/20

Bring sites are places that provide residents with an additional method of recycling household materials to that of the kerbside blue bin collection service. Each site has at least one container for mixed materials (such as glass bottles and jars; tins and cans; plastic bottles and pots, tubs and trays), and at least one separate container for paper materials only, such as newspapers and magazines. At the end of October 2016, the existing North East region-wide bring site contract with an external service provider ended its five-year tenure. Subsequently, STWWMP decided to procure new mixed and paper materials containers and return the bring site network to an in-house collection model, which, through the inclusion of cardboard materials within the mixed material containers, now replicates the household kerbside blue bin collection service. A number of sites also include containers from different charitable organisations to collect books, CDs, and DVDs, and textiles and footwear.

Partner Authority	Total Dry Mixed Recycling (tonnes)	Total Paper Materials (tonnes)	Total Textiles & Footwear (tonnes)	Total Books, CDs & DVDs (tonnes)
Gateshead	57	43	136	22
South Tyneside	0*	0*	51	25
Sunderland	58	64	104	18
Total STWWMP	115	107	291	65

**Not separated from household kerbside recycling collections*



South Tyneside Council



REPORT TO THE SOUTH TYNE AND WEAR WASTE MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP JOINT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

30 APRIL 2021

REPORT OF: Colin Huntington, Project Director, South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership

SUBJECT: Waste Management Plan for England

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To update the Joint Executive Committee following the publication of the Waste Management Plan for England (the Plan).

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Published on 27 January 2021 by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), the Plan's core aim - as specified in the Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011 - is to bring together all current waste management policies within a single, national document. The legislation dictates that the Plan must be updated every 6 years.

2.2 The Plan draws on a number of plans and strategies that are issued across a range of government departments, such as the:

- Clean Growth Strategy;
- Industrial Strategy;
- Litter Strategy;
- UK Plan for Shipments of Wastes;
- National Policy Statements for Hazardous Waste and for Renewable Energy Infrastructure; and
- Resources and Waste Strategy (RaWS).

2.3 Therefore, the Plan highlights both existing policy and the possible changes in waste policy that are contained in the Environment Bill. This includes RaWS circular economy proposals such as: consistency in household and business recycling collections; the introduction of a deposit return scheme; and reforms to the UK packaging producer responsibility system (also known as extender producer responsibility).

3. WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR ENGLAND - KEY ISSUES

3.1 The Plan does not contain any new requirements or policy changes. However, it does update government thinking on a number of key issues, including:

Energy-from-waste

3.2 Defra is seeking to increase the number of energy-from-waste (EfW) facilities which operate in combined heat and power (CHP) mode. Currently, only around one quarter of UK EfW plants provide CHP. Encouraging EfW facilities to produce heat for local networks will substantially reduce their emissions by utilising the otherwise wasted heat to displace gas boiler heating.

3.3 Therefore, Defra is supporting the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy's £270 million Green Heat Network Fund scheme, which is expected to open in 2022.

Recycling

3.4 The Plan suggests that despite government action to support local authorities to improve the quantity and quality of recycling, material quality has not improved significantly with many local authorities continuing to provide comingled collections and are not, as recommended, separating glass from other materials.

3.5 Therefore, the as-yet still-awaited RaWS consultation on recycling consistency will clarify the separate collection requirements. This will be supported by statutory guidance which will set out the process by which waste collection authorities and other waste collectors may collect recyclable waste streams together.

3.6 The Plan also highlights the requirement for separate weekly food waste collections to be provided to all households in England. It notes that anaerobic digestion (AD) is the government's preference as the most effective way to treat food waste which, therefore, will need to be collected separately to kerbside garden waste collections.

3.7 However, the Plan states that government are still to consider the costs and benefits of free garden waste collections before making a final decision on whether they will be required, or whether garden waste charging should remain a matter for local decision making.

Extended Producer Responsibility

3.8 The Plan notes that Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) is 'an environmental policy approach through which a producer's responsibility for a product is extended to the post-use stage.' There are already UK-wide producer responsibility schemes in place for packaging waste; end-of-life vehicles; batteries and accumulators; and waste electrical and electronic equipment.

3.9 The RaWs sets out plans to review and reform these systems, with the latest consultation exercise including the principles that will be central to the revised EPR packaging scheme.

3.10 However, the Plan also confirms that Defra is currently considering five other waste streams where EPR could be introduced to improve waste management, i.e.:

- Textiles;
- Bulky waste;
- Certain materials in the construction and demolition sector;
- Vehicle tyres; and
- Fishing gear.

4. **ENVIRONMENT BILL - UPDATE**

4.1 However, separate to the publication of the Plan, government has also recently provided an update on the progress of the Environment Bill (the Bill) through parliament. This unexpected announcement highlighted that the Bill needed to be carried over to the 'next parliamentary session', with recycling minister Rebecca Pow confirming that the Bill's Royal Assent is now not expected until autumn 2021.

4.2 Government indicated that the delay is due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has resulted in 'exceptional pressure on the parliamentary timetable which has reduced the amount of time available for the scrutiny of legislation.

4.3 However, Mrs Pow suggested that carrying the Bill over to the next parliamentary session did not diminish the government's environmental ambitions and that key work on implementing the Bill's measures will 'continue at pace'.

5. **CONCLUSIONS**

5.1 The government is legally obliged to update the Waste Management Plan for England every six years to ensure the provision of an up-to-date overview of waste management in England. This update does not outline any new regulations and its publication does not provide further clarification on the key decisions still outstanding from the RaWS proposals, e.g. the potential re-introduction of free garden waste collections.

5.2 Consequently, there are no immediate implications for local authorities arising from its publication.

6. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

6.1 The Joint Executive Committee is requested to:

- (i) Note the contents of this report.

Contacts:

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South Tyneside Council



REPORT TO THE SOUTH TYNE AND WEAR WASTE MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP JOINT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

30 APRIL 2021

REPORT OF: Colin Huntington, Project Director, South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership

SUBJECT: Resources and Waste Strategy Consultations

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To update the Joint Executive Committee following the publication of the latest consultation exercises arising from the national resources and waste strategy proposals.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 In late December 2018, government issued a new, national, resources and waste strategy, *'Our Waste, Our Resources: A Strategy for England'*. The strategy contains proposals that set out the long-term waste policy framework and aims to encourage England to move away from the traditional linear economy (take, make, use, throw away) and begin to recognise and maximise the value of resource usage by minimising waste and its impact on the environment.

2.2 Following its publication, the Department of Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) issued three initial consultation exercises, which sought views from a wide range of organisations on many of the proposals outlined within the strategy (such as local authorities; waste management companies; retailers; manufacturers; product designers; trade organisations; charities and social enterprises; academic and research organisations; and individual responses from members of the public etc.).

2.3 The Joint Executive Committee previously received reports regarding the first consultation exercises:

- On 14 June 2019, highlighting the STWWMP responses to the three consultation exercises; and
- On 13 September 2019, providing an overview of the consultation outcomes that were published by Defra.

- 2.4 Following the publication of the outcomes, further consultation was scheduled to take place during 2020, but the coronavirus public health emergency impacted on the consultation programme and no further exercises were issued.
- 2.5 However, on 25 March 2021, government published the next series of consultation exercises, which covered two topics:
- Introducing a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland; and
 - Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Packaging.
- 2.6 However, the anticipated third consultation exercise updating the previous proposals regarding the introduction of consistent recycling collections for all households and businesses remains delayed, with government recently announcing that its publication has been held back until after the local elections that are taking place in May. No additional details for the further delay have been provided.
- 2.7 This is a particularly significant consultation exercise for local authorities as further clarification is expected around key proposals, such as the provision of free-of-charge garden waste collections to all households with gardens and mandatory separate collection of food waste.

3. **DRS CONSULTATION**

- 3.1 Moving towards a more circular economy, where resources are kept in use for as long as possible and waste is minimised to ensure that the UK is a world leader in resource efficiency and productivity is a priority for government.
- 3.2 The introduction of a DRS is key part of this aspiration. Every year across the UK, consumers use an estimated 14 billion plastic drinks bottles, nine billion drinks cans, and five billion glass bottles. The DRS proposals are aimed at incentivising consumers to deliver used, empty, drinks containers to return points that will be hosted by retailers, where they will be reimbursed for the up-front deposit for each container that was paid at the point of purchase.
- 3.3 Following the first consultation exercise in 2019, government indicated that they intended to introduce a DRS for drinks containers in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland from 2023, subject to receiving additional evidence and carrying out further analysis on the costs and benefits of such a scheme.
- 3.4 A joint (yet separate) second consultation exercise has now been issued by Defra in England, the Welsh Government, and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs in Northern Ireland. The exercise contains 78 questions in total. Scotland has already set out their own plans to implement a DRS, which acknowledges the support for coherent schemes across the United Kingdom.
- 3.5 However, whilst government remains committed to delivering on its commitments to introduce a DRS, it also recognises that the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the economy and society. This has resulted in many

people reassessing their values, decisions, and priorities in both the immediate and longer term.

3.6 On this basis, government confirm that the second consultation also offers an opportunity to explore further what the continued appetite is for a DRS in a 'post-COVID context. Therefore, this consultation will also inform how a future scheme can be designed in the best and most coherent way possible to deliver on the objectives set out by its introduction.

3.7 With this in mind, government has also reassessed what a realistic timeline for implementation of a DRS would be to ensure that sufficient time is provided to ensure a successful roll-out of the scheme. Therefore, it is now anticipated that the introduction of a DRS in England, Wales and Northern Ireland will now be delayed until late 2024 at the earliest.

4. EPR CONSULTATION

4.1 The joint EPR consultation has been issued by all four United Kingdom governments and contains 104 questions in total.

4.2 In 2019, approximately 11.7 million tonnes of packaging was placed on the UK market. The proposals being covered in this consultation are concerned with reforms to the packaging waste regulations, which have been in place since 1997. Initial reforms were outlined in the first consultation, which seek to transform the current PRN (packaging waste recovery note) system to ensure packaging manufacturers pay for the full costs of managing the disposal of their packaging waste at its end-of-life, with higher fees being levied if packaging is harder to reuse or recycle.

4.3 One of the key principles for extending producer responsibility for packaging is to enable fair and transparent payments to local authorities for the cost of collecting and disposing packaging waste from both the residual and recycling waste streams.

5. NEXT STEPS

5.1 Stakeholders are invited to respond to the consultation exercises within a ten-and-a-half-week period, with both consultation exercises closing at 2345 on 4 June 2021.

5.2 The Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee (LARAC) has expressed 'grave concerns' about the delay to the release of the consultation on consistent collections and also raised concerns about the shortened consultation period, which, they say is 'taking place at a time when local authorities and business are stretched with their ongoing efforts in the face of COVID-19' and would, therefore, 'ask the governments to seriously consider reinstating the consultation period to the full 12 weeks.'

5.3 However, the joint partnership team will now develop a series of internal consultation exercises aimed at developing a joint partnership response to each

consultation. This will include direct discussions with elected members/portfolio holders and senior service managers in each of the partner authorities.

- 5.4 This process will also involve close working with all current external waste service providers, and public sector waste organisations, such as the LARAC and the National Association of Waste Disposal Officers (NAWDO).

6. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 The Joint Executive Committee is requested to:

- (i) Note the contents of this report; and
- (ii) Agree to receive further updates on the South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership submissions to the Deposit Return Scheme and Extended Producer Responsibility consultation exercises. as appropriate.

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