

Somerset Waste Board meeting  
14<sup>th</sup> February 2020  
Report for information

Paper  
Item No.

New Collection Contract Mobilisation Update  
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<b>Forward Plan Reference:</b>	
<b>Summary:</b>	This report summarises progress in mobilising our new collection contractor (SUEZ Recycling and Recovery UK) and hence delivery of Recycle More. It updates the board on what has happened since the last Board meeting in December 2019, and what will be happening next to ensure a smooth transition to SUEZ as collections contractor on 28 March 2020 and ahead of the roll-out of the Recycle More service in Mendip in June 2020. It also updates the board on where we are with implementing My Waste Services (our new customer relationship management platform) and the current behavioural change activity which aims to support the transition.
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<b>It is recommended that the Board notes the progress made in mobilising a new collection contract.</b>
<b>Reasons for recommendations:</b>	To ensure transparency in the mobilisation of our new collection contractor (SUEZ) and preparations for Recycle More roll-out.
<b>Links to Priorities and Impact on Annual Business Plan:</b>	Task 1.1 within the SWB Approved Business Plan 2019-24 concerns the transition to a new collection contractor and new service model.
<b>Financial, Legal and HR Implications:</b>	<b>Revenue:</b> In addition to delivering the significant environmental benefits of Recycle More, a new collection contract will deliver significant savings to all partners - total forecast savings are over £2m per annum once Recycle More is rolled out. This does not mean that year 1 costs will be lower by this amount, as SWP will incur roll-out costs before savings can be realised, and savings

	<p>are not realised until Recycle More is fully rolled out in 2022.</p> <p><b>Capital:</b> As set out in the December Board we are expecting an increase in expected total capital costs of just over 1%, due to an increase in depot costs of c.£0.3m to £24.9m. The exact amount is being finalised through ongoing commercial negotiations. Vehicle related capital expenditure remains as forecast at £17.8m. The additional capital borrowing will be undertaken by SCC on the same terms as other borrowing (PWLB +1%).</p> <p><b>Legal:</b> SWP and SUEZ have extended their Letter of Intent to 27 March 2019 to ensure that mobilisation progresses ahead of contract signature. SWP expect to sign the contract imminently.</p> <p><b>HR:</b> Collection Contractor staff will TUPE transfer to the new contractor on 28 March 2020. Drop-in sessions have been undertaken at all depots, as have meetings with unions. Formal engagement with unions and staff about measures (i.e. changes when SUEZ take over) is ongoing. Training sessions for all staff, including familiarisation with new vehicles/technology, will take place in early Spring. 10 loaders are already being trained as drivers ahead of the commencement of the new contract.</p>
<b>Equalities Implications:</b>	An Equalities Impact Assessment has been updated at key milestones throughout the procurement project and will continue to be updated as we progress through to service commencement and Recycle More roll-out.
<b>Risk Assessment:</b>	The risks related to the mobilisation of a new collection contractor and Recycle More are maintained in SWP's risk register and a specific project risk register.

## 1. Background

1. On 29 March 2019 in confidential session the Board decided upon SUEZ Recycling and Recovery UK as the preferred bidder. SUEZ will roll out our new collection service model (Recycle More) in phases. This will enable the public to recycle even more through the kerbside sort system, adding in the following materials to the weekly collection:

- Plastic pots, tubs and trays (including black plastic)
- Food and beverage cartons (e.g. TetraPaks)
- Small electrical equipment (e.g. a kettle or toaster)
- Household batteries

This is in addition to what can already be recycled every week – food, paper, glass, cans, aerosols, plastic bottles, cardboard, foil, textiles and shoes. A 60litre weighted reusable sack will ensure residents have space for all their extra recycling. With so much more recycled each week, the frequency of residual waste will be reduced to every three weeks. This change is crucial to us being able to respond to public demand to recycle more, to nudge those that aren't recycling fully at the moment, to support our aim to

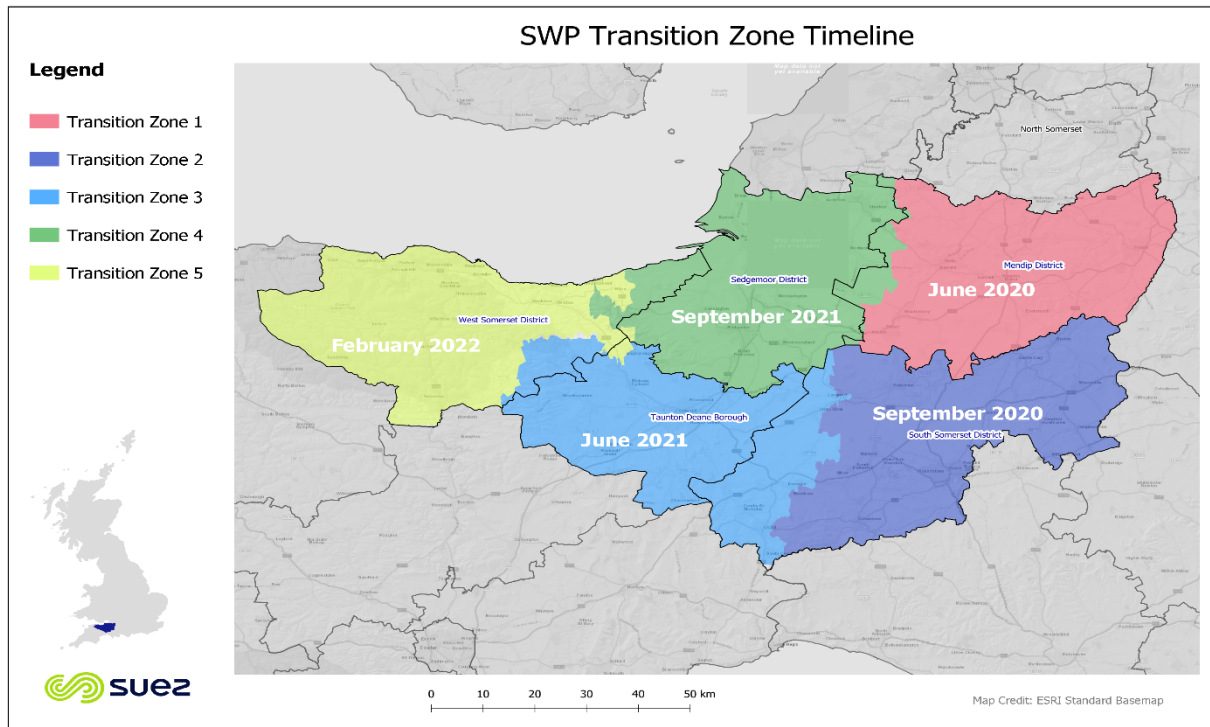
see waste treated as a resource.

For communal properties (e.g. flats) additional materials that residents will be able to recycle each week will be cardboard and plastic bottles, pots, tubs and trays. This is in addition to the paper, glass, cans and aerosols they can already recycle. Over time we will work in partnership with our new contractor to enable residents of communal properties to use the full range of kerbside services for recycling.

We expect this to take our recycling rate to around 60%, and reduce the amount of residual waste from around 480 kg/household to 418kg per household – with this residual waste being used to create Energy from Waste rather than going into landfill.

1. In the September Board progress report the Board heard from Steve Holgate, Director of Municipal Services for SUEZ Recycling and Recovery UK, discussed the positive environmental impact of the new fleet we have ordered (and our plans to further improve when reliable technology exists), the plan to first roll-out Recycle More in Mendip in June 2020. The main focus of discussion in September was the substantial communications and engagement plan SWP are developing, with the Board endorsing the approach set out, our plans to expand the Schools Against Waste Programme, and the approach we intend to take to support those households that utilise nappies or adult hygiene products.
1. In the December Board progress report the Board were updated on the delays to the construction programme at Evercreech (noting that this will not impact on the planned roll-outs of Recycle More), on the delay to launching My Waste Services , changes to the garden waste service on day one of the contract, changes to the school service to drive significant improvements in their low level of recycling, on the planned programme of depot improvements and the roll-out schedule for Recycle More:

<b>Zone</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Properties</b>	<b>Properties by area</b>		<b>Depot</b>
1	29 June 2020	50,392	Mendip	50,392	Evercreech
2	28 Sept 2020	60,434	SSDC (east)	60,434	Evercreech & Lufton
3	June 2021	71,336	SSDC (west)	16,129	Bridgwater (vehicles)/
			SWAT (central/east)	55,207	
4	Sept 2021	56,351	Sedgemoor	54,246	Taunton (recycling)
			Mendip	1,376	
			SWAT	729	
5	February 2022	17,337	SWAT (West)	17,337	Williton



## 2. Progress to date

### 2.1. Update on mobilisation

The mobilisation programme is currently broadly on schedule. Construction work for the new buildings and facilities to manage the additional waste is underway at the Evercreech site with planning and scheduling of the works at other depots continuing apace.

The build of the new fleet of recycling vehicles is underway, with the first recycling vehicles fully wrapped and ready for service launch at the end of March. Following a slight delay at one of the component manufacturers in Germany, a small number of recycling vehicles may arrive in the week after service commencement date, though contingency plans are being developed for this and it will not affect the roll-out of Recycle More. Any temporary vehicles used will have in-cab devices in them to ensure that there is no impact on the service. All other vehicle production is on track.

There is a slight delay to the construction and commissioning programme at the Energy from Waste Plant in Avonmouth caused by the main civils contractor (Clugston Construction) going into receivership. The current projection suggests that the plant will start accepting waste slightly ahead of our formal contract commencement on 1st April 2020, and will be fully operational later in Spring 2020 (rather than the start of April as planned). This marginally impacts the collection contract in that the new fleet of refuse vehicles we have procured are

not designed to drive on to the landfill face and it would not be safe to allow them to do so. SWP are working closely with Viridor and SUEZ to put in place a contingency plan, and this is not expected to disrupt services or increase costs to SWP. The financial risk of delay to the Energy from Waste Plant in Avonmouth lies with Viridor.

Before Christmas SWP had a successful campaign focusing on what happens to Somerset's recycling ([www.somersetwaste.gov.uk/beyondthekerb](http://www.somersetwaste.gov.uk/beyondthekerb)). This aimed to build trust ahead of Recycle More, emphasising that SWP is the 7<sup>th</sup> best carbon performer nationally, and that 91% of recycling stays in the UK – all thanks to people separating their recycling. The next phase in the warm-up to Recycle More is Slim my Waste, Feed my Face ([www.somersetwaste.gov.uk/slimmy](http://www.somersetwaste.gov.uk/slimmy)), encouraging even more people to take up food waste recycling ahead of the transition to Recycle More. The launch of the campaign was delayed slightly from late January to early February due to delays at one of our printing suppliers.

## **2.2. My Waste Services**

The launch of My Waste Services has suffered a number of delays. As has previously been highlighted to the board, this is probably the most challenging element of the mobilisation, particularly given the complicated interface with different partner systems, differing partner priorities and pressures, and the challenges inherent in upgrading antiquated ICT systems.

At the time of writing this report it is anticipated that the first phase of changes (enabling District Council webservices and call centre functions to flow through to our contractors system – essentially ensuring continuity of service with the new system) will go live in early February, following completion of user testing and final technical work. The mobile phone app and being able to do it online on SWP's website will be available later in February. Between then and the end of March SWP and partners will refine the system. The main benefits of the new system will then be ready when it integrates with SUEZ's system (CORE) on 28th March. The real benefits of the new system will then be available - real-time reporting and feedback, vehicle monitoring and tracking, collection day reminders.

This phased approach reflects the importance of having robust District systems in place for the annual garden waste subscription cycle. The Board are reminded that instead of rising with inflation, the cost of garden waste collections is set to fall from £56.90 to £55.50, reflecting the reduced costs from SWP's deal with the new collections' contractor SUEZ. Garden waste collections will no longer necessarily be on the same day of the week as recycling and rubbish collections.

In parallel with these changes SWP will be refreshing its website – enabling people to undertake transactions online, providing better information on the Slim My Waste, Feed My Face food recycling campaign, the roll-out of Recycle More

expanded weekly kerbside collections. These changes involve the website being given a new look, and every section and page is being reviewed to ensure effective, simple and swift communication. This refresh will be phased over the next few months.

### **2.3. Communication and Engagement**

Following on from the Board's endorsement to the proposed communications and engagement for Recycle More, detailed plans are under development. This includes identifying disability groups and networks to ensure that we capture their feedback in our plans, developing plans to engage with parish, District and County Councillors and many other stakeholders. For example Carymoor Environment Trust will be targeting all 51 primary schools in Mendip with the aim of having a session in every school ahead of roll-out, and we are identifying suitable events and locations to hold roadshows/events.

As with the #Slimmy campaign a detailed service change communications pack will be developed to ensure consistency in messages, with a slimmed own version being developed for some stakeholders.

All residents in Mendip will receive an A5 4 page leaflet 8 weeks ahead of service change – raising awareness of the planned service change including why they are being introduced, what they can expect, when and what they will need to do. 4 weeks ahead of the service change an A5 6-page mailer will ensure householders have all the information they need to participate effectively in the new service (including household specific collection day and calendar information). Both of these mailers will encourage residents who are concerned (e.g. because of the amount of waste they produce) to contact SWP so that we can support them ahead of the service change. A 'last refuse collection' tag, new recycling box stickers (applied by crews) and a new recycling bag will be issued to residents when the service changes. Post launch support will ensure that those residents who are struggling with changes have the help they need.

### **2.4. Nappies, wipes and Adult Absorbent Hygiene Products**

We are continuing to progress our work on nappies. The project consists of two parts – finalising our processes with regards to requests for additional capacity/support for residents using disposable nappies and continence/period products during the move to Recycle More, whilst encouraging residents to consider sustainable alternatives such as cloth nappies, reusable period products and reusable wipes.

The stepped process we will follow to support residents follows closely the process used successfully by East Devon District Council and reflects a review of how all authorities nationally with three or four weekly collections support their residents, as well as the learning from SWP's trial a few years ago (where families with children in nappies coped well).

The decision to allow extra rubbish capacity will depend upon how many people are in a household, with stickers provided for one extra sack per child where it is necessary. Evidence from our trial and elsewhere suggests that most people, if supported to recycle properly, will cope with this. However, if a resident is still struggling then an SWP Officer will visit them or see if they need more support – such as a larger or additional bin, or more authorised additional waste stickers. The final step will be for an additional collection to be offered through the clinical waste collection service. This is an expensive option and experience from elsewhere suggests that this is only needed for 2-4 households in any one district. This final step ensures that suitable support is available for those that really need it, but without offering this up in an uncontrolled manner. A key aim of the communications and engagement campaign will be to encourage residents with concerns about nappies and hygiene products to contact us in advance so that we can work with them to address worries and sort out any issues.

We are continuing our engagement with the local nappy groups to ensure that there is enough provision for residents to be able to try cloth nappies at a low cost and get advice and support from experienced advisors. Following the Board's agreement to a budget of £10k we will purchase additional nappy kits which consist of a number of different nappy types for people to try, to establish which style suits them and their baby best. The groups will be there to provide expert advice and support and to help residents make the switch. Experience of other local authorities has found that one-to-one support from dedicated nappy advisors along with trialling cloth nappies results in larger numbers of people making the permanent switch to reusables, than offering a small incentive such as a discount on a purchase.

In addition to nappies, we are looking at other hygiene products such as period and incontinence products, and reusable baby wipes. We are looking to procure some demonstrator kits so that people can see the different types available. We are also at an early stage of discussions with Wessex Water to conduct a joint campaign to raise awareness of these products and encourage people to switch to reusables.

- 2.5.** It is planned to hold an informal briefing session with the Board and Joint Waste Scrutiny Panel in April in order to go through the detailed roll-out plans for phase 1 of Recycle More. A similar session will be offered to Mendip District Council's Cabinet and senior team.

### **3. Background papers**

- 3.1.** All previous board papers on Recycle More are available on the SWP website.