

Somerset Waste Board meeting
25 June 2021
Report for information



Performance Report Quarter 4 – January 2021 to March 2021

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| Forward Plan Reference: | 11.06.2021 |
| Summary: | <p>This report summarises the key performance indicators for the period from January 2021 to March 2021 and compares these to the same period last year. The report aims to give a more rounded view of performance than the previous separate reports the board received and provide greater transparency and accountability. This period was significantly affecting by Covid-19. A verbal update will be provided to the Board By SWP and senior SUEZ management on the current state of services and the prognosis for the near future given the severe service issues being experienced.</p> |
| Recommendations: | <p>The Joint Waste Scrutiny Panel considers and comments on the following recommendations in this report.</p> <p>That the Somerset Waste Board notes the performance results in the Fourth Quarter 2020-21 Performance Management Report and discuss the current collection service issues and mitigation plans in place.</p> |
| Reasons for recommendations: | <p>Report for information only. Whilst this report sets out specific actions being taken to address areas of concern; the business plan sets out how we focus on improving performance. Understandably recent service performance has been a cause for serious concern for the Board, and hearing from SWP and directly from SUEZ senior management will give an opportunity to better understand both the causes for the service issues and the actions in place to address them.</p> |
| Links to Priorities and Impact on Annual Business Plan: | Transparency – Publishing Key Performance Indicators |

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| Financial, Legal and HR Implications: | No direct financial, legal or HR implications. |
| Equalities Implications: | No equalities implications |
| Risk Assessment: | Areas of poor performance inform our overall risk assessment. A summary of risk is now included within each quarterly performance report, showing our top risks, new risks, changes in risks and mitigating actions. A no deal Brexit risk register has also been developed by SWP and shared with all partners. |

1. Background

- 1.1.** As part of SWP's drive for continuous improvement, this report ensures that each quarter, Board Members receive an update on progress in delivering the business plan, key risks, health and safety, recycling metrics (including tonnage, percentage and national indicator suite), end use, missed collections, fly-tipping, financial performance (noting that a separate finance report is still provided) and communications/customers. New, this quarter are two additional pages giving an overview of the ongoing General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) project and performance data for the Energy Recovery site at Avonmouth. Subject to the views of the board, we will continue to improve how we report performance in the future to the board.

2. Summary

- 2.1.** Key headlines are:

- **Business Plan:** Roll-out of Phase 2 of Recycle More is due to start on Monday 28 June in South Somerset, with planning already underway for Phase 3 in Somerset West and Taunton (old Taunton Deane area). Work has also commenced on the construction of the remodelled Taunton Depot at Walford Cross, to be ready for the start of Phase 3 operations.
- **Waste Minimisation:** Overall household arisings were up by just over 6,000 tonnes, or 10.06% compared to Q4 in 2019-20, although was only up around 5,500 across the full year, showing how tonnages have picked up in Q4 compared to Q1-Q3. Factors driving this are the waste generated over the Christmas period and collected in January, but also probably due to slight easing of Covid restrictions and increasing garden waste tonnages.
- **Recycling:** Our recycling rate improved compared to Q4 last year at 52.36% (2.28% higher than 2019-20), although for the full year was slightly lower at 52.37% (0.49% down). This shows the situation improved in Q4 compared to the first part of the year, helped by increased recycling tonnages due to Christmas and the benefit of Recycle More in Mendip. There were increases in food waste (up 3,967 tonnes), glass (up 4,146 tonnes), cardboard (up 2,838

tonnes) & mixed plastics (up 885 tonnes), along with a continued decrease in paper (down 2,459 tonnes), all from kerbside collections. At recycling sites, we saw decreases in garden waste (down 3,417 tonnes), wood (down 1,317 tonnes) & mixed paper & cardboard (down 1,133 tonnes). Other sources that contributed to the overall reduction included recycled street cleaning residues (down 240 tonnes) & schools recycling (down 201 tonnes).

- **End use:** SWP continues to see strong demand from UK based reprocessors for the high-quality materials we collect. For 2020-21 almost 98.0% of materials stayed in the UK, with the amount that was reprocessed in Somerset also remaining high at almost 51.0%. This meant that just over 3,000 tonnes of recyclate were reprocessed outside of the EU, with all this material being mixed paper & cardboard sent to Thailand, Turkey and Vietnam.
- **Missed collections:** We saw an increase in missed collections in Q4, compared to Q3 (0.902 per 1,000 collections against 0.832 in Q3). Missed collections levels continue to be monitored and are one of the standing performance measures discussed in weekly meetings held with SUEZ. We expect to see this drop off in performance improving over the coming months and to continue into the following quarters of 2021-22.
- **Risk:** In addition to our corporate risk register we maintain detailed risk registers for Recycle More and Covid-19. Risks have also been updated to reflect risks from the current Defra consultations.
- **Developer's guidance:** This has now been updated and redesigned with SWP branding and published on our website. Meetings have also been held with district planning teams, with the guidance directly referred to in the SCC Waste Core Strategy and has also been added to the local list in MDC. SWP has responded to SWT's consultation on their local list, requesting that the guidance is added, as well as the Districts working together to provide standard pre-application guidance, with the SWP providing a paragraph as part of this. We are also looking for examples of good practice to provide as case studies.
- **Viridor:** It was announced on the 21 May 2021, that part of their business is to be sold to Biffa. Whilst Viridor propose to retain those services provided under the New Waste Treatment Facility Contract (NWTF2) including the provision of Avonmouth Energy from Waste plant (EfW), the two in county Waste Transfer Stations (Dimmer & Walpole) & Walpole Landfill, the rest of the service currently provided through the Core Services Contract (Recycling Sites, Compost Sites, Walpole AD & closed landfill management) is expected to transfer to Biffa over the next couple of months. Somerset County Council, as holder of the contract with Viridor, will consider the full extent of the novation proposal in due course. A verbal update will be provided at the meeting.
- **Suez:** Veolia and Suez have announced that they signed a combination agreement on 14 May 2021, following approval by their respective Boards of Directors of the latest terms for their merger. Further details will be provided in a verbal update at the meeting.

3. Collection service issues

- 3.1.** Whilst the last year of delivering services through Covid in a new contract has been an extreme challenge to SUEZ and SWP, there was a serious service degradation in May 2021 ongoing into June 2021. This resulted in significant numbers of dropped or incomplete rounds and a serious degradation in service quality as all attention was focussed on juggling insufficient resources to complete rounds as much as possible. This has put incredible pressure on our frontline staff. The primary reason for this is a nationwide shortage of HGV drivers, a situation made worse by Covid (which has meant a backlog of HGV driving tests and significantly increased competition for drivers), Brexit which has seen some drivers move back to EU countries and other changes affecting the HGV driver market (e.g. tax status), all compounding a pre-existing national shortage which the Board have previously discussed. Other local factors underlying the service issues will be discussed at the meeting, as well the intense efforts being put in to address the underlying issues, stabilise the service and hence bring service quality back to where we would all expect it to be.

4. Consultations Undertaken

- 4.1.** Consultation on findings in this report have been undertaken with SWP's Senior Management Group (officer representatives from partner authorities) and with SWP's Senior Management Team.

5. Implications

- 5.1.** Key implications of the performance data are:
- Mobilisation for Phase 2 of Recycle More and forward planning with SUEZ to mobilise for Phase 3, including focussing on communications and engagement
 - Continued further developing our new Customer Relationship Management system, My Waste Services, (incl. website changes, app and a new chatbot), reflecting the significant opportunity for better customer service that these system changes will enable, and ongoing work to deal with issues, as they come to light
 - Continuing to influence the expected further national consultations on resources and waste, maintaining SWP's influence at national level, and implementing the actions we have agreed through the joint County-wide Climate Emergency Strategy/Plan (where funding permits us to do so)
 - Ongoing work with SUEZ to manage service quality during the first quarter of 2021-22 and ensure service levels are maintained at a satisfactory level for delivering subsequent phases of Recycle More, and that we reach the improved levels of performance compared to Kier that we expect from Suez.
 - Continue to closely monitor budgets and spend, seek opportunities for

external funding (especially for our climate emergency projects)

6. Background papers

6.1. Performance Monitoring Report Q4 2020-21 (Appendix 1)