SOUTH LONDON WASTE PARTNERSHIP

Report to: South London Waste Partnership (SLWP) Joint Committee

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Report title: Contract Performance Report

Summary

This report provides the Joint Committee with an update on the performance of the transfer, treatment, recycling and disposal services that are procured and managed by the South London Waste Partnership on behalf of the four London boroughs of Croydon, Kingston, Merton and Sutton. The services covered are as follows:

I. Food and green waste services
II. Household Reuse and Recycling Centre (HRRC) services, and
III. Residual waste treatment services.

This report provides the full year performance data for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.

Recommendations

The Joint Committee is asked to;

- note the contents of this report, and
- comment on any aspects of the performance of the Partnership's transfer, treatment, recycling and disposal contracts

Background Documents

Contract Performance Monitoring Reports have been presented to the SLWP Joint Committee since 22 July 2010. The most recent reports was presented at the meeting in April 2023 by the Partnership Director, Andrea Keys.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1. **Food and green -** The following food and green contracts have been in operation since 1st September 2022 and will continue until no later than the 31st

March 2030. The food and green services are delivered via four contracts which are summarised as follows:

I. Bio Collectors Ltd – receipt and treatment of food waste

II. Olleco – collection and treatment of food waste

III. Countrystyle Recycling – collection and treatment of green waste

IV. SUEZ Recycling and Recovery UK (SUEZ) – receipt, bulking, transportation and treatment of green and food waste

1.2. **Household Reuse and Recycling Centre (HRRC) services** - the HRRC service is operated by Veolia (ES) (UK) Ltd. The contract commenced on the 1st October 2015 and includes the management of the six HRRC sites in the SLWP region, the operation of the waste transfer station at Villiers Road, and the marketing of the recyclates collected at each of the HRRC sites. This service operates until the 31st March 2025. The Contract includes the option to extend these services up to the Long Stop Date of 15th September 2030.

1.3. **Residual waste treatment contract** - Viridor South London Limited ('Viridor SL') was awarded a contract for the treatment and disposal of residual waste in November 2012. To deliver the contract, Viridor designed, built and now operates an Energy Recovery Facility (ERF) at the Beddington Lane site in Sutton. Following the construction and commissioning period, the ERF became fully operational in March 2019. The Contract has an initial term of 25 years and so will operate until the 3rd March 2044, with the potential to extend until a Long Stop Date of 5th November 2047.

2. **Performance detail - Food and green**

2.1. **Food and green waste receipt** - Under the SUEZ food and green waste contracts, the London Boroughs of Croydon, Merton and Sutton deliver kerbside-collected green waste and food waste into the SUEZ owned and operated waste transfer station located in Merton. There is also the option for the three boroughs to deliver food waste directly to an Anaerobic Digestion (AD) facility located in the London Borough of Merton up to an agreed limit of 5,000 tonnes per year through the Bio Collectors contract.

2.2. The Royal Borough of Kingston delivers green and food waste into the Kingston Council owned Villiers Road waste transfer station.

2.3. **Food and green waste treatment** - Food waste is treated at three separate Anaerobic Digestion (AD) facilities. Up to 5,000 tonnes of food waste is treated via a direct delivery contract with Bio Collectors Ltd at their Anaerobic Digestion (AD) site in Merton, as detailed above. The food waste bulked at the SUEZ waste transfer station is hauled to and treated at the Severn Trent AD facility located in Surrey, and the food waste bulked at the Villiers Road waste transfer station is hauled to the Olleco AD facility that is located in Aylesbury.

2.4. Green waste is collected from the SUEZ transfer station and the Villiers Road transfer station and during the reporting period was hauled to and treated at the Laverstoke Park Farm, located at Overton in Basingstoke.

2.5. **Food and Green waste volumes** - Food and green waste tonnes have continued to decrease over the reporting period 1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023 when compared to the same period last year. During the year 2022/23 there was a 16% reduction in the total green waste collected at the kerbside and HRRCs combined, and a 9% drop in food waste collected at the kerbside, when compared with 20221/22. As previously reported, seasonal variations since 2016 have seen green waste tonnes fluctuate up and down by no more than +/-9%, so this reduction is exceptional. Summer 2022 was however exceptionally dry, and a similar trend in green waste tonnes can be seen across London. Warmer weather and dryer summers mean this lower green waste tonnage may become a more frequent trend. A reduction in the volume of food and green waste will impact recycling rates in all boroughs, however, this downward trend supports the waste hierarchy which prioritises waste reduction over recycling.

2.6. The following table presents a summary of the total green and food waste collected at both the kerbside and the HRRC sites in the year 22/23 and the difference in tonnes when compared to the year 21/22.

Material Treated	Volumes Treated In 22/23	Variance against 21/22	Variance expressed in Tonnes
Green waste	27,446	-16%	5,176
Food Waste	25,190	-9%	2,511

3. **Performance detail - Household Reuse and Recycling Centres (HRRCs)**

3.1. **HRRC Contract Performance Review:** The scope of the HRRC services can be summarised in three parts: the general management of the sites (including staffing, plant, equipment and site layouts); the transportation of materials; and the recycling, treatment and/or disposal of waste collected at the HRRC sites (excluding green and residual waste).

3.2. The contract specification focuses on three key performance categories; site user experience, health and safety, and material recycling.

3.3. **Site user experience -** Veolia started customer satisfaction surveys in July 2016 in order to monitor site user experience. Customer satisfaction questionnaires are undertaken at the six HRRC sites for two weeks in turn for each round. Surveys have continued since that date, with only a brief suspension and some precautionary measures adopted during the COVID pandemic. Questions were updated in January 2022 in order to seek feedback on booking forms introduced at three of the six sites and the fair use policies introduced at two of the sites. The Contract continues to achieve a high customer satisfaction rate. A summary dashboard is available to download from the SLWP website.

3.4. **Recycling Performance** – Each month the SLWP looks at materials recycled, recycling markets and the impact of the wider SLWP recycling services in order to better understand HRRC recycling rates and assess the Contractor's performance. At the end of the reporting year 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023, the combined performance at the SLWP HRRC sites was 64%. Table 2a in Appendix A details the recycling performance by site and by month (please note the year end performance figure is based on the raw tonnage data, not an average of the recycling performance per month).

3.5. **Recycling Performance analysis** – Some examples of tonnage changes by material type when compared to the previous year are as follows:

HRRC Material	Tonnes Collected 2022/23	Variance against 2021/22	Variance In Tonnes
Green	6,036	-19%	-1,174
Residual	11,283	-7%	-744
Wood	8,976	-2%	-223
Soil	1,771	-2%	-44
WEEE	1,881	-8%	-153
Ferrous scrap metal	1,769	-3%	-54
Books	112	255%	285
Glass	91	27%	25
Paper	118	10%	11
Card	1,393	5%	65
Total Tonnes collected	41,079	-7%	-2,854

3.6. Factory lane saw a 1% increase in the amount of materials brought to the site by residents, with all other sites seeing a drop in total tonnes.

3.7. Green Waste - There was a 19% drop in green waste tonnes collected across the HRRC sites during the reporting period, slightly higher than the 16% overall reduction in green waste reported above at 2.5. Fishers Farm in Croydon reported a 26% drop in green waste, Kimpton Park Way Sutton 23%, Purley Way Croydon 22%, Garth 18%, with Villiers and Factory showing a 14% drop in green waste. This has resulted in a percentage point reduction of just over 1% for the SLWP recycling rate. As reported to the April 2023 Joint Committee, taking a longer view on the green waste trend, green waste tonnes at the HRRC have reduced by 64% since 2016/17 and there has been a steady increase in tonnage collected at the kerbside since this date.

3.8. The table below shows how each material contributes to the HRRC recycling rate, and highlights the five key materials which are the largest contributors to that recycling rate.

HRRC Material	Tonnes Collected	Recycling Rate
Green	6,036	26%
Wood	8,976	38%
Soil	1,771	8%
WEEE	1,881	8%
Ferrous scrap metal	1,769	8%
Books	112	0.5%
Glass	91	0.4%
Paper	118	1%
Card	1,393	6%
Bricabrac	412	2%
Textiles	187	1%
OTHER RECYCLED	574	2%
Total Recycled	23,320	100%

3.9. Table 2b in Appendix A uses data from the last three years in order to compare performance from April 2022 to March 2023 with the same period from the previous two years. The blue bars show the recycling performance to date for this reporting. The yellow and blue bars show recycling performance for the same period in the previous two years.

3.10. **Reuse and Recycling Projects at the HRRCs**

3.11. Soil separation and recycling – The soil separation activity increases recycling rates as staff encourage and support residents to split out soil from rubble. The subsequent soil fraction is kept clean enough to be recycled and reused. In the reporting period a total of 1,771 tonnes of soil have been diverted at the six HRRC sites.

3.12. Reuse Shops – The reuse shop at Kimpton Park Way HRRC (Sutton) has been in operation since the HRRC contract first started in 2015 and the Fishers Farm HRRC Community Reuse Shop opened in November 2021. Both shops sell items that our residents no longer want or need. Residents bring unwanted items to any one of our Household Reuse and Recycling Centres and the operatives at each of the sites will collect and store anything that can be reused, including electrical items, bikes, bric-a-brac, furniture and toys. The Community Reuse Shop team will then collect suitable items and take them back to the reuse shops where they are fully checked to ensure they work properly and safely, and meet any legal requirements, such as fire labels.

3.13. Social Value – In December 2022 Veolia and their Community Reuse Shop partners hosted a free Xmas toy giveaway. Toys which had been donated by residents across the six SLWP HRRCs were checked to ensure they were complete and in safe working condition and were offered free of charge to residents across the partnership. The scheme was very well received and Veolia are now working on a summer-club toy giveaway project and other initiatives so this can function as a year round reuse project. In addition, Veolia have donated over 100 games toys and books to the Rotary Food Bank, and have invited a number of charities to the sites to collect presents and toys, including The Golden Hearted Charity. Veolia continue to work with a number of social enterprises on an ad hoc basis to find outlets for reusable items.

3.14. ‘Upcycle Workshops’– An Upcycle Classroom is located at the Kimpton Park HRRC site and the unit is being upgraded ready for public use. Veolia and the SLWP continue to work with local groups that can offer upcycling and reuse projects at this facility.

3.15. **Booking Forms** – A booking form system has been in place at the HRRC sites in Kingston, Merton and Sutton since 13th May 2020. Initially introduced to help manage visitor numbers at the sites and comply with Covid-19 restrictions, the booking forms proved popular with site staff and site users, so have been retained. Following feedback from residents and Joint Committee members, the SLWP procured a new online booking system that, amongst other features, this system sends a reminder text message or email to the customer ahead of their booked time slot, and enables customers to amend or cancel their booking slot, book multiple slots on the same day, and view the number of bookings that they have made to date. The new system delivered by Pentagul has been in use since early 2022 and has received positive feedback from residents.

3.16. **Assisted Tipping** – The site parking arrangements have been reconfigured at all sites to enable a larger bay to accommodate assisted tipping so that anyone needing help from site staff or a carer has plenty of room. When not in use for assisted tipping this larger parking bay can also be used for residents with bulky items or side access vehicles. For those sites operating a booking system, a new section has been added to the booking forms to enable customers to book assistance at the larger bay in advance.

3.17. **Rubble Charging at Kimpton Park Way (Sutton) –** The introduction of a charge for the disposal of rubble at Kimpton Park Way (Sutton) commenced in July 2021. This charge was introduced to recover the costs associated with the disposal of this waste type and to deter potential site abuse from trade and commercial businesses. Residents are advised of the rubble charge via the booking form, which also provides alternative options for disposal, such as via the trade person completing the work (if applicable) or via a bag disposal system, mini skip, grab lorry or other commercial waste service if completing the work themselves. A list of trade waste disposal sites is also available on the council website. Rubble tonnages fell by 78.2% in 2022/23.This significant reduction is believed to be due to deterring trade visitors posing as residents and disposing of this waste free of charge. To date, there is no evidence to suggest there is a correlation between the implementation of this charge and a rise in fly tipping.

3.18. **Fair Use Policy** – Fair use policies have been introduced at the Kingston and Sutton HRRCs. The aim of these policies is to ensure that these HRRC sites are reserved for Kingston and Sutton residents, and only receive, process and pay for the recycling and disposal of household waste.

3.19. In Kingston, the fair use policy allows Kingston households, travelling by car, to book up to 20 visits per year. The fair use policy was introduced in April 2021 and, based on 2019/20 usage data, only impacts 3.2% of site users.

3.20. In Sutton the fair use policy allows Sutton households, travelling by car, to book up to 24 visits per year. The policy was introduced in July 2021 and reviewed in June 2022, and historical data indicates that for 99.9% of Sutton residents, the fair use policy will have no impact on their annual visits to the site.

4. Residual Waste treatment Contract (Viridor South London Limited)

4.1. Viridor South London has been delivering the services under the Residual Waste Treatment contract since 4th March 2019.

4.2. In the reporting period, 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023, the SLWP boroughs delivered 195,239 tonnes of residual waste to the Viridor residual waste treatment contract. This is 11,274 tonnes (6%) less than the same period last year. To note, this is the lowest annual tonnage generated by the boroughs since 2010 when contract performance monitoring reporting to the Joint Committee commenced. Please see Appendix A table 1a for further details on residual waste tonnes.

4.3. **Landfill Diversion** - In the reporting period, 100% of the residual waste delivered by SLWP partner boroughs was diverted away from landfill. Please see Appendix A table 1b for further diversion data. A planned maintenance shutdown took place during April and May 2023 and so this diversion rate will vary for 2023/24.

4.4. **Emissions** – The emissions from the Beddington ERF are sampled every 10 seconds, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. The results are fed back to the ERF Control Room, so any potential issues are known about immediately and appropriate action can be taken. The results from the continuous emissions monitoring systems (CEMS) are reported to the Environment Agency (EA - the regulator for the facility) and uploaded by Viridor to a publicly-accessible website (www.beddingonterf.info). The EA sets limits (based on 10-minute, 30-minute, and daily averages) for different types of emissions. The Beddington ERF has been designed to operate at the very highest international standards and, during normal operating conditions, emissions are well below the limits set by the EA.

4.5. The last Joint Committee reviewed the permit exceedances in the table below as reported by Viridor. Viridor have indicated that the likely cause of a number of exceedances are gas bottles going through the facility which, if they explode, can result in a spike in emissions. As discussed at recent committees, the increase in large nitrous oxide canisters has been particularly challenging and it is a national issue. Operational measures have been implemented, including; driver training, loader training, and waste ‘blend’ training to ensure a more homogeneous waste.

4.6. Artificial intelligence - A trial into the use of artificial intelligence in the bunker in order to detect gas bottles has now started. Cameras were installed in the tipping hall in April 2023. These are positioned over each bay and are designed to detect bottles as they are tipped into the bunker, this will alert the plant operator of the presence of gas bottles in the waste. The AI is linked to an

ANPR system which will allow Viridor to determine the source of these bottles and target the customers/rounds. The process of 'training' the AI system is ongoing. This involves putting bottles within the waste whilst a human operator shows the system what to look for. To date, the system has been trained with around 700 bottles and it is now starting to correctly identify the bottles.

4.7. The installation of the system in the shredder building is programmed for autumn 2023. Exact timings are still to be determined but Viridor have stated that they are examining the options to install the cameras with minimum disruption.

4.8. Exceedances resulting in a permit breach between the dates of 1st April 2022 until 31st March 2023 are summarised as follows:

Date	Emission	Daily or half-hourly limit	Limit	Reading	Cause submitted by Viridor
03.05.22	Hydrogen Chloride (HCL)	Half-hourly	60mg/m^3	60.2mg/m^3	Technical issue with lime dosing equipment
16.05.22	Carbon Monoxide	Daily	50mg/m^3	77mg/m^3	Gas bottle
21.05.22	Carbon Monoxide	Daily	50mg/m^3	51mg/m^3	Over-fire in the boiler
21.05.22	Volatile Organic Compounds	Half-hourly	20mg/m^3	29.4mg/m^3	Gas bottle
13.06.22	Volatile Organic Compounds	Half-hourly	20mg/m^3	22.48mg/Nm3	Over-fire in the boiler
27.06.2022	Volatile Organic Compounds	Half-hourly	20mg/m^4	35.28 mg/Nm3	Overfire on the grate due to waste and explosion
15.09.2022	Volatile Organic Compounds	Half-hourly	20mg/m^4	22.32mg/Nm3	Waste Feed temporarily stopped
23.12.2022	Hydrogen Chloride (HCL)	Half-hourly	60mg/m^3	76.60mg/m3	Waste composition caused high HCl peak, despite the maximum lime dosing
09.03.2023	Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC)	Half-hourly	20mg/m^4	20.38 mg/Nm3	Discharge on Line 1 was partly blocked on one side. Poor combustion and operation of one out of two burner resulted in VOC levels that went just over the ELV.

4.9. As reported by SLWP at the April 2023 Joint Committee, there was an exceedance of the 30-minute average Emission Limit Value (ELV) for Sulphur Dioxide (SO2) on 17th March 2023. This was caused by a failure of the ERF's lime dosing equipment. The failure was rectified quickly, but it did result in a single 30-minute average reading of 209mg/m3 (the 30-minute average ELV for SO2 is 200mg/m3). Viridor have notified the Environment Agency (EA), as required by their Permit. It is likely that the EA will consider this exceedance to have taken place during a period of 'abnormal operation' and it will therefore not consider it to be a breach of the Permit.

4.10. **Transparency of Emissions data** - Viridor publish detailed emissions reports on the Beddington ERF Virtual Visitor Centre on a regular basis (https://www.beddingtonerf.info/). A link to the 'emissions data' can be found in the top right corner of the site's home page. An archive of reports dating back to 2019 is available for the public to view here. This is done to ensure local residents have access to detailed information about the performance of the plant. A detailed 'Guidance Note' is provided to help residents interpret the emissions reports accurately. We are not aware of any other energy from waste facility in the country that provides this level of openness and transparency.

4.11. It is important to note that the facility must operate in accordance with its Environmental Permit which is issued and regulated by the Environment Agency (EA). The site cannot operate without its permit from the EA and if the site is not compliant with its permit, the EA has the power to serve both enforcement and suspension notices. The SLWP will continue to work closely with Viridor and the EA to ensure the Beddington ERF is operating safely.

4.12. **Environmental Permit variation** – Viridor submitted an application to the Environment Agency (EA) seeking to increase the amount of waste that can be processed at the Beddington ERF. The application was duly made by the EA on the 10th November 2022 and a six week public consultation was launched. During the consultation period, local residents and stakeholders were able to review the technical information submitted by Viridor in support of the application (including newly modelled Air Quality Assessment and Human Health Risk Assessment), and share feedback with the EA directly. More than 500 responses to the consultation were received by the EA.

4.13. Next Steps – The EA have stated that they will consider all comments and feedback made in the consultation, and will summarise the key issues in a decision document explaining how and why a decision is reached. If the EA does decide to issue the permit variation, a second phase of consultation called "minded to issue" will be launched.

4.14. The SLWP has requested an update from the EA on the likely timescales for a decision to be made on the application. There is no further update since the last Joint Committee.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. It is recommended that the Joint Waste Committee:

a) Note the contents of this report, and
b) comment on any aspects of the performance of the Partnership's transfer, treatment, recycling and disposal contracts

6. IMPACTS AND IMPLICATIONS

6.1. LEGAL -There are no legal considerations arising directly out of the recommendation in this report.

6.2. FINANCE - There are no financial considerations arising directly out of the recommendation in this report.

7. Appendices

7.1. Appendix A provides data on the performance of the five jointly procured treatment and disposal contracts for the reporting period 1st April 2022 to the 31st March 2023.

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