

Service Delivery Plan 2015/16

Proposed Amendments

November 2015

CORPORATE AIM 1 - DELIVERABILITY

We will ensure that the waste delivered to us is managed sustainably.

To do this, we will:

- Procure and manage our waste contracts to maximise the benefits to the Authority and the community it serves.
- Develop, maintain and operate our new and existing waste management facilities in a safe, efficient and sustainable manner.
- Continuously improve services to meet the needs of the local community and other stakeholders.

Our Key Priorities in 2015/16 for DELIVERABILITY:

We will continue to manage our contracts and our facilities to achieve the best economic, environmental and community outcomes for Merseyside and Halton. Particular focus will be on:

- Mobilising the Resource Recovery Contract (RRC).
- Continuously improving the performance of the Waste Management and Recycling Contract (WMRC) through active engagement with our contractor, our partners and service users.
- Managing residual waste to provide the best environmental and economic options available through interim treatment and landfill.
- Delivering a new Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) in Merseyside.
- Continuously improving the environmental management and aftercare of the Authority's closed landfill sites.

1.1 Resource Recovery Contract (Construction Phase and Internal Mobilisation)

The Resource Recovery Contract was awarded to SITA in 2013 and includes a high efficiency energy-from-waste facility (EfW) with Combined Heat and Power at the Wilton International site in Teesside and a new Rail Transfer Loading Station (RTLS) in Kirkby which will transport waste which hasn't been recycled to Wilton for treatment.

The energy-from-waste facility will enable the Merseyside and Halton Waste Partnership to divert more than 92% of its residual waste from landfill, while generating the equivalent electricity to power thousands of homes.

Construction Phase

EfW Wilton: On site construction began in late January 2014 and is planned to be completed by 19th August 2016. Commissioning and testing of the process plant and equipment will run concurrently with the construction phase which is planned to be completed by 31st August 2016 and to date, works are progressing according to plan.

Knowsley Rail Transfer Loading Station (RTLS): Site mobilisation commenced on 5th January 2015. Construction works to modify the existing building for use as a RTLS are planned to be completed by the end of November 2015. Commissioning and testing of the plant and equipment is scheduled to be completed by the middle of May 2016 to facilitate the transfer of waste in accordance with the above EfW programme.

Objectives 2015/16:

- 1.1.1 EfW Wilton: Complete procurement and manufacture of process plant & equipment by February 2016. Continue with construction works and mechanical installations in accordance with agreed programme.
- 1.1.2 Knowsley RTLS: Complete construction works by February 2016 and commence commissioning and testing of the plant and equipment in accordance with the agreed plan.

Internal Mobilisation

We are now in the second year of the 30 year Resource Recovery Contract and following the construction works identified above, focus will then be on the commissioning of the facilities which is planned to commence in early 2016. Resources from this Authority and SITA have been assigned and the internal mobilisation is focused on working through the agreed task allocator for the construction and commissioning phase of the contract.

The following work packages have commenced:

- Communications;
- Management Information Systems;
- Commissioning Arrangements.

These three current work packages are progressing, however, continued management focus is required to prevent scope and timetable creep. The appointment of the Authority's Project Coordinator and the SITA Operations and Management Contract Manager will improve the control environment and mitigate quality and timetable risks.

Prioritisation of the Authority's resources will need to be considered as more work packages come on stream as the agreed resource plan involves the majority of staff within the Authority.

Objectives 2015/16:

To achieve readiness of the RRC facilities for commissioning, and complete the Authority's internal mobilisation plan. Specific outcomes will include:

- 1.1.3 Complete arrangements to ensure adequate commissioning waste is provided to SITA.

- 1.1.4 Establish and maintain the community liaison group for the Knowsley Rail Transfer Loading Station.
 - 1.1.5 Establish and maintain the community fund for the Knowsley RTLS.
 - 1.1.6 Establish and test the management information system for the contract.
 - 1.1.7 Ensure the RRC operational arrangements integrate with District Councils and the Authority's Waste Management and Recycling and Landfill contracts.
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1.2 Waste Management and Recycling Contract – District Council Waste

We directly manage over 450,000 tonnes of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste. The waste is accepted and managed in accordance with the Waste Management and Recycling Contract (WMRC) which enters its seventh Contract Year during 2015/16.

The WMRC operates 2 Materials Recovery Facility's (MRFs), 4 Transfer Stations, and provides transport services and numerous processors for the treatment and recycling of waste collected by the Merseyside and Halton Districts.

The Gillmoss and Bidston MRFs will accept approximately 84,000 tonnes of separately collected commingled waste during 2015/16. Due to declining global material prices and increasingly high quality specifications from end markets, there is a significant challenge for the Authority to ensure that its MRFs continue to produce high quality recyclates that meet required quality standards.

With this in mind, we will oversee the planned upgrade of the Bidston MRF which will be undertaken by Veolia. The upgrade will introduce new technologies to the plant and ensure the ongoing production of high quality recyclable materials and maximise recyclate sales income to the Authority.

To allow the development works at Bidston to take place, Veolia will need to temporarily close the Bidston MRF and consequentially process all commingled waste at the Gillmoss MRF, and we will be required to manage the WMRC Services around this event.

The following recycling and diversion performance is expected during 2015/16:

- Exceed 90% Diversion Rate for commingled waste via the WMRC's MRF Service
- Exceed 95% Diversion rate for organic waste via the WMRC's garden waste and kitchen waste processing services

Objectives 2015/16:

- 1.2.1 To meet or exceed the diversion rate targets for commingled and organic wastes in the WMRC for 2015/16.

- 1.2.2 To manage deliveries of waste to the numerous interim treatment facilities and landfill sites in accordance with contractual requirements and to minimise costs.
 - 1.2.3 To commence deliveries to the new Resource Recovery Contract to allow commissioning of the Rail Transfer Loading Station in Kirkby.
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1.3 Waste Management and Recycling Contract - Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs)

We provide 13 HWRCs across Merseyside and also manage two HWRCs on behalf of Halton MBC. The sites are managed and operated in accordance with the WMRC.

During 2015/16, the 15 HWRCs will accept approximately 163,000 tonnes of household waste from residents. Recycling and diversion performance across the HWRCs currently stands at an impressive 69% recycled (target is 52.91%) and 76% diverted including rubble against a target of 60%.

The encouraging levels of recycling have been added to by the introduction of carpet and mattress recycling at the HWRCs, along with the continued success of the Commercial Vehicle Permit Scheme which deters trader abuse at the sites.

Objectives 2015/16:

- 1.3.1 To manage the HWRC Service and meet or exceed the WMRC's contractual performance standards and targets to minimise the total cost of MRWA's waste management and recycling services.
 - 1.3.2 To undertake campaigns to promote awareness including garden waste recycling and waste electrical recycling at the HWRCs to help maintain high recycling performance and minimise costs.
 - 1.3.3 To work with Veolia to promote the Trade Waste Recycling Service provided at the Bidston and Huyton HWRCs.
 - 1.3.4 To review the opening times at HWRCs to determine how savings can be achieved while considering any risks to maintaining high recycling levels and customer satisfaction across the HWRC Service. Implementation of any changes will be subject to Authority approval.
 - 1.3.5 Following the completion of the Old Swan HWRC development, to manage the opening of the new HWRC including a communications programme to promote the facility and working with Veolia to complete all necessary actions to allow the HWRC to open as planned.
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1.4 Re-Use Shops (WMRC)

During Spring 2015 we are planning to commence a 12 month trial at the South Sefton HWRC to provide the first HWRC Re Use Shop on Merseyside. The trial will be evaluated and if successful, we will look to open additional Re Use Shops at other suitable HWRCs in due course.

The trial will allow a selected charity to operate the shop in order to establish its success. The new service will provide added social value and support a local charitable cause.

Objectives 2015/16:

- 1.4.1 To open a Re-Use Shop in South Sefton HWRC for a 12 month trial period and to evaluate its success.
 - 1.4.2 To develop a Re-Use Shop at Old Swan HWRC subject to planning consent and the success of the trial at South Sefton.
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1.5 Landfill Contracts

We currently have arrangements for the disposal of waste at Arpley Meadows landfill site in Warrington, with contingency landfill arrangements at Gowy landfill site near Chester. We also have hazardous waste disposal arrangements for small amounts of cement bonded asbestos at Clifton Marsh Landfill Site near Preston.

During 2015/16 approximately 290,000 tonnes of waste will be delivered to landfill (subject to interim treatment of waste procurement).

There is currently an appeal from the Arpley landfill site operator to overturn a planning decision not to extend the life of Arpley, and until this is resolved, there remains a risk that the site may close or have restricted inputs to the site. If the appeal is unsuccessful, we would be required to make alternative arrangements for landfill disposal. We will continue to monitor this situation and work closely with the landfill operator to ensure the Authority's landfill disposal requirements are provided for.

Due to declining void space, Arpley landfill site is undergoing the construction of a new disposal cell and works commenced during March 2015 with completion expected approximately July/August 2015. As a consequence, we will deliver a proportion of waste to the Gowy landfill site in order to maintain services and relieve pressures at the Transfer Stations.

Objectives 2015/16:

- 1.5.1 To manage the Authority's landfill requirements to ensure sufficient capacity up to the mobilisation of the Resource Recovery Contract.

- 1.5.2 To carefully manage waste to landfill, whilst maximising deliveries to interim disposal facilities, in order to satisfy complex contractual requirements and to minimise waste disposal costs including Landfill Tax throughout the year
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1.6 Interim Contracts

In the period leading up to the operation of the Resource Recovery Contract, we have the following arrangements in place for diversion of residual municipal solid waste (MSW) from landfill:

An Inter Authority Agreement with the Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority (GMWDA):

This is an extension to the two year agreement put in place in 2013. The agreement now runs until 31st March 2016. The Authority's Waste Management and Recycling Contractor Veolia delivers waste to the GMWDA facilities for treatment and diversion from landfill. The tonnage contracted to be delivered over the period of the agreement was 80,000 tonnes.

A one year contract with FCC Waste Services (UK) Ltd:

This is the third and last contract let under the Authority's framework set up in 2012. The contract period is 1st October 2014 to 30th September 2015. Veolia deliver waste to the FCC facility at Stretton Way, Huyton for processing and transfer to energy recovery facilities in mainland Europe for diversion from landfill. The tonnage contracted to be delivered between October 2014 and September 2015 is 45,000 tonnes.

It is anticipated that some 60,000 tonnes of residual MSW will be directed under these interim arrangements in 2015/16.

We have also commenced a project to offer more tonnage to the market to achieve additional diversion of residual MSW from landfill in the period up to the commissioning of the RRC facilities (Commissioning tonnages are expected to be required from late March 2016)

At present, inputs through the GMWDA agreement are behind schedule due to commissioning at their facilities and has resulted in additional spend under the landfill contracts approved budget.

Performance through the FCC facility is currently achieving in excess of 80% diversion from landfill, compared against the contract minimum of 50%.

Objectives 2015/16:

- 1.6.1 Ensure that the agreed tonnages are delivered to the GMWDA and FCC contracts to achieve budget savings.
- 1.6.2 Complete the market testing project.

1.7 Old Swan Household Waste Recycling Centre

We have included in our capital programme provision for the development of a new Household Waste Recycling Centre in Old Swan. The new facility will be built to the Authority's modern standard, and capable of receiving up to 15,000 tonnes of household waste per annum in various waste streams.

The facility will incorporate:

- A covered split level area for bulk containers
- Dedicated hard-standing areas for small recyclables
- Cover enclosure for the receipt of WEEE goods
- A Re-Use facility/shop with dedicated public parking
- A dedicated small business area for the receipt of waste materials from trade
- Accommodation and parking for operational staff

Developing the site requires a lease from Liverpool City Council who own the site and planning consent to build and operate the HWRC.

Planning consent was granted by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) in April 2014, however, due to a necessary change to the point of entry to the site for service vehicles, a revised planning submission was required and a revised planning consent was received from the LPA in March 2015.

Following a tendering exercise in June 2014, a preferred principal contractor was identified, however, due to delays in granting the lease by Liverpool City Council, site works were unable to commence. In order to mitigate the delay, a licence to enable demolition works to be undertaken was granted by Liverpool City Council in February 2015.

A property lease is currently being agreed with Liverpool City Council. The draft lease contains onerous conditions relating to the use of the HWRC in terms of potential nuisance to the adjacent SAKA premises and requires the Authority to indemnify SAKA against any claims for costs or losses arising from a breach of this condition. This obligation originates from the conditions contained within the transfer agreement between Redman Heenan and Liverpool City Council relating to the acquisition of the site by Liverpool City Council.

Objectives 2015/2016:

- 1.7.1 To deliver a new Household Waste Recycling Centre, open to the public by December 2015.
- 1.7.2 To achieve a minimum CEEQUAL award of 'Very Good', aspiring to 'Excellent' for the facility.

- 1.7.3 To deliver the new Household Waste Recycling Centre on time and to budget.
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1.8 Closed Landfill Site Aftercare

We have both statutory and legal responsibilities for seven closed landfill sites previously used for the disposal of municipal waste generated within Merseyside.

To satisfy these responsibilities, we carry out regular environmental monitoring of landfill emissions (gas and leachate) to ensure that the sites are not knowingly polluting the surrounding environment; and undertake regular maintenance of plant and equipment to ensure that pollution prevention systems remain operational.

The Authority's insurance protects against sudden and catastrophic pollution events only and therefore regular environmental monitoring and maintenance is essential to provide evidence against gradual pollution events.

An Environmental Management System, accredited to ISO: 14001, is in place to ensure effective environmental monitoring and maintenance.

Objectives 2015/2016:

- 1.8.1 To undertake scheduled maintenance activities for plant and equipment at the Authority's closed landfill sites.
- 1.8.2 To undertake scheduled environmental monitoring activities at the Authority's closed landfill sites in compliance with set guidelines.
- 1.8.3 To successfully pass the external audit of the Environmental Management System; maintaining accreditation.
- 1.8.4 To undertake a review of the leachate treatment and drainage systems at Bidston Moss Community Woodland and Foul Lane closed landfill site to determine if financial savings can be made against trade effluent discharge costs.

CORPORATE AIM 2 - SUSTAINABILITY

We aim to reduce the amount of waste produced on Merseyside, increase the proportion of waste reused and recycled and promote the sustainable management of waste through the Waste Hierarchy.

To do this, we will:

- Develop and implement waste strategies to maximise the value of otherwise wasted resources in terms of economic, environmental and social benefits.
- Work together with partners and other stakeholders to provide services that support the local economy, benefit the community and improve the environment.

Our Key Priorities in 2015/16 for SUSTAINABILITY:

We will continue to work towards these targets, and specifically in the coming year we will:

- Develop and review our strategies to reflect the wider circular economy and resource resilience issues.
- Reduce waste and promote recycling and re-use through education and awareness initiatives, including the Waste Prevention Programme.
- Continue to work in partnership with the district councils to support the development of improved collection and treatment options.
- Continue to develop and manage the Authority's Community Fund to deliver projects that support the Authority's corporate aims.

2.1 Strategy Review

There is a statutory requirement for the Authority to produce a Joint Recycling and Waste Management Strategy. RESOURCES Merseyside was approved by the Authority and all Merseyside District Councils in 2012 with a commitment to a five year review. The scope of the review will include completing a two seasonal waste composition analysis and considering future policy objectives and targets. Consultation with the District Councils and stakeholders will identify priority issues and options including potential for joint efficiencies and performance improvements. The revised draft Strategy will require final adoption by all partners by 2017.

Objectives 2015/16:

Commence the review of the Joint Recycling and Waste Management Strategy in 2015 by:

- 2.1.1 Preparation of the scope and timetable for the Strategy Review;
- 2.1.2 Authority approval to the key phases of the review programme;
- 2.1.3 Award of a waste composition tender for completion by March 2016.

2.2 Re-Use Strategy

We will develop a Re-use Strategy and related projects in the year for Member approval. We will also work with our partners to identify and deliver opportunities across the Region which keep resources in the local economy for longer and which maximise economic and social value and reduces waste arisings.

Objective 2015/16:

2.2.1 To approve the Re-Use Strategy and deliver projects with partners by March 2016.

2.3 European Funding Projects

We will seek opportunities to secure additional resources through European funding grant applications to support the delivery of the Circular Economy and be more efficient with our natural resources. We will do this by working in partnership with key stakeholders to develop projects to the benefit of residents and businesses in the City Region.

The Authority is currently supporting two European Funded projects; Climate Metropole in respect of climate adaptation in the City Region and a Horizon 2020 application called Prewastec which is a bid to support the development of regional waste management case studies. The proposed City Region case study will focus on reuse and repair and build on the education and skills base within the community to move towards a circular economy

Objective 2015/16: (Stuart Donaldson)

2.3.1 To input into the development of the Climate Metropole project by March 2016.

2.3.2 To develop the scope for the Prewastec project as a regional partner and support the grant application to the European Union in early 2016.

2.4 Waste Prevention Programme

We aim to deliver a strategic programme of waste prevention activities with key partners and local communities each year. The programme supports awareness raising and promotes simple changes in behaviour by residents which will save them money. Projects also deliver skills development and other economic and social benefits alongside waste and carbon reductions.

Priority themes for 2015-16 will be food waste, textiles, furniture and composting. Key partners for engagement will be housing associations, universities, social enterprises and charities with students remaining a priority audience to engage and change behaviours. We will monitor the reductions in junk mail through promotion of the Royal Mail Preference Service and sales of home composters through the National Composting Framework

We will support organisations including WRAP, Merseyside Textile Forum and Children's Food Trust to directly engage with our residents on food waste and textile projects. We will seek opportunities to commission initiatives by suitable third parties including the creation of a re-use/repairs skills programme through community hubs in 2015.

Objectives 2015/16:

- 2.4.1 To complete a waste prevention work programme by March 2016 that enables residents to reduce waste through changes in their behaviour.
- 2.4.2 Review the Authority's waste prevention database in 2015 and identify future needs/benefits.

2.5 10 City Challenge

The Authority has taken the lead for the Waste Partnership to support WRAP's funded 10 City Challenge for Love Food Hate Waste (LFHW). This was launched in Liverpool in August 2014 where over 1500 people were engaged and made pledges to avoid food waste. The campaign will continue until March 2016 with the aim of reducing household food waste by 5% across the 10 Cities. Tesco Stores are our lead retail partner in the City Region.

WRAP directly fund projects (£48,000 per annum) and the Authority has worked to plan provision of resources across the City Region including 1000 Save More Information Packs, cookery equipment and recipes for use by residents, a series of Cookery Roadshows and increasing use of WRAP communications for website and social media.

Objectives 2015/16:

To contribute to the 10 City Challenge working with WRAP and Tesco to deliver:

- 2.5.1 An online diagnostic food waste tool for use by householders.
- 2.5.2 A Food Champions Network including use of a private social media group.
- 2.5.3 An additional 11 cookery clubs by December 2015 to complement the Mersey Waste Muncher community fund programme.
- 2.5.4 A second LFHW campaign funding an additional 189 banners on district Refuse Collection Vehicles.
- 2.5.5 Develop engagement with local Tesco store community champions on LFHW and wider recycling initiatives.
- 2.5.6 Support additional LFHW events to be funded by WRAP including The Big Freeze.

2.6 Waste Development Fund

The Waste Development Fund of £28.9M was distributed to Merseyside District Councils in 2014, under the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding agreed between the Authority and the District Councils, to enable them to support the shared objectives of the Joint Waste Strategy as they are best placed to make service developments.

Objectives 2015/16:

- 2.6.1 To receive letters of assurance from each District Council, in line with the Memorandum of Understanding, confirming how they have used their portion of the Waste Development Fund to further the shared objectives of the Joint Waste Strategy, or how they plan to in the future.
 - 2.6.2 To prepare a report to the Authority in September 2015 to confirm how the funds have been used by Councils in the last financial year as required under the Memorandum of Understanding.
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2.7 Joint Efficiency Savings

MRWA Officers are working with District Council colleagues to look at the economic business case for efficiency savings through shared service models, in consultation with the Leaders Group for Merseyside and Halton.

Objective for 2015/16:

- 2.7.1 To produce a proposal paper for Leaders based on the feasibility of joint service provision and to identify the cost/benefit impact of joint working options.
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2.8 Joint Performance Savings and Improvements

We are always looking at ways in which we can work with local councils and the community to improve waste management in Merseyside and Halton. Each year we identify projects and initiatives which will deliver savings and improvements by reducing waste sent to landfill and improve the quality of the resources diverted.

To help improve the quantity and quality of recyclable material from high density housing, we are working in partnership with Liverpool City Council to trial a new collection system for commingled recyclable materials from a limited number of households. Once completed, the trial will be reviewed and should provide valuable information to all Merseyside Districts who collect from high density areas of terraced properties.

Following successful project work this year we will also continue to work with Districts to maximise the recycling of collected Street Cleansing waste and minimise waste disposal costs.

In order to maintain high levels of visitors to the Gillmoss Discovery Centre we will continue to support local schools that visit the facility by way of contributing towards their travel costs.

Objectives 2015/16:

- 2.8.1 To work with Liverpool City Council to complete the trial of a new collection system for commingled recyclable materials in high density housing and to review and disseminate information on its outcome.

2.9 Community Fund

The Authority awards Community Fund grants (with additional financial support from Veolia Environmental Services) to community organisations who deliver projects that reduce, reuse and recycle household waste and add social and economic value in the City Region.

A fund of £110,000 was approved for 2015/16 and was launched in February. The Expressions of Interest submissions will be evaluation and Members asked to agree the projects which will be invited to submit final project plans. Final awards are expected to be issued from May onwards.

Objectives 2015-16:

- 2.9.1 To ensure all projects funded in 2014-15 are completed and a final outcome report produced.
- 2.9.2 To seek Member approval to a list of applicants who will be invited to submit final project plans by May 2015.
- 2.9.3 Develop proposals for a further annual scheme by February 2016 for Member approval.

2.10 Partnership Support

Apprenticeships Support Scheme

We have worked with all districts to develop a pilot support scheme for 12 month apprenticeships in waste management. Sefton and St Helens employed 10 apprentices during 2014 and the pilot has been extended into 2015 with 4 waste prevention apprentices in Wirral.

Objectives 2015/16:

- 2.10.1 Identify opportunities for further support to districts for apprenticeships in waste and recycling during 2015-16.

2.10.2 Report outcome of pilot apprenticeship support scheme by February 2016.

Policy Service

We provide a policy advice service within the Authority and to District waste management officers. This supports the Waste Partnership to comply with national/European legislation and regulation. We also respond on behalf of the Authority and districts partners to consultations on relevant waste management matters issued by central Government, the European Union, City Region and other organisations.

Objectives 2015/16:

2.10.3 To advise senior officers and districts on relevant policy matters and provide appropriate consultation responses during the year.

Partnership web portal

The Authority owns and maintains the Recycle/Reuse for Merseyside and Halton website and image library on behalf of the Waste Partnership. This is used as a portal for up to date information, advice and downloads to residents and stakeholders to help them take actions to reduce waste and increase re-use and recycling.

Objectives 2015/16:

2.10.4 To manage the partnership website and keep it up to date with practical waste prevention, re-use and recycling information to stakeholders during the year.

CORPORATE AIM 3 - ACCOUNTABILITY

We will conduct the Authority's business effectively and efficiently and we will fulfil our obligations to the highest standards.

To do this, we will:

- Manage our business and finances with openness and transparency.
- Establish challenging targets for efficiencies and improvements and set out plans for delivery.
- Develop our staff and Members to ensure the Authority has clear direction and the skill sets to deliver our aims and objectives.

Our Key Priorities in 2015/16 for ACCOUNTABILITY:

We will continue to apply high standards to the way in which we conduct our business and specifically in the coming year we will:

- Manage the Authority and its resources efficiently, effectively and appropriately and improve how we manage and report our performance.
- Improve the way we communicate and consult with our key stakeholders.
- Ensure our actions comply with our policies and procedures, are within the law and that decisions are taken appropriately.
- Review the Authority's resource needs and develop Members and Officers to make the best effective use of resources to deliver the Authority's Corporate Aims.

3.1 Levy and Budget Strategy

The Revenue Budget for 2015/16 has been set at £65.591M, which is the 6th successive year of achieving a zero increase despite rising costs, particularly in relation to increases in Landfill Tax which adds a potential £850k to the budget. Other budget pressures include contractual inflation and other costs relating to the improved performance of the Waste Management and Recycling Contract, and the addition of a new Household Waste Recycling Centre in 2015/16.

These increases have been, and will continue to be managed through effective use of balances and cost saving initiatives such as the Interim Contracts which reduce the cost of residual waste disposal when compared to landfill. The Authority has also reduced its staffing by 15% and made other efficiency savings.

Despite this, the Authority's costs will continue to increase in line waste arisings (the waste collected by the Merseyside councils and also waste delivered to Household Waste Recycling Centres). Costs are affected in particular by the amount of residual waste delivered which, if landfilled, is subject to landfill tax currently charged at £82.60 and is due to increase by

inflation each year. The Resource Recovery Contract will remove our reliance on landfill but at present, the budget pressures identified are likely to result in an increase in the Authority's Revenue Budget in 2016/17.

The budget is funded by way of a levy imposed on the five Merseyside Councils and we will need to work with our Members and the constituent councils to limit the impact of those anticipated increases.

Objectives 2015/16:

- 3.1.1 To deliver a workshop with Members on the Authority's levy and budget strategy early in 2015/16 to enable officers to develop forward budget options.
- 3.1.2 To develop an options paper setting out alternative levy options.

3.2 Financial Management

The Finance section at the Authority provides a range of services both statutory and support across the activities of the Authority.

- Publication of the Annual Statement of Accounts is a statutory duty that requires significant input from the Finance team and from staff across the Authority. A large part of this work involves detailed liaison with external audit.
- Preparation of the Annual Revenue and Capital Budgets is co-ordinated and finalised by the finance team but also requires significant input from budget holders and the Executive Management Team, particularly in consideration of Levy policy and the financial security of the Authority.
- Budget monitoring and the development of better management accounts information is led by finance but involves and is for budget holders.
- Preparation of Government and Statistical returns continues throughout the year for Finance, summarising actual and estimated data about the Authority.
- Internal Audit services and financial support services Service Level Agreement with St Helens Council are managed via the finance function.
- Ad-hoc support for service development and in particular the operation of the new RRC contract payment mechanism will continue to be important.

Objectives 2015/16:

- 3.2.1 Closedown of the accounts, preparation of the statement and the extensive supporting working papers, detailed liaison with external audit and publication of the statement of accounts on time with few audit adjustments.
- 3.2.2 Preparation of the budget and levy to support the Authority's activities and priorities, maintaining financial security while mitigating the impact of the Levy on Councils wherever possible.

- 3.2.3 Assessment of preparations for the Resource Recovery Contract and payment mechanism, stress testing interfaces with other contracts, preparing reporting structures and detailed reconciliations dependent upon the outcome of scenario planning.
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3.3 Performance Management

Our Performance Management Framework (PMF) sets out how the Authority's long-term corporate aims are translated into day to day operations. It gives Members and officers a clear understanding of how the work we do and the decisions we take contribute to the overall goals of the Authority. A review of the framework commenced in 2014 resulting in a revised Corporate Plan and planning process and the establishment of a Member Forward Planning Panel.

The PMF will continue to be developed and the focus will be on translating this Service Delivery Plan into the day to day activities of the Authority so that staff are clear on their own personal objectives and how their work contributes to the Authority's Corporate Plan.

Objectives 2015/16:

- 3.3.1 Approval of the Service Delivery Plan.
- 3.3.2 Development and production of a revised quarterly and annual performance reporting regime to support Members in making informed decisions on the direction of the Authority.
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3.4 Corporate Services

Corporate Services brings together a range of corporate functions, such as ICT, Finance, HR, and Communications which work collectively and consistently together to help support the Authority's frontline services to deliver effective internal controls.

Invoices paid within 25 days currently stand at 84.98% which exceeds our target of 80%. The Staff Development Scheme continues to remain on target with all staff receiving their development interview. Sickness Absence currently remains higher at 3.7% than the top quartile target of 2.76% set for local authorities. The number of Comment and Complaints received and resolved in less than 28 days currently stands at 77.99% which is under our target set at 95%.

Moving forward in 2015/16, a Review of the Comments and Complaints System will be undertaken to identify potential improvements and efficiencies. The procurement of a new clocking system will enable greater efficiency to time and attendance management throughout the Authority.

Objectives 2015/16:

- 3.4.1 Review the Comment and Complaints Procedure to ensure improvement in response time by June 2015.
 - 3.4.2 Establish a new programme of time and attendance key indicators by Sept 2015 which support a greater efficiency of time management throughout the Authority.
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3.5 Communications

The Communications Team aim to provide a single, consistent voice for all of the Authority's services to employees and service users by ensuring messages have maximum impact and are communicated in the most effective way.

The Communications Review identified a number of actions to improve the delivery of both external and internal communications. A Communications and Marketing Team has been established, headed up by the Chief Executive, the Corporate Services Manager and the existing Communications professionals to deliver comprehensive internal and external communications advice. In relation to internal communications, a rebranding exercise was undertaken which led to the 'In the Know' campaign which utilised existing communications vehicles including the intranet, noticeboard and one note, making them more user-friendly.

Moving forward, the communications team is currently developing an external communications improvement plan which aims to review external campaigns and establish the value for money obtained from each project. A draft Marketing and Communications Strategy has been developed which aims to reflect the communications and marketing priorities which support the overall Authority Corporate Aims. A Social Media Policy has been developed to ensure that the appropriate use of social media is maximised when possible.

Objectives 2015/16:

- 3.5.1 Establish a baseline to evaluate the current effectiveness of internal communications by April 2015.
 - 3.5.2 Evaluate the impact of the redesigned and rebranded internal communications delivery 'In the Know' by April 2016.
 - 3.5.3 To develop an External Communication Improvement Plan by April 2016.
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3.6 Corporate Governance

The Authority's corporate governance arrangements are regularly reviewed and updated to take account of best practice and government policy. A key aspect of this is the annual

review of governance arrangements which is undertaken by the Primary Assurance Group consisting of senior officers including statutory officers.

The latest review was undertaken in March 2015 and reflected much of the work being undertaken to produce this Service Delivery Plan. The review identified improvements to strengthen the Authority's governance arrangements in 2015/16 and some of these are included in this plan, for example the scrutiny arrangement in relation to the Waste Development Fund and a review of skills to ensure the Authority's establishment structure is fit for purpose.

Objectives 2015/16:

- 3.6.1 Maintain good standards of governance across all aspects of the Authority including decision-making and financial management.
 - 3.6.2 Strengthen and improve the Authority's systems of internal control and governance arrangements through the delivery of the Corporate Governance Action Plan 2015/16 and any agreed recommendations by the Authority's auditors.
 - 3.6.3 Prepare the Annual Governance Statement to be approved no later than 30th June 2015.
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3.7 Governance of Mersey Waste Holdings Limited

Mersey Waste Holdings Ltd is the group of companies that are 100% owned by the Authority. The company and its subsidiaries stem from the former Local Authority Waste Disposal Company (LAWDC) and are still used by the Authority to access Landfill contracts at beneficial rates. The contracts cannot be transferred from the company and any negotiation by the Authority would not achieve such beneficial gate fees. When Veolia ES took on the Waste Management and Recycling Contract (WMRC) much of the company's activities were transferred under the contract to Veolia. At the same time many of the company's former employees were transferred to Veolia under TUPE regulations. The effect of this is that the company has retained responsibility for funding historic pension liabilities for former employees. These responsibilities and the landfill contract payments are cash-backed by the Authority. The company also has a small number of legal liabilities associated with former employees that it manages, including pensions claims and employment claims. During 2014-15 the Authority's governance of the company was reviewed and strengthened. Significant decisions by the company now require prior approval by the Authority. The company's medium term financial position was also reviewed, providing more financial resilience, allowing for surplus funds to be returned to the Authority and allowing for the deployment of a development fund to enable the Company to introduce income generation schemes.

Objectives 2015/16:

- 3.7.1 Return of surplus funds to the Authority as agreed.
- 3.7.2 Delivery of landfill contract tonnages for the Authority.

- 3.7.3 Approval by the Authority of the framework for the development fund, and individual schemes within the framework where they are significant.
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3.8 Organisational Development

Currently our organisational priorities are to ensure we develop and maintain a workforce that is flexible, adaptable to change and that we have the skills, competencies and capacity to deliver our services. Workforce planning is an important aspect of this development, considering how to achieve 'the right people, skills, along with time and cost' will support managers to plan ahead for issues such as succession planning, critical roles and considering what the Authority will require in terms of future skills and knowledge.

We have seen a reduction in the workforce by 15%; this has been achieved through voluntary redundancy and retirements. The establishment structure has been revised and resources deployed internally to ensure knowledge and skills are available where they are most needed. In particular, resources have been transferred to the contracts team to support effective contract management, particularly in relation to the Resource Recovery Contract.

Moving forward, the recent changes to the establishment will necessitate the need to review the Corporate Training and Development Plan in alignment to the future organisational development needs, ensuring appropriate skills and knowledge are retained or transferred or skill gaps identified and addressed.

Objectives 2015/16:

- 3.8.1 Undertake a Skill Gap Analysis to identify potential areas where skills and knowledge transfer is needed, due to current establishment review, no later Oct 2016.
- 3.8.2 Deliver a new Corporate Training and Development Plan by April 2016 which supports the changes within the establishment by ensuring our staff have the appropriate skill and knowledge to deliver our future services.
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3.9 Member Training and Development

In order for the Authority to deliver its services and statutory responsibilities to the highest standards and greatest effect, it is important that those charged with governance (our Members) are given the necessary support and information to reach informed decisions.

Each year, we develop a programme of workshops and study tours to ensure Members can engage effectively and understand their own roles and responsibilities and those of the Authority's officers. The programme also enables Members to build upon and broaden their skills and knowledge and provides opportunity for effective consultation to support good governance.

This year's programme will focus in particular on preparations for the mobilisation of the Resource Recovery Contract, the performance of the Waste Management Recycling Contract and the Authority's financial strategy including budget setting.

Objectives 2015/16:

- 3.9.1 An Annual Member Training and Development Plan will be developed in consultation with Members to include study tours, workshops and an induction process for new Members.