



Joint Contract Authority Performance – Quarter 4 2020/21 1st July 2021

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Introduction

This report provides a summary for the Joint Committee of the latest quarterly position on recycling performance for the four Joint Contract authorities. This is based on data sourced from the SEP waste data system. The Annexes to this paper show the latest available performance data for each of the four authorities. There is one performance dashboard for each authority.

Recycling performance – Quarter 4 2020/21

The first section of each dashboard reports on recycling performance. Performance is reported monthly, up to and including March 2021, the latest month for which data are available.

The report shows tonnages collected by type of material. The recycling rate is based on these as a percentage of total waste and recycling. All comparisons are based on performance for the 12 months to March 2021 compared with that for the 12 months to March 2020.

It should be noted that although the first table in each dashboard shows the tonnages collected, the table below the charts then shows the disposal tonnages, which are used as the basis for calculating recycling rates. Disposal tonnages allow for material which is collected as recycling but which cannot be recycled, and which are then accounted for as residual waste. Disposal tonnages are therefore generally lower than collected tonnages for recycling, but higher than collected tonnages for residual waste. The exception to this is tonnages defined as “other recycling”, where disposal tonnages include recyclable material extracted at the disposal stage from material collected as leaf fall and road sweepings.

Surrey-wide performance

Surrey-wide performance is provided here for context.

This quarter saw the continued impact of the coronavirus pandemic on kerbside waste collection tonnages. Across Surrey as a whole, this has resulted in some significant increases in tonnages of all the main waste streams since April 2020. This increase has in turn impacted on the long-term trend, which is reported here by comparing the latest 12-months with the preceding 12-month period.

For dry mixed recycling (DMR), the increasing trend in tonnages seen in the first three quarters of the year has continued this quarter. The 12-month period to March has seen a year-on-year increase in tonnages of 13.5%. Additionally, the proportion of this material which is then recycled has increased this quarter, with the material markets having recovered to some extent from earlier in the year. Overall garden waste tonnages, including those collected at the CRCs, have seen very little change in the 12 months to March compared with the same period for the previous year; however, there has been an 8.7% increase in tonnages collected at the kerbside, which has been balanced out by a reduction in CRC tonnages. Food waste recycling tonnages have increased year-on-year by 12.2%. Tonnages of residual household waste, however, have also increased over the same period,

by 6.7%, although this incorporates a decrease in tonnages collected at CRCs; for kerbside tonnages, the increase was closer to 10%.

Although we have seen increased kerbside tonnages this year as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, this has affected both recycling and residual waste. Consequently, there has been only a marginal effect on the overall recycling rate, and most authorities have seen only a small change in their individual rates.

Joint Contract authorities – general trends

In Q4 2020/21, the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the Joint Contract authorities has generally been in line with that for Surrey as a whole. The tonnages collected in the quarter were higher for all the main waste streams when compared to the same period in previous years. However, the seasonal reduction in garden waste tonnages has meant that overall volumes are lower when compared to the earlier quarters of 2020/21.

Year-on-year comparisons of WEEE and textiles tonnages often tend to show reasonably large changes. This is largely due to there being variable disposal patterns for these materials, with containers at depots being collected as required rather than by way of daily tipping as is the case for other materials.

There is no clear pattern for fly-tipping tonnages, although for all authorities except Elmbridge, overall tonnages saw little change from the previous year. Both tonnages and incidents have been monitored in Q4 as part of the SEP Covid-19 contingency planning exercise, and we have seen significant variations in both week-on-week. In Elmbridge, there was a 50% year-on-year reduction in fly-tipping tonnages in the year to March 2021. We are investigating the possible reasons for this, although it is most likely due to how these tonnages are recorded at the weighbridge, as they are possibly being recorded as street-cleaning rather than fly-tipping, as is the case for Mole Valley.

Elmbridge

In the year to March 2021, DMR tonnages were up by around 19% compared with the previous year. Garden and food waste tonnages have also both increased, by around 12% year-on-year. Residual waste tonnages were also up however, by over 10% year-on-year.

Although the monthly recycling rates have generally been lower this quarter, this will largely be due to the seasonal reduction in garden waste tonnages. The 12-month rolling rate has continued to increase steadily in the latest quarter, continuing the long-term upward trend that has been observed since April 2020.

It should be noted that there have been some revisions to tonnages of both “other recycling” and “other waste” tonnages since the previous report, which have resulted in an increase in both of these tonnages for Q3 (Oct-Dec 2020). This is due to some tonnages of leaves and road sweepings, including recyclable material that was recovered, having been incorrectly allocated to Mole Valley in Q3.

Mole Valley

DMR tonnages were up by almost 12% in the year to March 2021 compared with the previous 12-month period. Garden waste tonnages were also up over the same period, by 7.2%, and food waste tonnages were up by 12.6%. However, residual waste tonnages have also increased, by 11.3% year-on-year.

Although monthly recycling rates have generally been lower this quarter, this is again mainly due to the seasonal reduction in garden waste tonnages. The long-term trend as indicated by the 12-month rolling average rate continues to show an increasing trend.

As for Elmbridge, there have been some revisions to tonnages of both “other recycling” and “other waste” tonnages since the previous report, due to some tonnages of leaves and road sweepings, including recyclable material that was recovered, having been incorrectly allocated to Mole Valley in Q3. For Mole Valley, this has resulted in a decrease in both of these tonnages for Q3 (Oct-Dec 2020).

Surrey Heath

In the year to March 2021, DMR tonnages were up by 8.4% year-on-year, although this was below the average county-wide increase. Food waste tonnages also increased over the period, by 6.8%, also below the average county-wide increase. As has been noted in earlier reports, garden waste tonnages have again seen a significant year-on-year increase, of close to 25%. Residual waste tonnages were also up year-on-year however, by around 12%.

Although Surrey Heath have also seen a reduction in monthly recycling rates in Q4 alone, in contrast to the other Joint Contract authorities there has also been a reduction in the long-term trend, as indicated by the 12-month rolling average rate. This is at least partly due to an increase in tonnages of rejected loads.

Woking

DMR tonnages in the year to March 2021 were up 8.3% year-on-year. This is an improvement on Q3, when the increase was fairly low compared with the county-wide average. Food waste tonnages were also up, by 10% on the previous year. Garden waste tonnages have also seen a year-on-year increase, of around 12%. Residual waste tonnages, however, were up by around 13% year-on-year.

Monthly recycling rates have been only slightly lower this quarter, again mainly due to the seasonal reduction in garden waste tonnages. The long-term trend however, as indicated by the 12-month rolling average rate since April 2020, continues to be gradually increasing.

SEP Joint Strategy performance – Q3 2020/21

Quarterly performance against the council specific measures in the SEP Joint Strategy has been shown on each dashboard for completeness. This is up to and including Q3 2020/21 and is based on data sourced from Waste Data Flow.

Recommendation

The Joint Committee are asked to discuss and comment on this report and the Annexes.

Next steps

The next performance report will be presented at the September 2021 Partnering Board and Joint Committee meetings. It is expected that this will report on performance up to and including Q1 2021/22, although this will be dependent on whether data from Surrey County Council’s waste contractor, SUEZ, are received by the deadline.