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| **Partner Authority Member and Officer Briefing**  13 May 2019 |  |

**Information**

Sheet Number:

2017-21/105

**for Somerset Waste Board and Partner Authority Members**

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| From: | Mickey Green, Managing Director, Somerset Waste Partnership |

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| Date: | 13 May 2019 |

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| To: | All Members of the Somerset Waste Board  All Members of Somerset County Council  Members of Partner District Authorities via the Senior Management Group Representatives |

**New Somerset recycling and waste collections contractor**

**Summary**

* **Somerset Waste Partnership (SWP) has today (13 May 2019) announced that it has selected SUEZ recycling and recovery UK (SUEZ) as its preferred bidder to help deliver a comprehensive new recycling and waste service across Somerset from 2020. The preferred bidder was selected by the 12 councillors of Somerset Waste Board on 29 March 2019.**
* **Worth £210m for its initial 10-year duration, with an option to extend for another 10 years, the contract will employ more than 460 people locally with no redundancies expected and extra staff required.**
* **The new contract will see SUEZ deliver SWP’s new Recycle More service, operating new vehicles and collecting a far wider range of recycling every week. The new service will start rolling out across Somerset in 2020. It will help SWP meet public demand to make it easier to recycle more plastic.**
* **Recycle More is one part of the transformation of all Somerset waste services, with upgraded recycle site opening hours, and from 2020 almost all rubbish being used to generate electricity. Together these changes will ensure that the vast majority of material discarded from homes in Somerset is either reused, recycled or goes to good use, with SWP remaining a leader in reducing carbon emissions from waste and recycling.**

**Background**

* SWP is the local authority team managing waste and recycling services for all councils in Somerset. It is accountable to the Somerset Waste Board, which consists of two members from each of the partner authorities. SWP delivers services to all households in Somerset and many schools.
* The collections contract was put out to competitive tender and several companies bid against the contract specification. Submissions were individually assessed and scored against objective quality and affordability criteria to select a preferred bidder.
* The current service is provided by Kier, and all staff will transfer to SUEZ when the new contract begins in March 2020. All current staff were informed of these changes at a special briefing with SWP, Kier and members of SUEZ’s senior leadership team early this morning, which took place at each of the five depot locations in Somerset.
* SUEZ recycling and recovery UK is a business unit of the global SUEZ group. In the UK, SUEZ employs over 5,000 people, operating across hundreds of sites, and handles in excess of 10 million tonnes of waste materials every year – a significant proportion of the UK’s total waste.
* Agreed by all Somerset councils in 2015, Recycle More cuts costs by millions to help fund other vital council services; brings better services with a new contractor, new trucks and new technology; and is expected to boost Somerset’s recycle rate from todays 52% to around 60%. By sticking to our kerbside sort methodology our recycled material will remain of the highest quality, helping us maintain our record of recycling over 90% in the UK. SWP is already independently ranked as a carbon-saving high-flyer nationally, and this should improve our environmental performance even further.
* In addition to the dozen or so materials – including food waste – already collected weekly, **Recycle More** will pick up a wide range of new items each week, including plastic pots, tubs and trays; Tetra Paks and other cartons; small electrical items; and household batteries. Taking far more recyclable household material each week, Recycle More will help empty rubbish bins, which will be collected every three weeks. Flats and schools will also be able to recycle more.
* Recycle More has been fully tested in a long-term, large-scale trial in Somerset that saw recycling levels jump, rubbish tonnages fall, very few problems – all of which were easily resolved, no fly-tipping, and overwhelming support: the post-trial survey showed 84% approval rating for Recycle More’s extra recycling and less frequent rubbish collections. SUEZ currently successfully operates similar services, which have been well-received by residents, raised local recycling rates and cut the amount of rubbish sent to landfill.
* Recycle More’s phased roll-out, which starts next June, allows great care to be taken to communicate to all residents, answer all queries, offer support, and improve delivery for all, including those with children in nappies or households with individuals using adult hygiene products. A comprehensive communications plan will ensure that residents are supported through the changes to their services. Full Recycle More details will be sent to every home well in advance.
* **Next steps:** SWP and Suez expect that we will sign the contract this summer, once the necessary legal work has been completed. Suez will be starting work ahead of that, in particular ordering the new fleet of vehicles. SWP Managing Director, Mickey Green, will shortly be taking the decision to sign a letter of intent to ensure that Suez can progress the necessary vehicle orders and other aspects of contract mobilisation. This is necessary to ensure that c.140 vehicles are built prior to the start of the contract. The new contract will commence on 28 March and the phased roll-out of Recycle More will start in June 2020.
* For further information contact Mickey Green on 01823 625707 or email [mickey.green@somersetwaste.gov.uk](mailto:mickey.green@somersetwaste.gov.uk)