

1. Summary of Performance

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1.1 The North London Waste Authority (NLWA) (the Authority) is responsible for managing the waste collected by seven north London boroughs. NLWA has a statutory responsibility to dispose of the waste collected by Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey, Islington and Waltham Forest. However, the Authority also aims to manage the waste in line with the waste hierarchy, prioritising waste management actions which are better for the environment above those that are less preferred from an environmental perspective. This means that waste prevention work is prioritised, recycling and composting are promoted and disposal to landfill is avoided as far as possible.



1.2 Preventing waste reduces society's consumption of resources and saves on the costs of waste disposal. In 2019-20 the Authority made good progress with waste prevention. The Authority pioneered the development of Low Plastic Zones, working with local retailers to eradicate single-use plastic. The first Low Plastic Zone launched in Farringdon, Islington on 5 February 2020 with 76% of businesses in the area taking specific action to reduce single-use plastic items in their shops. In addition, in order to tackle clothing waste, the Authority organised 14 clothes swaps or Swish and Style events, which also included clothing repair and upcycling workshops. Despite the cancellation of two events due to the COVID-19 outbreak the project exceeded its objectives attracting 1,059 attendees compared to a target of 640, and the project diverted more than 2.5 tonnes of textiles from recycling and disposal, more than double the target of 1.2 tonnes of textile waste avoided. The uptake of the Authority's reusable nappy scheme subsidy, which rewards parents for using reusable nappies rather than disposables, more than doubled in 2019-20 compared to 2018-19 resulting in an estimated 823 tonnes of nappy waste avoided as a result. Charities in the Authority's recycling credit scheme recycled 2,210 tonnes of materials (textiles, books and furniture) in 2019-20 which is less than the estimated 3,117 tonnes. This was because several of the charities were unable to submit Quarter 4 data due to COVID-19.

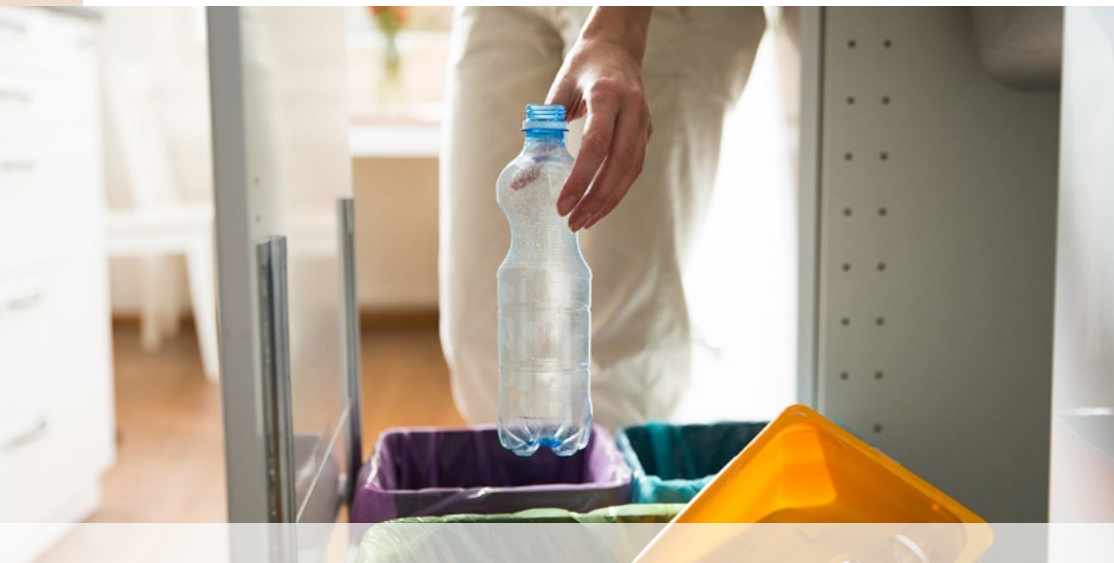
1.3 In addition to the above, a range of food waste prevention events were delivered, directly reaching 10,934 residents and social media posts promoting food waste prevention generated 217,000 impressions on followers' newsfeeds as part of a 'Three Meals Challenge' food waste campaign.

1.4 On recycling, despite carrying out an increased number of communications and engagement events to encourage more recycling, overall recycling rates, (recycling, composting and reuse), fell from 29.9% to 28.9%. In total the Authority handled 115,344 tonnes of dry recycling in 2019-20 compared to 113,479 tonnes the previous year, an increase of 1,865 tonnes or 0.02%. There was a fall in the amount of garden and kitchen waste processed into compost and digestate from 52,272 tonnes in 2018-19 to 49,600 tonnes in 2019-20, a fall of 2,672 tonnes or 5.1%. There was a 5.9% reduction in the amount of waste delivered to reuse and recycling centres by residents too in 2019-20, 43,490 tonnes) compared to 46,104 tonnes in 2018-19 and 51,842 tonnes in 2017-18.

1.5 The outbreak of COVID-19 in March 2020 caused significant service disruption. As the country went into 'lockdown' waste services staff were designated as 'key workers', and there was considerable recognition and support for the importance of waste services to maintain public health. Whilst borough, NLWA and contractors' staff worked throughout the lockdown period to keep refuse and recycling collection and processing services running, all of the Authority's reuse and recycling centres (RRCs) closed with effect from 25 March when the Government announced restrictions to all but essential journeys, and centres closed across the country as a result. The RRCs were not re-opened until May 2020.

1.6 The Authority is the sole owner of LondonEnergy Ltd. (LEL) which had a turnover of £64.991 million in 2019-20. The turnover arises principally from contracts with the Authority for the disposal of waste, sales of electricity, contracts with other waste disposal authorities for treatment of their waste and operating the RRCs under contract to NLWA. LEL also worked closely with the Authority during the year to develop the design solutions for the North London Heat and Power Project (NLHPP) which addresses the need to replace the existing energy from waste facility at the Edmonton EcoPark which is coming to the end of its operational life.

1.7 During 2019-20 the Authority awarded, on programme, the majority of the site preparation contracts for the NLHPP. The Authority also held three in-person market information events, two of which were for works associated with the 'EcoPark South' developments of a resource recovery facility incorporating a new publicly accessible RRC and EcoPark House. One of the events was for works associated with the replacement energy recovery facility. More than 100 people interested in the procurement opportunities attended this event in person, with an additional 148 online attendees.



- 1.8** Construction work also started in January 2019 with a temporary laydown area to the east of the River Lee Navigation to the east of the EcoPark site. This work was completed during 2019-20 and the contractor, Buckingham Group, subsequently began construction of the west section and eastern access to the site. Galldris Construction also progressed construction activity on three contracts. In the last quarter of the financial year, the COVID-19 pandemic affected the NLHPP and contractors were instructed to pause activity as result. During the down-time the Project team worked with contractors to identify opportunities for future programme recovery through resequencing or acceleration of the works.
- 1.9** In 2019-20 NLWA's agreed original budget was £69.149 million (m). This was to be financed by estimated revenue balances for £5.377 m, charges to boroughs for non-household waste of £9.111 m and levies on boroughs of £53.182 m.
- 1.10** The net budget requirement as reported as part of the ordinary business of the June 2020 Authority meeting indicates that the total expenditure for the year was less than budget at £62.685 m. As the levy is fixed at the start of the year, this resulted in the Authority having a revenue surplus, including balances brought forward, of £8.443 m at 31 March 2020. In February 2020 the Authority set the budget for 2020-21 and decided that the levy on boroughs for 2020-21 would be set at £55.229 million with the use of revenue balances and charges for both household and non-household waste making up the balance to fund the Authority's 2020-21 budget of £71.789 m.

