

Item 4 - Public Question

It is almost a year since the beginning of the controversial contract between Greater Cambridgeshire Waste and Re-Gen in Newry, Northern Ireland. Our recycling is taken 400 miles to Northern Ireland to be sorted into different waste streams, then almost all of it travels back, or on, hundreds of miles to finally be recycled somewhere else. The contract has another four years to go, so ending I guess in March 2030.

On average there are 24 lorryloads a week. Each lorry uses 70 gallons of fuel for the journey, so a total of 1,680 gallons. If the lorries use diesel the total CO2 emitted in a week is 19,236 tonnes. If they use HVO (hydrotreated vegetable oil) they produce 1,923 tonnes in a week. A significant impact on climate change for a council which is aiming to become net zero by 2030!

When the contract was put out to tender in September 2024 there was another bidder, Biffa. They have five Materials Recovery Facility sites (MRFs) in England. Altogether there are over a hundred nearer English sites that Greater Cambridge Shared Waste could have agreed a contract with.

The situation around new contracts will be complicated by the transition to a unitary authority, which I believe will happen by April 2028.

Could you tell me when you expect Greater Cambridge Shared Waste or the new unitary authority which succeeds it to start the tendering process for a new contract? I'm hoping that campaigning will focus officials' minds on the importance of thinking and choosing local next time.