

Annual Report

2024-25

Business Plan

2025-26



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 Cheshire West
Recycling
Tomorrow starts today



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ABOUT US

Cheshire West Recycling (CWR) is a Cheshire West and Chester Council owned company, established in 2019. We proudly serve our community by delivering safe, reliable and innovative waste, recycling and fleet maintenance services.

We are guided by cooperative principles, working collaboratively with our Shareholder and the borough's residents to reduce waste's environmental impact and build safe, sustainable communities for the future.

Safety is at the core of our operations. We uphold the highest standards to protect the health and wellbeing of our workforce, fostering an inclusive environment where individuals are supported to grow and thrive.

Our data-driven approach ensures we create meaningful social and environmental impact. By using insights to guide our decisions, we prioritise employing local people on secure contracts, partnering with local businesses to strengthen the economy, and leading behavioural change to address the climate emergency in our borough.

Our Services

CWR plays a vital role in supporting the community by delivering key frontline waste and recycling services across the Borough. At our state-of-the-art materials recovery facility (MRF) in Ellesmere Port, we efficiently process nearly 35,000 tonnes of recycling annually. Additionally, we operate two waste transfer stations, providing safe and compliant facilities for the Council's Streetcare service.

We are expanding our commercial waste services to better serve the community, harnessing our unique position of visiting every part of the borough every week. Building on the success of our partnership with council-owned Brio Leisure, we have launched food waste collections for schools. This initiative supports schools in meeting their legal obligations while offering a carbon – and cost – efficient solution to a significant community need. These efforts reflect our commitment to delivering sustainable and efficient waste management across diverse sectors.



Our Fleet Services division ensures cost-effective and efficient maintenance for our vehicles and service critical Council-owned fleets, including gritters and integrated transport vehicles. In 2024, we enhanced our fleet services capability by introducing an electric vehicle maintenance workshop at our Canalside depot. This will enable us to support the Council's transition to electric vehicles.

In October 2024, we were delighted to secure a new contract term to provide a household kerbside collection service for Cheshire West and Chester Council. This extension, commencing March 2026, is for an 8-year term with the potential for an additional 4 years.

We are also proud to have been awarded the contract to manage the Council's Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) from April 2026 to March 2034, with an option for a further 2-year extension. Together, these significant developments will increase our operations by approximately 20%.

A Blueprint for the Future

As we look ahead, our focus remains on delivering exceptional value to our Shareholder and the community we serve. Our ambition is not only to sustain our role as a leading service provider but to set a benchmark for excellence in performance, sustainability and social impact within the sector.



With a foundation of long-term planning, financial stability and strategic investment, CWR is well-positioned to grow sustainably, drive innovation, improve service delivery and create lasting environmental and social benefits for Cheshire West and Chester and beyond.



GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

Frank Rogers serves as Independent Non-Executive Chair, guiding CWR's Board in meeting its legal, regulatory and Shareholder obligations under the Member Agreement. The Board provides strategic direction, evaluates key decisions, and ensures strong oversight, convening monthly with comprehensive performance reporting.

The Board of Directors is made up of:

Frank Rogers Independent Non-Executive Chair							
James Cowell	Chris Smith	Mark Rutter	Rebecca Oldham	Andy Edwards	Jody Sherratt	Councillor Karen Shore	Council Officers
Non-Executive Director (Resident)	Non-Executive Director	Employee Non-Executive Director	Employee Non-Executive Director	Executive Director	Executive Director	Shareholder Observer	Shareholder Observer(s)

Shareholder observers and key employees provide expert insights on financial performance, key projects and human resources, while quarterly engagement with the Shareholder and members ensures alignment with the Council's strategic objectives and the Borough Plan.

Chair of the Board Statement

I am delighted to introduce CWR's 2024-25 Annual Report and 2025-26 Business Plan, which sets out our continued commitment to delivering outstanding waste and recycling services for the residents of Cheshire West and Chester.

This year marks a significant milestone for CWR as we secure long-term contracts for kerbside collections and HWRC management, providing stability for strategic growth, service innovation and financial resilience. These achievements reflect the confidence of our Shareholder and the dedication of our workforce.

Looking ahead, we are committed to advancing sustainability, expanding commercial operations and driving efficiency through technology. Our investment in electric fleet capabilities and expanded food waste collections demonstrates our commitment to environmental leadership and the borough's climate action plan.

At the heart of our success is our people. By fostering a culture of inclusivity, innovation and development, we ensure CWR remains a great place to work and grow.

As we embark on this next chapter, I want to extend my sincere gratitude to our teams, partners and stakeholders for their continued support. Together, we will build a cleaner, greener and more sustainable future for Cheshire West and Chester.

Frank Rogers

Independent Non-Executive Chair



Employee Director Statements

At CWR we are committed to developing our workforce, driving continuous improvement and championing equality, diversity and professional growth. We recognise and nurture talent from within, ensuring staff voices shape our decisions.

A key focus is our People and Wellbeing Strategy, which provides training, resources and motivation to support our workforce. The Employee Focus Group plays a vital role in ensuring frontline staff are heard and valued, directly informing Board decisions.

We are also dedicated to amplifying women's voices in the workplace and fostering a supportive, transparent culture where everyone can thrive. Beyond operations, we continue to challenge how we work, shaping the future of our business, employees and the communities we serve.

Mark Rutter & Rebecca Oldham

Employee Directors

Managing Director Statement

Since 2019 CWR has delivered sustainable waste, recycling and fleet maintenance services for Cheshire West and Chester. As a Council-owned company, we focus on maximising value, driving innovation and reducing environmental impact while supporting the borough's climate action plan.

Securing long-term contracts this year provides stability to invest in technology, enhance services, and support workforce development. We are expanding food waste collections, optimising operations through data-driven efficiencies, and upgrading our fleet with low-emission vehicles while supporting the Council's transition to a modernised fleet.

Our people remain central to our success. By fostering a culture of continuous improvement, investing in skills and safety, and driving operational excellence, we are building a resilient workforce ready to meet future challenges.

Andy Edwards

Managing Director



OUR SERVICE PERFORMANCE

(April 2024 - March 2025)

Total number of collections undertaken

23,984,441



% right first time collections

2023/24

99.96

2024/25

99.96

% missed collections rectified within target

2023/24

98.64

2024/25

99.81

% right first time bulky collections

2023/24

99.90

2024/25

99.98

% containers delivered within target

2023/24

94.46

2024/25

99.67

MATERIALS COLLECTED

(Tonnes)

Domestic Waste

2024/25

55,922



Food Recycling

2024/25

9,255



Garden Recycling

2024/25

26,877



Fibre Recycling

2024/25

12,606



Container Recycling

2024/25

15,983




























A Year in Review

In 2024/25, CWR has delivered strong operational performance while supporting Cheshire West and Chester Council's objectives.

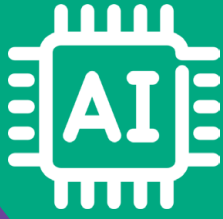
The RAG-rated assessment below outlines our progress against last year's key operational objective.

 Target	 Outcome	 RAG Rating
HSEQ		
Achieve 100% competency for new MRF operation.	Comprehensive training package has been developed and implemented.	
Implement and embed a standardised framework for Root Cause Analysis.	Root Cause Analysis framework embedded, including accident and incident management training to 14 staff.	
Decrease incident recurrence by 20% through lessons learned.	We missed our incident recurrence reduction target due to severe weather-related injuries. We are strengthening preventative measures for ongoing improvement in 2025/6.	
Ensure compliance with regulatory requirements and maintain ISO certification, including integration of Fleet Services into certification.	Successfully maintained ISO accreditations (ISO 9001, ISO 14001, ISO 45001), extending the scope to include the fleet workshop.	
OPERATIONS		
Optimise Fleet Services in line with recommendations outlined within in the service review.	Phase one targets successfully completed, with phase two activities ongoing.	
Maintain efficient, budget-consistent and risk-controlled operations at new MRF facility.	New MRF is operating within CWR's operational budget, with majority of materials processed in-house, significantly reducing third-party processing costs.	
Expand the commercial waste service offered to CWaC and Council owned companies.	Launched food waste collection service for schools.	
Rollout and embed new crew and driver score cards.	Rolled over to 2025/26.	



 Target	 Outcome	 RAG Rating
PEOPLE		
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training programme.	Train the Trainer programme completed, with cascading training scheduled for staff and new starters.	
Delivery of Enhanced Performance Management programme.	Introduced a standard framework for consistent performance management and enhanced support for managers.	
Develop employee engagement improvement plan, addressing outcomes of satisfaction survey.	Frontline Focus Groups are driving People & Wellbeing strategy outcomes. No satisfaction survey was conducted as protracted pay claim discussions likely to impact broader workplace sentiment.	
Develop and implement organisational 'sharing in success' incentive scheme.	Not yet commenced; a key strategic priority for 2025/26, to be led by the incoming People Manager.	
Fully embed Thrive social value drivers with CWR's recruitment and people policies.	Social impact drivers have been embedded in CWR recruitment process and recently adopted People and Wellbeing strategy.	
FINANCIAL AND COMMERCIAL		
Increase local supplier usage to 60%.	71% achieved, contributing over £3.5 million to the local economy.	
Accurate forecasting and predictability of financial outcomes.	Enhanced robust monitoring is in place at both operational and strategic levels.	
Maximise volume and value of kerbside materials collected through producing high quality materials and effective brokering.	Continued overperformance of market indices and targeted downgrades achieved. Implement resident engagement programme to reduce contamination levels and improve material quality.	
Complete options modelling when requested by the Council.	Several exercises were completed, including securing a new HWRC contract.	





Case Study:

Harnessing AI for Innovation at CWR

At CWR innovation is one of our core values, driving us to embrace technologies that enhance efficiency, safety and value. Artificial Intelligence represents the next step in our innovation journey, transforming our operations and delivering meaningful benefits for stakeholders.

We are proud to be the first local authority trading organisation to introduce AI into our Materials Recovery Facility (MRF). This technology provides valuable insights into plant operations, helping us to minimise downtime, improve efficiency and enhance accuracy and productivity.

The benefits of AI extend beyond the facility. By using its insights, we can engage with the community more effectively, offering tailored education on recycling and reducing contamination. This ensures that together, we maximise both the financial and environmental value of the materials we collect.

As we move forward, AI will play a key role in streamlining processes, enhancing safety and enabling smarter decision-making across the wider organisation. Importantly, these advancements will be implemented in alignment with robust data governance requirements to ensure the secure and responsible use of information.

Rather than replacing people, AI at CWR will act as a "cobot"; a collaborative tool to help employees work more efficiently and effectively. By supporting tasks such as drafting reports or scoping projects, AI technology will empower our staff to take on new challenges, build confidence and grow professionally.

These efforts align with the national focus on technology-led innovation and productivity. By adopting AI strategically, CWR will advance local operational goals while contributing to a smarter, safer and more resource-efficient future. Through the transformative power of AI, we will pave the way for a new era of operational excellence.





KEY ACHIEVEMENTS



Innovative

National Recognition:

Winner of the LARAC 2024 'Best New Idea' Award for its innovative 'Zero Agency' initiative. This approach replaced temporary agency staff with a permanent workforce, improving service quality, HSEQ compliance, efficiency, and fostering a culture of growth and long-term employment.



Safe

A Commitment to Excellence:

CWR maintains ISO 9001, 14001 and 45001 accreditations, now extended to fleet services, alongside CMS certification. This dedication to high standards ensures robust compliance, strong management systems, and a continual focus on health and safety excellence.



Trusted

Trusted by our Shareholder; valued by the Borough:

CWaC's decision to extend its current kerbside waste collection contract by a minimum of 8 additional years – plus an additional award to deliver the borough's HWRCs – is reflective of their trust in CWR, its operations and ability to bring real value to the residents of Cheshire West and Chester.



Responsible

Safeguarding the Community:

CWR installed defibrillators on 25 additional vehicles to ensure its entire fleet of 61 frontline vehicles is equipped with life-saving equipment. Combined with its policy mandating drivers to remain in-cab at all times ensures CWR is on-hand to support the community and respond quickly in an emergency.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS



Innovative

An Early Adopter:

CWR is the first Local Authority Trading Organisation to integrate Greyparrot 'Analyzer' technology into its Materials Recovery Facility. This pioneering technology tracks over 89 material types, enhancing sorting, reducing inefficiencies and improving recycling quality, and sets a benchmark for innovation and sustainability in the sector.



Safe

A Commitment to Safety:

CWR's in-cab policy sets a new industry standard, ensuring drivers remain in their vehicles to reduce rollaway and theft risks while overseeing safety-critical operations. Recognised as a finalist for LARAC's 2024 'Health & Safety Initiative of the Year,' this initiative highlights CWR's commitment to protecting both its workforce and the public.



Trusted

Shining Achievements

Its commitment to supporting ex-services personnel into employment and to create meaningful opportunities for veterans and reservists through the Armed Forces Covenant has earned CWR a Silver Award in the Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS).



EMPLOYER
RECOGNITION
SCHEME

SILVER AWARD



Responsible

A Key Partner:

CWR's Fleet Services team proudly serves as the Council's maintenance partner for 20 gritters, ensuring over 490 miles of roads remain safe during the winter. Reinforcing its commitment to the borough, CWR also looks after 30 community transport vehicles, providing residents with reliable access to essential services.





FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

Year 2024/25	Actual	Budget	Variance
Income	17,950	17,610	340
Cost	17,653	17,515	-138
Depreciation	95	95	0
Surplus/Deficit	202	0	202

Key Issues

Materials Recycling Facility (MRF):

Despite initial challenges during the construction and commissioning of the new MRF, including periods of downtime, all material is now largely being successfully processed on-site. This allows us to maximise income from recyclable materials.

Materials Income:

Prices were strong in the first half of the financial year, generating a favourable variance of approximately £325K against budget. However, a significant decline in prices during the second half, particularly for plastics, reduced this to around £290K. Our expert broker partner continues to deliver measurable value, helping to optimise this important income stream.

Fleet Services:

Following the completion of a detailed improvement programme in early 2024, Fleet Services has achieved a break-even position while continuing to deliver high-quality service and strong value for the Shareholder.

Plan Deliver Review:

Our Plan Deliver Review process has once again ensured high performance standards while maximising productivity. This structured approach has delivered savings of approximately £150K by optimising frontline resources, reducing overtime and eliminating the use of agency labour, all without compromising service quality.

Supporting Council Cost Pressures:

£235K of the savings generated from the above have been used to support the April 2024 pay award.

Cash Management:

Effective cash management and surplus generation has resulted in unbudgeted bank interest of £52K for CWR. We continue to operate debt-free, maintaining our loan-free status since March 2023.



2025/26 Budget

£000s	25/26 Budget	24/25 Actual
Household Collections	15,505	14,919
Materials	2,051	2,462
Fleet Maintenance	395	406
Commercial	59	51
Other	88	108
Total Income	18,098	17,946
Cost	18,012	17,649
Depreciation	86	95
Surplus/(Deficit)	NIL	202

Figures in £000s.

Key Assumptions

- The MRF operates within planned downtime assumptions, and the quality of household recycling meets the anticipated input specifications.
- Material prices align broadly with the 10-year average.
- Overtime and absence levels are maintained at 2% and 4.5%, respectively.
- The review of assisted properties is completed before the start of the financial year.
- Any changes to container management policies by CWaC will be fully funded.



HEALTH, SAFETY, ENVIRONMENT AND QUALITY (HSEQ)



Accountability and safety are at the core of everything we do, underpinned by our dedication to HSEQ excellence. As the first wholly Council-owned organisation to achieve ISO 14001, ISO 45001 and ISO 9001 certifications, we are steadfast in our pursuit of continuous improvement.

The increase in our RIDDOR and Lost Time Injury rate is primarily attributed to a spike in incidents caused by severe weather in January 2025. Despite this setback, we remain committed to improving safety performance and have implemented measures to prevent future incidents.

2024/25 HSEQ Performance					
RIDDORS		Number of Lost Time Incidents (LTI)		Total Number of Incidents (NLT+LTI)	
2023/24	0	2023/24	12	2023/24	38
2024/25	7	2024/25	13	2024/25	48

Highlights of our key HSEQ achievements in 2024/25:

ISO Certification Extension:

- Successfully extended ISO 9001, 14001 and 45001 certifications to include Fleet Services, reflecting our dedication to ensuring all aspects of the business operate under robust compliance and management systems, with no non-conformances identified.

Near Miss Reporting:

- On track to maintain or exceed the 20% increase in near-miss reporting achieved in 2023/24.

Extensive HSEQ Training and Engagement:

- Delivered a comprehensive training programme tailored to the new MRF at Canalside, ensuring operational readiness and compliance.
- Designed and rolled out bespoke training packages on environmental and health and safety compliance specifically for the Fleet Services team.
- Launched proactive safety campaigns and completed a full refresher training programme for all operational crews, reinforcing core HSEQ values and best practices.

Fire Incident Mitigation Improvements:

- Completed a comprehensive review of Fire Prevention Plans and fire procedures to strengthen risk management and enhance safety measures.
- Collaborated with Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service to refine fire safety strategies and ensure robust emergency preparedness.
- Delivered targeted awareness training for staff, with a particular focus on managing risks related to contamination in waste and the dangers posed by lithium-ion batteries.





Driving Innovation and Expanding Capabilities

In its second year of operation, CWR's Fleet Services division made significant strides in strengthening cost-effectiveness, driving innovation and enhancing social value impact. This progress has positioned the division as a key enabler of sustainable and efficient fleet management for both CWR and its Shareholders' vehicles.

Fleet Services is aligning with the Council's evolving fleet strategy, preparing for expanded electric vehicles (EV) by increasing servicing capabilities and staying ahead of industry trends. Ongoing discussions aim to synchronise the Council's fleet maintenance contract with CWR's core collection services, ensuring long-term integration and stability.

The division has also delivered on its commitment to community impact by:

- Hiring its first apprentice to support local talent development.
- Presently 100% of its workforce resides within the borough, reinforcing community engagement.
- Prioritising local suppliers to strengthen the borough's economy and foster closer partnerships.

In 2025/26, CWR plans to broaden the scope of its Fleet Services division to include a wider range of engineering capabilities. This will enhance our ability to more effectively maintain our key asset, the MRF, reducing downtime and ensuring consistent performance.

Fleet Services will also prepare for the increased demands of the new HWRC contract, which will include not only routine workshop-based maintenance of operational plant, but also on-site activities such as container repairs and breakdown repairs. This expansion will provide scope for further skilled apprenticeships, supporting workforce development and reinforcing CWR's commitment to nurturing local talent.





EMPLOYEE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

At CWR, our people are at the core of everything we do. We are dedicated to their development, empowering them to seize opportunities, grow professionally and thrive. By fostering a culture that upholds high performance and champions professional growth, we strive to strengthen our position as an Employer of Choice, creating an environment where individuals can achieve their full potential.

People & Wellbeing Strategy (2025–2030)

In December 2024, the CWR Board approved the adoption of a transformative People and Wellbeing Strategy for the period 2025–2030. This strategy outlines the approach CWR will take over the next five years to solidify our position as an Employer of Choice. It aims to support our existing workforce, attract new talent and ensure a seamless transition for those joining us through the TUPE process from the current HWRC contractor in April 2026.

Frontline Focus Group

Established by CWR Employee Directors, this cross-departmental group ensures frontline staff voices help shape organisational strategies. At its inaugural meeting in December, valuable feedback refined the 'People and Wellbeing Strategy,' which was later endorsed by the Board, highlighting the impact of employee engagement in decision-making.

Building on this success, we will expand these focus groups as a key communication channel for the Board. Their ongoing input will ensure strategies remain responsive to employee needs, fostering trust, engagement and inclusivity while supporting sustainable growth and long-term success.



Employee Showcase: Conor McEvoy

Driven by a passion for mechanics, local Ellesmere Port student Conor McEvoy joined CWR's Fleet Department at the Canalside Hub as an Apprentice HGV Technician from Remit Automotive Academy in September 2024.

Under the mentorship and guidance of Workshop Technician, Jamie Dover, Conor is expanding his knowledge, skills and confidence of working with a range of vehicles.

Whilst at CWR, Conor has completed his second college placement, passing his Vehicle Inspection Test with a 100% PASS grade.



Conor has said of his experience so far: "This opportunity has put me on my dream career path. I'm really enjoying working alongside my colleagues; it's fantastic and I always find myself leaving work with new knowledge. One day in the future I hope to be lucky enough to apply the skills and opportunity I've been given at CWR to run my own restoration garage. I'd love to save older vehicles that are special to the car community – it would give me a real sense of pride."

Jamie has said of his mentorship experience: "Working with Conor is providing me with an opportunity to strengthen my leadership skills; but it's not just that. It's great to see just how much he is taking in. He's willing to try any task given to him. The news of his 100% pass grade on his Vehicle Inspection Test shows us just how well he is progressing."

"Conor has become a valued member of the team over the past few months; it's an honour to share knowledge that will help him progress with his career."

At CWR, we are proud to call Conor 'One of Our Own'.



OUR SOCIAL VALUE



In its second year of partnership with Thrive, CWR continues to strengthen its commitment to delivering meaningful social value. Thrive, an independent organisation with a social value reporting framework used in over 25 countries, supports purpose-driven organisations in both the public and private sectors.

Guided by cooperative principles, CWR remains dedicated to creating positive social impact through its waste collection and fleet maintenance services, contributing to the development of stronger, more sustainable communities.

Our efforts are focused on:

- **Generating local jobs and fostering careers growth and skills development**
- **Supporting small businesses and ensuring money stays within the borough**
- **Promoting wellbeing and addressing economic inequality**
- **Reducing our environmental footprint and taking decisive action on climate change**

Thrive's tools enable CWR to make informed decisions that embed social value into our policies, ensuring both the intrinsic and added value of our services are captured and maximised. The confirmation of new contracts for waste collection and HWRC site management, commencing in 2026 for an initial eight-year minimum term, presents a significant opportunity to amplify our social value impact.

Recognising the need for alignment, CWR is collaborating to unify social value metric frameworks currently used by the Council and its companies. This collaboration will result in a shared reporting mechanism to measure key metrics, enabling the Council to capture CWR's contributions to the Borough Plan and its six strategic missions:

1. **Starting Well**
2. **Tackling Hardship and Poverty**
3. **Resilient People Living Their Best Lives**
4. **Opportunity in a Fair Local Economy**
5. **Neighbourhood Pride**
6. **Greener Communities**

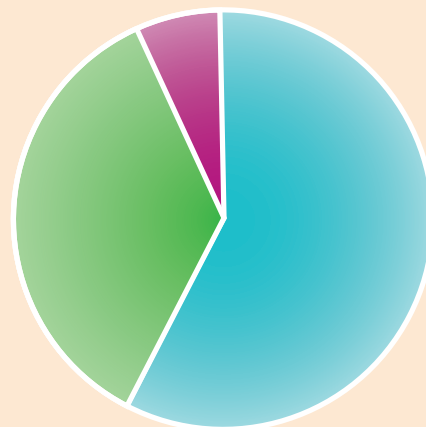
CWR remains committed to integrating these principles into our operations and to ensuring our efforts align with the Borough's strategic goals to contribute meaningfully to a brighter, more equitable future for all.

Since establishment in March 2020, we are proud to have created a cumulative social value total of £99M*

- **Fighting Climate Change £34.3M**
- **Wellbeing and Equal Opportunity £5.7M**
- **Tackling Economic Inequality £59M**

In the calendar year 2024 we increased this figure by £22M

(£11.6M intrinsic and £10.4M added value)



*This figure is subject to final Thrive verification, based upon the supporting evidence already submitted.

For more information visit: thrive-platform.com



2024 Highlights

Total Social Value Delivered in 2024: £22M



Recycled tonnes:
67,132



278 employees from
within the borough,
over **92.4%** of the
workforce



£4 Million spent
with companies
within 30 miles of
the borough



£2.6 Million spent
with companies
within the borough



12 loaders
upskilled to drivers



160 hours of
community
engagement on
environmental issues



42 new full time
employees from
unemployment



12 onboarded
employees
previously classified
as NEET



£4.1 Million spent
with suppliers
classified as SMEs



812 metric tonne
reduction in Carbon
Dioxide Equivalent



5,795 items donated
to local food banks



1 new apprentice
opportunity created



1 (ex) veteran
employed



58 new starters
offered permanent
employment



993 hours of learning
and development
delivered to staff



Silver Award in the
'Defence Employer
Recognition Scheme'



STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

This is a high-level summary of the key strategic business risks. These risks feed into our detailed operational risk framework, regularly monitored by the Board.

Area	Principle Risks	Description	Principle Controls / Risks
Health, Safety, Environmental and Quality	Health and Safety of colleagues and the community	Incident occurs resulting in in death or injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robust health and safety management system in place for all areas of the business externally audited to ISO 45001. • Route Risk Assessments in place for all rounds to identify and mitigate hazards. • Comprehensive safety training programme and matrix in place. • Remote and in person crew monitoring. • Root Cause Analysis & Investigations – thorough incident investigations and root cause analysis to prevent recurrence and drive continuous improvement. • Information sharing and learning via the Shareholder led health and safety forum.
	Maintaining legal and regulatory compliance	Scope for significant harm with the potential for cessation of all or part of business activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data driven compliance performance dashboards, reviewed at Director level. • Clear business continuity plans established and approved by Board. • Use of R2C software to ensure accurate record keeping and compliance. • CMS embedded. • Legal & Compliance register maintained, reviewed and audited externally.
	Inadequacy of internal control systems	Established processes and systems not used correctly, resulting in an increased risk or operational inefficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key policies and procedures embedded within ISO certified HSEQ Management systems. • Key business processes mapped and controlled, performance management measures implemented where not followed correctly. • Plan, Deliver, Review methodology embedded, ensuring control of people and operations.
Operational	MRF mobilisation and optimisation	New MRF facility unable to meet operational assumptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce Plan, Deliver, Review approach to oversee and optimise. • Expert advice available to support operational performance optimisation. • Design liabilities in place to minimise risk of plant underperformance.
	Incorrect service use / lack of service participation	Impacting upon quality of material collected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robust processes to manage incorrect service usage in development with CWaC. • Service Specification included scope to remove the service from properties when all engagement activities have been exhausted.



STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

Area	Principle Risks	Description	Principle Controls / Risks
People	Adequate provision of labour due to inability to retain / recruit	Shortages of labour in key operational and managerial roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual alignment with Local Living Wage. • Introduction of a dedicated resourcing coordinator driving shift to towards a more permanent workforce. • Active recruitment of ex-armed forces personnel and those from vulnerable or disadvantaged groups. • One of Our Own programme driving progression at both frontline and managerial levels. • Development of a 'sharing in success' incentive scheme.
	Employee relations	Inflation levels and labour market conditions drive challenging pay and condition expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactive discussion with Trade Unions. • Significant pay rise settlements agreed over the last two years. • Celebrate, challenge, change feedback mechanisms established and communicated via Management 'Sofa Clubs'. • Contingency plans established.
	Health and Wellbeing	Personal financial pressures continue to impact upon wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People and Wellbeing Strategy in place. • Employee Assistance Programme in place and actively promoted. • Mental Health first aiders in place across the organisation.
Finance & Governance	Cyber / Data Security	More complex and increased levels of Cyber / data attacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial penalties up to 4% of Turnover (£600k+). • Reputational risk.
	HWRC	HWRC detailed budget to be completed and funding agreed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant TUPE Risk. • Inherited sites – conditions not known. • Procurement lead times could overrun go live date.
	Impact of the recycling materials market	Significant market volatility with the difference between high and low price points over £3M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing engagement with CWaC to ensure effective management of service misuse. • Utilisation of expert broker who continues to deliver value for money. • Engagement with CWaC regarding stimulation of local end markets.





SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

The following PESTEL and SWOT outlines the high level external environment in which CWR is operating and a situational analysis of CWR's current position.

PESTEL

POLITICAL	ECONOMICAL	SOCIAL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued challenges in relation to annual pay award expectations. Pay award negotiation, locally and at a national level. CWR reviewing alignment to new Borough Plan for the Shareholder. Continued pressure upon local funding, leaving the Shareholder needing to take action in relation to any funding gap. Policy changes that will have a local, national and global impact. Accelerated pace of devolution talks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inflation continuing to impact on both the business and its employees. Introduction of higher employer NI costs. High employment levels, resulting in skills shortages at both a direct and indirect staffing level. Protracted restructuring of the UK economy post Brexit further impacted by global events, such as the conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza. Cost implications of 'greening'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost of living crisis continuing to place increasing pressure upon both employees and the residents. Increase in pressure from citizens for action in relation to the climate emergency. Continued social care pressures on the Shareholder. Nature of workforce driven by historical approach to the core business activity. Public perception of public sector funding v service received.
TECHNOLOGY	ENVIRONMENTAL	LEGAL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social media becoming increasingly influential, both at a local and national level. Rise of artificial intelligence presenting both opportunities and challenges. Improvements in robotics present an opportunity to improve productivity and improvements in recycling, material recovery and quality. Data and challenges over who owns it is becoming increasingly important. Increased risks of more complex cyber security attacks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing public awareness surrounding environmental issues, although this does not always translate into action. Ambitious local, national and global targets have been set in relation to CO2 emissions and the climate crisis. Transition from fossil fuels places an increasing pressure upon existing infrastructure and fleet. Global direction of travel with environment target commitments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued rollout of the Environment Act is starting to see significant changes being introduced on measures such as food waste / commercial collection and EPR. Continued shift to UK centric legislation, replacing historic EU legislation. Changes in legislation or regulatory requirements. Agreement of formal contract documentation e.g. HWRCs.



SWOT ANALYSIS



Strengths

Long term security:

8 years plus contract awarded for waste collection and the management of HWRC's from 1st April 2026.

Data-driven principles:

Established and embedded practices, maximising efficiency and ensuring operational compliance.

Experienced workforce:

The "One of Our Own" initiative has fostered a skilled and talented team.

High-quality service:

Delivery of efficient, high-standard waste collection services.

Shareholder investment:

New fleet and facilities reduce risks of operational plant failure and support growth potential.

Award-winning provider:

Recognition for service excellence with clear operational goals.

Strong board and senior

management governance in place:

Supported through reserved matters and CWaC Board observers.

Social value impact:

Generating a very positive social value impact, contributing to the Council's 6 missions contained in the Borough Plan.

Comprehensive ISO Certification:

ISO certification across all current business areas demonstrates a commitment to quality, environmental management and health and safety.

Enhanced relationship with Shareholder:

A strong level of trust and collaboration; the ability to make longer term decisions; greater transparency and mutual support for providing excellent resident services whilst achieving efficiency savings through innovation.



Weaknesses

Management capacity:

Would need to prioritise with Shareholder any asks not included in the Business Plan.

High frontline staff turnover:

Driven by the nature of the industry and competitive labour market.

Brand visibility:

Although improved, CWR brand recognition remains limited. This can potentially restrict growth opportunities.

Materials Trading Volatility:

No reserve in place to protect against a downturn in materials prices, which are volatile.

Speed of Change:

Influenced by the Shareholder's timeline and governance structure, to work with the Council to effectively plan to ensure efficient execution of key projects.

Data Management:

Insufficient internal processes for data storage, processing and robust Data Protection Impact Assessments, creating potential compliance risks and affecting stakeholder trust, operational efficiency and reputation.





Opportunities

Planned sustainable deliverable growth:

Identify future sustainable deliverable growth opportunities where CWR can offer real value and efficiency savings in delivering and supporting Council or external services in present format or post devolution.

Capital investment optimisation:

Maximise the value of recent investments in fleet, MRF and workshops.

Community stewardship:

Broader engagement and leadership within the local community.

TECKAL status:

Enables external growth and diversification of services.

Transferable approach:

"Plan, Deliver, Review" model applicable to other Council or third-party organisations.

AI technology integration:

Maximise the potential integration of AI technology to improve efficiency and performance.

Commercial trade opportunities:

Potential to further expand commercial / school food waste collections in April 2025 when legislative changes are introduced.

Longer term strategy:

With the award of a longer-term contract for waste collection and HWRCs, this paves the way for longer-term financial management and strategy.

Economies of scale:

The addition of HWRC sites management increases the potential of gaining advantageous procurement terms and conditions when procuring future contracts.

Extending ISO Certification and management systems to new HWRCs:

Expanding ISO certification and management systems to new HWRCs helps ensure consistent health and safety, quality and environmental standards across all operations.



Threats

Resident service usage:

Material quality and value depend on correct resident usage, with limited CWR influence.

Economic challenges:

Long-term impacts of national and local economic conditions.

Recycling market volatility:

Unpredictable market dynamics affecting recycling profitability.

Legislative policy changes:

Legislative policy adjustments, impacting efficiencies and operations.

Employment law changes:

Likely increased operational costs due to planned legislative changes.

HWRC mobilisation:

Uncertainty surrounding the TUPE transfer of the workforce presents a risk as staffing details will not be confirmed until the transfer date, potentially leading to skills gaps. Additionally, the contract start date begins over a double Bank Holiday – a traditionally busy period – posing additional operational challenges.

Procurement pipeline bottleneck:

Significant number of contracts set to expire at the end of March 26, leading to a bottleneck in workload.



OUR 2025/26 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

STRATEGIC GOALS

CWR is committed to working cooperatively with the Council, with aligned common goals to strengthen communities. The following core strategic goals are agreed for 2025-26:

Seamless transition to HWRC management

Ensure a smooth transfer of HWRC operations by April 2026, prioritising safety, efficiency, staff integration, and high-quality service delivery.

Excellence in waste and fleet services

Maintain and enhance high standards through innovation, data-driven decisions, collaboration and continuous improvement.

Alignment with the council's borough plan

Positively contribute to the Borough Plan's six missions to build thriving, sustainable and inclusive communities.

Further embedding social value

Continue to place social value at the heart of decision-making to maximise community impact and align with the Councils Borough Plan.

Strive to retain our position as an employer of choice

Foster an inclusive workplace culture, attract and retain talent, support career development and enhance staff wellbeing.

Optimising material quality and MRF operations

Use AI and data-driven strategies to improve material quality, integrate HWRC haulage and enhance service efficiency.

Sustainable growth opportunities

Identify and pursue sustainable growth that delivers efficiency and value for the Council and external services.

Future fleet and infrastructure readiness

Assess our fleet and infrastructure to align with sustainability goals, considering net-zero emissions, legislative changes and alternative energy sources.

Financial resilience

Explore options to strengthen financial stability, including establishing reserves to mitigate market fluctuations in recycle pricing.





OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES

Our 2025-26 objectives have been established to ensure continuity in our excellent service delivery performance, whilst continuing to deliver upon our safe, trusted, responsible and innovative values

HSEQ

OBJECTIVES	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	QUARTER
Integrate HWRC sites into the CWR HSEQ management framework, ensuring all sites meet all standards and are on track for ISO and CMS Certifications.	Execution of structured integration plan, including staff training and infrastructure improvements. Completion of updated Safe Working Procedures and risk assessments. Implement internal audit and gap analysis tools to measure progress and identify key risks.	Q4
Reduce reversing-related incidents and H&S risk through enhanced safety monitoring and supervision.	Implement full reversing safety campaign and training support package, including intervention plan and enhanced monitoring. Achieve a 25% reduction compared to the 2024 baseline.	Q4
Monitor and maintain management systems to ensure compliance with all environmental regulatory requirements.	Maintain zero major non-conformities for ISO/CMS and Environmental Agency compliance classification score of less than 10. Maintain and develop environmental management systems, including training and competency plans for relevant staff. Reduce health and safety related incidents (ISO 45001).	Q4
Collaborate with local communities, partner agencies and stakeholders to raise awareness and promote positive changes in road safety and fire risk reduction, enhancing operational safety.	Deliver a community safety campaign. Increase internal reporting of incidents by 10%. Execute partner campaign with the police and utilise social media and local media outlets. Provide staff training on reporting.	Q4
Drive continual improvement and sector engagement through benchmarking operations and waste handling.	Benchmark operations and waste handling against WISH/industry best practices. Complete two benchmarking exercises and implement identified improvement actions.	Q4
Fully implement AI sampling to meet new Environment Agency MRF sampling regulations, ensuring compliance is achieved in an efficient and safe manner compared to traditional manual processes.	Achieve 100% compliance with Environment Agency MRF sampling regulations by integrating the AI system for automated material identification and classification.	Q4



OPERATIONS

OBJECTIVES	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	QUARTER
Maintain and enhance the delivery of consistently high-quality waste and fleet services.	Maintain 23/24 KPI performance levels. Achieve a right first-time collection rate of 99.9% Maintain MOT first time pass rate and winter equipment available at 23/24 levels.	Q4
Incremental improvements to the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF).	AI technology fully embedded, demonstrating 15% improvement in sorting accuracy and operational efficiency. Automation options appraisal completed – and business case established. Staff fully trained on AI and automation systems, with 100% demonstrating proficiency. KPIs established for contamination reduction and recovery rates, with baseline targets achieved.	Q4
Optimise operational efficiency and compliance for Fleet Services.	Optimise fleet operations for inefficiencies and compliance gaps. Robust maintenance schedule to minimise downtime and extend vehicle lifespans. Increased EV maintenance throughout with specialised tools and training. Fleet Services expanded into a comprehensive engineering function, providing maintenance and support for both MRF and HWRC operations, and ensuring seamless service delivery across both areas.	Q4

PEOPLE

OBJECTIVES	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	QUARTER
Implement an inclusive reward and recognition incentive scheme ensuring all employees have equal opportunities to share in the company’s success.	Conduct an annual performance review for 100% of staff each year and quarterly check-ins. Launch a Pay and Rewards Programme by 2026.	Q4
Develop a staff engagement network to facilitate employee input into company development and decision-making.	Establish clear feedback channel. Host annual conference for overhead staff and annual stand-down session with SLT for frontline staff.	Q2 Q4
Increase workforce retention rate by 10% through career development, recognition and enhanced work-life balance initiatives.	Professional development and up-skilling programmes and a formalised coaching and mentoring offer.	Q4



PEOPLE

OBJECTIVES	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	QUARTER
Work towards a more equitable workforce and address deeper, systemic barriers which limit alignment with the company's culture and values.	Complete equality, diversity and inclusion training for all staff. Increase proportion of underrepresented groups by >1% each year.	Q4
Strengthen the company's social value contributions through inclusive recruitment strategies and community engagement initiatives.	Obtain Disability Confident and Armed Forces Covenant Gold accreditations by 2026. Utilise the apprenticeship levy to onboard 1 apprentice each year. Maintain a local workforce of >80%.	Q4

FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE

OBJECTIVES	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	QUARTER
Embed social value into Procurement processes.	Ensure social value forms at least 10% of decision-making process.	Q2
Increased level of Data Governance.	Implement improved processes to build robustness, including DPIA and links to procurement.	Q4
Increase local supplier usage.	Increase by 5% to 75%.	Q4
Maximise volume & value of recyclates by improving input quality & producing high quality outputs whilst minimising MRF downtime.	Prices achieved exceed published indices. Ensure no unprocessed material is sent out. Benchmark input quality and quantify appropriate improvement target.	Q4
Robust financial understanding & predictability of outcomes.	Full year forecast to be updated monthly. Risks & Opportunities to be updated quarterly. Engagement with Shareholder at least quarterly.	Q1
Increased financial awareness & resilience.	Operations dashboards expanded into financials, where applicable. Detailed segmental reporting and devolved budget responsibility.	Q4
Agreement of HWRC service funding & related budget.	Funding agreed & budget finalised.	Q3



CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT

OBJECTIVES	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	QUARTER
Improve the Business Support team's efficiency, enhancing flexibility, skill sets and team resilience.	Conduct a skills audit to identify gaps and training needs within the business support team.	Q1
	Implement cross-training initiatives to improve adaptability and reduce reliance on single points of expertise.	Q2
	Streamline workflows and adopt automation tools to increase productivity and reduce administrative burdens.	Q4
	Develop a culture of continuous improvement by incorporating feedback loops and innovation workshops.	
Strengthen CWR's ICT systems and infrastructure to support planned organisational growth and agility.	Evaluate current ICT systems and identify areas for improvement to ensure scalability and robustness.	
	Invest in cloud-based solutions and cyber security measures to enhance data security and accessibility.	Q4
	Foster digital transformation by integrating tools that support remote working, real-time collaboration, and process automation.	
	Review escalation process.	Q2
Expand CWR's commercial food waste collection service to help educational facilities to comply with UK planned changed legislation by April 2025.	Work with schools and council buildings to understand their specific food waste management needs and challenges.	
	Design a scalable collection service that ensures compliance with the UK legislation timeline.	Q4
	Promote awareness and education on the benefits of food waste reduction and recycling.	
	Measures in place for the environmental impact and cost-efficiency of the service.	
Deliver programmed service change projects in partnership with the Council and provide strategic advice and modelling for future changes.	Collaborate closely with Council stakeholders to define priorities, timelines and deliverables for service change projects.	
	Use data-driven analysis and scenario modelling to predict outcomes and adapt services to meet future needs.	
	Ensure alignment with the council's broader strategic goals, including sustainability, community engagement, and compliance with regulatory changes.	Q4
	Monitor project progress, reporting on milestones and adjusting plans as needed to ensure successful implementation.	



CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT

OBJECTIVES	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	QUARTER
Tackle contamination and improve material quality.	<p>Reduce contamination through targeted education and engagement campaigns.</p> <p>Embed data-driven decision making and enhance removal processes within the MRF to improve system efficiency and recycling outcomes.</p>	Q4
Provide project management for the HWRC mobilisation phase and ensure robust governance is in place.	<p>Detailed mobilisation plan with timelines, resource allocation and staff training.</p> <p>Stakeholder engagement with local communities and partners.</p> <p>Regular monitoring and evaluation of mobilisation progress.</p>	Q4



OUTLOOK FOR THE FUTURE

With the award of two long-term contracts for household kerbside collection services and the management of Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs), CWR is well-positioned for future growth. These agreements provide a stable foundation for developing a comprehensive business strategy, ensuring alignment with our vision for a sustainable and efficient future.

This stability enables the creation of a medium-term financial plan, securing long-term financial sustainability while supporting continued investment in our workforce, infrastructure and technology. By adopting a structured approach, we aim to enhance operational efficiencies, introduce innovative services, and explore new revenue opportunities that align with the Council's waste strategy.

Strategic Priorities

Service Delivery & Efficiency

- Investing in advanced waste processing technologies to improve recycling rates.
- Expanding data-driven service models to optimise collection routes and reduce environmental impact.
- Increasing fleet resilience through electric and low-emission vehicles.

Sustainability & Environmental Leadership

- Supporting the borough's climate emergency action plan with waste reduction and circular economy initiatives.
- Enhancing public engagement to promote waste minimisation.
- Partnering with businesses and organisations to develop innovative waste reuse and recycling solutions.

Commercial & Financial Resilience

- Expanding commercial waste services for businesses, schools and public sector partners.
- Exploring public-private partnerships to drive innovation in waste management.
- Leveraging expertise to provide consultancy services to other local authorities.



People & Workforce Development

- Enhancing training opportunities to equip staff with future-ready skills.
- Strengthening local employment commitments and fostering sustainable careers.
- Cultivating a culture of inclusivity, innovation and continuous improvement.

Financial Outlook & Growth

The HWRC contracts will increase turnover by around 20% (£3.4m), including £0.7m from materials income, exposing the business to further market fluctuations. Additionally, the HWRC contract will add approximately 50 new staff, an 18% workforce increase. Back-office functions such as payroll, financial management, HR, procurement and HSEQ will be absorbed into existing teams where possible to improve efficiency.

Growth will be strategically managed, prioritising areas with capacity, such as Fleet Maintenance and Commercial Collections. Efforts will focus on securing work from Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWaC) to maximise Shareholder benefits. Revenue diversification will be explored to mitigate risks related to market volatility and strengthen financial stability.

Our Plan Deliver Review approach will continue to drive operational efficiencies while maintaining performance and safety. This will help offset increasing vehicle maintenance costs as the fleet ages, though additional measures may be needed in later years.

Innovative solutions, including artificial intelligence, will be considered to enhance efficiency and improve health and safety. We will also support the Council's re-fleet and depot strategy, evaluating power and fuel options based on cost and carbon impact.

SUMMARY

CWR's long-term contracts provide financial stability and a strong foundation for sustainable growth. By prioritising service efficiency, environmental leadership, commercial expansion, and workforce development, we are building a resilient organisation. A strategic approach to financial planning, risk management and innovation will ensure operational excellence while supporting the Council's waste management goals and delivering long-term community benefits.





Cheshire West
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WINSFORD
CHESHIRE
CW7 3PD**

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