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Recycle site focus shifts

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DEVELOPMENT of a business plan identifying suitable sites for a second resource recovery facility for Rockingham and Kwinana has been postponed.

Southern Metropolitan Regional Council has shifted its immediate focus to rebuilding its destroyed recycling plant.

Fire raged through the recycling processing facility in Canning Vale on June 1, throwing the southern suburbs' recycling system into chaos and forcing local councils to make urgent decisions on where to process recyclables from their residents.

At its meeting on Tuesday night, Rockingham Council unanimously passed a late item, recommending that the council process recyclable materials collected from its residents at a Cleanaway recycling facility in Mandurah for the next 18 months – the length of time estimated to take to rebuild the Canning Vale facility.

The council has the option of extending the timeframe on a monthly basis.

With 40 per cent of Perth's recycling processing capacity destroyed in the blaze, almost half of all recyclable materials, or about 900 tonnes, collected from the SMRC's seven member coun-

cils – Canning, Cockburn, East Fremantle, Fremantle, Kwinana, Melville and Rockingham – between June 1 and 12, was taken to landfill.

Of that, 485.02 tonnes was dumped at the Rockingham landfill facility.

Twenty per cent, or 121.60 tonnes of Rockingham recyclables was sent to landfill between June 1 and 12.

Mayor Barry Sammels said no further Rockingham recyclables were expected to end up in landfill.

Immediately after the blaze, the regional council said it would reopen a standby plant in Cockburn to help with the overflow of materials.

But it has since run into a legal snag, with its member councils required to make their own decisions on where to process their recycling.

Rockingham Council made its this week, by deciding to enter into the contract with Cleanaway.

Cr Sammels said the decision had the support of the SMRC.

The fire has also taken the focus off controversial plans to identify a suitable site to house a second RRRC facility to cater for Rockingham and Kwinana residents.

The Rockingham landfill is one of the regional council's preferred sites.