

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Staff Governance Committee
DATE	10 December 2019
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	LGV Driver Retention/Recruitment
REPORT NUMBER	OPE/19/454
DIRECTOR	Rob Polkinghorne/Andy Macdonald
CHIEF OFFICER	Mark Reilly/Isla Newcombe
REPORT AUTHOR	Paul McPherson
TERMS OF REFERENCE	Purpose 4 / Remit 2.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of the progress relating to LGV Driver recruitment and retention for Waste & Recycling Services and the mitigating actions being taken to alleviate the shortage of drivers which was experienced in late 2018.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the improvements made in reducing the amount of driver vacancies within the Waste Service and agree that no further action is required at this stage.

3. BACKGROUND

Background

- 3.1 A Service Update was circulated in October 2018 which highlighted that the Waste & Recycling Service was facing difficulty recruiting LGV Drivers, this was followed by a joint report to Committee in March 2019 from the Roads and Waste & Recycling Services on the same issue. The Committee requested that a further report was brought to Committee detailing progress made.

- 3.2 The Waste & Recycling Service has a daily requirement for 49 LGV drivers to run the waste and recycling collection services and an establishment of 60 LGV Driver posts.
- 3.3 At that time, the service was running with 14 LGV Driver vacancies and relied on agency drivers to keep the service running.

Current Position

- 3.4 As at September 2019, the number of driver vacancies has vastly reduced and the number of applicants for vacant posts has increased. The service has been running with an average of 4-6 driver vacancies which is considered to be a “normal” turnover rate of staff for a service of this size and nature. This is the lowest vacancy level the service has had for several years.
- 3.5 There are several activities and circumstances that have occurred which have contributed to this improvement. These include:
- Continuous open advert to maximise the opportunity for potential applicants to apply throughout the period
 - Increased profile of the Waste & Recycling Service due to press coverage of the recruitment shortages, following the Committee Service Update in October 2018
 - Increased and focused online and digital media advertising using social media including the Council’s Facebook jobs pages.
 - Emphasis on promoting the additional benefits of working with the Council – adverts included information about pension benefits, daytime working and short haul driving
 - The national cost of living pay award from 1 April 2019 resulted in a positive salary increase for the roles.
 - Training and development of existing staff – existing refuse loaders were offered the opportunity for career progression to train to become drivers. Four refuse loaders expressed an interest and two have taken advantage of this and are currently being trained to become drivers. One further member of staff has also shown interest and it is planned to continue to encourage existing staff to take up this opportunity.
- 3.6 Following the press coverage at the end of 2018, an unprecedented level of interest was received for driver vacancies.

Next Steps

- 3.7 Despite the recent success and improvement, it is important that the focus remains on recruitment and retention within the service. Waste Operations continues to work with colleagues in People and Organisation to develop initiatives to retain existing staff and to attract new staff.
- 3.8 These include:
- An emphasis on the new internal recruitment / internal movement of staff scheme – RE.CR.UIT, which focuses on moving our internal resource to our

areas of demand, identifying, supporting and developing staff across the organisation who may be interested in a move to these roles and / or who 'match' the key skills, experience or 'fit' for LGV driving roles, offering re-training opportunities where required. Only where the new scheme does not produce any suitable candidates will external recruitment.

- Consideration of an open day at Altens East to showcase the high-quality facilities and vehicle fleet that ACC has, which would be a benefit both to internal and external candidates.
- Continue to promote roles to existing staff as an internal programme, using case studies of staff that have made the transition to showcase, and providing a rolling programme of training.
- Investigating the availability of further funding and the potential to offer training opportunities to staff in other Council services.
- Using other non-digital methods of advertising, e.g. distribution of flyers/ posters to public spaces such as leisure centres, libraries, doctor's surgeries, lorry parks, etc.
- As part of our commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant, promote our opportunities to make those leaving the armed forces, reserve forces and cadet forces aware of these opportunities.
- Contacting contractors that are engaged on local projects that are coming to an end to raise awareness of LGV employment opportunities at ACC.
- Reviewing establishment numbers as part of the Service's working practices review.
- Further promotion of the non-financial benefits of working for ACC – employee benefits, pension, annual leave, training, etc.
- Investigation of a "job bank" which could reduce the time taken to recruit to vacancies and subsequently further reduce reliance on agency staff.

Summary

- 3.9 The Service has now resolved the recruitment issues faced last year. The high profile story in the press last year made a significant difference to the interest in the LGV vacancies within the service, and this, coupled with the targeted hard work put in by the staff from the service supported by colleagues in People & Organisation has reaped results. The training of existing staff has also been a success and we see this as a valuable way of succession planning for the future and will continue to explore ways of funding this.
- 3.10 One of the options that was put forward as a potential solution to the issues faced was to consider the introduction of a recruitment and retention incentive payment to encourage external candidates to work within the Council.
- 3.11 The only group of staff in the Council where a recruitment and retention incentive payment scheme are used currently is for teachers. This takes the form of a combination of a 'golden hello' and 'golden handcuff' scheme, which provides candidates with an incentive payment (equivalent to approximately 10% of salary) on commencement of employment with the Council with a further retention payment on completion of three years' service.

- 3.12 Having considered this as an option, it has been determined that due to the success of the actions taken as outlined within this report that there is not a requirement to introduce incentive payments at this stage. The team will continue to keep recruitment as a priority for the service and monitor the situation and should the number of vacancies rise above manageable levels, additional steps will be taken to increase activity on this issue including investigation into the potential for financial incentives.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Waste & Recycling

- 4.1 When there are driver vacancies there is a requirement to cover these with agency staff or by overtime working. The agency staff are mainly used to cover the vacant posts; however, agency staff are also employed to cover periods of sickness/ unplanned absence or peak holiday periods. Use of agency staff is carefully controlled and these agency costs are within the current overall staffing budget for the service.
- 4.2 The introduction of any financial incentive would require to be offset by a corresponding financial benefit.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Waste & Recycling

- 5.1.1 Provision of the waste and recycling service is a statutory function of the Council in discharging its duties as the Waste Collection Authority. Due to the nature of the service it cannot run below its minimum staffing levels as doing so would mean the Council failing to undertake its statutory duty to uplift waste.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

	Risk	Low (L), Medium (M), High (H)	Mitigation
Financial	Overtime required to complete routes where insufficient drivers are available.	Low	Managing available resources efficiently and work carried out to recruit more permanent staff. Control of agency staff use.
Legal	N/A	Low	
Employee	Increased pressure on existing staff to work	Low	Manage personal circumstances and drivers' hours to ensure staff can

	additional hours or take on extra work		accommodate these requests.
Customer	Refuse and recycling routes not completed. Business customers and householders do not receive their service.	Medium	Enlist agency staff or existing staff asked to work overtime (drivers hours allowing). Where possible divert resources from other less-essential tasks.
Environment	Overflowing bins and waste on streets.	Low	Enlist agency staff or existing staff asked to work overtime (drivers hours allowing).
Technology	N/A	Low	
Reputational	Risk of adverse publicity due to non-collection of waste and increase in litter/fly-tipping and overflowing bins. Risk to city reputation as a tourist attraction.	Medium	Enlist agency staff or existing staff asked to work overtime (drivers hours allowing).

7. OUTCOMES

Design Principles of Target Operating Model	
	Impact of Report
Customer Service Design	Decreased use of agency staff means service provided to customer will be of improved quality due to permanent staff who are more experienced and have a better understanding of the service.
Workforce	Improved morale within team if staff are employed and workforce is stable.

8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Equality & Human Rights Impact Assessment	Not required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required

Duty of Due Regard / Fairer Scotland Duty	N/A
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9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

N/A

10. APPENDICES

None

11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name Paul McPherson
Title Waste Collection Service Manager
Email pmcpherson@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel 01224 387601