

SERVICE UPDATE

<u>Name of Service:</u>	Waste & Recycling Service
<u>Date:</u>	12/10/2018
<u>Title of Update:</u>	LGV Driver Retention/Recruitment
<u>Report Author:</u>	Pam Walker, Acting Waste & Recycling Manager
<u>Contact Details:</u>	01224 387602

Background

The Waste & Recycling Service has a daily requirement for 49 LGV drivers to run the waste and recycling collection services.

The establishment has 64 LGV Driver posts (additional posts allow for cover for annual leave, sickness or other absence). The service has never had the full driver establishment in the past 3 years and more.

Currently, the service has 14 LGV Driver vacancies and relies on agency drivers to keep the service running.

The service now has an open advert for LGV Driver vacancies and additional steps to promote these vacancies have been taken including using radio advertising, press advertising and social media. Regular social media posts continue to try to promote this on an ongoing basis.

Despite this, the application rate remains very low and only three new drivers have been recruited to the service in the last 6 months (one from an earlier recruitment advert and two since the permanent open advert was placed in June 2018). Three existing drivers also left the service during this period and therefore the overall impact on the vacancy numbers is neutral.

Current Recruitment

Applications are dealt with on an ongoing basis. There have been 19 applications since the open advert was posted in mid-June 2018 and all of these were invited for interview. The following table outlines the outcomes of these:

Rejected at interview	5
Withdrew	4
Did not book interview	5
Did not attend after booking interview	3
Offer of employment made	2

The service is committed to processing new applications timeously and inviting applicants for interview as soon as possible. Agency drivers are also informed of the opportunity to apply for a permanent post.

The main issues faced by the service in attracting and retaining drivers are:

- Salary - higher paid work is readily available both outwith and within the Council as drivers in other organisations and Council Services are paid at a higher rate than waste and recycling drivers. Salaries in the private sector are particularly competitive, the table below helps illustrate this issue:

Aberdeen City Council Waste & Recycling	Aberdeenshire Council Waste & Recycling	Aberdeen City Council Roads	First Bus	Private Sector (20 LGV posts currently on recruitment website)
£9.84 - £11.06	£10.37 - £10.81	£11.07 - £12.43 (post requires LGV licence but also carries out other roads duties when not driving)	£10.10 - £11.40 (plus welcome incentive of £2,300 for PCV licence holders and free bus travel)	£12 - £17

- There is an acknowledged shortage of drivers nationwide which has been impacted by the introduction of compulsory National Vocational Training (CPC Training).
- Attracting drivers to Aberdeen is difficult due to the cost of living/property prices.
- There are several local large infrastructure projects which have a high requirement for LGV drivers and offer a type of work that may appear more attractive, e.g. the AWPR and Harbour Project.
- Time taken to recruit – the process can be lengthy and during the process some successful candidates have found alternative work elsewhere.

Whilst it is acknowledged that salary is a particular challenge, there are other benefits of working as an LGV Driver for Aberdeen City Council and the service will undertake to promote these more readily. These include:

- Good terms and conditions (annual leave, sickness policy, family friendly policies, training and development opportunities, special leave, overtime, etc)
- Local work (no long haul or overnight work required)
- Varied driving work (not continuous motorway driving)
- New fleet of vehicles
- Job security
- Strong ethos on equality and diversity at work
- Excellent pension scheme
- Employee Benefits including technology purchasing, car leasing and discounts at a number of online and in-store retailers
- Employee counselling service (for self and also for members of family)
- Sense of public work – overall purpose of the organisation is to support the people of Aberdeen (including children and vulnerable adults). Each role contributes to this.

Actions Taken to date

It is recognised that the above issues present a particular challenge for the Service in recruiting and retaining drivers. A number of initiatives have been introduced to try to improve the situation, these include:

- Introduction of an open advert to maximise opportunity for potential applicants to apply.
- Increased advertising - radio broadcast, local newspaper advertising in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire and social media (Facebook).
- Emphasising the additional benefits of employment by ACC – radio advert included information about pension benefits, daytime working and short haul driving.
- Training existing staff - employee development set up with assistance from HR Team to offer existing loaders the opportunity to become drivers. Four waste loaders have taken advantage of this and are currently being trained to become drivers. This training is being provided with 70% Scottish Government funding and it is planned to continue to encourage existing staff to take up this opportunity.

Next Steps

Despite the actions above, there remains a considerable issue with respect to recruitment of drivers to the Waste & Recycling Service. The team continues to work on developing ideas to reduce this.

These include:

- Contacting contractors that are engaged on existing projects at the appropriate time to raise awareness to staff nearing the end of their employment contracts of the availability of permanent posts in ACC.
- Developing other lines of advertising using non-digital means, e.g. distribution of flyers to public spaces such as leisure centres, libraries, doctor's surgeries, etc.
- Consideration of running an open day at Altens East to showcase the high quality facilities and vehicle fleet that ACC has.
- Contact MOD to look at how opportunities could be communicated to those leaving the armed forces.
- Exploration of the potential to develop a "supply list" of staff – e.g. when existing drivers retire, they could be asked if they wish to remain on a list to be contacted when required (and would be trained by ACC to ensure their skills and qualifications remain current), these opportunities could be advertised and may attract a different audience than those seeking full-time work.
- Investigate availability of further funding and potential to offer training opportunities to staff in other Council services.
- Review of establishment numbers as part of the Service's working practices review
- Better promotion of driver vacancies internally within the authority and also further promotion locally both within and outwith the city boundary.
- Work with HR Service to consider whether the recruitment process can be streamlined.
- Further promotion of the non-financial benefits of working for ACC – employee benefits, pension, annual leave, training, etc.