

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Staff Governance Committee
DATE	18 March 2019
REPORT TITLE	Retention/Recruitment
REPORT NUMBER	OPE/19/206.
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TERMS OF REFERENCE	Purpose 5

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee:

- Of the current issues relating to LGV Driver recruitment and retention and the mitigating actions being taken to alleviate this for Waste & Recycling Services.
- Of the issues relating to the recruitment and retention of staff within the Roads Infrastructure Service.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That Committee note the range of different approaches as set out in this report which seek to attract a wider and diverse range of applicants for these roles and subsequently reduce the vacancy level.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The issues with recruitment were discussed at the Operational Delivery Committee of 29 May 2018 and a report to Staff Governance Committee was requested.

3.1.1 This was presented in the form of a Service Update to the Staff Governance Committee on 1 November. The Committee requested that further work be done on this and a formal report presented at the next Committee.

3.1.2 The Roads Service also presented a Service Update on the same matter to the Operational Delivery Committee in November 2018 (?) and as a result it was agreed to amalgamate the issues from both Services into one consolidated report.

3.2 Waste & Recycling Service

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

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

3.2.3 Currently, the service has 12 LGV Driver vacancies and relies on agency drivers to keep the service running.

3.2.4 The service now has had an open advert for LGV Driver vacancies for some time and additional steps to promote these vacancies have been taken including using radio advertising, press advertising and social media to try to reach a wider audience of applicants. Regular posts on the Council's social media platforms (Facebook, twitter and LinkedIn) continue to try to promote these roles on an ongoing basis.

3.2.5 Despite this, the application rate remains very low and only four new drivers have been recruited to the service in the last 6 months (one from an earlier recruitment advert and three since the permanent open advert was placed in June 2018). In addition, three existing drivers also left the service during this period and therefore the overall impact on the vacancy numbers is one additional driver with 15 LGV driver vacancies remaining.

3.2.6 The service has been working towards different approaches to attempt to attract more applicants to the Council for these vacancies and subsequently reduce the vacancy level. As part of this work it has been identified that highlighting the whole Aberdeen City Council benefits package of benefits may be a good way to do this.

3.2.7 These benefits include:

- Excellent employment terms and conditions (annual leave, sickness absence policy, family friendly policies, training and development opportunities, special leave, overtime, etc)
- Access to the pension scheme
- Job security
- Local work (no long haul or overnight work required)
- Working hours
- Varied driving work (not continuous motorway driving)
- New fleet of vehicles
- Strong ethos on equality and diversity at work
- Technology purchasing, car leasing and discounts at several online and in-store retailers
- Employee counselling service (for self and 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.

3.2.8 Work is also ongoing with colleagues in People and Organisation and the following initiatives have been identified which may increase applicant numbers:

- Develop promotional material to target long-distance drivers who may be looking for a career change (e.g. arranging stalls to promote the Council vacancies in truck stops). **(See appendix 1)**
- Expanded use of social media campaigns including targeting social media forums frequently used by the transport industry
- Review recruitment and selection feedback, data and experience.
- Increased and targeted internal advertising to other Services across the Council
- Offer development opportunities to existing staff, including waste and recycling loaders to train to become drivers.
- Looking at more flexible ways of recruiting – e.g. using CV based recruitment rather than application forms
- A further radio advertising campaign (like the recent Northsound one but perhaps extending to Angus/Tayside).
- Investigate potential to run a recruitment Open Day at Altens East to showcase the facilities and working environment.

3.2.9 The expected impact of this work is to reduce the number of LGV Driver vacancies within the Council. This will allow a better quality of service, a more flexible and adaptable workforce, and reduced requirement for agency staff.

3.3 Roads Infrastructure Service

3.3.1 The Service has ongoing difficulties recruiting to a wide range of posts at all levels. The main issues are:

- Salary – higher paid work is generally available out with the Council.
- Career progression

3.3.2 There are difficulties recruiting to the following posts:

- Roadworkers – very few applicants/candidates come with suitable skills. Difficult to recruit workers with HGV license (Roads Operative 3) as plenty of driving jobs available elsewhere.
- Electricians
- Technical Officers G11 – when recruited tend to stay for a couple of years and then move on.
- Engineers G13 - difficult to recruit graduates even though the salary is commensurate with private sector operations.
- Senior Engineers G14 – post graduate professional qualification preferable - traditionally the supply chain has been through career progression within the service. Difficult to recruit from out with the service.
- Team Leaders G15 – post graduate professional qualification required - traditionally the supply chain has been through career progression within the service. Difficult to recruit from out with the service.

3.4 Actions Taken to Date

- Several web-based advertising sites have been used – this has had some success attracting technicians and graduate engineers from other EU countries.
- Attending a recruiting event at Coimbra University in Portugal.
- Attending a recruiting event in Poland for roadworkers.
- Put two PLO's on HERS Highway Electrician course.
- Use of open adverts to maximise opportunity for potential candidates to apply.
- Introduction of an apprenticeship scheme for technical officers.

3.5 Future Actions

- To continue discussions with colleagues in People and Organisation to review training and career development for professional and technical staff with the intention of progressing a business case as part of the transformation programme.
- Contact MOD to look at how opportunities can be communicated to those leaving the armed forces.
- Explore the introduction of an accredited apprenticeship scheme for craftworkers.
- Investigate whether there are existing staff to participate in the Modern/ Graduate Apprenticeship Programme
- Explore sharing of resources through the North East Roads Collaboration group.
- Work with colleagues in People and Organisation to engage with local Universities, Technical Colleges and Schools to promote career opportunities and career pathways through foundation, modern and graduate apprenticeships.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Waste & Recycling

4.1.1 The shortage of drivers means that there is a requirement to cover these vacancies 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.

4.1.2 The hourly cost of an agency driver could be up to £16.40/hr, this is compared to £14.72/hr (inclusive of usual employment on-costs) as an employee at the top of the grade. However, agency staff do not attract annual leave payments or certain other employers' costs in the same manner so it is difficult to compare on a truly like for like basis.

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.

5.2 Roads and Infrastructure

5.2.1 The Service provides a range of statutory functions as Roads and Flood authority. Due to the nature of the service it cannot run below its minimum staffing level.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

	Risk	Low (L), Medium (M), High (H)	Mitigation
Financial	Overtime required to complete routes where insufficient drivers are available.	Medium	Manage available resources as efficiently as possible and work to recruit more permanent staff.
Legal	N/A	Low	
Employee	Increased pressure on existing staff to work additional hours or take on extra work	Low	Manage personal circumstances and driver's hours to ensure staff can accommodate these requests.
Customer	Refuse and recycling routes not completed. Business customers and householders do not receive their service.	High	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.	Medium	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	Medium	Enlist agency staff or existing staff asked to work

	overflowing bins. Risk to city reputation as a tourist attraction.		overtime (drivers hours allowing).
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Waste & Recycling – Roads & Infrastructure

Agency staff are a cost-effective way of managing the daily fluctuations in staffing levels in an essential service like this and it is expected and planned that a level of agency use will always be required to run this service in an efficient manner. However, the aim of the service is to recruit to its establishment level as this gives better control, quality of service and working terms for those employed.

7. OUTCOMES

Design Principles of Target Operating Model	
	Impact of Report
Customer Service Design	Service provided to customer will be of improved quality due to permanently employed 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 more stable.

8. IMPACT

Assessment	Outcome
Equality & Human Rights Impact Assessment	Not required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Duty of Due Regard / Fairer Scotland Duty	Not applicable

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Service Update Report to Staff Governance Committee on 1 November 2018

10. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Promotional material to target long-distance drivers

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