

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Staff Governance Committee
DATE	28 September 2021
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	re.cr.uit Scheme Update
REPORT NUMBER	RES/21/167
DIRECTOR	Steve Whyte, Director of Resources
CHIEF OFFICER	Isla Newcombe, Chief Officer – People and Organisational Development
REPORT AUTHOR	Lesley Strachan, Talent Manager
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.2

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update Committee on progress with the implementation of the new approach to internal recruitment – the re.cr.uit scheme. The report sets out how the new approach works in practice and outlines changes and improvements which have been made as a result of the initial learning cycle undertaken from January to March 2021.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That Committee notes progress made with the re.cr.uit scheme to date in line with the earlier Committee instruction for an update report to be provided after one year of operation.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Context

- 3.1.1 As part of the ACC Workforce Plan, (approved at Staff Governance Committee in June 2019) Committee instructed the Chief Officer - People & Organisational Development to develop a new approach to the internal recruitment and movement of staff across the Council. This approach [now known as the re.cr.uit (retaining employees. changing roles. using internal talent) scheme] was subsequently approved by Staff Governance Committee in October 2019 with an instruction to provide an update report after twelve months. [RES/20/103].
- 3.1.2 From approval of the re.cr.uit scheme in October 2019, the principles of the way we recruit as an organisation began to change. Recruiting managers responded positively to the new approach to consider internal employees in a more flexible way, with an understanding that an employee may not have all the necessary qualifications, skills or experience required for the role from day one, but with development and experience will develop into the role.

- 3.1.3 The Covid-19 pandemic caused a significant delay in progress with system development and implementation as the team were diverted to develop the temporary movement of staff scheme [Recruitment Update, Staff Governance Committee - RES/21/076].
- 3.1.4 Once the temporary movement of staff scheme was operational, the team were able to focus on the development and implementation of the scheme with system training and testing with recruiting managers and employees.
- 3.1.5 Comprehensive guidance was developed to accompany the scheme, and this is available to all on the intranet on the People Anytime pages. The new approach also required a review and update of the overall recruitment and selection guidance.
- 3.1.6 The final stage was development of communications to managers and staff across the organisation to announce the launch of the full digital system from January 2021 including the 1:1 support that would be in place for colleagues who are less familiar with using technology.
- 3.1.7 Trade Union colleagues were kept informed and engaged at key stages throughout the development and implementation stages of the system and were consulted on all guidance documents.
- 3.1.8 The re.cr.uit scheme represents a new and different way of recruiting for the organisation. Employees can join the digital system to be automatically considered for roles that they have a potential alignment based on a combination of their qualifications, skills, experience and potential 'fit' to roles. ('Fit' is determined using the working preferences questionnaire (OPQ32 - occupational personality questionnaire).

3.2 Learning Cycle

- 3.2.1 The period January to March 2021 has been used as a learning cycle and review period. During this time the team gathered feedback from managers and employees on their experience of the new approach and has been continuously reviewing feedback and making improvements to the system on that basis. Trade Union colleagues have continued to be engaged during this period providing any feedback from their members and on any developments / improvements in the system and scheme.
- 3.2.2 Feedback has shown that the new re.cr.uit approach to internal recruitment and internal movement has been, overall, a positive experience for employees as well as recruiting managers. Many employees have been successful in moving to new roles and opportunities across the organisation and recruiting managers have filled vacancies that they have previously found difficult to recruit internally.
- 3.2.3 At the same time, the learning cycle and feedback highlighted that there were aspects of re.cr.uit that could be improved .

3.2.4 The main areas of concern highlighted as a drawback to the re.cr.uit scheme was that the only facility to be considered for internal vacancies was to join the re.cr.uit scheme and use the digital system to be aligned to vacancies. For employees who only wanted to apply for a specific vacancy rather than to be considered for opportunities across the organisation on an ongoing basis, this was felt to be a cumbersome approach. Appendix 1 summarises issues raised, and the associated action taken to address these.

3.3 Process Improvement

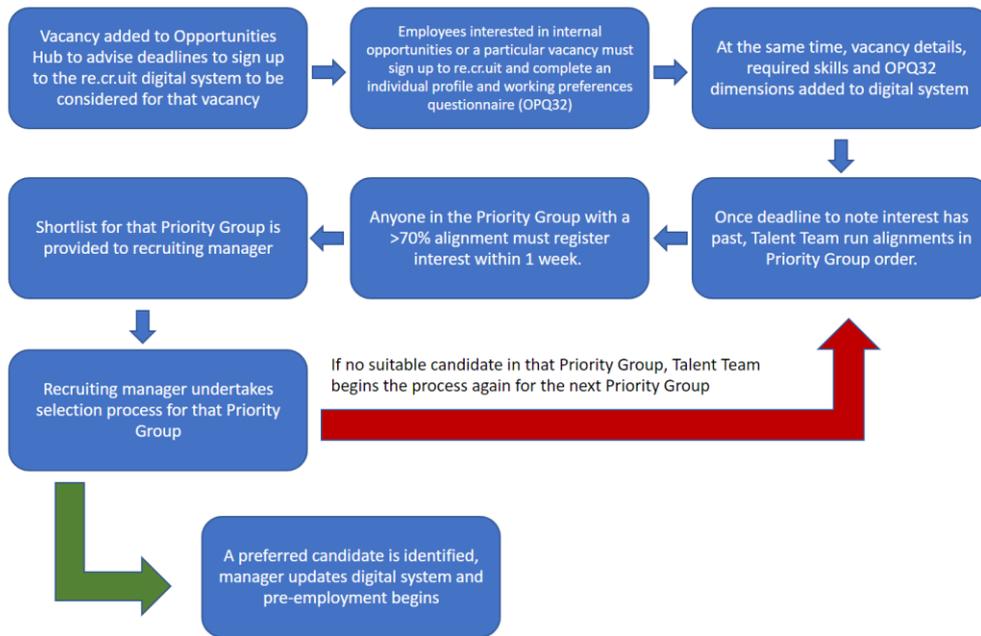
3.3.1 Having considered this issue together with other feedback received, improvements to the scheme have been made resulting in a simpler and streamlined process.

3.3.2 The revised process takes into consideration all the learning taken from the original process, including concerns about the complexity of the digital system; and retains the principles of the re.cr.uit scheme. The emphasis of the approach is very much still a focus on transferable skills and behavioural fit.

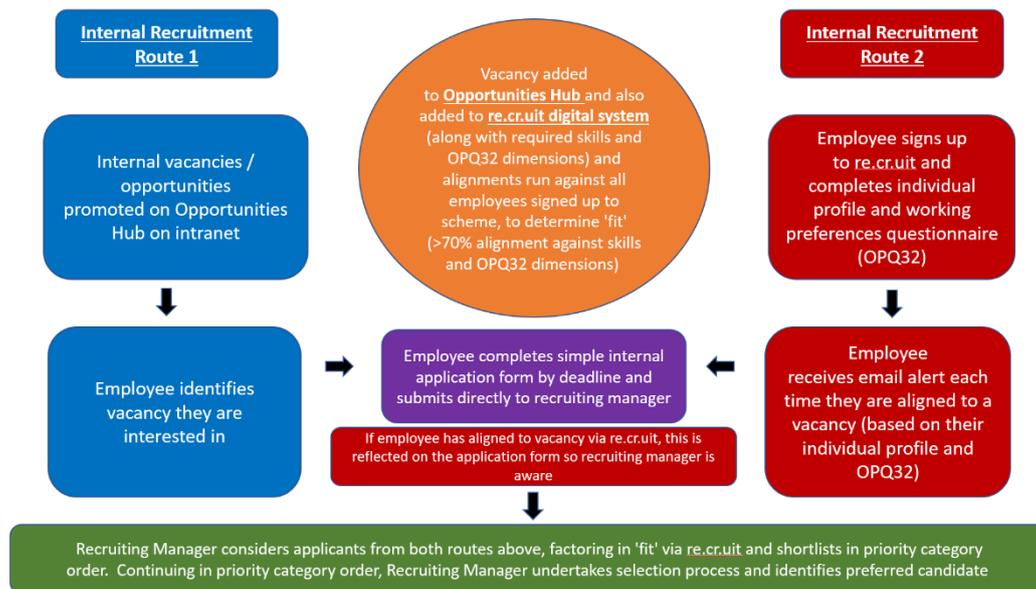
3.3.3 The scheme is about encouraging and supporting employees to consider new and alternative roles and careers, for which they are a good fit. Accordingly, the re.cr.uit digital system is available to employees who wish to be considered for vacancies and opportunities as they arise across the organisation and for which they may have a potential alignment.

3.3.4 The diagrams below set out the original re.cr.uit scheme process, where employees only had one route to be considered for internal vacancies and opportunities; and the revised scheme process where employees have two routes to apply and be considered for vacancies and opportunities.

Original re.cr.uit scheme process



Revised re.c.ruit scheme process



3.3.5 The process changes were discussed with a cross section of recruiting managers and Trade Union colleagues and the changes trialled with a sample of vacancies, before implementation in June 2021.

3.3.6 The new improved process has been well received with recruiting managers and employees, feedback has been very positive with improvements in time to recruit, accessibility and ease of use. There has also been a significant reduction in the level of queries coming through to the Talent team, a further indicator that the improvements are working for users.

3.4 Data and Outcomes

3.4.1 At the time of writing this report, over 600 employees have signed up to the re.cr.uit scheme and are actively being aligned to vacancies as they arise.

3.4.2 To provide some context on our internal recruitment approach, from January to July 2021, 475 internal requests to fill vacancies (these may include multiple roles) have been included in the re.cr.uit scheme. The table below shows the outcomes of these requests.

Outcome	vacancies	% of total vacancies
Successfully filled internally	197	41%
Redeployees undertaking trial periods	8	2%
Vacancies in process	133	28%
Moved to external recruitment	137	29%*

* a number of vacancies moved to external recruitment are traditionally hard to fill vacancies such as Social Workers, Support Workers, Cleaners, Catering Assistants, Refuse Loaders and Environmental Operatives.

3.5 Success Stories / Case Studies

3.5.1 This section outlines some success stories / case studies highlighting some of our internal employees who have successfully moved from a role in one part of the organisation to a role in a different team, cluster or function through the re.cr.uit scheme.

3.5.2 **Success Story Example 1** – An employee undertaking a Housing Officer role signed up to the re.cr.uit scheme and requested feedback on their working preferences questionnaire (OPQ) to get a better understanding of the outcomes. At the same time, this employee was aligned to a Community Care Co-ordinator vacancy within the Adult Health and Social Care Partnership. The OPQ feedback session highlighted their personal attributes and preferred working styles which suited this particular role. The employee went through the selection process for the role and was successful. Feedback from this employee was: *“Woohoo!! I got the job... amazing how streamlined this new recruit system is”*.

3.5.3 **Success Story Example 2** – A Team Leader in the Customer Function had signed up to re.cr.uit and was undertaking temporary alternative duties in support of the Covid-19 pandemic response. Following an alignment on the re.cr.uit system and successful interview process, this employee was successfully appointed to the Devolved School Management Co-ordinator position within Education. Their feedback at the time was: *“I have been successful in a role. Recruit is the way forward! It has been amazing for me. Could not be happier right now”*

3.5.4 **Success Story Example 3** – An Appeals and Quality Assurance Officer in Revenue and Benefits had signed up to re.cr.uit and was particularly

interested in pursuing opportunities with an IT focus. Following alignment on the re.cr.uit system and a successful interview, the employee was appointed to the role of Systems Development Officer within the Digital and Technology Cluster. Feedback from this employee was *“I actually missed the cut off for applying due to annual leave but got in touch with the re.cr.uit team and they passed on my details to the recruiting officer. A week later and I had my interview! I found the re.cr.uit scheme to be a much quicker way of applying for jobs... overall without re.cr.uit I'd have unlikely heard about the role and remained in my former post, so I'm grateful for the scheme!”*

3.5.5 The case study examples above, together with ongoing feedback received throughout the learning cycle and to date, show the positive nature of the re.cr.uit scheme in providing opportunities for employees, for recruiting managers and for the organisation overall. The table below summarises the benefits identified for each of these categories:

	Benefits of the re.cr.uit scheme
Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to alternative job opportunities more easily facilitated • internal recruitment process using a simple application form • digital tool allows employees to be aligned to vacancies that they can consider and apply to be considered for • opportunity to be supported and developed into new roles in potentially very different parts of the organisation, that they may not otherwise have considered • introduction period which provides security in moving roles across the organisation • a positive experience for redeployees who are actively considered on the digital system for all vacancies on a priority 1 basis (before other candidates)
Recruiting Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • receive applications from candidates that have aligned through the digital system, that they would otherwise not have received or where they may not have had any applicants previously • quick and easy process to consider internal applicants for vacancies • preferred candidate checks streamlined, resulting in a more efficient process • receive applications from employees who have aligned via the digital system as having the right 'fit' for the role together with transferable skills and experience. • supports succession planning – an ability to enable those within teams who have been trained and

	<p>developed to be considered (alongside candidates via the digital system) for vacancies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • achieve internal employees who already have a good understanding of the organisation therefore reducing induction / onboarding time
Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a workforce tool to enable the organisation to move existing staff flexibly, quickly and easily into resourcing gaps and / or areas of demand across the organisation • a focus on developing and flexing our existing workforce rather than incurring additional headcount, employing additional external resource. • an approach to filling internal vacancies and opportunities that is transparent and fair with one process for all.

3.6 Next Steps

3.6.1 The re.cr.uit scheme represents a very new way of recruiting and whilst the first cycle of learning has been completed, and changes made to improve the system and the process, it is intended that it will remain under continuous review, where the team will continue to actively seek and listen to feedback and to act on this with a view to making any further amendments or improvements to the process as the need arises.

3.6.2 Whilst the sign-up rate to the scheme is encouraging, it is intended to undertake a programme of communication across the organisation to promote the scheme and its potential benefits to encourage more employees to get involved in the scheme. This will include roadshows (which have not been possible to date due to covid restrictions), offers of 1-2-1 sessions, webinars, sharing success stories.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There is a cost of continuing to contract with the supplier providing the digital tool to support the re.cr.uit scheme. This cost is contained within existing budget.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Category	Risk	Low (L) Medium (M) High (H)	Mitigation
Strategic Risk	None	L	None
Compliance	None	L	None
Operational	None	L	None
Financial	None	L	None
Reputational	None	L	None
Environment / Climate	None	L	None

7. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
Impact of Report	
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of Economy Stretch Outcome 1 and 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10% increase in employment across priority and volume growth sectors by 2026. This includes social care. Key driver 1.2 is 'developing the talent and future workforce necessary to support diversification of business & economy'. This includes employability activity and progressing the Council's Investors in Young People Programme. • 90% of working people in living wage employment by 2026. Key driver 2.1 is 'promoting inclusive economic growth for our most disadvantaged communities'. This includes support for young people as well as people progressing positively through the employability pipeline.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of People Stretch Outcome 6:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 95% of children living in our priority localities will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026. <p>The key drivers for this outcome are:</p>

	<p>6.1 Improving pathways to education, employment and training for identified groups (including Care Experienced Young People and those with Additional Support Needs)</p> <p>6.2 Supporting young people, families, carers and communities to better understand the opportunities available to their children upon leaving school</p> <p>6.3 Ensuring children, young people and families understand the pathways available to them and skills required for future</p>
--	--

8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Impact Assessment	Not required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Reports to Staff Governance Committee as referenced above.

10. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Feedback received during Learning Period and Action Taken

11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Lesley Strachan
Title	Talent Manager
Email Address	lstrachan@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel	07824 335529

Feedback received during Learning Period and Action Taken

Feedback / Issue	Action taken and reflected in new process
1 Process for applying for internal vacancies via digital system is too complex	1 candidates complete simple internal application form
2 time to recruit is too slow	2 much improved timescales by streamlining processes
3 complexities for some employees in completing their profiles on the digital system	3 1:1 support in place for employees who wish to use the digital system and applications now direct to recruiting manager on simple internal application form
4 some employees only want to apply for a specific vacancy rather than sign up to the wider re.cr.uit digital system.	4 two routes for employees to apply for vacancies. If they do not wish to sign up to the re.cr.uit digital system, they can apply for vacancies using the simple internal application form
5 delays at preferred candidate stage – getting candidates into new roles	5 reduced requirement for preferred candidate checks as existing employees