



Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

Forward timetable of consultation and decision making

Council 30 November 2021

Wards affected: All

Recruitment of additional posts: HGV drivers and driver training for waste collection service

Report of Director Environment & Planning

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To seek Council support for the approval to recruit two additional HGV drivers and support the training of two existing staff as HGV drivers for the waste collection service.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 Council supports the request for the recruitment of two permanent HGV drivers and supports the training of two existing staff as HGV drivers for the waste collection service.
- 2.2 Council approves the supplementary budget of £87,000 in 2022/23 and £17,000 in 2021/22 for the part year impact.
- 2.3 Council notes the £60,000 for the estimated additional agency costs in 2021/22.

3. Background to the report

- 3.1 HBBC waste collection services have been impacted during the summer due to long term sickness and COVID absences. For many years the 18 establishment drivers have had such cover provided from local workforce agencies and the service has benefited from the lower cost and flexibility this allows giving reduced overall service costs. The national HGV driver shortage has impacted on the ability of agencies to provide covering drivers. Driver salaries and rates have dramatically increased across the private sector

particularly in our area as the Golden Triangle for logistics. Agencies have struggled to provide waste drivers despite increased pay rates and incentives. The service has needed to increase base salaries by a market supplement to retain and recruit to recent posts.

- 3.2 The service has managed to maintain all refuse and recycling rounds by rescheduling staff from garden rounds along with utilising supervisors and other drivers within the service. This has impacted on other service areas such as street cleansing and bulky collections. More recently support has been provided from DPD for the hired provision of up to five drivers Tuesday to Thursday. Through these measures the number of households (HH) missing garden collections has been minimised to date to:

HH's missing 1 garden collection	35.5%
HH's missing 2 garden collection	60.0%
HHs missing 3 garden collections	6.3%

- 3.3 This should be viewed against a recent survey of English waste collection authorities by the Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee which identified disruption to services this year significantly higher than HBBC.

% of authorities suffering	Residual	Recycling	Garden	Food / Garden	Food
Minor Disruption	13%	8%	15%	0%	5%
Moderate Disruption	8%	13%	18%	22%	20%
Severely Disrupted	0%	0%	6%	0%	0%
Withdrawn	0%	0%	6%	11%	0%

HGV and Service Statue Survey No 2 Results Week Commencing 4 October 2021 LARAC

- 3.4 SLT requested a review of the current problems and options to improve the ongoing resilience of the waste service in view of the changing national landscape for HGV drivers. This was undertaken by an independent consultant with former knowledge of the service. The key finding was the reliance on agency drivers to support the service is no longer fit for purpose as under current and future predictions agency HGV drivers are no longer readily available. Reviewing some other collection authorities who had managed to maintain less disruption, it was evident most had additional capacity of HGV drivers on their establishment of anything between 30-50%. Also many utilised driver/loaders who are qualified drivers but only drive when required performing as loaders for the remaining time.
- 3.5 SLT has considered and accepted the recommendation of seeking to recruit two additional HGV drivers to establishment, which equates to a modest 11% over capacity. This requires Council approval for a supplementary budget for 2021/22 and 2022/23.
- 3.6 In addition, it is recommended that the service seeks to facilitate HGV driver training for suitable interested staff in an attempt to grow our own. To

incentivise this and to retain such staff, the suitably qualified staff will be paid at the enhanced driver salary whilst undertaking driving duties reverting to the substantive post grade. Agency staff would cover the loaders post if required whilst driving. The total time to achieve a qualified and competent driver is currently estimated to be around 26 weeks due to high demand and licensing delays. Faster training routes are being explored.

- 3.7 The cost of this training equates to £1,345 per driver including licence applications etc. There would be costs associated with backfill for these individuals whilst they were undertaking training estimated to be £5000 per trainee. The training and backfill costs are expected to be borne over this and next financial year. This requires Council approval for a supplementary budget.
- 3.8 Whilst the total cost of the loader driver as a driver is similar to obtaining an agency driver, it does not rely on procuring an external agency driver and as they are existing staff, there are operational advantages from knowing the service. This cost would be met from the agency budget. The trained staff would be subject to the standard training agreement which covers recovery of percentages of the training costs should they exit the council within a two year period.

4. Exemptions in accordance with the Access to Information procedure rules

- 4.1 To be taken in open session.

5. Financial implications [DS]

Supplementary Budget (Drivers & Future Progression)

- 5.1 The estimated cost of implementing recommendations in section 3.5 is £87,000 per annum from 2022/23. This consists of £69,000 to recruit two new drivers and £18,000 to incentivise suitable interested staff to progress to drivers.

If recruited from 1 January 22 there will also be a one off pressure of £17,000 for 2021/22.

If Council approves the above supplementary request ongoing savings need to be found to match payroll costs to ensure there is no additional pressure on general fund balances.

Additionally, there is an estimated pressure of circa £60,000 allowed for within September budget monitoring for the impact in the current financial year.

- 5.2 Loaders (for noting)

The situation for loaders is similar to that of drivers. To secure agency loaders 8 week contracts have been given. It is therefore more efficient to recruit loaders and reduce reliance on agency loaders. If required up to £95,000 will

be vired from the existing agency budget to salaries to cover the cost of additional loaders. This budget movement is within existing budget lines therefore does not require formal approval.

6. Legal implications [MR]

- 6.1 As a Waste Collection Authority the Council has a statutory duty to collect household waste under sec 45 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990
- 6.2 Section 112 Local Government Act 1972 empowers the Council to appoint such officers as it thinks necessary for the proper discharge of its functions (see 7.1 above) on such reasonable terms and conditions as it thinks fit.
- 6.3 Section 1 Localism Act 2011 empowers the Council to do anything that individuals generally may do and in any way, including the power to do it for a commercial purpose and for the benefit of its area and residents

7. Corporate Plan implications

- 7.1 Waste collection is a statutory function which contributes to the councils clean and green objectives. The income from garden waste also contributes significant revenue to the council's budgets.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 None at this stage

9. Risk implications

- 9.1 It is the council's policy to proactively identify and manage significant risks which may prevent delivery of business objectives.
- 9.2 It is not possible to eliminate or manage all risks all of the time and risks will remain which have not been identified. However, it is the officer's opinion based on the information available, that the significant risks associated with this decision / project have been identified, assessed and that controls are in place to manage them effectively.
- 9.3 The following significant risks associated with this report / decisions were identified from this assessment:

Management of significant (Net Red) risks		
Risk description	Mitigating actions	Owner
Reputational – loss of confidence in the delivery of a key service	Driver recruitment and retention	Darren Moore / Caroline Roffey
Statutory – the council has a statutory duty to collect waste	Driver recruitment and retention / waste staff review	Darren Moore / Caroline Roffey
Environmental – failing to collect recycling reduces our recycling rate and has negative impacts on the environment,	Driver recruitment and retention / waste staff review	Darren Moore / Caroline Roffey

10. Knowing your community – equality and rural implications

- 10.1 This service is universal. An aging population does increase the number of assisted collections needed, and housing growth also increases demand for the service.

11. Climate implications

- 11.1 Garden waste collections and dry recycling collections make an important contribution to the circular waste economy and the council's environment objectives.

12. Corporate implications

- 12.1 By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:

- Community safety implications - none
- Environmental implications – recycling impact
- ICT implications - none
- Asset management implications - none
- Procurement implications - none
- Human resources implications – Julie Stay aware and has advised
- Planning implications - none
- Data protection implications - none
- Voluntary sector - none

Background papers:

Contact officer: Matt Bowers

Executive member: Councillor W Crooks