

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

INFORMATION

meeting date: TUESDAY 19th OCTOBER 2021
title: REFUSE COLLECTION
submitted by: JOHN HEAP – DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
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1 PURPOSE

1.1 To provide Members with an update on refuse collection in relation to the national lack of LGV drivers.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Community Objectives – To sustain a strong and prosperous Ribble Valley.
- Corporate Priorities – To protect and enhance the existing environmental quality of our area.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Currently there is a national shortage of LGV drivers. As a result, there has been an increase to the wages for drivers with a number of companies nationwide.

2.2 The refuse collection service has a driver establishment of 13.

2.3 There are 7 residual/ recycling rounds and 2 paper rounds.

2.4 At any one time the council encourage 2 drivers to be on leave to ensure all leave is taken in the year in a controlled manner.

3 ISSUES

3.1 In the last 4 months there have been resignations from 6 of the 13 drivers.

3.2 The council have advertised and secured 4 new starter drivers over the same period leaving a deficit of 2

3.3 We have now been informed that 2 of the recently started drivers will also be leaving soon. Another driver who has worked for the council for 3 years is also looking, in earnest, for a new job. His departure is not confirmed at this stage but certainly a possibility.

3.4 This will leave 9 drivers at best to complete the 9 rounds, not accounting for annual leave or sick leave.

3.5 We will work with our remaining staff, and the trade unions, if necessary, to agree temporary arrangements to deliver the service during the short period of reduced numbers, but a prolonged shortage of LGV drivers will likely impact on the service.

3.6 Several Driver Agency Companies have been approached for temporary support but with no success. Most of the districts in the country have been affected to a greater or lesser extent by the shortage and some councils have withdrawn some of the services that they previously offered.

3.7 A report has been circulated to CMT and their advice will be presented verbally at the committee meeting.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources –none at present
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – The refuse service will continue to service the residents, but the level of service may be affected. The council has a statutory duty to collect domestic refuse and to offer recycling collections of at least 3 materials.
- Political – None arising as a direct result of this report.
- Reputation – This is a nationwide problem affecting most collection authorities and as such should not affect the council's reputation in relative terms. However, any change in these core services may be very unpopular with residents.

5 CONCLUSION

5.1 Committee will note the contents of the report and the resultant pressure on the refuse service as a result.

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For further information please ask for Adrian Harper on 01200 414523

REF: AH/COMMUNITY 191021