



Neuadd y Sir / County Hall, Llandrindod, Powys, LD1 5LG

QUESTIONS AT ANY TIME TO CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

Response by the Cabinet Member:

Thank you for raising this issue with me, I do understand the frustrations of the public when they are keen to recycle and we are not able to collect when we should. I have also received a very similar question from Cllr Jenner so I hope that you don't mind that my response to both are somewhat duplicated.

As has been widely published in the media, there is a national recruitment crisis, which is being keenly felt across all sectors as well as local authorities. The Council is having problems recruiting across the board, but this is most noticeable with the waste and recycling collections as it is a service that every household receives.

Although the recruitment problem has been more acute in the North of the County, moving staff from the Newtown and Welshpool depots has not been a contributing factor in the missed collections and actually allows us more flexibility with the combining of the workforce. It is important to remember that Covid is still with us and we have had up to six members of staff off at any one time which does of course have a considerable impact on our ability to provide a service.

We have had a rolling recruitment programme for some time and have taken on a number of new staff as well as making many of our agency staff permanent. Furthermore, our own staff do have the opportunity to train as HGV drivers, but this does take time. It is, however, difficult to compete with the private sector, particularly with regard to HGV drivers who are able to obtain considerably higher wages elsewhere. The Council does offer excellent benefits for its employees, but we must consider other factors when determining pay levels such as fair pay across the Council's services and local and national agreements.

We will continue to promote the job opportunities as widely as we can. We have produced a poster advertising the vacancies which is being distributed in the local area and have now also taken out advertising space on local web based media outlets. With roles such as this, local word of mouth is often the best way to recruit, but with the full employment situation widely trumpeted, the pool of available people is limited.

In the meantime our crews have been working very hard to collect the waste and recycling from residents through working additional hours, catching up on rounds or collecting extra recycling where weeks have been missed. Highways staff have also been helping out with Waste and Recycling, but this department is also short staffed and do have essential maintenance work that they need to carry out. We do also utilise Agencies, although they are having similar problems with recruitment of staff.

I can assure you that we are giving this our full attention and hope that things settle down soon and we can resume our normal service. We would like to thank the people of Powys for their patience during these challenging times.

If anyone is interested in working in a rewarding role that really makes a difference not only to the people of Powys, but to the climate change crisis with our recycling collections, I would urge them to go to our website [Jobs and Training - Powys County Council](#) and apply.