

Report of: Julie Hatton

Report to: Julie Meakin, Chief Officer, CEL.

Date: 28th December 2016

Subject: Passenger Transport Driver re-grade

Are specific electoral wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. Passenger transport currently employs 157 drivers who provide transport to older people, adults with learning difficulties or children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Of the 157 drivers 46 work with children with special educational needs.
2. The current grade of the drivers is A2 for those who work with Adults and A1 for those who work with Children. The difference being that historically those drivers working with adults have done so on their own, under the banner of Driver – Escort, whereas those working on home to school transport will always have a Passenger assistant to support them.
3. Over time, the number of Adult drivers working with Passenger assistants has grown as the number of passengers with challenging behaviour and dementia increases. Thus the distinction between the two has gradually been eroded.
4. Further, the service has introduced new technology into the service which has required staff to be specifically trained and also there is an increasing requirement for drivers to support the meals on wheels service on a lunch-time; this requires additional clarification in a job description.
5. As a result of the changes to the job demands a revised generic Job description has been agreed and evaluated at B1.

6. This report seeks approval from the Chief Officer, CEL, to re-grade all drivers to the B1 grade and to back date this to 1st April 2016.
7. The re-grade does not affect those drivers who are protected under a Local agreement known as the “44 hr drivers”. If the re-grade was applied to this staff group it would be to their financial detriment.
8. The cost of the re-grade will be £150k in the first year(£111k charged to ASC, and £38k charged to Children’s services, rising to £420k in 2020 when drivers reach the top of the spinal point. (£314k charged to ASC and £108k charged to Children’s services)

Recommendations

The Chief Officer (Civic Enterprise Leeds) is asked to approve the re-grading of Passenger Transport drivers from A grade to B1 (spinal column point 13) with effect from 1st April 2016.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Chief Officer, CEL to re-grade Passenger transport drivers from the current grade of A grade to B1 with effect from 1st April 2016.

2 Background information

- 2.1 The existing Passenger transport service has been in existence since 2004 following the merge of Transport services in Adult Social care and Children’s services.
- 2.2 The role of the two groups of drivers was evaluated in 2007-8 and those drivers working with older people or adults with learning difficulties were graded an A2, whereas those working with children were graded A1.
- 2.3 The main difference being that those with adults tended to work on their own and took full responsibility for the vehicle as well as the health, safety and welfare of all the passengers on board. Those drivers working with children would always be supported by a Passenger assistant who is responsible for the health, safety and welfare of the children.
- 2.4 Over-time, the role of the two posts has become blurred as the number of adults requiring support from a passenger assistant increased and the service has introduced ICT into the day to day operation of the driver as well as a requirement to support the meals on wheels service.
- 2.5 Given the above changes and the service revised the job description and a generic JD was written to cover both disciplines. This has been evaluated and graded B1.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 It is nearly ten years since the job description for drivers has been reviewed. During this time there have been a number of changes to the roles; predominately the introduction of ICT into the drivers day to day role.
- 3.2 In order to ensure the changes are both recognised and agreed a new job description has been written which covers all the responsibilities. This has been evaluated at B1.
- 3.3 For reference the file reference of this evaluation is 161036 and JE ref 2047.

4 Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

- 4.1.1 Consultation with the Trade Union Convenors has taken place regarding the re-grade and no issues were raised.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

- 4.2.1 Due regard has been given to equality and diversity implications in the planning of this proposal, and an Equality Impact Screening document has been completed.

4.3 Council policies and best council plan

- 4.4 These proposals are in line with the Council's priority of meeting challenging budget targets with minimal impact on the wider workforce.

4.5 Resources and value for money

4.6 Legal Implications, access to information and call In

- 4.6.1 This decision is a Key Decision and therefore subject to call-in.

4.7 Risk management

- 4.7.1 If the decision to re-grade the drivers was not taken there is a risk to the authority of a number of Equal pay claims being brought by drivers as a comparator against other drivers in the council.
- 4.7.2 Contrary to this, if implemented there is a risk of challenge from Driver Supervisors who are graded C1 and B3 for a review of their grades and responsibilities as there differential between the two grades reduces. If this arises, the service will work with HR partners to mitigate any implications.
- 4.7.3 There is a further risk that the wage differentials with those in the private sector are great and the service may be subject to a challenge to out-source.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 The role of the driver within Passenger transport has gradually changed over the years with the differential between those working with adults and attracting a higher rate as opposed to those working with children.

- 5.2 New technology has been introduced and new ways of working as a result the original job descriptions have been revised and re-graded to B1.

Approval is sought to re-grade the Passenger transport drivers from A grade to B1 with effect from 1st April 2016.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 The Chief Officer (Civic Enterprise Leeds) is asked to approve the re-grading of Passenger Transport drivers from A grade to B1 (spinal column point 13) with effect from 1st April 2016.

7 Background documents¹

- 7.1 Current structure of Passenger Transport

8.1 Appendices

- 8.1.1 Appendix A – Passenger Transport Establishment Report (drivers)
- 8.1.2 Appendix B - Equality Impact Screening
- 8.1.3 Job description.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.