

Staff Consultation Forum

7th October 2009

Committee Room 2

Attendees

Kerry Shorrocks
Margaret Bracey
Carole Casey
Christina Corr
Roy Foster
John Robinson

Apologies

John Fisher
Sue Graves
Bob Leverett
Val Farquarson

		Actions
1.	<p>Apologies</p> <p>As above</p>	
2	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>IT leavers – It was noted that the Global email list needs to be cleared of members of staff who have left the authority, it is planned to invite an IT representative to the next meeting of the SCF.</p> <p>Recycling – It was explained that as Outlook is not received by every household in the district and could not contain all the information required for a fundamental service change, a dedicated letter was the only manner by which every household would be informed, the envelopes used were recyclable.</p> <p>Equalities Peer Review – NHDC has achieved Level 3 of the equality standard.</p> <p>Pay Review – A 1% pay increase will be made in the October salaries backdated to April. KS advised of a proposal to move away from printed payslips in November. FAQ's will be put on the intranet.</p>	KS
3.	<p>Green Book Review</p> <p>JR advised that a Business Plan for Careline is being developed to look at ways of securing long-term future investment. Currently seeking to negotiate a variation of the Green book conditions regarding unsocial hours payments.</p> <p>Other major areas affected are Parking Services and the Museum Service.</p> <p>Work on this is ongoing.</p>	

4.	<p>Restructure</p> <p>JR explained that we were on target to publish the proposals for the restructure. In addition to the 230k saving on Senior Management, there is still a substantial budget gap of approximately 650k and this figure will be much the same for next year. A report will go to Scrutiny then Cabinet, however, this will not include the detail which will be published at the end of October.</p> <p>It is hoped to make savings via natural wastage i.e. vacant posts, staff retiring, Redundancies would be a last resort.</p> <p>A staff briefing is being planned for November.</p> <p>The Senior Management restructure is ongoing, currently interviews are taking place for the Head of IT and Customer Services post. A decision will be made on Monday 12th October 2009.</p>	
5.	<p>NHDC Update</p> <p>Homeworking/Office Accommodation</p> <p>A report to consider office accommodation options will go to Cabinet shortly.</p> <p>One option may be remaining in the DCO and progressing our work on home and mobile working. Work is on going with Planning, Building Control, Environmental Health and Housing teams. Following this Phase 3 of the project will look for other suitable roles for home working.</p> <p>Partial home-working can be considered as well as ‘trailing’ of home-working, and this is covered in the Home-working Policy and will depend on service requirements. It is important for Managers to support staff who home-work and there will be training for managers.</p> <p>Swine Flu</p> <p>The rate of infection is increasing slowly, a further wave is expected. In preparation all services have their Business Continuity Plans in place.</p> <p>It may be necessary to establish an Anti-viral Collection Point (AVCP) at Hitchin Town Hall. To date there have been 7 identified cases and 1 request for time off for dependents.</p>	
6	<p>Essential Car Users</p> <p>NHDC is currently looking at reviewing payment methods as some staff are making very low or no mileage claims.</p>	

	<p>The policy will be reviewed. We are planning to monitor mileage claims over a 6 month period and then double the figure to give a yearly figure.</p> <p>Any staff claiming over 1000 miles will continue to be eligible for this payment, those claiming less than 1,000 miles will revert to 'Casual Car User' payments.</p> <p>The draft policy will be renamed 'Frequent and Low user car policy'. KS will be writing to staff to advise them by the beginning of November.</p> <p>JR suggested that staff might also come up with ideas for where efficiencies can be made and this is welcomed.</p>	
7	<p>SCF Membership Update</p> <p>KS advised that most of the current representatives have been on the SCF for a period of 2 years and directorates have changed. Managers in new directorates have been approached for nominees.</p> <p>Current representatives will be asked if they would like to continue. Anyone else wishing to become a representative will need to be nominated. If a lot of staff from one directorate are nominated, a ballot will take place.</p> <p>Representatives from the SCF also need to attend the Joint Staff Consultative Committee quarterly meetings (March, June, Sept & Dec) usually one and a half to two hours.</p>	
8.	<p>Dress Down Fridays</p> <p>Some members of staff have asked about having 'Dress down Fridays'. This has been discussed at previous SCF meetings and rejected. It was agreed at this meeting that this should still stand due to the following points being made:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) NHDC does already have a number of 'dress down' days for charity such as Jeans for Jeans day. ii) Not all staff are able to join in due to meeting having public facing roles. iii) The current dress code is quite relaxed. 	
9.	<p>Employee Queries</p> <p>There has been a problem with missing emails, this has been checked with IT and is due to anti-spam. KS will invite a representative from IT to the next meeting for a discussion.</p> <p>Property Services – KS to report to the next meeting the date of Barbara Oakes next attendance at SCF.</p>	<p>KS</p> <p>KS</p>

	<p>It was noted that access to the DCO on Thursday 8th October would be via the front entrance due to windows being replaced on the 4th floor.</p> <p>John Fisher has suggested having the same headed paper for all directorates to reduce waste when directorates are re-structured.</p>	
10	<p>A.O.B.</p> <p>None.</p>	

Chair for next meeting : Christina Corr

Date of next meeting : 4th November 2009 – Committee Room 3
2.30pm to 4pm