

## Staff Consultation Forum

4<sup>th</sup> November 2009

Committee Room 2

### Attendees

Kerry Shorrocks  
John Robinson  
Maggie Williams  
Christina Corr  
Debbie Ealand (on behalf of L Boast)  
Chris Carter  
Carole Casey  
Roy Foster  
John Fisher  
Robin Norton

### Apologies

Margaret Bracey  
Val Farquarson

### Guests

Barbara Oakes  
Mark Robinson  
Joanna Lines  
Jim Brown

		<b>Actions</b>
1.	<b>Apologies</b>  As above	
2	<b>Guest Speakers</b>  <b>Waste and Recycling</b>  Joanna Lines from waste management attended for this item. A query was raised regarding the facilities at NHDC for recycling cardboard and plastic. It was advised that the trade waste report is currently being written which will outline the potential options for commercial/trade recycling options for all NHDC customers including the premises at Gernon Road. It is likely that provision will not be made for commercial plastics at this time, but will include card. The reason for not including plastics is that it is envisaged that the most financially viable option will be the collection of trade waste for recycling utilising Veolias existing collection fleet. As plastics are not included within the kerbside collection scenario it probably will also not be included within the commercial.  <b>Property Services</b>  Barbara Oakes attended for this item. It was requested that, if possible, the front entrance steps edges be repainted white. BO advised that an order had already been raised for this work and should be carried out within the next 2-3 weeks.  Ladybirds back on landings in the DCO. BO advised that vaponas can be issued.	

	<p>Meeting Rooms – It was asked if members of staff should clean up after meetings if a caretaker was not on duty. BO advised that it would be helpful but staff should contact her.</p> <p><b>IT</b></p> <p>Mark Robinson attended for this item. It was discussed at a previous meeting that leavers were not being deleted from the mailing system. MR advised that IT cannot delete a leaver until authorisation from a manager had been received.</p> <p>Deletion of E-Mails – MR advised that a retention report was currently with legal.</p> <p>Web Browsing including Facebook – MR advised that figures are currently being looked at.</p> <p>E-Mail Manager – MR advised that IT will give users the ability to manage the release of their own blocked emails that require reviewing. The system is called WebSense PEM (Personal Email Manager).</p> <p><b>Green Group</b></p> <p>Jim Brown attended for this item. The Green Group had prepared a report outlining the current reduction in members attending meetings over the last 12 months and the impact that this has had on staff who regularly attend. It was agreed that a review of the objectives of the group should take place and should include the terms of reference reflecting that we will be staying at the Gernon Road Offices and the new directorate.</p>	
3.	<p><b>Matters Arising</b></p> <p>KS advised that with regard to the recent pay negotiations, staff received back pay to 1<sup>st</sup> April in their October salary. Pay claim has already been put in for next year – 2.5% or £500 whichever is the greater - the employers have yet to respond.</p>	
4.	<p><b>NHDC Update</b></p> <p>A report on office accommodation was taken to Cabinet on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2009. Cabinet resolved no further action would be taken regarding the purchase of the Old Grammar School. Cabinet decided to agree in principle to the relocation of staff. A further report may need to go to Cabinet in December.</p> <p>Restructure – Proposals are now almost complete and would be published during November. A staff meeting with the Chief Executive and CMT is to be arranged to enable staff to put forward any questions that they might have regarding the restructure.</p>	

	<p>NHDC are also seeking to amend unsocial hours payments. Carrying out the process of consultation at present with staff in Car Parks, and Museums. Also, looking into the insurance premiums that we currently have. RN asked for the cost of premium and what was the rate of pay out under the policy.</p> <p>JR advised that Tim Cowland – New Head of IT would be joining North Herts on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2009.</p> <p>Swine Flu – Reported incidents doubling. A briefing note for staff would be published within the next day or two.</p> <p>Howard Park Gardens – Lottery Grant award. Excellent achievement.</p> <p>Award received for Best Urban regeneration scheme for Baldock.</p> <p>Savings – JR advised that progress was being made in closing the gap, but that the target and gap change continuously.</p> <p>Homeworking – Set up payment still available and now looking at Phase 3.</p>	
6	<p><b>Essential Car Users</b></p> <p>This is an efficiency proposal to try and reduce the on costs of the Council to lower staffing costs to protect jobs.</p> <p>DE raised a number of questions from the Housing and Environmental Health team regarding the proposed changes. A discussion followed. KS reminded the SCF that comments and suggestions were welcome and explained that a number of suggestions had been received already and were reflected in the FAQ's. These would be considered in developing a new policy.</p>	
9.	<p><b>Employee Queries</b></p> <p>Would it be possible to hold a Prostate Cancer day for male colleagues as we do for Breast Cancer day. It was agreed that it would be discussed with Ashley Hawkins.</p> <p>Cycling Scheme – Would a cycling scheme be made available for staff. KS advised that it was not being ruled out and that the project was on the people strategy. KS also advised that during the last scheme, only 3 people took up the offer.</p>	
10	<p><b>A.O.B.</b></p> <p>None.</p>	

**Chair for next meeting :** John Fisher

**Date of next meeting :** 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2009 – Committee Room 3  
2.30pm to 4pm