

## Staff Consultation Forum

1<sup>st</sup> September 2010

Committee Room 1

### Attendees

John Robinson  
Kerry Shorrocks  
Sue Graves  
Nigel Schofield  
Christina Corr  
Lorrae Hunter  
Margaret Bracey  
Howard Crompton  
Jacqui Hamilton  
Chris Carter

### Apologies

Carol Casey  
John Fisher  
Lesley Boast  
Dee Levett  
Caroline Gray

		<b>Actions</b>
1.	<b>Apologies</b>  As above. Jacqui Hamilton attended on behalf of Unison in Dee Levetts absence.	
2.	<b>Minutes of Previous Meeting</b>  At the Staff Consultation Forum meeting held on 7 <sup>th</sup> July 2010, it was suggested that an area be made available on the intranet for staff to be able to recommend things to others such as holidays, restaurants, tradesmen etc. JR advised that as there are many similar sites available and staff have access subject to the Acceptable Use Policy to these sites so there is no real need for an area on the intranet which would use Council resources.	
3.	<b>Office Accommodation Update</b>  Howard Crompton attended the meeting to update SCF on the office accommodation project.  The recent 3 clear out days had been really successful with 100 bins of excess paper being cleared. The next clear out day has been arranged for the 2 <sup>nd</sup> September. There will probably be one more clear out day which is still to be arranged.  The proposed floor layout is now in the final stages of preparation and should be available to staff by next week (W/C 6/9/10)	

	<p>IT have been surveying the building for new cabling and have now obtained an initial quote. Disruption due to laying new cable will be kept to a minimum.</p> <p>It has now been agreed that the update of the telephony system will be with the existing supplier and should be completed by 20<sup>th</sup> October.</p> <p>Managers will soon discuss home-working options with staff who are eligible. HC advised that KS is currently working on forms that need to be completed to apply for home-working.</p> <p>The toilet refurbishments are to start on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2010.</p> <p>HC advised that all documentation regarding the office accommodation project was available on the intranet.</p> <p>HC advised that when the floor layout is published to staff, there will be information to explain the thinking behind the decisions made, and the constraints. The floor layout will not generally show where individual desks will be but will show teams.</p> <p>It was asked who had seen the floor plans at this stage. HC advised that the only staff who had seen the plans were, the Project Group, CMT and those that had needed to for their technical input.</p> <p>It was asked if there would be a schedule for moving. HC advised that this will follow once the floor plans had been agreed.</p> <p>NS advised that he could foresee problems if offices appeared to be empty when staff were working in more densely populated office areas. It was advised that a number of offices currently occupied by one or two people were being changed to meeting rooms to assist staff and managers to have space for private meetings. There would be occasions where offices are not being used but they would also be available for quiet working when not in use for meetings as a PC will be provided where possible.</p> <p>Areas will also be provided within teams for home, remote and mobile workers who need to come into the office.</p>	
4.	<p><b>Green Issues</b></p> <p>KS advised that waste management were still awaiting costs for in-house recycling.</p> <p>Due to the clear out days, we now have a very high level of surplus lever arch files. It was suggested that maybe these could be donated to schools. It was agreed that Jo Lines would be contacted regarding this suggestion.</p>	JH

6.	<p><b>Home-working/Office Accommodation</b></p> <p>This was covered in 3 above.</p>	
7.	<p><b>Saving Suggestions</b></p> <p>JR advised that all saving suggestions that had been put forward and the suggestions sent to “Tell JC”, had been put to CMT and were being given consideration.</p>	
8.	<p><b>NHDC Update</b></p> <p>JR advised that JC had put a message into this months Team Talk regarding budgets. Although the headlines of Comprehensive Spending Review will be available on the 20<sup>th</sup> October, it could be later in the year before we know how this will filter to local government.</p> <p>A number of budget scenarios were currently being looked at in the range of 25%-40% reductions over the next four years which would entail requiring annual efficiencies of around 1.4m or more per year. In view of the uncertainty the planned budget report to Cabinet in September is likely to be looking only at strategic options until more specific work can be undertaken once the governments decision are known.</p> <p>JR advised that there have been a series of successes that the Council has been involved in and expressed thanks to all members of staff.</p> <p>JR advised that the tenders were now in for Shared Managed Services Project through Hertfordshire County Council. The areas covered by the SMS contract are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human Resources – Payroll and HR transaction services</li> <li>• Occupational Health</li> <li>• Information Technology, PC and service support and projects, Helpdesk development and application support.</li> <li>• Financial Services - Debtors service, accounts payable, cashiers.</li> <li>• Customer Contact Services</li> <li>• Facilities Management</li> <li>• Internal Business Support Helpdesk – single point contact for all of these services.</li> </ul> <p>Briefings will be held during September for staff who may be effected.</p> <p>Councils will now have an opportunity to opt in to all or part of this contract and will have a period of 4 years from commencement in 2011 to do so.</p>	

9.	<p><b>Employee Queries</b></p> <p>It was suggested that due to the recent changes within the Council, a faith based pastor could be made available to talk to staff. It was agreed that KS/JR would contact the member of staff direct to discuss further. KS advised that proposals for a new training course – Managing people in an Uncertain Environment for Managers was currently being developed.</p> <p>Equalities Monitoring form – It was asked why this was not sent out by e-mail rather than hard copy and an explanation why this information was required.</p> <p>As the information requested was of a sensitive nature, the decision was made to request it by letter rather than e-mail in the same way as other confidential information is distributed e.g. personal contracts of employment.</p> <p>Local Government have additional legal duties to private sector employers to promote diversity in employment. We use this information to introduce and monitor equality in policy and pay. An example, is the recent Equal Pay Audit.</p> <p>The provision of this information is entirely voluntary by staff, however, by completing the records held by the Council, a more accurate analysis of the Council's current position can be made and help ensure NHDC's policies are fair to all groups of staff. work. The data is treated as personal sensitive data, will remain confidential and be used for monitoring purposes only. The data used in reports is anonymised to ensure the protection of individuals.</p> <p>Staff can choose not to give this information. At the moment we have gaps in data where we don't know if the individual has declined to give the information. If they inform us they do not wish to give the information we can mark their records accordingly and not request it again.</p>	
10.	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>None</p>	

**Chair for next meeting :** Christina Corr

**Date of next meeting :** 6<sup>th</sup> October 2010  
Committee Room 3  
2.30pm to 4pm