

Staff Consultation Forum

3rd August 2011

Committee Room 3

Attendees

John Robinson
Maggie Williams
Jo Keshishian
Nigel Schofield
Dee Levett
Margaret Bracey
Chris Carter
Christina Corr
David Carr

Guests

Howard Crompton
Giovanna Silverio

Apologies

Kerry Shorrocks
Sue Graves
Jacqui Hamilton
Carole Casey

		Actions
1.	Apologies As above.	
2.	Restructure – Cashiers Howard Crompton attended for this item to outline the proposals for a restructure within the small cashiers team. This will result in the loss of one cashier post. HC advised that the restructure was due to the increase in electronic payments and a 65% reduction in the number of payments that need to be processed. The consultation period with staff had started with individual consultations taking place within the next few weeks.	
3.	Restructure – Licensing and Enforcement Giovanna Silverio attended for this item to outline the proposals for a restructure within the Licensing and Enforcement Team which would result in the deletion of the Animal Warden post. The consultation period has started with an end date of 30 th September. One to one meetings have also commenced. All feedback will be responded to at the end of consultation period.	
3.	Matters Arising from Previous Minutes Cycle Scheme It was advised that the minutes of the previous meeting did not mention the previously discussed cycle scheme.	

	<p>KS had explained that previously the take up for this scheme had been low.</p> <p>KS had asked that the SCF representatives should check the level of interest from colleagues and to advise KS. As a result of the action, there had been only one or two expressions of interest. KS agreed to respond directly to individuals that had contacted her.</p> <p>JR advised that the proposal to purchase shredders was still on-going.</p> <p>In response to a query JR advised that he would establish with Property Services when the proposed refurbishment of the 4th Floor kitchen area would take place. Action: JR</p>	
3.	<p>Green Issues</p> <p>JR advised that a request had been received requesting that NHDC look into the possibility of introducing kerbside plastic recycling. It has been agreed that kerbside collections would not take place as they were not economically viable but bringbanks would continue to be used as they represented the arrangement which provided the most economically and environmentally sustainable approach. Revisions to plastic recycling arrangements were therefore likely to take place when the contract was next tendered and revised disposal arrangements were fully understood.</p>	
4.	<p>Home-working/Office Accommodation</p> <p>IT had now moved to Council Offices.</p> <p>Server room – Air conditioning currently being tested</p> <p>Toilet refurbishments are taking place on the 4th floor.</p> <p>Tannoy and Fire Drill issues were being resolved.</p>	
5.	<p>NHDC Update</p> <p>JR advised on the Council's new three priorities :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living within our means to deliver cost effective services • Working with local communities • Environmental Protection of our Communities for the future 	

	<p>These will replace the current priorities of :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Centres • Green Issues • Sustainable Development. <p>For those involved in the IIP process, it is sufficient to know the existing priorities and that new ones have been agreed.</p> <p>Budgets – JR advised that there are projections for £500,000 in cost reductions for 2012-2013 which will then rise again to £700,000 for 2014-2015 although these figures are still subject to change.</p> <p>Shared Services – (East Herts, Stevenage and North Herts) The outline business case has been pushed back until September/October. Savings are therefore likely to be available during 2012/2013. There will be regular communications to staff affected by this work and the County Council's shared managed service contract. The 'Tell JC' e-mail address is now available.</p>	
7.	<p>Employee Queries</p> <p>It was asked that due to the current warm weather, would it be possible for staff to start work before 8am. It was agreed that this would be looked into but there were implications for caretaking of the business and the flexi-time policy. There was also a point made about staff staying late for the same reason.</p> <p>Action: KS</p> <p>It was asked if there would be a ' lessons learnt'/best practice from the recent restructure process? i.e. are there things that NHDC could have done better? JR advised that a review would be carried out which would help develop lessons learnt from the process. JR advised that he would welcome hearing of any specific cases where things could have been done better but appreciated the potential need for anonymity so observations could be made via SCF members if preferred.</p> <p>Action: JR</p> <p>There was a query regarding variable designations of home-workers as "partial" or "ad-hoc". The former have an alteration to their contract and receive a broadband allowance; the latter do not.</p> <p>It was advised that job suitability for home-working can be reviewed and that staff should discuss whether their job is suitable for partial home-working with their manager.</p> <p>Staff that work from home on an ad-hoc basis, are more likely to have dedicated office space. Some staff may have jobs suited to home-working but choose not to, this does not prevent ad-hoc home-working continuing.</p>	

	<p>It was asked if paper towels could be provided on the back of toilet doors during the refurbishment. It was agreed to refer this to Property Services but hand gel dispensers were available outside doors if required.</p> <p>Action: JH</p>	
8.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>None</p>	

Chair for Next Meeting : Christina Corr

Date of next meeting : 7th September 2011
Committee Room 3
2.30pm to 4pm