

## Staff Consultation Forum

2nd May 2012

Wilbury Hills Chapel Hall

### Attendees

Kerry Shorrocks  
John Robinson  
David Scholes  
Chris Carter  
Christina Corr  
Susanne Gow  
Dee Levett  
Sue Graves  
Garry Melding  
Gail Dennehy  
David Carr

### Apologies

Claire Morgan  
Nigel Schofield  
Heather Cain  
Jackie Rushton

		<b>Actions</b>
1.	<b>Apologies</b>  As above.	
2.	<b>Matters Arising from Previous Minutes</b>  KS and JR advised that during the first year of the scheme, a total of 53 tonnes of office waste was recycled instead of being sent to landfill. This was a tremendous achievement for which thanks should go to staff. We have recycled: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 32.5 tonnes of paper</li><li>• 18.2 tonnes of food/card</li><li>• 1.2 tonnes of glass</li><li>• 964 kg of mixed plastics and cartons</li><li>• 171 kg of cans</li></ul> Before the scheme, 18.6 tonnes of waste were sent to landfill from the Council Offices every year. This has now been reduced to 4.6 tonnes, cutting our waste collection costs by 59% and saving nearly £2000. Cancelling the external confidential paper shredding contract and providing shredders in house will also save another £2000 each year. Regular updates are provided at recycling points and on the Intranet.  Minutes agreed.	
3.	<b>Green Issues</b>  See matters arising above.	

	<p>DS advised that regarding Item 7 on the minutes - he would be happy to attend staff team meetings on invite and this would include outside offices.</p>	
4.	<p><b>Home-working/Office Accommodation</b></p> <p>KS advised that results of the Staff Survey will be taken to the Senior Managers and then should be available to staff in about 2 weeks time.</p> <p>A query was raised regarding the one off payment for existing staff as set up to work from home. It was asked if new starters should receive this payment as this could be seen as inequality. It was asked if more clarification could be given in the policy. KS explained that the payment was to enable existing staff to set up. KS also advised that the provision of equipment by NHDC was still available to staff i.e the provision of a PC or laptop.</p>	
5.	<p><b>E-Lites Trial</b></p> <p>KS advised that the e-lites trial was taking place as discussed at SCF and would run until Friday 18<sup>th</sup> May. Posters had been put up in the 5<sup>th</sup> floor rest area advising of the trial and it was asked that any comments be e-mailed to HrHelp. To date, no comments had been received.</p> <p>The member of staff who requested the e-lite trial asked that their thanks are extended to SCF who agreed the trial.</p> <p>KS advised that a recent article in the press advised that e-lites are not regulated in this country as are not classified as medical or food products. It was advised that e-lites are used at the users own risk and although NHDC are allowing the trial they are not endorsing their use. The link to the press article is attached.</p> <p><a href="http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-2129550/Safety-fears-electronic-cigarettes-unclean-unregulated.html">http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-2129550/Safety-fears-electronic-cigarettes-unclean-unregulated.html</a>.</p>	
6.	<p><b>Museum and Community Facility at Hitchin Town Hall</b></p> <p>JR advised that the report had now been finalised and would be presented with a recommendation to proceed at Council on the 10<sup>th</sup> May 2012. JR advised that the proposal would affect the staff in the posts at Hitchin Town Hall. Consultation had started with groups and individual staff.</p>	
7.	<p><b>NHDC Update</b></p> <p>JR reminded staff of the elections that would be taking place on the 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2012.</p> <p>JR advised that the Howard Park project had been a huge success and a real hit with members of the public.</p>	

8.

### **Employee Queries**

It was asked if the Council would be looking at Childcare Voucher schemes. KS advised that HR were doing some work on this at present along with bikes for work and would be reporting to recommendations to SMT. KS advised that there would be an update for SCF within the next couple of months.

Saving Suggestions – it was suggested that no more buffets for anyone at all are provided. This was discussed and it was advised that the use of buffets was very minimal now and only tended to used in exceptional circumstances where a meeting was continuing through a meal time.

Progress on disposal of NHDC property - Property Services and Andy Cavanagh were contacted regarding this item who advised :

Brotherhood Hall - No immediate plans

Baldock Town Hall - Work is progressing with the Baldock Town Hall Group. It was agreed at the Cabinet meeting in March that they would be given a letter of intent which would allow them to bid for external grants.

Letchworth Town Hall - Negotiations progressing

Hitchin Town Hall - JR advised that the report had now been completed with a recommendation to proceed and would be going to Council on 10th May and he was consulting with SCF regarding the proposed potential changes. Consultations with groups and individual staff had also started.

Leaks at the DCO - Property Services advised that they are aware of leaks within the first floor civic area, i.e. committee rooms and council chamber and a leak that occurred on the 5th floor meeting room 1. A capital bid has been approved to renew the roof over the council chamber and committee rooms, and this work is being programmed in for the latter part of this financial year. We have also got the go ahead, recently, to replace the lead that was stolen in this area, and this work will progress in the next few months.

The 5th floor leak is either coming from the roof or from the cladding. Council has recently approved a feasibility study into the refurbishment of the DCO, which will include improvements to the 5th floor roof and the glazing around the building.

Property Services also advise that if there are any further leaks around the building they are notified via e-mail [propertyservices@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:propertyservices@north-herts.gov.uk).

It was asked if plugs could be provided for sinks used for washing up to save water. It was advised that JH would contact Property Services.

9.	<b>Any other Business</b>  KS advised that Gail Dennehy and Garry Melding are attending SCF as representatives for the Shared Services project.	
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**Chair for Next Meeting :**

**Date of next meeting :** 6<sup>th</sup> June 2012  
Committee Room 1  
2.30pm to 4pm