

Staff Consultation Forum

1 May 2013

Committee Room 1

Minutes

Present: Christina Corr (Chair), John Robinson, David Scholes, Kerry Shorrocks, Nigel Schofield, Claire Morgan, Dee Levett, Chris Carter, Sue Graves, David Car, Alan Fleck (Sub for Claire Morgan)

Apologies: Nigel Schofield, Claire Morgan, Dee Levett, Sue Graves, Alan Fleck

Circulation: Those present, Nigel Schofield, Claire Morgan, Dee Levett, Sue Graves, Alan Fleck

Actions

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Nigel Schofield, Claire Morgan, Dee Levett, Sue Graves and Alan Fleck

2. Matters Arising from Previous Meeting 3rd April 2013

- **Green Issues/Ideas**

JR advised that the usual update was not available as the Waste Services Team were going through a number of changes both with staffing and services. It was confirmed that the information on the income regeneration from office recycling would be provided as soon as possible.

3. Green Issues/Ideas

- **Walk to Work Week 17th May 2013**

NHDC have registered to take part in Walk to Work Week 13 -17 May 2013. This is a national challenge organised by the charity Living Streets as part of national walking month. The aim is to get people walking more to and from work, during work and at lunchtimes during the Week and beyond.

For those who can't walk all or part of the way to work the Policy Team are organising three lunchtime walks and encouraging officers to take the stairs rather than the lifts when at the office.

Encouraging staff to walk more can contribute to our health and wellbeing and save us money as well as reducing CO₂ emissions from car usage

4. NHDC Update

Budget Update

The government will be publishing an early Spending Review Statement in June/July 2013. It is envisaged that a further spending cut of up to 10% may be likely and work is already underway in looking at the budget for 2014/15.

DS advised that staff briefings will be held in May 2013 to provide them with an update on the budget position amongst other things.

Pay Award

The Employers have issued a revised offer the Unions of 1% increase for officers excluding Chief Officers (Chief Executive, Directors, Heads of Service and Corporate Managers). It is envisaged that this offer may be accepted and further news will be provided to staff once this is known.

Outlook

JR encouraged SCF members to look at the latest edition of Outlook which illustrated to residents all of the services NHDC were provided and which were important to our residents.

http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/index/council_and_democracy/news/outlook_magazine.htm

Sickness Update

Sickness levels had reached a record low for the authority. The Leader would be looking at ways in which this very positive news could be celebrated.

Pay Policy Statement

JR advised that the Pay Policy Statement, had been approved by Council on 11th April and had been published on the Council's website.

5. Employee Queries

CC asked for confirmation as to when SCF would have an opportunity to consider the report on Office Accommodation. DS advised that the meeting of Council was currently being rearranged from June to July and that SCF would get an opportunity to consider the draft report at its meeting in July 2013.

Chris Carter requested confirmation as to when the 1% pay increase (if agreed) would be paid. KS advised that this would be process fairly quickly once a decision by the Unions had been made.

6. Any Other Business

Employee Reward Scheme

KS advised that information around 'Employee Benefit Extras' would be included in the next edition of Team Talk. The additional benefits being offered include:

- Childcare Voucher Scheme
- Bikes to Work Scheme
- Retailers Discount Scheme

Both the Childcare Voucher and Bikes to Work schemes were a salary sacrifice scheme which could give NI and Tax benefits to employees. The Retailers Discount Scheme will be applicable to all staff and applies to purchases both in person and online.

Full details will be provided on the intranet shortly and a staff drop in session on the schemes outline above will be held on 12th June 2013.

Strategic Objectives/Priorities

David Carr requested that the Council's Strategic Objectives and Priorities be made more visible on the internet and intranet so that officers are able to refer to them. **JR**

Chair for next meeting:

Chris Carter
5th June 2013 , Committee Room 1

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