

JOINT STAFF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

18 SEPTEMBER 2013

***PART 1 - PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

AGENDA ITEM No.

5

STAFF CONSULTATION FORUM

The Minutes for the meetings of the Staff Consultation Forum held on 3 July and 14 September are set out below. The Draft Minutes of the SCF Meeting on 5 September will be tabled at the Joint Staff Consultative Committee Meeting.

Staff Consultation Forum

3 July 2013

Committee Room 1

Minutes

Present: Christina Corr (Chair), Nigel Schofield, Dee Levett, Kerry Shorrocks, Sue Graves, David Car, Andrew Cavanagh (item 3)

Apologies: John Robinson, David Scholes, Claire Morgan, Christ Carter, Melissa Tyler

Circulation: Those present, John Robinson, David Scholes, Claire Morgan, Chris Carter, Melissa Tyler

Actions

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from John Robinson, David Scholes, Claire Morgan, Chris Carter, Melissa Tyler

2. Matters Arising from Previous Meeting 1st May 2013

There being no outstanding action, the minutes were agreed.

3. Office Accommodation

Andrew Cavanagh attending for this item and advised that a report on office accommodation was being prepared for Cabinet in July which would recommend:

- That Council agrees to purchase the Council offices
- That Council also agrees to a significant refurbishment programme

AC advised that some Members of the Council still wished for the Council Offices to remain in Letchworth and not elsewhere. There were concerns that if the Council Offices were relocated elsewhere, this would have a negative effect on the economy in Letchworth Town Centre. In addition to this, AC advised that there were no suitable buildings in North Herts to act as the Council Offices.

In proceeding with the purchase of the building, this would release revenue savings of £219,000 per annum. Furthermore, the proposed refurbishment of the building would be done floor by floor in a aim to cause minimum disruption.

4. SCF Review

A discussion was held on the membership, roles of representatives, frequency of meetings and, the context of SCF meetings. After some debate, it was agreed that:

- Monthly meetings of the SCF continue to be held in the diaries. However, if the agenda was light, then the meeting would be cancelled.
- Policy Review documents would be reviewed at SCF meetings collectively rather than emailed for comment.
- A joint quarterly meeting with the Health & Safety Group be held

5. Flexi Timesheet Locking

KS advised that a new flexi timesheet locking system would be introduced to staff in September 2013. This would entail staff entering the working hours on to the system and at the end of the four week period, clicking a declaration box whereby the confirm that the details are correct and submit the form. This will then be automatically locked. There will only be a one week 'grace' period for staff to ensure that they submit their timesheets.

It was noted that Managers would still be able to run reports from the system to go through timesheets and this would encourage all staff who participate in this scheme that they ensure their timesheets are submitted on time.

Communication to staff on this matter will go out via Team Talk in August followed by updates on the Message Board.

6. Green Issues/Ideas

NG requested an update on the recycling information requested some months ago. It was confirmed that JR had been chasing this information and that it would be available soon. However, it should also be noted that the Waste Team are currently in the process of major service change and all resources were being made available for this important project.

7. NHDC Update

AC advised that the Comprehensive Spending Review had been published and this confirmed that central Government funding to Local Councils is likely to reduce again in 2015/16 by around another 10%. The Senior Management Team are looking at how this will impact on NHDC and we are now in the process of looking at Corporate Business Planning for 2014/15 and onwards.

KS advised that no formal notification of the intended 1% pay rise for employees had yet been received.

8. Employee Queries

Sue Graves advised that she had received an question about snow days i.e when a member of staff makes an effort to come in to work but, by walking in, this takes two hours. Would the member of staff have to take flexi time to cover the travelling to work time. KS advised that the Council relies on a number of staff who live locally to come in to work during severe weather and that in this particular instance, a pragmatic approach needs to be taken by managers and discretion used.

Sue Graves also advised that members of the team had noted that a particular Councillors continues to park the disabled bay outside the Council Offices when he shouldn't. It was agreed that this would be raised with Property Services. **SN**

David Carr requested that IT consider sending messages via text to home workers when they expect service disruption. There was an instance last week when this happened and no notice had been received. **SN**

Christian Corr asked why there were no toasters available in the kitchen areas on floors Ground to 4th. SCF confirmed that this was due incident relating to a toaster on the ground floor a number of year ago when the fire alarm was set off.

Chair for next meeting: TBA
7th August 2013 , Committee Room 1

Staff Consultation Forum

7 August 2013

Committee Room 1

This meeting of the Staff Consultation Forum was cancelled due to lack of business.