

Staff Consultation Forum Meeting

5th February 2014



Minutes

Present: Christina Corr (Chair), David Scholes, Kerry Shorrocks, Susanne Gow, Claire Morgan, Dee Levett, Helen Turner, Amanda Dell, Maggie Williams

Apologies: Chris Carter, John Robinson

Circulation: Those present, Chris Carter, John Robinson

Actions

Introduction

CC welcomed Amanda Dell to SCF who advised that she was the representative for the third floor.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from John Robinson and Chris Carter

2. Matters Arising from the Last Meeting

In terms of the toilets on the ground floor, it was noted that Property Services had advised that no further works were planned until Spring 2015 as part of the office accommodation project.

The minutes were otherwise agreed.

3. Green Issues

Chloe Hipwood had given her apologies for the meeting and it was agreed that she would attend the next meeting for a discussion on green issues.

4. NHDC Update

Flexi Time Policy

KS advised on the revisions to be made on the Flexi Time Policy following discussion with SMT. It was noted that:

- It should be noted by all staff that Flexi-time benefits work around the needs of the business. The expectation of customers is that our services are fully available and adequately staffed during normal office hours of 8.45am. to 5.15pm. Service Managers would need to ensure sufficient cover available to cover their own service customer demands.
- There will no longer be the core hours of 10.00 am – 4.00 pm,

instead 6 hours (pro rata for PT staff working less than a full day) will need to be worked between the hours of 08.45 to 5.15, this will apply to staff working at home or in the office.

- Lunch breaks would be a minimum of 30 minutes and maximum of 2.5 hours to be taken between 12 noon and 2.30 pm.
- The Flexi Scheme hours that time can be recorded from and to, will be 7.30 am to 7.00 pm
- Home working should not take place between the hours of 11.00 pm and 7.00am
- There are no changes to the number of hours credit or debit that can be accrued and no change to the one day or two half days that can be taken in each period.
- The policy would come in to effect at the end of April 2014

Dress Code

Following on from an matter raised at SCF some months ago, a discussion was held at SMT and SMG in the dress code. The most common recurring comment was managers should manage it at their discretion and the Senior Management Team support that.

It was also decided that all managers should refer to the relevant line manager, any case of any member of staff where they consider staff are not meeting reasonable dress code standards. In this way we should be able to develop a commonly applied approach to avoid the perception that there is differential treatment in different areas

Statutory Day

KS advised that the statutory days had been allocated as follows:

- Half day (pm) on Christmas Eve
- Half day (pm) on New Years Eve
- The other day will be added to annual leave entitlements.

Payroll Update

The new Payroll system will be changing and will be run by SERCO at Hertford, from 1st April 2014. To support you through this change, HR will be arranging the following to have Payroll System Champions – approximately 25 Officers will receive training on the new system, so they can support their colleagues when the system goes live.

In addition, system demonstration sessions will also be held and the first of these has been arranged for 19th March. These can be booked via the LMS system.

Pension Update

As previously advised the Local Government Pension Scheme is undergoing significant changes from April 2014. If you are paying into the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), you'll automatically be in the new scheme from 1 April 2014. If you retire or leave before then, there's no change to your pension.

A briefing for staff on the upcoming changes to the LGPS will take place on 11th March between 10:00 am – 11:30 am. The briefing will be presented by Neil Lewins from the LPFA and will be followed by a Q&A session. If you would like to attend please book via the Learning Management System or contact HR Help.

Budget Update

DS advised that the draft budget had been agreed by Cabinet and that the savings target had been over achieved by c.£700,000. This was hugely beneficial in terms of savings targets in future years but, this was dependant on whether central government made any significant changes in Council Tax thresholds, New Homes Bonus etc.

Priorities for the District

The priorities for 2014/15 had been agreed and briefings for staff would be held in late February/early March to brief staff on these and other matters.

PSN Requirements

DS advised that he was pleased to advised that the Council was now fully complaint and was one the handful of Councils who had been successful in achieving this status. The certificate for compliance had been awarded until August 2014 and there was a consensus that planning on preparing for achievement in August 2014 start as soon as possible so that the Council was better prepared.

6. Office Accommodation Update

KS advised that the Officer Group had met recently and that DL and CEC were both members on this group. Regular updates would be provided.

7. Employee Queries

Multi Storey Car Park

CM raised an issue around the 9th floor of the multi storey car park in that there always seemed to be a permanent puddle in the stairwell which staff had to walk through. It was agreed that Property Services would be made aware of the matter so that work could be undertaken to clear the standing water away and for this area to be monitored.

ID

Maintenance Issues

AD requested that Property Services develop a system whereby staff are able to report issues and around maintenance and that this matter

than be displayed on the intranet to avoid staff reporting the same issues over and over again. In addition, it was also requested that Property Services implement a system where if maintenance issues are reported a response is provided as to the course of action to be taken. At present, no feedback is provided to any reported issues.

ID

IT Systems

HT advised that the Housing Team had recently had a team meeting where it was suggested that IT create a user group whereby any new software is tested by users before being rolled out to the organization. This would prevent significant issues where new software is rolled out and creates a number of user issues.

VG

8. Any Other Business

AD requested that IT look at updating SID to provide information of location of officers. This would assist the Post Room especially when distributing post. DL confirmed that staff were able to update their own records on SID. It was agreed that a message be put up on the Message Board with the request that staff update their details and that IT look at introducing a 'location' column to the database.

**KS/DL/
AM**

CC requested an update on the SMT Corporate Projects. DS advised that the teams were in the process of developing scopes for the projects and these would be considered by SMT at the end of March.