

# Staff Consultation Forum Meeting

2<sup>nd</sup> April 2014

## Minutes

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Present: Chris Carter (CEC) (Chair), David Scholes, John Robinson, Claire Morgan, Christina Corr, Maggie Williams, Susanne Gow, David Carr (substitute for Dee Levett), Jess Young (substitute for Helen Rae), Jack Hughes (notes), Christian Proto (for Item 3), Jonathan Charter (for Item 3).

Apologies: Helen Rae, Dee Levett, Kerry Shorrocks and Sharon Nahal

Circulation: Those present, Dee Levett, Kerry Shorrocks, Helen Rae and Sharon Nahal

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### Actions

#### 1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Kerry Shorrocks, Helen Rae, Dee Levett and Amanda Dell

#### 2. Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes

The minutes of SCF held on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2014 were agreed with no matters arising.

#### 3. Parking Services Manual

CP explained that a new Parking Services Manual has been drafted for SCF's consideration. The manual replaces the previous procedure document and is a detailed operational manual that accounts for recent changes in legislation. CP stated that the manual had been drafted in consultation with HR and Parking Services staff and that it was designed to improve consistency across the service

JR commented that the manual also provided protection for Civil Enforcement Officers who often had to work in difficult circumstances.

CM queried whether Footway Parking was currently covered by NHDC Civil Enforcement Officers as it is included in the manual. CP confirmed that it was not but that the manual had been designed to anticipate changes to the service and make Parking Services staff aware of what they can and can't do.

CP asked for any comments to be received within a week by email.

**All**

#### 4. Green Issues/Ideas

DS advised that the Council are considering offering a Car Lease scheme to all staff. Consultation is still in its early stages and staff and management feedback will be welcomed, but the key points are as follows:

- The Car Lease payment will be deducted from the employee's gross income and therefore will offer the employee Tax and National Insurance savings on the deduction.
- Costs of vehicle maintenance (Insurance, Tax, new tyres etc.) will be covered by the scheme.
- The scheme will be available to both employees and employee's partners, provided the deduction does not bring the employee's earnings below the National Minimum Wage.
- There are several available Car Lease Frameworks available to the Council.
- Take-up for this kind of scheme for an organisation the same size as the Council is likely to be between 7.5% - 12.5%.

MW enquired as to whether the scheme's savings would be limited for higher rate tax-payers. DS explained that this type of salary-sacrifice scheme is not subject to those restrictions.

DS commented that a paper detailing the elements of the scheme could be distributed to SCF members if requested and that initial feedback on the scheme could be received either by email or raised at the next SCF.

All

## 5. NHDC Update

JR stated that the Council's Priorities for the District 2014/15 were to be confirmed at Full Council on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2014.

[G:\SCF\02\\_02.04.14\03 Priorities for the District.doc](G:\SCF\02_02.04.14\03_Priorities_for_the_District.doc)

JR outlined the key findings of the District Wide Survey 2013, which included:

- 95% of residents happy with North Herts as a place to work
- 86% of residents satisfied with the service the Council provides (17% higher than the Hertfordshire average and a 6% increase since 2011)
- 85% of residents satisfied with the Waste and Refuse services the Council provides (6% increase on 2011).
- Areas for improvement included the communication of transactions and how the Council's budget is spent as well as how often we consult people.

JR suggested that a link to the report on these findings should be distributed.

JH

[G:\SCF\02\\_02.04.14\04 District Wide Survey - Key Findings.doc](G:\SCF\02_02.04.14\04_District_Wide_Survey_-_Key_Findings.doc)

## 6. Office Accommodation

CEC explained that the Project Board were currently meeting and that an update would be given at the next SCF. DS commented that the project is moving forward and that the Project Board were in the process of developing a Project Mandate.

**7. Employee Queries**

CM stated that she had received a suggestion to add a porch or canopy area over the staff entrance, as the temporary porch was a welcome addition while the roof works were taking place. DS commented that it would be worth capturing this suggestion in the SCF minutes for any feedback.

**JH/AII**

CEC stated that he had received a suggestion for a water cooler to be provided on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor. DS suggested that Property Services are asked to consider this.

**JH**

**8. Any Other Business**

SG raised a query around how staff will be able to put forward comments on the Office Accommodation project. CEC explained that currently the best way to do this is through SCF Representatives.

JR asked whether there would be communications on what aspects of the project could be commented on and at what stage of the project comments could be made. CEC confirmed that there will be communications to that effect but not at this stage.

**9. Chair for Next Meeting**

Chris Carter.

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