

# Staff Consultation Forum Meeting

3<sup>rd</sup> September 2014



## DRAFT Minutes

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Present: Christina Corr (Chair), John Robinson, Kerry Shorrocks, Chris Carter, Claire Morgan, Amanda Dell, Susanne Gow, Dee Levett, Gemma Crook (sub for Helen Rae), Maggie Williams, Sharon Nahal (minutes)

Apologies: David Scholes, Helen Rae

Circulation: Those present, David Scholes, Helen Rae

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### Actions

#### 1. Apologies

Apologies were received from David Scholes and Helen Rae.

#### 2 Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes

In considering the minutes from the last meeting, it was agreed that Ian Davis from Property Services would not be invited to attend a meeting of SCF until there were items for discussion.

The minutes were otherwise agreed.

#### 3. Green Issues/Ideas

SCF agreed that the confidential shredding scheme was a good way of encouraging colleagues to dispose of documentation no longer required. It was noted that as part of the Office Accommodation project, more were planned.

C Corr asked whether the Council would be considering going back to weekly collections as there were government grants available. It was noted that the Council had made the decision to move to bi weekly collections for household waste and that recycling rates and landfill diversion had increased significantly in North Hertfordshire. The Council would not be moving to weekly collections for household waste.

#### 4. NHDC Update

Further to the recent announcement that The Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC) has raised the threat to the UK from international terrorism from SUBSTANTIAL to SEVERE, staff will be reminded to familiarise themselves with the Councils procedures for dealing with Bomb Threats or Suspicious Packages.

Whilst it is believed that there is no direct threat to Hertfordshire at this time, a response to this change has been implemented by the Constabulary reflecting the increased nationwide threat. This response

includes a strong visible police presence across the county to provide reassurance to all communities and to protect the public from harm

Corporate Board have met to consider the high level action plan following the recent reaccreditation of liP. Corporate Board will be reviewing arrangements for communication more generally and this will involve the reviewing Team Talk, one to one/team meetings, SCF etc. The outcome from this review will be communicated with all staff in due course. As part of this discussion, it was agreed that minutes of the SCF are routinely circulated via global email so that staff are aware of what is raised at the meetings and can feed in to the process via their representatives.

JR advised that the use of 'e cigs' in the workplace would be reviewed in the future following a recent announcement from the British Medical Association (BMA) whereby it called for the ban of these in the public places as a precautionary measure. It was noted that there was not clear evidence that e cigs were harmful and that this was the BMA view.

The Council had allowed for a 'pilot scheme' to be implemented whereby ecigs could be used in the canteen on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor. There had been some reports whereby staff had been seen to be smoking e cigs at their desks. This is not permitted.

## **5. Office Accommodation**

C Carter advised that there was a meeting of the Project Team next week and an update would be provided at the next meeting.

DL advised that the intranet page on the project was updated regularly and had some very useful information on the page. However, it was noted that the page was not very easily found. It was agreed that a link of the Office Accommodation project be placed on the front page of the Intranet.

**SN**

The page can be viewed by following this link: [http://srvinternet01.north-herts.gov.uk/intracontent/index/strategy\\_and\\_performance/dco\\_refurbishment\\_and\\_modernisation.htm](http://srvinternet01.north-herts.gov.uk/intracontent/index/strategy_and_performance/dco_refurbishment_and_modernisation.htm)

## **6. Employee Queries**

### **Policy & Community Development Restructure**

CM questioned whether the restructure report for the Policy & Community Development Team had been considered by SCF. KS advised that as the August meeting of SCF was cancelled, this was circulated via email for members to comment.

KS asked CM whether she had any comments to make and CM advised that some members of the team were not happy with the proposed restructure and concerns were largely around management capacity. The structure presented was a flat management structure and the team felt that there should more management capacity. KS advised that SCF members still had an opportunity to make comments on the proposed structure.

**SCF**

## **Printing Paper**

C Carter advised that printing on the MFD machines was causing some difficulty within his area. He had been advised by Andy Bateman that the quality of the paper being provided had been reduced which resulted in paper being 'crinkled' when printing. It was noted that JR would raise with Andy Bateman to see if quality could be improved at a reasonable cost to prevent wastage. **JR**

## **Flexi Time Policy**

AD raised a number of queries from the MSU Team on the amended Flexi Time Policy.

- When/if consultation had been carried out on the proposed amended scheme
- What data had been compiled
- What were the key questions asked and responses to these
- Felt that home workers were having a 'benefit' taken from them

KS advised that regular updates had been provided at SCF and, the proposed policy changes were discussed at a meeting of SCF in February 2014.

Furthermore, Directors, Head of Service and Corporate Managers were surveyed as to how Flexi Time/TOIL operated in their service areas. Following this information, SMT 2 considered and agreed that changes to the scheme which are being implemented.

Staff should note that the Council's services must be fully available and adequately staffed during normal office hours of 8.45am. to 5.15pm and so Service Managers would need to make sure sufficient cover is available.

Key changes to the scheme include;

- Instead of the core hours of 10.00 am – 4.00 pm, 6 hours (pro rata for PT staff working less than a full day) must be worked by staff working at home or in the office between 08.45am to 5.15 pm.
- Lunch breaks can be for a minimum of 30 minutes and a maximum of 2.5 hours and to be taken between 12 noon and 2.30 pm.
- The hours included in the scheme can be recorded between 7.30 am to 7.00 pm.
- Home working should not take place between the hours of 11.00pm and 7.00am.
- There are no changes to the number of hours credit or debit

accrued and no change to the one or two half days that can be taken in each period.

MW advised that the revised policy which, would come in to effect from 15<sup>th</sup> September 2014, would be on the intranet by Monday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2014 at the latest.

### **Payroll System**

DL raised a query with regards to recording bank holidays on to the system. KS explained that work was underway in resolving the issue and updates would be provided to staff in due course. In the meantime, the Frequently Asked Questions page does provide information on such matters and can be viewed by following this link: [http://srvinternet01.north-herts.gov.uk/intracontent/index/human\\_resources/serco\\_hr\\_payroll\\_system/frequently\\_asked\\_questions\\_post\\_self\\_service\\_go\\_live.htm](http://srvinternet01.north-herts.gov.uk/intracontent/index/human_resources/serco_hr_payroll_system/frequently_asked_questions_post_self_service_go_live.htm)

### **7. Chair for Next Meeting**

Chris Carter