

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

JOINT STAFF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

**MEETING HELD IN THE FIRST FLOOR, ROOM 3, DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES,
GERNON ROAD, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY ON THURSDAY, 3RD OCTOBER, 2019
AT 10.00 AM**

MINUTES

Present: *Councillors Kay Tart (Chairman), Kate Aspinwall, (Vice-Chairman), Terry Hone and Keith Hoskins*

In Attendance: *Ian Couper (Service Director – Resources, Kerry Shorrocks (Corporate Human Resources Manager), Dee Levett (Unison Representative), Christina Corr (Staff Consultation Forum Representative), Emma Jellis (SCF Representative), Matthew Hepburn (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer), Amelia McInally (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer) and Obianuju Nganwuchu (Business Administration Apprentice (Democratic Services)*

13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio Recording – 13 Seconds

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Claire Strong.

14 MINUTES - 27 MARCH 2019

Audio Recording – 25 Seconds

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 27 March 2019 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

15 MINUTES - 19 JUNE 2019

Audio Recording – 55 Seconds

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 19 June 2019 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

16 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio Recording – 1 Minute 15 Seconds

- (1) The Chairman welcomed those present at the meeting, especially those who had attended to give a presentation;
- (2) The Chairman advised that, in accordance with Council Policy, the meeting would be audio recorded;
- (3) The Chairman drew attention to the item on the agenda front pages regarding Declarations of Interest and reminded Members that, in line with the Code of Conduct, any Declarations of Interest needed to be declared immediately prior to the item in question.

17 STAFF CONSULTATION FORUM MINUTES - 5 JUNE 2019

Audio Recording – 2 Minutes 8 Seconds

The Corporate Human Resources Manager presented the Staff Consultation Forum (SCF) Minutes of the 5 June 2019. She informed Members that during SCF Meetings, staff tended to raise queries regarding the maintenance and cleanliness of the District Council Offices. The Corporate Human Resources Manager stated that these queries were answered by the Facilities Team Leader.

The Corporate Human Resources Manager informed the Committee that SCF Representatives were able to raise matters at SCF Meetings which had been brought to their attention by other colleagues. The Corporate Human Resources Manager further added that there was a dedicated SCF email address which allowed Staff to send suggestions and comments to the SCF Team. Similarly, SCF Minutes were circulated to Staff via Outlook and published on the Intranet.

The Corporate Human Resources Manager outlined some of the matters that were discussed at the SCF meeting on the 5 June 2019:

- Union Pay Claim;
- The Payroll Project - procurement of contract; and
- The announcement of the Statutory Annual Leave days for Christmas.

IT WAS AGREED: That the Minutes of the Staff Consultation Forum held on 5 June 2019 be noted.

18 STAFF CONSULTATION FORUM MINUTES - 3 JULY 2019

Audio Recording – 7 Minutes 35 Seconds

The Corporate Human Resources Manager presented the Staff Consultation Forum Minutes on the 3 July 2019. She informed the Members of the Committee that the following items had been discussed in the meeting:

- The dates of the Christmas closure;
- The Payroll Project;
- Demonstrations of the new payroll system were given; and
- The attendance of SCF Representatives at the Joint Staff Consultation Committee.

IT WAS AGREED: That the Minutes of the Staff Consultation Forum held on 3 July 2019 be noted.

19 STAFF CONSULTATION FORUM MINUTES - 7 AUGUST 2019

Audio Recording – 9 Minutes 41 Seconds

The Corporate Human Resources Manager informed the Committee that there was not usually a Staff Consultation Forum Meeting in August owing to it being a quieter month for Council business. However, despite this, an SCF Meeting was held on 7 August 2019 to allow the following important items to be discussed:

- Discussions on two restructures;
- The Payroll Project;
- Information in relation to the Christmas closure - Booking off Statutory Days on the payroll system. The Corporate Human Resources Manager informed the Committee that there were more Part-Time Staff than Full-Time; therefore it was important that all staff knew how to book off these Statutory Days within the system; and
- The Career Development Survey.

The Unison Representative raised the issue regarding parking for Careline Staff and explained that on some evenings when Committee Meetings took place, the Car Park was becoming increasingly full, which had led to some of Careline staffs' cars being blocked in. This was unacceptable due to the nature of their business.

In order that this issue be resolved, the Committee recommended that reminders go out to Members to inform them that the Multi-Storey Car Park opposite the District Council Offices would remain open for Planning and Council meetings.

The following Member asked questions:

- Councillor Kay Tart.

In response to questions raised, both the Corporate Human Resources Manager and the Service Director – Resources, provided the following information:

- Careline had a requirement of between 4 and 6 car parking spaces;
- A reminder would be put on the front page of the Committee Meeting Agendas and in the Member Information Service to inform Councillors that the Multi-Storey Car Park was open for some evening Committee meetings.

IT WAS AGREED: That the Minutes of the Staff Consultation Forum held on 7 August 2019 be noted.

20 STAFF CONSULTATION FORUM DRAFT MINUTES - 4 SEPTEMBER 2019

Audio Recording – 16 Minutes 32 Seconds

The Corporate Human Resources Manager outlined the issues raised at the Staff Consultation Meeting on the 4 September 2019:

- The Payroll contract had been awarded to Liberata;
- The system that would be used was Itrent;
- Self-service Payroll would be rolled out to Members;
- Flu jabs were being offered to all members of staff.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Terry Hone;
- Councillor Kay Tart; and
- Councillor Kate Aspinwall.

In answer to questions, the Corporate Human Resources Manager and Service Director – Resources confirmed the following:

- Councillors would be able to access their payslips online once the new payroll system was underway;
- Historic data from Serco would be extracted. However, it was recommended that P60s and payslips be printed out to 'err on the side of caution'.
- The majority of the 'Office moves' had taken place;
- Members would be informed as to where Departments and Colleagues were now located within the building;
- The Payroll contract had been awarded for 5 years and would commence in April 2020;
- The Windows 10 operating system update was underway, and it was hoped this would be concluded by mid-January 2020; and
- The cost quoted to extract the historic data from Serco was reasonable.

IT WAS AGREED: That the Minutes of the Staff Consultation Forum held on 4 September 2019 be noted.

21 PEOPLE STRATEGY UPDATE - INFORMATION NOTE

Audio Recording – 23 Minutes 25 Seconds

The Corporate Human Resources Manager presented the People Strategy Update and the following items were raised:

- Discussion on Equal Pay would be moved to the next JSCC meeting; and
- Through the National Pay Claim, the unions were requesting an increase in the amount of Annual Leave to be given to Staff on the lowest Pay Grade.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Kay Tart;
- Councillor Kate Aspinwall; and
- Councillor Terry Hone.

In answer to questions raised; the Corporate Human Resources Manager confirmed that:

- The amount of Annual Leave for those on the lowest Pay Grade was 21 days which would be increased to 22 days after 5 years service.

The Corporate Human Resources Manager directed Members to paragraph 3.71 and 3.73 on page 33 of the report. She informed the Committee that 177 members of staff had completed the Career Development Survey.

The Corporate Human Resources Manager drew attention to the Key Performance Measures on page 35 of the report, and suggested that the reason that appraisals had not been received by the target date had been due to Long Term Sickness or Maternity Leave.

The Corporate Human Resources Manager directed Members to Absence Rates on page 36 of the report. Members were informed that there was no long term absence in July 2019 and short term absence was 0.60 over target in the full Calendar Year 2018/19.

The Corporate Human Resources Manager assured Members of the Committee that there was support available from the Human Resources Department and Occupational Health for Staff on Long Term Absence.

IT WAS AGREED: That the information note entitled People Strategy Update be noted.

REASON FOR DECISION: To enable the Committee to consider the People Strategy Update.

22 STRATEGIC DISCUSSION PAPER - EMPLOYEE MENTAL HEALTH

Audio Recording – 41 Minutes 46 Seconds

The Corporate Human Resources Manager presented the Strategic Discussion Paper - Employee Mental Health and highlighted the following:

- There was a great deal of support available to all members of staff;
- Occupational Health advised staff on Health and Work related issues;
- The Employee Assistance Programme was offered by Workplace Wellness. It was offered free of charge to all staff and Councillors. This was a confidential service offering support day and night;

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- The Council's Flexible Working was a well developed culture;
- National Stress Awareness had been promoted.
- The Active Communities Team had arranged lunch time walks and healthier snack boxes for staff;
- There were Mental Health First Aid Courses; and
- The Human Resources Work Plan for next year was to focus on Financial Wellbeing.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Terry Hone; and
- Councillor Kay Tart.

In response to questions raised, the Corporate Human Resources Manager advised that:

- The Local Government Pension Scheme was a good scheme in which the employer contributed approximately 18.5%;
- The Council offered a Pre-retirement Seminar to help staff plan for their own retirement;
- Training on First Aid was taking place, this included Mental Health First Aiders; and
- There was a list of First Aider names on every floor of the District Council Office.

IT WAS AGREED: That the discussion paper on Employee Mental Health be noted.

REASON FOR DECISION: To enable the Committee to consider the discussion paper on Employee Mental Health.

23 FUTURE DISCUSSION TOPICS

Audio Recording – 56 Minutes 15 Seconds

Members considered which subjects should be discussed at future meetings and

IT WAS AGREED: That the discussion topic for the next meeting of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee would be:

- Salary Sacrifice Schemes

The Next meeting of The Joint Staff Consultative Committee would be held on Wednesday 18 December 2019 at 10:00am.

Chairman