

Staff Consultation Forum Meeting

07 April 2021



Present: Anthony Roche (**AR**), Ian Couper (**IC**), Nicola Viinikka (**NV**), Andrew Betts (**AB**), Dee Levett (**DL**), Vic Godfrey (**VG**), Emma Jellis (**EJ**), Jo Keshishian (**JK**), Alison Fox (**AF**), Matthew Hepburn (**MH**), Caitlin Bruce (**CB – notes**) Fallon Rumball–Nunan (**FRN – notes**)

Circulation: Global

1. Apologies

Debbie Hiscock, Christina Corr

2. Matters Arising

Question: Any Update on the set up of the automated response for the SCF inbox.

Answer: CC sent an email to the inbox and checked – No automated response. JK suggested CC or EJ to check with HR if needed for how to set the automated response.

3. NHDC update

JK gave reminder of holiday carry over as we have come to the end of annual leave year. This has now been adjusted and showing on ITrent. JK advised any issues with this to be sent to HR help.

Pay Negotiations for 2021 are ongoing – no update until mid-May.

Reminder, Friday 9th April Development Half Day – There is no theme this month however please note the Equality and Diversity resources are still available.

People Recovery Plan – This aims to take the good points from the last year (eg use of zoom meetings) wider home working will be continued into future, and wellbeing support for staff will be ongoing. The key themes for HR work are detailed in terms of what we need to do, what we should carry on doing and identifying anything we should stop doing. It is anticipated that we can progress to a more formal longer-term People Strategy in 18 months – 2 years.

A staff survey will be launched this month to obtain people's attitudes to returning and practicalities of this such as storage.

Support will also be extended to the wider district such as helping businesses/ high street.

New Vehicle Policy – This will incorporate several various other policies surrounding vehicle usage and addresses the issues necessary to avoid future tax liabilities. **IC to send out policy when finalised to SCF, Trade Union and Leadership Team.**

4. Employee Queries

Question: could the theme of the next Inclusion Group meeting be given more publication to gain more momentum?

Answer: **CB to share idea with Reuben Ayavoo**

Question: Will the Union Jack be flown above the council buildings as instructed?

Answer: It has been discussed, will consider the feelings of the community and what others do. Undecided for the moment.

Question: Has a return to office date been discussed?

Answer: This will be determined by the Government Road Map and Social Distancing Measures being reduced or concluded. The survey due to go out to staff will also impact this greatly.

5. IT Update

First batch of laptops will be rolled out week commencing 19th April and the second batch has been tendered. Roll out is on schedule to meet target.

Citrix issues (grey screen) are ongoing, but software is being produced to resolve this. IT helpdesk should be contacted in the first instance if issues continue.

320 calls last month (February) regarding lost passwords. **The 10-day alert to update passwords should not be disregarded by staff** as this impacts the IT help desk immensely.

Council Chambers are ready for postal verifications.

Question: Has anything been organised for the change in legislation for Council Committee Meetings?

Answer: A hybrid meeting will be organised with a maximum of 20 attendees in person and the rest attending virtually.

Video cameras will also be installed into the larger DCO meeting rooms to support hybrid meetings allowing staff to join meetings from home.

6. Building Services Update

First floor of the district council offices is currently not in use due to election preparations.

The possibility of installing solar panels on the district council offices roof is being looked into, should building regulations allow. This will reduce electrical and energy costs.

7. AOB

William Stafford has stepped down from SCF.

The SCF is now looking for a new member. If you are interested in becoming a member speak to one of the current members (listed below) or email scf@north-herts.gov.uk.

Suggestion: As the SCF will now be looking for a new member could this be advertised on the message board/Intranet?

Chair for next meeting – Dee Levett

Have something to say?

If you have an issue you think should be brought to the attention of the SCF, please contact any SCF representative via phone, email or in person. They will raise your issue at the next meeting. You will not be identified unless you want to be.

Issues relating to property e.g. broken lift, non-flushing toilets, etc. must always be reported to Property Services in the first instance: propertyservices@north-herts.gov.uk

Alternatively you can send any issues to the SCF inbox - SCF@north-herts.gov.uk

Representatives (and extension):

Emma Jellis #4312 - MSU team based on Floor 4

Allison Fox #4203 - Technical Support Officer based on Floor 3

Christina Corr #4325 - Senior Technical Officer R&B team based on Floor 5

Nicola Viinikka Visitor Services Assistant based at Hitchin Town Hall and Museum

Matthew Hepburn #4311 - Member, Committee & Scrutiny Officer

Andrew Betts #4282 - Contracts Officer Waste Management based at Buntingford