

Staff Consultation Forum Meeting

03/04/2024

Present: Anthony Roche (**AR**), Ian Couper (**IC**), Jo Keshishian (**JK**), Claire Bernard (**CB**), Christina Corr (**CC**), Tiranah Straughan (**TS**), Dee Levett (**DL**), Mark Robinson (**MR**), Harrison McLeod (**HM**), Caelan Ballard – notes (**CB**)

Circulation: Global

Chair for Meeting: Christina Corr (**CC**)

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Louis Franklin and Rebecca Webb who was covered by Jo Keshishian.

2. Matters Arising from Previous Meeting

None

3. NHC Update

- The next Elections will be taking place in May and the Elections Team welcome any volunteers. You can register your interest by emailing elections@north-herts.gov.uk.

HR and Employee Wellbeing Update

- The Staff Survey closed on the 28th of March with over 200 responses. Thank you to everyone who responded. The feedback received is very helpful and is being reviewed. The outcome of the prize draw for participants who entered their email will be announced shortly.
- The new holiday year has now begun, and a notice was uploaded to the Hub today which covers the 2024/2025 holiday entitlement which can now be viewed on iTrent. Statutory leave days have been booked for everyone as of today.
- Additional carry forward leave has also been added now, and spot checks are underway to ensure the correct amounts of carry-forward have been added where relevant.
- The next Personal Development Morning will be on Friday the 12th of April. This is a generic session, which will allow staff to ensure they are up to date with any essential corporate learning or complete any CPD that they have been planning.

4. Employee Queries

Q: Following on from the discussion about JSCC meetings in the last minutes, could a representative from the Inclusion group be invited to attend JSCC in addition to a representative from SCF?



A: It may be useful to discuss what is covered at the JSCC with the Inclusion Group so they are able to decide whether it would be beneficial for them to attend. If it would be useful for an Inclusion Group representative to attend the JSCC, this can be facilitated.

Q: It was proposed for the office chairs in the DCO to be cleaned, but this has not yet gone ahead. Can an update on this be given?

A: This would usually be due to be done in the Autumn, but looking to bring this forward.

Q: Following the [notice](#) on Insight about updating e-signatures for NHC's 50th anniversary, some staff have reported being unable to copy over the updated signature template. Could some more direction on this be sent out?

A: Comms will circulate the updated e-signature in an email which will be easier for staff to copy and paste into their existing signatures. There is also a new corporate Teams background with NHC's new 'Celebrating 50 years' slogan available for staff to use. Staff can find this under 'background filter' on Microsoft Teams.

5. IT Update and Queries

- The email filter solution currently in use at NHC will be changing to Mimecast after the Elections in May. The new system is cloud-hosted and will bring improvements to the email filters, better resiliency, and will also help to block unwanted junk and spam emails. More information on the new filter system will be circulated in due course, but a [notice has been uploaded to The Hub](#).
- The remote Windows 11 rollout should begin this month, and training videos are currently being prepared for staff to support them during the installation process and using the new operating system. Staff should be aware that laptops may take up to 40 minutes to load the first time they are turned on after the update. Users will be contacted by IT when the rollout reaches them.
- The IT survey which is sent alongside helpdesk tickets have been reviewed for feedback and responses have been collated. There were around 250 survey responses throughout the past year and feedback has been very positive with an average service satisfaction score of around 98%. The politeness and efficiency of the helpdesk service have also been mentioned. Staff are thanked for their feedback which has been passed on to management.
- Other IT projects are currently under preparation and will be rolled out later this year.

Q: Is IT equipment routinely checked?

A: Equipment is checked whenever problems are reported as there is too much to test on a regular basis. An asset audit is also currently underway so problems with equipment may also be identified through this. Staff are asked to log a ticket if they encounter any issues with equipment so that it can be tested and fixed.

6. Building Services & Facilities Update

Q: The lights in the DCO seem to be on at times, especially on the 4th floor, during the night and holidays when there are no staff working outside of Careline. Are the lights being left on?



A: The lights in the DCO are sensor controlled, meaning they must be triggered to turn on and then should automatically turn off. IC to raise with Property Services.

If anyone has any issues, please email these to propertyservices@north-herts.gov.uk

7. Green Update

Updates from April's Environmental Briefing include:

- The Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2 is now live, and details can be found on the [NHC web page](#). Residents can sign up via the HUG website or by calling the Energy Saving Trust.
- The second round of Solar Together has now closed. 185 households in North Herts have accepted their Solar PV recommendation. The average 14-panel system within the scheme is 34% cheaper than the typical market price for an equivalent system. Installations have now begun, with 297 completed in Hertfordshire so far and 50 installations completed in North Herts.
- The Climate Hive now has 355 subscribers and continues to update users with the latest climate activity such as HUG2 updates, the latest surveys and consultations, funding, and skills opportunities.
- Local Nature Recovery Strategy - £5,000 is available for all Hertfordshire District and Borough councils from Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) for engagement activities to contribute towards Local Nature Recovery. We are engaging with colleagues at HCC on how best to use this.
- NHC has been successful in its application for the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme and have now signed the Grant Offer Letter. The council have secured up to £7,743,224 from the fund for decarbonisation measures at leisure facilities in North Hertfordshire. These measures will include air source heat pumps, solar panels, and energy efficiency measures like insulation. A press release, agreed with Salix, has been released on [the website](#).
- Letchworth Organic Gardeners present 'The Plight of the Bumblebee' - a talk by Holly Pringle from the Bumblebee Conservation Trust. Also talks about local initiatives by North Herts Council and local beekeeper Gary Hammond as well as plant stalls, refreshments, and a raffle. Saturday 20th April 2-5pm. Talk starts at 3pm. Free Church Hall, Leys Avenue, Letchworth. More info and admission prices [here](#).

The full briefing, including other grants, discount schemes and updates is available to read on [the Hub](#).

8. Ideas/Suggestions

None.

9. AOB

Q: North Herts Leisure centre is now being operated by Everyone Active, who have introduced the use of the Everyone Active mobile app which allows members to book swimming lanes and sports courts. However, transferring accounts from the previous app



is not working for some members and they are unable to use the app. Has this been investigated?

A: There have been a few issues with people's data being transferred by SLL to the new Everyone Active app. This has been handled proactively and Everyone Active are contacting users as well as circulating updates on [Facebook](#) to explain the account transfer process and how to book Leisure Centre sessions on the app and [online](#). Advice is also available on the troubleshooting web page. If their advice does not resolve or answer queries, users are asked to call North Herts Leisure Centre on [01462 679311](tel:01462679311) or visit in person for assistance.

Q: There appear to be changes to the swimming lane sessions available for booking at North Herts Leisure Centre since the transfer to Everyone Active. Users now need to book a swimming session on the app or online. Are these changes going to be permanent?

A: As Everyone Active is a different company, some changes to services and sessions will be introduced, but Everyone Active will notify and communicate any intended changes with users.

Chair for next meeting – Drew Betts

Have something to say?

If you have an issue that 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 phone extension):

Christina Corr #4325 - Senior Technical Officer Revenues and Benefits

Claire Bernard #4323 - MSU Admin Support Officer

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

Louis Franklin #4262 – Admin Support Officer

Tiranan Straughan #4842 – Housing Policy Officer