

Staff Consultation Forum Meeting Minutes – 2 October 2024

Present: Anthony Roche
Ian Couper
Rebecca Webb
Louis Franklin
Christina Corr
Keith Fitzpatrick-Matthews
Tiranan Straughan
Katie Thomas
Claire Bernard
Mark Robinson
Michelle Bell - notes

Circulation: Global

Chair for Meeting: Tiranan Straughan

1. Apologies

Andrew Betts, Dee Levett

Welcome to Katie, our new SCF rep.

2. Restructure Notices

None

3. Matters Arising from Previous Meeting

None

4. NHC Update

HR and Employee Wellbeing Update (RW)

Flu vaccinations - As in previous years, free flu vaccinations are available to all Council employees who are not covered by the NHS roll out to help protect against the flu. This year, we will be offering flu vaccination vouchers instead of processing expense claims. A global email has been sent asking staff to confirm (using voting buttons) by 14 October if they require a voucher.

National Inclusion Week – Resources are still available including the recording of the [‘Being an Inclusive Colleague’](#) webinar, micro aggression posters and Growzone eLearning module. Positive feedback received that the posters are creating a talking point in the office. LF confirmed that discussions continued at the last Inclusion Group on 26 September and notes will be available shortly on the hub.

World Mental Health Day – 10 October 2024 – A [World Mental Health Day training session](#) will take place next week and the Insight article signposts to external organisations and internal resources we have available for support:

[Mental Health First Aiders](#)
[Employee Assistance Programme \(EAP\)](#)
[GP Helpline](#)

General NHC Update (IC)

The new Council Plan for 2024-28 has been adopted and supersedes the previous Plan launched in 2022.

Our Vision: Working with you for a fairer, greener North Herts

Our Priorities: Thriving communities
Accessible services
Responsible growth
Sustainability

RPR objectives should link to the Council Plan.

Hitchin flooding – IC thanked all staff who volunteered their support and worked alongside the emergency services. A flood warning is still in place although there is currently no flooding to properties.

Staff volunteers form an invaluable part of the Council's response to civil emergencies. To register your interest and to find out more about the different roles available, click [here](#).

5. Employee Queries

Q: What is permitted as part of the personal development sessions i.e. going for walk and listening to a podcast?

A: It's suggested that individuals have a conversation with their line manager about what PDM looks like for them. More comms will be arranged to continue to raise awareness and ensure clarity.

Q: Front facing staff can't participate.

A: PDMs are open to everyone. We appreciate that not everyone can take part in the PDM on a Friday morning, and so everyone is encouraged to take part at a time that suits them and their teams. Helen is making contact with the teams who can't participate on Friday mornings to ensure we are supporting CPD.

6. IT Update (MR)

- Additional camera installed at rear entrance fire escape behind Careline and at HTH bar area.
- Windows 11 roll out complete – only authority in District to have completed.
- Citrix to be discontinued within the next month. Another solution will be implemented and Timesheets will require password.
- IT plan of work now available on Hub. Microsoft Planner is available for all staff to use.



- Asset Review – users are not responding which is holding up projects. Managers asked to prompt staff to reply when they are asked for their asset numbers.
- October is Cyber Awareness month – comms will follow.
- ICT drop in around personal cyber awareness and would welcome suggestions on how to get staff involved – quiz suggested.
- New helpdesk – feedback being looked at. Old version is now switched off.
- Senior Technical Officer has been appointed, hopefully starting before Xmas.
- Phishing reports go to LT to understand our vulnerabilities and raise awareness.

7. Building and Facilities Update

None

8. Green Update

TS gave brief overview of hot topics in this month's Environment Briefing which be read in full [here](#).

9. Ideas / Suggestions

None

10. AOB

Following the success of the Yorkshire 3 Peaks Challenge, SMG have been discussing a potential new challenge – London Bridges Walk. More details to follow.

Chair for next meeting – Tiranan Straughan

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

Claire Bernard #4323 - MSU Admin Support Officer

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

Louis Franklin #4262 – Digital Services Officer

Tiranan Straughan #4842 – Housing Policy Officer

Katie Thomas #5021 – Digital and Customer Service Apprentice