

Staff Consultation Forum Meeting Minutes – 4th March 2026

Present:

Director- Resources: Ian Couper
HR Services Manager: Rebecca Webb
Staff representatives: Christine Howe, Christina Corr, Katie Thomas, Louis Franklin, Tiranan Straughan, Martin Trotter
Technical Operations Manager: Mark Robinson
Union representative: Dee Levett
Notes: Ruby Lewis

Circulation: Global

Chair for Meeting: Christina Corr

1 Apologies

Melanie Ferdaous

2 IT update

The MFD roll out is occurring right now. Please ensure you pick the new printer from now, the old queue will be gone from today. We are still proceeding with laptop rollouts.

ICT Starter, Leaver & Mover Policy

[Section 5.5 POL - ICT Starters Leavers and Movers Policy](#)

The leaver process is now live. The last part is a change to the form that you will out, the process has been streamlined. There are now distinct timelines on the starter process, for example we ask for 2 weeks' notice for starters or a minimum of 5 working days. We can never guarantee any less and the policy sets this out. There are now also leaver deadlines, where the account is deleted in line with Microsoft licensing. Part of the onboarding process is that the user has to accept the user acceptance policy, cyber awareness and data protection training before leaving the IT office. The idea is protection for the organisation. We are improving the form for starters, the form will not change but we now have a mover and leaver form, we are trying to ensure we capture every detail.

Q: We have tokens from DWP, sometimes people forget to return them. If you come across any, can they be put aside as they belong to DWP.

A: Yes, the leaver process will ensure that the department also gets notified of the leaver.

3 Matters Arising from Previous Meeting

Q: Has there been any feedback on the questions raised last time regarding parking and the cleaning of the stairs?

A: All questions have been acknowledged. The stairwell is a waste responsibility.

Q: Is there a rota for cleaning the stairwell?

A: The town centres have a continuous presence, but there is not a specific rota. Will ask for this to be put on the rota.

4 NHC Update (including HR and Staff Wellbeing Update)

EV benefits scheme – the electric vehicles lease scheme will be launched later this month. The policy has been circulated to the SCF inbox for comment. It is in the process of being finalised and there will be tweaks. Please let me know of any other comments. The next staff briefing will provide some details of the scheme and there will be a webinar from the provider on the 19th March.

Employee Complaints policy – We are consulting on this policy which is a merge of our complaints resolution and our bullying and harassment policies.

New recruitment system – We are launching a new recruitment tool in the beginning of April. We are currently in the implementation phase and learning the system and there will be training and support for managers. The system will improve candidate experience and provides increased automation, streamlining processes for HR and hiring managers.

[Employee Assistance Programme \(EAP\)](#) – We will be using a different EAP from the 1st April. It will include similar if not the same services but will be with a different provider. Details will be shared shortly.

[Race Equality Week](#) – We took part in REW at the start of February. Resources were shared via global emails and are still available on the Hub. We have received great feedback on the resources which are all bitesize.

Personal Development Morning – The next personal development morning is on Friday the 6th March and focusses on productivity. A global email has been sent.

[Celebrating International Women's Day](#) - International Women's Day is on the 8th March. Video resources will be available on the Hub and Insight.

[Staff Survey](#) – The new staff survey has been launched, it closes on the 18th March at 10pm. Please complete the survey and share it with your team, it does not take more than 5 minutes and your feedback is appreciated

[2026/27 budget agreed](#) – budget for next year has been approved.

Multistorey car park – There is a report going to overview and Scrutiny about the multistorey car park, currently we lease it from the people who own the shopping centre and they want it back. It will still be used for staff parking until April 2028. After that, we do not know what the need will be for the building due to LGR.

Q: Please could the EV policy be re-sent to the inbox.

A: Yes

Q: It has been previously discussed how managers phrase questions in the recruitment process. Is this training on the new system a time to refresh on how the questions should be set up. At times the questions can be confusing from an applicant perspective.

A: Yes, it will be a good opportunity to refresh. There is guidance given to all hiring managers on how to phrase the questions, but we understand not all managers will look.

Q: The REW materials were really good, they were discussed a lot in Inclusion Group, and the discussion was very interesting. Everyone please feel free to join Inclusion Group, there is no requirement to contribute.

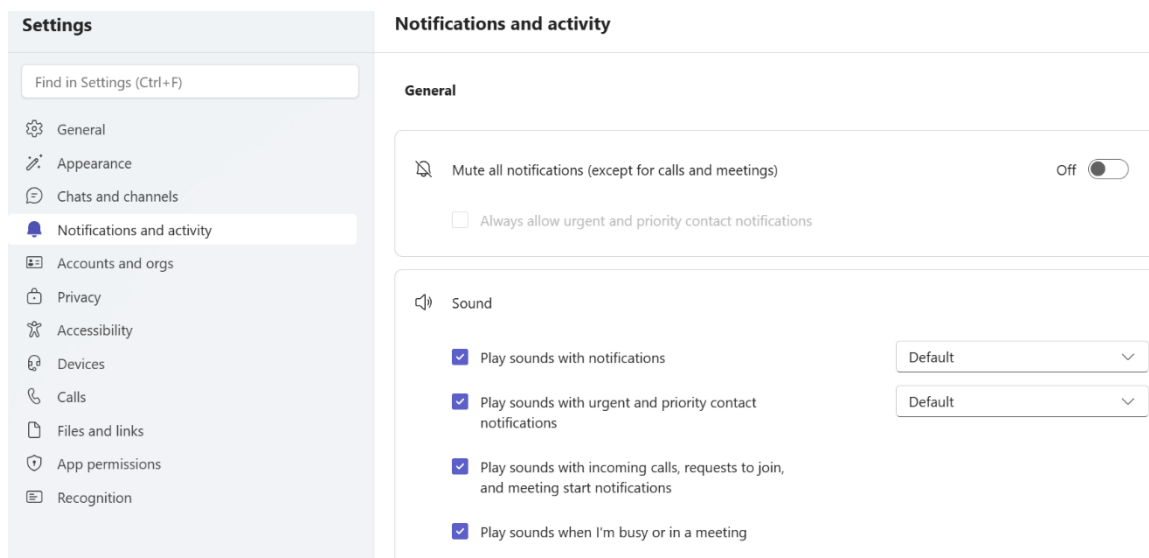
Q: Neurodiversity celebration week is coming up, are there any plans for that?

A: We try to pick up on all different areas but there is only so much resource in HR. I will check in with the team to see what we are doing. The Neurodiversity Network meeting was last week.

5 Employee Queries

Q: The number of alerts we get from Teams when Insight articles are being published can be distracting. Is it possible to have fewer notifications?

A: This can be changed in your Teams settings.



The screenshot shows the 'Settings' application with the 'Notifications and activity' section selected. The 'General' settings are visible, including a toggle for 'Mute all notifications (except for calls and meetings)' which is currently turned 'Off'. Below this, there is an unchecked checkbox for 'Always allow urgent and priority contact notifications'. The 'Sound' section is also visible, with several notification sound options checked, including 'Play sounds with notifications', 'Play sounds with urgent and priority contact notifications', 'Play sounds with incoming calls, requests to join, and meeting start notifications', and 'Play sounds when I'm busy or in a meeting'. Two dropdown menus are set to 'Default'.

Q: Can a sign be put up by the back door to let staff know the other two organisations that work in the building?

A: The issue with this is people possibly making a copy of it, the issue will be picked up. Possibly a picture could be placed by the sign in sheets.

6 Green Update

[2 Sustainability Briefing February 2026.pdf](#)

7 Ideas/Suggestions

Q: Could Inclusion Group be a subtopic on SCF. It could include an update on Inclusion every month? This will help tie it into other areas and spread the message.

A: Inclusion can be added as a standing agenda item and will ask Inclusion group for updates and attendance where possible.

8 Any other business

None

9 Chair of next meeting.

Louis Franklin

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

Louis Franklin #4262 – Digital Services Officer

Tiranan Straughan #4842 – Housing Policy Officer

Katie Thomas #5021 – Digital and Customer Service Apprentice

Martin Trotter #4541 - Shared Service Contract Officer – Waste

Christine Howe#4832 - Client Services Support Officer

Melanie Ferdaous#4324 – Admin Support Officer

