

Staff Consultation Forum Meeting Minutes – 1st April 2026

Present:

Director- Regulatory: Jo Doggett
HR Operations Manager: Jo Keshishian
Staff representatives: Christine Howe, Katie Thomas, Louis Franklin, Tiranah Straughan, Melanie Ferdaous
Technical Operations Manager: Mark Robinson
Assistive Technologies Client Services Manager: Amanda Dell
Union representative: Dee Levett
Notes: Ruby Lewis

Circulation: Global

Chair for Meeting: Louis Franklin

1 Apologies

Rebecca Webb, Ian Couper, Martin Trotter, Christina Corr

2 IT update

The forms for the new starter leaver and mover policy will be live from 5pm today. You will now be able to do the leaver and mover form online. Any tweaks necessary will be made later down the line. The link for the form will remain the same, so anyone who has it saved will not need to update it.

The printer roll out happened a few weeks ago. Everything was simplified as much as possible and we had very few issues.

Q: When we print hologrammed permits, the hologram is coming off on the rollers. The supplier says the issue is because the printer is running too hot.

A: There is no real solution. The heat is used to fuse the powder onto the paper and they have to be a certain heat to be able to do it. You can try feeding it via another route, but it may be that we need to look at working with the department to supply a lower capacity printer. That will need to be submitted via a change request, and we will need to look at budgets etc.

3 Inclusion Group update

The next meeting is Tuesday 28th April. It will be on Teams and there is information available on [The Hub](#) including notes from the last meeting. There will be a regular Inclusion Group spot on the staff briefing agenda going forward. The anonymous feedback form has also been introduced for each meeting.

The Race Equality week articles were very well received and the Neurodiversity Network in February also had good feedback.



4 Matters Arising from Previous Meeting

NA

5 NHC Update (including HR and Staff Wellbeing Update)

There was a short staff survey that closed last month, we had 190 responses and analysis of this is currently underway. The results will be shared.

The pay offer for April 2026 has recently been made by the National Employers Group. The proposed increase is 3.3% and this has been passed to the Unions. We are awaiting a response.

The [Electric Car Benefit Scheme](#) was recently launched. The Hub page has a recording of the webinar.

The HR team are currently busy with the implementation of the new recruitment system. Information about training will be sent to recruiting managers later this month.

Today is the first day of the new holiday year. A global email has been sent containing information on Holiday Flex and carry forward.

There is a survey on the hub to gauge interest in a [Women's Network](#). Please complete this and encourage other employees to do so.

We have entered a new contract with a different EAP provider. Details can be found on the Hub: [Employee Assistance Programme \(EAP\)](#)

Q: Why has the women's network been set up?

A: it was discussed at inclusion group. The groups usually discuss challenged and ways forward. The deadline for the survey is April 10th.

Following feedback from the Staff Briefing, we are looking at re-vamping the agenda to make it more engaging and helpful. People have shown interest in a day in the life of what staff in different areas do, and we are aiming to have more face-to-face meetings. Please come along where possible. Please contact Christine Crofts in Comms if you have any ideas for the agenda.

On the 25th March the decision for LGR was announced for some counties. A 5 unitary model has been agreed for Essex, this is interesting for Hertfordshire because it means it does not necessarily follow the idea that we will end up as a 2 unitary. Social care may be a deciding factor. It is reassuring that the government are not applying a blanket approach. We are anticipating to hear for Hertfordshire in late June or early July.



Q: Do we need to take travelling into work in office hours out of our time, and if so where do we record this? Does it need to be on our calendars?

A: Unless you are in a role where you are doing site visits, then travel to work time from your home would be your own time. Adding this to your calendars would be the preference.

Q: Does the sick leave policy need to be reviewed due to more working from home?

A: Please send the question to Hrhelp. If you are too unwell to work it needs to be taken as sickness and not annual leave or flexi. Itrent is flexible enough that a half day, or a few hours of sickness can be recorded.

Restructures – Careline CareServ Team

AD: We have various teams in Careline, I am the manager for the Administration team. We have had various restructures and the team has grown from a team of 4 to a team of over 20. It is unsustainable for me to manage that number of people. I now have two seniors on a grade 5 and they are being proposed to become team leaders on a grade 6. The element they are not currently doing is the staffing element. They will be responsible for all aspects for who is in the team, including leave, overtime and any HR issues. On the Job Profile, it has gone from being 'experienced in' to having a 'proven ability'. The restructure will mean I line manage the two Team Leaders and they will have roughly 10 staff each. One additional part is that a member of the team who is currently on a repairs contract for grade 3 will now be working to a grade 4 Job Profile doing administration and repairs. We will no longer be recruiting to the grade 3 Job Profile. There are no proposed redundancies or backfill. The consultation opened on the 23rd March and will close on the 24th April. I have had 121's with all of the team and there has been no negative feedback.

Q: Is this a straight switch on roles, will it be the same people?

A: Yes. If they had no interest, we would have recruited for them. But the idea is that they will just move up to Team Leader.

Q: Will these people have to sit an interview?

A: No, they have been job matched and there is over a 70% match which means they can be slotted into the roles without an interview.

Green Update

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

Ideas/Suggestions

Q: Is it worth having someone from Safeguarding come to talk about their new courses?

A: We could ask for it to be added to the staff briefing, a wider audience would benefit.

Q: Could we switch up the Directors that come to SCF, to get different perspectives?

A: Yes, this can be considered if IC has annual leave we can offer out to different Directors.

Any other business

None

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