

Staff Consultation Forum Meeting Minutes

Wednesday 1st July 2026

Via Teams

Present:

Director- Resources: Ian Couper

HR Services Manager: Rebecca Webb

Staff representatives: Tiranah Straughan, Louis Franklin, Christina Corr, Christine Howe, Katie Thomas, Melanie Ferdaous

Technical Operations Manager: Mark Robinson (for IT update)

Union representative: Dee Levett

Notes: Fallon Rumball-Nunan

Circulation: Global

Chair for Meeting: Louis Franklin

1 Apologies

Christine Howe, Tiranah Straughan

2 IT update

A phishing awareness campaign has recently been conducted. The results highlighted some areas for improvement and are currently being reviewed with the Director and then will be presented to Leadership Team. Appropriate follow-up measures will be implemented.

Question: Are the phishing emails the same for everyone?

Response: No. While the emails may be based on the same theme or concept, different versions are distributed to provide a more accurate assessment of user awareness and responses to phishing attempts.

3 Matters Arising from Previous Meeting

- **Training Requirements:** Concerns were raised regarding the volume and relevance of mandatory training, including both e-learning and face-to-face sessions, particularly for employees in non-public-facing roles. IC has reviewed this with the Safeguarding Team, who advised that the face-to-face training is only required once every three years and that all training requirements are considered proportionate to the level of risk associated.
- **Accessibility:** Difficulties were reported with independently accessing parts of the building, particularly the Arc. The matter has been referred to Property Services and HR for further investigation and discussion with the individual concerned to identify any appropriate support or adjustments.

4 NHC Update (including HR and Staff Wellbeing Update)

- **Pay Negotiations:** There has been no further progress regarding the pay award. Trade unions are currently balloting members on potential industrial action.
- **Probation Period:** In light of the forthcoming changes introduced through the Employment Rights Bill, particularly in relation to unfair dismissal rights, the probationary period for new starters is being amended. The standard probation period will be reduced to four months, with updated policy/guidance due to be published shortly.
- **Personal Development Morning:** Scheduled for 3 July, the morning will focus on *Navigating Change* and is designed to offer something for everyone, with a mix of short introductory sessions and opportunities for more in-depth learning.
- **LGR Change Network:** Thanks were extended to those who volunteered to participate in the LGR Change Network. The response has been very positive, and the network is expected to be established in the autumn.
- **Union LGR Update Meeting:** Presentation slides from the recent union update meeting are available and can be accessed [here](#).
- **LGR Outcome Notification:** Employees have the option to sign up to the IT text messaging service to receive notifications regarding the LGR outcome. To be added to the service, please submit a new IT incident requesting access to TextAnywhere and ensure that you include your mobile telephone number. Information will also be communicated through the usual organisational communication channels.

Question: Is that the same as the IT text messaging service used when system issues arise?

Response: Yes, this is the same IT text messaging service that is used to communicate alerts and updates relating to system issues. Employees can sign up to receive the LGR decision notification through this service, alongside communications issued through the usual channels.

Question: Do you think the situation in central government will impact the decision date?

Response: The message we have received so far is that there will be no change to the decision date. We have not been advised of any delays and will continue to communicate any updates should the position change.

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[Inclusion Group](#) Update

- Next meeting scheduled for 5 August 2026

6 Employee Queries

None

7 Green Update

[7 Sustainability Briefing July 2026](#)

8 Ideas/Suggestions

- **Future of SCF:** A meeting between SCF representatives has been arranged for 16 July to discuss the future of the SCF and consider potential next steps.
- **New Starter Catch-Up:** A representative will attend the new starter catch-up session on 2 July to provide an overview of the SCF and encourage engagement.
- **LGR Updates:** SCF previously agreed that AR was not needed at SCF unless there were key LGR updates, given a clash with another regular meeting. RW raised whether AR should attend future SCF meetings to provide updates on LGR, once the decision on number of Unitary Authorities had been confirmed. If this is agreed, meeting dates and timings may need to be reviewed to accommodate attendance. The group agreed to discuss this further at the subgroup meeting and feedback.

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Any other business

None

Next Meeting

Chair: Christina Corr

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