



Staff Consultation Meeting

5 Dec 2018

Present: Ian Couper, Kerry Shorrocks, Rebecca Webb, Vic Godfrey, Emma Jellis, Ben Glover, James Watson, Claire Morgan, Christina Corr, Dee Levett, Oliver Charter, Caitlin Bruce, Hannah Sweetman. Vaughan Watson and Louise Wileman attended for Item 3

Circulation: Global

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from David Scholes, Anthony Roche and Sue Collett

2. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

The minutes of 7th Nov were agreed as a true record.

There were no Matters Arising

3. Green Space Restructure

VW attended to update on proposed restructure to the Green Spaces Team> Due to the Council's financial position there is less capital investment in Green Spaces and there has been a Cabinet decision to reduce the number of play areas. However there is pressure from Developers of new sites that want the Council to adopt green spaces within their developments. These will be reviewed on a case by case basis to assess how they align with the green space strategy, and be refused when they don't..

The proposal is to combine the two senior manager posts into one manager; there will be one senior manager. A new apprentice will be recruited on a grade 4 – 6 career level grade. Proposal to fund ½ a post in MSU for the admin work which will be transferred.

Staff representative for the area raised concerns from the team regarding the demands on the manager and a large grade gap to team level. Unfortunately VW had already left the meeting before staff concerns were heard. The forum noted that the staff representative needs to be asked if they have anything to raise before the SD leaves the meeting.

4. NHDC Update

Stat Days allocated to 24 and 31 Dec and staff are reminded to book these off on SAP.

HTH/North Herts Museum – Settlement agreed by Cabinet and the legal side of the purchase is now proceeding.

Churchgate went to Council on 27th Nov – The scheme is highly dependant on LEP funding which will be announced in Mid Dec.

Waste Contract – Council agreed an extension of 3 months to the brown bin collections and a roll of liners for each property.

Consultation on expenses can be found <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/NHDCexpenses-allowances> Please encourage colleagues to complete

5. Pay Award

Two-year pay award was agreed last year, so the pay increase will be 2% in April. The living wage bottom loading has made it quite tricky to calculate and the increase on lower grades will be higher than 2%. The TU has been advised and have no concerns

6. IT Update

- PSN – Annual accreditation due in Jan and pre planning is taking place. Anticipating changes to length of time between password changes, possibly from 90 days to 30 days.
- Writing a new App for CSC
- Working with HR to design new electronic forms
- New App to replace SID
- Several system updates – Northgate and Civica
- Recent speed issues due to MS update on the Dell Platform. IT are working with Dell to resolve the issue.
- FOI – 45 outstanding – 747 received since Jan 2018
Data Protection – 7 outstanding - 127 received since Jan 2018
- IT have been asked to look into the fumes coming into Careline when the Diesel Generator is started.
- Body Cams have been issued to Environmental Crime Officers.
- A hearing loop has been requested in the Council Chamber. At present there are portable hearing loops available.

7. Employee Queries

Query that has previously been reported to PS with no response – Exterior letter box is not secure, post can be removed from the outside. **IC to raise with PS**

Reports of office chairs being dirty, how often are they cleaned? – **IC to raise with PS**

Dry air in the office, complaints of tickly throats and dry eyes, can plants be brought into the office to help with humidity? IC did not think plants would be a problem but would raise with PS to see if there are any issues – **IC to raise with PS**

Complaints of inconsistent treatment of homeworking set up fees – KS advised that the officers should contact HR so they can investigate.

4th Floors ladies toilet blocked – IC advised that these things may not be sorted until the end of the day unless it is an emergency, if not clear by the next day, please raise again with PS

Changes to procedures for evening meetings and keeping the building open being reviewed.

The forum would like to thank all staff involved in organising the staff Christmas party at Hitchin Town Hall for a fabulous evening. It is hoped these will continue.

8. Chair for next meeting

It was agreed to move the next meeting to the 9th Jan as several members are still on leave on 2nd Jan - Christina Corr to chair