

Staff Zoom Chat – April 2021

Office Move

We are now fully operational from the Red House site. Vehicles are located at four locations throughout Woking – Moorcroft, St Mark's, Lakers and The Red House. In addition, a few staff members have been permitted to park vehicles at their home location.

This current situation is not ideal, but it is necessary as a single site to locate all vehicles has not been identified. Areas of concern regarding vehicle location includes:

Walk-around checks -Vehicle daily walk-around checks are a legal requirement and must be completed before vehicles are driven. Completed sheets need to be returned to the main office daily; however, we appreciate that the current spread of vehicles hinders this task due to the distances involved. Therefore post boxes will be placed at Moorcroft and The Lakers site for staff to place completed sheets within. Staff will be issued with safety sheet booklets for use when conducting walk-around checks. WCT must keep completed sheets for 18 months.

Should a safety fault with a vehicle be detected during a walk-around check, staff should not drive the vehicle and immediately contact the office, which is staffed from 7:30 am.

App

Vehicle cleanliness - Staff should continue to ensure that vehicle cleanliness is maintained both inside and outside the vehicle. Staff can now take advantage of the vehicle washdown point at our garage.

Vehicle damage – Vehicle damage must be reported as soon as it occurs or as soon as it is identified.

Parking at the Red House site

Due to limited parking spaces allocated to WCT staff collecting vehicles from the Red House site must only park their cars in the space occupied by the minibus they are collecting. Should a staff member need to visit the Red House for any other reason, they should park in one of the visitor spaces near the main entrance.

Training

We now have excellent training facilities at the Red House; MiDAS refreshers have restarted, as has first aid training. Should you find it challenging to complete the first aid training at home, we can arrange for you to complete the training at the Red House.

New build

There has been a delay in the approval of the planning application for our new depot. The outcome of the planning application was due in early February, and this latest delay means that we are unlikely to receive a response until the end of June. This will inevitably delay the build process and push back our move.

Possible new work

In an effort to identify new opportunities to utilise our vehicles and provide additional staff hours during the middle of the day, we have bid on a school meal transport tender. If successful, this contract will provide up to 15 staff with additional hours during school term-time commencing 1st September 2021. We will know the outcome of this tender on the 7th May. Should you wish to volunteer for these extra hours, please contact Colin.

Surrey Choices

Surrey Choices have confirmed that not all routes will be returning and that some centres will close over the next 18 months. It is unclear which routes will be affected, but some may be redirected to other centres while others will be cancelled. Surrey Choices are assessing their requirements and are offering some transport to their customers. If a route returns which you were providing transportation for, you will be offered first refusal to return to the route before alternative staff are approached.

Hospital Hubs

Hospital hub transport is beginning to return, although this is sporadic at the moment. We are currently working with the NHS to update our GDPR requirements in order to receive email bookings for transport. It is hoped that a daily service will return over the next couple of months, and as with Surrey Choices work, those who were operating on Hub transport will have the first refusal to return to this work.

To cover all GDPR requirements, a one-page staff policy has been created, which staff will need to sign to confirm the policy has been read and understood.

EV's

We have another EV on order, which should be delivered in June. The application process for funding promised by SCC, which will permit us to buy an additional ten vehicles, has been delayed due to local elections taking place in May. We are now not expecting an update on funding until the end of June.

Garage status

The garage has been brought in-house and will no longer operate as a wholly commercial enterprise. WCT's vehicle and those of other charities and not for profit organisations will continue to be maintained at the garage. The garage will no longer provide garage services for the general public. However, WCT staff will have the option of registering up to three family cars with WCT, which can be maintained at the garage. Unfortunately, MOT testing will not be available.

Uniform

We are now well into Spring, and therefore staff can choose to wear a polo shirt in place of the white shirt and tie. Knee-length shorts can also be worn, but staff must continue to wear the issued safety shoes.

All uniform worn must be clean and presentable state. Should you require replacement items, please talk to Mark, who will provide a one for one exchange.

New Staff

To strengthen our office team we have recruited an Office Manager, Fleet Manager and most recently an Admin Vehicle Assistant. Bethany replaces Richard Rawlings, who has become a full-time driver.

Do staff want to continue with Zoom meetings, a survey will be completed to obtain employee feedback?

WCT Policies on website

Confirmation from staff that they have been made aware of this will be required. Office Manager to give further details.