

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

LOCAL JOINT PANEL – 4 APRIL 2005

REPORT BY THE SECRETARY TO THE STAFF SIDE

5(B) GRANGE PADDOCKS CAR PARK

RECOMMENDATION – that East Herts Council install a CCTV camera at Grange Paddocks in line with the original risk assessment recommendation.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 On 14 March 2005, staff started using Grange Paddocks car park, after representations to the Council for alternative parking arrangements had been rejected.
- 1.2 The number one concern expressed by the vast majority of staff about use of the car park was that of the additional time it would take to walk to and from the car park. This was followed closely by worries about personal and vehicle safety.
- 1.3 A risk assessment of the car park and journey to and from the council offices was undertaken by the Health and Safety Officer, the results of which were shared and discussed with UNISON. Some adjustments were made following consultation and both sides were satisfied that a comprehensive assessment had been carried out and that recommendations made should help to address the various problems identified.
- 1.4 However, a final version of the risk assessment was sent, in which it was observed that the recommendation to install a CCTV camera had been removed and substituted by the statement that no controls were needed since the increased use of the car park would ensure self policing of the area.

2.0 Staff Issues

- 2.1 It is particularly offensive to staff that the Council, having rejected every single request and suggestion made with regard to their parking needs, now considers that the risk to safety is so low that installation of a CCTV camera is not justified.
- 2.2 The risk may be low but are managers and the Council so insensitive to the welfare and needs of staff that a relatively inexpensive measure such as a CCTV camera cannot be put in place? It would go a long way in not only putting people's minds at rest but also in restoring some of the lost goodwill and belief in East Herts as caring employers.

3.0 Conclusions

- 3.1 All the points raised at the last meeting of the Local Joint Panel are still valid and will still be pursued. Staff are not happy about car parking arrangements and although they recognise that they may have to accept the situation for the time being, the arrangement is certainly not suitable long-term. The car park surface will not stand up to the extra wear and tear and many staff are seriously inconvenienced by the additional time on their journey to and from work.
- 3.2 The least the Council can do meanwhile is make the car park as safe as possible so that staff can be assured that not only will their vehicle be safe but more importantly that they themselves will be free from assault, abuse or violence of any kind.