

Joint Consultative Committee meeting: 10 October 2019

On October 10, 2019, we had our final Joint Consultative Committee meeting for 2019. The following issues were raised by the PSA:

1. The PSA raised the issue of mobile phones being used on site by Horticulturalists. We raised concerns that horticulturalists were anxious regarding the use of the personal mobile phones at work – the PSA advised that this is not a Correctional Centre, it is the Botanic Gardens. Staff are often contacted about work by supervisors and other members of their teams on their phones and should therefore be allowed to be use them while on duty.
2. There was discussion over flexible working practices, particularly in relation to members from the Collections team. The PSA advises flex days should be approved in a timely manner – members should not have to wait for a week for their flex leave to be approved. The PSA raised concerns that upper management is being copied unnecessarily into emails regarding flex time, causing members to feel intimidated. The PSA and management agreed that there is a need for more verbal communication of such matters and less reliance on email.
3. Recruitment for the Digitisation Project has been difficult. Two Digitisation Officer roles are yet to be filled, although temporary appointments (three months) have been made. Due to the importance of this project, the PSA argued for proper levels of funding to fill vacancies in the Collections team. Machinery of Government changes have meant that recruitment has been forced to the Deputy Secretary level across DPIE, this has made recruitment processes slower.
4. Shelley James, Manager Collections, will leave on 22 November. An Expression of Interest for this role will be advertised soon.
5. Construction of the Australian Institute of Botanical Science (AIBS) Herbarium is likely to begin in May 2020, after some project delays due to NBN issues. Completion is due in May 2021. There will be a working group subcommittee created, including PSA representatives, to deal with ongoing matters relating to the move to Mt Annan. There will be further opportunities for feedback as well as monthly drop in sessions for workers to relay their concerns to management. All members are encouraged to engage with the process, the feedback you provide is vital to creating a workplace that works for you.
6. Management acknowledged the poor results indicated by the People Matters Survey across the Gardens. Bullying, training and development and dissatisfaction with senior management were highlighted. Due to these results, management have been asked to form focus groups and act to address areas needing improvement.
7. Management will be filling Horticultural roles that have been empty on an ongoing basis.
8. The Human Resources representative for workers across the Gardens is Amie Charlett, who can be contacted at amie.charlett@planning.nsw.gov.au.
9. The PSA will be having regular, bimonthly members' meetings in the Gardens. Dates and locations for these meetings will be sent out in a subsequent bulletin.
10. The PSA proposed to hold an all staff Christmas BBQ event on site (Central Depot) on 4 December 2019. This was supported by management.

