

Rutherford and Appleton Laboratories

MERGER WORKING PARTY REPORT

3/79
Nov. 1979

The third meeting of the AL/RL Merger Working Party was held on 8 November 1979.

This report outlines the main subjects discussed and conclusions reached.

1. TRANSFERS

It was reported that following further discussions centrally, agreement has been reached on payment of the passenger supplement at the appropriate rate for a maximum of 1000 miles travel within the Chilton area whilst looking for accommodation. The equivalent in monetary terms could be paid where public transport is used.

2. VISIT TO THE CHILTON AREA

A further visit had been arranged for Wednesday, 14 November.

3. BULK TRANSFER TERMS

It was agreed that bulk transfer terms would apply to all staff who are compulsorily transferred to Chilton or any other Council establishment as a result of the merger. Permanent transfer terms will apply to staff who transfer as a result of successful applications against CVN's or who are promoted and transferred following annual reviews.

4. TRANSFERS TO THE CIVIL SERVICE

After further discussion the CSD had said that because the merger was a departmental re-organisation and not a "HARDMAN" dispersal, they could not help with transfers of Non-Industrial staff. Staff could still however apply for CS trawled posts and Manpower Section would be encouraged to continue to circulate trawls including those covering posts in shortage areas e.g. computing staff. It was still possible that CSD will consider transfers for some Industrial staff but they will need to know numbers, grades and disciplines etc before finally committing the Civil Service.

Direct approaches to local establishments in the Ditton Park area would be made when the TU side had provided the Appleton administration with a list of the establishments they wish to be contacted.

5. SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT

Much discussion had taken place on the statement and the final draft text had been given to the Employee Side for final clearance. It was expected that the statement would be published within a week.

6. TRANSFER PROBLEMS

The Employee side asked whether sufficient information was made available to staff transferred to Chilton about the site services. The Official Side replied that Mr Peter Nichols had generally been assisting staff on their arrival, and arrangements had been made for meetings with Personnel staff for some induction. Site services were available at Chilton and all transferred staff in doubt about the whereabouts of the services should ask. It was emphasised that once staff were permanently transferred their administrative needs were catered for by the Chilton Administration. If problems were encountered at Ditton Park prior to transfer the Ditton Park administration should be approached for advice.

7. TITLE FOR NEW LABORATORY

Official Side considered that there was no urgency for a new title to be agreed. Meanwhile suggestions for a new title from staff would be considered. Suggestions should be sent to the Merger Office.

8. FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS

Several aspects of flexible working hours including the Ditton Park problems were being considered by the Whitley CEM Sub-Committee and the GPC. Further consideration by the Working Party should await the outcome of these deliberations.

9. PROGRESS WITH THE MERGER

(i) Building Programme at Chilton

Work on R25 Phase I was continuing and the accommodation should be ready for occupation by June 1980. Construction of R25 Phase II and the NW Extension had commenced. Design work on R7 was virtually complete and the refurbishing of the interior would commence shortly. Council approval for the conversion of R3 would be sought shortly and would include provision for the combined Photographic and Reprographic Centre. Full consultation with the Employee Side would take place before blocks of work and staff were moved.

(ii) Progress with the IRAS Project

The antenna was being prepared for its first functional test scheduled to take place in December. In R58 the local control room was nearing completion and would be in use in December. The main Control Centre in R1 housing the ICL 2960 computer and two PDP 11 computers were all in operation. Buildings R32 and R16 were being used to house the staff transferred from Ditton Park which at present numbered around 10. In January next year a further group of IRAS staff will be transferring.

(iii) Staff in Mobile Admin. grades had been seen individually by Dr Valentine and Messrs Addison and Maxwell. The current position had been fully explained to them and in some cases Management had been able to give a view on possible timing of transfer or retirement.

(iv) The transfer of the mm wavelength test range to Chilbolton rather than to Chilton had been agreed by Professor Houghton.

(v) Staff wishing to consult Mr Maxwell during his visits to Ditton Park should contact his Secretary at Rutherford or Mr T Paterson at Ditton Park who will make the necessary arrangements.

10. PREMATURE RETIREMENT AND REDUNDANCY PROCEDURES

(i) Premature Retirement

Mr Maxwell reported that of the 9 requests for VPR received by the Merger Working Group 2 had been agreed, 1 had been withdrawn, 3 refused and 3 were still under consideration. Cases were considered as quickly as possible but it could take a few weeks before a decision was given. The main criterion for granting VPR was that a post should disappear.

(ii) Redundancy Procedure

Dr Valentine reported that the Redundancy Agreement for Industrial staff had been ratified at the last JNC meeting and suggestions had been received by Management from National Union officers on ways of treating older staff. After discussion at the GPC, Management was considering proposals which allowed for greater flexibility in redundancy terms generally. Management intended to present proposals to the Working Party on this in the not too distant future.

Mr Pickles said that Chapter 10 of the ICEM's would be printed and circulated in a matter of weeks.

11. LOCAL WHITLEY AND LJCC STRUCTURES

(i) Whitley Structure

Staff Side representatives stated that during the Merger phase, the Local Staff Sides would like the Rutherford and Appleton Laboratories Local Whitley Committee to include 5 staff representatives from Chilton and 5 staff representatives from Ditton Park. Some arrangements should continue on each site to allow staff representatives access to their Director on local issues. Written proposals on the local Whitley structure would be sent to Management shortly with a proposed target date of 1 February for the introduction of the new arrangements.

(ii) LJCC Structure

The TU Side representatives proposed that each of the present LJCC structure should remain for the time being with the addition of an observer from the other site LJCC present in case an item of common interest arises. This proposal was agreed.

12. ACCOMMODATION

(i) Mr Maxwell had written to three local authorities to see what assistance could be given to staff. So far only Newbury District Council had replied. They had difficulty in meeting local demands and therefore could not make accommodation available. They did however operate a mutual exchange scheme which may be of some use.

(ii) Estate Agents in the Chilbolton area had been visited and asked to supply particulars of accommodation in the area. Details are available in the Merger Office.

(iii) The Merger Unit had not sought to identify how many AL staff had purchased Houses from a Local Authority. Staff who envisaged a problem when selling such property on transfer should consult Mr Maxwell or Mr Paterson.

(iv) Reservation sheets for the AERE Hostel Accommodation are held in the Merger Office.

13. STAFF QUESTIONNAIRES

Statistical information on housing and transport provided by Non-Industrial staff in mobile grades was considered by the Working Party. The statistics gave only a general impression of staff intentions as stated some months ago. The TU Side representatives restated their position that without sufficient information regarding transfers/redundancy and timing they were not able to consider the proposed circulation of questionnaires to industrial staff. The Employee

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Side said that it intended to seek further information on possible transport requirements from staff and if this showed a significant need, it would ask for an appropriate service to be introduced for a trial period.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (i) Two organisations had expressed some interest in purchasing the Ditton Park site but as yet the site has not been put on the market for disposal.
- (ii) A special meeting of the Working Party to discuss the plan for transfer of work and staff has been arranged for the second week in December. It is expected the plan will be circulated to all Appleton staff by the end of the year.

16 November 1979