

Corporate Property 2020

News for Corporate Property employees

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Thank you to everyone who is continuing to work hard in these uncertain times. As new measures are introduced by Government our first priority is your health and safety and wellbeing. I am pleased to include a message from Vertas and Concertus who you will see also have health and safety and wellbeing of colleagues as a top priority.

You may have seen in the local newspapers a story about Unison criticising our decision to move services to Vertas. We do believe that the trade unions have an important role to play, but are disappointed that they have taken the action they have. There are many inaccuracies in what Unison have told the media.

You can see our response below, which we shared with all the colleagues who are transferring to Vertas.

The two joint venture companies will enable both the design service and the cleaning and caretaking service to prosper. We want to continue to provide these services to schools and other customers as not only is this a source of jobs it is also a source of income for the council. In recent years a number of schools and other customers have been lost, which threatens not only these services but also other Corporate Property activities that rely on the income that is generated. Vertas and Concertus have shown in Suffolk how they can turn this around and they have now contributed millions of pounds to the County Council to be invested in front line services.

Kind regards

Dave Massingham
Director of Property

In the news

Some of our local papers carried a story about Unison opposing the joint venture with Vertas. Here's our message to colleagues who will transfer to Vertas in September:

“The council strongly believes that creating a joint venture company with public sector owners for our cleaning and caretaking service is the best possible option for our customers and our employees, who will transfer to the new company with their employment rights protected.

“Over the last 18 months we have had regular

meetings with the trade unions and they have also been offered a continued involvement with the joint venture, identical to the one Unison has with Vertas in Suffolk.

“The council has a duty to make sure its services are the best possible value for money for council tax payers, and we believe that this arrangement will do that. All the proposals have been developed in a transparent way with significant engagement and with staff, trade unions and councillors.”

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A Message from Vertas Group Chief Executive Officer Ian Surtees

I hope you are all keeping safe and positive through this period of uncertainty. With schools planning to be fully reopened next term there is positivity for the future and a new era when Vertas Derbyshire Limited launches on 1 September 2020.

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, our focus has been to ensure we're taking care of the health, safety, and wellbeing of our colleagues. When it comes to our people's mental wellbeing during this pandemic, we have offered a range of support resources. Including an Employee Assistance Programme, which includes face-to-face counselling sessions, bereavement counselling and online GP appointments. I'm pleased that you too will be able to benefit from these colleague perks upon joining the Vertas Family.

In preparation for your new chapter at Vertas, we have recently emailed all cleaning and caretaking colleagues transferring to Vertas, inviting you to complete Induction and Health and Safety training. We're pleased that none of your training has had to go on hold and that it can be held virtually, delivered by our award-winning Health and Safety team.

Information on how to access the e-learning platform was also included in our email. If you didn't receive this communication or you have any questions or queries, please contact your line manager. If you do this training outside your normal hours you will be able to claim additional hours from Derbyshire to do this.

We are delighted to have you join the Vertas family and look forward to meeting you soon!

A Message from Concertus Managing Director Andrew Rowe

Many of our colleagues are still working from home and we will continue having regular communication with each other and clients on Microsoft Teams, as we are working business as usual and have done so since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, our office will remain closed to visitors until further notice.

We are currently gearing up for the start of September go live date where we are looking forward to welcoming our new colleagues in to the Concertus family to be part of our journey. We have been preparing as much as we can with pre-recorded training sessions, writing CV's, planning processes and developing all the detail we need to ensure the JV go live is as smooth as possible for those involved.

We are also pleased that during this time we have now increased our communication with all future Concertus employees in forums such as all staff meeting catch ups and regular team meetings'.

We look forward to you all joining us in September.