

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

LESBIAN, GAY AND BISEXUAL PEOPLE'S FORUM

Wednesday, 13 September 2006

PRESENT:	Tom	(Chair)
	Andrew	NLGBA
	L Ambrose	NBC
	Chief Inspector P Glover	Northamptonshire Police
	R Smith	Northamptonshire Police – Hate Crime Unit
	A Crowder	Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Trust
	K Sugden	NBC

ACTION

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Palethorpe and Sergeant P Colhoun.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2006, copies of which had been circulated, were agreed.

4. MATTERS ARISING NOT ALREADY ON THE AGENDA

The Chair referred to the discussion at the previous meeting as to how the Police were reportedly dealing with anti-social, and potentially homophobic, behaviour in the public houses in the town catering for the LGB community.

Chief Inspector Glover advised the Forum that his background was in dealing with equality and diversity issues and he stated that the Police were firmly committed to pursuing any reports of hate crime. Cases where this had not happened would be acknowledged by the Police and lessons would be learnt for the future. He then advised the Forum of the Pub Watch Scheme, which was an independent association of licensees who worked closely with the Police to provide a safer environment within licensed premises. It also provided a facility for information exchange between the Police and licensees. It was noted that although the Police had no jurisdiction in terms of those banned from licensed premises, licensees could request their assistance in ejecting people if necessary. The Forum then discussed the details of the specific incident that had taken place at the Boston Clipper and how it had been subsequently dealt with.

The Chair then referred to the tragic murder discussed at the last meeting and R Jones advised how the Police had dealt with it and how they had supported the community at that time.

Andrew advised of a safety issue as a result of the door policy at one licensed premises and asked whether complaints in relation to this could have a detrimental effect on their premises license. Chief Inspector Glover explained that door staff now needed to be licensed and that any problems in relation to door policies or staff should be reported to the Police Licensing Section.

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| Agreed : | (1) That any problems with door policies or door staff be reported to Mark.Worthington@northants.police.uk. | All |
| | (2) That Chief Inspector Glover ask to Mark Worthington explore a means of reporting such incidents to the Licensing Section generally, rather than to him personally. | CI Glover |
| | (3) That Andrew place this information on the NLGBA website. | Andrew |

In conclusion Chief Inspector Glover reiterated the Police's commitment to dealing with hate crime and a willingness to work with the community to resolve any issues that may arise.

Annual Event

L Ambrose advised that during the last few days she had received the contact details for a few people who wished to be involved in the Forum as a result of the mailing via NLGBA and therefore they may be attending future meetings.

5. AIM 4 NORTHAMPTON VISION CONSULTATION

K Sugden advised the Forum of the background to the Vision Consultation Exercise and the importance of the Borough Council ensuring that it was providing what the people of Northampton wanted. She then explained the consultation process that had been undertaken so far and requested the feedback of the Forum on the draft Vision circulated.

The Forum commented as follows :-

- The NBC often took the blame for the shortcomings of other organisations, an example being the Street Doctor.
- The "Be Safe" element was particularly important for the LGB community – The Chair had taken part in a safety walk to help identify potential risks.
- NBC did not sell its successes well enough. It needed to work with the local press to ensure they publicised good news as well as bad.
- Northampton had a long and interesting history that should be used to the town's advantage.
- People of Northampton needed to see action and not just consultation.
- The Bus Station and underpasses were in a poor state which must be addressed as this was often the first impression people had of the town.
- Consideration needed to be given to alternative options for filling the vacant office space above the Bus Station eg. For use by young people.
- The "Be a City" element of the vision would need a lot of work as many residents of Northampton still saw it as a market town.

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| Agreed : | (1) That the Vision be E Mailed to the NLGBA so it can be circulated to their members for comment. | KS |
| | (2) That comments be E Mailed to onevision@northampton.gov.uk | All |
| | (3) That L Ambrose raise the issue in relation to Street Doctor with Councillor Caswell, the Portfolio Holder. | LA |

6. CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS SURVEY AND EVENT - UPDATE

L Ambrose circulated the results of the Civil Partnerships Survey that had been sent to members of the Northampton LGB Forum. An information sheet giving details of civil partnership service providers was circulated for information.

It was noted that there had been a lot of interest in the Civil Partnerships Fair and the Guildhall Office would be liaising with the Chronicle & Echo concerning coverage of the event. As those attending were not paying it was suggested that the Forum consider whether they should be asked to make a donation to charity. Another consideration was whether the Forum felt that the event should be open to all.

- Agreed :**
- (1) That, in an effort not to deter companies from attending, they should not be asked to make a charitable donation.
 - (2) The Civil Partnerships Fair be open to all.

7. POLICIES ON HIV - HEALTH CENTRES AND HEALTH SERVICE ORGANISATIONS

Ann Crowder from the Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Trust advised of her role in relation to equalities and diversity and explained some of the work that she was involved in. She acknowledged that Health was some way behind Local Government in terms of equality and diversity and advised that she was the only officer in the County with this responsibility. The Trust had previously been focussing on race equality issues but now good progress had been made in that area, they would be looking at other equality issues. She then asked for Forum for suggestions as to areas on which the Trust needed to focus. The Forum suggested :-

- Access to mental health services for all minority communities.
- Consideration of the Trusts HIV policies that related to employees.
- The need for GP practices to be more aware of discrimination issues.
- The support given to those visiting Northampton who are unexpectedly admitted to hospital and they have no one else locally to assist with their care.

Andrew suggested that A Crowder meet separately with the NLGBA to discuss their concerns, particularly in relation to access to health care services, and A Crowder welcomed this suggestion.

A Crowder referred to the to the recent changes in law in relation to Civil Partnerships and advised that the guidance was not explicit about next of kin rights. However the Trust, in the spirit of the law, allowed next of kin rights to civil partners. The Forum acknowledged that this issue needed to be investigated as soon as possible.

- Agreed :** (1) **That anyone wishing to raise further issues with Ann Crowder could contact her on Ann.Crowder@nht.northants.nhs.uk** **All**
- (2) **That A Crowder provide information in relation to the Trusts HIV Policies for employees.** **AC**

L Ambrose referred to previous discussions at the Forum concerning Medigold and the Borough Council policy on the disclosure of HIV information in relation to the recruitment process. H Crabtree had advised at a previous meeting that he had been intending to work on the policy later in the year, hopefully by September 2006. However due to the number of issues he was having to deal with it was now hoped that this could be done by the end of the year. Andrew had been expressing his concerns in relation to the confidentiality of the process and Medigold's policy on disclosure for some time now, and it appeared that little progress was being made.

- Agreed :** **That a letter be sent to Howard Crabtree on behalf of the Forum expressing concern at the length of time it was taking to resolve this issue and when he anticipated being able to report back to the Forum.** **LA**

Further to the Meeting – Howard Crabtree has confirmed he will attend the January 2007 Meeting of the Forum and he apologies for the delay.

Andrew referred to the discussion at the last meeting in relation to the HIV policies at the Borough Council's health gyms and confirmed that he had requested clarification of the policies that were in place.

- Agreed :** **That the NBC Leisure Services Dept be requested to provide their HIV policies relating to the health gyms.** **LA**

Further to the Meeting – Ian Redfern has been contacted for this information.

8. INFORMATION EXCHANGE

Commemoration Event

The Chair advised that the Boston Clipper were holding an event on Sunday 17 September 2006 focussing on community safety issues. The event would also be in commemoration of the victim of the murder discussed at the last meeting. It was noted that the Mayor, Assistant Chief Constable and the NLGBA Chair would all be attending.

Channel 4 Documentary Series

L Ambrose circulated information advising that Channel 4 were looking for families to take part in an observation documentary series to show what family life was like in Britain. Anyone who wished to be involved in the programme was asked to contact Channel 4 on 020 7033 3191 or e-mail real-lives@fireflyproductions.tv.

Money for Youth Scheme

L Ambrose explained the Money for Youth Scheme and advised that there was

£100,000 available to provide facilities for young people provided they were schemes developed and supported by young people themselves. Ideas were being encouraged from community groups and the Chair suggested that the University also be encouraged to participate. It was noted that a meeting of the Northampton Youth Forum would be held on 7 December 2006 to shortlist the schemes put forward.

Agreed : That L Ambrose contact the University about the Scheme.

LA

Further to the Meeting – Various people at the University have been contacted with the information.

9. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION AT FUTURE MEETINGS

It was agreed that the topics for discussion at future meetings should include:

- Civil Partnerships – Health Services – next of kin rights
- Medigold HIV Policy
- HIV Policy at NBC Health Gym Facilities (Head of Leisure Services to be invited to attend)
- Holocaust Memorial
- Co-Chair Elections
- The progress the Borough Council are making on undertaking Equality Impact Assessments

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting was planned for 9 November 2006 which was a Thursday. However, as the meetings were normally held on Wednesdays it was requested that the date of the next meeting be changed to 8 November 2006.

AGREED: That the date of the next meeting of the Forum be changed to 8 November 2006.

All

Further to the Meeting - **8 November 2006 at 6.30pm** is confirmed as the new date for the next meeting.

M5027

Minute Annex

Guidance Notes on Stonewall's Web-site (as at 5th October 2006)

Next of kin

The introduction of the Civil Partnership Act means that civil partners are automatically entitled to the same next of kin rights as married couples.

The term 'next of kin' is widely used, but there is no statutory definition. In practice the general rule has been to recognise spouses and blood relatives as next of kin - this now extends to civil partners.

Although the term is vague, hospitals are frequently loath to give information to anyone other than those they regard as next of kin.

Given the development of case law in other areas we can see nothing that need prevent a same-sex partner describing his or herself as next of kin, although this may not always be accepted.

In relation to medical treatment, outside the mental health field an adult is the only person who can give valid consent to the administration of health care. English law does not recognise rights of proxy consent on behalf of an adult.

In cases where a patient is unable to give consent themselves healthcare professionals are obliged to treat a patient in accordance with his or her best interests. In reality they would undoubtedly discuss the position with partners or relatives, so establishing that you should be treated as next of kin is important.

In a worse-case scenario a same-sex partner not in a civil partnership could be excluded from all major decisions about treatment and we have been notified of instances where this has happened.

Minute Annex

Relates to item 7 in the minutes

Original Message-----

From: Claire McNab

Sent: 05 October 2006 15:09

To: Lindsey Ambrose

Subject: HIV Policy

Further to our telephone conversation this afternoon I confirm that Leisure Services do not have a specific policy for HIV issues.

We would obviously at all times comply with all NBC Policies and Procedures and within our Normal Operation Procedures/Emergency Action Plan have procedures for dealing with Faecal Contamination, Diarrhoea, Blood and Vomit.

For your information many of our staff have also attended a British Red Cross Intensive First Aid Course and issues around HIV would broadly be covered within this.

I hope this is sufficient for your needs.

Claire McNab
Operations Manager