

**NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**LESBIAN, GAY AND BISEXUAL PEOPLE'S FORUM**

**Wednesday, 18 July 2007**

**PRESENT:**

Tom (in the Chair)	Individual
Councillor Church (Co-Chair)	NBC
Paul Colhoun	Northants Police
Lindsey Ambrose	NBC
Andrew Bewers	NLGBA

**1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

L.Ambrose reported that Councillor Church was the new co chair of this forum. Everyone present then introduced themselves in turn.

**2. APOLOGIES**

There were none.

**3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14 MARCH 2007**

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2007 were agreed.

**4. MATTERS ARISING NOT ALREADY ON THE AGENDA**

Reference was made to item 4 regarding Town Centre Development and it was noted that A J Gray was happy to come to the next meeting to have a further discussion with the group.

Reference was then made to the International Day Against Homophobia and the fact that the NLGBA had organised a minute's noise on the Guildhall steps. This had proved successful and the NLGBA were committed to do the same again next year. Andrew stated that next year those taking part would walk to County Hall as well to ensure that the County also got a rainbow flag.

In response to a question from Tom regarding various County Council Highways updates L Ambrose advised that she had so far been unsuccessful in getting information from Highways but would continue to chase.

**5. CHANGES RE STRUCTURES OF MAGHRAHS, NIAG AND HATE CRIMES FORUM**

Andrew circulated a note regarding the changes in the structures of MAGRAH, NIAG and the Hate Crimes Forum stating that there had been work in progress in the last few months towards rationalising the structures in relation to hate crime. He stated that this would culminate in a strategic County Hate Crime Forum. Also a number of groups would be formed around various areas of work and operational groups would be set up to deal with specific issues around hate crime. He stated that there would be two operational Hate Crime Forums namely Northamptonshire West and Northamptonshire North. The last meeting of MAGRAH in its old format would take place the following week and the existing membership would be merged into the two forums accordingly. This then led onto some discussion in terms of where reports from the Midsummer Meadow Working Party would best be submitted as it used to report to NIAG. Some comment was made that perhaps the reports could be made to this Forum or to the Police Liaison Committee but it was considered that this needed further consideration and it was agreed that the issue be kept on the agenda for further discussion at the next meeting.

## **6. TOWN CENTRE: UPDATE**

L Ambrose circulated a note headed Central Area Action Plan Update for the group's information in terms of the latest position regarding the town centre developments. It was noted that a new Interim Lead Officer had now been appointed who was reviewing the work to date and the work programme. Tom commented that all Forums needed to be kept updated with regard to town centre developments.

## **7. CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS AND WEDDINGS EVENT: UPDATE**

L Ambrose advised that this year's event would take place on 3 November between 10.00am and 3.00pm in the Guildhall and that the Guildhall office were currently liaising with the various people involved with the event. The event was to be run on a non-commercial basis to enable small businesses to take part and a resource pack had been produced and distributed. Information was also available regarding companies and businesses that performed civil partnerships. Comment was made as to the possibility of getting community involvement in terms of using the town's fashion and music students. It was agreed that the Mayor should be invited to this event.

## **8. HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL: UPDATE**

Andrew gave an update on this item advising that plans were in progress for 2008. The Ann Frank exhibition had been booked for February 2009. L Ambrose commented that there was to be a balloon launch at Sixfields in the spring the idea being that people would use the balloon as a symbol to launch their dreams. It was noted that two survivors of the Holocaust had been identified who wished to be involved with the memorial event and it was noted that this year a new compere was needed.

## **9. INFORMATION EXCHANGE**

Andrew took this opportunity to mention Midsummer Meadow and the various issues there that had been discussed by the working party. He referred to the problems following the closure of the gates to the meadow and also touched upon

discussions regarding the future of the Midsummer Meadow site and a recent planning application for a floating restaurant which had apparently been turned down. Some general debate on the issues and problems regarding the Midsummer Meadow site then ensued it being noted that this group would be kept updated on the situation.

## **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

In response to a question regarding the HIV Policy and the Pre-Employment and Health Questionnaire it was noted that the issue had been dealt with but that the item could be placed on the agenda for the next meeting so that the Forum could be formally updated.

Andrew referred to the discussion on the IVF Policy earlier in the year and sought assurance that the policy had been adjusted in accordance with the Forum's wishes as nothing formal had been received back. It was agreed that this would be looked into.

Again Andrew questioned the discussion regarding the Housing Strategy document earlier in the year and sought clarification that this Forum's comments had been incorporated in terms of it taking into account the concerns expressed regarding Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual People.

Reference was made to a report that had been produced by a Disabled Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Group in Leeds and it was agreed that as an item of information this could be placed on the agenda for the next meeting to discuss the issues it raised. It was suggested that it might also be useful to pass the document to the Disabled Peoples Forum.

It was noted that the initiative that had been carried out by a number of schools in terms of anti-homophobic bullying in schools was now drawing to a close and that perhaps it would be useful to get Joe Wood from NIAG to come along to speak to this Forum. This was agreed.

L Ambrose advised that the Youth Festival that had been scheduled to take place in Abington Park which was being organised by the Youth Forum had been postponed due to poor weather but that weather permitting it was due to take place this coming Saturday in Abington Park. Should the event be rained off again then organisers were going to try to move as many activities as possible into The Great Hall in the Guildhall.

## **11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting was scheduled for 12 September 2007 at 6.30pm in the Holding Room at the Guildhall and that future meeting dates were scheduled for Thursday 8 November 2007, Thursday 10 January 2008, Tuesday 11 March 2008 and Tuesday 17 June 2008.

The meeting concluded at 7.45pm.

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