

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

Wednesday, 8 November 2006

PRESENT:

Tom	(Chair)
Andrew	NLGBA
L.Ambrose	NBC
S.Silver	NBC
Sgt P.Colhoun	Nptonshire Police
Dennis	NLGBA
L.Hamilton	Nptonshire PCT

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

There were none.

3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 September 2006, copies of which had been circulated, were agreed.

4. MATTERS ARISING NOT ALREADY ON THE AGENDA

- (A) Reference was made to the discussion on policies on HIV – Health Centres and Health Service Organisations and to the second action point advising that A Crowder would provide information in relation to the Trust's HIV policies for employees. L Ambrose advised that she had not received this as yet.
- (B) Under the same item, Tom enquired as to the progress in terms of the letter being sent to H Crabtree and his attendance at this meeting. L Ambrose advised that H Crabtree would be attending the January meeting to speak on this issue

5. HATE CRIMES REPORTING AND COMMUNITY CONFIDENCE

Paul Colhoun reported feedback from the special NIAG meeting that had been held in late October relating to homophobic incidents. He commented that what had come out of this was an awareness that the Police and the NLGBA had a reasonable working relationship and a good contact and liaison. However there were groups where relationships needed to be built upon further. He stated that

they were currently working with licensees from some of the local gay venues.

Surgeries had been held at one of the venues but had not been very well attended and so it was felt that there was the need to persevere with this in the hope that it would improve and that there would be better liaison.

S Silver commented that finding a safe and accommodating venue in which to engage with the LGB community had been a long standing issue with this Group. Often the community felt vulnerable attending meetings but preferred to maintain contact by way of information being mailed out to them.

Reference was then made to the door policy at licensed premises.

P Colhoun stated that any issues or concerns regarding licensed premises should be fed through to the Borough Council's Licensing Officers so that any issues could be pursued (tel:01604 838750, email: licensing@northampton.gov.uk).

6. EQUALITY STANDARD AND NBC PROGRESS

S Silver reported on this item advising that the Council's plan was to meet its obligations under Equality Standards for Local Government. The Council was currently at level 1 of the five levels. The Council's Equalities Policy had been updated and an Equality Steering Group had been created. Managers had received training preparing them to carry out impact assessments and all departments would be assessed in terms of their equality impact. The Service Plans needed to be in place and at the moment the Council was preparing its templates for these Service Plans. Core values had already been established. Comment was made that engaging the workforce in this process was possibly something that the Equality Steering Group needed to have on its agenda. S Silver commented that all service area reviews had been withdrawn as a result of the CPA except for Area Partnerships and Forums so the engagements that were taking place were notable by their exception.

7. CO CHAIR ELECTIONS UPDATE

L Ambrose advised that the postal process had taken place in terms of the Co-Chair elections for the various Forums and it was time for LGB Forum to do its election for Co Chairs. It was noted that the postal process of voting for the Forums would be used again this time.

8. CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS EVENT UPDATE

L Ambrose circulated copies of the brochure and pictures that had been produced with regard to the Civil Partnerships and Wedding Fair which had been held at The Guildhall the previous Saturday, 4 November. The event had proved to be very successful and the brochure listed a whole range of service providers that had responded to the survey and who had replied that they welcomed business from couples including for Civil Partnerships. Andrew commented that he felt it was a very worthwhile event and the Group placed on record their thanks to Lindsey

Ambrose for all her hard work and to the Guildhall Office who had provided a lot of support in helping to make the event a success.

9. HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL 2007 UPDATE

S Silver reported on this item advising that things were progressing and that Stuart McQuaid had agreed to compare the event which would ensure a good LGB content. It was now a process of firming up on the programme and sending out invitations in December. He added that the programme gave organisations the opportunity to make whatever contribution to the event that they felt able.

10. INFORMATION EXCHANGE

(A) Lesley Hamilton, Assistant Director Public Health for Northamptonshire PCT, was introduced to the meeting to speak on the proposed eligibility criteria for IVF treatment in Northamptonshire. Andrew commented that the reason for wanting this on the Agenda had come out of a media release on 30 August which had highlighted a clear discrimination in terms of the criteria. He pointed out that one of the eligibility criteria was that the couple would be in a stable heterosexual relationship for at least twelve months. L Hamilton stated that funding for IVF treatment in Northamptonshire had been temporarily suspended and that when the service resumed, most likely during 2007, there would be new criteria to help the NHS decide which couples should be eligible for treatment. Northampton PCT were currently asking for comments and were therefore publicly consulting on the eligibility criteria for IVF treatment in Northamptonshire before finalising the criteria prior to the service resuming. She briefly explained the proposals and criteria for when the service was resumed. In addition the couple needed to meet the following eligibility criteria namely:

the female partner will be aged between 31 and 39 years of age

the couple will be in a stable heterosexual relationship for at least twelve months

the couple will have no living children from their current relationship, also one partner would have no living children from a previous relationship and the other partner would have no more than two living children

neither partner will be sterilised

the female partner will be rubella immune

neither partner will have a body mass index greater than thirty

the couple will have had no previous cycles of IVF treatment during their relationship, including private treatment or treatment partly or fully funded by the NHS

where the female partner had already had surgery to repair damaged fallopian tubes, eighteen months would have passed without conception

It was noted that the PCT planned to review the eligibility criteria early in the New Year and was inviting comments on the current draft criteria and suggestions as to how it might be amended to ensure that access to IVF funding and treatment was as equitable as possible. Comments could be sent either in writing or by email to Bridget Peat, Communications Manager, Highfield, Cliftonville Road, Northampton by no later than 30 December.

The eligibility criteria was then generally discussed by the Group, with it being reiterated that it was the second point where this group had particular concerns. Andrew stated that it was really just a case of taking out the word heterosexual and that would resolve the problem. In terms of the public consultation, a further comment from this Group was that whatever became available next year should be available to all regardless of sexual orientation.

ACTION: Andrew to liaise with L Ambrose to get a response drafted and sent out on behalf of this Group.

- (B) S Silver referred to correspondence, copies of which were circulated, entitled "A Community Vision for Northampton to 2031". He stated that in order to progress Vision activity a conference was being held on 5 December aimed at LSP partners at Kings Park Conference Centre. The Vision would be submitted to Cabinet in January and would underpin a community strategy.

11.ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

12.ITEMS FOR NEXT AND FUTURE MEETINGS

It was noted that two items for consideration at the next meeting would be Civil Partnerships for a Spring Fair and that H Crabtree would be bringing an update on the HIV policy.

13.DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting was scheduled for 8 January 2007.

The meeting concluded at 8:00 pm.