

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

RACE EQUALITY FORUM

Thursday, 11 January 2007

PRESENT:

S.Silver (in the chair)	NBC
L.Ambrose	“
M.Felix	NREC
R.Begum	Victim Support
C.Mistry	Vishwa Hindu Parishad
J.Campbell	Inspiration FM
T.Round	Princes Trust
A.Ahmed	Somali Community
C.Owusu-Akuffo	Divine Prayer Society
S.Owusu-Akuffo	“

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

In the absence of a Chair it was agreed that S Silver assume the chair for this meeting. He welcomed everyone to the meeting and then everyone introduced themselves in turn.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Malpas, V Dumbleton, N Aggarwal and M Walker.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2006, copies of which had been previously circulated, were agreed subject to correctly spelling Patel Samaj.

4. MATTERS ARISING NOT ALREADY ON THE AGENDA

J Campbell gave feedback with regard to a couple of young people who had attended the Youth Forum meeting in December when the Youth Forum had shortlisted ideas to be turned into real projects. She stated that they had been invited at short notice but had expressed some concerns following the meeting in terms of their attendance. Whilst they were not put off by the experience they did not feel wholly comfortable with it. S Silver explained what the meeting was about and the purpose for which it was set up. He explained that it had been set up for the Youth Forum to make the assessments on the ideas which had been submitted under the Money 4 Youth Initiative. The intention was not to actively engage those

young people who had come along as the audience in this process but rather for them to observe the process. J Campbell commented that the way it was worded had led the young people who had raised the concern to believe that they could come along to the meeting and possibly make further presentation on their application. L Ambrose stated that this was the first time anything like this exercise had been carried out and it was really a learning process and that lessons would be learnt from the feedback as was the case in this instance. It was also noted that all the young people who had sent in ideas to the scheme had been sent a certificate from the Mayor to thank them for sending in their ideas which had so far been shortlisted and rejected. Work was continuing to shortlist and develop ideas. She asked that J Campbell feed this information back to those two young people accordingly.

L Ambrose then advised on the next stage of the Money for Youth process stating that there was further funding and therefore the opportunity for the submission of further applications from April 2007 to March 2008. She circulated a poster that had been produced with regard to this. It was noted that the scheme was driven by the young people themselves.

J Campbell then referred to page 2 paragraph 4(c) of the minutes of the last meeting regarding the issue of education and BME young people's achievements and stated that she too had not been able to make contact with L Green. Also she referred to the conference on 23 June 2007 and expressed an interest in how Inspiration FM could assist to help promote the event. It was noted that she would need to contact M Walker with regard to this.

(A) HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL 2007 UPDATE

S Silver circulated copies of the final draft of the programme of events for the Holocaust Memorial 2007 event. He stated that invitations to the event had gone out to all members of the Area Partnerships and Forums. He added that any group who wanted to organise an event or to join in the programme was very welcome and that he could still add to the programme but this needed to be finalised the following day.

(B) FORUM MEMBERSHIP AND NETWORKS UPDATE

L Ambrose advised that the lists were currently being reviewed and that she had some new contacts which would be included on the list and asked that members of the group let her know if they were aware of any more contacts that needed to be added. T Round from the Prince's Trust stated that this was his first attendance at this group and that he had not been aware of the various groups until he had received an e-mail advising him of the Borough Council's various community forums.

J Campbell commented that it would be helpful to have an item on a future agenda "Future Work Plan of this Group". It was noted that this was in fact an item for discussion later in the agenda.

(C) COMMUNITY CO CHAIR ELECTIONS UPDATE

L Ambrose advised that it had been agreed that the postal voting process would take place again and letters would be sent out after this meeting with a report to the next meeting.

(D) COMMUNITY EVENTS - JOINT FORUMS WORKING UPDATE

L Ambrose advised that there had been a whole range of events across the Forums and they had been well received.

(E) COMMUNITY COHESION CONSULTATION WORK FEEDING INTO COUNTYWIDE RESPONSE

S Silver advised that the Borough Council had organised a couple of workshops with regard to this issue and that Northampton Borough Council was part of a county-wide group looking at community cohesion. As reported previously Central Government was looking to identify a national picture of good practice and perspectives and was seeking views via consultation and there was a document available with regard to this. L Ambrose in response to a query from J Campbell offered to e-mail her the paperwork. It was noted that individuals were welcome to make their own comments on the consultation.

5. EQUALITY STANDARD AND NBC - PROGRESS UPDATE BY S.SILVER

S Silver advised that the Equalities Standards for Local Government was a national programme and Councils could be measured on a standard 1 to 5 to show how well they were progressing. Currently Northampton Borough Council was at level 1 but was working to progress this. In response to a question from M Felix it was noted that the Borough Council did not have a dedicated Equalities Officer at present but the Corporate Equality Steering Group was looking at this. S Silver advised that further updates on the Equalities Standard would be reported as it progressed.

6. COUNCIL FOR ETHNIC MINORITY COMMUNITIES - PRESENTATION BY M.BROWN

It was noted that under this item there was due to be a presentation by M Brown but as he was not present this item was deferred and it was agreed that he be invited to the next meeting to make his presentation.

7. INFORMATION EXCHANGE

R Begum asked that an item "Northampton Travellers Action Group" be put as an item on the next agenda so that representatives could attend and brief the meeting about this group.

R Begum then suggested that she could bring a breakdown on BME Police Staff in terms of ranking etc to a future meeting of this group for information. This was agreed.

R Begum then stated that Victim Support were recruiting for volunteers and that this commenced on the 25th of the month and she asked that any interest be directed to her.

T Round then gave a brief overview on the work of the Prince's Trust stating that the Trust had three programmes in particular where ethnic minority groups were under-represented. He felt there was the scope to encourage their achievement and would welcome applications from young ethnic people. He stated that the Trust was able to give grants up to £500 to young people who wanted to access training. He added that ethnic minorities were not proportionately represented so anything he could do to promote this would be welcome. J Campbell agreed to liaise with T Round after the meeting so that she could assist and give publicity through Inspiration FM.

A Ahmed then referred to item 9(e) of the previous minutes which dealt with new arrivals strategy stating that there was an issue in that there were several groups within the Somali community and whilst there had been engagement with some of the groups the Somali community were not happy with the engagement process and did not appear to be currently involved with this process. It was noted that S Jobbins was the person to liaise with in this instance. As a forum the comments could only be noted and all the groups of that community encouraged to engage with this forum.

M Felix referred to the last meeting and to the fact that Race Action Northampton were looking for alternative offices as they were having to move out of their offices in Hazelwood Road. He stated that they had now acquired new premises namely the Old Bank in Kettering Road. Also sharing those premises would be the Chair of the Somali Forum. It was hoped that Race Action Northampton would be in the new offices by the end of the month.

L Ambrose advised that there was a Housing Strategy consultation meeting in the Guildhall on 17 January 2007 at 2.00pm and 7.00pm.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

C Mistry from the Indian Hindu Welfare Organisation advised of a number of events that the organisation were putting on at the Hesketh Centre. For example there were religious musical events every second Friday of the month. He also advised that a project encouraging young people of all ethnicities to learn the game Kabbadi was looking to be set up at The Academy and that this was one of the outcomes of the Money for Youth scheme. The Kabbadi project would be led by Northampton's team of young people who were second in the national tables for the game. The news about this project was welcomed.

9. ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING TO INCLUDE

It was noted that these would include Community Co-Chair Announcement, Forum Annual Work Plan and as mentioned earlier an Overview from the Northampton Travellers Action Group and the deferred item Council for Ethnic Minority Communities Presentation by M Brown.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING 8TH MARCH 2007

It was noted that the next meeting was scheduled for 8 March 2007 at the Guildhall.

The meeting concluded at 8.20pm.