

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

Tuesday, 11 March 2008

PRESENT:

Tom (in the chair)	Individual
Dennis	Individual
Paul Colhoun	Northants Police
Lindsey Ambrose	NBC
Andrew Bowers	NLGBA
Tina Harvey	Individual
R.Woodhouse	Individual

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Everyone present introduced themselves in turn.

2. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Church.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2008 subject to the inclusion of Andrew Bowers on the list of those present were agreed.

4. MATTERS ARISING NOT ALREADY ON THE AGENDA

L. Ambrose referred to the works in Becketts Park and Midsummer Meadow as reported at the last meeting advising that as far as she was aware the works had gone ahead with no problems. Andrew commented that the works in Becketts Park by the tennis courts had to be commended.

L. Ambrose then referred to the Community Engagement Strategy Consultation under item 8 advising that this had now been adopted.

The group were then advised of two additional items of business which Andrew would raise later on the agenda.

5. IDAHO - THE INTERNATIONAL DAY

A.Bowers stated that he was just flagging this up to see whether the group wished to support this day. He reminded them of last year's event which started with a minute's noise on the Guildhall steps. The County had expressed a wish to be

included more in this year's event and so it was being proposed that the group would assemble again on the Guildhall steps and then proceed to the County Council offices in George Row making as much noise as possible as they progressed.

6. HATE CRIMES UPDATE

P Colhoun gave an update on hate crimes. He made particular reference to a couple of incidents upon which he elaborated. Reference was also made to issues concerning the venues of the Boston Clipper and K2. He noted that it had been reported at the last meeting that K2 had been reopened. However it had now closed again. Mention was then made to the Hate Crimes Scrutiny Panel that had recently been set up and Andrew stated that he had been invited to go along to the Panel meetings and he welcomed this.

Tina Harvey then expressed her concerns that there was a minority in the community that were not being represented on the forums i.e. in that sex workers had been victims of hate crimes and that there was no forum where they were currently represented. She stated that she had set up a National Campaign for Sex Workers and elaborated further upon this. The group considered that this was perhaps an issue that could be placed on a future agenda for this forum to discuss. Reference was also made to the SWAN project (Sex Workers Around Northampton) and that the co-ordinator of this project could also be invited to the meeting. Another issue that could be placed on the agenda for a future meeting was drugs in the gay community and comment made that the agenda for 17 June which was the next meeting could have a health related theme.

7. HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL PLANNING AND ANNE FRANK FESTIVAL UPDATE

L Ambrose advised that the Anne Frank exhibition was coming to Northampton in 2009 and outlined some activities that were being organised around that event. She stated that in conjunction with this they were looking to see whether they could fund a play writing and a drama project to run alongside the exhibition. This was all in its very early stages at the moment however in terms of the Holocaust Memorial event a theme for next year was still being considered.

8. DELAPRE ABBEY - UPDATE

Tom stated that he had asked for this item to be placed on the agenda to make the forum aware of the Delapre Abbey Options Appraisal. He stated that there had been a public consultation on this in terms of the future of Delapre Abbey which was due to close in April but he felt that it was important to make the forums aware of the appraisal so that they could contribute to the consultation accordingly. He added that Delapre Abbey was a major asset to the town and this would be even more so once it had been refurbished. He stated that he would email some information on this out to forum members.

9. ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

As discussed above it was agreed that items for the next meeting on 17 June would include Sex Worker Needs, Drugs and the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Community and Gay Venues.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

As referred to above Andrew reported on two additional items of business both of which were to do with Customer Services Equality Issues.

The first was with regard to The Angel of the North and the fact that this was the tenth anniversary of The Angel of the North in Gateshead and to mark this the town had run a competition to allow ten couples to renew their wedding vows under the wings of the angel. However when it was advertised on the website it was for a bride and groom and therefore did not give equal rights to same sex couples. When this was pointed out to those running the competition they extended the deadline and extended the ten couples to twenty to include civil partners.

The other issue of business was with regard to sperm donation and Andrew circulated an email and information on sperm donation. Andrew then outlined the background to the issue and to the document from Care Fertility which listed a number of groups from which they would not recruit donors which included homosexual and bisexual men. Andrew stated that he had written formally saying that they were acting unlawfully on their website and he was asking this forum to write formally endorsing this. It was agreed that the co-chairs would write a letter on behalf of the forum in conjunction with Andrew accordingly.

NB

Further to the meeting discussions have taken place where it was decided that it would be more appropriate for the sex workers issue to be considered outside of this forum. As such the agenda items for the June meeting will be changed in discussion with forum members and not as discussed at the meeting.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING -17 JUNE 2008

It was noted that the next meeting was scheduled for 17 June 2008.

The meeting concluded at 7.40pm.

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