

Northampton Borough Council

Northampton Pensioners' Forum

Thursday, 15 December 2011

People at the meeting: R Rumsey (Chair), E Henry, G Bartley, U Johnson, D Smith, R Gibbs, J Rawlings, B Nichols, M Hill, L Percival. M Dyer - Atkins, J Forrest - Smith, R Godon.

Officers at the meeting Bill Edwards – Community Safety Partnership
Emma Garratt – Democratic Services

1. WELCOMES AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and the forum members took the opportunity to introduce themselves.

2. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

Matters Arising

The Chair explained that the Older Peoples Health Forum meetings would continue and feedback given with regards to changes to the Health Service

3. APOLOGIES FROM PEOPLE WHO CAN'T MAKE IT TO THE MEETING

Apologies were received from Councillor Oldham, Lindsey Ambrose, David Hewitt, Harry Tuttle, Hazel Tuttle and Monica Lewis.

4. TAXI AGE POLICY CONSULTATION

A representative from the Community Safety Partnership spoke about a consultation that was being carried out about the age of Taxi's and Private Hire vehicles following a debate by Councillors at a Licensing Committee. He highlighted the main considerations being considered which included:

- Introducing an age limit for Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles
- Increasing engine capacity from 1400c to 1600c

The forum discussed whether they considered older vehicles to be more of a risk to passengers than new vehicles and whether the increase in engine capacity would increase fares as way for taxi drivers to cover the costs of petrol and diesel.

A questionnaire was circulated and the forum were asked to put down any comments that they thought would be relevant about the consultation and post it back in the free post envelope.

The Chair thanked the representative from the Community Safety Partnership.

5. FIRE SERVICE CONSULTATION

A representative from the Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Team presented a report and distributed their Strategic Plan. Included in the information was an explanation, which outlined how the Fire and Rescue Service had been performing in relation to road traffic accidents (RTA's) and fires. She informed the forum that the Service was legally obliged to provide the strategic plan by Government and provided an integrated Risk Management Strategy and it also provided a breakdown of how their budget was spent.

The forum members were informed that the Chief Fire Officer was also working with the east Midlands Ambulance Service and other partner organisations. A questionnaire was circulated and the members were asked to complete it, should they wish to. It was noted that the questionnaire had been sent out to over 2,500 random addresses to ask for feedback with regards to providing and improved service.

It was explained that the Fire Service was providing Home Fire Safety Checks, safety advice and some free smoke alarms. It was noted that some of the criteria for receiving free smoke alarms had recently changed and that whilst there used to be a blanket on distributing free smoke alarms, budget cuts had resulted in a limited service of this, which would still be provided to the most 'at risk' people. Information was also provided about the expected response time of the Fire Service and the provision of education in schools to help prevent arson and anti-social behaviour as well as a number of events that have been held in the local area to provide additional information and awareness about what the Fire Service does.

The Chair thanked the Fire Service representative for her informative presentation and time.

6. TRAINING OF VOLUNTEERS FOR INSPECTION OF CARE HOMES

The Chair explained that volunteers would carry out inspection of care homes more and more in the future and that those members of the forum who wished to volunteer could be done through Northamptonshire LINK (details below). He reported that no qualifications were needed but that each volunteer would have to have a CRB check in order to volunteer.

The Chair explained that the inspectors would not be allowed to carry out an inspection of a care home unannounced and residents would have to give permission and preferably have a relative present if the volunteers entered a private room – to ensure consideration given to those who may be vulnerable. It was explained that the purpose of this would be to ensure that safety measures were met and any recommendations and additional information be provided. Details were given about the fact that the inspections were applicable to both state run and privately run homes and that it was a way of ensuring people get a basic standard, regardless of who much the care cost.

The Forum members strongly agreed that they supported the training of volunteers

for the Inspection of Care Homes and agreed that the three main things that were of a concern to them was the people in care homes should be treated with respect and dignity and kept clean – in a safe environment and properly care for.

Members of the Forum thanked the Chair for his insightful and informative presentation.

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7. COMMUNITY NEWS EXCHANGE

The Chair reported that a National Health Service Area Meeting was soon to take place.

Councillor Oldham would be invited to feedback to the Forum and give an update on street lighting.

LINK be contacted and an representative from Northampton General Hospital be invited to attend a Pensioners Forum meeting in the near future.

Members thanked Lindsey Ambrose for the chocolates she had provided for the meeting.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

9. DATE AND VENUES OF FUTURE FORUM MEETINGS

The date of the next meeting of the forum would be the 9th February 2012 in the Jeffery Room. Future meetings dates to be discussed.

The meeting concluded at 15.52