

# Northampton LGBT and Q People's Forum

on Tuesday, 12 March 2013 at 6:30 pm until not later than 8:00 pm

in The Holding Room, The Guildhall, St. Giles Square, Northampton, NN1 1DE.

## Agenda

### 1. Welcome and Introductions

### 2. Apologies

### 3. Minutes and matters arising

- Minutes of the last meeting of LGBTQ People's Forum (29 January 2013)
- Minutes of the all-Forums Northampton Borough Council Budget Consultation Meeting (22 January 2013)

### 4. Northampton Pride

### 5. Planning the work of LGBTQ Forum for 2013

At the last meeting of LGBTQ People's Forum, it was agreed that a planning session is carried out at the next meeting. The aim of this would be to develop a framework of themed meetings during the course of 2013/14. Members of the Forum will suggest topics to be covered during the course of the year.

### 6. Community Information Exchange

### 7. Any Other Business

### 8. Items for Future Meetings

### 9. Date Of Next Meeting

The 2013/14 calendar of meetings will be considered at Full Council on 11 March 2013

Map and directions at: [www.northampton.gov.uk/guildhall](http://www.northampton.gov.uk/guildhall)

For more information about this meeting please contact:  
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More information about the Forum generally is at: [www.northampton.gov.uk/forums](http://www.northampton.gov.uk/forums)



Facebook page: [www.northampton.gov.uk/lgbtqpf](http://www.northampton.gov.uk/lgbtqpf)

Please note that this Forum is supported and funded by Northampton Borough Council. The Forum may work in partnership and collaboration with other community groups, councils and local services from time to time. The views expressed and decisions taken by the Forum are not necessarily those of Northampton Borough Council.



# Agenda Item 3

**Northampton Borough Council**

**Northampton LGBT and Q People's Forum**

**Tuesday, 29 January 2013**

## **1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

Everyone introduced themselves, including the Co-Chairs of the Forum Anna King and Barry Hansford.

Joe Biskupski from Northampton Borough Council was in attendance, and prepared the notes of this meeting.

## **2. APOLOGIES**

Representatives of Lesbian Line, Stephen Bennett (Northampton Pride) and Matthew Toresen

## **3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING**

Everyone agreed that the notes of the last meeting were accurate and fair.

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

- Local artist Gerald Porter has approached Co-Chair Anna King; he would like to work with the local community and would like to outline his work at a meeting of LGBTQ Forum. He was unable to attend this meeting of LGBTQ Forum, but is hoping to attend a future meeting.
- Representatives of Lesbian Line were unable to attend this evening's meeting. Barry Hansford said that their events are publicised on their website: <http://www.lesbianline.co.uk>.

## **5. NORTHAMPTON PRIDE**

Steven Bennett was unable to attend this meeting, and this item will be rescheduled for a future date.

## **6. HOUSING TENANT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY**

Joe Biskupski outlined the Housing Tenant Engagement Strategy 2013-16. This draft document is currently being consulted upon by the Borough Council. It aims to set out the commitment of the Borough Council to tenant engagement as a key aspect of the housing service it provides. Joe explained that the Council has a long-established commitment to engaging with local communities and recognises its responsibilities in involving local residents in the issues that affect or interest them. Joe Biskupski explained that the strategy had been out to consultation for the past few weeks, and the deadline for responses is 31 January 2013.

Joe asked LGBTQ Forum to focus in particular on Section 13 Proposed Engagement Model for Scrutiny (pages 31 – 34).

Question: Where are the council's policies available?

Answer: Key Council policies are generally available on the Internet.

Question: What training is available to council tenants and officers to challenge homophobia and discrimination? It is really important that training is available on the issue of hate crime and that homophobic behaviour is challenged.

Answer: Joe report back at next meeting.

Question: Who is being consulted?

Answer: Joe said that all tenants and leaseholders are being consulted, as are stakeholders. There have been five public meetings across the borough, one in each of the management areas and in the Guildhall

Question: How have hate crimes been reported back?

Answer: In the past, the Hate Crimes Unit has reported back. However, they do not do this now.

Comment: It is unacceptable that there is no mention of sexuality. There is an opportunity for NBC to be bold and proactive regarding LGBTQ communities.

Comment: Many of the LGBTQ communities are hidden. Confidentiality is important.

Comment: There is a serious problem with discrimination within Black communities. In addition, Anonymity is important, especially in the rural parts of the county.

Comment: We need to guarantee people's safety; it is important that the process of reporting incidents is safe.

Comment: There is a lack of visibility of LGBTQ communities in the work of many local authorities across the county. Local authorities could invest in the provision of expertise in LGBTQ issues.

Comment: A clear recognition of LGBTQ issues needs to be made in the strategy; a specialist need to be engaged to ensure that this happens. This specialist needs to be aware of the issues within each community.

Anna King said that she will raise this issue before the report goes to the council's Cabinet.

Comment: It is good that this issue is being approach from a grassroots level. The strategy needs to start from basics.

## **7. PLANNING THE WORK OF LGBTQ FORUM FOR 2013**

The Community Engagement Manager asked whether forum members were content with how the forums were being arranged or if they would feel it more helpful to have an annual work programme.

The forum members agreed that the idea of having a work programme may be beneficial as often there were sometimes too many topics covered in a single meeting, and a work programme would add focus to the discussion. However, they concurred that the meetings should continue to have a degree of flexibility to ensure that topical discussions would continue. It was also noted that with a framework in place the Community Engagement Manager would have more time to arrange for relevant speakers to attend forum meetings.

In answer to the question of who can attend meetings of the Forum, and whether attendance was only limited to those people who are representatives of organisations, Barry said that the LGBTQ Forum was not a closed meeting, and was open for everyone to attend. He added that it was important for the Forum to continue to develop a positive relationship with local authorities. In the past, Forum chairs had met with the Leader of Northampton Borough Council. It would be good for this to happen again in the future.

It was agreed that the work of the Forum needs to be supported by effective and widespread promotion. This should include media such as Twitter, Facebook, the local press and radio, as well as the Borough Council's website.

The meeting considered the notion of "community" and accepted that this may be problematic to define. It was accepted that the notion of LGBTQ communities extends beyond Northampton's boundaries and that engaging with others in the LGBTQ communities often means travel of some distance.

The meeting considered whether there was a budget for the Forums, which could be used to invite guest speakers. Joe confirmed that there is resource to support forums, for example, his time and the provision of meeting rooms, but no specific budget.

LGBTQ Forum would like to see more inter-Forum events, as well as closer working with both Borough Council and the County Council in organising conferences. An example mentioned was a possible conference on "Celebrating Difference".

The following topics were suggested:

**Hate Crime** – There was formerly an officer from the Hate Crime Unit attending meetings of the Forum with a report on the previous twelve months' incidents. A closer relationship needs to be developed between the Forum and the Hate Crime Unit, and an officer from the Unit should be invited to a future meeting of the Forum to report on Hate incidents.

Comment: it is not easy to report Hate Crime to the police. This is particularly problematic for the deaf community. The Forum needs to devise a way of monitoring what is happening. At times, organisations such as the police or local authorities appear reluctant to categorise a crime as a hate crime.

**Education and youth** – This was seen as an important topic to consider, particularly the issue of addressing homophobia in schools. It was not clear to what extent schools report Hate Crime; each school has its own sex education policy and has a duty to promote diversity. However, this may not extend to raising the issue of homophobia.

AGREED:

- a. That a planning session is carried out at the next meeting of the Forum. The aim of this would be to develop a framework of themed meetings during the course of 2013/14. Members of the Forum will suggest topics to be covered during the course of the year.
- b. That an officer from the Hate Crime Unit is invited to a future meeting of the Forum to report on hate crime incidents.

## **8. COMMUNITY INFORMATION EXCHANGE**

**Barry:** There is an active LGBT group at Northampton College, although it is relatively small in numbers. Work is being done with one of the College governors. The group is looking to organise a College Pride walk. A LGBT month has been organised, with the involvement of the whole college.

The chair of the student union is travelling to Auschwitz and will be sharing his learning when he returns.

**Lee:** A deaf LGBT group has been started in January. The group aims to break down barriers within the community. Quite a few people attended, with lots of discussion. Lee was disappointed about funding – many funders said that there is not enough evidence for a need for such a group.

**Michelle:** FAN provides social activities for the LGBTQ community in Northampton. The group is planning an exhibition to be staged at the Jesus Army building in the town. The group's website is regularly updated with event information (<http://www.fannorthants.com>). FAN is keen to develop links with other groups.

## **9. ITEMS FOR NEXT AND FUTURE MEETINGS**

- Northampton Pride
- Planning the work of Northampton LGBTQ Forum for 2013/14.

## **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Barry reported that the Council is proposing to demolish the public toilets in Upper Mounts car park (opposite the Police Station) and by the River Nene car park/picnic area, off Bedford Road (opposite the White Water Centre) and has asked that this Forum be consulted.

It was noted that both sets of toilets had been closed for some time and that there were no plans to re-open them. There were toilets available for activity groups around the White Water Centre and public toilets were due to be constructed at the skate park later this year. The new bus interchange would also contain public toilets.

Comment: This could be a problem for people with medical problems, such is incontinence.

Comment: A few years ago, there was a consultation exercise about closing toilets on Midsummer Meadows. There was a furore as these toilets were used for cottaging. However, this activity is illegal and should not be used as a consideration when closing toilets.

Comment: Why doesn't the council put in pay-toilets?

Comment: The toilets are currently closed, so their demolition is not an issue.

Comment: This matter should be considered by Disabled People's Forum. Joe will raise this issue with the chairs of Disabled People's Forum.

## **11. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS – to be confirmed**

# NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL ALL-FORUMS BUDGET CONSULTATION MEETING

Tuesday, 22 January 2013

18:30 in the Jeffery Room, Northampton Guildhall

Present: Christine Woodhams, Barbara Barber, Larry Barber, Roger Rumsey, David Hewitt, Lee Gilbert, Councillor Suresh Patel (NBC), Councillor Brian Oldham (NBC), Councillor Phil Larratt (PL) (NBC), Councillor Alan Botwood (NBC Cabinet Member for Finance) (AB), Isabell Proctor (NBC Director of Resources) (IP), Joe Biskupski (NBC Community Engagement Manager) (notes).

Introduction – Isabell Proctor introduced Councillor Botwood and herself.

IP explained the context of the Borough Council's budget. She said that only a relatively small share of Council Tax (CT) revenue goes to NBC, the largest amount goes to the County Council.

IP said that local government budgets are currently extremely stretched in the face of government cutbacks and the economic situation.

IP said that there is no transfer between the council's Revenue budget and its Capital budget.

Councillor Botwood made his presentation on the draft budget for the council. The following comments / questions were raised by those present:

- Q.** Ground Works – Councillor Botwood said that the council will get more value if the money spent in-house. Where will the money be spent?
- A.** If the service provided is directly under our control, we can get better value for money
- Q.** What impact will the NNDR review have on charities?
- A.** The council worked closely with charities developing the new scheme, and it is anticipated that charities will not be unduly impacted. There will be incentives for charities to share back office functions and facilities. For example, if a charity is co-located with another organisation, there will not be an increase in CT.
- Q.** Regarding the Ground Works scheme – if we didn't fund Groundworks, how can we continue providing the service, how can we save money?
- A.** (AB) There are a number of ways, including seeking sponsorship
- Q.** What will be happening with CCTV?
- A.** (AB) we review CCTV constantly, and work with the police to ensure that these are most appropriately located – e.g. near sheltered housing.

**Comment:** CCTV acts as a deterrent.

(IP) CCTV cameras that are in high activity areas are priorities to remain switched on.

**Q.** What monitoring is taking place?

**A.** (IP) CCTV cameras are recorded, but not everyone can watch all cameras at all times. If there is a crime, the police can request a recording.

**Comment:** Can we work smarter with the cameras that we have?

(AB) Yes

**Comment:** In Kingsley (Phippsville) there is no right turn into Kettering Road. However, there needs to be a policeman present to see the right turn into Kettering Road. Needs to be more joined-up working across a range of agencies.

**Comment:** (PL) In Nottingham the CCTV can identify people littering and Fixed Penalty Notices are issued.

IP will pass these comments on to people who are responsible for CCTV cameras.

**Q.** Can we issue Police Community Support Officers with cameras?

**A.** (IP) PCSOs are employed by the police – we cannot issue cameras.

(PL) Each Chief Constable can give PCOSs additional enforcement powers. In Northampton additional powers should be introduced by Chief Constable.

Cllr Oldham will ask Adam Simmonds to come to Pensioners' Forum.

Cllr Patel – Deputy PCC will be coming to next meeting of Diverse Communities Equalities Forum.

**Comment:** From a civil liberties point of view, we have more cameras per head of population than any other country.

**Q.** Greyfriars Bus Station won't be used to garage buses overnight. During period of darkness, will security be needed?

**Comment:** the bus station needs floodlights.

**Q.** Where will buses be garaged overnight?

**A.** Rothersthorpe Road – Stagecoach has a stopover place which can accommodate buses overnight.

**Q.** An item of growth is £12,760 for Park Ranger vehicles. How many Park Ranger vehicles can £12,000 buy?

**A.** (AB) The council is looking at sponsorship to contribute to the cost of vehicles.



(IP) The council is looking at contract hire of vehicles.

(AB) Greyfriars Bus station still being used as a station during the day.

**Internal savings:** AB said that internal reviews are being carried out all the time.

**Q.** What does moving services into LGSS mean?

**A.** The Borough Council will share services with LGSS. They will take over the administrative and back office functions currently undertaken by directly employed Borough Council staff.

**Q.** Is LGSS a profit-making organisation?

**A.** It is a collaboration between Northamptonshire County Council and Cambridgeshire County Council, to which other organisations join in.

(AB) if other Local Authorities join in later on, NBC will also benefit from any future savings.

**Q.** Is this similar to what's happening with Enterprise?

**A.** There are similarities, but Enterprise is a for-profit organisation, but LGSS is not done for profit.

**Q.** Is the contract only for 5 years?

**A.** The agreement is for 5 years, and will be reviewed, with an option to renew. The delegation agreed by the council needs to be robust. We delegate our services to LGSS on our behalf, and we can un-delegate them.

**Comment.** Savings mean people's jobs

**Q.** Why are we sticking stamps on envelopes? For example, letters were sent out regarding Housing Stock Transfer.

**A.** Sometimes we have to consult by letter. There are certain protocols we have to go through. We need to ensure that there is reliable communication.

**Q.** Are all staff Essential Car User Allowances being taken away?

**A.** (IP) it is beginning with senior staff. However, all staff will be affected over time, and negotiations are being carried out with trade unions.

**Comment:** In private industry, people pay their own professional fees. (IP) NBC have paid only professional fees if it is necessary to carry out the work. The proposal is to stop paying professional fees from 2014 to give staff time to adjust.

**Q.** When bin collections are made, if anything is spilt, it is frequently left on the street.

**A.** (IP) if this happens, customers should contact NBC and this will be passed to Enterprise to resolve.

**Q.** Who monitors the performance of Enterprise?

**A.** (IP) The Borough Council monitor performance via performance indicators and complaints received are part of this process.

**Comment:** We need to ensure that we get value for money from our refuse collection.

(AB) The contract is being monitored, and this is being addressed.

**Q.** Are inspections made of grass cutting work?

**A.** (AB) the contracts are monitored and Enterprise monitors the work they carry out, but they cannot inspect everything. They cannot collect and remove grass.

Cllr Larratt would like to propose that we do a session for all forums on the Enterprise contract.

**Comment:** Before the Enterprise contract, the Borough Council had a mower with a hopper. Why can't we do that now?

**Q.** What does providing floating support for tenants mean?

**A.** (IP) this means providing additional support for vulnerable people.

**Q.** Southfield children are being prevented from playing on playing fields by children from Goldings, particularly on local football pitches.

**A.** This is outside our control.

**Comment:** The skate park was money well spent.

IP concluded and thanked all for being present.

(AB) it is important to use your borough councillor to lobby.

(IP) budget surgeries are being carried out on Monday 28 January at 13.30, and on Tuesday 29 January from 18:00. A public consultation session is being held on Thursday 24 January at 18:00.

**Q:** 30% of the public do not have access to computers. They are excluded from consultation. How will the council address this?

**A.** (AB) we cannot know who has access to a computer. However, we do have computers in the One Stop Shop at the Guildhall.