

Northampton Borough Council Northampton Disabled People's Forum

Friday, 27 March 2015

Present: Cllr Larratt (Chair, NBC), Martin De Rosario (Co-chair, Independent), Keith Goodwin (Northampton Door to Door Service), David Smith (Independent), Larry Barber (Independent), Barbara Barber (Independent), Simon Burgess (Independent / NPH tenant), E. Bassett (Independent), Carl Weininger (Northampton Polio Fellowship), J. Forrest Smith (Independent), Rashmi Shah (Independent), Andrew Holden (NBC Planning) Vicki Rockall (NBC), Alice Morgan (NBC)*

*Took minutes

1. WELCOMES, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Stefanie Weldon (NAB), Graham Wilson (Northamptonshire Sport), and Jessica Marayan (Deafhub),

2. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

Minutes were agreed as a true record

Matters arising:

AM shared data around employment of disabled people at Northampton Borough Council. This data can be found here: <http://www.northampton.gov.uk/downloads/download/1826/workforce-monitoring-report>

3. DAVID SMITH - NORTHANTS POLICE DISABILITY ACCESS SERVICES

DS gave an overview of the Keep Safe Scheme, which has been designed primarily for adults with learning disabilities, but also for adults with other disabilities or illnesses that make them more vulnerable, such as physical disabilities and dementia. Keep Safe can be accessed on smart phones and on the internet. More details about the Keep Safe scheme can be found here: <http://www.keepsafenorthants.org/>

ACTION: AM to make sure service is promoted in the One Stop Shop.

The service is promoted in BAME and diverse communities through various networks and the equality and diversity board. DS said that more is still to be done, and would like to promote through other networks in the future.

DS gave an overview of how Northants Police services can be accessed by those with hearing impairment, or difficulties using the telephone. The Force has pioneered Live BSL services – this can be accessed by anyone with a device with webcam facilities between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday. This is not necessary an emergency service, and is more like the 101 service. For emergencies, there are

local and national 999 emergency texting services – to set this up, text ‘Register’ to 999.

4. NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL - PLANNING PROCESS

Andrew Holden from NBC’s Planning team, advised that Building Regulation Officer’s ensure disability access is taken into account in the planning process.

DS told the forum that he trains organisations to ensure plans are accessible. DS gave the example of Crawley Borough Council, which has a forum of disabled people that looks at every planning application at the design stage, and can make recommendations on accessibility.

Attendees discussed issues experienced with the disabled toilets and lift in Northampton train station, and difficulties visually impaired people have experienced using Abington Street.

DS questioned how the community is engaged with in the planning process, and whether this is just through the Compliance Officers. DS asked whether a subgroup for the forum could be used to consult with on accessibility issues on new planning applications for public buildings, sheltered housing and future homes – especially on homes for people who have mobility difficulties. Also, a forum attendee asked whether it could be a planning condition that signage would have to be agreed with Northamptonshire Association for the Blind, to ensure suitability for visually impaired people.

ACTION: AH advised he will take this back to his team, to see if this would be possible.

ACTION: AM to discuss internally regarding the setting up of a sub group.

ACTION PLANS

Forum attendees discussed the possibility of holding an event for Disability Awareness Week, and combining with hate crime awareness raising. International Day of Persons with Disabilities falls on 3 December. More details can be found here: <http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp/default.asp?id=111>

ACTION: AM to look into booking a space for this.

6. COMMUNITY INFORMATION EXCHANGE

MDR – Issues with bins in Goldings, has spoken to Warden and Housing Officers.

LB – Bellinge football cage (MUGA) is never litter picked, and nor is pathway up to village. **ACTION: AM to pass onto Warden.**

DS – Asked for the justification for cancelling the Disabled Go website. DS commented that NBC is the first Council not to renew their contract. VR advised that Disabled Go have recently become a social enterprise, and as a result were advised

to go through the Partnership Grant process, as other organisations have to do in the borough for funding to provide a service. 46 organisations applied for funding this year, and applications added up to a value of £1.3 million, where there is only £550,000 available. The decision on who is funded is made by a cross party panel, which also includes the Chief Executive of Voluntary Impact Northamptonshire, and 2 VCS representatives elected by the Northampton VCS forum. DS commented on the impact of the decision. VR advised that other funding is available for the organisation to apply for, and the support of the Partnership and Communities team has been offered.

7. ITEMS FOR NEXT AND FUTURE MEETINGS

Northampton Partnership Homes
Further discussion of planning process
Opportunity for a community bus stop

8. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Friday 24th July, 10-12, The Holding Room, The Guildhall

The meeting concluded at 12:00