

Northampton Borough Council - Northampton Pensioners' Forum

Thursday, 17 September 2015 at 2:00 pm until not later than 4:00 pm

Present Cllr Brian Oldham (Cllr, Co Chair), Roger Rumsey (Co Chair), Mike Hill (Pensioners Voice), Madeline Boys (Pensioners Voice), J Forrest-Smith (Individual), Lee Johnson (Changing Minds NHFT), Tony Mallard (NFRA veteran), Brian Nicholls, Veronica Male (Northants Dementia Action Alliance), Julie Hayward (Care & Repair), Andy Leighton (Northamptonshire Highways), D J Hewitt (Individual), Alice Morgan (NBC), Nisha Mejer (NBC)*

*Took minutes

1. Welcomes, introductions and apologies

Roger Rumsey opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

Apologies: Hazel Tuttle, John Rawlings, Gill Shadbolt (Care & Repair), Christiana Owusu-Akuffo

2. Minutes and Matters Arising

AM handed out Veronica Male's presentation from the previous forum meeting.

RR commented that he has tried to get the Health and Wellbeing strategy from NCC but still has not received it. AM added that there is a current strategy which runs until 2016, and she hopes that there will be a consultation with this forum as part of the process of creating the next strategy. The department has been invited to the forum.

ACTION: AM to bring paperwork for next meeting.

3. Northamptonshire Highways - Andrew Leighton

AL : Northampton Highways founded in April 2013 to deliver highway services. They work to County Council services and work on new developments etc. AL is a Community Engagement Manager and is a point of call for the forum.

TM: Asked about resurfacing and enquired as to how long it lasts?

AL: Depends on the work. If you took the cheaper option then it takes 5 years. More expensive options last longer. There is no categorical answer as it depends on traffic but a minimum of 5 years.

TM: There are lots of pot holes and they are being left. They will become larger.

AL: There is a limited budget. The Highway budget is 50% of what it was. Have to work on the policy of the County Council which is that a pot hole has to be 50 mm deep before it can be dealt with.

BN: A resident from Austin Street wrote to the Chronicle. She thought that her road was the worst road in the county. BN went there and the road was very bad. But this is a cul de sac. BN read out email that he sent to complain about Elm Hurst. BN was referred to Alex Hill and then referred to Stuart Mann. Would like a reply to the email.

AL : Asked for the reference number (752799) and respond to the email.

BN stated that Michael Ellis MP received £1.8 million. Can you use this money?

Cllr Oldham: Money offered to each county councillor to pick one street. There are two pots of money – one from central government and some from Michael Ellis MP.

DH: Believed that patching repairs are supposed to last 75 years but only last 6-8

months. Roads are perfect in the affluent areas. DH commented that the problem lies in contracts. There are weeds in the footpaths. DH commented that Herbicide is being sprayed in September and should have been sprayed in Spring.

This work is contracted to Enterprise through NBC–DH asked AL who polices contracts to make sure we get best value for money.

AL answered that they have a contract monitoring scheme in place.

DH: People should ring the street doctor to report issues. Weeds are coming out all of the paths.

Cllr Oldham: Referred to the Bridleways in Green Lane, West Hunsbury. – will talk to AL about this after the meeting.

There are roads which have sunk and when it rains the water ices over. What criteria are there for this issue? Is this a subsiding problem?

AL: Safety inspector will assess this issue.

Cllr Oldham: Can Hunsbury Close be assessed? When the water freezes over it causes problems.

AL: Will look into this.

DH: There is a complicated system for the roads of Northampton with regards to refuse collection. Two ash carts come which creates pressure on the roads. Sewers are collapsing. Dips will become big holes. The weight of vehicles doesn't help.

Cllr Oldham: Prevention is better than cure. Cannot measure prevention and cures cost money. There are accidents waiting to happen with the potholes, please try to deal with this as there are problems everywhere.

BN: The National Grid has been in our area for 6 weeks. There was a large amount of earth which was not cleared. This created problems, can this be checked please.

AL: The Highways Agency have a statutory right to look under the roads. Random inspections are carried out. The area of NN3 2LS will be looked into.

RR: Asked what the situation is with regards to the procedure of monitoring work done by other agencies on the roads. RR suggested that a retainer should be kept to make sure companies do their jobs properly.

AL: The Traffic Management Act helps with this. Companies have to guarantee trench work but don't have proper power with some companies.

RR: Suggested that agencies should ask residents associations to help. Volunteers could be trained to monitor this work is completed to a satisfactory standard.

AL: Happy to discuss this further. Perhaps have a pilot scheme.

MH: Concerned about road markings especially on corners. People park on corners and this causes an obstruction eg Tudor St. would like to see double yellow lines on the corners.

Cllr Oldham: This is a matter for police and Highways Agency. We need to use speed cameras. Every time there is request for yellow lines the police are consulted. Police then look at the analytical data to see if this feasible.

AL: Have proven accident data and there is a limited budget. Have to prioritise where to do this. There is a consultation process including the police. Lines are reviewed once every 12 months. This way one lot of legal costs are paid and everything is looked at together.

DH: See your local councillor if you have problems.

4.Changing Minds (NHFT) - Lee Johnson

LJ thanked everyone for inviting her. She explained what the service offered and is looking for suggestions as to how to gain more interest. People from a young age do use the service but there is no age limit. But the proportion over 65s who use the service is low.

Some parts of the service are self-referral. With other services you have to go via your GP. The doctor can fill out a form and people can be referred that way.

Changing Minds is now called the IAPT service – Improving Access to Psychological Therapy.

MB : In her experience a GP no longer refers patients. Has a letter from her surgery to confirm this.

ACTION: MB to send the letter to AM/NB, to share with Cllr Oldham and Roger Rumsey. LJ reassured the forum that GPs do refer to their service. The organisation receives 12,000 referrals from GPs a year. LJ asked to see the letter too if MB has been refused a referral.

LJ explained that an appointment is normally booked for the wellbeing service in the GP surgery.

If matters are more serious then patients can be referred to cognitive behavioural therapy if required. The service does not help people with drug or alcohol problems, as there are other services specifically for these issues.

There are also peer supporters available in the service. People can talk about their own experiences and can meet in social gatherings. Self-referrals are accepted for this service. There is also a service for people who have psychological problems or stress as a result of having health conditions such as stroke or diabetes.

Changing Minds also have webinars where you can access a class and an opportunity to interact with others. This can help improve your mind and there are different types that people can sign up to. These classes are free.

There is a worker who deals with people who have been in the Armed Forces. Jackie has links with forces Jackie can be contacted through AM.

MH explained that his daughter had acute mental health problems and lived on her own. She had an operation and no longer has support as Campbell House is no longer there.

LJ advised that his daughter should ask her GP to refer her to Primary Care Liaison Workers who should be able to give her support. Sheila Cox should be the person for MH's area. Community Law can also take up your case.

DH stated that over 6 million people do not use the internet. Asked LJ what geographic area they cover. LJ answered that they cover the whole of Northants.

DH stated that he is very angry about the treatment of elderly people in particular those who have very bad dementia. DH asked where the organisation help with provision of care. He knew a person who has bruises on his arms. How do we police this? People are inhibited to deal with this and the problems are increasing. LJ stated that they do not deal with this type of work, but the service could help with anxiety or depression. On the topic of the internet LJ commented that webinars are new system; the service also work face to face and via the telephone. There is a need to look into doing home visits.

VM asked what services are available in care homes--LJ will look into this further.

Cllr Oldham: Does your organisation have someone in all doctors surgeries?

LJ : Yes. Sometimes they are there for the day or half a day.

DH: GPs have a strict budget. Homes can give you up to 1 month notice before people are told to leave. If you haven't got someone to advocate your cause it is very difficult.

MB: Went to an "Alzheimer Choir" – found it to be very friendly and welcoming. It was a relief to have this kind of pleasure.

ACTION: MB to give AM information about this. .

BN: asked whether LJ was aware of Diabetes Awareness Day on 3rd October. There is an open at St Giles Church on 9.30am – 12.30pm. This may be a good place to publicise the service for people with Diabetes.

ACTION: AM /NM to try to find out further details for Changing Minds

TM : Had grandson who was withdrawn. He couldn't face people. He was homosexual and had a difficult two years. How could you help people experiencing similar things?

LJ: Have a therapist who is very good with people. The wellbeing worker will talk to the person to get a good understanding. Sometimes people cannot face others and they can't go out. Might be that they have been bullied. They don't challenge this and the situation gets worse. They would have therapy and usually pin point the problem. Sometimes the first person that the sufferer tells is the therapist.

5.Action Plans

AM talked about the Inter-generational project. 2 people from The Pensioners Forum met with 2 people from the Youth Forum. The pensioners shared their family stories and the interview session was a great success. We could take this to the wider audience.

The Youth Forum enjoyed talking to Tony and Hazel and these interviews can be used by the museum for future projects.

TM : We should get Youth Forum more involved.

TM raised a discussion that was held at Northampton Federation of Residents Associations with AM regarding Residents Associations and getting young people more involved.

AM: There are youth councils at schools, who could possibly send representatives to - residents associations and do activities together MN asked whether the British Legion are involved in the project? There is lots of social history in the country.

ACTION: AM / NM to report on this.

DH: suggested this project is extended to WW2 to ensure these memories and histories are also recorded

AM: The Youth Forum would like to do this.

6.Community News Exchange

Diabetes Awareness Day on 3rd October. There is an open at St Giles Church on 9.30am – 12.30pm

7.Suggestions for Items for Future Meetings or Forum Activities

The forum said that they would like an update on the hospital and what the plans are about the expansion.

J: Would like to see Sonia Bragg from the County Council to attend.

Cllr Oldham: Would like a representative from Adult Social care in particular Suresh Patel and Caroline Kus. This would take up the whole meeting. Therefore have only one agenda item for this.

MH: Bed block. Where to put us. Renting home.

RR: Has been invited to meet the Chief Constable. Please let me know of issues that you would like me to speak with him about.

DH: Council got rid of forums where police senior officers were invited. We have lost this link and we need to build this back up.

MH: Would like meetings with area partnerships and parish councillors. There is no communication from present councillor and would like to see more partnership meetings.

8.Any Other Business

TM: Had a visit from cold callers. Suspicions were raised as the caller asked bank details.

Cllr Oldham: Advised the forum to call Andy Langford who can explain criteria as there been a spate of burglaries.

AM: Can arrange a meeting with Barclaycard Fraud Team.

9.Date and venues of future Forum Meetings

12th November 2-4pm, The Jeffrey Room, The Guildhall

Map and directions at: www.northampton.gov.uk/guildhall

For more information about this meeting please contact:
Alice Morgan, Community Development Officer



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More information about the Forum generally is at: www.northampton.gov.uk/forums



Facebook page: www.northampton.gov.uk/pensionersforumonfacebook

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.



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