

Northampton Borough Council - Northampton Pensioners' Forum

Thursday, 12 May 2016

1. WELCOMES, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

Present: Cllr Oldham (CO, Co Chair NBC), Roger Rumsey (RR, Co Chair), Ann Timson (AT Independent), Hazel Tuttle (HT, Independent), Alice Morgan (AM, NBC), Mike Hill (MH, Independent), Tony Mallard (TM, NBC), Nisha Mejer *(NM, NBC), David Hewitt (DH, Independent), Madeline Boys (MB, Independent), Veronica Male (VM, Tollers and Northamptonshire Dementia Action Alliance), Sue Wright (SW, Northampton Hope Centre), J Forrest-Smith (JFS, Individual), Maureen Hill (MHill, Individual), Malcolm Mildren (MM, Individual), Liz Carroll- Wheat (LCW, School of Life), Matthew Torreson (MT, VIN), Cllr Anna King (Cllr K, NBC), Jeanette Pidgen (JP, Nene CCG),

*Took minutes

Apologies : Brian Nicholls (BN, Independent)

RR Welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

Minutes agreed as true record.

Matters arising:

ACTION: NM to invite Nicola Hobbs Brake to future forum meeting to give update about potholes.

ACTION: NM to invite new cabinet member for Highways to future forum meeting. (Cllr Ian Morris).

Previous agenda item of the bus station was discussed.

ACTION: Invite Steve Bird to discuss buses and bay allocation.

3. SUE WRIGHT - HOPE CENTRE

The Hope Centre was founded in 1974 as Northampton Soup kitchen and it has grown substantially over 40 years. The name was changed to Hope Centre in 2006 and have been based in Oasis House for four years. There are 48 bedsits and there are a number of other services/agencies in Oasis house. These include NAASH (Northampton Association for the Accommodation of the Single Homeless), Northampton Partnership Homes, medical services etc.

The ethos of the organisation is “every person matters.”

There are many reasons of how people become homeless – often drug and alcohol addiction is a key factor although this is not always the main cause.

There are many causes of homelessness and it can be a series of events eg – job loss, rent arrears, health, lack of family stability, traumatic childhood experiences etc. eg neglect, abuse.

The average life expectancy of a rough sleeper is 47 years. For every one person on the street, there are 100 in hostels. The Hope Centre sees approx. 120 people every day and numbers are increasing. Over 30% of new registrations are people aged under 25.

There is a philosophy at the Hope Centre that we have to give a hand up rather than a handout. The aim is get people back into a decent lifestyle and to help them budget. The Centre provides free tea and coffee but charge small amount for food. It also handouts free underwear and provides free showers.

There are workshop activities and links with other services – eg drug and alcohol services. Would like to see people back in employment and working with businesses. So far four clients are working for Coca Cola in Brackmills and in What Daisy Does.

There is also a social enterprise workshop where clients can refurbish tools and sell them. This is to help reduce reliance on the Hope Centre.

The Hope Centre targets fundraising are £650k. Research shows that to help a homeless person would cost £120K per year. So this is a huge saving. Fundraising efforts including a sleep out which raised £38k. Other efforts include abseil, bike rides.

Sue invited forum members to visit.

TM: Shame that in 21st century that there is a break down in society. Do you get people out of town?

SW: Not many. Population of Hope Centre reflects population of Northampton. Predominantly white British people. There is a growing number of Eastern European people. 80% male and 20% female.

AT: There are more prostitutes in buildings and there are drug busts. What support is there for these people?

SW: NAASH deals with this. Normally they are assigned a key worker.

JFS: A big thank you for your work.

DH: There is a lack of affordable housing. We are the 7th richest country in the world and we can't look after our own people. We need to build more social housing.

Cllr K: The volunteers are doing a great job at the Hope Centre and would like to continue to support this cause.

4. CLLR KING - CABINET MINISTER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY

Recommendation has been made about changes to taxi ranks. Looking at possible road closures on Bridge Street as it very chaotic in the evening.

Bellinge had a week in action and 12 tonnes of rubbish was cleared. The rubbish was mostly in gardens and pocket parks. An event called Bellinge Fun Day was organised at the end of the week. We will be doing this in Kings Heath next.

DH: The planters still look derelict in Abington Street.

Cllr O: This issue was raised in a previous meeting and the planters are now being addressed.

DH: How do we stop people cycling on a footpath?

Cllr K: Signage was put up 4 years ago. Went to factories in Moulton Park and there was support initially. However, this has dwindled and there is a lack of resources of PCSOs.

MH: There are parking issues in Poets Corner. Spaces are limited and there is double parking.

MB: Can something be done about people building at the back of their houses in Beech Ave?

AT: There is a small cycling route near Spencer Bridge Road. This is dangerous and needs to be addressed. There are not enough cycling routes.

Cllr King: Acknowledged that new cycling paths were needed.

ACTION: Cllr King to look into the issues raised by forum members.

MH: There is no street lighting in certain areas. Eg - Rushmere Road and Harlestone Road. This can be dangerous. When you exit the roundabout to go onto Rushmere Road the speed limit 40 mph. This then reduces to 30 which is unexpected. Need adequate lighting. Kingsley Road is poorly lit too.

MHill: Agreed about the issues with Rushmere Road.

Cllr King will address.

DH: There is a lamppost on St Matthews Parade which is located in the middle of a footpath. This is also dangerous.

ACTION: Cllr King and DH to meet to look into this.

Cllr O: There are 744 lampposts which are owned by NBC.

MM: Asked how many are now in use.

Cllr O: There is a scrutiny panel next week to look at this.

5. SCHOOL OF LIFE - LIZ CARROLL-WHEAT

The School of Life project aims to bring generations together through intergenerational projects. People are encouraged to skill swap through activities. Eg – youngsters have been teaching the elderly IT skills.

There are other initiatives such as singing for Dementia patients in a care home. The School of Life has also partnered with schools and knitting projects have been undertaken. On 18th June people are invited to The Big Northampton PicKnit at Abington Park (near the bandstand).

MB: There is an issue with transport for the elderly. Please make venues convenient for people to get to.

TM: Would like to see oral history projects

ACTION: AM/NM to create a project for Pensioners and Youth Forum.

5A. JEANETTE PIDGEN - LOCALITY MANAGER NENE CCG

Nene CCG looks at the primary care of GP services wants to create open and clear communications with NHS. JP offered to attend the forum on a regular basis to help raise issues, pilot schemes, hear about the experiences of the NHS and to be a link between the forum and the NHS.

DH: Support regular services however, issues get lost in bureaucracy. Not sure if this is the best model as there is a lack of joined up thinking in the NHS.

JP: Money is limited. Best way forward is to look at certain elements of NHS and invite specialists to come in. The GP is the gateway to services. Best to decide as a forum which part of services members want.

MB: It is difficult to get appointments at surgeries. Had to wait 5 weeks for an appointment.

JP: There is a national shortage of GPs. Best to write to practice manager or do a Friends and Family practice test.

MH: There is a lack of coordination between NHS and social services.

JP: Agreed on this issue. Organisations are now pulling resources together to try and work differently. Need a better care fund.

VM: Suggest Dementia Services.

ACTION: Invite Gerry McBridey.

DH: Some patients cost more than others. GPs are private companies and we have lost the focal point of the NHS. People discharged prematurely from hospital.

Cllr O: There is a huge pressure on hospitals to free up beds. There are no longer house visits. There are too many people coming on to the system and care suffers. This is not always the GPs fault.

ACTION: JP to liaise with NBC to attend future forums.

5B. ACTION PLAN

AM asked forum members what projects they would like to do with the School of Life. Suggestions put forward were cooking and housekeeping.

ACTION: AM/NM to progress this.

MB: Would like to start to attend tea dance clubs in particular ballroom sequence dance.

6. COMMUNITY NEWS EXCHANGE

AT: Two men tried to access garden stating that they were windows cleaners. They would not give their name.

Cllr O: In these types of circumstances it is best not to allow access.

AK: 25th June is the Mayor Tea Dance at The Guildhall 2-5pm.

AM: Dementia Week 15- 21 May. Various activities have been arranged.

Care and Repair organisation sent the following information:

- We once again have a pot of Hardship money to carry out small essential home repairs for those vulnerable and with limited income and savings. Works are carried out by our own inhouse team of technicians, all fully paid for. I have attached our electronic flyer for this. If anyone would like a supply of leaflets or more information, or would like to access this fund please contact our office by telephoning 01604 782250 or email office@careandrepairnorthamptonshire.org.uk.
- We are about to launch a 'Home Safety and Support' Service in Northampton and will producing flyers in due course (will send to you for circulation). The service is fully funded for those vulnerable and in need. It provides a

comprehensive home safety assessment (including fire, trips and falls, home security, home warmth, child safety) and then provides remedial measures to address risks identified – such as smoke detector, grab rails, door security, draught exclusion). We are working closely with Northants Fire & Rescue on this service. For more information, please contact office above.

7. SUGGESTIONS FOR ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS OR FORUM ACTIVITIES

Not discussed.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Microphones to be arranged for next meeting.

9. DATE AND VENUES OF FUTURE FORUM MEETINGS

July 21st The Jeffrey Room, The Guildhall. 2-4pm