

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

NORTHAMPTON LGBT AND Q PEOPLE'S FORUM

Tuesday, 24 September 2019

PRESENT: Councillor Anna King (Chair); Matthew Toresen (Deputy Chair); Steve (Northants Police); Rebecca; Ally; Fred; Claire; Zach; Will; Catrin; Sharon; James; Zoe; Phil; Leo; Benny.

APOLOGIES: Ben (Unison), Liz.

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

Attendees: Matthew Torsesn (Co-chair), Cllr Anna King (Co-chair), Steve (Northants Police), Rebecca, Ally, Fred, Claire, Zach, will, Catrin, Sharon, James, Zoe, Phil, Leo, Benny.

Apologies: Ben (Unison), Liz.

2. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

Update on the gender options for reporting crime (Yemi Holman, Hate Crime co-ordinator, Northants Police): Thank you to the forum for feedback around gender options for reporting crime. 'Non-binary' has been put forward as an option. Changes have to be approved and implemented by regional and national teams. Changes are expected to be made in February 2020.

3. NORTHANTS POLICE POSITIVE ACTION

Sgt Steve Bedford gave an overview of hate crime stats; there has been a steady upwards trend in reported hate crime since March 2019, the majority being racist and religious hate crimes. Reports of LGBT crimes has dropped countywide which is not reflective of the reality. Question posed around confidence in police and access to reporting.

A number of negative comments made on an article in the Chronicle about homophobic hate crimes recently. Comments showed a lack of understanding about hate crime and the importance of reporting, such as 'waste of police time, chasing 'name callers''. The response from the Police was positive and challenged these views.

Suggestion that Force control is not consistent in handling hate crime calls and could be advised not to argue or challenge callers reporting a hate crime over the crime type.

A new police model will be launched on 14 October 2019.

Issue in relation to online reporting references raised. **Action: Steve will follow this up and report back to James.**

Forum made aware of the Neighbourhood Alert system and encouraged to sign up to receive relevant information on their local area and crimes. **You can sign up by visiting <https://www.northamptonshireneighbourhoodalert.co.uk/>**

The Police are currently asking for public views on their Local Identified Priorities. You can give your opinions via this survey link www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/LocallyIdentifiedPriorities

Police are looking for individuals to join the 'IAG' (Independent Advisory Group). The IAG is a critical friend to the police made up of people from or linked into key communities in

Northampton, and provide feedback and advice regarding policy proposals. Anyone interested is advised to contact Aimee who will pass on information.

Matthew Toresen has started a new role with Police. Part of his role is to support recruitment and diversity of the workforce. Many recruits refuse to provide sexual orientation information.

Feedback from the forum is that the recruitment drives are really good but the contact with applicants is poor. Suggestion that observation shifts could be organised with Neighbourhood Teams for those interested in joining Police.

The Police LGBTQ group has been relaunched recently and membership has increased.

4. NORTHAMPTON PRIDE UPDATE

Northampton Pride committee has been meeting to begin planning.

Pride will be taking place on Saturday 18 July 2020, at Becket's Park. The group have set some key priorities including a parade, a wellbeing space and overall accessibility. The group have chosen to use the Progress pride flag.

Fred would like to see Sarah-Jayne singing at Pride again next year. **Action: Aimee to contact Sarah-Jayne and invite her back to perform.**

Action: Aimee to liaise with comms for Press release to 'save the date' and invite vendors, stall holders, performers etc to register interest in Pride 2020.

5. LGBTQ FORUM XMAS SOCIAL

Next meeting will be the Christmas social on Tuesday 10 December. Forum asked for suggestions.

A venue that is not focussed solely around alcohol would feel more inclusive for everyone. The Platform was suggested and agreed as a suitable venue.

Action: Aimee to request the café area of the Platform.

6. COMMUNITY INFORMATION EXCHANGE

- Qstory, Queer Lit Fest – Saturday 28 September, Racecourse.
- Q film Weekender – 8-10 November, Northampton Filmhouse
- Q Word – book club, moved to last Monday of each month. Looking for new members. Varying texts and genres read.
- Mabels – lesbian group with weekly activities and meet ups <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Mabels/>
- Northampton LGBTQ social meet up – Wednesday 25 September, Balti Central. Register interest on app or FB page to join in events.
- Trangst social and peer support – Tuesday 1 October, 6.30pm, The Optimist.
- QSpace 'Dreaming of the Future', Wednesday 2 October, 6.30pm, Olly B's.
- Qspace event in town centre for International coming Out Day, Friday 11 October. Details to follow.
- QSpace: Q Corner – Saturday 12 October (and every 2nd Saturday each month following), Hunsbury library (all ages drop in).
- Bohemian Finds LGBTQ event – Sunday 6 October, 1-3pm.
- World Aids Day civic ceremony at the Guildhall Courtyard 12pm, followed by refreshments in the courtroom.
- Outlaws Discussion event – Sunday 1 December, more information to follow.

Hate Crime Week 14-18 October. Range of events and activities taking place across the

borough (and countywide).

NPH will be touring the borough with information on reporting Hate Crime, particularly how they can support tenants with hate crime and Anti social behaviour.

- Monday 14 October – Weston Favell Shopping Centre.
- Friday 18 October – Market Square, Town Centre.

Foundation Stones Project Update:

Charity fundraising event planned for Saturday 7 December.

The project is at the final review stage with the National Lottery and will provide a homelessness shelter focussing on single females, lgbtq people and couples. The project also aims to provide a food bank and offer working opportunities to those using its service. The project has recently been accepted on to the Northampton lottery scheme and will receive a percentage of ticket sales.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Diversity in LGBTQ spaces:

Discussion took place about the limited representation of people of colour (POC) within a number of LGBTQ spaces in Northampton, which are predominantly white/white British. Part of the reason was thought to be around culture and acceptance; there is sometimes a fear of being out in a western sense, not all communities have this luxury.

Forum members suggested they are aware that some people attend LGBTQ spaces outside of Northampton instead. The nearest LGBTQ groups specifically for POC are in Leicester.

The forum are keen to engage with LGBTQ people of colour and try to make meetings, events etc as accessible as possible for people in these communities. Suggestions included making events publically LGBTQ **and Allies** to allow people to attend that might otherwise be put off by outing themselves. Additionally, venues such as pubs may put off muslim or jewish community members, and timings of the meetings may clash with family meal times which may also exclude LGBTQ people with children.

QStory have created a safer spaces policy which they are happy to share with other groups, to be referenced to them, or to be used as a starting point for creating their own. **Action: Catrin to forward to Aimee for circulation to the forum.**

QSpace are involved in Diwali this year, taking place on Saturday 19 October. Will is also completing 'diversifying your community' training soon and will feedback findings on improving engagement with wider community.

The University does not have a LGBTQ society at this time. Reminded that the onus is on students to make this happen and without students willing to step up into roles societies do not happen. Advised to take this up with university and seek support from Students Union.

Action: QSpace and Lowdown to send any information across to Aimee, or directly to university, to promote other LGBTQ spaces in the town.

Suggestion that the meeting could start later and be shorter. **If anyone wants to feed in thoughts for LGBTQ Forum 2020 meetings please send this to Aimee ASAP for consideration.**

8. ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Christmas social, Tuesday 10 December.

Venue and time tbc.

The meeting concluded at 20:30

