

Northampton Borough Council, Northampton Pensioners' Forum
Thursday, 29 May 2014

Present: Cllr. Brian Oldham (Co-chair, NBC), Roger Rumsey (RR, Co-Chair), Mike Hill (MH, Pensioners Voice), Ann Timson (AT), Brian Nichols (BN), Christiana Owusu-Akuffo (CO, Pensioners Voice), Julie O'Brian (JO, Care and Repair), Jacky Taylor (NHFT), Andy Langton (AL, NBC), Cllr. Mike Hallam (NBC), Alice Morgan (AM, NBC)*

*Took minutes.

1. WELCOMES, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

Apologies received from John Rawlings, Jacqueline Forrest-Smith, Tony Mallard and Vicki Rockall (NBC).

2. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

Mike Hill's initials are wrong on the minutes; MK should be changed to MH. AT suggested initials are put after names on 'present' section for accuracy and ease.

Item 5 – AT asked for Independent Living Teams details to be shared. Lynn Horwood can be contacted on lhorwood@northampton.gov.uk or 01604 838462.

Item 6 - wrong spelling of Clare Street

Matters arising around the ALMO will be brought up at the next meeting.

BN asked whether the code of conduct is now in effect. Cllr. Oldham confirmed that the code of conduct is now in use for all of the forums.

3. NHFT - OLDER PEOPLE'S SERVICES

Jacky Taylor, from Northamptonshire Healthcare Foundation Trust (NHFT), gave an overview of the community services offered by NHFT for older people, including;

- Comprehensive district nursing service - most people using this service are house bound, some patients have needs that the district nurses specialise in. Most patients are elderly, and have long term chronic needs, but do provide services for people who are 18 years plus. District nurses provide information on self-management, and also work with other organisations such as Age Concern, Marie Curie and Macmillan nurses.
- Specialist nurses - Give advice to patients on their illnesses and skill up general district nurses also.
- Podiatry - only now available for people with complex foot conditions. Can no longer manage the 'healthy foot' (nail cutting etc.).
- Physiotherapy service - 12 locations across county. Patients can self-refer, or be referred by their GP.
- Wheel chair service – only provided for people who need a wheelchair for inside their home as well as outside.

- Frail and elderly programme – multi disciplinary team. The elderly can receive short term high intensity care in own home without having to go to hospital. Bringing treatment to the elderly stops them from losing their self-managed capabilities. Accessed by GPS, district nurses and hospitals, for instance.
- Older Peoples Mental Health Team – There are four inpatient units, two in Northampton and two in Kettering. Community nurses have satellite bases. CMHT can be contacted through GP or Crisis team.

RR asked whether preventative medicine is used, for instance it was felt that stopping the 'Healthy Foot' service meant that there is no focus on prevention, only on cases once they have become 'complex'. JT said that preventative medicine and approaches are delivered to an extent by district nursing, through self-management and education on how to care for selves. Also, NHFT works closely with practise nurses and GPs.

Cuts to services are a result of budget pressures and an attempt to spend more wisely. Not an easy decision to make –with reference to Podiatry, the commissioners decided a service would be commissioned only for people with serious foot problems (all put out to public consultation).

MH felt that through personal experience, the service is not complete and things aren't joined up. BN also raised concerns over what is 'complex', and what is classed as not. JT said that where someone does not qualify for the Podiatric service, private Podiatrists should be used. **ACTION:** JT to find out whether there is an approved list of private services. If so, this will be sent to AM for circulation.

AT raised an issue with Hospital Chiropody around records not being kept of patients. NGH is not JT's remit. However, with reference to patient's records, at NHFT every episode of care is counted as a new patient. If a condition is ongoing, this will be recorded as one episode of care. All records are computer based, and if a patient is seen again in the future, NHFT will have access to past admission data with patients permission for data sharing.

An explanation was given about the Clinical Commissioning Groups. JT explained that PCTs were split up, and in their place CCGs were formed. Many professionals sit on these groups. CCGs receive money, decide on the services to provide, and then buy services from the pot of money. Some commissioning for NHFT is also done through Northampton County Council around social services.

4. REFUSE COLLECTION - CLLR. MIKE HALLAM AND TOWN WARDEN

Cllr. Hallam gave an overview of the services provided within the Environment portfolio and the outsourced contract with Enterprise – now taken over by Amey. This includes refuse collection, street cleansing, parks and open spaces, allotments, cemeteries and Northampton in bloom.

Cllr. Hallam also explained the improvements that have been made to Environmental services, such as refuse collection routes, grass cutting, investment in parks and open spaces. Cllr. Hallam is keen to get feedback from residents etc. to

further improve services in the future.

Cllr. Hallam explained that there are three agencies responsibility for grass cutting. NCC do one cut a year around July. NBC cut on a 3-4 week cycle, dependent on the weather. Highways agencies are responsible for the main arterial routes. Cllr. Hallam told the forum that the weather should not be used as an excuse by NBC for the grass being overgrown. The crews should plan for the weather, may get a bit in front or behind, but given flexibility to catch up/balance itself.

AT raised an issue with grass cutting in Spring Boroughs, where border flowers have been cut off as well. **ACTION:** Cllr. Hallam agreed to take this issue back to environmental services to be addressed.

BN raised an issue with Abington Park - last autumn/winter, problem with wet leaves becoming a hazard for older people. Cllr. Hallam advised the forum that two new park rangers have been employed by NBC. This resource has been increased to address problems such as leaves.

A question was raised, asking why some street trees are being chopped down. Cllr. Hallam advised that it is very hard to get rid of a tree, unless it is diseased/dead. However, trees in the past were planted in mass, which are now 40-50 years old and their roots causing problems. Removing a tree is a twofold process, the tree and the roots are removed by different teams. NBC has a policy of replacing trees once they are removed. However, this is a divisive issue as NCC's policy is not to replace.

5. NOMINATION OF THE COMMUNITY CO-CHAIR

It was agreed to defer this item to a later meeting.

6. UPDATE ON FORUM PRIORITIES, ACTIONS AND DECISIONS FROM THE LAST MEETING

AM went through the Action Plans with attendees and gave an update on the activity that has taken place:

- Intergenerational project. VR is waiting to hear back from the War Memorial Trust regarding the bid submitted. We expect to have heard back by the next meeting and will be able to progress the plans for the Intergenerational project further.
- Improve attendance at the forum. VR and AM have been working on a communications drive – press releases have gone out, an article has been published in Age UK magazine, social media has been utilised, leaflets have been printed and circulated to community centres, community rooms, residents associations, VCS organisations and neighbourhood wardens, and forum dates are being advertised in the one stop shop. This effort will continue to increase attendance.

7. COMMUNITY NEWS EXCHANGE

AT – Problems with Lovells and the Decent Homes Standard, including experiences

such as:

- Issues with rewiring of properties
- Delays on work being completed
- Mess left behind after work completed, more work and decorating needed as a result
- Work being signed off as completed without the knowledge of the tenant.
- No boxes for packing or covers for furniture provided.
- Main security doors left open

Cllr. Oldham advised AT that these issues can be brought at the next meeting.

JB – Care and repair - handy persons service for vulnerable people. More information can be found here – www.care-and-repair.org.uk or call 01604 782250. RR added that from personal experience, this is a fantastic service.

CO – Has returned from travels in Ghana, thankful for everyone's support.

MH – Raised that the PCT left £44 million of debt, leading to the cutting of services. The Clinical Commissioning Groups that have replaced the PCT now also fund operations – concerns around this. RR said that a list of all operations that now are funded through the CCG has to go to committee first, RR to give to AM to circulate.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

BN asked whether the events calendar is kept updated. AM confirmed that the calendar is kept up to date on the internet but for those that do not have access to the internet, AM will post.

BN raised concerns over the amount spent on the fountain by the market square. BN also raised questions around the PCC – recommendation that £500,000 is spent on roundabout for Wooton Hall – staff budget over £1 million. BN felt that the public do not know how the PCC works, and why so much money is spent.

9. SUGGESTIONS FOR ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS OR FORUM ACTIVITIES

Next meeting: ALMO update - Suzanne McBride & Cllr. Markham.

Future meetings: Northampton General Hospital

10. DATE AND VENUES OF FUTURE FORUM MEETINGS

Thursday, 24th July, 2-4pm

Thursday, 18th September, 2-4pm

Thursday, 13th November, 2-4pm

The meeting concluded at 4:02 pm