

## Northampton Borough Council

### Northampton Diverse Communities Forum

Thursday, 22 November 2018

#### 1. WELCOMES, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

**ATTENDANCE:** Pauline Woodhouse (PW, Co-Chair), Cllr James Hill (JH, Co-Chair), Jamie Wells (JW, NBC), Mavis Mudirwa (MMu, Power of The Mind), Abade Ahmed (AA, Somali Community), Beckii Blackwood (BB, St Andrew's Healthcare), Marie Beckett (MB, Diverse Actors Company), Suzanna Storey (SS, What's the Storey Podcast & Diverse Actors Company), Aideen Fogarty (AF, Northampton Town of Sanctuary).

#### MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

#### 3. AIDEEN FOGARTY, JAMAL ALWAHABI AND JAMAL BHAATII - TOWN OF SANCTUARY

Town of Sanctuary

Group who declared themselves to be part of the movement of the city of sanctuary who aim to support refugees. This is for all refugees but to welcome the youngsters who are here. There is a youth club at Leicester Street to help these young people. Activities such as cooking take place at the club. Come from places such as Sudan and Eritrea.

Refugee week, various things happened, event at the guildhall, L2L ran a stall and The Deco had a show. Want events to take place during the whole week across the country and we want Northampton to be a part of this.

UoN very supportive of ToS and they would like to become a University of Sanctuary. Supporting and giving bursaries/tuition to 2 students this year.

Royal and Derrigate looking to become a Theatre of Sanctuary and involved in some shows there.

Mainly boys, a small amount of female asylum seekers. Young boy from Eritrea found in the parkrun was then part of the Northampton Athletic club and then he was moved to Leicester.

17<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> of June is refugee week.

Q: What support would you like from the forum? Would it be something to help with the refugee next week?

A: Yes it would, this would be good to discuss closer to the time.

Q: How many young people are in the Northampton?

A: Over 300 in Northamptonshire

AA: There is a scheme where refugees come over to help, I would like to come to your youth club and make some links.

MMu: For the event we could do a storytelling event, to help build confidence and to inspire other people.

AF: This could be good, it will have to be taken into consideration that these events have been traumatising but these are keen individuals who are looking to move forward in their life.

MMu: Yes, maybe more of a shared experiences session.

**ACTION:** Add refugee week/town of sanctuary to the action plan.

RB: St Andrews could help support these individuals because of their trauma.

## **NATHAN GREEN - JAMAICA DAY**

### **5. COMMUNITY INFORMATION EXCHANGE**

JW talked the forum about International Men's Day, activities included:

Information Stalls

Grey Dog Trust Playing Music

Male Choir

Boxing sessions

Role Model of the Year awards

Look to continue the awards for the next year.

Q: How did you bring publicity to the event?

A: There was posters, radio, press releases, posters on social media etc.

RB: New team planning all outreach and organisation.

**SS: What's the story podcast.**

Identified areas where there was lack of diversity but always asked where's the evidence?

This was where the idea of the podcast came around, this is available on all platforms.

Diversity can be enhanced so much more if people know the stories of people and their history.

What is going on? Pitfalls in society?

Look to have social bias broken down and understand different communities more so.

### **Diverse Actors Company**

Created to help create content which reflects Northamptonshire and create opportunities for diverse individuals.

MB: Stories that are told are often told from a white bias. This cuts a lot of people off and doesn't give people as an ethnic minority the chance to get roles. A lot of acting schools you have to pay for and this continues the trend of what we have now and limits diversity. It is not a level platform and this means that writers/actors aren't coming through to tell their stories.

SS: It's about providing a platform for people who have different experiences to white people. This is here to create a space for different minorities to express their talents. The podcast will link in to the actors company as this will act as inspiration. This will be a company for adults as there are more opportunities for the youth out there.

Q: Have you have contact with Screen Northants?

A: Yes, I used to work really closely with them.

PW: You should speak to Weekes Baptiste.

AF: Some of the individuals from ToS have been in community theatre so would be happy to be involved in this project.

SS IMD winner.

RB and MMu to get in contact with SS about the podcast.

MMu: sharing of stories is so important, this creates more understanding and this project sounds great.

Power of the mind storytelling project runs once a month, two people came last Saturday and talked about mental health and we also had a worker from Mind come in and speak to the community, it was a very useful event.

In February, there will be an event about domestic violence, we will ask people if they would like to share their stories and we will also invite professionals to help those who have been or are in this situation.

PW: Should be a paper about interpersonal violence which was carried out quite some time ago. There were workshops which produced evidence statistics to go to a scrutiny panel, this lead to funding and a paper produced.

Look at this document and see how it can help.

**ACTION:** MM/JW to look for scrutiny report regarding interpersonal violence.

MMu: This would be good for us to build on instead of starting from the beginning.

PW: It would be good to build on the existing information as the community isn't changing, it is just getting bigger.

MMu: If we can have individuals who worked on that who are happy to help us we would love for that.

**AA: Northamptonshire's campaign against FGM**

Looking to engage with the community and open conversations through the social club and cafe. Trying to spread awareness of the issue and to educate the community of what FGM is and help clarify questions surrounding the issue. Why are men talking about FGM?

This is a family issue, a human right issue and a health issue.

A reason this is done is to prevent sex before marriage, this is based on culture and not religion. We are looking to change the thoughts of people and help build bridges between people like social workers and the community.

Northampton has had families investigated, this is a very sensitive topic and although it is illegal, there is no structure to deal with an issue when this might be the case.

Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> November at the UoN from 9am-4pm there is a variety of workshops regarding gender equality.

JH: You are right, the problem has been identified and there is training for people who work in schools but then it is knowing how to deal with issue this once suspected.

PW: The project showed that there was issues with inclusivity between men and women, and questions were asked such as "should men be included in these conversations".

It is good to see Abade continuing with this work and that police and schools are working together to raise awareness of issues regarding things like FGM and interpersonal violence.

PW: That's why it is important to build on previous work because it keeps it alive.

## **6. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AT THE NEXT MEETING**

Yemi to talk about hate crime when she is in post.

Police and Stop and Search – need an update on this and the local perspective with stats.

Jenny Campbell sent an e-mail saying that stop and search is always on the radar, commended the forum but raised issues surrounding the timing.

**ACTION:** MM to document that Jenny has requested this.

SS: It would be good to invite the Happy You project.

PW: It may be good to invite Nazreen back in to see if anything has changed.

MMu: Would like to talk to the group after a meeting with Nene conservation.

## **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The meeting concluded at Time Not Specified