

Northampton Borough Council

Northampton LGBT and Q People's Forum

Tuesday, 21 May 2019

Officers at the meeting

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

Attendees: Leo, Zach (Qspace), Phil, Aleks, Rebecca, Iulia, Alison, John, Samuel (UNISON), Jane, Solomon, Victoria (NPH), Sami, Ben (UNISON), Sonja, Sharon, Benny, Alison (VIN), William.

Some attendees chose not to write their names on the sign in sheet.

Apologies: Cllr King, Matt (QSpace), Liz (Qfilm), Cat (Qfilm).

Matthew welcomed everyone to the LGBTQ Forum and gave an overview of the forum's purpose and structure for the many new people attending. The forum is chaired by Cllr Anna King and Community co-chair, Matthew Toresen and meets bi-monthly alternating between a formal meeting at the Guildhall and a social meeting at a town centre pub venue.

2. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

Outstanding action noted- Forum awaiting update from Sgt Rod Williams (Northants Police) re. crime reporting gender options.

Action: Aimee to circulate video and podcast links received from Will

Link to short documentary film with gay activist Chris Dilworth
<https://youtu.be/UhXGEubz3po>

Link to The first episode of Frequeerency Spectrum podcast,
<https://youtu.be/osNRHSEe3-c>

Minutes agreed.

3. 40TH ANNIVERSARY APPEAL FOR INFORMATION

The forum welcomed DCI Ally White to the meeting to talk about the 40th anniversary of the death of Sean McGann on 17 April 1979:

15 yr old Sean McGann went missing from Midsummer Meadows at around 6pm. At the time, Midsummer Meadows toilets were known to be used by the 'cruising community'. Sean's body was found in an alleyway 2 miles away. He had not been robbed or assaulted but was found strangled. His body was not hidden and police suspected an element of regret.

DCI White explained that the Police at the time were heavy handed and prejudiced which was also reflected in the media reporting but that attitudes today have come a long way. DCI White informed the forum that some funding recently became available to conduct a full forensic review of the case. Forensics have come a long way and DNA has now been found from a letter with information on the death received by Police in 1991.

The Forum were reminded that men who might have been witnesses would have

also been committing a crime and could have had a lot to lose by giving information at the time.

Police are asking the community if you know anyone who might have been using the toilets at the time please come forward with information. All information will be treated sensitively. This is possibly the last chance to receive any information.

Q: People who already gave statements at the time, their memory will be worse now, are they being asked to come forward again?

A: Their original statements will remain on record, but also allegiances change, people have died and it might be easier to talk now, years later.

The park had a reputation and a transient community. Additionally, a fair and football match were taking place on the day of Sean's death, which would have brought people from other areas into the town.

Action: DCI Ally to share links, Aimee to attach to minutes for LGBTQ Forum.

Q: What will happen to witness statements after this if not solved.

A: They will continue to be stored.

Matt is sharing information with older gay communities.

4. PRIDE REVIEW AND FUTURE PLANNING

The forum attendees were very positive about the Pride event that took place in the Market Square on Saturday. Aimee has received some great feedback by email and there has been a lot of good press online and on social media about the event. Some were disappointed that there was no parade but a good step in the right direction. Suggestion that it seems to be the right time for Northampton Pride, particularly with University moving to the town.

Promotion:

Not everyone uses social media/Facebook so would be good to have more promotion in the town and elsewhere too. Good promotion from NBC social media and roadside boards, and via the Meet up group. Posters seen in Daventry gender clinic. Poster was not circulated early enough to get out to people.

Some performers received negative comments by young teenagers when leaving the market area. Koola were a brilliant end to day.

We want an event that is inclusive and open to all. Kettering did a pride last year with lots of families. Wellingborough Pride 3rd August- Glamoris hall.

Suggestion to get in touch with Girl Guides who now support Prides.

Mixed comments about what worked well and future preferences around alcohol, family-friendly event and location. It was felt that the location on the market square meant increased footfall. Unitarian meeting house suggested as a quiet space to go

if people need it for any future events in town centre. To be discussed by steering group in future.

Future Pride steering group:

Alison (VIN) spoke to the group about her role at VIN as a development officer, supporting people who want to form community groups, and helping established groups to explore funding options.

Alison suggests an unincorporated association for the LGBTQ Pride steering group. This is a straightforward process where the group meets and individuals decide on committee members, and set rules (constitution) that the group agrees. The group needs to set up a bank account and is then in a position to apply for funding. There is an option to become a registered charity group later, which opens more doors to funding. Small charities do not pay taxes. If the group registered with HMRC gift aid would also be an option.

Would need to set some aims and look at costs. NCF, NBC and small awards for all lottery pot are all options.

LGBTQ Consortium also offers funding for Prides, and was previously discussed as an opportunity the forum would like to explore.

We have had a lot of interest from businesses and organisations that are interested in sponsoring Pride 2020. Aimee will explore further once the steering group is established and begin discussions.

Discussion took place around sustainability and considering the environment when planning future Pride events. The group feel it is important to not allow other organisations (sponsors) to take control, consider ethical side and would want to look at their policies around LGBT. Steering group to make decisions and include this into constitution.

Fundraising in the community is important in the local community to build the energy. Creates energy and interest but makes least money for time/input- the community involvement is what is important.

Utilise people's skills who are not necessarily able to make meetings.

If anyone is interested in being part of the constituted Pride committee (core group) please contact forums@northampton.gov.uk or aluck@northampton.gov.uk

5. ACTION PLAN

Carnival, Saturday 8 June: Everyone is invited to get involved in the forums float.

Please contact forums@northampton.gov.uk to get involved and receive further information.

6. COMMUNITY INFORMATION EXCHANGE

QSpace Recently launched Q corner in the East Hunsbury library, second Saturday every month. Anyone needing a safe space, somewhere LGBTQ can access. Looking for volunteers to support QSpace which has been expanding quickly.

Foundation Stones Project is a new charity, designed to support homeless community in Northampton. Vision for new shelter by Christmas. Great support by New Mayor and NBC leader Cllr Nunn. Aimed at single females, people in a relationship, and LGBTQ community members- those who find it difficult to access current shelter. The project has charitable status and has reached Round 4 of Big Lottery Fund. Council trying to support with finding premises. More information can be found at www.thefoundationstonesproject.com

Unison- Focus on employment discrimination in workplace. Would like to recruit more people to trade union and form a self organised lgbtq group within this as a collective to address issues. Not all campaign issues are directly related to LGBT e.g better funded services, healthcare. Happy to work with and support other groups to run LGBT history month activities and campaigns.

School nurses at NHS very keen to get involved in Pride next year. NHFT have a number of LGBTQ services; would be great to have representatives from the different services sharing a space in future. Would like to include gender clinic in future events- confidential/quiet space would be welcomed. Lowdown facility is so close and could have opened up for offer a space for confidential services, to explore in future.

Bruce would like to go back to Uni to discuss setting up a UON Pride society, which would be able to raise some funding and support the steering group.

Wellingborough Pride on Saturday 3 August wellingboroughpride2019@gmail.com . If people want a stall it costs £5.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Northampton Socialist Film club: Sunday 28th July pm.
Screening of 'Pride' with a Q&A with Mike Jackson the National Secretary of Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners at Kinsley Working Mens Club.

ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 25 July, social meeting. Venue tbc.

Tuesday 24 September, 6.30pm The Guildhall

The meeting concluded at Time Not Specified