

Northampton Borough Council

Northampton LGBTQ People and Allies Forum

Tuesday, 23 February 2021

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

Attended: Matthew Toresen (chair), Aimee Luck (NBC), Simon (Outlaws), Will (Qspace), Laura Graham (Action4Happiness/Happy Hood), Helen (Lowdown), Will B (Lowdown), Philip, Dean (National Care Group), Sgt Steve Bedford (Northants Police), Zach (Qspace/Trangst), Amy (Northants Fire), Alex (NCF), John (NLive)

Apologies: Belinda Cotton, Cllr Anna King

2. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

Previous minutes agreed as a true record.

Messages of Hope (Qstory) and Bard Picnic to be picked up on April agenda.

3. ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

Laura joined to talk about the Action for Happiness and ask for ideas from the Forum.

A National charity founded in London to improve wellbeing. Locally a group was set up to create this social movement across Northamptonshire – proactive health and wellbeing!

Public Health funded 90 minute monthly meet-ups are taking place online. This month was friendly February – open to all, currently by Zoom – UFO, Heathers Café, United Africa Assoc, and Zimwomen running these digital meet ups.

[Action for Happiness Website](#) has LOADS of free resources that you can access and share.

[Free online wellbeing events](#) happen each month which are open to everyone and explore the 10 Keys to Happier Living.

[Monthly Actions Calendars](#) developed by volunteers in Northants have been downloaded millions of times and provide daily suggestions that are proven to improve happiness.

[Action for Happiness App](#) is free and given twice daily happiness prompts.

Find A4H on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter by searching @A4HNorthants. If the group have any suggestions for social media/content please get in touch.

Subscribe to the free, local, monthly newsletter with lots of lovely ideas to help you be happier, just email Laura on... to be added to the distribution list.

Q – Dean: representing a care home in the town; are the meet ups open to people with support needs?

A - Not there as a counselling service but an opportunity for social support and is often referred to by social prescribers.

Laura to get in touch with Lowdown to pick back up on previous partnership work.

Offer from Dean to volunteer/have some input – welcomed by Laura.
John offered to add A4H to NLive community noticeboard.

John arrange with [Laura](#).

THE HAPPY `HOOD – Laura is also co-founder of this local Zine all about good news in Northampton, published quarterly and celebrating all those doing good in their communities.

Follow on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#). Zines can be ordered from [our website](#)

If anyone has any good news from their organisation they'd like to share, email:

hello@thehappyhood.com

4. INDEPENDENT ADVISORY GROUP

The Police are expected to have an Independent Advisory Group (IAG), representative of the diverse communities, who meet regularly to raise policing issues that affect them and to act as a sounding board for Police when looking at new processes or policy that may adversely affect some communities.

Members of the IAG are sometimes (thankfully rarely) called upon to assist with major investigations where there maybe communication barriers or mistrust within communities and also sometimes to form a small task/finish group to look at a specific issue or problem.

Discussions have been taking place to collaborate with the Community Forums and have a standard agenda item on all forum meetings that would be attended by a Police Sergeant. The purpose would be for the community to be able to raise crime and policing issues directly and to act as a critical friend to the Police and challenge them on issues.

A form will be circulated with the minutes asking for personal details from those who are willing to be included on a list of community contacts. This list would be contacted directly in the event of issues that are likely to cause concern in order to share factual information through your networks and get feedback.

These contacts are also sometimes used to gather a panel to review policy changes and also in matters of a major incident for purposes of an investigation. The latter would need a confidentiality statement signing to protect sensitive information being released that could hinder the investigation.

Anyone with questions/wanting further information/clarification, or wishing to feedback on any of the above please contact [Aimee](#) or [Steve](#).

Discussion and feedback from forum members:

Will (Qspace) raised concerns about the Police attending all meetings, with the view that it may put some people off and suggested the attendance over the years from

the police has been inconsistent.

Zach suggested an LGBTQ Officer might be preferred.

Steve – The issue with this approach is that the officer on duty at the time of the meeting may be from a different area and not in the best position to take action whereas having a Sgt rank attend would give more consistency and be more accountable.

A number of other members disagreed with comments made and welcomed the police to attend. WillB (Lowdown) highlighted that the forum is predominantly made up of people who also represent LGBTQ services and groups and it is important to work with the police, build working relationships and encourage hate crime reporting. If it was a support group then it would be less appropriate for Police to take part on a regular basis.

Dean agreed that opening the line of communication with the Police is important.

Alex (NCF) asked if replacing the advisory group would mean less formalised scrutiny of the Police?

Steve - Hoping for more formal scrutiny as a result. Previous Advisory Group was successful for several years but membership dropped off and no longer have a representative group. Actions will be noted in the minutes and updated on in the next meeting. Meetings were not minuted for the advisory group so this would be more accountable.

IAG is not to hold police to account, but to challenge and be a critical friend.

John asked about the kinds of issues that could be raised – for example; Domestic abuse and how it impacts LGBTQ people in Northampton?

Steve agreed this would be a good example of an issue to raise.

A number of issues were raised with the form which has been seen by those who attend some of the other forums and have received this already. The group agreed this is an opportunity to educate the police around terminology and LGBTQ language. Steve welcomed this information and guidance from the forum.

The majority also agreed that language evolves and changes and even those within the LGBTQ community are not always aware of all terms and it would be useful to share something across the forum to better educate everyone.

WillB (Lowdown) offered to support with a glossary of sorts for the forum.

Anyone wanting to suggest changes to the form/offer guidance on language/terms please send these to aimee.luck@northampton.gov.uk who will collate and share with Steve.

5. COMMUNITY INFORMATION EXCHANGE

Lowdown penpal scheme for youth group launched – mostly under 13's paired with youth group members – lovely to see the communications between them. If you

know any young people under 13 that can't access social media groups this might be useful.

Parent and carers session taking place 2nd March – email [Helen](#) to refer.

Trangst continued to run throughout lockdown online. If you want to access please use facebook page (private space for peer support and social).

Matt (Chair) – also works for Northants police as staff, not officer in positive action team, recently challenged by an anti trans group ('Sex not Gender') about policies – warning that others may be targeted.

Qspace still sending out monthly wellbeing packs – free, if you want one/know anyone who does just contact by email or social media. Virtual youth group taking place on a Thursday.

History month video created by Qspace; https://youtu.be/UB_LrfCNfUM about venues in the town. Still looking for more history so please input if you have anything to add to mapping the history.

Aimee to share with NCB comms – completed.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Alex – NCF Grants available:

Covid funding – for those working with those effected , up to £2k

Queens institute fund – health and wellbeing £10-20k (Northampton)

Compton fund – arts

Anyone wanting funding info please get in touch with [Alex](#)

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 20 April, 7pm (social)

The meeting concluded at 20:05