

Northampton Borough Council

Northampton Pensioners' Forum

Thursday, 3 November 2011

People at the meeting: Cllr Oldham R Rumsey, B Eccles, L Percival, H Tuttle, H Tuttle, J Smith, D Hewitt, M Boys, G Bailey, M Brown, J Hepworth, Cllr Mason, Cllr Oldham, S Owusu – Akuffo, C Owusu-Akuffo

Officers at the meeting Tracy Tiff (Overview and Scrutiny Officer)
Andrew Foster (Northampton NHS)
Lindsey Ambrose (NBC)
Vivienne Bicknall (NBC)

1. WELCOMES AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and the forum members took the opportunity to introduce themselves.

2. APOLOGIES FROM PEOPLE WHO CAN'T MAKE IT TO THE MEETING

Apologies were received from John Rawlings, Barbara Isaac and Rashmi Shah.

3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the meeting held on the 29th September 2011 were agreed.

Matters Arising

The Chair reported that he had written a letter to the County Council Cabinet Member – Councillor Gonzalez with regards to the streetlights that had been turned off to express the forums concerns about safety issues. He commented that he was still awaiting a response from Cllr Gonzalez and would contact him again in order to gain a response.

In response to a comment made by a forum member with regards to the cost of Caretakers at Abington Community Centre, the Chair reported that he would converse with the relevant Cabinet member to gain further information and report back at a future meeting.

4. CHANGES ASSOCIATED WITH PLANS TO REDEVELOP NORTHAMPTON BUS STATION ☐

Mike Kitchen - Principal Regeneration Officer introduced his report and explained to the forum the reasons for rebuilding the bus station which included the current bus station car park being unusable and expensive, empty offices and visually displeasing and therefore in need of regeneration. He reported that the Grovsnor Centre was being developed and in order to maximise its potential, there would be a

need to demolish the current bus station and a new one erected on the site of the Fishmarket. He further reported that certain criteria had been met in considering the new location, which had included a walk from the bus station to the Town Centre as being no more than a 2.5 minute walk. It was explained that by developing on the land at the Fishmarket currently owned by the Borough Council, fewer problems would be encountered than from the purchase of land from an external source.

In response to concerns raised by members, Mike Kitchen explained that the waiting area for the bus station would be under cover and therefore people would be protected from the elements. It was reported that the new bus station would be half the size of the current bus station and that it was hoped that it would be opened in March 2013. It was explained that an archaeological dig would be taking place under the grounds of the bus station, prior to any work being carried out, as there was evidence of there being Jewish heritage beneath the site. Councillor Oldham explained that should there be a significant find during the excavation process, patience would need to be demonstrated. He further commented that the needs of pedestrians were being looked at as a priority.

In response to questions asked by forum members, Mike Kitchen explained that the Grosvenor Centre would be double its current size and that the bus station would be single storey. It was reported that the County Council were looking at using the land on the Drapery more efficiently for buses; Legal and General remained an essential part of the process.

5. IMPROVING NORTHAMPTON OLDER PEOPLE'S HEALTH FORUM MEETINGS

Roger Rumsey explained that he had attended the last Older Persons Health Forum and questioned whether members of the Pensioners Forum would like to see a continuation of the Health Forum.

Andrew Foster – NHS Northamptonshire, explained that a decision had been taken which would result in the NHS Northamptonshire and the Northants County Council stepping back from the Health Forum which was due to cutbacks to the service area, but that the NHS would continue to support the Older People's Health Forums around the county until March 2012. He further confirmed that after this date, they would be able to provide guest speakers on occasions and offer phone support.

One Forum Member questioned the ownership of the Health Forum and what the rationale was behind it. It was noted that there had been very poor attendance at the last meeting, which members of the forum suggested had been due to very poor publicity of the meeting and bad organisation. Andrew Foster explained that there was going to be more of an emphasis on quality rather than quantity; there had also been a reduction on staff whilst trying to engage with more people.

Members of the forum agreed that they did not want to lose time in their meetings for discussion of NHS matters and they did not want to support organising another NHS Northampton Older Persons Health Forum before March 2012.

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

This was covered under Minutes and Matters Arising and other agenda items.

7. CORE QUESTIONS SCRUTINY PANEL 2 INDEPENDENT LIVING STRATEGIES

The Chair of Scrutiny Panel 2 – Independent Living Strategies explained that as part of the Overview and Scrutiny process, evidence was being gathered to inform the strategy in order to put forward recommendations. A list of core questions, relating to Independent Living, was circulated at the meeting. It was explained that a report would be taken to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in March 2012 to report the findings.

On completion of the questions, the Chair of the Scrutiny Panel 2 thanked the members of the Pensioners Forum for their feedback and informed them that a copy of the report would be made available to them, prior to the meeting in March 2012.

8. TRAINING FOR INSPECTING CARE HOMES

This item was deferred to a future meeting.

9. SUGGESTIONS FOR ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS OR FORUM ACTIVITIES

This item was not discussed.

10. DATE AND VENUES OF FUTURE FORUM MEETINGS

Date of the next meeting: 15 December, from 2pm to 4pm in the Holding Room at the Guildhall, Northampton.

11. COMMUNITY NEWS EXCHANGE

Deferred to a later meeting.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

The meeting concluded at 16.11