

Northampton Diverse Communities Equalities Forum

on Thursday, 14 March 2013 at 6:30 pm until not later than 8.00pm

in The Holding Room, The Guildhall, St. Giles Square, Northampton, NN1 1DE.

Agenda

1. **Apologies**
2. **Welcomes and Introductions**
3. **Minutes of previous meetings and matters arising**
 - Minutes of last meeting of Northampton Diverse Communities and Equalities Forum – 24 January 2013.
 - Minutes of all-Forums NBC Budget Consultation Meeting – 22 January 2013
4. **Recruitment of Army reserves and cadets (Lt Col Blomfield, Deidre Newham, Lt Col Simon Worsley and Nick Spors)**
5. **Planning the work of the Forum for 2013/14**
6. **Meeting dates for 2013/14**
7. **Community Information Exchange**
8. **Items for discussion at the next and future meetings**
9. **Date of next meeting - Wednesday 5 June 2013**

Map and directions at: www.northampton.gov.uk/guildhall

For more information about this meeting please contact:
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More information about the Forum generally is at: www.northampton.gov.uk/forums



Facebook page: www.northampton.gov.uk/dcf

Please note that this Forum is supported and funded by Northampton Borough Council. The Forum may work in partnership and collaboration with other community groups, councils and local services from time to time. The views expressed and decisions taken by the Forum are not necessarily those of Northampton Borough Council.

Agenda Item 3

Northampton Borough Council

Northampton Diverse Communities Forum

Thursday, 24 January 2013

Minutes of meeting

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS (Chairs – Councillor Suresh Patel and John Rawlings)

Everyone introduced themselves. Ten people attended the meeting co-chairs Councillor Suresh Patel and John Rowlands. The minutes were taken by Joe Biskupski (Northampton Borough Council).

2. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes were agreed as a true record of the last meeting held on 24 March 2013. Matters arising were:

- Forum to contact OFSTED regarding pupil achievement.
- Page 3, item 5 – exclusion data needs to be followed up.

4. THE WORK OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

Iain Britton, the Assistant Commissioner – Justice outlined the role and priorities of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC).

Iain explained that on 15 November 2012, Adam Simmonds was elected to be Northamptonshire's first PCC. This position takes over the role of the former Police Authority in leading policing and criminal justice in the county.

The work of the PCC includes:

- Holding the Chief Constable to account and scrutinising the police;
- Setting the strategy for policing in the county;
- Setting the budget for policing, and the police precept;
- Producing the five-year Police and Crime Plan for the county, with 3 – 5 year priorities.

The Commissioner is accountable to a police and crime panel, made up of councillors and independent members.

Police and crime commissioners are expected to connect and engage with communities and victims and to play a major role in shaping the policing services. They have a new role in commissioning services to tackle crime and disorder.

Iain outlined the main priorities of the PCC. These included:

- Putting victims at the heart of the system. A victims commissioner is to be established from March 2013 for 4 – 5 months;
- Commissioning several types of victim support activities from April 2014;

- Focusing on violent crime, including sexual offences, and ensuring that a reduction of these crimes is a high priority;
- Antisocial behaviour;
- Bringing together services for victims, antisocial behaviour, nuisance and criminality. In the future, the PCC will have a new role for local commissioning of victims services.
- An emphasis on drugs and the impact of drugs on local communities;
- Involving the voluntary and community sector in finding solutions to problems of crime;
- Engaging with the diverse communities of the county;
- Engaging with organisations that have a shared commitment to tackling crime.

Iain added that the Commissioner is keen to engage with communities across the county and how things could be done differently in the future.

Question: What does the team around the Commissioner do? How are appointments made?

Iain: The PCC developed from the old Police Authority (PA) and includes staff from the PA structure. Formally, Iain is an interim Assistant PCC, with his substantive post being with the police. The new Assistant Commissioner posts will be advertised and will be open, public appointments.

Question: How many posts are currently interim, and how many are permanent?

Iain: There are four ex-PA staff and 8 interim posts. Northamptonshire's will be the smallest PCC office in the country, but will be larger than the former PA. This is because the new role is bigger.

Question: It is a concern that the election of a PCC may lead to active political involvement in the work of the police, which would be regrettable. How is the new role going to link in with other agencies? How are the public going to know who and how to contact the PCC? How can the public complain about the police – this is done through the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) at present?

Iain: It is recognised that the issue of police politicisation is a public concern at present. It should be stressed that the Chief Constable is operationally independent. It is important not to perform the PCC role in a partisan manner. Furthermore, it is important that the PCC works in a way that adds value, and does not duplicate work elsewhere.

Complaints addressed to the Chief Constable are a matter for the PCC. Complaints against police officers fall within the remit of the Chief Constable, under the supervision of the PCC, who is responsible for setting standards. The PCC has a role which is not too different from other elected politicians, to pass on and monitor complaints.

The role of the IPCC is somewhat different. This is a non-departmental public body which is responsible for overseeing the system for handling complaints made against police forces.

Question: The Police Plan has been derived from the Adam Simmonds manifesto. At what stage will there be an Equality Impact Assessment? There is a concern about the "war on drugs" and the impact of "stop and search", particularly on young Black males. When Adam Simmonds was seeking election as PCC, he spoke about reducing disproportionate "stop and search". Now that he has been elected, will he continue with this view?

Furthermore, when seeking election, Adam Simmonds said that tackling human trafficking was a priority. Will this be a priority following his election?

So-called “victimless crimes” (such as hate crime, disability hate crime) need to be effectively tackled.

The PCC is accountable to the Police Complaints Panel, which is mostly comprised of councillors with a few additional members. A larger body would have had an equality champion.

Iain: As far as drugs policy is concerned, the aim is not a “war on drugs”. There is a focus on the supply side and a real intent to make things different, moving away from a hard-faced enforcement strategy model. The PCC is keen to engage about Equality Impact Assessments. It is essential that they are not merely box-ticking exercises, and need to be genuine and add value.

The Police Inspectorate will be looking at “stop and search”, the PCC is keen to allow the Inspectorate to do their work, and then follow up with any actions required. The police had assumed that “stop and search” is no longer an issue – however, this view is not shared by communities. The PCC is planning a formal review of “stop and search” within his first year in the post.

Comment: “Stop and search” is a major issue for communities; it impacts not only on Black communities, but also on Asian communities. It is not clear why it will take so long to do something about this.

Councillor Patel: The Forum would like Iain to pass on this issue to the PCC as an issue of concern of the Forum.

Comment: If “stop and search” is to end, it needs to end properly.

Comment: If a member of the public is subject to “stop and search”, he or she is allowed to ask the police officer’s number. In one case, the police officer was rude. If teachers are expected to conduct themselves in a certain manner, there is no reason why the police cannot do so.

Comment: Information has been asked for in the past from the police. However, this has often been unintelligible and delivered by police officers who were not informed.

Question: What does the PCC consider to be the priorities of Northampton’s communities? Is there a section in the Police Plan that reflects the diversity of Northampton’s communities?

Comment: It is important that the PCC engages with young people.

Iain: IB said that he hoped that the Police Plan will reflect the PCC’s commitment to diversity. The PCC recognises issues of diversity, and has been engaging with Northampton’s communities. He wants to talk with, listen to and engage with local people.

Question: Does IB plan to attend a future meeting of this Forum?

Iain: IB confirmed that he would very much wish to attend a future meeting of the Forum to provide an update on the work of the PCC.

5. HOUSING TENANT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY (Joe Biskupski)

Joe Biskupski outlined the Housing Tenant Engagement Strategy 2013-16. This draft document is currently being consulted upon by the Borough Council. It aims to set out the commitment of the Borough Council to tenant engagement as a key aspect of the housing service it provides. Joe

explained that the Council has a long-established commitment to engaging with local communities and recognises its responsibilities in involving local residents in the issues that affect or interest them. Joe Biskupski explained that the strategy had been out to consultation for the past few weeks, and the deadline for responses is 31 January 2013.

Joe asked Diverse Communities Equalities Forum to focus in particular on Section 13 Proposed Engagement Model for Scrutiny (pages 31 – 34).

Comment: There is a particular need for the Council to engage with people with disabilities.

Comment: Action is needed to capture the voices of younger tenants

Comment: Paragraph 2 on page 13 is unfortunate. This reflects a fixed, relatively intransigent approach to people who are vocal and have strong views. This does not mean that people have nothing to say.

6. HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY – UPDATE (Joe Biskupski)

Joe Biskupski and Morcea Walker outlined the plans for Northampton's commemoration of Holocaust Memorial Day on 28 January 2013. Two events are being held, a morning event in the Courtyard at Northampton Guildhall, and an evening event in the Great Hall at the Guildhall. Two schools will be involved, Vernon Terrace Primary School and Abbeyfield Secondary School. Members of the Youth Forum will also be involved.

7. PLANNING THE WORK OF THE FORUM FOR 2013/14 (Joe Biskupski)

Joe Biskupski asked whether forum members were content with how the forums were being arranged or if they would feel it more helpful to have an annual work programme.

The Forum agreed that having a work programme may be beneficial as this may help the Forum to make a greater impact. However, they concurred that the meetings should continue to have a degree of flexibility to ensure that topical discussions would continue. It was also noted that with a framework of themed meetings in place the Community Engagement Manager would have more time to arrange for relevant speakers to attend forum meetings.

Comment: Health is an important matter and would benefit from further consideration at a themed meeting.

Comment: Would like to see this Forum as a body which makes more of a difference, and not just an opportunity for people to say that they've attended a meeting. People will attend Forum meetings if they feel that they are relevant.

Comment: It is important to engage with councillors, and to ensure that any actions agreed by councillors are followed up.

Comment: This Forum should work with other agencies.

Comment: There is a need to provide Census data to help identify the main groups. Problems need to be solved at grassroots levels to improve people's lives. Need to empower people at grassroots level to improve their lives.

Comment: In the past, people would attend Forum meetings to understand how the council works. With the internet and increased transparency, things have now changed, as there are many other sources of information and means of influencing agendas.

Comment: Work needs to be done with young people; the Forum needs to include a mixture of older and younger members.

AGREED: That the next meeting of this Forum be primarily devoted to agreeing a programme of themed meetings.

8. COMMUNITY INFORMATION EXCHANGE

Zimwomen: Zimwomen are organising a multicultural fashion show on 5 April at 6pm to raise money for the Mayor's charity.

Zimwomen: Africa Day celebrations are being held on 25 May 2013.

Association of Northamptonshire Supplementary Schools Annual Dinner: a fundraising concert for the ANSS is being held at Cripps Theatre, Northampton School for Boys on 10 March.

Muslim Communities: Muslim communities see the need for a purpose-built mosque. Existing mosques are not large enough to cope with the numbers of people.

FAN: An exhibition of work by lesbian and gay artists is taking place at the Jesus Centre in Northampton.

Holocaust Memorial Day: a HMD lecture is being held at Northampton Synagogue on 10 February. Free admission is by ticket only.

NREC: A seminar on the duty to publish equality objectives is being held at the Doddridge Centre on 28 February at 1pm. Further details are available from Anjona Roy.

LINK: LINK is being set up as a public enterprise company and is encouraging people from BME groups to take part in its work.

NBC Partnership Fund Grant: Joe reported that the deadline for NBC Partnership Fund grants for the voluntary and community sector passed on 21 January. It is anticipated that outcomes will be announced in March 2013.

9. AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT AND FUTURE MEETINGS

- Planning the work of the Diverse Communities Equalities Forum for 2013/14.

10. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The next meeting of the Diverse Communities Equalities Forum will take place in the Guildhall on Thursday 14 March 2013 at 18.30 in the Holding Room, Guildhall.

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL ALL-FORUMS BUDGET CONSULTATION MEETING

Tuesday, 22 January 2013

18:30 in the Jeffery Room, Northampton Guildhall

Present: Christine Woodhams, Barbara Barber, Larry Barber, Roger Rumsey, David Hewitt, Lee Gilbert, Councillor Suresh Patel (NBC), Councillor Brian Oldham (NBC), Councillor Phil Larratt (PL) (NBC), Councillor Alan Botwood (NBC Cabinet Member for Finance) (AB), Isabell Proctor (NBC Director of Resources) (IP), Joe Biskupski (NBC Community Engagement Manager) (notes).

Introduction – Isabell Proctor introduced Councillor Botwood and herself.

IP explained the context of the Borough Council's budget. She said that only a relatively small share of Council Tax (CT) revenue goes to NBC, the largest amount goes to the County Council.

IP said that local government budgets are currently extremely stretched in the face of government cutbacks and the economic situation.

IP said that there is no transfer between the council's Revenue budget and its Capital budget.

Councillor Botwood made his presentation on the draft budget for the council. The following comments / questions were raised by those present:

- Q.** Ground Works – Councillor Botwood said that the council will get more value if the money spent in-house. Where will the money be spent?
- A.** If the service provided is directly under our control, we can get better value for money
- Q.** What impact will the NNDR review have on charities?
- A.** The council worked closely with charities developing the new scheme, and it is anticipated that charities will not be unduly impacted. There will be incentives for charities to share back office functions and facilities. For example, if a charity is co-located with another organisation, there will not be an increase in CT.
- Q.** Regarding the Ground Works scheme – if we didn't fund Groundworks, how can we continue providing the service, how can we save money?
- A.** (AB) There are a number of ways, including seeking sponsorship
- Q.** What will be happening with CCTV?
- A.** (AB) we review CCTV constantly, and work with the police to ensure that these are most appropriately located – e.g. near sheltered housing.

Comment: CCTV acts as a deterrent.

(IP) CCTV cameras that are in high activity areas are priorities to remain switched on.

Q. What monitoring is taking place?

A. (IP) CCTV cameras are recorded, but not everyone can watch all cameras at all times. If there is a crime, the police can request a recording.

Comment: Can we work smarter with the cameras that we have?

(AB) Yes

Comment: In Kingsley (Phippsville) there is no right turn into Kettering Road. However, there needs to be a policeman present to see the right turn into Kettering Road. Needs to be more joined-up working across a range of agencies.

Comment: (PL) In Nottingham the CCTV can identify people littering and Fixed Penalty Notices are issued.

IP will pass these comments on to people who are responsible for CCTV cameras.

Q. Can we issue Police Community Support Officers with cameras?

A. (IP) PCSOs are employed by the police – we cannot issue cameras.

(PL) Each Chief Constable can give PCOSs additional enforcement powers. In Northampton additional powers should be introduced by Chief Constable.

Cllr Oldham will ask Adam Simmonds to come to Pensioners' Forum.

Cllr Patel – Deputy PCC will be coming to next meeting of Diverse Communities Equalities Forum.

Comment: From a civil liberties point of view, we have more cameras per head of population than any other country.

Q. Greyfriars Bus Station won't be used to garage buses overnight. During period of darkness, will security be needed?

Comment: the bus station needs floodlights.

Q. Where will buses be garaged overnight?

A. Rothersthorpe Road – Stagecoach has a stopover place which can accommodate buses overnight.

Q. An item of growth is £12,760 for Park Ranger vehicles. How many Park Ranger vehicles can £12,000 buy?

A. (AB) The council is looking at sponsorship to contribute to the cost of vehicles.

(IP) The council is looking at contract hire of vehicles.

(AB) Greyfriars Bus station still being used as a station during the day.

Internal savings: AB said that internal reviews are being carried out all the time.

Q. What does moving services into LGSS mean?

A. The Borough Council will share services with LGSS. They will take over the administrative and back office functions currently undertaken by directly employed Borough Council staff.

Q. Is LGSS a profit-making organisation?

A. It is a collaboration between Northamptonshire County Council and Cambridgeshire County Council, to which other organisations join in.

(AB) if other Local Authorities join in later on, NBC will also benefit from any future savings.

Q. Is this similar to what's happening with Enterprise?

A. There are similarities, but Enterprise is a for-profit organisation, but LGSS is not done for profit.

Q. Is the contract only for 5 years?

A. The agreement is for 5 years, and will be reviewed, with an option to renew. The delegation agreed by the council needs to be robust. We delegate our services to LGSS on our behalf, and we can un-delegate them.

Comment. Savings mean people's jobs

Q. Why are we sticking stamps on envelopes? For example, letters were sent out regarding Housing Stock Transfer.

A. Sometimes we have to consult by letter. There are certain protocols we have to go through. We need to ensure that there is reliable communication.

Q. Are all staff Essential Car User Allowances being taken away?

A. (IP) it is beginning with senior staff. However, all staff will be affected over time, and negotiations are being carried out with trade unions.

Comment: In private industry, people pay their own professional fees. (IP) NBC have paid only professional fees if it is necessary to carry out the work. The proposal is to stop paying professional fees from 2014 to give staff time to adjust.

Q. When bin collections are made, if anything is spilt, it is frequently left on the street.

A. (IP) if this happens, customers should contact NBC and this will be passed to Enterprise to resolve.

Q. Who monitors the performance of Enterprise?

A. (IP) The Borough Council monitor performance via performance indicators and complaints received are part of this process.

Comment: We need to ensure that we get value for money from our refuse collection.

(AB) The contract is being monitored, and this is being addressed.

Q. Are inspections made of grass cutting work?

A. (AB) the contracts are monitored and Enterprise monitors the work they carry out, but they cannot inspect everything. They cannot collect and remove grass.

Cllr Larratt would like to propose that we do a session for all forums on the Enterprise contract.

Comment: Before the Enterprise contract, the Borough Council had a mower with a hopper. Why can't we do that now?

Q. What does providing floating support for tenants mean?

A. (IP) this means providing additional support for vulnerable people.

Q. Southfield children are being prevented from playing on playing fields by children from Goldings, particularly on local football pitches.

A. This is outside our control.

Comment: The skate park was money well spent.

IP concluded and thanked all for being present.

(AB) it is important to use your borough councillor to lobby.

(IP) budget surgeries are being carried out on Monday 28 January at 13.30, and on Tuesday 29 January from 18:00. A public consultation session is being held on Thursday 24 January at 18:00.

Q: 30% of the public do not have access to computers. They are excluded from consultation. How will the council address this?

A. (AB) we cannot know who has access to a computer. However, we do have computers in the One Stop Shop at the Guildhall.

Agenda Item 6

Northampton Diverse Communities and Equalities Forum

Meeting dates for 2013/14

Wednesday 5 June 2013

Wednesday 31 July

Thursday 26 September

Thursday 21 November

Thursday 23 January 2014

Thursday 13 March

Thursday 29 April

Wednesday 4 June

Wednesday 30 July