

Northampton Borough Council - Northampton Diverse Communities Forum

Thursday, 5 June 2014

Present: Cllr. Malpas (Co-chair, NBC), John Rawlings (Community Co-Chair), Nick Stephens (Police), Sue Ward (NIFF), Robert Henry (NubiWise), Wendi Buchanan (Solar), James Kitchener (NBA), Weekes Baptiste (Theatre), Alaa Abouzanad (ANSS), Godwin Kativu (ROHR Zimbabwe), Martin Kelly (Inspiration FM), Jenny Campbell (Inspiration FM), Matthew Toresen (NVC), Abade Ahmed (Somali Community), Abdi Yusuf (Northamptonshire Development Society), Chrisptopher Fray (NREC), Pauline Woodhouse (BME SRP), Louise Musson (NBC), Vicki Rockall (NBC), Alice Morgan (NBC)*

*took minutes

1. WELCOMES, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Ann Timson (Spring Boroughs Residents Association), Anne Villegas (Healthwatch), Anjona Roy (NREC), Tendai Ndongwe (NHFT), Neelam Aggarwal (BME SRP, IHWO, NIFF), Rutendo Nyatsine (Zimwomen Association), and Rachel Packman (Northants Police).

2. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

JC – page 3 of the minutes state that “JC suggested there is no age restriction on Stop and Search which was concerning”. JC felt that this is not accurate reflection of what was said at the meeting. However, AC confirmed that there is not an age restriction on Stop and Search - this will be picked up later in the meeting

Other than the above, the minutes were agreed as a true record.

3. NOMINATION OF THE COMMUNITY CO-CHAIR AND ELECTION

Nominations received for community co-chair

- Neelam Aggarwal – BME SRP, IHWO and NIFF
- Rutendo Nyatsine – Zimwomen Association
- Anjona Roy - NREC

It was agreed that as all three nominations were not in attendance and unable to speak, elections would be deferred to the next meeting.

ACTION: VR will ask that the nominees send an overview, explaining what they are going to bring to the forum as a chair and this information will be circulated before the meeting. It was agreed that at the next meeting we will hold anonymous elections as people come into the room.

4. STOP SEARCH UPDATE - SUPERINTENDENT ANDY COX, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICE

A copy of the Stop and Search form was circulated to the forum to look at. Cllr. Malpas asked for a copy of the form to be circulated with minutes. **ACTION:** AC agreed this would be sent to be circulated with minutes.

Andy Cox outlined Teresa May's (Home Secretary) statement. This statement can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/stop-and-search-comprehensive-package-of-reform-for-police-stop-and-search-powers>. Stop search powers remain, and in the last 12 months (April 2013 to end of March 2014) there have been 1270 successful stop search April-end March by Northamptonshire Police.

There are now no targets for officers to deliver a number of Stop and Searches. At Northamptonshire Police, every officer has received training input on conducting Stop and Search and its impact. Furthermore, there is now national training for Stop and Search from National College of Police which will be rolled out to all forces. There is a commitment to continuous professional development of officers, and if concerns are raised around the way stop search is used by an officer, their powers can be restrained.

Around concerns about the disproportionality of the way Stop and Search is used within ethnic minority communities, there is a system in place which measures any disproportionality. If a level of disproportionality is between 5-10% plus, this is flagged for investigation. No ethnic group have been flagged as more than 5% disproportionate in the use of Stop and Search across all ethnic groups. Another forum member raised concerns around the disproportionate use of Stop and Search on males. AC advised that guidance and support is now given to officers to stop search females. However, it is important to remember that the proportionality of Stop and Search incidents on different communities and gender is worked out in relation to the offending population, not the population as a whole.

Picking up the issue that JC raised from the last minutes, it was asked why there is there no age limit on stop search. AC explained that it is very difficult to know where to draw line. Criminality begins at age 10. Stop and Search has been conducted on young people in the county who are under ten. Some under 10s may be carrying things that they shouldn't be, such as someone hiding something in a baby's push chair, or getting a young child to carry stolen goods. This is all based on individual circumstances.

Clarification was requested around what makes a Stop and Search 'successful'. A 'successful' outcome is where an item is found in the possession of the individual that is criminal. There has been a slight reduction in those that are not successful. AC said that it would be unrealistic to have a 100% success rate; however the

success rate in Northamptonshire is significantly better than a number of other forces nationally.

WB asked how many of those who are stopped are repeats – AC advised that the people who are most Stop and Searched are PPO's (Prolific and Priority Offenders). However, this is dependent on individual circumstances.

WB raised that there needs to be recognition of the negative effect that stop search has on a person. AC advised that the Police are soon going to be issuing some guidance around grounds of stop search for officers.

AC is keen to continue to engage with communities, and would like to increase confidence in the BME community about the way that Stop and Search is used, ensuring that it is used proportionally and evenly. A Forum member asked whether there would be a possibility for the public to patrol with Police, observing use of stop search. AC said that he supported this in principle; however it must be carefully thought out and introduced in the right way.

On engaging with BME groups, a forum member raised that many of the young people who won Young Black Achievers Awards have experienced stop search. AC advised that the Police are looking to get these groups involved in delivering training and speak directly to officers about the experience of Stop and Search. People with members in their community who have experienced stop search, please let AC know if they would be interested in speaking to officers about their Stop and Search experience.

Concerns were raised by some forum members around Stop and Searches that are not recorded. AC stated that if searches are not recorded, then this is completely unacceptable and will not be tolerated. The Police will need evidence of who was stopped, where and when – AC said that if anyone has this evidence he would be happy to look into it. JC asked if no form completed, whether this is classed as an illegal search. **ACTION:** AC to look into this.

The forum discussed ideas for solutions the Police could use to educate the public about their Stop and Search rights. Suggestions included:

- WB - A6 cards which tell people their rights and responsibilities, flag up what they should be asking of the police officer.
- Getting the Police and Communities to work together. AY asked whether the police be willing to let young youth have work experience with the police to break down barriers. AC advised that this is already in practice through the Police Cadets, Special Constables and Volunteer programmes. This is a big agenda for the Police and they are interested in taking community working forward to understand the issues that they face and the solutions that they have. NS said that if individuals or groups would like to meet to discuss Stop

and Search or opportunities to work with the Police, please direct enquires to NS (nick.stephens@northants.pnn.police.uk) who will arrange.

- MK raised that he had tried to do a public service announcement about Stop and Search on Inspiration FM, however the survey he had was out of date.
ACTION: AC agreed to share the updated survey.
- AC confirmed that people can video a Stop and Search happening to them – no issues with this. There had been suggestions for body worn video to be used by officers. However practicalities of this have meant that the idea has not been taken forward – the time to download, storage, keeping police off the street. Hopefully something in the future that can be further explored.

A comment was made that the PCC has not attended a Diverse Communities Forum meeting as yet. Cllr. Malpas agreed that an invitation would be sent for a future meeting.

5. CALL CARE - LOUISE MUSSON AND ANJALI NINAWA

Laura Musson spoke to the forum about Call Care - a monitoring service which provides an instant response service for vulnerable people, who may need peace of mind while living independently. Further details around the Call care package can be found here: <http://www.northampton.gov.uk/callcare>, or please phone 01604 230227 for more information.

6. ACTION PLANS - UPDATE

Opportunity for funding for projects within the action plans if the forum all agrees it is a good community project. This is a working document, and responsibility for leading the project will remain with the organisation that put it forward. However, this is a great opportunity for partnership working and support. If anyone had any suggestions for projects to be on the action plan please send through to VR or AM to be included on the list for consideration.

The items on the action plan do not need to be just events, can also put forward ideas for project work that can be used as a solution to the issues raised at the forum. For instance, this could include the Stop and Search card to be given out to young people, as suggested earlier in the meeting.

ACTION: AM to circulate draft action plans to forum members to consider before the next meeting

COMMUNITY INFORMATION EXCHANGE

HATE CRIME UNIT

SW gave an over view of the disbanding of hate crime unit and the decision that has been made by the Police that there is not a unit; one person will coordinate Hate Crime in county, and responsibility has been given directly to officers to deal with hate crime incidences. SW suggested that the forum should monitor the service now to ensure that responses to hate crime incidents are at a satisfactory level.

It was asked why this was not brought to this forum before the decision was made.

AC commented that it may be helpful for someone to present detailed rationale to forum at a later date. AC is now more aware of hate crimes that are happening every day as it has been brought to daily briefing meetings.

ACTION: AC to let us know who Portfolio lead is on Hate Crime, for an invitation to be sent for a later meeting.

ACTION: VR to write letter on behalf of the forum to Chief Constable and Police and Crime Commissioner on this issue to raise concerns about the disbanding of the Hate Crime Unit and to invite someone to come to the forum to discuss.

(This action has now been completed – a letter has been sent to the Chief Constable and Police and Crime Commissioner as requested by the forum)

SW said she is interested in hearing from anyone who knows a victim who hasn't had a response or has lost confidence due to loss of unit.

RESPONSE FROM HMO SCRUTINY PANEL

The response from Cllr. Capstick was circulated for the forum's information.

9. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AT THE NEXT MEETING

- Elections
- Development of Action Plans, including;
 - o NubiWise
 - o Project Diversity

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 30th July from 6:30-8:30pm in the Holding Room, the Guildhall.

The meeting concluded at 8:30 pm