

Northampton Borough Council Northampton Disabled People's Forum

Friday, 5 December 2014

Present: Cllr Phil Larratt (Councillor Co-chair, NBC), Martin De Rosario (Community Co-chair), Dean Eales (Disabled Go), Louise James (Changing Minds, NHFT), Lee Johnson (Changing Minds, NHFT), Daniel Smith (Independent), Stefanie Weldon (Northamptonshire Association for the Blind), Jessica Maryan (Deaf Hub), Graeme Wilson (Northamptonshire Sport), Samantha Lavender (Autism Concern), Larry Barber (Independent), Barbara Barber (Independent), J. Forrest-Smith (Pensioners Forum, Luisa Jepson (Northamptonshire Police), Alice Morgan (NBC, took minutes)

1. WELCOMES, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Simon Burgess, Eira Bassett, Keith Goodwin and Cllr. Mennell.

2. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

Minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true record.

Matters arising – AM has passed comments regarding the availability of Disabled Facilities Grants to Marion Goodman, Head of Customers and Cultural services, who oversees the One Stop Shop.

3. DISABLED GO - DEAN EALES

DE gave an overview of the new DisabledGo website, which includes new accessibility features;

- Homepage; search box has been moved up the page for user ease. The functionality of this has also been improved; when the user begins to type, venue/location predictions will appear.
- Accessibility software called 'Recite-me' has been bought for the website. This includes an audio setting which can read the content to the user, of which the speed and gender of the speech can be changed. The site is dyslexia friendly, includes colour contrast for the pages, a ruler, and a thesaurus/dictionary. The content is available in 52 different languages, and both the text and most of the audio can be translated.
- By creating an account on the website, your settings can be saved ready for your next visit to the site.
- A section is going to be added for accessible public toilets and changing facilities.
- Disabled Go are looking at adding new symbols to the site, including a symbol for 'Safer Spaces', and also 'Dementia Friendly Spaces'.

Access guides are always in development. A review system has been added to the site, although only 20% of venues on the site have been reviewed. Some reviews have been negative, which has led to dialogue opening and positive changes resulting. Northampton access guides have had 11,437 views in the past year.

Traffic is mainly from Google search, although links have been added to the websites for Northampton Leisure Trust, Northampton borough Council. Northampton General Hospital has just renewed their agreement, and Disabled Go is also in discussions with NHFT.

DisabledGo are looking into the possibility of introducing venue window stickers to increase brand awareness and awareness of the service. This is being trialled in the London Borough of Newham. The organisation are also launching an App – this is now available for Leicester for Iphone only, but will be available on Android in the future.

Cllr Larratt commented that clearly the feedback of the forum from previous meetings has clearly been taken on board, and congratulated Disabled Go.

A forum member asked whether the Disabled Go blog 'Disabled Goings On' is still active. DE advised this is still active, although participation varies in different areas.

PM commented that Sportability does not have massive participation from disabled people in the town. **ACTION: DE to take this forward outside of the meeting.**

ACTION: Forum to think about how the work of DisabledGo can be supported.

4. CHANGING MINDS - LEE JOHNSON (NHFT)

Changing Minds is NHFT's Wellbeing Service, or IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies) service. The service provides psychological support for mild to moderate depression and anxieties, including Generalised Anxiety Disorder, panic, health anxiety, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder etc. The service is for adults aged 16 years plus, with no upper age limit.

LJohnson gave an explanation of the tiered mental health service in Northamptonshire.

1. Universal support – G.P.'s and Wellbeing Navigators
- 2. Changing Minds wellbeing service**
3. Therapists, working with Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, etc.
4. Community Mental Health Teams
5. Hospital.

In order to access the level 2 Changing Minds wellbeing service, an individual must be referred to the service by their G.P. It is understood that this can be a barrier, and not everyone can get to their surgery, so occasionally the service can arrange home visits or telephone support. Once a person is referred into the service, there are usually between 4-6 follow up appointments, with 'homework' given in between sessions. Booklets are given to service users to work through, such as 'A Guide to Relaxation' – these are also available in Easy Read format. The Changing Minds team are also aware that materials need to be adapted, and this is done on an individual basis.

Other services offered through Changing Minds includes a Peer Support Service - which is self-referral -, a Diabetes Psychological Support Service, and also support for people who have been diagnosed with long term conditions (however, at present

this is only funded until March at present).

More information can be found on the website here:
<http://www.changingmindscentre.co.uk/>

AP commented that the Home Service would be an improved for physically disabled people, and asked whether there would be any opportunity for the peer support 'buddy' service to also open up to home visits, as this would be beneficial also for alcohol dependent people who do not leave their home. LJohnson commented that there is an exclusion criterion for alcoholism and drug use in accessing the Changing Minds services.

A number of forum members asked whether referrals are accepted through other agencies, rather than just the G.P. SW and DS asked whether NAB Community workers or Olympus Care, for example, could refer. LJohnson advised that referrals are primarily through the G.P; there are occasions when someone is referred from other services within health, and they do try to be as flexible as possible.

LJohnson advised that Changing Minds service is trying to reduce waiting lists, and as a service are not short of referrals. However, they are trying to ensure that as many people as possible are aware that the service is available and how they can access this. For more information, or if you would like Changing Minds to speak to your organisation, please contact Lee Johnson Lee.Johnson@nhft.nhs.uk or visit the Changing Minds website: <http://www.changingmindscentre.co.uk/>

****Meeting adjourned****

Incident took place regarding recording during the meeting.

ACTION: AM to get some clarity around recordings in the Guildhall.

****Meeting continued****

LJames, an Employment Advisor for Changing Minds, spoke to the forum about her role. The role looks to support service users in the transition back into the workplace, alongside the mental health support they are receiving. The role also focuses on setting up partnerships with other agencies providing this support.

5. ACTION PLANS

AM spoke to the forum about the introduction of action plans across the forums, and suggested that the Disabled Peoples Forum looks to introduce some activity to their action plans, in addition to increasing attendance. ***Action: Cllr Larratt asked that forum members come to the next forum meeting with ideas and suggestions for forum activity.***

6. COMMUNITY INFORMATION EXCHANGE

Luisa Jepson – Hate Crime Co-ordinator, Northamptonshire Police

LJepson spoke to the forum about the changes in Northamptonshire Police around hate crime, outlining the closing of the Hate Crime Unit back in April. LJepson is now the Hate Crime Coordinator for the Force, and hate crime is now dealt with by

local police teams and CID. LJepson is visiting a number of the NBC forums and other community groups to gauge peoples' experiences of hate crime at the moment, and their experiences with the Police.

LJepson was invited to attend the next forum meeting in January to discuss this further.

Community News:

BB was concerned that Door to Door buses are now forbidden to pull into the layby by the market square, since the new bus station was built. BB and LB questioned why other cars are able to pull into the bay, but not a bus for disabled people. This has made it very difficult to disabled people to get around town. BB shared a photograph of other cars and vans using the bay. **Action: AM to discuss this with the Town Centre Manager.**

GW updated the forum with the following disability sporting news

1. Eleanor Robinson (Winner of the 2014 Northampton Sports Awards Disabled Sports Person) success at the British Para-Swimming Short Course Championships:
<http://www.northamptonshiresport.org/news/2014/12/northants-para-swimming-pair-win-at-national-championships>
2. Northampton Rowing Club now offering sessions for disabled people & those with Sensory Impairments:
<http://www.northamptonshiresport.org/news/2014/09/northampton-rowing-club-offers-sessions-for-disabled-people>
3. Wheelchair Dance taster session being planned for Saturday 28th February 12 – 3pm at Duston Sports Centre. More details to follow in the New Year.
4. Northamptonshire selected as 'Hot Spot' area for Bowls so will be opportunities & efforts to get more people especially those with a disability/impairment participating in the sport:
<http://www.northamptonshiresport.org/news/2014/12/northamptonshire-announced-as-bowls-hot-spot>
5. The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) are targeting Northampton to get more disabled people playing the sport in the Borough whether that's at clubs, parks, schools, day care centres, or any other amenable facility. Anyone interested in getting involved as either a player, or an activator (basic coaching & organise sessions) should contact Nina Bridge at the LTA either via email Nina.Bridge@lta.org.uk or phone 07971 141173.
6. Golf also targeting Northamptonshire as a county to get more disabled people and those with a sensory impairment playing the sport. New project starting in March will see Professionals from clubs around the county offering sessions for disabled people & those with impairments at their clubs & other

settings where disabled people reside. For more details should you be interested please contact David Davis from the Northants Golf Foundation on daviddavisgolfpro@yahoo.co.uk 07846 142297

7. Northants Recreational Cricket are carrying out some research to find out the thoughts & experiences of disabled people & their Parents/carers regarding Cricket that will help to shape future developments in the sport for disabled people & those with a sensory impairment. They'd really like to get as many people completing the surveys as possible of which more details & the links to the surveys can be found in the news item below:

<http://www.northamptonshiresport.org/news/2014/12/disability-cricket-research>

8. Northamptonshire Federation of Disability Sport (NFDS) recently concluded their 'Inclusive Coaching Month' project which was funded by Northants Community Foundation. The project was designed to up-skill sports coaches & other people involved in the delivery of sport in the county to make them more aware of how to include disabled people & those with an impairment in sport/physical activity. More details about the project can be found in the 2 links below:

<http://www.northamptonshiresport.org/news/2014/12/inclusive-coaching-and-activity-forum>

<http://www.northamptonshiresport.org/news/2014/10/inclusive-coaching-month---complete>

DS asked GW whether walking football is available in the town. **ACTION: GW agreed to get the details of this is DW after the meeting.**

SW from NAB has been working closely with NBC and the contractor on the opening up of Abington Street, which is due to be opened shortly. SW has requested the introduction of contrasting artificial curbs, appropriate signage and other safety features in order to ensure the safety of visually impaired people using Abington Street. NBC would not include these features in the original design. SW has concerns about the safety of the road, being 30mph without a controlled crossing point, and will be pushing for a safety audit to be done once the road has been opened. Cllr Larratt asked whether safety features have been included in Guildhall Road also. This will be discussed again at the next meeting.

7. ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

Cllr Bottwood – Budget Consultation, NBC
Luisa Jepson – Hate Crime, Northamptonshire Police

8. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Friday 30th January 2015, 10-12pm, Holding Room

The meeting concluded at 12:00