

Northampton Borough Council - Northampton LGBT and Q People's Forum

Tuesday, 16 September 2014

Present: Cllr King (Chair), Matthew (VIN/FAN, Community Co-chair), John (NHFT), Daniel (BooQfest), Lee (Northants Deaf LGBT), Chris (Northants Deaf LGBT), Matt (Interpreter), Rachel (Police), Mark (Barclays Spectrum), Mick Stamper (Northants Police) Vicki Rockall (NBC), Alice Morgan (NBC)*

*Took minutes

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Sarah, Jeanette (Lesbian Line), Carole (LL), Mandy (LL), Ben (Unison), Rod (Health Watch), Ian (NCC LGBTQ Champion), and Simon Favell (NBC Wellbeing Partnership Officer).

2. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

Minutes of the last meeting were agreed. Vicki advised that with regards to the action plans, the small grants pot can be applied for.

3. NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICE - HATE CRIME UNIT

Mick gave an overview of the previous Hate Crime Unit, which was a small team which dealt with hate crime incidents. The decision has been made for the Hate Crime Unit to be dissolved, due to budgetary constraints. Last year, the Police Force has a budget of £130 million, this year this has been reduced to just under £100 million. As a result, the Police Force has had to look at all areas of service faced with the challenge to provide an equal service but for less money.

Currently, if anyone phones in to report a hate crime, an officer will visit you, report the incident, and investigate and see through. Alongside this, the Police force are in the process of training hate crime champions, and reintroducing HIRG's and making sure these are running.

Mick said that he stands by the decision, due to both economic reasons and also having higher awareness of hate crime at a local level.

Questions and comments:

What number should the community call when reporting a crime?

Mick advised that when reporting a hate crime, you should call 101 if non-emergency and hasn't just happened. If an emergency and just happened, should call 999. Individuals can visit the Police desk at the Guildhall, but it will probably be smoother process to call, in order for an appointment to be booked for an officer to visit you.

Opening services up for all

Chris - 101 provides a good service for deaf people. Police came to visit to speak to deaf community. Card has been produced, and people are able to text 999, or

another number if not an emergency. There is a need to register for this in advance. Chris thanked Northamptonshire Police for setting this up. Mick added that the control room now has the facilities for video sign, and are looking to introduce this at the Guildhall desk also. This work is all part of the force's commitment to opening services up.

Community trust

Matthew raised that community trust is key, and that if an officer is not comfortable with a conversation, the victim will pick this up. For LGBTQ people, they knew that if they went to the hate crime unit, someone would understand, care and guide the individual through the process. The forum also discussed the Victims Voice Report which praised the Hate crime unit. The forum felt that the lack of consultation with the community before the decision was made has made the community feel that their point of view not important. Mick outlined how the decision was made and told the forum that the decision was an operational decision made by the Chief; hundreds of decisions are made, and cannot consult the community on everything. However, Mick said that he understands that the community may feel that way. In terms of the Police, they do not criminalise anyone for being gay, and does not happen throughout the county. If this does happen, Mick needs to be made aware and will deal with this.

How will the Police measure whether the decision has been effective?

Mick advised that the Police will look at a qualitative measure, such as victim satisfaction and experience and feedback, rather than quantitative as they may not represent actual experience effectively.

How many savings have actually been made through closing the unit?

A saving of around £450,000 has been made from pensions etc. and posts have been moved elsewhere. Officers reduced elsewhere so moved around and also had to do this elsewhere in other areas of business. Hate Crime officers in team have gone to other roles.

Information of training for staff

Mick said that he is in discussion with Luisa Jepson (Hate Crime Coordinator) about Hate Crime Champion training, in order to add value. Hate crime champions will be Police Officers in case the need arises to investigate crime. However, PCSOs will also be trained. Cllr. King asked whether Hate Crime Champions could come to a future meeting. Mick advised that he does want Hate Crime Champions to be known by communities, and for communities to understand their role.

Mick advised the forum that it is highly unlikely that Northants Police will have another unit specifically for hate crime, but is not against looking at other ways of doing things to improve the service. Northampton Police will work with the community now and will come back to feedback to forum and review.

4. SIMON FAVELL (NBC) - COMMUNITY WELLBEING BID

Simon Favell gave his apologies for this meeting and hopes to attend another

meeting in the future.

ACTION PLANS

INTERNATIONAL COMING OUT DAY

ICOD will be held at Royal and Derngate this year in their underground 1 and 2 space. BooQfest will be running at the Royal and Derngate alongside the Straight Allies work, and there will be a QFilm screening of Pride in the Errol Flynn cinema at 3pm. There will also be an evening social at the Black bottom club from 7. There will be a guest list for ICOD attendees and will also get in using Straight Allies badges as entry.

Ben Cohen has been asked if he can come and open the event, but has not responded. Mark said that Barclays is doing some work with Ben currently, so will follow this up for us. Unfortunately Stonewall is unable to send anyone to attend the day.

STRAIGHT ALLIES

Matt and Cllr King are looking into holding a Business Breakfast on Friday 10th, get more businesses signed up to campaign. Timing fits well as Friday before ICOD. However, it was discussed that it may be better to hold off until we have the resources to deliver the event properly.

Organisations already signed up include VIN, Wellingborough Homes, NREC, Nene Valley Community Action, Relate, Women's Aid, Service Six, Northampton Carnival, NTFC, SOLAR, Daddies with Angels, NHFT equality unit. John to follow up at a later meeting how NHFT as a whole signs up.

Saints as an organisation has said no to being part of the campaign, but will pass on to individual players to join the campaign if they would like to. Outlaws Rugby club and Northampton County Cricket Club have both said yes. Northamptonshire Police interested in signing up.

Vicki questioned what the review process will look like for organisations signing up to the campaign, and what are they actually doing to sign up. Cllr King suggested that part of the sign up should be around being on the Stonewall index. Other discussions included organisations displaying window stickers, attending IDAHO, go through training etc. The forum discussed that organisations signing up are allowing staff to come out as staff allies and work as advocates, but for organisations signing up, we need to keep away from being too prescriptive.

Mark said that he was sure Barclaycard would support campaign, but their LGBT internal network at a global level have their own straight allies campaign internally, and therefore the campaigns would need to complement each other. They are using desk cards for people in the work force to show their support and become straight allies..

At the launch of the campaign at the Umbrella fair, straight allies made pledges on bunting, which was strung up around marquee. This will be at ICOD. Umbrella Fair

worked really well, hundreds of people coming into marquee, listening to music and signing up to campaign.

Taking the campaign forward, we could look into charging for badges in order to sustain the project. We are also working on leaflet, photos of event, logo, why important, other details etc, to share with those who are signing up. A forum member recommended we look into including QR codes which link to the website - Alice to look into this.

Matthew gave an overview of the video being produced to support straight allies campaign. This involves talking head filming, umbrella fair footage, NTFC pledge, Youth Forum etc. and we will also be using ICOD for more filming.

6. COMMUNITY INFORMATION EXCHANGE

John – LGBTQ staff network meeting – February LGBTQ history month. Want to have rainbow zebra crossings. Could we look into doing anything similar at the Guildhall site? **ACTION: Cllr King to look into this.**

Rachel – since the changes with hate crime unit, Rachel or Nick (Community Engagement Officers – Northants Police) will come to future meetings of the forum to ensure there is a link with the Police. If anyone has any issues please let them know.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8. ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Simon Favell – Wellbeing Partnership Officer NBC

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 11th November, 6:30-8:30pm, Holding Room

The meeting concluded at 7:50 pm