

Northampton Borough Council

Northampton LGBT and Q People's Forum

Tuesday, 29 January 2019

Officers at the meeting

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

Matthew welcomed everyone to the meeting.
Round table introductions.

Attendees: Matthew Toresen (Chair), Aimee Luck (NBC) Sgt Rod Williams (Police), James, Robin, Phil, Jonathon, Benny, Liz and Cat (Q Film), Will, Morcea, Matthew, Zach (QSpace/Trangst).

Apologies: Cllr Anna King, Cllr Zoe Smith, Steve Bedford (Police), Lucy somers (IDidAdventure).

2. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

Action: Matthew to follow up with Umbrella Fair re Pop up events.

3. ACTION PLAN SETTING

Recurring action plan items include civic events for International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBiT) and World Aids Day.

The forum discussed having another Pride event this year. Aimee has contacted USA contacts but unfortunately they are not able to link up this year due to hosting a wedding as part of their event.

Forum members are invited to put themselves forward to be part of a steering group to set up a Pride event in Northampton. **Action: Interested people to contact Aimee who will coordinate an initial meeting.**

Action: Matthew to find out dates from W'boro and Kett Prides for info.

Carnival – 8th June (Good opportunity to advertise events). Cllr King and Morcea Walker (carnival organiser) have arranged for the forums to have a float again this year. Members from all forums and associated organisations will be invited to be part of the carnival float. The theme for carnival is '15 years of celebrating magic through carnival'.

Matthew proposed adding Book Fest to the action plan, agreed by forum. Cat explained the vision for book fest, a previous event reignited, to be hosted at Umbrella Fair (end of Sept). They are currently setting up a group to progress the event which is funding dependant. Funding opportunities are being explored and the group are looking for author and speaker suggestions particularly around diverse backgrounds and sexualities. Suggestion to link in with Happy Hood for local writers.

Action: Aimee to forward contact details to Cat.

Social media and website is in progress but can be contacted by email at this stage, northamptonqueerlitfest@gmail.com.

4. COMMUNITY INFORMATION EXCHANGE

Northants Police:

New Hate Crime coordinator in post, Yemi Holman. She is supporting to train hate crime champions across the county. If anyone is interested in becoming a hate crime champion or finding out more please speak to Rod at the end of tonight's meeting or email the forum.

Hate Crime document shared with the group does not breakdown incidents into LGBT. Rod provided additional statistics: Sexual orientation: 72 offences recorded in 2017 (6/month), 60 offences recorded (2018), 17 transgender offences in 2017, 18 transgender offences in 2018. These figures are low in comparison to other groups- why? Police would like some feedback around under reporting on LGBTQ hate crime offences. Floor opened up for feedback, captured below:

- Lack of understanding of LGBTQ people from Police on one reporting example- individuals last report was dealt with by a new female officer and was handled well. The male officer supporting seemed to find it harder to understand and handle.
- Lack of feedback from reporting- no idea whether someone is arrested or if the report is not being dealt with.
- Hard to report strangers when trying to keep safe and avoiding perpetrators.
- Feeling that there is no reason to report- what is going to be done with the report? Will it make any difference?
- Would like reassurance that some action will be taken or what is being done by the Police as this is missing.
- Assumption that verbal attacks are not bad enough to report and physical attacks are the only thing that will be taken seriously/actioned.
- Length of time around 101 calls and to see any Police.
- Promotion of Hate crime info may have raised expectation of public when the resource is not there to deal with it.
- Many have grown up with hate incidents and don't feel it is serious enough despite being affected by it daily or regularly.
- The offer of talking to someone about it would be helpful. Lack of support service with understanding of LGBTQ community.
- Fear of being outed can be a factor as it is unclear where the information goes.
- Lack of understanding around language in the LGBTQ; eg. Correct pronouns.
- Spectrum is not seen to be active and involved in the community- lack of presence from police in LGBTQ communities.
- Suggestion that a number of LGBTQ officers do not feel comfortable reporting. If they do not believe in the reporting system how can public.
- Transphobic messages are out in the public and social media, and are seemingly allowed which doesn't help invoke faith from LGBTQ community.

- Community being asked to trust an organisation that they may not have faith in now.
- One individual has experienced a number of Eastern European perpetrators. Are issues with lack of understanding from other nationalities being dealt with by Police?

Query regarding whether Northampton compares to other towns of similar sizes.

Action: Rod to compare stats for Northampton against other towns and report back to the forum.

Forum member expressed a positive experience coming out as transgender and was supported by staff at Debenhams very well in particular and continues to be supported by people in the town, particularly in businesses.

Concerns raised around gender options available for reporting crime. Only Male or Female are given as options. Unclear if the Police booking system is the same.

Action: Rod to take this back to Northants Police to improve.

Homelessness:

James raised an upcoming project around homelessness. How do we support LGBTQ homeless in Northampton? They are currently setting up a group, applying for charity status and looking to set up a new shelter for Northampton to tackle the gaps such as single females, couples, those with pets and LGBTQ people. Meeting arranged with Cllrs and the leader of the council in the next week. Suggestion to liaise with Good Loaf re. their knowledge.

Q Word (book group) meeting this Thursday (last Thursday of each month), 8pm at Cheyne Walk Club and looking to find a way to improve attendance. Each month the group choose a book to read, usually with LGBTQ themes or by an LGBTQ author and then discuss it at the book club. Suggestion to promote to Student Union.

It was suggested that the group has become a little closed and not open to wide audience. No one has stepped up to take on the organising of the group and this is lacking. If anyone is interested in getting involved in the running of the group please contact the forum to be put in contact.

Action: Zach offered to promote the group through Q Space.

Students in the room raised concerns that cases being raised on campus to security are not being passed to Police. They have been told that if it is significant enough it will be raised to Police officers. Sgt Williams suggested that complaints should be raised directly with police as if a case is considered important to victim it should be reported to police. **Action: Rod will pass on concerns to Sgt Lorna Clarke, the University Police Team Sergeant.**

Q Space:

Community organisation to support LGBT community, predominant focus on youth but expanding to all ages. An event has been organised for LGBT history month, "Celebrate Our Community". This involves a community day on Sunday 24th

February 2pm- late at Dapper Sandwich Co on Wellingborough Road- open to all. 2-5pm will include community information and activities/ 'whats on', and 6pm onwards is a social event. Anyone wanting to promote their group etc please contact Q Space via Facebook page or qspacenorthampton@gmail.com.

Action: Police representative to attend. Zach to feedback whether the Officer is to be in uniform or plain clothes, but to definitely be showing visible support for LGBTQ community.

Q Space setting up an LGBTQ buddy support around April. More information to follow.

Wanting to share information and material and create a shared calendar for the LGBTQ community in one place. Possibly a weekly newsletter.

Action: Groups can share their events/info to Q-space via Facebook/Twitter.

Q Space- Thursday 6.30-8.30 13-18yrs

Out there Plus (Gold St), 18-25yrs- 2nd and 4th Wednesday each month.

Trangst organised event in Becket's Park last summer brought in over 40 people to get together. Will be looking to repeat this in Summer 2019.

Trangst meetings take place on Wednesdays from 6.30pm. For any non-cis persons or persons with an interest/supporting someone non-cis.

Will is starting a podcast of music through LGBTQ lens. **Action: Will to share links with Aimee when available who will circulate to the forum.**

QFilm:

2nd Thursday of every month at Northampton Film House. Starring and made by LGBT people as well as LGBT stories. Meet up group is available.

Berrywood are doing history month event 20th Feb.

MT is resurrecting an idea for getting some groups/services for older LGBT community where there is very little provision, including care home, dementia care and end of life support. Will be looking to organise a steering group to gather information and ideas.

Conversation around a new protocol for police/doctors accessing historic information for people with dementia. **Action: Source information for the forum.**

Meet up group are not represented in this forum. MW has shared meeting dates with lead organiser.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Next social meeting Tuesday 26 March, 6.30pm at Phipps Albion.

The meeting concluded at 20.20.