

Northampton Borough Council - Northampton Pensioners' Forum

Thursday, 29 November 2018

1. WELCOMES, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

ATTENDANCE: Roger Rumsey (RR, Chair), Michael Macleod (MM, NBC), Jamie Wells (JW, NBC), Norman Sharp (NS, Individual), Stewart Quelel (SQ, Individual), Andy Leighton (AL, Northants Highways), Derrick Simpson (DS, NBC), Jeanette Pidgen (JP, Nene CCG), Helen Elliott-Mainwaring (HEM, NGH), F Nelson (FN, Individual), D Nelson (DN, Individual), Brian Nichols (BN, Individual), Christiana Owusu-Akuffo (COA, Individual), Tony Mallard (TM, ERA and Veterans), Ann Timson (AT, Individual), Hannah Thomas (HT, University of Northampton), Claire Clinger (CC, University of Northampton), Nicki Wells (NW, University of Northampton).

APOLOGIES: Veronica Male, Toby Birch, David Hewitt, Brian Oldham.

2. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

Fly tipping was brought up in the last meeting – how many people have been prosecuted.

Will be on the minutes of the NFRA meeting.

ACTION: Invite Mike Hallam to the January Meeting.

Northampton In Bloom – how did it go?

AT - Question for Mike Hallam - How frequently are dog waste bins emptied? It never gets discussed.

3. PETER BAGULEY - NBC

Head of Planning for NBC

HIMO's are where there are more than one household living in a house. Usually 3 or more who have individual contracts. Aware the ways the town's houses are being used are changing. Seeing people increasingly going into the rental sector. More students, single person households, benefit changes etc. Responsible to put planning policies in place to make sure this isn't detrimental to Northampton.

Article 4 direction helps control any more than 3 people living in one house. The relocation of the uni is having an impact on Far Cotton and Delapre for example so different policies will be established because of this. HIMO standards are met by using a radius around the house, if there is 15% HIMO's in this area then the application would be denied. Other issues such as rubbish/noise/parking generated etc. Loughborough university produced a study to look at the impact of the previous.

5 Recs from research.

Article 4 across the whole town.

Threshold comes down to 10% in 50 metres instead of 15%, overconcentration.

Be proactive on enforcement, there are unlicensed premises in the town.

Coordinate and collaborate the approach – all teams to work together and be on the same page.

Annual forum where landlords/stakeholders all come together etc.

Review if need for article 4 town wide.

Look at new planning policy statements.

Look at working more closely with colleagues with those in NBC.

If any concerns, get in touch with NBC, will need to take details but these will only be used if it gets to the prosecution stage.

TM: There are some houses in the area where there are 3 or 4 families living in the same house, there is more parking/rubbish etc. and then there are garages being knocked down.

PB: If you're concerned that there are too many people living in a property separately then contact the environmental wardens. If they are together as an extended family then this is their choice. Parking is taken into consideration when planning happens.

It is possible to talk to the County Council about this issue.

AT: When there are changes of plans/policies. People parking in spots near the train station as the barriers are broken. New barriers are going in but only those with cars/garage will get a fob. Although a lady with a scooter isn't getting a fob even though she stores it in her garage. What also happens to the emergency services with barriers and family visits etc.? The terms and conditions to get the fobs are also very strict.

PB: When there's planning applications need to take into place new parking and to make sure that this doesn't impact the existing parking around the application.

AT: This week people have not been allowed access to their parking spots until certain times etc.

PB: Unitary could be an opportunity for more cohesive working as it will be under one organisation and not NBC and NCC but this will only apply to new build properties.

Planning committees are always subjective as we don't know every detail, such as how many people will have cars etc.

RR: Mentioned you've been door knocking to see how many unlicensed HIMO's there were. How different did you find the figures to the records that you had? Population hasn't changed on the census to much but there seems to be a lot more people in the town and housing estates now as there was over 30 years ago.

PB: We do use the census for our statistics, one in two of the accusations of a HIMO weren't founded, these are more to do with visiting family friends etc.

If the community have more of an understanding of what a HIMO is there may be more accurate reporting.

RR: Census determines a lot.

NS: Bus Station, NCC and the Uni have all have bad publicity. These have all been passed but there are many problems. Bus Station gridlocked, NCC no parking and residents not happy with the students.

There hasn't been anything acted on to fix the bus station.

PB: When recommendations are made, my responsibility to make sure the councillors are informed about the potential impact of highway safety. County progress the roadworks, this is open for better work within Unitary as one council and not two.

NCC has no parking, the plan would be to use the town's car parks and public transport.

Transport study is currently taking place regarding Greyfriars, looking how to find a way to use the site and bring it back into the town without impacting the flow into the town.

County Council use a computer system to calculate the impact of doing different things to highways.

ACTION: PB to be invited to a future forum to talk about the retail study.

4. JEANETTE PIDGEN - NHS NENE CCG

Role is to work with primary care – have been quite a few changes since the last forum JP has been at.

Government has said people are struggling to get in to see a GP – answer is can you see a nurse, paramedic? Etc.

Towns are split into “Neighbourhoods”
GPA and Blue Med.

Federations act as one voice for multiple practices. Help deliver the services you use.

New CEO – Toby Sanders.

Need to learn about the impact of Unitary council and Toby will be looking to meet with people.

Working with Kings Heath – GPA stepped in – caretaker contract – practice rated as inadequate, working with the practice to improve this.

Extended access service – been up and running since Oct 1st, opportunity to access a clinician for a non-urgent routine appointment, cough/colds/medical reviews etc.

Extended service is run from Highfield – ambition is for people to see somebody for a non-urgent appointment.

Forum members looked through flow chart which explains how it works.

If you do go to Extended access you should be asked if you are happy for your medical records to be accessed.

TM: Can't get DRs appointment but yet the doctors doors are often open with only them inside looking at their computers. I also had a call from a company saying they know about my medical records and that they could sell me some products to help. Same happened to Roger and neither people on the phone calls would give any information about their organisation. They start with saying that they're conducting research on behalf of the NHS, looks like this may be a scam call.

Jeanette passed statistics regarding the visits to the extended access service at Highfield.

RR: Struggling to get appointments for the doctors, especially for blood test results etc.

JP: These are all private practices with their own appointment and rules and it is difficult, you would need to take this up with them directly.

Looking to have clinical pharmacists get more involved and have booked appointments.

Q: What are the numbers on the maps?

A: Numbers on the map are the population of numbers of patients at that practice.

5. DERRICK SIMPSON AND ANDY LEIGHTON - TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT AND HIGHWAYS

Derrick Simpson – manager of the bus station – multi story car parks – events etc.

Andy Leighton – Northamptonshire Highways – Keir and WSP.

AL – all know at the moment of the pressure on NCC funding etc but still undertaking statutory functions.

RR: This winter – gritting of roads and footpaths – more of a problem for those who are older with less mobility.

AL: Gritting service has been reduced but only to how it was in 2000. Footpaths have always been from the grit bins.

AT: We used to have people come along in their cars and take a bag of the grit out which is an issue.

The bins are set outside of the perimeter on the pavement, this gave them the access, if this was set inside, this might make a difference.

AL: Grit bins have to be situated on a public highway so that's why it will be found outside the boundaries of NPH housing.

TM: 240 parish councils will be supplied with these bins.

AL: A lot of parishes actually pay for their own.

BN: A letter in the Chronicle about the remembrance day service being marred by the homelessness problem in Northampton. Duvet's and tents left everywhere yet if a member of the public litter they get fined on the spot. Letter expresses how the individual is embarrassed by the town now.

DS: NBC/Police are doing everything in power to address these issues. Have been offered help, a lot have health and or mental health problems and many suffer with addiction. There are places such as the Hope Centre and the Night Shelter but they have to meet certain rules.

Have been in contact with property owners, but it is not illegal to sleep in doorways and leave your belongings there. They only have to move if asked by the property owners. A lot of these people choose this lifestyle and we do look to address this problem but the government hasn't given councils the power and we cannot physically remove them unless they are breaking any laws. Fines are issued as they are breaching rules but they often do not have the means to pay it. Over 150 homeless have been supported but it is a cycle. Our good work has also hindered us as people from out of town and out of county then make their way here for help.

BN: This council is trying to get people to shop locally, I go to market Harborough and Olney etc. this is not prevalent in those towns, there must be something attracting them here, but this is driving local residents away.

DS: Being targeted to be helped. We have lost a lot of the larger companies but there has been an increase in the smaller independent business setting up here.

NS: The bus station has many faults that could be pointed out and cameras could be added to look at the problems there etc.

DS: Worse north than south, need ANPR but need central governments permission first. This was progressing nicely, then County Issues arose and then this was put on hold for a while. This has now been re-discussed and NPR should be put in in the future and Bradshaw Street will be made one way.

There has been discussions about what needs to be put in place before Greyfriars is used again.

When ANPR is installed, will be able to track all vehicles that have not been registered.

There will be cameras top and bottom.

NS: Traffic wardens could issue notices.

DS: Traffic wardens can only issue notices on parked cars.

TM: Where there any good points made at last night's meeting?

DS: Place of storage for homeless belongings.

Veolia are being given 12 months to get up to standard from where it was left.

idverde also will be doing work to landscape and get the right plants in, cut back foliage where necessary etc.

How to make vacant premises look better with posters and vinyl's etc.

That the council do not own all the lots in the town centre.
Looking to create more in the town centre, different activities and events such as arts/crafts/music etc. to bring different people into the centre.

TM: Lived in Northampton from birth and didn't know that the county hall had found out that they had a nice garden, this could be something to attract people in.

RR: Overstone Road factory, said that a 2 year rule was going to be introduced. That something had to be done with it in the 2 years.

DS: It would have to be part of a grander development to put such restrictions on.

TM: Asked why this couldn't be made into something relating to Northampton, something involved with leather and shoes.

BN: Did anyone raise the question at last night's meeting of laying on some sponsored entertainment? Thinking about something like a flash mob/orchestra.

FN/DN: Paths full of rubbish, dead wood and the plants are wrong and overgrown. Trees are also overgrown and are blocking the street lights.

6. COMMUNITY NEWS EXCHANGE

BN: Stagecoach are changing many routes from January next year.
Police warned 12 people and fined 1 person, was done on Wellingborough road and Kettering road. Would be better on Abington Street.

FN/DN: Also on Billing Road too. The cycle path isn't wide enough on that road.
Cars are also parking on footpaths and making it hard for people to get past.

COA: No computer course at Abington Library.

BN: Nationwide are closing one of their branches in the town centre.

NS: Lloyds bank in Kingsthorpe is closing in February 2019.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8. SUGGESTIONS FOR ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS OR FORUM ACTIVITIES

ACTION: Invite a substitute from the Police if the PCC cannot make the Forum.

ACTION: Invite Mike Hallam to the next Forum.

DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The meeting concluded at Time Not Specified