

NORTHAMPTON DIVERSE COMMUNITIES EQUALITIES FORUM

31 July 2013

NOTES/ACTIONS

In Attendance: Keith Mitchell, John Rawlings, Anjona Roy, Jenny Campbell

Apologies: Cllr Malpas, Nick Stevens,

Notes: Sue Ousley

| | Agenda Item | Action |
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| 1 | Apologies See above | |
| 2 | Welcome and Introductions Nick Stevens sent apologies due to ongoing illness. The Chairman sent apologies also due to a misunderstanding over the date of the meeting. In the absence of other members it was agreed that the meeting would be informal and any items requiring action only would be addressed. It was also agreed the minutes would be agreed at the next meeting. | |
| 3 | General Discussion KM explained his role as an interim officer between the departure of Joe Biskupski and the recruitment to the new posts. He explained the duties he will be responsible for and advised that he reports to Steve Eley, Head of Communities and Environment, including Environmental Services. In future there will be six forums as a new Women's Forum is being set up. A copy of the departmental structure was requested to see how these groups sit within the Division. Keith will distribute this. JC asked what powers the forums have? She felt that she had joined a group that would take action on issues but nobody appeared to be clear on what the forum can actually do. KM will seek clarification on | KM KM |

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| | <p>the issues but the forums do not have responsibility to ensure actions are carried out but this can be requested of officers. The Terms of Reference for the group need to be reviewed - project work could be undertaken, exchange of information and responding to consultations.</p> <p>JR advised that they have the ability to request consultations be undertaken and KM advised that this should be a two way process. AR commented that the group needs to show that it is a forum where actions will be taken and this is perhaps why membership has dwindled.</p> <p>AR commented that the same discussion had taken place at the last meeting and having some power can influence issues. When issues are discussed, this becomes a forum view and can lead to more leverage and activity within groups.</p> <p>The group needs to recruit more members to be effective and AR felt a re-launch was required. She also questioned why there was no budget for this forum as others had one. She also felt the launch should focus on specific issues.</p> <p>JC stated the meeting was an opportunity to raise questions. She felt it was good that the Police do presentations but that sometimes the data is not fully understood by members. Perhaps a working group for stop-and-search could be set up and AR stated she had been invited to the next meeting of the Police group on this.</p> <p>JC requested KM find out about a budget.</p> <p>JR commented that a lot of groups do not share information regarding common problems and to work well this needs to happen with NBC and the Police being asked to identify problems. .</p> <p>AR felt this was the only forum of this sort that the public have and members would not know Steve Elsey and what he does. It was felt that if the Borough feels the group is not serving any purpose, the group could be disbanded. KM reassured that this was not being considered. NBC facilitates these groups and it provides a two way dialogue.</p> <p>Discussion took place on the Terms of Reference and it was agreed there were no changes required at the present time.</p> | <p>KM</p> |

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| <p>Discussions on the name of the group also took place. It was felt that the general public would not necessarily associate themselves with 'Diverse Communities'.</p> <p>JR spoke about the report produced by Emma Arklay and the figures contained within it which show more recently arrived communities now in the town. As more communities arrive in the town, NVC literature will need to reflect this.</p> <p>JR also commented that Cllr Malpas's influence with his political party could be useful in the future.</p> <p>With the suggested re-launch of the forum, KM will speak to NVC regarding promotion of the group and other opportunities to grow the group to fulfil the aims and objectives of the group.</p> <p>AR reported that as from today there would be no immigration service provided by NREC but they are hoping to tie up with the private sector to provide a service but this would mean a charge. A free pro-bono service is to be launched on 21 August at which the High Sheriff is attending and an invitation to this group is extended.</p> <p>The next meeting of the group will be Thursday 26 September and KM will report on actions and AR will advertise via Facebook and Twitter.</p> <p>JC offered a slot on the local radio to KM to promote the group and production of the TOR is required in formats ethnic groups will understand and that they would be able to ask direct questions of the group.</p> <p>Links with the new university buildings should be explored to understand what the students are learning which could provide a link with the services NBC offers. KM asked what could be done with the information and it was felt it could shape council services.</p> <p>AR will bring compliance information contained in a recent NREC report to the next meeting. Transparency within the NREC report is required and this is now an opportunity to change it so it is agreed by all parties.</p> <p>JR raised the issue of zero-hours contracts which is causing concerns. He asked whether the Borough uses zero hours contracts and KM will find out. It was felt that ethnic communities could be impacted by this</p> | <p>KM</p> <p>KM</p> |

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| | and it should be an agenda item in future. | |
| 7 | <p>Items for Discussion at next meetings</p> <p>September – NBC Housing allocation policy</p> <p>November – Stop-and-search – Nick Stephens/Adam Simmonds/Andy Cox</p> <p>January 2014 – Schools – NCC Education rep</p> | |
| 8 | <p>Date and Location of Next Meeting</p> <p>Thursday 26 September 2013.</p> | |

DRAFT