

Northampton Borough Council - Northampton Disabled People's Forum

Friday, 25 September 2015 at 10:00 am until not later than 12:00 pm

Present: Cllr Larratt (Co Chair), Martin Derosario (Co Chair), Cllr Eldred (NBC), David Smith (Personal), Rashmi Shah (Personal), Stephanie Weldon (NAB), Barbara Barber (Individual), Larry Barber (Individual), Beverley Mennell (UKIP), Debbie Fergusson (NBC), Alice Morgan (NBC) Nisha Mejer (NBC)*

*took minutes

1.Welcomes, introductions and apologies

Apologies: Simon Burgess, Sue Armstrong (Action Support), Graeme Wilson (Northampton Support).

Cllr Larratt welcomed everyone to the meeting and everyone introduced themselves. Cllr Larratt explained that he will have to leave the meeting 10.50am and Martin would chair thereafter.

2.Minutes and Matters Arising

Minutes were agreed as a true record.

AM: There has been a new bin installed in Bellinge and the warden enquired as to whether this has made a difference. LB responded that rubbish is still being dumped in the woods.

ACTION: AM to feed this back to the neighbourhood warden.

3.Partnership Grant Allocations 2015 - Councillor Eldred

Cllr Larratt thanked Cllr Eldred for attending, and explained that there have been concerns amongst the group regarding the issue of grants to Door to Door Service and Shop Mobility.

The Door to Door Service received £45,000 this year but received £20,000 more than this in previous year. Shop Mobility received £11,000 instead of £22,000 which was received in 2015.

Cllr Eldred stated the funding grants amount of £550,000 will not be cut this year. The funding is split into sections which are:

£100,000 – Empowering Communities

£100, 000 – Investing in cleaner, safer communities

£100,000 - Heritage and Culture

£100,000 – Health and Wellbeing

£150,000 – Information and advice services (separate commissioning process).

Each group has the right to apply but not everyone can receive something. This year there were 50 applications and 24 were successful.

The panel that makes the decision on how grants are allocated is last year was made up of 6 councillors – 3 Conservative, 3 Labour and 1 Liberal Democrat. There are also people on the panel representing the volunteer sector – Jane Carr from the Voluntary Impact Northampton, Derry Miller (Age UK) and Jane Birch (Community Spaces Northampton, before she became a councillor).

The process in deciding who gets funding is a three day process. On day 1 the applications are sifted. On day 2 the applications are sifted again and dwindled down further. On day 3 the groups are allocated money. This is a very difficult process.

BM: What is being said is right and the process is fair. The Door to Door Service needs a business plan and cannot rely on NBC. However would like to remind NBC that the organisation has a duty of care to the most vulnerable, elderly and needy. Even though the process is fair and balanced, more duty of care is needed for these groups.

Cllr Eldred: This Council hasn't cut any funding to groups and this administration is not cutting any funding.

RS: Was concerned that there is a conflict of interest with volunteers who may also have connections with an organisation. Eg Jane Carr receives funding for organisations.

Cllr Eldred: Jane Carr runs the voluntary sector. If community representatives apply for a grant and there is a conflict, then they have to leave the room when decisions are being made. There is going to be an election for a new community representative.

AM: This is organised by VIN on NBC's behalf and voting will take place at the next Northampton VCS Forum.

ACTION: AM/NM to circulate the date.

RS: Talked about the Community Empowerment Fund and that this has been cut.

DF commented that the fund RS spoke about is from Northamptonshire Partnership Homes. RS asked whether they should be working together. Cllr Eldred explained that when housing was passed over the funding was given to NPH. The Council now has no say on the budget for this. DF added that this has to be spent on Housing. There is a government steer on this and it is very specific.

Cllr Eldred: £550,000 given out and will continue to work with the Volunteer Sector. Jane Carr advises us and we have a lot of experience on board. Have DF and AM to help too. All grants have gone to a worthy cause.

Looking at the figures over 10% (£56,000) of the budget has been given to the two organisations. The disability organisations fall under every category so I believe this to be fair. People work hard on this and other funding is available.

DF: Jane Carr is happy to come along to meeting to run through the process.

ACTION: AM/NM to invite Jane Carr to meeting.

DS: It is commendable that the funds have not been reduced. Would be interested to know what percentage is spent by NBC compared to other councils. Think it would be better that the grant is given out in proportion to the demand in the pot.

AM: Will look into this-

MM: Asked how groups can apply for funds.

Cllr Eldred: Local councillors give out funds. There are small grants and you can look at criteria for that. VIN can also help with applications.

Cllr Larratt: Thanked Cllr Eldred for attending.

4.Action Plan

(A).Planning consultation group

AM: Is in the process of setting up a planning consultation group. However, they were unable to come to this meeting. -

Following the last meeting, AM explained to the Planning department that the forum would like a more formal involvement. Andrew Holden has said that any planning applications for public use buildings will be shown to the forum. We need to let them know what we want to look at.

DS: Can we have a separate meeting as there is expertise in this group.

ACTION: AM will arrange a meeting to take this further. If you would like to be involved please let AM know.

LB: Will this Forum get involved with Delapre Abbey to give input?

Cllr Larratt: The application has already been dealt with and there was a consultation. The whole of the Abbey has not been looked at yet but all parts of the building will be accessible when funding is available.

DS: Needs accessibility for disabled people and they are not compliant if they don't do this. There is responsibility to employees too.

Cllr Larratt: Money has been allocated and will come into next phase.

DS: For future planning the Forum would like to be considered.

(B)International Day for Persons With Disabilities - 3rd Dec

AM: NM and AM have been working with the One Stop Shop (OSS) and there is space available to have stalls. There is no space in The Great Hall as it is set up for Christmas parties.

Cllr Larratt: Asked if the reception area by the Spencer Percival can be used.

ACTION: NM to book foyer area in addition to one stop shop.

AM: Spaces have been mapped out in one stop shop. 2 areas can be used for workshops.-

ACTION: Forum to share ideas as to what we can have there. NM and AM will then make contact with organisations.

BM: A woman was disguised as a police officer and was ringing people offering security. Could have a stall where we can raise awareness about this type of behaviour. Could have a safety stall where literature is given out.

There could be a stall to raise awareness of illnesses such as Dementia and Alzheimers.

SW: There was an event in summer and 3 rooms were used in the Park Inn hotel. SW will share contacts from this. NAB would like a presence at the event. Also could offer self-defence sessions

DS: Could have a Keep Safe Stand.

Time of event was agreed as 11am – 3pm.

BM: Is an advocate for Rocky Roadmender Club. This is a worthwhile organisation and important to give support.

LB: There is a band called Phylissis Frog who sing 60s and 70s music for charities.

MM: Can the council put this on their blog. Can PR be done for this event.

AM: Would you like to see a presence of Hate Crime Awareness. Can have a stand/session around this issue.

Hate Crime Survey

The final draft is ready to be launched on Monday. AM read out the questions from the survey to the forum and asked for final comments.

BM: Stated from the minutes of 24th July that the forum needs to raise awareness of the term “disablism.” This needs to be added to promote this word and to make people aware.

DS: the problem with this is word is that some people hate it. Therefore use with caution.

BM: Need to make people aware that they can’t abuse others. This is not acceptable and need to send that message out.

LB: If you mention this word to people they don’t know what it means.

AM: would like to invite Anjona Roy from Northampton Rights and Equality Council to the event to have a stall about discrimination against disabled people.

ACTION: Invite AR to-have a stall at the event.

RS: Is there publicity on how to report Hate Crime?

DF: There is a reporting line on NBC website. The staff in OSS can help too. People want to remain anonymous and we can this. People don’t always want to go through the police.

LB: Need to go to schools. DS advised that PCSOS still go into schools as part of their remit.

AM: Is working on the action plan and asked if anything else needed to be added.

BM: Please add social media and communications on action plan. Can we keep the Facebook page more up to date.

DS: Facebook is not always accessible to the most vulnerable. Can use Charities Support Based networks.

LB: The elderly don’t always use pcs. Can access libraries which would be better.

5.Community Information Exchange

AM: GW: There is wheelchair rugby session on 3rd Oct.

ACTION: To be sent out.

Information from Sue Armstrong at Action Support:

These can be delivered a we prefer alongside the Community Placement Work Experience where, as you know, we give far more to our trainees than "work experience". We have demonstrated success already within this partnership with Northampton Job Centre

As you are also aware we receive NO funding from any outside source, yet manage to deliver a high quality programme, but e would like to expand and offer the "Classroom sessions" as well.

We now have a fully equipped bespoke Training Room, at no 4 Quarry Park Close for 10 learners and 1/2 trainers, equipped with interactive whiteboard and projector, WIFI and 3 large wall mounted whiteboards.

This training room, as well as for our own purposes is also available to hire at a rate of £75 a half day or £150 full day, to include refreshments. Lunch and pastries etc can be added as extras.

We can deliver a range of Employability bite size, or fuller length bespoke courses to assist your company?

- CV and application form- How to be a Success!-1 day and follow up 1:1 as required
- Negotiation Skills- How to build a "Golden Bridge"-1 day

- Communication Skills- "How to say what you want with poise!"-1 day
- Assertiveness Skills- Bridging the gap from Passive to Aggressive- 1 day
- Interview Skills- Dressing to impress and training those nerves"- 1 day
- What Job suits my skills?- Skills Mapping to find your vocation!- 2 days

and for Employers-

Fulfilling your responsibilities for employing under the DDA

- A New Employee- Recipe for Success all round!-1 day
- Flexibility for greater productivity!-1 day

We also offer

Equality and Diversity- How to get it right without being afraid!-1 day

Project Management- from simple to advanced- bespoke as required

Advocacy Skills for Professionals- Think Outside the BOX!- 2 day

Self- Advocacy to get your VOICE heard appropriately-6 half days

AM: All forums are working with IHWO and helping to support the Diwali event on 7th November. All forums are invited.

There is an arts workshops on 26th October between 11am and 3pm. People can come to the parade too. Idea is to extend to other events.

It is International Coming Out Day on 11th October and there is an event called Booqfest on 9th Oct. The LGBTQ Forum will be attending.

ACTION: Email out details of the event.

DS: Would like to raise awareness of disabled people in the workplace. Organisation called "Disability Access" where you can bring together small organisations.

This is a charter where there is an opportunity to provide work experience for disabled people.

RS: As a local authority we should be positivity promoting disability.

SW: NAB AGM is on 19th October at 2pm.

NAB is working with RNIB and carrying out online sessions. People can update their skills.

RS: Asked who the sessions were for. Is it for basic users or more intermediate?

SW: Best to come along and find out but there are activities where people can use their smartphones etc.

6.Items for Next and Future Meetings

BM: There is an inequality with welfare and the way benefit is paid.

RS: Between NBC and NCC there needs to be support in housing and Health and Wellbeing.

MM: There is support in Weston Favell Library. Please email county council for more information.

BM: Referred to the Disability Facilities Grant. Money has not been paid out. Need to debate this issue.

ACTION: Need an update on this. (AM/NM)

BB: would like to invite Northamptonshire Carers.

ACTION: Invite them to next meeting.

SW: Can we invite a representative from the communications dept to help promote services. Can we put out helplines to help vulnerable people.

BM: Raising efficiency saving: - these are not used properly. NBC needs to explain how they can promote all that has been talked about as we need to reach vulnerable people. There have been government cuts and money should be paid in the best way. It is frustrating that we talked about this in the 1990s and we are still talking about this now.
ACTION: Invite an officer from NBC to come along.

MM: Everyone pays their council tax and rent. Please arrange an officer to come along and talk about all services. Would like to invite David Kennedy.

DF: Raised concern about the purpose of the forum. There is a need to have proper channels to talk about issues.

BM: The Chief Executive needs to hear what the Forum is saying.

MM: We must be careful not to overload meetings. They need to be spaced out. The emphasis is on disability and needs to be relevant.

SW: Would be useful to have someone from the communications dept as we don't missed opportunities.

ACTION: DF asked to go through the process. Meeting to be arranged with comms.

7.Date of the Next Meeting

Friday 27 November, 10am – 12pm, The Holding Room, The Guildhall

Map and directions at: www.northampton.gov.uk/guildhall

For more information about this meeting please contact:
Alice Morgan, Community Development Officer



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Tel: 01604 837795



More information about the Forum generally is at: www.northampton.gov.uk/forums



Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/NorthamptonDisabledPeoplesForum?ref=hl>

Please note that this Forum is supported and funded by Northampton Borough Council. The Forum may work in partnership and collaboration with other community groups, councils and local services from time to time. The views expressed and decisions taken by the Forum are not necessarily those of Northampton Borough Council.



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