

## **Northampton Borough Council - Northampton Disabled People's Forum**

**Friday, 22 March 2019**

### **1. WELCOMES, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES**

**ATTENDANCE:** Martin De Rosario (MDR, Chair), Cllr Phil Larratt (PL, Chair), Michael Macleod (NBC), Debbie MacColl (DM, NBC), Helena Milic (HM, Cube Disability), Jennifer Shaw (JS, NCC/NASS/OCS), Martin Page (MP, DWP), Louise Danielczuk (LD, Hope Centre).

**APOLOGIES:** Carl Weininger, Larry Barber, Barbara Barber, Beverley Mennell.

### **MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

#### **3. LOUISE DANIELCZUK - NORTHAMPTON HOPE CENTRE**

Hope Centre – day centre – large room in Oasis house – Monday to Saturday morning to lunchtime to provide food and shelter for that period of time. There is access to showers, underwear, socks, toothbrushes etc. Not everyone there is street homeless, might be hidden homeless, sofa surfing etc. or even in severe poverty.

Food is cheap, contributions of around £1. The point of the hope centre is to help people look towards their future and help build to their future. Help them with their benefits and then encourage them to learn to plan their finances. This is why the food is not just a handout. Some will also volunteer and be rewarded with meal vouchers, this helps people plan for the future and begin to create a structure for them.

Various activities going on at the centre. Clothes can be purchased, small fee of 30p. Unless someone has absolutely no funds, those people will be given free items and the team will then work with them to get their benefits in order.

Groups include meditation, creative writing, active activities such as football etc, also in partnership with a boxing gym. There are also things such as pool table, books, television and internet café available.

In addition to the day centre, there is a team of people who are there to help people move forward with their lives. They'll be referred through the client service team to help identify where they want to get to. Whether this is to live independently, learn English, get a job etc.

This is not a straightforward task but the help is always there and the Hope Centre will stick by this person regardless of the outcome to keep moving forward.

Other social enterprises are there to help the hope centre going and also a platform. Hope catering, Hope tools and allotments etc.

Food club, similar to food banks, this happens each week. People are charged for the food but at a huge discount. £30 worth of food for £7.50.

Opening a shop on Abington Street.

PL: Thank you Louise for coming, I would recommend hope catering who I have previously used.

Q: How do you work with people who have disabilities?

Q: Also who helps with their benefits, is it you or a partner organisation?

A: We do not work with many disabled people but there are a few. We are completely wheelchair accessible but we treat everyone on an individual basis, so we take each person's specific needs into consideration when we work with them. Also work very closely with other organisations and we're not afraid to tell people we're not the expert in that but we can point them in the direction of who is.

Q: Do you link up with the CC employability service?

A: I believe we do but I will have to check.

LD: If anyone wants to come and look at the centre please let me know.

Q: What's happening with the future of the building?

A: Last October we were given a 12 month eviction notice. After a lot of negotiating, we have accepted that we will be leaving the building but there is no deadline so we can find something that suits us perfectly. Needs to be easily accessible to those who are street homeless so it has to be in the town centre.

#### **4. COMMUNITY INFORMATION EXCHANGE**

##### **Improving the Forum**

DM: Another venue for the forum?

JS: Could be hosted at other agencies such as The Cube, or Angel Square.

PL: Angel Square parking is an issue.

HM: The Cricket Ground has a great room.

Forum members discussed about how to spread the word about the Forum.

PL: Berrywood Hospital are very good for community groups. Some are upstairs but they are very accessible.

LD: Goodwill solutions may be an option?

JS: Maybe before we move the forum, it would be good for all members to put in the effort to spread the word.

HM: Cube disability sponsor The Cobblers disability football team.

DM: St Andrews said they have rooms but this is unfortunately at the weekend.

PL: We need to look forward to see what is happening this time next year, we need to try and keep these going and think about the form they would take.

MP: We need to make sure that people with disabilities have their voices heard and are not forgotten about when we go to two unitary authorities.

HM: Could set up at events like open days and engagement events. Such as the cube or NCC events.

Q: Is this specifically adults?

A: No it is aimed at all ages.

**ACTION:** Send JS a slide with the aims of the forum.

MP: to promote at future meetings.

LD: Might be worth getting in touch with the Chamber of Commerce.

HM: Can they also come in or phone or is it just e-mail?

DM: We are definitely open to speaking to people in any form.

HM: Need the people who have issues to bring to the table to attend meetings.

MP: Under the disability act, people should always fill things out on their worst day so they are always protected.

### **International Day for People with Disabilities.**

Great day, there were some issues regarding access. Going to approach St Andrews to look at the possibility of hosting, would try this on a Saturday instead of a Monday.

PL and MP: The main room there does not have great access.

JS: The University might be able to offer something.

HM: What about the Benham sports centre? Lots of parking there.

MDR: Emmanuel Church might be good, good access and lots of parking.

Cripps centre could be an option but there are car parking charges.

DM: NIA School offer their building to the wheelchair rugby team.

JS: Also the College near Weston Favell School could be good.

University would seem most likely.

As it is 'international' day for people with disabilities, we could try and make the event more cultural.

Could even try and link in with the twinned towns.  
Could also try and link in with the Diverse Communities Forum.

HM: Room was a good fit, the performances were exciting.  
Now we've been we can spread the word, have multiple stalls or ask other links to see if they would like to perform.

## **5. ITEMS FOR NEXT AND FUTURE MEETINGS**

VIN – Social Prescribing

Update on the council

JS: IKEA are designing furniture specifically for disabled people, may be worth contacting them.

## **6. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

10<sup>th</sup> May – 11am starting time.

Any info send to JS – who can then spread the word through Informa. Could also put something on the atrium.

HM: Could put an article out about the forum.

The meeting concluded at Time Not Specified