



**West
Northamptonshire
Council**

Women's Forum

Minutes of a meeting of the Women's Forum held at on Tuesday 29 March 2022 at 11.00 am.

Present Pauline Woodhouse (Co-Chair), Mavis Mundiwa, Cllr Rosie Humphries, Cllr Danielle Stone, Katy Newman, Vicki Rockall, Divya Terry, Alex Rex, Morcea Walker, Sarah Franklin, Anjona Roy, Sally Wood, Andrea Newman, Elona Latifi, Debs Burns, Debbie MacColl.

10. Welcomes, Introductions and Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Anna King, Rachel Duncan, Neelam Aggarwal and Miranda Wixon

11. Code of Conduct

12. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes were greed as a true record.

13. Update on SWAN (Safer Women at Night) Project

This project was part of the Home Office Safer Streets 3 fund which was aimed at reducing violence against women and girls. Environmental improvements were being rolled out across the Racecourse and Becketts Park including help points which connected straight to the CCTV control room. There had been very tight timescales of 6 months in which to deliver a wide range of projects including a refresh of the Safer Nights Out campaign to fit in with the Government's 'enough' campaign. Various partners had been involved including Suzie Lamplugh Trust and Northamptonshire Rape Crisis. A new website ([It Only Takes One – One community can say 'Enough is Enough'](#)) being launched this week. The messaging can address good and bad behaviour. There are good tips on the website on how to call out bad behaviour safely. A lot of training was available including for licensed premises and the safer routes from the University were being refreshed. The police Operation Kyack continued during the night-time economy and the SNO van equipped with responders. See attached presentation.

Update from Superintendent Sarah Johnson - Op Kayak does not use plain clothed officers. This is in recognition of the potential public unease about plain clothed officers watching and approaching women. The aim is to be active in preventing offences rather than an observer to offences therefore it has been important to be readily identifiable as a Police Officer. They do not enter clubs/bars and there is no surveillance apart from overtly by CCTV. Officers will always be double crewed but unfortunately it is not always possible to have male/female pairings on the basis of available resources. Feedback to date has been overwhelmingly positive from the public and from licenced venues. We have had no complaints about officers making

women feel uneasy and actually they are extremely grateful when officers check up on them.

Pauline stated that the focus was on the town centre and night-time economy, but things went on outside of that and it was how we support people to make a difference whatever area it may be in.

Danielle Stone stated that it was an extraordinary we live in a world that is so scary for women and we shouldn't lose that shock. She thanked Vicki for all the positive work that was going on. She was often told by residents that they do not feel safe walking along the streets due to the fear of being accosted by men especially at the Racecourse and welcomed all the measures being put in but not all women out at night were out having a good time, some were returning from work night shifts. Also, we need to be careful how we expect people to intervene as her son was attacked when intervening to protect a woman. Vicki responded that there was a section on the website on how to intervene safely and although the funding was specifically for the night-time economy, a lot of the work could be taken into other areas.

Cllr Humphreys added that she was very interested to hear of so much positive action and agreed that we should not stop being shocked and asked whether the campaign was going out to sports clubs etc. Vicki responded that the campaign had been structured in a way we could do anything with it.

Katy asked for the website link as the Fire Service was heavily male dominated and she would love to ensure the workforce were educated.

14. **BAME Sub Group Update**

The previous meetings minutes (8 March) had been circulated to the Forum. Mavis stated that the group were inviting different organisations and services to the forum to find out what they did and their offer for BAME women. They were on course but it was taking longer than perhaps most people expected. Other issues discussed include 16 Days of Activism Campaign, barriers to accessing services by BAME women and The DA Bill. The next guest speaker was Cllr Ashraf and any questions about Council support were invited. The next meeting is 10.00am on the 10th May and would be face to face, venue to be confirmed. Discussions were needed between Eve/NDAS/Voice on who would be the admin support for the group going forward. Mavis emphasised that they were just a group with no funding and were not able to enforce anything.

Cllr Stone stated that a BAME network for adult social services had just been established and to let her know if anyone on the BAME sub group wanted to be part of this.

Anjona stated she had tried to join the last virtual meeting but couldn't so welcomed the face-to-face meeting. She also mentioned the innovative work Creating Equalz was doing with their workshop for black and brown women survivors of DA and congratulations to NDAS and Eve for referring women and for joint working to

address the needs of black and brown women as it was very labour intensive. Also, organisations supporting BAME women were not receiving funding to do so and were going above and beyond.

Divya added that the Creating Equalz recovery course was for all BAME women, whether they were in refuge, but they had to have left the abusive relationship. The course ran for 12 weeks, and currently had almost 100% attendance to date (1 absence due to sickness). This was the first of its kind in the county and it was hoped to run more in the future.

15. **Rose Review Update**

Asy introduced himself as the Local Enterprise Manager for Nat West and he was here to present the updates from the Rose Review. In 2018 Alison Rose, who at that time was the Deputy CEO of Nat West was asked to write a review into female entrepreneurs and the barriers they faced. Alison was now the Group CEO and updated the review each year. The full review can be read here - [bJ4GeuqbRBfiOfXSzsdT \(natwestbusinesshub.com\)](https://www.natwestbusinesshub.com/bJ4GeuqbRBfiOfXSzsdT) summary sheets to be circulated with these minutes.

There were 1,100 new businesses starting each day in the UK, a third of them by females. Female start ups on average had 50% less starting capital and were less likely to reach business turnover of £1m. A few of the reasons for this are: -

- Greater risk awareness
- Females have a disproportionate responsibility for care – this has been exacerbated by the Covid pandemic.
- Difficulties accessing funding/opportunities
- Women are less likely to have a relatable sponsor or mentor
- Women more likely to doubt their skills and experience

Giving female led start-ups the same opportunities/funding as those led by men could be worth £250billion to the UK economy. The report looks to put things in place, not just from the bank but also the government. The central initiatives involved around funding looking at a new Women's Code signed up to by a lot of financial organisations ensuring their policies consider equality when decisions were being made. NatWest had ring fenced £1billion for female led start-up businesses originally with another £1billion since added.

Work was being carried out in schools to put girls in the mindset, direct support was being given such as 1:1 support and surgeries to give confidence and allow the entrepreneurial mindset to develop.

Mavis asked if there was any funding for charities. Asy stated funding was occasionally available for specific projects/timescales but unfortunately no pot of money. Support could be given in other ways such as a meeting room and training to help business start-up.

Pauline asked for more information on the workshops. They were open to all and started at the pre-start stage, running through types of businesses such as sole

trader etc and accessing different grants. They were quite busy at the moment with the change over from the European funded projects to the levelling up agenda. Asy would be a regular attendee at the forum and would be happy to get involved with next year's IWD.

Asy's contact details – Asy Ho, Local Enterprise Manager, 07788 347151, asy.ho@natwest.com

16. **International Women's Day**

Although having the presentation in a separate room had been very much appreciated by the shortlisted women, it had been difficult to hear down in the Great Hall and confusion about who had won. Also people had begun to pack up before 3pm.

These issues to be looked in to and hopefully resolved before next year's event. Pauline added that BBC Radio had supported the Inspirational Woman Awards since the beginning and wanted a letter of thanks and appreciation to be sent from the Forum.

17. **Knife Angel Update**

The Knife Angel will be arriving on All Saints Plaza late afternoon on Friday 29 April and will leave again early Saturday 14 May. Please see calendar of events attached to the minutes.

18. **Community Information Exchange**

Morcea - [Save the dates](#)

Jubilee Weekend 2 – 5 June – Pageant in Northampton on Saturday 4th 11am-1pm

Picnic in the park – Delapre on Saturday, Wicksteed Park on the Sunday

Carnival 11 June – opportunity to get involved with the parade, the theme was

Summer of Jubilation, or have a stall. Forms on the website. [Welcome to the Northampton Carnival | Sat 11th June 2022](#)

June 22 – Windrush event at the Guildhall lunchtime and evening event at New Testament Church.

Elona, who had set up an Albanian Group was looking for a room to use for free in the town centre area. **Action: Debbie to send details and make introduction to colleague who covered the central area.** Alex added that she was meeting with Jamie Wells around support that Diverse Forum could give in relation to an event if linked to the National Day. She was also trying to set up an Albanian dancing group and asked if anyone knew of other cultural dancing groups **Action: Mavis to contact Elona outside the meeting.**

Alex –

Queen's Institute Relief Fund – 6 May deadline for grants up to £5,000 for projects based in Northampton that improve health and wellbeing.

Examples of the types of eligible project activities include the following:

- Support and advocacy groups for people living with a health condition
- Community projects that promote emotional, mental and physical health and wellbeing
- Activities that reduce isolation or that provide social activity for vulnerable people to prevent loneliness
- Activities that provide help for people that need support to live in their own homes
- Activities that use arts, creativity, physical exercise and sport to support health and wellbeing

Global Goals Fund for Northamptonshire. The fund will focus on the following themes:

- Decent work and economic growth - Community investment in projects supporting employment pathways for individuals / Alternative learning experiences/ Developing digital skills for all
- Reduced inequalities – User-led projects which provide specific and appropriate services / Projects that actively provide accessible and inclusive services
- Sustainable cities and communities - Safe public spaces / Investment in new and young volunteers/ Projects which connect communities/ Community Transport for all
- Peace, justice and strong institutions. - Promote education on and understanding of the rule of law and democracy/ Supporting physical spaces where communities can meet

This is a rolling programme meaning you can apply at any time and the maximum funding award is £3000.

For more information on the above and other funds -

<http://www.ncf.uk.com/grants/grant-finder>

Pauline reported she had attended the NTFC ladies football match at Sixfields and it had been really enjoyable and the team deserve support.

Debbie added that they had won the following match 8 – 0!

19. Items for Future Meetings

20. Date of Next Meeting

11am May 24 – this will be a hybrid meeting with the option of a face to face meeting in the Guildhall's Jeffrey Room or joining by Teams. Link to be sent out in the Agenda.