

RAPAR.

OPEN FORUM meeting of members held on Tuesday 11th October at St Thomas of Canterbury School starting 4.30 (delay).

PRESENT: Zeinab (vice-chair); Maryam, Frank, Rhetta, Christian, Ndujmot, Juma, Graham, Curtis, MB, Sandra.

WELCOME: the vice-chair Zeinab welcomed everyone to the meeting.

APOLOGIES: Mike S, Bogusia.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING.

- Last forum meeting 13th September: Accepted as true and accurate record by those present.

MATTERS ARISING :

- Work with Black Health Partnership proposed in future around mental health.
- Accommodation project. As yet no further progress.
- Cheetwood. Because of problem re using Cheetwood as venue at present it was agreed to use Oliver's Gym at I, Holland Walk, off Langley Rd South until Christmas. A map will be distributed. Graham will meet people in car park. He was thanked for this help.
- 21st September Salford Community Empowerment Network (CEN) meeting, BME network. This had been attended by a few members. They had raised issues and highlighted work already done by RAPAR around personal safety and race hate crime and also concerns about the splitting of families in terms of schools. Minutes as yet had not been produced. MB asked for a new link with this group and it was agreed Juma would replace her.
- At this point Graham raised point that meetings of RAPAR could be better publicised. It was pointed out that the attacks on the organisation had meant that for a while life had been about survival. It was still important not to raise expectations and best to find permanent office space before mass publicity drive. Meanwhile focus was to connect with leaders in each group of refugees and people seeking asylum and groups of people from the areas. However aim not to be nationality based as issues affect all communities.
- Zimbabwe community wants to be constituted group. CVS would help with constitution. There is a music group.
- 2 sets of fliers, one more suitable for children, were available re November 19th Childrens Rights march. RAPAR was down as supporter. Museum event may produce more pictures. There was to be a planning meeting for the march at the Friends meeting house in Manchester. Miwanda and Christian would attend. Graham was planning to take youth club with their banners.
- October 1st meeting in Bolton about section 9 and the Sukulu family campaign. Around 300 people had attended. Bolton Advertiser had given publicity and unions said they would not implement section 9.
- SWAP. Meeting on November 12th planned 12.00pm start for SWAP, 2.00PM start for RAPAR AGM. Discussion on whether to use Albion High school or Oliver's gym youth club. Attendance likely to be about 50 people + those playing football on the football pitches. Frank and Graham would liaise. Costs would be greater if Albion High used. Frank reported that SWAP had £1500 for last quarter from the CEN and same amount was available this quarter. Juma had been nominated as Management group member for CEN. The CEN AGM was on October 20th.

MANCHESTER MUSEUM EVENT.

Zeinab reported on this event planned for October 15th from 11.00am till 3.30pm. RAPAR would refund travel costs. There would be tours of the museum, lunch and activities and idea was to bring children and young people together from different communities. The theme had been chosen by them. There was need to take some care about numbers attending. A pictorial record of some of art work would be made. Offers of help were invited.

FINANCE /FUND RAISING.

Frank reported that the committee at their meeting on October 6th had decided to employ a consultant to look at various projects RAPAR could get involved in and apply for appropriate bids. Rhetta had

agreed to do this as already familiar with what involved. She also explained her own current circumstances.

Areas of work were around housing, supplementary schools and extending work at museum about the impact of war on children. There was also the possibility of working in partnership with other European organisations on an evaluation of what actually happens following forcible return.

It was agreed to trust the committee on October 31st to finalise these arrangements.

NEWS FROM MEMBERS.

- Christian raised issue for a different venue for Saturday school than Bethel. There were some reservations about continuing there but there was a need for a venue which provided structured learning opportunities. Oliver's gym was more about 'fun learning'. There were 2 Congolese worshipping communities and a sizeable number of children involved. Frank would approach Matthew Norris from Great Clowes St URC. It was also reported that the Beacon Centre in Albion High School had made Wednesday evenings available as BME night. Aim was really a mixed group.
- Zeinab reported on meeting held last week about funding for supplementary school in Longsight. Bid was being made for 1 year development of education post. School would be launched on November 19th from 10.00am to 12.00 but this would still mean people could go on March on the same day. The school would be called RAPARLASS, the LASS standing for Longsight Ardwick Supplementary School.
- Miwanda had attended a meeting in Bristol for exiled journalists. She had also made a link with UN High Commissioner for refugees. Rhetta will continue as link to the group of journalists. There will be scope possibly for research.
- Rhetta had received an invite to an exhibition moving from Urbis to Wythenshawe. Ndjuimot would attend on our behalf. She had also received an invite to a planning meeting on October 20th for an International Peace Conference. As this clashed with the CEN AGM it was agreed to send our apologies.
- Rhetta and Frank also drew attention to the situation of a man threatened with eviction and destitution who was on the verge of suicide. It was hoped with support of a GP the eviction would be prevented on the grounds of mental health. Lawyers were considering highlighting how the system itself causes mental health problems. A press release might be issued this week about the situation.
- Frank raised the need for training for ourselves as knowing where to turn next was so difficult. Opportunity for funding for training might be possible. At the management meeting of the CEN a question had been raised as to whether the African churches in Salford had been approached by the Faith network.
- Graham hoped there might be a joint camp for children and adults next year and this was greeted with enthusiasm.

MANCHESTER DESTITUTION CONFERENCE DECEMBER 3RD.

RAPAR had offered a workshop but this had been turned down. It was proposed however that RAPAR book 10 places to attend so voices heard.

Sandra agreed to pull together quickly list of all dates. These are attached separately.