

RAPAR

(Refugee and Asylum seeker Participatory Action Research)
*C/o Faith and Justice Commission, Cathedral House,
250 Chapel Street, Salford, M3 5LL*

Minutes of RAPAR Information Sharing Meeting, 17th September 2002

Present: Nilofer Sheikh (Salford PCT), Ali Namegoshaye Fard, Dr. Rhetta Moran (Revans Institute, Salford University), Dr. Bogusia Temple (Housing and Urban Studies Unit, Salford University), Donna Hewitt (Project Manager, Salford RAPAR Community Development Team, Dr. Hermione Lovel (School of Primary Care, University of Manchester, Fazil Mustafa Jamil (all RAPAR members)

In attendance:

Tim Hilton and Keith Grayson (Refugee Action), Nicky Vincer (Pendleton College), Lisa Cooper (Salford CVS), Shahnaaz Levell and Bryan Nelson (Salford Action Team), Kevin Mossop (Trafford Asylum Support Team), Mike Scantlebury (Salford Community Network), Geoff Kirkman (Greater Manchester Police Authority – Consultation Team), Suzanne Hindle (New Deal for Communities), Dr. Anisa Dani (Manchester Museum), Scott Duraiaij, (Hate Crime Officer, Salford Community Safety Unit)

Apologies: Phil Greenham (Salford City Council), Steve Conway (Manchester Asylum Forum), Phil Davis (refugee Action), Mark McDonnell (Salford CVS), Maria Thornton (Salford PCT), Cath Maffia (Salford PCT), Anna Maria Bagenda and Mohamed Nazri (Salford RAPAR Community Development Team)

1. Welcome

A warm welcome was extended to Donna Hewitt the new SRB5 Funded Project Manager for RAPAR in Salford.

2. Matters Arising

Geoff Kirkman informed the meeting that from now on Christina Smith from Greater Manchester Police Authority will be attending in his place. Geoff will be moving to Trafford.

3. Current Research proposals

3.1. The chair formally thanked Drs Bogusia Temple, Rhetta Moran and Hermione Lovel for their involvement in recent RAPAR research proposals to The Joseph Roundtree Foundation and The Community Fund. Both these applications superceded an initial bid which had been submitted to the ERSC. The research bids focus on enhancing multi-agency work across Manchester Salford & Trafford with Afghani and Somali communities and on assessing the impact of projects for helping people to learn how to live together.

Members of RAPAR were asked to put themselves (and suggest any other relevant members) forward who would be interested in taking part in a RAPAR research management group: S Conway, H Lovel, Z Mohammed, M Nazri, A Namegoshaye Fard, M Thornton

The Joseph Roundtree Foundation require RAPAR to establish an advisory group. The following people put their names forward for consideration M Scantlebury, H Lovel, T Hilton, S Nelson, A Dani

4. Charity Commission

Lisa Cooper from Salford CVS attending in Mark McDonnells' absence updated members on the progress of legally constituting RAPAR. RAPAR was now a not for profit company limited by guarantee and in the process of seeking Charitable status. An application has been made to the Charity Commission, who have recently replied requiring confirmation of contact with the Office for Immigration Services Commissioner and an amendment of the object referring to "Well Being" in the governing document. The Charity Commission consider this to be vague and undefined. RAPAR is advised that if any amendments are made they must be made by a Special Resolution at a general meeting. The meeting will be called for RAPAR members with 21 clear days notice as stated in RAPAR's current governing document.

UPDATE AS OF 26th SEPTEMBER

The general meeting *for current members* to propose the above amendment to the constitution will be held on Monday 28th October at 3pm. Venue to be confirmed.

5. Manchester Museum & Art Gallery

A new project is being developed that involves Somali, Sudanese and Afghani communities and focused on women's health, nutrition and exercise.

RAPAR members were encouraged to publicise this amongst the people they are working with.

6. Abdullah Rahmatulla update

Abdullah is now in Vienna and is being refused asylum. He has no access to welfare and is unable to work. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is examining the case. A vigil has been organised to take place on 26th Sept at 6pm, which marks 6 months since Abdullah was deported. The vigil will take place at the steps of Salford Town Hall, Civic Centre, Swinton.

7. Hate Crime Co-ordinator:

Scott Durairaj has recently been appointed to this post and explained part of the structure of the Strategic Hate Crime Forum

A Salford refugee and asylum hate crime forum is proposed. The meeting discussed this issue briefly and determined that Scott should arrange a separate meeting with RAPAR on this issue. The following people indicated preparedness to be involved in

such a meeting: Donna Hewitt, Nilofar Shaikh, Keith Grayson, Rhetta Moran and to report back to RAPAR after the meeting.

8. Salford City Council

Rhetta Moran had been invited by the City Council to attend a special meeting about asylum seekers on 23rd August. The invitation arrived after she went on annual leave. Phil Greenham attended on behalf of RAPAR. The meeting asked that Phil feedback at the next information sharing meeting and that Rhetta get in touch with John Merry to find out about subsequent action by the City Council.

9. Manchester Asylum Forum Meetings

Mental Health sub group 26th Sept Apologies to be forwarded
Health Group 30th Sept Hermione Lovel to attend

The meeting discussed the fact that now there is a real PAR resource in place in Salford it is timely to revisit the situation in both Manchester and Trafford. Accordingly, Steve Conway (Manchester Asylum Forum) and Barbara Donovan (Trafford Asylum Team) will be asked if they can attend the next meeting and offer their perspectives on the current situation vis-à-vis Participatory Action research in their respective localities.

10. Community Network

Community Network development worker Mike Scantlebury reminded those nominated RAPAR members to come along to the next Community Network Core group (Contact Mike for details). There is also a Community Network General meeting on Tuesday 8th October at Buile Hill

Mike also informed the meeting that the Network is seeking to employ Community Organisers working in geographical communities in Salford to help develop and support the Network

11. Contacts from Universities

11.1 The University of Kent, Tizard Centre has identified RAPAR as a Best Practice Project and would like RAPAR to complete an extensive evaluation form. The meeting decided to contact TIZARD and invite them to come and see us, rather than us complete the form. Rhetta to contact.

RAPAR has been invited to the University of Oxford Refugee Studies Centre and Rhetta and Hermione will attend.

Rhetta and Bogusia are running an ESRC funded seminar series through the University of Salford over 2 years on eliciting the views of refugees and asylum seekers. Any one interested in participating should contact either of them.

12. Any Other Business

12.1 Good news: the increasingly popular Somali women's swimming club has been extended!

12.2 Geoff Kirkman reported back on a recent welcome event held in Pendleton. 80 people attended mainly from Eccles and Broughton. The meeting was described as highly successful and considered issues around policing and crime, how asylum seekers are unaware of the law and the problems around a lack of understanding about law and accessing interpretation. This meeting was organised by a multi agency consultation group. The meeting discussed the fact that RAPAR is not a consultation organisation and that the meeting Geoff described engaged with a community group that has come into being through RAPAR's work. The meeting was also reminded of the fact that RAPAR held formal meetings with Salford police about these very issues last October and are still waiting for the police to act on the information that RAPAR offered them.

Geoff Kirkman agreed to circulate the report about the Pendleton welcome meeting.

At the Revans Institute on 21st Nov at 2pm Rhetta will lead a seminar on Participatory Action Research with Refugees and Asylum Seekers. If anybody wants to book a place contact Juliette on 295-5277

Forthcoming Information Sharing Meeting Dates:

Next Meeting

Tuesday 15th October 10 – 12 am at Salford Cathedral

Then

Tuesday 12th November at 4pm at Salford Cathedral

ALL WELCOME