

## **Refugee and Asylum seeker Participatory Action Research (RAPAR)**

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### **MINUTES FROM THE REFUGEE AND ASYLUM SEEKER PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH (RAPAR) MEETING HELD ON 27.02.02 AT 16.30, CATHEDRAL HOUSE, CHAPEL STREET, SALFORD**

#### **Present:**

Satkunasingam Manjula (Tamil refugee), Mark McDonald (Salford CVS – MINUTE TAKER), Nilofer Shaikh (Community Health Project), Anne Marie Fell (Revive), Louise Kay (Salford IAG Education Project), Nilofar Sheikh and Andy Muir (Higher Broughton Health Centre), Fazil Jamal (Iraqi Kurdish Asylum seeker), Latif Ebadi (Iranian refugee), Cath Maffia (Health Visitor, Salford PCT), Phil Davies (Refugee Action), Hermione Lovel (School of Primary Care, Manchester University), Zoltan Mohamed (Afghani asylum seeker), Ali Namegoshaye (Iranian Asylum Seeker), Mohamed Nazri and Abdullah Rahmatullah (Afghani asylum seekers), Bogusia Temple (Institute for Health and Social Care, University of Salford), Hermione Lovel (School for Primary Care University of Manchester) Rhetta Moran (Revans Institute for Action Learning and Research, University of Salford, CHAIR)

**Apologies:** Maria Thornton and Simon Aldridge (Salford PCT), David Botham (Revans Institute), Zeinab Mohamed (Refugee Support Group/Robert Darbishire Practice), Steve Young (Salford Mental Health Trust)

#### **1. Minutes of previous meeting, 22.01.02**

Latif Ebadi is a Kurdish refugee and a rep for the Greater Manchester Coalition to Defend Asylum Seekers. Fazil, not Fasid Jamal. Ali Namegoshaye is an Iranian Asylum seeker. Otherwise meeting minutes accepted as a true record

#### **2. Matters Arising**

2.1. Group asked for update on liaison with police from Phil Davies/Ameen Hadi in time for next meeting

**Action: Phil and Ameen**

#### **2.2 FUNDING BIDS**

2.2.1. SRB5 Funding, social inclusion stream. RAPAR has succeeded in a bid for a community development team for 4 full time posts over 3 years for the Salford area and involving dedicated community development with the indigenous population, sub Saharan African and Middle Eastern/Arabic refugees and asylum seekers. The details need finalising. Ongoing negotiation for an arrangement whereby the project is steered via RAPAR and line managed via Salford Public Health directorate.

**Action:**

**Nilofar Sheikh and Rhetta Moran will meet with Diana Martin from SRB partnership on behalf of RAPAR.  
Nilofar will update at the next meeting**

ESRC Seminar series – No information yet  
Community Fund – Bid to be submitted by 1<sup>st</sup> March  
Scarman Trust – Rhetta to meet with representative for informal discussion in late March  
Community Empowerment Fund - £10,000 agreed in principle

**Action: Funding to be moved into RAPAR's new bank account by March 31<sup>st</sup> for subsequent distribution as already agreed. Mark McDonald to follow through**

## **2.3. Education**

### **2.3.1. Adult Education**

Mark, Nazri, Rahmatallah and Fazil have been working on creating self sustaining training projects with the aim of enabling people to learn English at the level they can manage and will find useful. Money from the Salford CVS community leadership skills project has been earmarked for the purpose. There is though considerable difficulty finding suitable venues.

**Action: Any info on possible venues please contact Mark on 787-7795**

**Post script: Salford Link may be able to help with this. Abdur Rauf will attend the next RAPAR meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> March**

An interesting and important good practice model is developing at MANCAT where Marina Pahar has led on an approach where people who are refugees are acting as support tutors for students whose first language is not English.

### **2.3.2. Young People**

It is becoming increasingly difficult to place 15 and 16 year olds in schools in Salford. Mancat will however accept students if Salford CC will pay the cost (which they would have to pay anyway). It was agreed that RAPAR should take some action.

**Action: Cath to lead. Mark to find out who is lead on education in cabinet .**

Rhetta is to speak at an education forum in Manchester on 18 March. It would be useful if all the information, concerning problems with young refugee and asylum seekers education, could be pulled together by 14 March and passed on to Rhetta. More cases were then described, this is clearly a big problem.

## **2.4. Mental Health Conference**

This conference will include training in cultural awareness, giving refugees experience of making presentations and helping people who are delivering services to understand the sorts of experiences that people have gone through and that profoundly influence their mental well-being. It is hoped that this training will act as a pilot and lead to training for trainers . There is some difficulty in staff being allowed on the course. Persuasive work at senior and middle management level needs to be done to release frontline staff.

## **2.5. Constitution**

The constitution was adopted at a meeting on February 13 . The membership forms have been produced. Elections resulted in the following three posts being filled

Chair: Nilofer Sheikh

Secretary: Cath Maffia

Treasurer: Maria Thornton

RAPAR still needs a graphic designer to design the logo.

## **2.6. Accommodation**

There has been no formal response from Salford City Council despite Cllr Margaret Dixon raising the issue. The group recalled that the local authority has a statutory duty to house.

It seems that currently many refugee families cannot be housed because of fears of racist attacks. Housing officers are juggling with shades of colour, trying to place people in areas where they will blend in. The reality is that even once they are granted leave to remain there is little real choice in where people can live. Additionally, there is a real problem in finding accommodation for seven member families, many of these families having to wait 6-8 months in emergency accommodation.

**Action: When the accommodation group meets next week it will discuss proposals for RAPAR's response to the Salford Council's silence on the matter.**

### **2.6.1. One Stop Shop**

The one stop shop in the Salford precinct has been querying housing entitlement of people with 4 years ELR with "what happens after 4 years?"

**Action: Accommodation group to pursue**

## **2.7. Health Project Sub-group**

The group has met twice since formation and has accessed records of 1,300 people who have entered Salford since last October. The group wants to see the establishment of a health check beyond the standard GP one on arrival in the UK. In particular they want an assessment of illness, nutrition and distress. Hermione suggested that they could pull together a bid to put to the relevant Ethics Committee by mid-July.

### **2.7.1. Website**

Health information is available on [www.healthprofile.org.uk](http://www.healthprofile.org.uk)

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## **2.8. Sports Group Update**

Update next time when Ameen Hadi is present.

## **3. Healthy Salford Fair**

Andy Muir, Event Co-ordinator for the Healthy Salford Fair explained that the fair was open to all groups and that he was looking for expressions of interest from groups to exhibit, demonstrate and advise about the health related aspects of their work.

**Action: RAPAR will put on an event. Identify lead for that at next meeting**

#### **4. Langworthy Cornerstone Event**

The event was attended by 50 adults and 20 children . Food was provided by the Afghani community. Cornerstone want to charge RAPAR £172 if we use it again.

**Action: Mo to be approached and asked if she can help with this**

#### **5. Immigration**

A letter from Rhetta Moran to David Blunkett concerning the deportation of Hashmatullah Mirzadeh to Austria, under the third country rule (Dublin Convention 1991), is attached. This was sent with a covering letter from the Revnas Institute Director. Arrangements were made for Hashmat to be supported by an Austrain AID agency. However, there has been no word from Hashmat since his deportation to Austria. This whole case raises a number of questions:

Should there be a study into similar cases?

Should we be formalising our links with the Medical Foundation? – all of our people are people who have been subjected to forms of group violence

Should we affiliate to the Immigration Aid Unit?

Clearly and naturally our asylum seeking communities are very anxious about people signing in and disappearing and we understand that this is intensely counter productive to the community development work being done. It is possible that two or three of our members from Afghanistan could talk about their experiences and their reaction to what happens around them, as an article to be submitted to The Lancet.

It is recognised that it is important for RAPAR to join with other agencies –Law Centres etc – to respond to urgent cases, to enable the solicitors concerned to optimise their efforts.

**Action: RAPAR to affiliate to Immigration AID Unit**

**Cath to lead on collecting some stories on tape with Nasri and Abdullah and Fasil and Simko and Latif**

**Rhetta to lead on an Immigration sub group forming after Easter**

#### **7. The Little Acorn Project**

Denise Lewis talked about Peterloo People and referred to the Community Action Plan which she believed should have an entry for refugees and asylum seekers. She also spoke of a pamper day being held at The Healthy Living Centre.

#### **8. Kurdish Community**

Fazil Jamal requested that the next social event should be for the Kurdish Community in Salford. He has established links with the Kurdish community in Manchester through the Refugee Support Network. He is currently working with 23 men living in Salford.

**Action: Next community event, date to be set as soon as possible, to focus on Kurdish people**

## **9. Resources for Children**

200 children (without parents or guardians) were dispersed throughout Manchester last year. Research and action needed. Refugee Support Network has succeeded in acquiring approximately £50000 for a two year project about the experiences of 5-13 year olds and they have approached Rhetta to be part of the steering, on behalf of RAPAR.

October is a deadline for a Diana fund bid.

**Action: Rhetta to join current steering group with RSN and to lead from RAPAR on development of bid to Diana Fund in partnership with Steve Conway from the Refugee Support Network**

## **10. Salford Social Action Research Project**

Have given two places to RAPAR to attend its conference on Thursday and Friday February 28th and March 1st. Mohammed Nazri and Abdullah Ramatallah will attend as observers.

## **11. Events**

- Channel 4 drama documentary
- Well being initiative
- Short video
- Peer Education – Sexual Health through the Black Health Group.
- SHIFT to consult on the plans for a new health centre at Hope Hospital on March 4<sup>th</sup> & 6th at the Resource Centre on the corner of Bury New Road and Great Cheetham Street
- International women's day on March 8th

**Date and time of next RAPAR organization and  
development meeting at  
Salford Cathedral House, Chapel Street, Salford:**

**Tuesday, 26.03.02  
10.00-12.00**

**Chair: Cath Maffia (Dr Bogusia Temple has had to stand down)**

**Minute Taker: Dr Hermione Lovel**

**Actions need to include: Setting dates for next tow main meetings and booking rooms**

**All are welcome**