

# **RAPAR**

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

## **Date and Time of next meeting:**

Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> February

10 am

Cathedral House

250 Chapel Street Salford

## ***Minutes of Information Sharing Meeting Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2003, Salford Cathedral House***

**Present:** Nilofer Shaikh (RAPAR Chair) Rhetta Moran (Revans Institute, University of Salford – 0161 295 5277) Bogusia Temple (Revans Institute, University of Salford – 0161 295 2197) Miwanda Bagenda (RAPAR Salford Project 07776 184 861) Donna Hewitt (RAPAR Salford Project Manager 07900 248 934) Martin Smith (WHBC - World Harvest Bible Church – minute taker 01254 671230) Nicolette Vincer (Pendleton College 1061 743 9501) Neil Walbran (Salford CVS 0161 787 7997) Paula Hawson (Salford VB 0161 707 7067) Jessica R Pathak (Salford Youth Service – Black Youth work Development Project Minerva House, Pendlebury Road, Swinton M27 – 07971 963 159) Mike Scantelbury (Salford Community Network, CVS Eccles 0161 707 0507) Francis Kaikumba (Salford Community Network, CVS Eccles 07946 345 667) Phil Greenham (LA/PCT Salford – 0161 742 7472)

### **1. Apologies:**

Received from: Cath Maffia (Health Visitor Salford PCT Asylum Seeker Health Team) Maria Thornton.

### **2. Matters arising from the minutes of meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2002**

**2.1.** Ref Item 4 (5.3.1.4) - Working Party to consist of Cath Maffia (Chair), Nilofer Shaikh, Ann Hayton, Donna Hewitt, Francis Kaikumba, Chris Storab [*Post meeting note from previous minutes*] was agreed on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2002 to consider the needs of children, in particular to form a joint bid from Salford and Manchester to the Children's fund. Steve Conway to be approached to prompt a meeting – **Action: Francis Kaikumba**

**2.2.** Ref Item 4 (5.4) Pendleton College situation for Iraqi Kurds – they are carrying on as normal with full college support despite their new status.

### 2.3. Ref Item 5 – Changes to the Immigration Bill

There was a meeting at Manchester Town Hall prior to Jan 8<sup>th</sup> attended by 80 people involved in service delivery. In view of the grave situation, a **CRISIS**

**COMMITTEE** was launched with a brief:

2.3.1. To develop support for the destitute

2.3.2. To increase awareness of the serious consequences of the changes to the law.

The actions are aiming at nothing short of overturning the new legislation.

**There is a meeting planned on 8<sup>th</sup> February at the Contact theatre for refugees to ask “What do you want to see happen?” This is a platform to give information, and to allow people to speak as Asylum Seekers. Contacts can be made through RAPAR and Refugee Action – (Phil Davis?)**

**MEDIA GROUP – Rhetta Moran has been approached by the media including BBC since the Cheetham Hill tragedy. There is a need for RAPAR to develop consistent media contacts – an interest/action group was proposed:-** *[please check first two email addresses]* Francis Kaikumba – [francii@hotmail.com](mailto:francii@hotmail.com) , Miwanda Bagenda [seemaquoma\\_ann@yahoo.com](mailto:seemaquoma_ann@yahoo.com) , Mike Scantlebury – [mike.scantlebury@salfordcvs.co.uk](mailto:mike.scantlebury@salfordcvs.co.uk) , Martin Smith - [martin.smith@uk.iccc.net](mailto:martin.smith@uk.iccc.net) .

2.4. Ref Item 4.1 – Abdullah Ramatullah who has helped RAPAR with contact with Afghan community, now deported to Vienna, and trying to return to Salford – he is very concerned about a return to Afghanistan. Unusually, he has been allowed to work in Vienna, but only part time street sweeping – 8 days per month @ one fifth of the hourly rate and with no protective clothing in -10°C conditions. It is imperative that he has enough to live on and remains legal – he has become symbolic of the Afghans’ plight. **Donations of £10 per month were requested to help him.** Rhetta Moran visited him, and has had 8 hours of taped interview transcribed as a basis for a judicial review of a refusal to set a date for his Asylum hearing. **Action: All.**

2.5. Ref Item 8.3 from November 12<sup>th</sup> meeting – Health issues. Cath Maffia reported concern over an AS who had been given notice to leave whilst in hospital being treated for TB. Had it not been for the diligence of the TB nurse, his case may not have been followed up. This type of incident appears to be followed up only on an individual basis – some specific policy is needed. It was proposed that RAPAR write to the Director of Public Health asking about infection control issues:

- what lessons have been learned from this case?
- what is going to be done to ensure that a more coherent policy is adopted to ensure that situations like this are adequately covered?

Particular concern was expressed that there are many TB cases, the existing mechanism is failing, and that children are particularly at risk.

**Previous Action: Nilofer Shaikh and Rhetta Moran to draft the letter.**

Particular concern was that this man appears to have been moved to Hull under hard case support. With no National Insurance Number – there is no way of tracing him or the situation

**New action: Phil Greenwood to establish the current facts of the situation.**

## **Agenda items**

### **3. Salford RAPAR team launch.**

Took place on 14<sup>th</sup> January. Well attended and good feedback. Great interest in hard hitting video – needs controlled lending. To be released as part of training package – Salford RAPAR requested patience! The whole team were pleased – Town hall was great venue – so much diversity under one roof. Superb range of material and good speakers.

It has raised a serious problem with the attitude of several private accommodation providers who were exposed on the video. – there needs to be protection for families identified – one family with 7 children threatened with eviction

RAPAR team to report back if a letter from RAPAR to the accommodation providers is required. – **Action Donna Hewitt**. There are many cases of accommodation providers failing to do even the minimum for security and heating – no opportunity to withhold rent, so abuse is rife. Cllr. Bernard Murphy is supporting the residents – a copy of his letter to be sent to NAS. - **Action Donna Hewitt**

There was some discussion about advocacy being urgently required for clients – Bob Osborne? – perhaps scrutiny issues – perhaps CAB? **Donna Hewitt to write to CAB c.e.o. Tom Tocker?**

### **4. RAPAR membership forms**

Karen Whittaker to send forms out with the minutes.

### **5. RAPAR trustee training – 24<sup>th</sup> & 31<sup>st</sup> January 10am – 3 pm at the Angel**

Places available – trustee positions can be adopted as individuals for those involved professionally.

### **6. RAPAR AGM**

21 days notice required – date to be set after Trustee training. **Action Nilofer Shaikh**

### **7. A.O.B**

**7.1.** Nicolette Vincer reported on a Pendleton College “Preparation for work” course aimed at Asylum Seekers to help them understand the UK work culture – Health & Safety, First Aid etc. 6 week course aiming to find a placement and help prevent them losing their employment once gained. Course aimed at low level English speakers. The Employment Service provides transport and lunches.

Donna Hewitt raised the question of Asylum Seekers avoiding the “poverty trap” caused by entering low pay jobs, and losing benefits. **Action Nicolette Vincer** to report on the compulsory nature of employment benefits with regard to these courses. Some just need prior qualifications ratified for employment.

**7.2.** Rhetta Moran reported on a Manchester City Council Scrutiny Committee which has been set up to investigate the question of Refugees in Manchester, with a brief to make recommendations to the Executive Council. They have started by interviewing Council employees, then on to service providers and Police. Through RAPAR, contact with Asylum seekers can be provided. Question – how can front line workers communicate with the Committee? And how can white working people who are

vitality helping Asylum Seekers have their voice heard?

RM has been approached to be interviewed by the Scrutiny Committee, and has an appointment with the Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> February – requested Salford RAPAR team representation **Action Rhetta Moran & Donna Hewitt.**

**7.3. BNP Youth leader Tony Wentworth – student at Salford University**

An ANL leaflet was circulated indicating that Tony Wentworth “wants to incite racial hatred on campus”

Several groups are raising awareness of this – it is alleged that his accommodation is funded by BNP. There is a meeting with the Vice Chancellor on Monday January 27<sup>th</sup> with a view to expelling him. It was requested that letters be sent to the Vice Chancellor requesting his expulsion.

The Community Network were asked to raise this internally to agree a position on this.

**7.4. There is an International night planned for 20<sup>th</sup> February at Salford University Student’s Union**

**7.5. Phil Greenwood reported that New Deal for Communities is creating a Drop-In centre – looking for 10 volunteers.**

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