**Refugee Week Steering Group planning meeting**

Friday 19th January 2018, 10am

One Community Centre

**Present**

Ali Mahgoub – Leeds Refugee Forum (Chair)

Helen Doherty – Leeds Refugee Forum (minutes)

Andrew Rathbone – Leeds Refugee Forum

Mugeeb Mohamed – Leeds Refugee Forum

Ghezae Ghebremicael – British Red Cross

David Skivington – LASSN

Jasmine Evans – Refugee Council

Lynn Trowler – Leeds Library Service

Samantha Powell – Leeds City Council

**Apologies**

Pria Bhabra – Leeds City Council

Julie Linley – St Vincent’s

Ruth Davany – PAFRAS

Ruth Hannant – West Yorkshire Playhouse

Madeleine Thorne – Opera North

Emma McKee – Manuel Bravo

Emma Crossley – Meeting Point

There is an action table at the end of the minutes. Actions highlighted in blue have not yet been assigned. Please let us know if you would like to take on any of the unallocated actions.

1. **Purpose of the meeting**

The purpose of the meeting is to start preparations for Refugee Week 2018 in Leeds, and source new ideas and fresh perspectives in preparing, planning, managing and organising events.

1. **Details**

Refugee Week will take place Monday 18th – Sunday 24th June 2018.

The theme will be the same as last year, “different pasts, shared future”.

1. **Background**

Last year the steering group which was split into two parts;

1. Refugee Community Organisations (RCOs) – they have tended to plan their own activities, they planned the family day, attended the football tournament, and planned the cultural day in conjunction with Burmantofts Gala.
2. Organisations working with refugees have also organised their own events with support from volunteers, people who use their services, and staff.

Leeds Refugee Forum (LRF) co-ordinates Refugee Week, with an emphasis on celebrating the achievements of refugees. LRF also co-ordinates the football tournament, which is attended by refugees, RCOs, and other organisations.

1. **Email discussion before the meeting**

Opera North are very keen to be involved.

Manuel Bravo hope to host an evening celebration music event to jointly celebrate their tenth birthday last year, 20 years of Refugee Week and 70 years since the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. They will hopefully be collaborating with Refugee Council on this event and possibly others, depending on time and resources.

There was an email discussion around screening a film as part of refugee week. Emma Crossley from Meeting Point, Jon Beech from LASSN, and Ruth Davany from PAFRAS discussed organising a screening of Human Flow by Ai Weiwei. Ruth is going to speak to Laura at Scalarama and a contact at Hyde Park Picture House to discuss setting this up.

West Yorkshire Playhouse are keen to be involved in Refugee Week.

Meeting Point are happy to host a celebratory party as they have done in previous years, and host other events if needed.

Ruth at PAFRAS said that it would be good to start thinking how the LMP Ops group will build on the networking event from last year.

1. **Ideas for this year**

Ali began the discussion and said that Ruth Hannant at West Yorkshire Playhouse is happy to do the same activities as last year. WYP are happy to give some free tickets to some events. They also usually organise events especially for Refugee Week.

Today we need to explore how we can come up with new events this year, set up sub-committees, and suggest ideas for funding.

Jasmine said that Refugee Council are in talk with Manuel Bravo around a music event. Central library could possibly provide the performance space for this.

LRF can talk to Though Bubble and Community Comics Power about having a comic strip event. They held a comic workshop at the One Community Centre in autumn 2017 so could possibly do something similar for Refugee Week. Helen will speak to them.

1. **Women**

There are not enough activities for women and young people. Women participate in the cultural day, but we need to have more events and activities specifically for women.

Women’s Health Matters run a group at LRF on a Tuesday morning. LRF could speak to them to see if they would like to do something for Refugee Week.

1. **Young people**

Regarding gaps in provision for women and young people, Samantha asked if women and young people can be involved in the planning stages. Ali said that different RCOs tend to organise their own events for young people, but these are often not seen by wider society as they are kept within RCOs. Ali spoke about working with LRF youth group and Refugee Council to get young people involved in planning.

Last year, there were two teams of young people in the football tournament. Again, we need more activities that are specifically for young people.

David suggested that we could put a lesson together to either deliver at schools or give as a resource to schools. Also suggested speaking to Schools of Sanctuary.

Discussion re Nola Ellen; she is very good at working with children and young people. Is now self-employed. We could speak to her to see if she would be able to help.

Lynn discussed Zena Gooding-Broderick, funeral director in Chapeltown (Goodings funeral director). Zena is very interested in working with City of Sanctuary.

Ghezae suggested contacting Children’s Society to see if they can offer any support. There is also a person on Ghezae’s team who works with young people. Ghezae to speak to them.

It was suggested that we could involve local schools and invite them to co-ordinate their own events. They could celebrate the achievements of refugees in their local area.

1. **Social media**

Discussion around social media. Lynn said that the library service would be happy to do daily posts as they have a large social media following. We discussed having a hashtag and consistent approach in order to maximise impact.

We discussed the possibility of having a separate Facebook and Twitter page specifically for Refugee Week.

There was a discussion around dropping hints in the run up to Refugee Week, e.g. Refugee Week is coming, what it is about, why, how people can help, what’s happening (events etc).

We need to tell the wider public how they can become involved in Refugee Week.

1. **Types of events/activities**

We discussed having the following strands of events/activities:

* Cultural activities
* Football tournament
* Family events
* Training/awareness – we could expand further on presentations by refugees and asylum seekers

1. **Universities**

Samantha discussed working with the universities. She is going to speak to her contact to see what they are doing for Refugee Week and if we can link into this. This could be an issue as it is exam/holiday season, but we can explore it.

Andrew spoke about STAR (Student Action for Refugees). They do a lot with refugees and asylum seekers, so we could get in touch with them.

The universities could also help with publicity.

1. **Media**

We discussed gaining media interest in Refugee Week, e.g. BBC, Look North, Made in Leeds, Chapel FM, Fever FM (could do a jingle competition), and Radio Leeds (Nick Ahad – did a play at the library about refugees).

1. **City centre event vs alternatives**

The council have been keen to have an event in the city centre. Samantha is going to ask what is happening with this and let us know.

We would need to find out specifics regarding funding.

There was a discussion as to whether we wanted to spend money on a city centre event (as this may be expensive) or whether we wanted to focus funds on smaller events across the city.

1. **Burmantofts Gala**

We discussed whether we would prefer to put more money into Burmantofts Gala. The cultural day has merged into Burmantofts Gala but is currently run on minimal funds. There is potential for this event to be expanded and improved if we were to dedicate more resources. There could be more stalls, dancing, etc. It is currently held in a small marquee.

The gala is important as it brings people together. The local area has large white British and refugee communities and the event is helpful in terms of integration.

There was a discussion about additional attractions we could have at the gala; a mobile library, fire service, ambulance service. The ambulance service could potentially deliver some basic first aid training.

Both the fire service and ambulance service are looking to increase BME representation in their workforce, so this could also be a good opportunity to connect with BME communities.

1. **Libraries**

In conjunction with Leeds Refugee Forum, libraries could offer tours including information about services on offer. LRF could organise transport. People could meet at LRF and make their way to a library together. Groups of people could attend existing groups, e.g. knitting group.

Lynn suggested that libraries could host poetry and storytelling events.

Refugee communities often don’t know what services libraries have on offer. Discussion around libraries offering drop-in sessions to advise people what services are available. The library service could also so a quiz on refugees, including statistics and achievements. Migration Yorkshire have a good icebreaker quiz that could be used.

Lynn said that the central library has a performance space. She is meeting with Fire and Ice to discuss them putting on a performance.

Discussion around having simple displays at libraries, especially at smaller sites where it may not be possible to stage an event. These could focus on the struggles and achievements of refugees.

1. **Training, awareness, education**

British Red Cross are happy to deliver a First Aid training course and be part of the family day.

Samantha from Leeds City Council said that we could use Refugee Week this year to help educate the wider public on migrants/refugees. We could possibly use more public spaces to spread the word, rather than having events focused in one or two areas. We could focus on:

* stories
* what it’s like to be new
* celebration of people moving and seeking sanctuary
* achievements
* contributions
* integration

Samantha is going to speak to Migrant Access about this.

We could ask some people from refugee communities to come and talk about their experiences.

Ghezae said that he would be happy to do a presentation as a refugee and get other people he knows to do the same. He said he can talk about the difficulties of seeking asylum here, the process, and achievements. Jasmine said that Refugee Council can help with finding people who are willing to speak about their experiences.

Ghezae said that the Red Cross will do a presentation on what they do. We could have other organisations doing the same thing, e.g. LASSN, PAFRAS, LRF, St Vincent’s, Refugee Council, etc.

1. **Funding**

Ali is going to contact Leeds Community Foundation to apply for funding. He is also going to ask Migrant Help to sponsor the football tournament.

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| **Action** | **Who is responsible?** |
| Co-ordinating Refugee Week | LRF |
| Organising the football tournament | LRF |
| Host an evening celebration music event | Emma Crosley at Manuel Bravo, possibly with Refugee Council and other organisations |
| Speak to Laura at Scalarama and a contact at Hyde Park Picture House re screening Human Flow by Ai Weiwei | Ruth Davany at PAFRAS and Emma Crossley – Meeting Point |
| Host a celebratory party | Emma McKee at Meeting Point |
| Host the same activities as last year, offer free tickets to some events, organise some activities specifically for Refugee Week | Ruth Hannant at West Yorkshire Playhouse |
| Speak to Women’s Health Matters Rainbow Hearts group to see if they want to host an event. | LRF |
| Social media strategy needed | Leeds Library Service and other organisations  To be discussed further at next meeting |
| Co-ordinate media interest |  |
| Deliver First Aid training | Red Cross |
| Red Cross to deliver a presentation on what they do | Red Cross |
| Other organisations to deliver similar presentations |  |
| Educate the wider public on migrants/refugees, focusing on:   * stories * what it’s like to be new * celebration of people moving and seeking sanctuary * achievements * contributions * integration | Samantha from LCC is going to speak to Migrant Access about this. |
| Ask some people from refugee communities to come and talk about their experiences. | British Red Cross  LRF  Refugee Council |
| LRF can talk to Though Bubble about having a comic strip event. | LRF |
| The council have been keen to have an event in the city centre. | Samantha from LCC is going to ask what is happening with this and let us know. |
| Work with LRF youth group and Refugee Council to get young people involved in planning. | LRF  Refugee Council |
| Put a lesson together to either deliver at schools or give as a resource to schools. |  |
| Speak to Schools of Sanctuary. |  |
| Speak to Nola Ellen to see if she would be able to help with young people’s activities. |  |
| Speak to Zena Gooding-Broderick, funeral director in Chapeltown (Goodings funeral director). Zena is very interested in working with City of Sanctuary. |  |
| Contact Children’s Society to see if they can offer any support. |  |
| There is also a person on Ghezae’s team who works with young people. | Ghezae to speak to them. |
| Contact local schools and invite them to co-ordinate their own events. |  |
| Contact universities in Leeds so find out what they are doing for Refugee Week and whether we can join in. | Samantha from LCC to speak to her contact. |
| Contact STAR (Student Action for Refugees) to see if they are doing anything for Refugee Week and whether we can link in with them. |  |
| Arrange for fire and ambulance service to be present at Burmantofts Gala. Ask ambulance service if they can deliver basic First Aid training. |  |
| Arrange for a mobile library to be present at Burmantofts Gala. | Lynn from Leeds Library Service |
| Libraries to offer tours, visits to existing groups, host poetry and storytelling events, host a quiz about refugees, host drop-in sessions to let people know about services available, use the performance space for a Fire and Ice performance, have simple displays at smaller libraries. | Lynn from Leeds Library Service |
| Contact Leeds Community Trust to apply for funding. H Ask Migrant Help to sponsor the football tournament. | LRF |
| More activities needed for women and young people. | All organisations to consider this when planning events and activities. |

**17.Any other business:** None

**18. Next meeting:** Monday 26 February 2018 at 10.00 am at One Community Centre