



One-day Symposium: Shaping the Agenda
“What are the strategic issues facing BAME and Muslim communities within the Criminal Justice System and governments locally, nationally and globally”?

April 7th 2016
9.30am – 3.30pm

Hosted by the School of Social Work, Care and Community, University of Central Lancashire, at:

Cotton Court Business Centre, Preston, Church Street Preston PR1 3BY

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One Day Symposium: Shaping the Agenda

Programme for the day

Facilitators

- Dr Christine Hough, UCLan, Research Project Investigator.
- Tariq Mahmood, Arooj, Honorary Research Fellow, Centre of Governance, Leeds Beckett University.
- Mohammad Hanif, Arooj, Leadership Board of the Reducing Reoffending Third Sector Advisory Group, Ministry of Justice and National Offender Management Services.

Keynote Speech, Dr Adam Calverley University of Hull, author of Cultures of Desistance.

There are two main purpose of today's Symposium. The first is to share the outcomes of a research project, which was the proposed evaluation of a local offender rehabilitation programme that is specifically tailored to the needs of BAME and Muslim offenders in North West Lancashire. The second purpose is to open out a wider debate about the strategic issues that face BAME and Muslim communities and governments locally, nationally and globally. This wider debate will be facilitated through two short workshops, which will focus on two aspects of the debate:

Workshop 1

What are the strategic issues facing BAME and Muslim communities within the Criminal Justice System locally, nationally and globally, in the light of the rising numbers of BAME and Muslim people in the prison population?

Workshop 2

What contributions can BAME and Muslim communities make to creating solutions to these issues by working with governments locally, nationally and globally?

The recommendations and outputs from these workshops will form the basis of the development our research work in the future.

Key outcomes of the evaluation of ReachingOut.

- The policies and processes of the government's Transforming Rehabilitation arrangements served to constrain Arooj in their role as a provider of rehabilitation support to BAME and Muslim ex-offenders at a local level. During the first six months of the project, Arooj received no referrals of ex-offenders, from regional offender managers, for their community-based services.

- The Payment by Results (PbR) system of rewards to the Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) providers is likely to encourage them to 'cherry-pick' those clients who are more amenable to desisting from re-offending, rather than those whose needs are more complex. This may have been an influential factor in the decisions not to refer offenders to Arooj.

- The values-based, advocacy role of Third Sector Organisations (TSOs) such as Arooj is in danger of being eroded by the modus operandi of the new Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs). This is because of the 'marketised' business model they now conform to, which provided the basis for the CRCs taking part in the competitive bid tender for the contracts to provide probation service support to offenders who have had sentences of less than twelve months. The pressing need to cut costs and provide 'value for money' may result in a 'quick fix' approach to reducing reoffending amongst medium to low risk ex-offenders, rather than addressing the more costly, transformative issues of assessment, diagnosis and desistance from re-offending.

These outcomes reflect the negative impact of the policies and processes of the government's TR arrangements on the community-based, rehabilitation support work of a local Third Sector Organisation.

Selected Outcomes of Workshops 1 and 2:

What are the strategic issues facing BAME and Muslim communities within the Criminal Justice System locally, nationally and globally, in the light of the rising numbers of BAME and Muslim people in the prison population?

1. Historically, migrants who have settled in the UK remain “deprived” and are kept out of wider society. This has led to their “ghettoization” – both enforced and desired.
2. Government policies associated with housing and (lack of) employment opportunities have resulted in BAME and Muslim migrants being “managed” rather than benefiting from a central approach to relationship building. Central policies should more clearly reflect wider social attitudes.
3. Changes to the magistracy: who will be the new magistrates?
4. Pre-sentence reports: personal histories of vulnerable young people are not considered “correctly”.
5. Empower local communities. Need to have BAME and Muslim representations on national policy groups.
6. Need for locally based “movements” (campaigns and rights-based) to tackle central government policy making.

These will provide the basis for the consideration of future research bids; consultancy opportunities and more activist-led initiatives to challenge central government policy-making with regard to the support of BAME and Muslim individuals and their families within the Criminal Justice System.

To reinforce the outputs from the day’s Symposium, we compiled a list of interested parties who would be interested in collaborating on how to “take on”/address the challenges we have identified and explore ways of implementing some of the solutions, through the work of a small Consortium. Our vision is of generating higher levels of engagement, development and understanding across and between the Criminal Justice Sector, communities and governments.