



## Mercian Collaboration Directors Meeting

### Minutes

13<sup>th</sup> March 2017, University of Birmingham

#### 17/01 Apologies & introductions:

**Present:** Caroline Taylor (Leicester, Chair), Robin Green (Warwick, Treasurer), Diane Job (Birmingham), Christine (Chris) Porter, Kirsty Kift (SDG Chair), Emma Walton (Loughborough, SG Member), Judith Keene (Worcester, SG), Paul Reynolds (Keele), David Parkes (DMU), Ian Snowley, Chris Powis, Deborah Findlay, Emma Sansby, Maria Carnegie, Phil Brabban (Coventry, SG Member), Ruth Stubbings (NTU, substitute), Gaz J Johnson (MCDO, minutes), Heather Whitehouse (Aston), Rose Jones (OU), Fiona Parsons (Wolverhampton)

**Apologies:** Caroline Williams (Nottingham), Enid Pryce-Jones (Birmingham City), Kathryn Greaves (Harper-Adams), Mark Toole (NTU), Janet Weaver (Staffs)

The Chair opened the building and thanked Debra and her staff for hosting the meeting.

#### 17/02 Tour of Birmingham Library

Debra and her staff provided a tour of the recently opened new University of Birmingham library.

#### 17/03 The Future Academic Library: Presentations & Discussions

A number of Directors gave brief presentations around the issues for 'future libraries', from their own experiences, challenges and current activities. The following are highlights of these talks<sup>1</sup>:

Diane spoke first about the Birmingham new library project, noting how long it had taken to get here, in terms of the project. Three prior feasibility studies had taken place, with the earliest in 1992, so this had been a very long history. The question of refurb or new build had been a challenging one, but eventually this had moved forward into the new library project. Diane noted that Louise Jones at the DWL at Leicester, had commented what a fatiguing process it would be, and this was something that Diane and her team agreed with: it was a mentally fatiguing process. Additionally, there was a need to be wary that of perceptions that the one central building is 'The Library'. There are 5 other satellite libraries which are also part of the service, and these have not been refurbished. As wonderful as the new building is, it will never be big enough. Expertise of really good architects is why the building is as good as it is. Birmingham thought they knew what they should have, but it was based on very little experience about what a building is and what is needed, and what will work. There is the fear that things could go really wrong. Moving the undergraduate problem out of the way, solving the physical issue of where to place resource and the students, is all low-level stuff. If the team could move past that, then the other aspects like supporting researchers can be addressed effectively. This latter thing is a concern for the next 50 years or so, and will form the legacy of the building.

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<sup>1</sup> Note: These are rough notes, to provide an approximation of the topics covered, rather than verbatim or precise representations of the talks.



Hence many other issues to be addressed, copyright, digital literacy, data management, content issues in a challenging world. E.g. The Library was asked to have physical books on difficult subjects, concern over their legality within the library. The other issue was around handling requests under the 'prevent agenda'. These sorts of ethical and other complicated issues were ones which, over the coming years, would raise questions about where the library's responsibilities are towards, students academics and institutions. There could be serious problems that would arise if these were not handled well.

Chris Powis then spoke about work he was involved in at Northampton, explaining how the university was moving to a brand-new campus. At the same time, everything is changing at the university, meaning they can start from scratch with new learning and teaching plan. Lectures are being removed, and active and blended learning (not flipped) is the core ethos. Students will have lots of group work online, lots of one to one stuff. The institution is moving to a completely hot-desk culture, no one will have an office and academic structures have been reorganised to 4 schools. Very much a holistic change, which gives an opportunity to start from scratch. So, it was agreed that they would not build the new campus based on organisational structures (e.g. no Business School building). Built by function, so only five buildings (apart from residences): SU building (recreation), sports centre (exercise), creative hub (maker), research centre and everything else in the learning commons. Not a learning commons though, e.g. a library nexus or social learning space. Brings everything together, resources, people and space. This 'commons' building is going to be IT rich, very adaptable – little fixed space, no fixed computers – laptops for loan. Allows space to be changed, and it will be 'democratic' - owned by the people who use it. Public will also be allowed in, and also have a say in the building. It will be fully integrated, there isn't a library only space – books will be on shelves throughout the building.

Academics all based in this building – four faculties and only three large rooms for them to be based in. All professional services will also be in that building – all student facing environment – no library offices. Staffing structures won't change, managers will remain – but intent is to get people to work together in a more integrated manner. People will flourish in this building, but they won't be able to spread – no demarcation as you pass between staff and functions. The VC sees this as a new kind of university, and that Northampton will be perceived a university with teaching and learning at its heart. Most library rules have been removed, other than in silent areas. Hence, learned to be adaptable as a staff and an institution. Biggest issue that remains, is the management of it – staff are used to controlling how we use and adapt our space, they will be run by committee and representatives of those who use that space. Currently, these committees are the staff who are developing the campus, but once the university has relocated, there will be new people and hence the building will continue to change. It must respond to the needs of its users and occupants. This also turns the Librarian into something else, as Chris chair's this committee, placing them at the heart of these 'revolutionary' activities.

Dave spoke about related work at DMU. Just setting out on a new build project, but still not sure if this will be a new-build or a refurbishment. Had 70 or 35 million suggested as costs. Challenges are about what it is going to be, which all hinges on what happens with the rest of the campus. Dave has made a proposal of what he hopes it should be, drawing on work doing for the New Media Consortium on learning spaces. Bringing out a report on this next month, with a big focus on learning spaces being more important for universities, as they wrestle with tackling the digital divide, digital capabilities, deficit gap/learning and gaming. Looking at report for the last month, key issues were collaborative learning, blended learning design, measure in learning, deeper learning cultures

of innovative, significant challenges (e.g. digital literacy), difficult challenges (achievement gap), wicked challenges (staffing, knowledge obsolesces, rethinking librarians as educators). NOMAD, previously Curious Orange, spoke to 450 students over 4 months and worked with them week by week, using UX conversations, come up with things that students want to see in their new spaces. Thresholds into the library and new spaces is key. Dave went to Vodafone, and saw how they have threshold spaces, so as people move into new spaces, they shift into different frames of mind – a psycho-geography of space. Demands for things like Café, theatre performance, book shop, group working, mindfulness space, meditation space, power supplies (pedalling) and very silent space. OA, library spaces rethinking, mobile first solutions, no-logout access, academic libraries in curriculum, digital capabilities are also the main things which DMU is looking at right now.

Finally, Emma Walton spoke about work at Loughborough, which is very different. Had a refurbishment some years ago, but not having a rebuild. Like Birmingham, there was a prevailing institutional attitude that the library was 'done now', and so they continue to have to fight this preconception. Refurbishment has now added an in/out barrier which adds to statistics, but it has a capacity and will lock if the building is full to capacity. Not reached it yet, but a concern and a massive risk, both in terms of PR and practicality. Loughborough has a big emphasis on the student experience, and this would be a major problem if they were locked out. But it is about space, not about what people are doing or why, not about learning, about business. Glad this has raised library higher on the agenda, but has provided an opportunity for the library to raise issues across the institution. Some of the things in the spaces aren't what the students want and need. Hence, trying to get library up the agenda, to enable these to change. Thankfully, Emma now has a very good person in charge of learning spaces, from a pedagogical perspective. Additionally, a new PVC for Learning and Teaching has been appointed, so the expectation is that things will begin to happen.

Library also had a major review, manage to push the learning agenda over the space agenda. However, difficult when try to apply any influence, and when they hold a focus group and students say they want something, this seems to be taken of account more. However, students understood what the library was and what it was for, which was advantageous. On the back of this the library has been tasked with a major piece of work; but not about a rebuild, although there is some possibility. What this will allow, is the potential incorporation of some of the other spaces across campus which are classed as learning environments, and allow them to be rebadged as part of the library service. Additionally, while the library is not being rebuilt, as new buildings go up across campus, the library has generated new conversations and learn about what these buildings are for and what students desire or require of the library service. Interestingly, for example, lots of demand has come about for more fixed PCs in library, something which is in contrast to Northampton's strategy. Hence, from all these activities it is important to discover what comes of these new engagements, but at the same time learning what can be dropped from library provision is also an area for exploration. Overall then, the conversations are about learning over space, with a focus on library as an informal learning space, along with trying to change the common terminology in use with respect to the library at Loughborough. However, there are also conversations happening around Loughborough within a research intensive environment, and here there may be some money for (re)building, but to meet the needs of researchers not students. This gives the library two separate issues/agendas to address: learning & teaching, but also meeting research needs.



The Chair summarised the main themes in each talk, and thanked each of the speaker's for their contributions and insights. After a break for lunch conversations on this theme continued, with the Chair noting where there were issues with particular resonance, then these could be picked up by the MC as a core theme. Managing content was a particular issue to be addressed collaboratively, but digital capabilities was also one to return to as a themed meeting. Space too was an area to consider, and come back to these discussions more within the MC.

## 17/04 Governance

### a) Minutes of previous meeting (Oct 2016): Actions and matters arising

Corrections: It was noted that Kirsty Kift (SDG) was missing from those listed as present. Outstanding actions from previous minutes were as follows:

### 16/16 Jisc Discussions

There had been an action on Liam Earney, to provide notes on his talk, which had not materialised despite the MCDO chasing twice. It was agreed that it was desirable to have access to these and so they would be chased again

**ACTION: GJJ to chase provision of notes from talk by Liam to October 2016 meeting**

Caroline W had been actioned to share blog notes relating to on Canadian experiences with shifting (oil linked) prices, as a parity with the impact of Brexit on library supplier prices. This was noted as having not occurred.

The Jisc Regional Officer(s) had not been invited to attend today's meeting, as there was still some lack of clarity over their identity. There was discussion that while the Regional Officers for Jisc had been reorganised now, and that across the Mercian Directors were being contacted, that there were still variances in the individual personal across the Collaboration. It was agreed that the Chair should invite a representative to attend the next meeting to discuss this, and related matters, with the Collaboration.

**ACTION: Chair to approach Jisc to invite Regional Officer to attend November 2017 meeting.**

It was noted that Taylor and Francis F and Wiley are now the next stage in terms of negotiations, and as with Elsevier, the 'Plan B' approach will be taken with these publishers on an unified national level. It was also noted that SCONUL will be party to these discussions.

### b) Steering Group (SG) Officers & Members: Nominations, Election, Review 2017-2019

Following the SG nominations and election process, the results of the ballot of Directors was as follows:

- **Chair:** Dave Parkes (22 votes) – elected as Chair 2017-2019
- **Vice-Chair:** Diane Job (12 votes), Chris Porter (10 votes) – Diane elected as Vice-Chair 2017-2019
- **Treasurer:** Paul Reynolds (22 votes) – elected as Treasurer 2017-2019
- **Steering Group Members:** Diane Job (14 votes), Emma Walton (18 votes), Fiona Parsons (14 votes), Phil Brabban (19 votes). As Diane has been elected Vice-Chair, Emma, Fiona and Phil will serve as SG Members 2017-2019.

It was agreed that the Directors were happy with the nominations and election process, and agreed the minor changes proposed by the MCDO in the light of experience. The Chair welcomed the new SG, and wished them well in their endeavours following today's meeting.

**ACTION: GJJ to update the election protocols documents and amend the versions on the Website**

#### c) Treasurer's Update

Robin reported that for 2016 the spend had been £14,405, and noted that all subs were now in for 2017, thanking his colleagues for their prompt response on these. In 2017 to date the spend had been £2,294, which left £18,235 left in the account. Assuming the 2017 expenditure goes as anticipated, this means there should be a surplus of around £4.5k by the end of the year, which fell just under the ideal level that had been originally agreed of £5k in reserve. One question which had recently arisen, was an unexpected charge from web providers Adaptive of £144, for 'support' in Feb 2017. Both GJJ and Robin were unclear as to what this charge was for, and it required investigation. However, Robin felt that the finances were being handed over in good health to Paul.

**ACTION: GJJ to follow up with Adaptive Web providers re-unexpected February charge**

#### d) Terms of Reference Updates

Several minor updates to the ToR had been suggested by the SG, and distributed to Directors prior to meeting. Largely these were necessary to take account of changes to Steering Group configuration and the formal election process. These were agreed by the Directors.

**ACTION: GJJ to update ToR documentation and ensure website in sync**

#### e) Mercian Distribution list – to consider broadening membership

At the Jan SG meeting a proposal was made to broaden the membership of the Mercian distribution list<sup>2</sup> to permit additional staff to be added, e.g. deputy librarians (however they are defined locally). There was a brief discussion as to the role of the list, and its utility for deputies. It was noted that while the list has in the past served an archival role, the website now represents the primary Mercian document repository. An issue was raised that some controversial or politically tricky topics have been and likely will be discussed on the list in the future, a reason for its private setting. Hence, all list members would need to be aware of the need for tact and privacy, and particularly not forwarding to external parties any part of list discussions. Directors also discussed how broadening the list membership might stifle or constrain discussions.

After some discussion, it was agreed to open the Mercian distribution list membership to deputies, but noting this remained a confidential list. Hence, there were expectations on all members to use care and discretion when using it. GJJ noted he would collate names and expand the list in early April.

**ACTION: All Directors to supply list of deputy staff's emails to GJJ for adding to the Mercian Distribution list**

### 17/05 Mercian Collaboration priorities & action plan

#### a) Digital Preservation Training: Collaborative bid

The Chair reported on discussions at the SG, concerning the potential cost for a collaborative bid for training in the realm of digital preservation. Caroline noted this stemmed from explorations at Leicester, where it had been found that the cost was quite high. DTP will offer a bespoke course, but won't offer a cost at this stage until there was more indication of the level of interest. Hence, she asked was there a broader interest within the collaboration, and practically if there was a desire to pursue a bespoke DTP training programme from within the MC members?

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<sup>2</sup> LIS-MidlandsLibraries@jiscmail.ac.uk



It was agreed that there was a need to identify if the training was intended for digital preservation practitioners, or if it was more aimed at those with responsibility for strategic planning. Caroline noted that Leicester had been looking at it from a practitioner point of view. After some discussions, it was noted there was some interest, but that there was a need to explore this issue in some more depth first before committing to anything. Hence, it was agreed to invite a DTP speaker to talk to the MC Directors at a future meeting to develop this theme

**ACTION: CT to pursue invitation to DTP Training to speak to Directors at the November 2017 meeting**

#### b) Talent Management Task & Finish Group

Dave Parkes has been leading on this, and thanked people for their responses to his questionnaire, exploring areas of talent management. He reported that 100% of respondents wanted the talent management on offer, 90% agreed to a statement to incorporate what we want to do and how, 72% (8) said any programme should be facilitated centrally and managed centrally, rather than by institutions. 100% of respondents noted interest in the mentoring scheme, and shadowing while 90% of them were interested in job exchange opportunities, although all suggested possible caveats or qualifiers to this support. 100% supported the idea of quality circles as a way of managing, and action learning sets as well as developing talent and buddying. 80% offered leadership in terms of development for staff in other institutions, through a centrally facilitated scheme.

Dave noted, that there had been a very positive response to this overall. However, it raised questions about how we facilitate this going forward, and especially how we draw on the SDG's work, and where any overlaps or boundaries lay. People will need to check with home institutions in terms of own development structures, to see if there any alignments or issues with these plans. A central record was felt to be very important, and a question about how this activity is triggered. People had raised issues about capacity and timing, and what to do when people who are approached, along with limitations on what could be expected of the trainer/trainee relationship. Full exchanges were favoured, but it was highlighted that there were HR implications in terms of achieving this goal. Some concerns were also raised about the challenges in balancing collaboration and competition between institutions, and the tensions which might arise. Action learning sets were very favourably regarded. Additionally, it needed to be resolved if people would self-nominate or if managers would nominate.

Nevertheless, the bottom line was that idea was well supported from the feedback, and during discussions with Directors. An online form has been created to allow people to request involvement, but they would still need to seek line manager permission. Questions from Directors in the room centred on how this would be coordinated, organised, and managed. Ideally, the SG would lead on this process, and then roll out the scheme once these details had been finalised. What was required was an enabling statement, followed by launching a 'proof of concept' pilot scheme, which was proposed to be introduced at the conference.

The question was raised, were any other institutions have similar talent management schemes, and can we learn from these? The Mercian may be only regional group doing this sort of thing, but what are others doing that is comparable? It was noted that nothing was in terms of regional groups, but that the Future Leaders Programme, or internal schemes, were more likely to play a role. Some comments noted that this sort of thing was occurring outside of libraries. E.g. in the corporate world, or the NHS which has a big talent management programme. Questions too were raised about where staff would find out about the scheme, but also the need to differentiate talent management with the buddying scheme.



A question was raised about the lack of response from some Mercian Directors, given only 50% responded. Issues around how this would work within organisational HR structures remained, as did issues over the size of staff, where smaller organisations could potentially struggle to facilitate involvement. It was noted this may be answered in time, once examples of how the scheme works before it could be developed within some smaller organisation.

**ACTION: SG to develop talent management concept further drawing on examples of other organisational schemes**

**ACTION: Chair to draft talent management enabling statement and proof of concept design through discussions within the SG**

**Action: All to propose potential talent management staff to SG**

**ACTION: SG to discuss the final buddying programme with SDG Chair**

### c) Disability SIG: Proposal review

A paper had been provided by Beck Maguire, Janice Morris, Carol Keddie, Laura Waller<sup>3</sup> to progress the idea of a Mercian Disability Forum, which had been meeting informally but was now seeking to come under the Mercian umbrella. The Chair and Directors thanked the librarians for their submission, which was very informative. It was noted that there seemed to be a genuine demand and need the group that had been identified, which was very pleasing to see

After discussion, it agreed that this group should go ahead and become formally part of the Mercian Collaboration's subgroup structure. There were still some questions to be answered about the kind of group it was, and the Importance of having a library lens to discussions and activities, which should be reflected in the group's documentation. Hence, Directors outlined their requirements on the group, in line with other Mercian subgroups, would be as follows:

- An outline Terms of Reference document to be submitted for approval (Nov 2017 meeting)
- An annually submitted plan of activities for the forthcoming year (Nov 2017 meeting)
- An annual report on past activities (submitted for the March Directors meeting)
- A formally named Chair, to act as the primary point of reference and responsibility to the Directors
- A representative membership list and meeting agendas/minutes for the website
- An outline of any expected funding needs

Assuming these requirements are met, it was agreed that a member of the SG would need to take a lead in directly supporting and liaising with the group. This would help align their activities with the broad interests of the Mercian Collaboration, but would also provide them with an advocate to Directors and the SG. Naturally, the MCDO should be included in any discussions, as per his normal role in supporting the Mercian subgroups.

**ACTION: GJJ to reply to Disability Subgroup on behalf of Directors and outline requirements**

**ACTION: SG to identify representative member to support and liaise with Disability group**

**ACTION: SDG Chair to talk to other Subgroups re-buddying schemes (RDM & Disability)**

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<sup>3</sup> Universities of Nottingham, Bishop Grosseteste, De Montfort, and Warwick

#### d) Partnership Experiences

As discussed at the SG in January, Fiona will lead an initial discussion on this and explore if it's something we wanted to expand on at the next meeting, or in some other way within the Mercian. Postponed to talk about this in more depth next time.

**ACTION: FP to have initial discussions about partnership experiences with the membership in advance of expanded discussions at the November 2017 meeting**

### 17/06 Reports & Updates

#### a) Staff Development Group: Activities & planning report

As the SDG had only met the previous week (9<sup>th</sup> March), Kirsty only circulated her reports the day before. A few things had arisen for highlighting and discussion with the Directors. Firstly, the current events programme was going well, and there had been good feedback from delegates. She also noted that with the main Mercian site now being up, that the group was decommissioning the old SDG Wordpress website. At the meeting the SDG had reviewed their TOR and had proposed some changes, for which they sought the Directors' approval. After discussions, these revisions were agreed, and the ToR would be revised online as well.

It was noted that the SDG and other subgroups should ensure they liaise with each other, or via the MCDO, to ensure they coordinated event dates, to avoid any potential clashes.

**ACTION: All Groups to check with MCDO/each other wherever possible before finalising event dates**

Kirsty reported that locations for the library tour events (*All the same, but different*) had been agreed. However, she invited comment and feedback on the range of topics which the SDG had identified as potential *Learning Exchanges*. The Directors provided a range of comments, which the SDG will feed into their 2017/18 event planning process. It was noted the proposed and approved 'buddying scheme' still needed more practical development, but that a launch at the MC conference was planned. The SDG intends to discuss the scheme in depth at their June meeting, with the launch/reveal of talent management scheme potentially having some bearing on this. Kirsty highlighted that for the buddying scheme, it was felt important to talk directly to people about its aims and intentions, rather than just sending out a call electronically.

Kirsty also reported that the SDG had held informal elections for officers, and that she would continue as Chair through to March 2018. Three new positions of Admin and Evaluation Officers, and a Vice-Chair had been created (Ruth Stubbings, in the latter case). The expectation is that the Group will mirror the election processes of main Director committee at the March 2018 meeting, formalising the process.

Finally, Kirsty noted committee meetings are planned for the coming year, highlighting that most tended to be hosted in the institutions at the centre of the Mercian Region<sup>4</sup>. This had given rise to potential concerns over the repeated cost implications for these institutions. After a brief discussion, the Directors whose institutions were included in this central region noted general agreement that they were content to absorb the cost, as part of their contribution to the collaboration.

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<sup>4</sup> Those in Nottingham, Leicester, Birmingham especially



#### b) Conference Group: Progress report

Due to her recent minor surgery, Emma W apologised for the lack of a formal paper. However, she was happy to report that a few meetings had now been held, with an engaged group of staff recruited. During explorations into dates and venues, DMU had come forward with an offer of their conference centre, for no booking charge. When contrasted against other costs, the price of comparator venues, and the conference budget, this made it an almost unbeatable offer. Nevertheless, other university and commercial venues had been reviewed, and their costs evaluated alongside this. Consequently, it had been agreed to go for a university venue this time, and accept DMU's gracious offer. Thus, the **2017 Mercian Conference will take place Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> Sept at the DMU Conference centre, Leicester**. Emma reported that the group was now moving on to develop a core themes from a range of suggestions. The core intention remained, that the theme should incorporate the interests of a wide range of library staff, across all seniority levels. The day's content would also accommodate a stylistic range of sessions, not just 'presentation' style.

The Conference Group planned their next meeting planned for end of March, out of which the final clear, broad theme(s) would emerge. This would to enable Mercian library staff to showcase a wide range of activities, not just those represented within the Conference Group membership. Emma also invited ideas for keynote speakers from the Directors.

**ACTION: All, to send Emma ideas for Mercian Conference keynote speakers**

**ACTION: EW to write article for launch of Conference date (save the date) for the Mercian Website**

#### c) RDM Support Group: Progress report

The RDM Group had provided the requested update paper, which had been circulated previously. It was noted that they planned an event (24<sup>th</sup> April 2017) which may have cost implications. The Chair thanked them for their report, and asked Emma W and GJJ to coordinate as required with the Group.

**ACTION: EW/GJJ to follow up with RDM group re-forthcoming event and costs**

#### d) SCONUL Update: Activities report

As Mark was unable to attend, as a SCONUL Board member, Judith reported on current activities. The annual strategy day had reviewed the current SCONUL strategy, with thinking focussed on perceptions of SCONUL by other groups of staff beyond library directors. It was agreed that SCONUL is perceived very much as a Directors club, with reduced relevance to other groups and staff. Hence, the board discussed approaches which could make it more inclusive. The Task & Finish group on leadership, who have been doing various things, have commissioned a piece of research about leadership in the library sector, both UK and internationally. They aim to report back on this during the summer conference (June , 2017). At the Executive Board meeting, the feedback on the survey had shown members were 'fairly happy' with SCONUL's work. Discussions around the virtual enquiry service particularly identified concerns about OCLC's responsiveness on some levels. Given this is branded as a SCONUL service, this had caused some Board Members some disquiet.

#### e) Collaboration Development Officer: Activities report

This had been circulated for information and comment prior to the meeting.

17/07 AOB

a) Dates, Venue & Items for Future Meetings

After some discussion, it was agreed that the next meeting should take place on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2017. Both Warwick and Coventry offered to host. [Note: After the meeting, it was agreed that Coventry would be the host].

**ACTION: Phil, Kirsty and GJJ to coordinate on practical arrangements for the November 2017 meeting**

b) Staffing Structures

Enid had asked via email *"I have had feedback that it would be really useful to have a senior group where those in charge of managing teams of staff managing resources were able to share experience and good practice? There is a group where those in charge of subject librarians meet, there is the customer services group, there are training groups – but we're not aware of anything for this particular sub-set of library activity."*

It was agreed that there had not been much mutual discussion in this area. UKSG and NAAG were discussed as potential venues, before being dismissed as large events rather than a support network or regional grouping. It was generally agreed that a regional group along these lines would be beneficial, initially in terms of senior staff. However, the importance of not setting up too many subgroups within the Mercian was an issue, due to the impact this might have on some smaller staffed institutions' ability to participate. It was proposed that the SDG group could facilitate a meeting to take this idea forward.

**ACTION: SDG to facilitate a learning exchange event focussing on staff managing resources**

**ACTION: Enid, Heather, Diane and the SDG to discuss the issue of support for Staff Managing Resources further**

**ACTION: SG to consider this idea in more depth and consider if further action required**

c) Close & Formal Handover

Dave, as incoming Chair, tabled a vote of thanks to Caroline T and Robin for their work over the past three years as Chair and Treasurer respectively. Caroline and Robin thanked the Directors, and expressed how much they had valued their time in office, and wished the new SG well. With that the meeting was closed, and responsibility for the Mercian Collaboration handed over to the new SG.