



Mercian Collaboration Conference Group Meeting

Minutes

Friday 31st March 2017

University of Leicester

01 Apologies & introductions

Present: Emma Walton (Meeting Chair), Carol Barker, Jen Brotherton, Helen Curtis (Minutes), Rob Davies, Gareth Johnson (MCDO), Liz Kennedy, Chloe Turner

Apologies: Matt Cunningham (SDG), Anna Richards

02 Outstanding actions from previous meeting (30th Jan 2017)

Emma reported that the Steering Group have approved of the conference plans to date. Following a question concerning the need to run decisions past the SG, GJJ and Emma noted that the Conference Group has been given the agency to organise and run the event without necessarily returning to the SG for further input. However, Emma and GJJ will continue to represent the Group on the SG, and if necessary bring matters of contention or requests for specific input and support to the Mercian Chair and Officers.

03 Date: Selecting the date

The date has been confirmed as Tuesday 12th September at The Venue, DMU. The booking form for the venue has been completed, and the Directors have all been informed. It was noted that they, and the Steering Group were supportive of the Group's decisions and progress.

04 Titles & Themes

a) Theme discussion

After a brief review of previous discussions, a consensus was reached. A number of ideas were discussed around the idea of 'trust' in libraries and librarians. A formal title for the conference was agreed as: '*In Libraries We Trust*' with three themes under this:

- I. Giving trust (to our users) e.g. PDA, space, user groups, feedback, UX
- II. Building trust (with staff/managers)
- III. Keeping trust (through our expertise + development)

b) Keynote speaker

Emma asked the group to think about potential keynote speakers and she will remind the Directors for suggestions. There were some suggestions made on the day that individual Group members would follow up.

Action: Emma to ask Directors' Group for ideas for keynote speakers

Action: All to sound out potential Keynote Speaker suggestions

05 Timelines, Dependencies and Deadlines

a) Formal announcement & paper call

Following this meeting the Chair noted that she believed the group is now on track and a formal announcement and call for papers will go out at the end of April. The call will be open for c6 weeks before the group will meet to review submissions. Gareth will ask Directors to circulate the conference details to their staff when the call is open, and group members will share via their networks.

The call will ask for papers or workshops. It was agreed that we wouldn't ask for posters initially but could add this to a follow up call if needed. Potentially this could be offered as an option to any paper proposals that are declined at review.

Action: Emma and Helen to draft the call for papers and circulate to the group for comment

b) Session chairs and facilitation

It was agreed that all conference group members will act as session chairs at the conference. Further support may be required depending on the nature of the programme, but the expectation was that group members would all be present to facilitate the event.

c) Delegate bookings

For the first conference bookings will only be option to those within the Mercian region (likely 3 attendees per institution). This can be reviewed at a later date should there be available spaces and we wish to open the conference to others outside of the region.

d) Catering booking

Carol confirmed that catering decisions will need to be made two weeks prior to the conference although a month in advance would be better. The Chair noted that this was very useful, as it allowed the Group to adjust their requirements close to the conference date.

e) Evaluation process

Evaluation was not discussed in detail at this meeting but will be developed at a later meeting.

06 Individual/Role Responsibilities

The group has confirmed the roles needed¹. Liz and Chloe may need support with speaker liaison from other members. The budget will be spent on catering and any 'freebies' for delegates. It was noted that as the Mercian was not a university itself, it would likely not be constrained to institutional merchandise suppliers.

Action: All to research ideas for 'freebies' for conference delegates

07 Dates of next meetings

Emma suggested a longer meeting hosted at Loughborough, to be potentially held in June, to focus on structuring the event and selecting papers.

Action: Emma to agree and set date for the next meeting

¹ Cf. the Group's webpages, and terms of reference documentation

08 AOB

GJJ raised the issue of *penalty charges* for delegates who fail to attend, with a nominal charge of £50 suitable. This was to encourage participation through dissuading perceptions that the 'free' delegate places were valueless. This was agreed as worth considering before opening bookings during the next meeting/telcon. It was noted that genuine emergency or unexpected circumstances would be acceptable without charge.

The meeting closed with the Chair thanking all members for their input.