

**Meeting notes from Steering Group Meeting Friday October 6<sup>th</sup> 11am-3pm, City Gate East Building, Tollhouse Hill, Nottingham NG1 5FS**

**General Summary**

This meeting of the Steering Group aimed to generate a series of proposals to bring to the next Director’s meeting. Actions below will be collated into a set of recommendations to be presented at the next meeting (EW October 2023)

**Attendees** – EW, PM, SA, JW, SP, JK – apologies RJ

**1. Matters Arising/Action log**

DATE	ACTION	FOR	PROGRESS
11/7	To ensure that the effective working of SIGS is on the agenda for Oct 6 <sup>th</sup>	RJ	Completed: elsewhere on Agenda
11/7	Conference Delegate link to be sent to SA	RJ	
11/7	Confirm to colleagues in the proposed Library systems group that approval has been given by SG	EW	Completed
11/7	Work with new Systems SIG on operational practicalities	RJ &SG	Ongoing
11/7	Seek information from ALN re file sharing/shared spaces	RJ	
11/7	Discuss with SCOUNL new opportunities	EW& RJ	Ongoing and further discussion at October meeting
11/7	Sharing of Staff Development Group new plan	SP	Completed
11/7	Contact Copyright Group	RJ	Completed and further discussion in meeting
11/7	Discuss with MDF future plans	RJ& JW	Completed
11/7	News item to be written for website	EW	Completed

**2. Updates**

**a. Conference**

The Conference was excellent and received great feedback from SG colleagues and others, the in-person mode and the venue worked well and did seem to be appreciated. The group is working on a post conference report. Thanks were given from the SG to the Conference Group,

Sue for Chairing and Ruth for support. It was also noted that the Conference Group will have a new chair and new members.

**b. Group activity –**

Updates were provided from across the range of groups. Discussion topics around the nature of groups, types of groups and activity was raised – see further actions following discussion as part of agenda item 3.

**c. Executive Officer activity**

See apologies

3. Discussion topic - **The Mercian Collaboration – future direction and activity**

**Review and refresh**

Further to our conversation in July we continued to reflect on and discuss our work as the Mercian Collaboration. As a group our priorities for the coming year are

- to ensure we are meeting the needs of our community,
- aligning with and helping to deliver the new SCONUL Strategy
- reviewing aspects of our governance (annual report, groups) to streamline and simplify
- seek other ways to share, celebrate and collaborate

It was hoped that by looking at our offer in this way we would be able to provide an excellent value proposition for all our members, recognising that that is key in challenging times.

During the meeting we realised that 2024 marks the 10 year anniversary of the Mercian Collaboration so this was seen as both an ideal time to undertake this review and also an opportunity to celebrate.

**ACTION:** to include in presentation of recommendations at the next Director's meeting

**Governance**

1. Steering Group – the information about the SG on the website was revisited. SG were generally comfortable with this remit  
<https://merciancollaboration.org.uk/about-mercian-collaboration>
2. Reporting to SCONUL and into Mercian

**ACTION :** EW to talk to Ann Rossiter and/or Lisa McClaren re MOU and other governance related issues and send round to SG. Based on findings SG will make some recommendations to Director's Board

**Groups**

To make it easy on groups to understand their responsibilities, to report to the wider group, to work together and provide value to their members, the wider group and the sector more generally.

**We proposed**

- 1) A review the nature of groups ie a SIG, COP or Task& Finish
- 2) The creation of definitions to support types of group

- 3) The creation of reporting proformas
- 4) Additional information related to roles, expectations etc as part of a group
- 5) A more joined up approach utilising the conference as a showcase opportunity
- 6) An understanding of the role of the Officer in supporting group activity

NB This conversation mainly focused on the existing SIG groups as it was felt that the Operational groups (SDG and Conference group) were running well. However, joining up and any celebratory activity included all groups.

**ACTION:** to include in presentation of recommendations at the next Director's meeting

### **Deputies Group**

It was felt that the "deputies group" could be a valuable resource for the Mercian Collaboration and for members of it as a developmental opportunity but needed some further thought about how it is organised in order to ensure this value.

Some thoughts were

Projects given to the group to add value to the work of the Collaboration on key agenda topics that are not covered by groups e.g AI, sustainability. These projects could be shorter to allow for involvement by those interested and/or with capacity.

To rename this group "emerging leaders" to allow inclusion of a wider range of colleagues.

**ACTION:** For discussion at Director's Meeting

### **Director's Meeting**

- The SG felt that two meetings a year continued to work and that in-person meetings would work best for the work of the collaboration.
- However, it was felt that meetings should be scheduled either at the start of a year or at the very least further in advance.
- It was also felt that the wording about representatives attending should be revisited to allow for other colleagues to attend.
- A name change was also suggested from Director's meeting to Mercian Board meeting (see below)
- Financial support be provided if this was a challenge (this could be looked at more broadly than the Director's meeting).

**ACTION:** for discussion at the next meeting

### **SCONUL Strategy**

The SG looked at the SCONUL Strategy and felt that the Collaboration activity was both in alignment and complementary to this strategy. It was also suggested that the SCONUL Strategy be referenced more in our messaging to further align the Mercian Collaboration to SCONUL

4. Director's meeting – agenda and date  
EW to find some new dates in December and resend to the Director's list.
5. AOB

Whilst not discussed as AOB items these topics were discussed by the SG and are likely to go to Director's meeting

- Language and terminology in addition to changes suggested for Deputies Group the SG thought that the term Director's meeting could be changed to the Mercian Board. This is a more inclusive term. Also recommended that a nominee could be sent in place of a Director. 1) we would rather have more members attend than not 2) Our strong emphasis on development would suggest other senior colleagues could attend both as members and for a developmental opportunity.
- EW proposed that we look to change the Steering Group membership from 6 to 7 to support additional activity e.g group sponsorship.
- Discussion is required to look at possible EDI activity for the Collaboration.

There was also discussion related the need for a dedicated storage and sharing "space to aid the work of the Collaboration.

**ACTION:** EW & RJ to explore this further

Emma Walton, Mercian Chair

October 2023