Mercian Collaboration Conference Meeting
Minutes
12th November 2018

01   Introductions & Apologies

Present: Emma Walton (Meeting Chair), Carol Barker, Claire Browne, Matt Cunningham, Helen Curtis, Gaz Johnson, Liz Kennedy, Lydia Matheson, Jo-Anne Watts

Apologies: None

02   Conference Group Membership and Recruitment

Chair to continue to be member of the Mercian Steering Group. To remain as Emma for, initially, a further 12 months, presuming continuation on Steering Group.

Carol and Liz to stand down following two-years as members of the Conference Group. The Chair and all other members of the group wished to thank them for their invaluable contributions.

Lydia to consider whether to continue as member of the Group, dependent on other work commitments.

Gaz to email directors to seek 3 new members for the Group, ideally maintaining an East/West balance.

Action 1: Gaz to email directors to seek new members for the Conference Group.

03   Group Organisation and Terms of Reference Review

The Terms of Reference and Group Principles docs were discussed and areas for updating/revision identified. Agreed that amendments need to be made to reflect actual group dynamics and activities.

- Booking Operator to be re-named.
- Marketing Operator to expand to include Publications.
- Sponsorship no longer an 'envisaged' role

Action 2: Gaz to share Google Doc versions of both documents
Action 3: All group members to suggest revisions and minor edits to the Terms of Reference and Group Principles docs
Action 4: Helen to create financial support document to decant key information on financial aspects of role

04   Reflections on 2018 Conference

All members of the Group shared their thoughts on the 2018 Conference. All agreed great venue, with only a small number of minor issues.

Positive response from delegates on the day and in subsequent feedback. Date of conference to remain the same.

Areas to explore improvements/developments for next time:

- Look at changing the plenary session
- More input from SDG, and potentially other groups
- More emphasis on discussion in parallel sessions and interactivity in workshops, speakers to be encouraged to include
- Explore role of Directors at the conference

- Conference Group to have project plan, document drawing together key agreed things (e.g. room layout)
- Sponsors to not have to book to attend, to be done through email
- Explore the organisation of bookings in regards to automated response on bookings and the problem of no-shows
- Health and Safety and first aid check to be done with the venue
- Merchandise to be organised sooner, around March
- Ways of capturing outputs and write-ups
- Potential sponsors to be contacted earlier, needs to fit in with their timescales
- Privacy notice to be amended to allow data to be kept for two years to aid reporting/evaluation
- Be more proactive around BAME and diversity agenda, maybe around keynote

Sponsorship agreement to be revised. Emma, Gaz and Carol to have a telecon to discuss. Emma raised the suggestion of having static/fixed venues with Birmingham to be one and one in the East Mids (possibly Nottingham). Conferences would alternate between the two venues allowing for better working relationships to be developed. Emma to investigate feasibility. Claire to find costs for Birmingham venue for 2020.

Action 5: Emma, Gaz and Carol to revise sponsorship agreement.

Action 6: Emma to explore static venues and consider suitable site in Nottingham for next conference.

Action 7: Claire to explore costs for Birmingham 2020.

05   Review of Delegate Feedback

Collected feedback from the conference was discussed. Feedback from delegates was overwhelmingly positive, small issues raised considered in list above. Very little negative feedback.

Feedback from SDG had been positive.

Helen and Emma to produce formal report to feed into Mercian Annual Report.

Action 8: Emma and Helen to produce formal report of feedback and evaluation.

06   AOB

Question raised as to when members standing down would be removed from Group communication/website etc. Agreed this would happen in January.

07   Next Meeting: Date & Venue

Next meeting to be in January. Venue and date TBC.

Action 9: Emma to send out poll to fix next meeting date.

Last updated JW 26/11/18