



## Marketing & Communications SubGroup

### Minutes

Monday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2022, 3-4pm

**Present:** Stuart Sandilands (BCU), Claire Brown (Birmingham), Emma Halford-Busby (Nottingham), Joe Carey (Wolverhampton), Katie Mann (Newman), Scott Chesworth (Keele), Kirstie Brookes (Staffordshire), Sam Platts (Warwick), Sue O'Sullivan (BCU), Edward Wakefield (Newman), Gareth J Johnson (Mercian Collaboration)

**Apologies:** Keren Stiles (OU), Karybn Meaden-Pratt (Cranfield), Gemma Marakas (Warwick), Helen Curtis (Aston), Rebekah Broad (NTU), Holly Singleton (Coventry), Claire Townsend (Aston)

#### 22/01 Introductions

GJJ welcomed everyone to the meeting, and introductions were made.

#### 22/02 Group Form & Function

After providing some background to the group, and the quiet period of the past two years, GJJ outlined the purpose of the meeting. He explained it aimed to explore three key areas:

- Do we think the group is viable and remains a going concern?
- Is there a small corpus of participants willing to lead in its organisation?
- What themes and topics should the group address at its next meetings?

There was general agreement that interest in the group remained strong, as demonstrated by those here today as well as those wishing but unable to attend. It was also agreed that experience exchanges and discussions would prove a valuable focus for future meetings. GJJ pointed out if the group wished to host meetings for the wider Mercian Collaboration community, he was happy to help in facilitating their organisation. He also noted there are central funds available from the Steering Group, if external speakers or trainers were desired and came with a cost implication.

**ACTION: GJJ to update the website to reflect changes to the group's operational status**

**ACTION: GJJ to update group mailing list to include all new members**

#### 22/03 Committee Roles

Following the agreement to continue the group, a call for volunteers to help guide the group's continued operations was made. Claire Brown, Emma Halford-Busby, Joe Carey and Sue O'Sullivan volunteered – and would now take a lead on the group's behalf for the next year or so. GJJ welcomed them, but also offered thanks to Stewart as outgoing chair and the prior committee for their work on initiating the group.

**ACTION: GJJ to update the website and mailing list to reflect changes in group lead membership**



22/04 Governance

GJJ indicated the previous subgroup remit<sup>1</sup> had been agreed by the Collaboration's Board, and unless there was a strong desire from group members to revise it, there was no need to revisit it. He would discuss with the new group leads if they wanted to go down the road of named positions, and ideally who would take on the nominal chair and vice-chair roles.

**ACTION: GJJ and operational leads to discuss committee roles ahead of next meeting**

22/05 Next Steps

It was agreed the next meeting for the group would be a discussion forum, which would revolve around members sharing their insights, experiences and tips on a number of topical areas. This would be hosted online sometime in May, it was proposed, date to be agreed online.

Themes which were suggested as ones of possible interest included:

- Doing more with less – finding cost effective (or neutral) solutions, and working them in to the marketing planning and promotional cycles
- Effecting student behavioural changes e.g. messaging/promotion of difficult/challenging topics (e.g. Covid safe requirements)
- Media production – planning, creating and deploying media messaging (video, audio etc), and the best 'inexpensive' packages and platforms
- Messaging and influencing the disengaged or reluctant to engage user communities
- Quick collaborative wins – collaborating with other departments (e.g. central marketing, IT, student support) to reach more/broader communities
- Rebuilding relationships post-Covid/back on campus with different user communities
- Skills and development – what are the current key skill areas for personal/professional development.
- Social media & alternatives – exploring what platforms have worked and in which scenarios, along with alternative routes to effective student engagement 'beyond social'.
- Student collaboration – working with students on marketing and communications to achieve greater buy-in and distribution of library messaging

It was agreed to survey the membership as to the most popular themes ahead of setting the next meeting agenda.

**ACTION: GJJ to facilitate survey of membership on preferred themes.**

**ACTION: GJJ and leads to sort date for next meeting in May**



22/06 AOB

**a. Collaboration Conference**

GJJ noted that this year's conference theme *Redefining Engagement*<sup>ii</sup>, likely chimed closely to many of the group's interests. It was suggested a group submission might be made. It was confirmed with the call for speakers coming out in April for a June deadline, that there was time to pick up on this at the next meeting.

**ACTION: All to consider submitting a session proposal to the Collaboration conference**

## Endnotes

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<sup>i</sup> See: <https://merciancollaboration.org.uk/marketing/group-remit>

<sup>ii</sup> See: <https://merciancollaboration.org.uk/conference-theme-2022-announced-redefining-engagement>