# Mercian Deputies/Senior Stakeholder group

Fri 25 Nov hosted by UCB. Chaired by Ann-Marie James, BCU

## Attendees

Ann-Marie James (BCU, Chair and notes), Ann-Marie Lee (BCU), Jessica Wainwright (UCB, host), Kirsty Kift (Coventry), Kay Jefferies (Derby), Selena Killick (OU), Jon Granger (Wolverhampton), Deborah Munro (Aston), Kate Marshall (NTU)

A range of topics were discussed:

## General

* A number of libraries had senior management changes and still adjusting
* Some institutions exploring parent space

## Workforce development

* Recruitment: 4 questions with 250 word limits – cuts out speculative CV applications
* Greater use of ERP for HR and finance functionality
* Discussion around sharing info amongst senior staff/ eg reporting to Heads of service – some institutions stand-up meetings; noted size of different teams etc no one size fits all.
* Some libraries don’t minute meetings any more as no staff read them. More agile.
* Meetings on Teams summarise with bullet points rather than full minutes
* Monthly all staff briefings popular

## EDI

* Mention of ‘reverse mentoring’

## Budgets

* Some institutions have to hold vacancies for 3 months to make savings
* Some places have benefitted from Univ pots of money – eg for parent space
* Cutting indiv academic journal subs
* Springshare suite of software deemed good value and being looked at by other departments
* Credit card purchases scrutinised. Many institutions not able to buy directly for eg pens / freebies for stands.
* Security costs tripled
* Flying start textbook scheme.
* Discussion around fines – BCU moved to incentive-based book returns. Some institutions SU asked library to keep to increase circulation of books.

## Engagement and comms

* OU model of student engagement. Invite all students, get c500. Online activities. Get buy in by sending by post a welcome pack (letterbox size) with goodies.
* If engage in an activity get £10 amazon for half-hour; £20 an hr
* Senior stakeholders like branded merch (eg water bottles)
* Some places trying paper surveys (now a novelty). Some institutions use the fact that library assistants know students to take opportunities to engage/do quick surveys. Some put on study desks. Some do as part of induction.
* Graffiti boards/washing lines for library week: students like giving nice feedback
* Some observation studies but generally people found diminishing returns
* Offer SU officers space in the library – so can engage students
* Engage students and SU officers via social media
* Work with SU on campaigns and what’s of interest to them.
* Noted permanent SU staff often key as officers change annually.
* At one institution regular meeting library/SU scheduled even before they start
* Social media important. Long-established. Imp conduit for students and staff
* Some institutions coming off twitter – looking at mastadom
* Some dabbling in tik-tok, works best when student led / influencer style. Pay students to do tik-tok vids.
* Discussion around how to bring Business intelligence back from meetings and share.
* Secret agent / mystery shopper being run at BCU
* Specific sessions on using ebooks

## CSE

* Some cancelled or stepping back because of cost and time commitment. Discussed merits in terms of can support case for filling vacancies, staff’s ongoing customer focus.

## Civic engagement

* Growing area for many.
* Work closely with public lib (read and relax collection) Staff exchanges. Interactive archive. – take care out to talks. Work with Grapevine organisation – bridging town and gown. Widening participation campuses – link with local businesses
* Access students can use facilities. Eg FE students can use print. Walk-up access, linked with local schools for supervised homework club / working with outreach. But – most libs block on SCONUL access at peak times. Noted safe-guarding issues.

## Next meeting

Agreed good to alternate face-to-face and online – next meeting online c. 3 months.