

## EMALINK & WESLINK Steering Groups

### Meeting at the University of Warwick, 20<sup>th</sup> February 2015

- 1. Present:** Graham Walton, Susan Storey, Susan Rodda, Ruth Stubbings; Jane Mortimer; Rob Davies, Jo Parker: Kirsty Kift; Ruth Chell; Elizabeth Warner-Davies; Angela Brady, David Crozier; Deborah Findlay; Michael Dainton; Kathryn Greaves; Maria Carnegie, Heather Green, Caroline Taylor, Robin Green

Apologies for absence

- Judith Elkin
- Judith Keene
- Christine Porter (David Crozier to attend as representative)
- Janet Weaver
- Andrea Lambon
- Heather McBryde-Wilding

- 2. Welcome:** Jo Parker (Open University) was welcomed to the meeting and David Crozier as a replacement for Christine Porter.

### 3. Merger of EMALINK & WESLINK

#### a. **Headlines from Mercian Collaboration Group (MCG) – Caroline Taylor and Robin Green**

- a. Envisaged the group will be similar to the Northern Collaboration
- b. There will be a new banding system for subs to the Collaboration
- c. Appointment of a 0.2 FTE Officer to support the Collaboration
- d. Directors Group will agree clear aims for time and resources
- e. Will bring groups into Collaboration to meet common aspirations
- f. Better resourcing and support for EMALINK and WESLINK type activities
- g. Draft terms of reference are available
- h. Next Directors meeting is March 24th

#### **Q. What is the primary function of the collaboration?**

A. To work where collaboration is needed, not every project will be applicable to all institutions (project based), possible conference, training and development out of projects, an up down flow of communication is envisaged around potential programmes.

#### **Q. What is the membership?**

A. Directors Group (DG) will steer but projects will use a wider range of staff.

#### **Q. How will communication work between the groups?**

A. DG intend a planning cycle (poss. 2 years) which will inform top down comms, member from Training Group to report up.

#### **Q. This seems like a formalising of current situation**

A. Still envisaged as a community venture so same kind of training events envisaged but with more of a mix.

#### **Q. What additional support will there be for increased workloads?**

A. 0.2 post plus support for web site, online booking for larger numbers, electronic feedback. Also help from SCONUL especially around conferences.

#### **Q. We are concerned about losing support element that the smaller groups provided.**

A. The DG can have around 32 members and still functions in this way so this should not change.

**Q. What is the envisaged role of the proposed Training Group chair as this is currently rotational.**

A. To report up and down between the Training Group and the DG

**Q. What is our name?**

A. You can choose.

**Q. Group would like Directors to have realistic expectations of what we can do especially workload around conferences.**

A. SCONUL can help with conferences of up to 100 and with finance.

**Q. Point 9 in the draft Terms of Reference refers to sponsorship is that for conferences?**

A. Yes it's mainly envisaged to be around conferences or additional speakers

**Q. Who will carry out Collaboration projects?**

A. It is envisaged that these will be more likely to be task and finish groups.

**Q. What if we say no?**

A. The DG would be unlikely to continue to support WESLINK and EMALINK moving forward.

**Q. How often will the DG group meet?**

A. 2-3 times per year.

**Q. When are we required to amalgamate?**

A. By the end of 2015.

**Q. Should the new Mercian Staff Development group be selective in its membership?**

A. It could be but there would need to be clear mechanisms to make sure everyone is engaged.

**ACTION:** Individuals can feed back to [caroline.taylor@le.ac.uk](mailto:caroline.taylor@le.ac.uk)

**ACTION:** Group to advise Caroline if they would like her to return with Collaboration Officer once this post has been recruited, to a future meeting.

**b. Discussion and agreement on approach & recommendations – agreed responses to briefing paper.**

**We were asked to:**

**1. Comment on draft terms of reference**

In relation to the draft terms of reference the group would like to ask the following/make the following comments.

In relation to point:

1. **ACTION:** How does the DG wish to be advised about emerging trends? We would assume this would happen anyway as part of the development of a programme of events.

2. **ACTION:** Please could the DG clarify why a regional workforce development plan is required, given the differences that exist between types of institutions? If it is required (see amended ToR) then please advise on the proposed form of the plan and when the plan is required.

**The group proposes the following amended Terms of Reference:**

1. To advise the Mercian Collaboration Directors Group annually on emerging trends which may affect workforce development.
2. To share workforce development plans to identify shared training needs and economies of scale where appropriate.
3. To develop and deliver an annual staff development programme informed by the identification of shared training needs. To include the needs of any Mercian Collaboration projects as well as knowledge exchange activities.
4. To monitor/liaise with other collaborations to inform programme planning.
5. Evaluate all staff development activities to inform future planning.
6. To provide the DG with an annual headline report on staff development activities undertaken and planned future programme. To receive feedback on that report from the Directors Group.
7. To evaluate the terms of reference of the group after 1 year of operation and amend as necessary.

The following terms of reference will be considered as part of the evaluation of the first year of operation.

8. To develop an annual/biennial conference on behalf of the Mercian Collaboration.
9. To identify sponsors and generate sponsorship of activities in relation to the proposed conference.

In addition the group wishes to appoint a Communications Officer for the group rather than a Chairperson so that the chairing of the meetings remains on a rotational basis. This officer will act as a key liaison between the Training Group and Chair of the DG for upward and downward communications.

**2. Advise on issues to be addressed**

- a. The group would like to minute its concerns over potential workload under the draft Terms of Reference. Particularly for the smaller institutions. A 0.2 Officer for the whole Collaboration will not have a huge amount of time to help with websites, administration, etc.
- b. Concerns remain regarding finance. The projected Collaboration budget is 14k and the Officer for the Collaboration will cost 11k. There is an additional burden of hosting for a larger group. Also increased costs if more formal training sessions are required as a result of Collaboration projects. **ACTION:** The Group will seek to work out partnering for events and explore virtual collaboration to mitigate some of this.
- c. **ACTION:** Please could the DG confirm that they are happy with the current programme for the current year, as no feedback has been received.
- d. **ACTION:** The Group would like sight of final and agreed Terms of Reference for the Mercian Collaboration as a whole, in order to properly understand the aims and where the staff development group fits within it.

**3. Advise on implications of timings of meetings and ways of reporting**

- a. **ACTION:** Please can the Group have sight of the meeting schedule for the DG so that we can best schedule our input.
- b. Agreed that the joint group will start work on group governance and procedures as well as planning for 2015-16 with a view to a joint programme commencing in October 2015.
- c. The group would intend to plan sessions in June and present an annual report with a forthcoming programme in October each year. This would be in the format of headlines of key activities/successes during the year and the forthcoming programme.
- d. **ACTION:** Jo to contact Northern Collaboration Group responsible for training and development to understand their deliverables/objectives. This can then be used to confirm/inform the Mercian Collaboration ToR.

#### **4. Programme 2014/15 – EMALINK & WESLINK**

4.1 It was agreed that this would be covered by a June planning meeting of the new wider Mercian group.

4.2 **ACTION** Heather to send EMALINK names and emails to Andrea Lambon to be added to the WESLINK wiki to help communication across the wider group.

#### **5. News: HR and staff development initiatives (postponed)**

#### **5. Requests for information (postponed)**

#### **6. EMALINK Administration**

6.1 Minutes of the last meeting were agreed. (Nottingham Trent on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2014)

6.2 All other items were postponed until joint meetings in April/May and June.

#### **7. Any other business**

7.1 Maria will be leaving the group as Kay returns.

#### **8. Dates of future meetings**

8.1 It was agreed to hold a meeting in April/May to agree working practices of the new group.

8.2 It was agreed to potentially use the EMALINK date of 26th June 2015 as the planning meeting for the 2015-16 programme for the wider group.

**ACTION:** Heather to organise a Doodle poll for both events, venues tbc.

**ACTION:** Kirsty to produce the minutes and take feedback on section 3 to send back to Caroline Taylor.

**ACTION:** All to consider the name of the combined Group. To be discussed at the next meeting.

