

Mercian Staff Development Group Minutes

June 2023

1. Welcome and Apologies

- a. Apologies: Jon Granger (WLV), Alison Pope (Staffs), Kirsty Kift (Coventry), Laurian Williamson (Leicester) (not present Kay Jeffries, Heather McBryde-Wilding, Amy Jackson, Emma Hollingshead)
- b. Present: Annmarie Lee, Ruth Knowles, Ruth Stubbings, Matthew Cunningham, Chris Porter, Kate Marshall, Vicki Fairweather, Liz Gardner, Ruth Jenkins, Steve Parton, Vicki Fairweather, Teresa Jordan, Cheryl Gardner

2. Minutes / Matters Arising

a. Passed as correct

b. Matters arising

- i. Action: AML re Finalising two sessions. Imposter Syndrome session took place last week. Disability Joint Forum was not enacted and will be rolled forward into next programme.
- ii. Action: KK updating flyer. This was completed as much as possible.
- iii. Action: Request to mediate where there are limited numbers. **Additional request to reps to request people use work email when booking one Eventbrite.**
- iv. Action Evaluation: RS to add evaluation form and update. Completed.
- v. Action Evaluation: Reps to ask with presenters what feedback they would like (pick up in evaluation item later in agenda) but positive feedback to form given.)
- vi. Action: KK to ask for Coventry volunteers to match for buddy scheme and Cheryl received volunteers so this was completed.
- vii. Action: CG to look at annual reports to see how scheme is matching to previous updates. CG reports difficult to make comparison.
- viii. Action: notifications and tagging. No further action required.
- ix. Action: KK to set up next meeting. Completed.

3. Chairs Update

No significant updates from steering group. Mercian Disability Joint Session as mentioned will roll forward to the new programme.

4. Mercian Officer Update and welcome to the group

AML welcomed Ruth to the group. RJ is still on a really steep learning curve in spite of Gaz's extensive notes. Request to just bear with while she gets to grips with it. Sarah Pittaway has agreed to be MSDG sponsor. Steering group meeting has not yet taken place due to difficulty in finding date which is why Ann-Marie has not attended. Mercian Disability Forum will be getting a new chair. Discussion has taken place about the balance of in-person and online for session.

5. Conference Update (Matt Cunningham)

7th September. In person at the Exchange "Putting Change into Action: Development, Diversity and Drive". Paper selection has taken place and programme has been drawn up. Booking will open in a week or so. Keynote speaker will be from Chimp Management a well-known speaking company. <https://chimpmanagement.com/> There will be the usual speaker briefing sessions. There will be a limit on places because of physical spaces. The group will ask Directors and/or MSDG reps to allocate places from each institution. If places are not

filled there will be a waiting list. There will not be an online avenue this time and will be reviewed and consider for hybrid in the future. Places will be limited to three. Discussion around the difficulty of running hybrid events both technically and as an experience. Issues around accessibility of in-person. So there will need to be a review moving forward. Wider point was made by RS around prioritising staff development and making space for it as people often felt too overwhelmed with work to attend events. Point made about being clear on impact of attendance at events in the workplace.

6. Evaluation of Sessions (Ruth Stubbings)

Some institutions are not attending all the sessions and some institutions are sending more people than others. Decolonisation session had 96 attendees. Transnational was next well attended and indicates online allows more people to attend. Very little negative feedback nearly all excellent and good. Areas for improvement related to refreshments, longer or shorter, more activities to be further categorised. Future events suggested – open access, AI and chat GPT, more on decolonisation, more on trans awareness, neurodiversity.

Re form. Most people say leave evaluation form as it is and people are happy to re-use. Would recommend taking off categories that are not relevant to the session as people not good at . Shortly sending out the longitudinal study.

ACTION: Request to make sure (especially if capped numbers event) attendees are reminded to say if they can't attend and those on waiting lists can be slotted.

ACTION: AML to chase the session at Northampton that had to be cancelled. (**NOTE:** cancellation of this session was largely due to the timing and clashes with other sessions rather than location.)

7. Update on Buddy Scheme

Since re-launch 22 request for and 23 volunteers. Reduced since then. Review and evaluation will take place end of August. Nice spread across institutions and revised process is working well. Good feedback. Discussion that the page and information is a little hidden.

ACTION: RJ to have a look at existing information and make sure it's visible.

ACTION: Cheryl to send round information about participation.

8. Discussion of sessions for 2023-24 (Content and delivery method)

See [draft programme](#) for agreed programme to date.

Note: Agreed to run trans-awareness again as there was a reading list but agreed to cap at three iterations.

Note: Matt happy to run CS session online in the evening as these teams really need it and miss out.

Note: UX session also pencilled in the conference programme discussion around pulling themes out of the conference feedback. Re-evaluate when conference has taken place.

ACTION: Reps to go back and ask about All the Same But Different and also knowledge exchange session around more technical aspects eg doc supply.

9. Points of Discussion - Institutional Updates

Interest in neurodiversity session, Cheryl will feedback.

10. AOB

ACTION: TJ to check if the UX session could be in person to ensure a mix.

11. Date of Next Meeting

ACTION: KK to send out Doodle Poll for September after the conference.