



Officer Update Report for MSDG (June 15th 2021 Meeting)

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Here are some updates and developments from recent months which may be of interest to the Mercian Staff Development Group members.

Steering Group: The new Steering Groupⁱ was inaugurated in late March, with past-Vice Chair, **Chris Porter** (Newman) progressing to Chair. Members for 2021-23 are **Laura Pilsel** (Vice Chair, Harper-Adams), **Helen Curtis** (Treasurer, Aston) as well as **Chris Powis** (Northampton), **Jo-Anne Watts** (Wolverhampton) and **Judith Keene** (Worcester). As usual, the Vice-Chair assumes the Sponsor role for the MSDG. The new Steering Group met in April and furthered debate and action on membership criteria, sponsor appointments and reserves policy.ⁱⁱ Additionally, revisions to the SCONUL/MC memorandum of understanding and the Collaboration's Strategic plan are also now underway, led by the Chair. The Steering Group also instigated investigations into website accessibility. The next Steering Group meeting will be held in August, with representation of all subgroups in attendance.

Board: The Directors board met in late March to discuss (1) Evaluating the Online Experience and (2) reinventing Libraries & Services.ⁱⁱⁱ Other matters of operational interest including a revision to the Collaboration's membership criteria, SCONUL relationships and the Senior Staff Group's Terms of Reference. The next Board meeting is scheduled for the Autumn, date TBC.

Annual Report '20: The Collaboration's annual report for 2020 was published and is now available online.^{iv} Fourteen (out of twenty-three) Collaboration members submitted annual update for their institutions as part of this report.

Conference '21: The call for speakers for this year's Collaboration Conference remains open through to the end of this week^v. The Conference Chair and committee strongly encourage submission of any and all proposals on the theme of *Adaptation and Growth in Times of Adversity* by Friday 18th June. A micro-site for the conference has been established^{vi} and the event #tag is [#Mercian21](#). The conference itself is planned to be held online, over two half days (Thu/Fri 9/10th September) on the MS Teams Live platform. Delegate registration is once again free, and for the first time will be opened to academic library staff from outside the region.

Subgroup Activities: Since the last MSDG meeting other subgroup activities have notably included: Conference Group (meeting, April), Deputies & Senior Staff (planning & preparation discussions, May), Mercian Disability Form (meeting, March), Mercian Metadata Group (eForum: eBook management, March). The Marketing & Communications and Copyright Groups currently have no planned activities. There was also another Virtual Networking event (teaching & learning, April) hosted. Minutes and reports on these can be found on the respective subgroup pages.

News Items: News items covering MSDG events have been gratefully received and posted to the Collaboration Website.^{vii} These include the *Crowd Control* and *Difficult Customer Situation* events. However, a news item for the *Trans Awareness* event remains outstanding at this time.

ALN: The Northern Collaboration and North West Academic Libraries (NoWAL) launched their new website and finalised their merger in April as Academic Libraries North.^{viii} The new collaboration includes all previous members of both groups, which number thirty-three academic libraries in total.



Newsletter: The monthly^{ix} newsletter for the Collaboration continues to go out regularly at the start of each month. This highlights forthcoming events and meetings, as well as summarising recent news and activities from the Collaboration and its subgroups. To receive the newsletter, join the mercian-collaboration@jiscmail.ac.uk list (exclusive to staff at Collaboration institutions).

The Officer welcomes discussion on any and all of these points during or subsequent to the meeting.

ⁱ See for details: <https://merciancollaboration.org.uk/contacts-officers>

ⁱⁱ Minutes available at: <https://merciancollaboration.org.uk/about-collaboration/agendas-minutes-steering-group>

ⁱⁱⁱ Minutes at: <https://merciancollaboration.org.uk/about-collaboration/agendas-minutes-directors-board>

^{iv} This and past reports can be found here: <https://merciancollaboration.org.uk/about-collaboration/agendas-minutes-annual-reports>

^v The call and submission form are online via: <https://merciancollaboration.org.uk/deadline-conference-submissions-mid-june>

^{vi} Conference micro-site: <https://merciancollaboration.org.uk/conference-2021/conference-2021>

^{vii} See for all news items: <https://merciancollaboration.org.uk/news>

^{viii} Their website can be found here: <https://www.academiclibrariesnorth.ac.uk/about-academic-libraries-north/membership>

^{ix} Although I'd expect it to lapse for a month or two over the summer, due to the usual reduction in activities over this time.