

MERG Annual Report to Council of Governors – 28 September 2016

Terms of Reference – At the last meeting, these were modified to reflect those published in the Annual Report and on the Website. The following objective was added – “**Network with other Foundation Trusts and monitor and receive reports from NHS Providers before consideration by the Council of Governors.**”

Education & Training – absorbed into the group last year, has provided some excellent sessions but attendance has been low. Geoff Stokes provoked fresh thinking on the effectiveness of current delivery. Use of web based training and a review of what is needed and what works well, particularly for new governors, will be undertaken.

Membership & Public Engagement – David Fairweather again worked hard to produce a programme of engagement events where governors met the public (members & potential members). These were supported by a small core of governors, some of whom also initiated meetings in their constituencies. The assistance of the three associations of voluntary services in reaching community groups has been sought. The large meetings, addressed by the Chair and a medical speaker, were dropped on cost grounds but liked by members.

The Big Lottery Funding (£10K) initiative being pursued in partnership with the three Local Authorities will restore some of these larger events for one year if successful. Events in each of the constituencies will address Health & Well Being and have a Trust supplied medical speaker. While not just a SUHFT matter, consultation on the Success Regime proposals will also need to be taken into account in event scheduling.

Membership Engagement Strategy – A sub group headed by Rachel Clark, with Frank Haysom & myself worked with Officers to review our current engagement activities and produce a draft strategy. This was presented to the last MERG meeting and accepted for submission to the CoG AGM. A revised Membership Form with a tear off slip is part of the recommendation to governors.

The new strategy aims to 1. Increase active member engagement. 2. Ensure membership is representative of our community and 3. Achieve and maintain effective feedback systems in order for Governors to represent both trust members and public needs. **Rachel will present this proposed strategy for approval at the AGM.** Current membership is 16,275 with data breakdown available.

The Future Newsletter – is produced via a keen and active sub group. With postage costs so high, hard copy is limited to one per year with other issues being emailed with supplemental hard copies for libraries, events etc. There are about 3,500 of our current 16,275 members on email, with a drive to increase this.

Youth Governors – The experiment to involve youth in governor activities has not been very successful although the enthusiasm and promise of the three volunteers in initial meetings was encouraging. We know the pressures of student life conflicted with good intentions and will review our approach to the worthy aim of youth involvement as part of our work plan.

From the above, it can be seen that the year has seen high levels of usual business together with considerable work on reviewing how and why we conduct our activities in MERG. I hope the CoG accepts the Membership Strategy recommendations after Rachel's presentation. Proposals on other matters under review will be presented at future CoG meetings.

Governors are encouraged to forward their views and suggestions on MERG matters via David Fairweather.

We said goodbye and thanks to hard working Elaine Blatchford who has served her 6yrs.

Joe Cooke – Chair MERG

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