

Notes from a meeting of Group Committee Chairs
held on 18th September 2012

Those present: Elaine Blatchford, Frank Haysom, Judith Craven, David Hobbs, and Miriam Schramm

All had received the notes from last meeting (revised with all additions) and comments from the Trust Secretary and Chairman.

The information from the Trust Secretary and Chairman appeared to show that there was a background reason to look at the groups, due to overstretched resources and therefore the groups felt it would have been better had we been aware of that before we started.

There still seems to be a drive to amalgamate some of the groups but the chairs were in agreement that it would either lead to much longer meetings or more of them which would not achieve any saving. Also those members of the amalgamated groups may not be interested in the other part of the meeting dealing with issues they were not involved with and could have an adverse effect on the overall efficiency of the groups.

The discussion was also around the timing of meetings and if we are serious about younger members they will not be able to attend during the day so that would not be appropriate. It was felt that all the groups should assess their viability by looking at the terms of reference and the groups recommended by the FTGA and Monitor.

Therefore at present we do not feel able to agree to amalgamation, but realising the finite resources would be willing to set agendas, book rooms (if able) and some groups may be willing and able to take their own minutes (although there was some concern regarding this). If the meetings are all booked at the start of the year then only ad hoc meetings would need to be booked later. It was thought that maybe some groups do not need to meet as frequently and that more focused agendas would then be appropriate.

There was some discussion regarding the Trust's view of governors, what are we expected to deliver and how will that be delivered? There is some concern about how the governors are valued by the Trust and that the number of active governors appears to be declining. We felt the groups need to make sure we fulfil the roles necessary and that the NED's who attend the groups feel they are useful and carrying information between the Board of Directors and the Council of Governors.

The idea of fewer governors may cause some problems, and also some groups may fold with less governors /group. This may highlight those groups that are working well and those that didn't get sufficient support probably needed to assess their viability.

The group are therefore willing to take any questions from the governors from each recommendation and if necessary meet after the COG with the Trust Secretary and Chairman to discuss how the groups can be more effective and useful.

Miriam Schramm
Sept 2012