**DRAFT**

**MEETING WITH MARK HIRST - DIRECTOR OF WORFORCE**

**MARCH 31ST 2017**

**Kathy West and Malcolm Alexander, Patients’ Forum**

**Apologies: Melissa Berry**

1. **Equality and Diversity Committee**

Agreed that the new Committee is very committed to ensuring that the LAS is focussed on transforming the LAS towards a focus on the needs of staff and patients in relation to protected characteristics. Kathy said that participants were enthusiastic and she had confidence that they will provide the leadership that has been absent in the past. It is likely that Trisha Bain will chair the meeting in future.

Membership includes: Paul Woodrow, Janice Markey, Bob Mc Farland, Fergus Cass and Melissa Berry. It likely that the committee will meet six time each year and that three of these meetings will focus on patients and three on staff.

1. **Patient Report Forms**

The collection of data by paramedics about the ethnicity of patients is believed to be based mostly on observation and supposition rather than on asking patients to provide accurate information. We agreed that all front line staff needed to be trained in the right techniques for gathering diversity information. Training could be on line, but evidence of participation is essential.

1. **Electronic Staff Records**

The ESR is currently be set up within the LAS to bring it in line with normal standards in the NHS. Data is being validated and should include any protected characteristics and any languages spoken by staff.

1. **Occupational Health**

Noted the Occupational Health provider is changing. The new provider is called: People Asset Management – PAM and they will formally start on July 1st 2017

Note: Its website is bland and uninspiring. <https://www.pamgroup.co.uk/>

1. **Racial Equality in the LAS**

We expressed concern that Melissa Berry’s contract will soon come to an end and that without specialised leadership, that the great progress with race equality work in the LAS is be set back. Mark confirmed that Melissa would remain in post for a further six months.

Note: this issue has been raised with the LAS board.

Mark said a great deal of work was being done to comply with the 9 WRES indicators (Workforce Race Equality Standard).

1. **Priorities Agreed with the Commission for Human Rights and Equalities**

The LAS has not complied with most of the objectives they agreed with the EHRC in 2012. The LAS and EHRC came to an agreement in 2012 in line with theTechnical Guidance on the PSED on three high level objectives to enable the LAS to demonstrate progress in relation to achieving equality objectives in relation to race. These were:

* 50% of complainants will have provided relevant details in relation to ethnicity, and the LAS will begin to monitor trends in complaints from black and minority ethnic (BME) service users from 2012/2013.
* Acting on the results of the staff survey and develop both corporate and localised actions to improve key problems identified by 2016.
* Appoint champions for each protected group in 2014 and ensure the interests of these groups are protected and promoted with regards to staff, patients, service users and other stakeholders in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.
1. **Ethnicity Data**

Mark said that currently, 12% of the whole LAS workforce was of a BME heritage. We emphasized the importance of having data that was comparable over a number of years for each staff group so that progress could be easily monitored.

Karen Broughton will lead on any target setting regarding protected characteristics for the LAS, but an agreement has not yet been reached on this issue because of reservations within the LAS about the relevance of targets**.**

1. **The LAS Academy**

The Academy will use positive action in the selection of new candidates for transition from technician to paramedics. MA will be visiting the Academy in the near future and will check on the current situation.

 **J) VIP Awards**

The Forum has proposed a VIP award for the member of staff who has done most to promote race equality and for the award to move over a period of 4-5 years to include all protected characteristics. The proposal was accepted by the LAS Chair, Charlotte Gawne and Melissa Berry. The ceremony it to be held on April 27th.

 **k) LAS Public Facing Website**

 We highlighted some of the very poor features of the LAS website in relation to

 accessibility, communications and diversity.

END