**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT – NOVEMBER 7th  2017**

**Audrey Lucas, Beulah East, Lynn Strother, Malcolm Alexander**

1. **LAS Draft Strategy** – the draft strategy was presented to the LAS Board on Oct 31st and the Forum has met Angela Flaherty who lead on development of the strategy. Copies will be available for members at the next Forum meeting. Noted that an LAS strategy meeting will be held on December 7th for two hours in the morning. Agreed to seek an evening meeting for Forum members and representatives of the LAS. We have asked for details of how the public will be involved in development of the strategy, but this is so far not forthcoming. The strategy document is at a very early stage of development but is intended for completion in February when the CQC are expected to return to inspect the LAS. The LAS Board were talking of both six weeks of engagement and consultation but there is no intention to formally consult.

Action: A) Propose date for meeting when Forum members can attend. B) Prepare draft response. C) Request hard copies for the Forum meeting.

1. **Ambulance Response Programme** – The ARP started on November 1st. Forum meeting on ARP went very well Stuart Crichton answered many questions put by Forum members. Responses to patients with sickle cell in crises confirmed at 17 minutes. Cat 3 and 4 provide responses of 2hrs and 3hrs which need to be closely monitored, especially for older vulnerable people. Agreed to discuss response time with national charities. Lynn will discuss with Age UK and raise issues with Alvin and Ade at Healthwatch, especially about impact on people who fall in the street and wait hours for an ambulance. Agreed we need to develop a monitoring tool in light of the withdrawal of data by the CCG. New data is awaited from the LAS.

**Action**: A) Discuss monitoring of ARP with Trisha Bain, Chief Quality Officer. B) Develop a monitoring tool for the Forum and Healthwatch. C) Raise concerns with HW. D) Contact national charities and HW.

1. **CQC Re-inspection of the LAS –** CQC due back in February 2018. Heather Lawrence, CQC Chair met with David Behan at Deloitte Dinner and raised with him the delay in the LAS getting out of special measure. DB agreed to visit LAS with Ted Baker, Chief Inspector of Hospital to meeting with Chair and Garrett Emmerson. Forum has agreed to support mock inspections of the LAS at the end of November and has asked members to support on six dates.
2. **Race Equality in the LAS –** Beulah and Audrey will attend LAS Equality and Inclusion meeting on December 6th (3-5pm). Forum has sent letter below to Patricia Grealish, but has received no response. Letter provides the Forum’s advice and concerns about employment from BME communities. Action: A) Send Forum’s Race Equality Report to Audrey and Beulah East. B) Send letter to Patricia Grealish again and ask for it to go onto Equality meeting agenda.
3. **Attendance at LAS Quality Meetings -** Most EC members are attending LAS group meetings. Agreed to try to arrange for two members to cover each group to ensure attendance and mutual support.
4. **Q Volunteering -** Discussions are taking place between Heather Lawrence and Alex Ankrah’s manager at the Dept of Digital, Culture and Media. Audrey, Beulah, Sister Josephine and Malcolm have met with Briony Sloper and Ted Nyatanga. Alex Ankrah has responded to Heather’s Chair report presented to the October 31st LAS Board meeting. Way forward is still unclear despite commitment of all parties.
5. **Complaints Charter –** The Forum has presented the LAS Complaints Charter for Urgent and Emergency Care to the LAS Board and it was accepted in principle. A few small changes to be made and Malcolm will meet with Trisha Bain on Friday, November 10th to finalise. Concern was expressed by Board members about ‘complaints leading to enduring improvement in LAS services’ and compensation when the LAS causes losses to patients.
6. **Complaints Review –** the EC has waited several months to complete a data sharing agreement. No agreement yet.

****

Patricia Grealish

Director of People and Organisational Development

London Ambulance Service

25-10-2017

Dear Patricia,

Thank you so much for your excellent presentation to the Forum meeting on September 11th.

We discussed recruitment and diversity at a recent meeting of our Executive Committee and focussed on the low number of front-line paramedics from BME heritages. We took the opportunity of reflecting on what you and Melissa reported to the Forum regarding the LAS’s attempts to increase potential recruits from these heritages. It is clear that work is taking place to interest and engage pupils in their last year at school and this is very much welcomed. However, it was somewhat surprising to hear that the thrust of the work so far has been to help pupils who have considerable difficulty regarding letters of application and other attendant documents that might well be needed when considering their next steps. Evidently, the thrust of this initiative is to try to encourage interest in non-paramedic posts since it appears that the LAS are of the fairly definite view that the level of educational achievement they come across in schools is not high enough to achieve success in getting a place on a university paramedic course. .

The EC would like to propose, again, that not enough is being done with Level 3 students (equivalent to A level) in London who are on Public Services courses at Further and Higher Education Colleges. Colleges in other parts of the country provide rich sources for potential front-line staff in, for example, the fire service, the police service (some run courses for ‘beat’ police staff right through to forensic science courses) and the ambulance service. Some students are not sure which service to enter until their second year of study and are encouraged to learn initially about all three services, and in some colleges the armed services are also included. These students are intelligent enough to move on to under-graduate courses [Level 4] if they achieve high enough Level 3 outcomes.

There is no “wrong time” to engage students on these courses with the services they might aspire to. Students receive speakers from the services at various times of the academic year. College staff collaborate with local stations, use service staff to help develop the curriculum, receive ‘real life’ case studies, students visit stations, they are engaged in live work experience.

Adults are another potential rich stream of dedicated future workers who may aspire to become paramedics. Access to HE is a tried and tested programme that has been in existence since the 1990’s. Access courses are delivered up and down the country for a range of vocational careers including health, science and social care courses, and might include paramedic careers for adults (over 19 years old) who need to change career paths. Access courses work in collaboration between Further Education Colleges and Universities. They jointly design the course in line with the end career in mind, taking in the requirements of the sector. Some programmes also deliver preparation to access courses to bring some adults up to the full access programme. It is important to speak to colleges outlining the requirements of the LAS. Access courses are very diverse in the recruitment of students and would be attractive to BME applicants. Colleges are now in preparation to begin recruitment to their courses early in the New Year.

If the LAS hopes to increase the number of BME front-line staff, it would be appropriate for existing BME paramedics to be involved in this kind of promotion and collaboration with local colleges. It is not unusual for aspirations to be raised following visits to, and work experience in, actual stations. Level 3 and Level 4 students in London could be a rich source of future paramedics, including specifically those from BME heritages. While embracing lesser capable pupils/students is nonetheless welcome, the EC would like to encourage the LAS to put a stronger focus on students who are perhaps more able, who have exhibited sufficient interest to enrol on a Public Services course, and who might well find paramedic posts enthralling – especially when they are introduced to them by appropriate role models. Much more could be done by introducing to school pupils the prospect of Public Services courses in colleges – emphasising paramedic work.

A list of the London FE Colleges has been provided to Trisha Bain (and Heather Lawrence), with an explanation that the staff need to target in the first place those who lead and/or teach on Public Services courses. Even if paramedic work has not been high on the college’s promotional materials, the sooner it appears from now on the better. In the meantime, for those students who are in their first year and perhaps are equivocal about which route they will take ultimately, this current academic year is moving on. There may be opportunities to speak ‘differently’ to first- and second-year students. The first steps, however, remain establishing which colleges run Public Services courses and making contact with relevant staff. It might be that some staff themselves need to be enlightened about possibilities for their students, and especially for BME students, of whom there are very many. That in itself could start an interesting train of events.

We understand that efforts are continuing to recruit trained paramedics from Australia/New Zealand. They still need to get to understand practice here, to learn their way around London, and to deal with pressures unlike anything they are used to. We suggest strongly that alongside that recruitment effort, much more could be done to grow our own wood – particularly from BME students in London.

We hope you will take these suggestions seriously enough to begin pursuing lines of enquiry, and we look forward to seeing your strategy and action plan for the development of a workforce that truly represents the population of London.

Yours sincerely,

Angela Cross-Durrant Malcolm Alexander Sister Josephine Udine

Vice Chair Chair Vice Chair

Copy to: Garrett Emmerson, Fergus Cass, Melissa Berry, Trisha Bain, Tina Ivanov