Minutes

Tuesday 8 September 2015, 2.00pm Huntingdon Room, Roger Needham Building

Present: Dr Rachael Padman (Chair), Prof Ian Leslie, Prof Graham Virgo, Dr Alan Blackwell, Mr John Norman, Dr Martin Bellamy, Mr Chris Edwards

Apologies: Ms Priscilla Mensah

In Attendance: Dr Ian Cooper (secretary), Mr Richard Young

USER NEEDS COMMITTEE

1. Welcome and apologies
Dr Padman welcomed members to meeting and welcomed Mr Richard Young, Deputy Director for Education, Administration & Student Services (UIS). Apologies had been received from Ms Mensah; Prof Clarkson is on leave until the New Year.

2. Minutes of previous meeting
The minutes of the meeting held on 2 June 2015 (UNC-09) were accepted.

3. Actions and matters arising

Action point 1.4 (ongoing) – Work in the development of user panels was ongoing and was included on the agenda, see minute 7.

Action point 1.5 (ongoing) – Constitution of project boards to ensure user needs are considered was ongoing
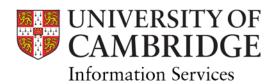
Action point 1.6 (ongoing) – Dr Padman had met with Dr Mark Ferrar and Prof Virgo. Dr Bellamy reported that the next steps in the user experience portal development had not progressed as much as expected due to other work in progress within UIS and that there was no active work in progress. Resource with expertise in User Experience was to be brought onto the project in due course.

Action point 2.1 (ongoing) – Dr Padman had not received any recommendations for further membership of the committee. A brief discussion on whether to co-opt Dr Mark Thompson from the Judge Business School took place and Dr Blackwell commented that Dr Thompson had taken over other duties from him in order that he could attend this committee.

Action point 2.2 (ongoing) – Included on the agenda, see minute 4.

Action point 2.3 (ongoing) – Included on the agenda, see minute 7.

Action point 2.4 (ongoing) – A PD33 was in development and would be circulated by Mr Edwards.

Action point 2.5 (ongoing) – Mr Edwards provided a brief update; work was ongoing and involved Dr Ferrar. A range of personas that had been developed were circulated.

Action point 2.6 (ongoing) – A short discussion on possible visiting speakers took place and Mr Norman had provided some ideas. Dr Padman would forward details to Dr Bellamy. Dr Bellamy would speak with Mr Steve Riley regarding inviting Mike Bracken or a current representative of the Government Digital Service.

Action point 3.1 – RP & MB

The number of action points that were recorded as 'ongoing' was concerning.

4. User Needs in service development

Mr Edwards talked about how user centric design would fit within the UIS Build and Development division, within the Quality Assurance team, as quality is related to user experience. Four projects are under way which include particular emphasis on user needs: Service Catalogue (including user interviews and personas); Room Booking service; Information delivery framework for finance; Online graduate application form (recommending to the project board that the user perspective is represented in that group).

It was acknowledged that there is currently no top-level resourcing in the area of user centric design within UIS and members of the committee were concerned at the limited staff resource. More staff should have an understanding of user centric design; the new role within UIS would be tasked with instilling this within the team but there were also other staff across the University who might provide a useful network.

5. Interaction with UIS Education, Administration & Student Services division

Mr Young provided an overview of the way that his team would engage with the University in order to understand organisation and user need. The division would have five relationship managers, of whom four would be in post soon with the final to be advertised.

The division was overseeing several activities: delivery of the Service Catalogue pilot project (a responsive process with changes being made over time); the ERP systems strategy refresh (with a driver around casual user usability problems); the integration of systems and business information (considering changes to internal processes in order to move to 'vanilla' systems); the Digital Education Strategy (at early stages).

Work to investigate a move to 'vanilla' software was possible as functionality now existed in some vendors' products that was not present before (and had required specific customisations for the University). Business analysts from UIS Build and Development would support the work to review changes that might be required of internal processes.

6. Digital Transformation Consultancy (as AOB on the agenda)

Mr Norman presented the organisation structure and scope under consideration for the Digital Transformation Consultancy which would be discussed at the UIS Change Board. The committee was interested to understand how this team would interact with the Build & Development and

Service Operations divisions within UIS. There is an expectation of teams being co-located and that the Build & Development division would provide assistance with prototyping.

Some of the proposed roles in the unit would require additional funding and the timing of the Planning Round process was felt to be somewhat problematic.

The organisation design would need some care to be taken in order to attract the appropriate people with the desired skillsets.

7. User Panels

User panels had been suggested on the basis of thoughts of Ms Alison Allden (former Chief Executive of HESA and Member of the ISC) and are one means of understanding the community, with a goal to engage people over the long term, benefiting from their experience and an understanding of what needs to change.

The committee held a discussion on the form the panels might take and the advice they might be asked to offer, whether these were needs, information about what they use, or what they would need in the future. There was a desire to ensure that typically 'forgotten users' were considered, e.g. Faculty Administrators and those undertaking Masters administration. There would need to be some value for the individuals participating.

In addition the idea of a user survey was discussed, which might provide panels with prioritisation of requirements. Dr Padman asked UIS to submit a proposal for the committee's next meeting.

Action point 3.2 – MB

8. Information Services Strategy

Dr Bellamy introduced the development of the integrated Information Services Strategy that will be developed in 2015/16 ahead of the Planning Round 2016. An initial gathering phase would include a survey of desires and a review of other strategies under development, including Digital Education, high performance and research computing, the enterprise systems refresh, digital experience in Estates and external collaboration. The information would then be synthesised during Lent Term at which point the views of Institutions and their own roadmaps would be incorporated.

The committee felt that it was important to review the work to ensure that there would be benefits to the 'little users' and that these were balanced against other priorities to ensure appropriate productivity gains were achieved.

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9. Any other business

There was no further business

Dates of future meetings

All meetings will be held in the Huntingdon Room at the Roger Needham Building unless otherwise indicated:

- Tuesday, 3 November 2015, 10.00-12.00
- Tuesday, 15 December 2015, 10.00-12.00
- Tuesday, 9 February 2016, 10.00-12.00
- Tuesday, 29 March 2016, 10.00-12.00
- Tuesday, 17 May 2016, 2.00-4.00

Summary of action points

Ref.	Action	Who	Status
Actions from previous meetings			
1.4	Deputy Directors for Research & Institutional Services, and Education, Administration & Student Services to develop consultation methodology for user panels	MB	Ongoing
1.5	Review of project board constitution to be considered by the committee	IC	Ongoing
1.6	Determine appropriate next steps for the User Experience Portal – assigned to Dr Ferrar, Chief Architect	MB	Ongoing
2.1	Recommendations for UNC membership to be passed to Dr Padman	All	Ongoing
2.2	Review benefit of engagement with users of the finance system in designing a system considering users' needs	CE	Ongoing
2.3	Provide a discussion paper for the Committee, to consider an outline proposed engagement plan and user groups	MB	Ongoing
2.4	Draft PD33 for the user experience specialist to be provided to the Committee prior to being raised and advertised	CE	Ongoing
2.5	Provide a paper to the Committee to give an update on the library of resources, and data-driven design, being developed within the UIS	CE	Ongoing
2.6	Suggestions for design seminars to be passed to Dr Padman or Dr Bellamy. Mr Riley to explore an invitation to the Government Digital Service	All, IC	Ongoing
New actions from 9 September 2015 meeting			
3.1	Dr Padman to pass suggestions of design seminars to Dr Bellamy. Dr Bellamy to discuss approaching Mike Bracken, or another contact at the Government Digital Service, with Mr Steve Riley.	RP MB	

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Ref.	Action	Who	Status
3.2	Table a paper with a proposal on user surveys and user panels	MB	For 3 November 2015