



Our Ref: UNC.151103.Minutes

**Tuesday 3 November 2015, 10.00am Huntingdon Room, Roger Needham Building**

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

Apologies: Prof Ian Leslie, Ms Priscilla Mensah

In Attendance: Dr Ian Cooper (secretary)

**USER NEEDS COMMITTEE**

**1. Welcome and apologies**

Dr Padman welcomed members to meeting. Apologies had been received from Prof Leslie and Ms Mensah; Prof Clarkson is on leave until the New Year.

**2. Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2015 (UNC-10) were accepted with a minor amendment clarifying Ms Alison Alden's role.

**3. Actions and matters arising**

The number of ongoing actions was a concern but it was noted that the agenda included an item to discuss how papers to support the committee's work might be generated.

**Action point 1.4 (closed)** – A discussion on user panels was on the agenda, see minute 4.

**Action point 1.5 (closed)** – There had been no progress on the review of project board constitution and it was noted that the Committee does not own project boards. It was suggested to add a standing item on the agenda to ensure that users were being included as project boards are established. It was suggested that UIS review and revise earlier ISSS documentation on project board constitution and to include the Committee in consultations before taking a proposed revision to the ISC.

**Action point 4.1 – CE**

**Action point 1.6 (on hold)** – Work on the development of a user experience portal was on hold pending wider review by the Chief Architect.

**Action point 2.1 (closed)** – Dr Padman had not received any recommendations for further membership of the committee. There was a need to identify an appropriate individual to serve under Class ii of the Committee's membership following Prof Leslie's term. The Committee has an opportunity to co-opt one further member under Class vi.

**Action point 4.2 – RP, GV**



**Action point 2.2 (ongoing)** – Mr Edwards reported that activity on the finance system design, for reports required by users, was ongoing and would bring a paper to the committee in due course. There was a dependency on other items within the project and the project manager was aware that there was a user-centric element to the work.

**Action point 2.3 (closed)** – Included on the agenda, see minute 4.

**Action point 2.4 (ongoing)** – A meeting had been scheduled to take place shortly after the Committee's meeting.

**Action point 2.5 (on hold)** – Work was on hold pending discussions with Mr Norman on the scope of activity and outputs from the Digital Transformation Consultancy.

**Action points 2.6 and 3.1 (closed)** – Mr Riley was happy to engage with appropriate individuals from the Government Digital Service but wanted to understand the scope and purpose of the proposed events. There was a need to better understand the purpose of the proposed events, when they would take place and how they would be facilitated. Mr Norman felt that the facilitation aligned with that of the proposed Advisory Board (see minute 6) and was seeking to recruit an individual to support this work. In addition a tender to acquire a consultant's advice to raise awareness internally was under way. An initial event was tentatively booked for 4 December.

**Action point 4.3 – MB, JN**

**Action point 3.2 (closed)** – Included on the agenda, see minute 4.

#### **4. Creating a listening organisation (UNC-11)**

Mr Norman introduced a paper that proposed four channels of communication that were in the process of being developed or being discussed: user satisfaction metrics, regular and ad-hoc surveys, representative groups and committees, and relationship management. Establishment of satisfaction metrics would help to focus attention on issues and provide a means to measure improvements following any change. The functionality provided in the Qualtrics platform – for which the UIS holds a licence on behalf of the University – could support this activity and would potentially assist in the administration, enabling panels of users to be established for individual pieces of work. Where possible the detailed survey findings would be available to all, and certainly to survey participants.

Where representative groups already exist (for example, CITMG and the Schools/UIS Engagement Group) these should be used where possible, rather than forming new groups

The Committee was supportive of the proposals but cautioned on the potential for survey fatigue. The choice of the Qualtrics platform was hoped to aid in this area by tracking respondent invitation and participation across multiple activities. Prof Virgo stressed the importance that any survey activity does not interfere with the successful completion of the NSS, PTES, or PRES.

There was a short discussion on the need for UIS to be a communicating organisation, not just listening, and reference was made to an overarching communications plan being developed within UIS. However, it was noted that the Committee did not own responsibility for communications.



The Committee asked Mr Norman to return a paper with proposed activity for review at the next meeting.

**Action point 4.4 – JN**

Proposed questions for the initial survey should be circulated to Committee members by circulation with the intention to pilot with one college and one department.

**Action point 4.5 – JN**

### **5. Funding for user needs activity (UNC-12)**

Prof Virgo and Prof Leslie declared interests in this area through their involvement in the Planning Round process.

The outline structure for the Digital Transformation Consultancy had been presented at the Committee's meeting on 8 September. The paper covered a proposal that would be built into the UIS Planning Round 2015 submission for additional resource initially of £220k for 2016-17, which Mr Norman outlined would bring the team up to the level of competence required for the aspired emphasis on user experience. This is an area that is gaining interest across the higher education sector and was larger than other HE institutions might have in place at present.

The Committee was aware of the forthcoming Comprehensive Spending Review and the consequences for additional funding through the Planning Round but nevertheless noted that development of this area of activity was perceived of primary importance to enable UIS to build capacity in this area and recognised that it would be challenging to delivery to Principle A2 of the IT Review of 2013 that, *"the management and delivery of those services must be driven by the needs of our users for support of their teaching, research, learning or administration."*

[At the subsequent meeting noted in action point 2.4 a discussion also took place to examine how best to use the UIS's currently defined allocation in the light of the likely outcome from the Planning round.]

### **6. Digital Advisory Board (UNC-13)**

The Committee discussed proposals to form a Digital Advisory Board, which would provide advice and input from external experts in a way that Martha Lane Fox's advice led to the "Digital by Default" programme in Government. Care would be needed to ensure that any advice had appropriate context and emphasis for the higher education sector.

The Committee noted that the scope of such an advisory board was potentially much wider than just the UIS and would require appropriate sponsorship, likely involving the UAS. Dr Padman would consult with the Registry to seek his views.

**Action point 4.6 – RP**



**7. Any other business**

*7a) Sourcing committee papers*

The Committee had a brief discussion on its expectations for future discussions to be supported by appropriate papers. At present it was felt that one of the key teams to deliver this from UIS was missing and the incorporation of Mr Norman's group would help. The expectation was that UIS would table papers across its various areas of activity, primarily from Build & Development, Digital Transformation Consultancy, and Service Operations.

*7b) Future meeting dates*

The Committee's meeting scheduled for Tuesday, 9 February would be rescheduled to Monday, 8 February at 2.30pm in the Thetford Room, Roger Needham Building.

*7c) Out of hours cover – user needs*

Dr Bellamy was interested to gain the views of the Committee Members on what user needs there might be to support services during non-office hours. Prof Virgo observed that the University is a 24x7 organisation and that there will be someone working somewhere at all times. It was noted that there are particular points in the year where there are higher levels of support required of IT systems that support the academic and administrative activities of the University. The Committee supported targeting of the limited resource available at mission-critical services and understood that UIS already has some insight into critical business periods for the University.

**Dates of future meetings**

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

- Tuesday, 15 December 2015, 10.00-12.00
- Monday, 8 February 2016, 2.30-4.30, Thetford Room, Roger Needham Building
- 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	Closed
1.5	Review of project board constitution to be considered by the committee	IC	Closed (but see 4.1)
1.6	Determine appropriate next steps for the User Experience Portal – assigned to Dr Ferrar, Chief Architect	MB	On hold
2.1	Recommendations for UNC membership to be passed to Dr Padman	All	Closed (but see 4.2)
2.2	Review benefit of engagement with users of the finance system in designing a system considering users' needs	CE	8 February 2016



Ref.	Action	Who	Status
2.3	Provide a discussion paper for the Committee, to consider an outline proposed engagement plan and user groups	MB	Closed
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, JN	On hold
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	Closed
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	Closed
3.2	Table a paper with a proposal on user surveys and user panels	MB	Closed
New actions from 3 November 2015 meeting			
4.1	Include the Committee in consultation while UIS reviews and revises project board constitution documentation	CE	Interim update for 15 December 2015
4.2	Identify an appropriate individual to serve on the Committee under Class ii following Prof Leslie's term	RP, GV	15 December 2015
4.3	Identify a schedule and scope for user centric design events and the facilitation resource required to plan and book them.	MB JN	15 December 2015
4.4	Table a paper with proposals on an initial user survey	JN	15 December 2015
4.5	Circulate proposed initial survey questions to the committee by correspondence and identify one college and one department to pilot the initial survey	JN	Prior to 15 December 2015 meeting
4.6	Discuss the proposed formation of a Digital Advisory Board with the Registry	RP	15 December 2015