

University of Cambridge

Information Strategy and Services Syndicate

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 9 October 2008.

Members present: Professor Young (Chairman); Professor Littlewood; Professor Nolan; Professor Wallace; Dr. Carpenter; Dr. Wallach; Mr. Du Quesnay; Mr. Matheson; Mr. Norman; Mr. Richardson; and Mr. Warbrick.

In attendance: the Registry; the Directors of Finance, MISD and UCS; and Mr. Troupe.

Apologies were received from Professor Minson, Mr Fletcher and the Librarian.

PART A: INTRODUCTORY**30. Procedure of the Syndicate – Declaration of Interests**

Mr Du Quesnay declared a non-material interest as the Chair of the Colleges' Administrative Software Consortium (CASC).

31. Minutes

The Minutes of the third meeting of the ISSS held on 5 June 2008 were signed having been approved by circulation (Mins/ISSS 03/08).

32. Matters Arising and Review of Action Points

The Syndicate reviewed the Action Points arising from the previous meeting (ISSS Paper 35/08).

- (i) The Committee noted that the Registry would ensure that the transitional arrangements for administrative support of the Syndicate, as a result of the Secretary's resignation, would be resilient.

Action: Registry

- (ii) Action Point 20 – GBN/JTMC Proposal – this action point had been outstanding for some time. However, the Director of UCS reported that the composition and membership of the new Joint Network Management Committee (JNMC) had been revised, as requested by the Syndicate, but not circulated to the ISSS. Dr. Lewis would provide the Secretary with the information who would then circulate it to the Syndicate. On a related matter Dr. Lewis stated that the membership of the JNMC allowed for three University representatives and three from the Colleges. Currently there were two vacancies one in each category. The Bursars Committee was searching for a third College representative and the JNMC would propose a University representative. The Syndicate agreed, subject to consultation by the

Chairman with the Chairman of the Bursars Committee, that the Chairman of the JNMC would be Mr. Robin Walker for a period of one year to ensure continuity in the first instance. The draft constitution had suggested that the Chairman of the JNMC should be a member of the ISSS; that being the case the Syndicate agreed that Mr. Walker should be co-opted to the ISSS for this period.

Action: Director of UCS, Chairman, Secretary

- (iii) Action Point 28 - Authentication and Authorisation Group - the membership list had been circulated to the ISWG and the Group has held its first meeting. The second meeting would be held 3 November 2008. The ISWG would forward the membership list to the Secretary for onward circulation to the Syndicate.

Action: ISWG, Secretary

- (iv) Action Point 30 – Web Review Phase II – the Syndicate noted that the Internal Communications Consultation was underway. This was an ongoing matter and the action was transferred to the ISWG.

33. Business Committee Minutes

The Syndicate received the Business Committee Minutes for the meetings held on 3 July and 18 September 2008 for information (ISSS Papers 36/08 and 37/08).

PART B: PRINCIPAL BUSINESS

34. Project Reports

Progress reports from the following projects were received.

(i) CHRIS

The Syndicate received a status report on the CHRIS Project (ISSS Paper 38/08). A progress report for submission to the PRC was also included for information. The Director of MISD commented.

The Syndicate noted that the project was progressing according to plan and there was nothing adverse to report. The only concern was the relationship with Midland but this was being resolved. The Project Board was discussing the point at which CHRIS would become a service rather than a project.

(ii) CamSIS

The Syndicate received a status report on the CamSIS Project (ISSS Paper 39/08). A progress report for submission to the PRC was also included for information along with a paper requesting funding from the PRC. The Director of MISD commented.

(iv) Project Governance Guidelines

The Syndicate noted that that a revised draft of the proposed Project Governance Guidelines would be brought to the next meeting of the ISSS, scheduled for 27 November 2008.

Action: Mr Matheson, Director MISD

37. Strategic Planning - Financial Planning and the Role of the ISSS and the Strategy Implementation Plan

The Syndicate received a paper on the future role of the ISSS with regard to financial planning and an update on the Strategy Implementation Plan (ISSS Papers 44/08 and 45/08). The Chairman presented the paper.

The Syndicate noted that:

- the paper set out the current situation, the future role of the ISSS with regard to financial planning and its relationship with the PRC;
- the Chairman of the ISSS would replace the Director of the MISD as “Responsible Officer” for the Technology Development Fund and the ISSS would assume overall responsibility for approving bids against this fund, normally on the advice of the ISWG. Historically MISD has been the sole owner of this fund, the impact on the UAS would need to be assessed and transitional arrangements may be required; and
- the latest version of the Strategy Implementation Plan was available on the ISSS website. A Raven login and password was required to access the plan.

The Syndicate approved the paper.

Action: Chairman, Director MISD

38. Annual Planning

The Syndicate received note of forward planning from UCS along with a paper on equipment needs (ISSS Papers 46/08 and 47/08).

The Syndicate noted that:

- the financial figures presented may not be fully up to date due to year end activity;
- the UCS had been running a deficit on its recurrent account for some years. However, since it had accumulated substantial reserves, the RMC had recommended that it should fund the deficit by spending down reserves till they reached normal operating levels;
- the reserves had now been spent down as instructed leaving an approximate recurrent deficit of £300k pa to be funded from 2009/10 onwards;
- the Resource Management Committee has asked the UCS how the shortfall could be covered within existing UCS resources and £315k of savings had been identified;
- a reduction in staff made up the major part of the savings, but also included the introduction of charges for training courses. The Director of the UCS

- noted that the UCS headcount had been flat since 2000-01 and also indicated some disquiet at charging for training courses;
- the Public Workstation Facility was a significant strategic issue for the University and it accounted for a large proportion of UCS staff costs. If the UCS stopped a central service or reduced a particular activity, departments would need to make appropriate alternative arrangements. Care would need to be taken that this did not lead to an increase in overall costs for the University;
 - an analysis and transparent costing methodology, showing costs for the UCS and Departments/Colleges, should be devised; and
 - regarding the equipment needs, UCS had been asked to document all of its equipment requirements and not just priorities. Chest funding was insufficient to cover all of these requirements (e.g. upgrade of the e-mail system) and a bid would be made to the Capital Infrastructure Fund (CIF).

The Syndicate endorsed the equipment needs paper, and supported its submission to the Resource Management Committee, and the bid to CIF.

Action: Director of UCS

39. Grant Thornton Internal Audit Reports on Identity Management and Information Systems Business Continuity Planning

The Syndicate received both reports (ISSS Papers 48 and 49). The Audit Committee had asked that both reports be referred to the ISSS for consideration and comment. The relevant Audit Committee Minute was also attached (ISSS Paper 50/08).

The Syndicate noted that:

- the Directors of MISD and UCS had already provided responses to the auditors and the Audit Committee;
- the Audit Committee had requested that the Syndicate indicate how the audit recommendations would be taken forward;
- the integrity and resilience of the University's IT systems was very important, however business continuity management was not cost neutral. A costed plan was required to demonstrate that the any additional cost could not be absorbed by existing operational budgets; and
- the Syndicate agreed that the ISWG would prepare a response to the Audit Committee stating that the matter was urgent and should be given high priority.

Action: ISWG

40. Report of the General Board's Review of Teaching and Learning Support Services

The Syndicate received the General Board's report and was asked to comment (ISSS Paper 51/08).

The Syndicate discussed the report briefly and made a number of comments. The Secretary would submit the comments to the Secretary of the General Board.

Action: Secretary

41. ISSS Annual Cycle of Business

The Syndicate received the annual cycle of business (ISSS Paper 52/08) and noted it was a work in progress that would be revised in the light of experience.

The Syndicate delegated the task of making revisions to the Business Committee.

Action: Business Committee

42. Report from Information Strategy Working Group (ISWG)

The Syndicate received the Minutes from the ISWG meeting held on 10 September 2008 (ISSS Paper 53/08). ISSS Paper 54/08 was included in error and not discussed. Mr. Norman presented the Minutes and highlighted the following:

- the ISWG had adopted the Information Strategy as a framework and was now working on proposals to deliver it;
- an operational framework and template format for preparing recommendations had been adopted;
- Minute 4.1 Internal Communications (Web Review Phase II) – the Internal Communications Consultation was underway, it was anticipated that a paper would be brought to the January 2009 meeting of the ISSS;
- Minute 4.2 Identity Management Group – the working group had been convened and would meet again on 3 November 2008. A list of actions and proposals would be brought to the November meeting of the ISSS; and
- Minute 4.4 Records Management – the national Archive had agreed to provide an expert for one day on 17 November 2008.

43. Service Reports

The Syndicate received and noted reports from the University Computing Service (ISSS Paper 55/08) and the Management Information Services Division (ISSS Paper 56/08).

44. For Information

The Syndicate received the IT Purchasing Group Annual Report 2007-08 (ISSS Paper 57/08) for information.

45. Any Other Business

The Syndicate thanked the Secretary who was attending his last meeting.

Professor Steve Young, Chairman