University of Cambridge

Information Strategy and Services Syndicate

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 27 November 2008**.**

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

In attendance: Professor Minson and the Directors of Finance, MISD and UCS; Mr. Wilson.

Apologies were received from Mr Fox, Professor Nolan and Sir David Wallace.

The Chairman welcomed Dr Walker to his first meeting (see M 48 below).

PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

46.   Procedure of the Syndicate – Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

47.   Minutes

The Minutes of the fourth meeting of the ISSS held on 9 October 2008 were signed, having been approved by circulation (ISSS Minutes 04/08).

48.   Matters Arising and Review of Action Points

The Syndicate reviewed the Action Points arising from the previous meeting (ISSS 58/08).

The Syndicate hoped that their re-organisation of agenda into starred and un-starred (principal) business would lead to more efficient meetings, although the volume of paper still made it difficult to focus on issues. They noted the continuation of secretarial support from the Old Schools.

The constitution, membership and terms of reference of the Joint Network Management Committee (JNMC) were reported in paper ISSS 59/08; Dr Robin Walker had been appointed Chairman and co-opted to the ISSS. The Syndicate endorsed these arrangements.

The Syndicate noted that Mr Matheson would stand down from the JNMC at its next meeting and agreed that the JNMC should consider the Arts/Science balance in seeking a replacement. They also asked that papers of the JNMC be published on the web and that minutes of meetings be circulated with the Syndicate's agenda.

Action: Secretary, JNMC

49.   Business Committee Minutes

The Minutes of the Business Committee for the meetings held on 23 October and 17 November 2008 were received as ISSS 60/08 and 61/08 respectively.

Syndics asked for a copy of the response that had been sent to the Teaching and Learning Review Group.

They also asked that internal development list for the new telephony platform, with provisional dates of implementation, be reported to the Syndicate.

Action: Secretary

PRINCIPAL BUSINESS

50.   Project Reports

Project reports were made as follows:

(a) CHRIS (ISSS 62/08)

- Development work had commenced on the roll out of pilot employee self service in December 2008.
- Planning had commenced on salary exchange development with an implementation date planned for April 2009.
- The changes to the General ledger had been developed and delivered by Midland for automated handling of Salary Exchange calculations and improvements in search performance.
- Problems with JACKDAW and RAVEN had been fixed
- The October Pay review had been implemented but with a consequential deferment of the October upgrade to version 10.5 to December.
- Documentation updates for version 10.5.1 and a training plan had been completed; a trainer had been appointed.
- The January 2009 planned change from project board to management committee had been deferred; it was noted by the Syndicate that the Project Guidelines (see M 51) would provide useful guidance.

(b) CamSIS (ISSS 63/08)

- Whilst there had been some teething problems with bedding in the new online SAQ process, no extensive problems with the overall process had been experienced and the new system was generally viewed as a success. 14,833 SAQs had been submitted.

- Following meetings with Senior Tutors and Bursars of the twenty-three Non-Live Colleges during summer 2008, CamSIS team members delivered demonstrations of the new CamSIS capabilities to twenty-one Colleges. Follow up meetings were being scheduled with each College. Seven Colleges had expressed an interest in adopting CamSIS in 2008-09, it was expected that up to fourteen Colleges would take early capabilities. The

timetable for the Michaelmas Term was to rollout to a further twenty Departments, the emphasis being on Biological Sciences.

- The main focus of project activity in 2008-09 was as follows:

  - Department Rollout enhancement requirements
  - A range of sub-projects including one relating to points based immigration for students
  - A range of developments and enhancements including a number relating to ICE, reporting, and duplicate records
  - College Rollout enhancement requirements
  - Scoping studies for future potential developments

The Syndicate agreed that good progress was being made and that there would be a review in January of DeCAF implementation and of the handling of the supplementary application questionnaires.

(c) Telecomms (ISSS 64/08)

The project was on-target, would reach 50% implementation within days, and should finish ahead of schedule and slightly under-budget. Departments brought forward in the schedule would be notified within a few weeks.

As noted above (M49), the list of functions not implemented as part of the project had been reported to the Business Committee and would be reported to the next meeting.

51. Policy Issues

(a) Project Governance Guidelines (ISSS 65/08)

The Syndicate agreed that the establishment of the Project Office was key to satisfactory project governance as ensuring the retention of experience from project to project. They noted that a single individual - the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO - the Project Sponsor) – would take overall responsibility and welcomed the introduction of independent check-point reviews: the Syndicate would be involved if a project needed to be stopped.

The Syndicate would also be involved early in the process before funding was allocated, and would decide on the basis of a brief at the scoping stage which projects were Projects to which the Guidelines applied.

The SRO clearly needed to be from within the University; other roles may be outsourced. There therefore needed to be complete clarity about who the various individuals and committees involved in a project were accountable to, and in particular the Project Office and its staff, the Project Board, its Chair and the SRO: neither a committee nor its Chair *ex officio* could act as line managers.

The Guidelines should mention their ownership and the process of review and modification.

Subject to such amendment as was needed to incorporate the views of the Syndics, the Syndicate approved the revised Project Governance Guidelines as a further draft.

Action: Mr Matheson

The proposal for the Project Office would be taken up as an element of the Planning Round.

Although intended for project start-up costs and sub-major projects, the Technology Development Fund could be used to meet the Office's start-up costs until it was funded by the projects it oversaw, on the grounds that the project efficiencies it generated should pay for itself. Project budgets would in future need to contain an element for Project Office costs. Secretarial and policy support for the ISSS could also be located in the Project Office.

Action: Chairman

(b) Information Strategy

The Syndicate agreed at its meeting held on 9 October 2008 that the Information Strategy, approved by the Information Strategy Group in 2004, be reviewed by the Information Strategy Group. They noted that the revised strategy would be considered at the January 2009 meeting of the ISSS.

Action: Secretary, ISWG

(c) e-mail guidelines

The Syndics noted that the recently agreed email guidelines only applied to internal mailings, and that further work was needed to clarify policy on external mailings.

Action: Director UCS.

52. Annual Planning Round

The Syndicate received submissions to the annual planning round as follows:

(a) MISD (ISSS 66/08)

The Syndicate noted that MISD was within the Unified Administrative Service and Syndics could comment on, but not approve, the plan and forecasts – which had been contained within the 5% limit on increased Chest funding. The Director of the Service drew attention to the range of minor projects at various stages, including those on security, identity management, CamRIS and now a project to prepare for the Research Excellence Framework.

The Syndicate noted the business continuity and other risks (for example the vulnerability of the student admissions process) that would be managed by the

proposal for a second server room, possibly in partnership with the UCS. They therefore considered this to be a high priority.

The Director accepted these comments for the purpose of presenting his plan within the UAS.

Action: Director, MISD

(b) UCS (ISSS 67/08)

The Director drew attention to the activity based analysis in the summary of the plan and to the equipment needs summarised in table 2 on page 15. The Syndicate noted the equipment bid.

The Lapwing service now had some 4.5k users and with additional expenditure could increase coverage. Syndics discussed the UCS approach to charging, for this and for new services, and whether under an fEC approach the aim should be to establish capital funds. Syndics agreed there should be an exploration of the issue for report to a later meeting.

A development plan for the public work-station facilities in annex B had been provided at the Syndicate's request, but was a project to which the Syndicate would return. It was noted this was not simply an IT issue: it bore on teaching and learning and should also be within the remit of the Teaching and Learning Steering Group.

Syndics noted they were required to approve the UCS plan, and did so.

Action: Director, UCS

(c) CARET

The Syndicate approved the planning templates circulated as ISSS 76/08.

(d) In general:

Syndics wished to give much earlier consideration to planning issues for all the services in their remit to ensure that service plans took full account of their discussions. The next planning round, for them, began in the New Year.

Action: ISSS Business Committee

53.   Information Strategy Working Group

The Syndicate received the minutes of the fourth meeting of the Information Strategy Working Group held on 6 November 2008 as ISSS 68/08. Syndics' attention was drawn to the response to the Audit Committee on the Grant Thornton Internal Audit Report on Information Systems Business Continuity Planning (ISSS 69/08(b)). A report on Identity Management (ISSS 69/08(a)) was awaited.

Syndics noted the four priority projects of the ISWG and the progress being made. Integration of Information Strategy and network management needed to be discussed with the Registrary. The group on identity management had met four times; the Syndicate asked for a report at their next meeting.

The Syndicate agreed that someone must be identified to carry the Business Continuity recommendations through: to identify the highest priority systems, then the level of protection, and then the cost of other arrangements. Funding had been set aside in the Technology Development Fund for this work and the approach was approved.

Action: Secretary, ISWG

54.   CamTools

The Syndicate received paper ISSS 75/08 making the case for additional funding for CamTools. They noted the core running costs of £250k and the apparent difficulty of converting the project into an operational system despite what were understood to be wide benefits, but which had developed largely unplanned. £100k running costs were met by CARET. The balance could be met from the Technology Development Fund, but not as a precedent for any other operational service and only for 2009-10. The Syndicate would return to the issue in the Lent Term.

Action: ISSS Business Committee

Straightforward and Reported Business

55.   Strategic Planning – Strategy Implementation Plan

The Syndicate noted that the plan could be viewed through the ISSS homepage (Raven login and password required).

56.   ISSS Annual Cycle of Business

The Syndicate received **a** first draft of the Syndicate's annual cycle of business (ISSS 70/08) but noted that it did not include the amendments agreed by the Business Committee at their last meeting. A further copy would be circulated.

Action: Secretary

57. **Service Reports**

The Syndicate received reports from the Services as follows:

(a) MISD (ISSS 71/08)
(b) UCS (ISSS 72/08) and
(c) the UCS annual report for 2007-08 (ISSS 73/08)

58. **Membership of Authentication and Authorisation Working Group**

The Syndicate awaited ISSS Paper 74/08 with proposals for the membership of an Authentication and Authorisation Working Group

Action: ISWG Secretary

59. **Dates of next meetings**

All at 2.15pm in the Syndicate Room, The Old Schools

Thursday 22 January 2009
Thursday 19 March 2009
Thursday 21 May 2009
Thursday 9 July 2009

Dates for Business Committee meetings were being arranged.

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