

University of Cambridge

Information Strategy and Services Syndicate

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 5 July 2012 in the Syndicate Room, the Old Schools.

Present: Professor Oliver (in the Chair), Professor Howe, Mr King, Mr Matheson, Mr Norman, Dr Smith, Dr Titmus, Sir David Wallace and by standing invitation Professor Young (Pro-Vice Chancellor for Planning and Resources).

In attendance: Director, UCS; Director, MISD; Mr Hinton (for M364) and Mr. Wilson.

Apologies for absence were received from Dr Alexander, Dr Carpenter, Mr. Du Quesnay, Dr Dörrzapf, Dr Hand and Dr Walker.

There were no declarations of interest.

354. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the ISSS held on 17 May 2012 were approved.

355. Matters arising and review of action points

Action points, including the annual cycle of business and the outline programme of work, were circulated as ISSS 342.

Members were reminded that contributions and suggestions for their 2012 Annual Report were welcome.

356. Business Committee minutes

The minutes of the Business Committee meeting held on 19 June 2012 were received as ISSS 343

357. Information Technology – Strategic Aims

The ISSS are invited to review the Information Strategy – retitled *Information Technology – Strategic Aims* (circulated as ISS 344) with a view to publication as a joint Council and General Board Notice. Syndics were reminded of the current Information Strategy at: <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/reporter/2008-09/weekly/6150/6.html>.

Syndics agreed that further work was needed to turn the draft into a publishable notice. Users, for example, were not mentioned.

Action: Secretary

358. Grant Management Systems

At the last meeting the Syndicate had considered the approach to grant management systems described in the paper circulated as ISSS 334. The Syndicate had agreed to ear-mark funding from the TDF to enable recruitment but had asked for more detail about how the TDF funding would be spread across the three aspects of the project before releasing further funds (M 348). A revised paper was circulated as ISSS 345.

The first two initiatives referred to as A and B will deliver the core underpinning technology that will support the development of new capabilities in providing management information. These would be dealt with first and would lead into and provide a basis for initiative C, which would provide systems to support the life cycle management of grants. This was the largest component measured by spend. The details of C would not be available until after A and B, but each initiative would be separately approved after a scoping study. On that basis the Syndicate approved expenditure from the FHR funding for the core team for £640k to cover staff costs over the next three years.

Regular involvement by PIs as part of the project oversight was difficult – they did not have the time - but they could still be consulted *ad hoc*. It may be easier to engage with PIs later in the project when there was a product to discuss with them. The Syndicate nevertheless noted that ideally there should be one or two PIs on the Steering Group.

359. Planning Round 2012

The Syndicate noted that plans to be submitted in the next round were unlikely to propose any significant shift in direction, although some new initiatives were possible.

360. Eduroam

A paper was circulated as ISSS 346 recommending the provision of central funding to reduce the per-access point cost and a charge to those who have attached their own networking equipment to the central infrastructure.

In discussion members agreed it was desirable to introduce an incentive by reducing the charged out cost and that an attractive service and price should persuade those who did not currently buy-in. Conversion might take some time especially where there had been significant local investment but charges in these cases might be seen as “fines”, were not appropriate and that proposal was not endorsed.

A reduced unit price might increase demand substantially, but the objective was adequate coverage; new provision should not exceed what was necessary. After some discussion the Syndicate agreed that the wireless access points should be fully centrally funded since a small charge provided more disadvantages than benefits.

This central funding would not extend to Colleges but the benefits of complete coverage and standard provision should be explained to those not already using this equipment. UCS was invited to submit a paper to the Joint University/Colleges Committee.

The Syndicate endorsed the proposal for additional central funding to the UCS to enable the purchase of access points. A case needed to be made to the RMC to release funding in 2012-13.

Action: Director UCS

361. Content Management

The Syndicate received paper ISSS 347 which set out, at their request, the rationale for two content management systems. They agreed that the position could not be reversed and there was now no significant additional cost. The lesson for the future was to plan to avoid duplication at the outset.

362. Software Co-ordination

The Syndicate noted with pleasure paper ISSS 348 which included the letter to Schools introducing the co-ordination scheme. Feedback had been positive.

363. X5 Update

The Syndicate received an update on the X5 project circulated as paper ISSS 349. The project was back on track following a vendor’s delay of two months. However, after catching up on testing the software seemed sound and updates were working. The core product was expected on 7 September and the project was moving to questions of implementation with the aim of going live in mid-November. The vendor needed to recoup costs with a marketable product, reducing the risk to the University of a serious delay.

364. Estate Management Systems

A note on the replacement of the space planning/room booking and asbestos management applications used within Estate Management was circulated as ISSS 350.

Professor Young explained that he was chairing a group which aimed to make better use of teaching space, for which an effective room booking service was fundamental. The ISSS would receive an update from the group at their next meeting.

Micad (the replacement for Planon) could communicate with other systems and because it was web-based would be easy to access. UCS was working on the map replacement project and would need to discuss the interface with Micad.

The Syndicate asked for further information on interfaces between Micad and other systems generally, noting that this is an important requirement.

Members agreed there must be certainty about the security of data held offsite and asked for a report at the next meeting. Other users of Micad with sensitive data were said to be satisfied about security. Although data that would be released in response to an FOI request could no longer be regarded as confidential, that was no reason to give easy access.

Action: Estate Management

365. IT Review

The Chairman reported on what were expected to be the main conclusions of the PRC's IT Review Group. The Report was being finalised and would be received by the PRC at their first meeting next term.

366. Streaming media – impact

Sir David Wallace observed that it would be desirable to capture the impact of streaming media: was the country of origin of media requests recorded? Could the volume and destination of D Space downloads be measured?

367. Committee minutes

There had been no further meetings of the Teaching and Learning Services Steering Group since the last meeting of the Syndicate

The minutes of the meeting of the ISWG held on 7 June 2012 were circulated as ISSS 351 including a summary of the TDF. The ISWG website is:

<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/committee/iss/subcommittees/iswg/>

Minutes of the May and June 2012 meetings of the Joint Network Management Committee were circulated as ISSS 352 and 353 and were also available at:

<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/cam-only/committee/jnmc/minutes/>

The Financial Systems Committee website was:

<http://ufs.admin.cam.ac.uk/keycont/FSC/>

The HR Systems Committee website was:

<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/cam-only/committee/hr/system/>

Student Information Systems Committee papers were available at:

http://www.camsis.cam.ac.uk/cam-only/boards_groups_and_sigs/sisc/

368. University Card: Annual Report

The Annual Report on the University Card for 2010-11 was received as ISSS 354.

369. Meeting dates

Noted: the dates for meetings in 2012-13

BC	Monday 1 October 2012	12.00 pm	Treasurer's Room
ISSS	Thursday 11 October 2012	2.15 pm	Syndicate Room
BC	Monday 5 November 2012	12.00 pm	Treasurer's Room
ISSS	Thursday 15 November 2012	2.15 pm	Syndicate Room
BC	Tuesday 8 January 2013	12.00 pm	Treasurer's Room
ISSS	Thursday 17 January 2013	2.15 pm	Syndicate Room
BC	Tuesday 26 February 2013	12.00 pm	Treasurer's Room
ISSS	Thursday 7 March 2013	2.15 pm	Syndicate Room
BC	Tuesday 30 April 2013	12.00 pm	Old Schools Meeting Room
ISSS	Thursday 16 May 2013	2.15 pm	Syndicate Room
BC	Tuesday 18 June 2013	12.00 pm	Treasurer's Room
ISSS	Thursday 27 June 2013	2.15 pm	Syndicate Room

Arrangements could change The latest version of the list should be referred to.

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*PRAO
July 2012*