

University of Cambridge

Information Strategy and Services Syndicate

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 16 May 2013 in the Syndicate Room, the Old Schools.

Present: Professor Oliver (in the Chair), Dr Alexander, Dr Blackwell, Dr Carpenter Mr Carter, Mr King, Dr Lewis, Mr du Quesnay, Mr Norman, Dr Smith, Dr Walker, and by standing invitation Professor Young (Pro-Vice Chancellor for Planning and Resources).

In attendance: Director, MISD; University Librarian and Mr Wilson.

Apologies for absence were received from: Dr Dörrzapf, Mr Matheson, Sir David Wallace and Mr Weldon.

There were no declarations of interest.

423. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the ISSS held on 7 March 2013 were approved.

424. Matters arising and review of action points

Action points, the annual cycle of business and the outline programme of work (ISSS 396) were noted.

425. Business Committee minutes

Received: the minutes of the Business Committee meetings held on 26 February and 30 April 2013 (ISSS 397). The Syndicate noted that the number of Colleges without Eduroam access had reduced from four to three.

426. IT Review

The Council and General Board' second joint Report on IT infrastructure and support: <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/reporter/2012-13/weekly/6302/section5.shtml#heading2-15> had been followed by a Discussion on 23 April 2013. There had been acceptance of the main principles but a number of comments about timing and the position of the Director. The Council would consider its response on 20 May and was likely to amend the Report.

427. Data Security

The Syndicate received a note (ISSS 398) of a meeting held on 25 April 2013 to settle security issues specific to Micad, but which also made proposals for the development of a general data security policy.

Mr Dampier reported that the meeting's proposal to appoint a consultant had been modified in favour of convening a small in-house expert group, reporting to the Syndicate and widening the discussion as it developed.

Some 2012 guidance from Universities UK had come to light and there was probably other material relevant to HE. Reviews such as this could become too broad, making progress difficult. Members asked that it remained clearly focused and agreed that the aim should be to assist and enable the business of the University and not to hinder it, but with an emphasis on the security of enterprise data. They noted that internal as well as external hosting raised security issues and there was an increasing trend for software suppliers to provide the hosting. Special issues were raised when data were held in other jurisdictions and it was suggested that Legal Services should be asked for advice at some appropriate point. The X5 Project Board might also consider the security of IP.

Members

Action: Director, MISD

428. Support for Research Data Outputs – summary of recent developments

A paper by the University Librarian was received as ISSS 399.

Members noted the timetable, the possible consequences of non-compliance and the statement by HEFCE about the relevance to any subsequent REF. There were concerns about the risks to the research process of such openness, and to economic impact. Compliance was going to be expensive, but the current arrangements suggested that it would be significantly underfunded.

There was now a movement for 'open data', but organisation of datasets to make them accessible could be a time-consuming and labour-intensive (and, hence, costly) business and this would be wasted effort if it served no clear need. Meanwhile, access to important datasets retained by journals was no longer possible for those journals that held such material for only a limited time. Public repositories were often very specialised and led to the fragmentation of data from large-scale studies. Thus the management of research data was an important issue for the University as a whole, and there would be questions about ownership and the protection of IP.

Action: University Librarian

429. Information Technology – Strategic Aims: implementation

The Strategic Aims were published at:

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

A lead implementer had been identified for each of the top-level objectives (ISWG minute "Item 3" in the ISWG minutes circulated as ISSS 404 referred). A note of progress was circulated as ISSS 400.

Dr Lewis tabled charts showing the rise in wireless access from zero in August 2006 to 30k unique users in April 2013, with the ratio of users to devices being 3:2, and suggested that the maximum would be reached at about 45k users/month. Lapwing suffered from being platform dependent, although it was hoped that would change by the end of 2013. The problem with Eduroam – especially for visitors not already registered with Eduroam in some academic institution – was the complexity of initial registration and logging on for first-time users. That there was no single service across both the University and the Colleges and this baffled visitors who either had not or were not entitled to register their credentials as Eduroam users. Lapwing Ticketing was the solution for connecting these non-academic visitors and would be enabled by the end of the year.

However, for Academic visitors and current staff and students, the position was improving and there were a reducing number of areas without wireless coverage which recognised those with Eduroam credentials. Sites lacking such coverage included Addenbrookes and some Colleges.

The PVC Resources was reminded that he had agreed to discuss with Dr Lewis how the Colleges might be included in consideration for the provision of APs in pursuit of the strategic aim of a unified and seamless access to wireless networks across the Collegiate University (M372 refers).

430. X5 Update

An update (ISSS 401) on the X5 project was received, and publicity material announcing the new service was laid on the table*. The system was live from 12 May, and pFact would be unavailable for any new applications from 24 May. Any costings uncompleted by the end of July would need to transfer. pFact would be read-only from 1 August 2013.

The system worked, feedback was positive, and the Board considered that delivery had been made. The project was within budget.

The project had provided initial training and two people were retained until its end, after

which operational responsibility moved to the Research Operations Office who had yet to consider how training and support should be provided.

Members emphasised the importance of involvement between developers and users in any future project from the outset and of the important distinctions between user-centred design, agile and scrum methodologies and UAT. The last merely implies users testing a system to see it did what had it had been designed to do. While user involvement is desirable, Syndics were reminded of the difficulty in finding users willing to be involved in the development of X5.

* See also: <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/research/applying/x5/default.aspx>

431. CUFS R12 Update

An update on the CUFS R12 project was circulated as ISSS 402 – the Syndicate noted that the necessary technical resource had now been recruited and the status had been restored to “green”.

432. IT Systems Transition Project Board

Dr Lewis tabled the relocation schedule with its ten components; each of these was on track, with the one red element now reduced to amber. Some dates were unalterable and the first of these milestones had been passed. Preparation for the move of the HPCS was ahead of schedule. The crucial importance of EMBS making information available to UCS in a timely fashion was noted.

The Project Board met fortnightly under the chairmanship of Professor Young, who complimented members of both services on the high level of professionalism and commitment they had demonstrated to date.

433. Data Centre

The Data Centre was under construction. The management arrangements and assignment of space, in both of which the Syndicate would have an interest, had not yet been finalised. It was noted that there was to be capacity to expand to a fourth hall but this was not included in the first phase.

434. Operation of the Syndicate and Annual Report

Syndics were reminded that the annual cycle of business included an invitation to comment on (a) the operation of Syndicate and (b) matters to be covered in the annual report, for consideration by the Business Committee in the first instance.

Syndics were invited to make their observations to the Chairman or Secretary before the next meeting of the Business Committee on 18 June.

435. Service reports

Received: reports from UCS (ISSS 403) and MISD (ISSS 404).

The Syndicate were informed that a hacker of the University's and others' websites had been arrested and jailed. No sensitive data were exposed but the Information Commissioner had recommended that the University takes note of the incident and takes steps to secure personal and other sensitive data more effectively

436. Committee minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the ISWG held on 23 April 2013 are circulated. ISSS 405
The ISWG website is:

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

Minutes of the meeting of the Joint Network Management Committee held on 25 April 2013 are circulated. ISSS 406

The JNMC website is:

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

The next meeting of the Teaching and Learning Services Steering Group is on 17 May 2013.

Minutes of the 7 December 2012 meeting and papers for the 11 April 2013 meeting of the Financial Systems Committee are at: <http://ufs.admin.cam.ac.uk/keycont/FSC/> .

The HR Systems Committee website is:

<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/cam-only/committee/hr/system/> . The last set of minutes is 17 October 2012, there was a special meeting on 26 October and an ordinary meeting on 28 February 2013.

Student Information Systems Committee papers are available at:

http://www.camsis.cam.ac.uk/cam-only/boards_groups_and_sigs/sisc/ . Unconfirmed Minutes of the meeting on 5 March 2013 are available. The next meeting is on 3 June.

437. Meeting dates

Noted: dates for meetings in 2012-13 and 2013-14.

BC	Tuesday 18 June 2013	12.00 pm	Old Schools Meeting Room
ISSS	Thursday 27 June 2013	2.15 pm	Syndicate Room
BC	Monday 30 September 2013	12.00pm	Treasurer's Room
ISSS	Thursday 10 October 2013	2.15pm	Syndicate Room
BC	Tuesday 5 November 2013	12.00pm	Treasurer's Room
ISSS	Thursday 14 November 2013	2.15pm	Syndicate Room
BC	Tuesday 7 January 2014	12.00pm	Treasurer's Room
ISSS	Thursday 16 January 2014	2.15pm	Syndicate Room
BC	Tuesday 25 February 2014	12.00pm	Treasurer's Room
ISSS	Thursday 6 March 2014	2.15pm	Syndicate Room
BC	Tuesday 29 April 2014	12.00pm	Treasurer's Room
ISSS	Thursday 8 May 2014	2.15pm	Syndicate Room
BC	Tuesday 17 June 2014	12.00pm	Treasurer's Room
ISSS	Thursday 26 June 2014	2.15pm	Council Room

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