

University of Cambridge

Information Strategy and Services Syndicate

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 18 November 2010 in the Syndicate Room, the Old Schools.

Members present: Professor Littlewood (in the Chair), Dr Alexander, Mr. Du Quesnay, Dr Ellington, Mr Matheson, Mr Norman, Professor Oliver, Mr Richardson, Dr Robertson, Sir David Wallace and Mr. Warbrick.

With: Professor Young (Pro-Vice Chancellor for Planning and Resources); Directors of Finance, MISD and UCS; Mr. Wilson (Secretary).

Apologies for absence were received from: Dr Carpenter, Professor Howe and Dr Walker.

There were no declarations of interest relating to matters on the agenda.

The Chairman welcomed Dr Alexander and Dr Ellington to their first meeting.

207. Membership

Dr Gavin Alexander (Faculty of English) had been appointed by the General Board.

208. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the ISSS held on 12 October 2010 were approved.

209. Matters arising and review of action points

Action points with the note of the annual cycle of business and programme of work were received as ISSS 230.

210. Business Committee minutes

The minutes of the Business Committee meeting held on 4 October and 1 November 2010 were received as ISSS 231.

211. Review of Information Strategy

The Chairman reported that he had met on 3 November with the chairs of the three strategic groups and the chair of the Teaching and Learning Support Services Steering Group. Some of the groups had begun their work. The Syndicate would be kept informed.

212. Planning

The Syndicate considered the report to the PRC with recommendations for funding in 2011-12, circulated as ISSS 232.

Professor Oliver said that the Services and the ISWG had been careful only to propose funding on essentials, with the recommendations set out at the start of the paper. Annex A contained the list of possible projects whose full total cost averaged about £5m annually. The ISWG's recommendations included a regular Allocation of £0.8m to the Technology Development Fund because it was not possible to foresee requirements too far ahead, but the fund should not accumulate and excess funding should be returned to the Chest.

Dr Lewis reported that the PRC would be considering at their next meeting a registration under the capital projects process of a proposal for a data centre at West Cambridge. This was a feasibility study only at this stage; the ISSS would be invited to consider it in due course.

The CUDO project for replacement of the alumni system might be added to the list when further details were available.

Professor Young said that the PRC would consider the recommendations, but decisions on funding would have to wait until after the annual grant letter was received in March.

The Syndicate accordingly recommended that:

The PRC approve for 2011-12:

The annual Allocation to the TDF of £0.8 million

An Allocation of £580K for the Research Grants Financial Management project noting the recurrent post-project costs of £80k in and after 2012-13.

An allocation of £100k to enable implementation of recommendations of the Records Management and Document Management projects.

An addition of £102K to the MISD baseline allocation to meet the costs of the CamTools production service.

An allocation of £112K for Institutional Repository Development from 2011/12

An allocation of £250K for Finance & HR Systems Strategy in 2011/12

The PRC include in the forecasts for 2012-13 and beyond projects and provisional costs as follows (recommendations for Allocations for these purposes being subject, where necessary, to the presentation of a business case in due course):

TDF £0.8 million per annum for the full period of the plan

Funding for UCS equipment as shown in paragraph 32

Implementation of recommendations of the Records Management project: £100K per annum from 2012-13 until 2014-15

Financial & HR Systems Strategy: £4 million to be earmarked for 2012-13 to 2013-14

Voyager: £2 million around 2014

And:

Note the potential costs of the replacement of the Alumni System, pending presentation of a business case.

Note that funding for the CUDN replacement will be met from service charges.

Approve the registration of the Financial & HR Systems Strategy project under the Capital Projects Process.

Action: Secretary

213. X5 project

The Syndicate received a report on the X5 project circulated as ISSS 233¹. The paper set out four options. A decision was urgent. The project had proceeded thus far on the assumption of a partnership with Oxford but options could be pursued by Cambridge alone. After an extensive discussion, the Syndicate agreed that the Project Board should meet and be assured on the points that had been made. The Board's recommendation should then be circulated to the Syndicate for approval by correspondence. Any member at that time could ask for a special meeting. Syndics present would be likely to agree if the recommendation was for the same option preferred by Oxford, but they would not approve self-build.

¹ The Syndicate agreed that this paper was commercially sensitive and should be exempt from publication.

The X5 Project Board was constituted as:

Professor Littlewood (Chairman)
Mr Dampier
Mr Du Quesnay
Mr Matheson
Mr Reavely

Action: Mr Dampier

214. Finance and HR Systems

The Syndicate considered a strategy paper circulated as ISSS 234². Mr Dampier described the background to the proposals and that there were attractive options beyond the upgrade to CUFS that would otherwise be required.

The Syndicate agreed that the proposals should be developed further by a joint HR/Finance working party which would advise the Syndicate in due course. The proposal was not for a reform of the University financial and HR procedures, but for review of the systems that supported them although that might very well give opportunities to improve business processes.

The word “upgrade” would be deleted from the proposed scope of the review (para 2(a)(iii)), and interfaces with other systems included, thus widening the options to be considered. The steering group membership should be drawn from both the Finance and HR Systems Committees. Colleges had an interest and would be represented; the Director of the UCS – or his representative - should be a member. The group should be able to co-opt additional members and there should be strong user support, but to keep the group small it might want to involve users through expert groups dealing with particular points.

Action: Mr Dampier

215. Annual Reports and review of ISSS

The Syndicate agreed that any final comments on the draft annual report for 2009-10 (ISSS 235) should be submitted immediately after the meeting and the report then finalised for submission as was required to the Council, the General Board and the Senior Tutors' and Bursars' Committees.

Action: Secretary

216. Calendars

The Syndicate were informed that the Computing Service had rolled out Google Apps for Education Calendars on 19 October. A report on the project was circulated as ISSS 236 for information.

The Syndicate noted that departments which had set up Google Apps for their own sub-domains of cam.ac.uk posed a Data Protection risk because they were covered by Google's standard contract terms; it was agreed that it would be better if they were brought within the University's contract terms which dealt with that issue.

Action: Director, UCS

² The Syndicate agreed that this paper was commercially sensitive and should be exempt from publication.

217. Acceptable Use policy

The Syndicate consider paper ISSS 237 which asked the Syndicate how it would like to proceed with a review of the Acceptable Use Policy noting that the policy fulfilled a legal obligation and that any changes to it would require the ISSS making formal recommendations to the Council and General Board.

The Syndicate agreed that there was no need to revise the policy but it should be placed within the suite of other ISSS policies and the links to it reviewed.

Action: Director, UCS

218. Review of JISC

The ISWG at their last meeting had agreed a number of comments on the terms of reference of the HEFCE review of JISC as requested in a circular (ISSS 238). These were duly forwarded but HEFCE replied *"that the invitation was to submit comments on the HEFCE review of JISC in relation to the terms of reference, not comments about the terms of reference. The review is already well underway and therefore the terms of reference are already agreed. The deadline for responses was close of play yesterday, however we can extend that deadline for Cambridge until next Wednesday, if you are able to send comments by then."* [ie by 17 November] Responses were not limited to institutions. Syndics and others were invited to respond as individuals because there was too little time to prepare another University reply.

219. Joint Network Management Committee

The minutes of the JNMC's meeting on 23 June 2010 were received (ISSS 239).

220. Information Systems and Strategy Group

The minutes of the ISWG's meeting on 28 October 2010 were received (ISSS 240).

221. Service reports

Received: MISD operational reports (ISSS 242).

222. € Power savings

The Syndicate were informed that the Computing Service's had introduced locally controlled automated power saving facilities on its Managed Cluster workstations in December 2009 and had been monitoring the power savings achieved by this means across the cluster sites throughout the year. The results were presented in paper ISSS 243.

223. Risk Register

The Computing Service had recently reviewed its Risk Register and presented the updated register for the Syndicate's information as paper ISSS 244

224. Sub-Committee annual reports

The Syndicate had requested brief annual reports from sub-committees to assist with the compilation of the Syndicate's annual report. Reports from the ISWG and JNMC were circulated as paper ISSS 245

225. Meeting dates

Noted: the schedule of meetings for 2010-11. (Highlighted: changes to dates and times.)

BC	Tuesday 14 December 2010	2.15pm	Treasurer's Room
ISSS	Thursday 20 January 2011	2.15pm	Syndicate Room
BC	Monday 21 February 2011	11.00am	Treasurer's Room
ISSS	Thursday 17 March 2011	2.15pm	Syndicate Room
BC	Monday 18 April 2011	11.00am	Treasurer's Room
ISSS	Thursday 19 May 2011	2.15pm	Syndicate Room
BC	Monday 13 June 2011	11.00am	Treasurer's Room
ISSS	Tuesday 5 July 2011	2.15pm	Syndicate Room

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PRAO,
December 2010