University of Cambridge

Information Strategy and Services Syndicate

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 5 July 2011 in the Syndicate Room, the Old Schools.

Members present: Professor Oliver (in the Chair), Dr Blackwell, Dr Carpenter, Mr. Du Quesnay, Dr Ellington, Professor Howe, Mr Matheson, Mr Norman, Mr Richardson, Dr Walker, Sir David Wallace, Mr. Warbrick. Mr Wood; and, by standing invitation, Professor Young (Pro-Vice Chancellor for Planning and Resources).

In attendance: Director of UCS, Director, MISD; University Librarian, Director of Finance; Mr. Wilson.

Apologies for absence were received from: Dr Alexander and the Registrary

The Chairman declared an interest in respect of his Department's use of Matlab (M277).

268. D Space

The Syndicate received a presentation by Mr Chris Rusbridge on his external evaluation, commissioned by the UL, of the DSpace@Cambridge service. The Report and summary had been circulated as ISSS 272. DSpace served the expectations of funders and publishers for public access to data and although such a service was expected of the University, it was done particularly well. There were some questions about integration and with branding: it was too closely associated with "technology" and needed wider appeal: the number of theses appeared low. Articles in journals acted as advertisements for the data; if there were to be open access, archiving could not be selective.

The evaluation identified a number of questions: should non-research material, such as personal blogs and websites be archived? DSpace served many and varied purposes and fulfilled a need, but should it be this system? What archiving requirements should there be?

Provided there were assurances about access and the perpetual readability of such archived material, and there were clear advantages in terms of space, capacity and cost, the Syndicate agreed that the Board of Graduate Studies should be asked to consider requiring the deposit of an electronic copy of each PhD thesis, and whether that requirement should be extended to Masters' theses.

The Syndicate agreed a working group should be convened to take forward the programme of work and report back in due course to the Syndicate.

Dr Rusbridge was thanked for his presentation.

269. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the ISSS held on 19 May 2011 were approved.

270. Business Committee minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Business Committee held on 20 June (ISSS 273) were received.

271.   Matters arising and review of action points

A note of action points had been circulated, including the annual cycle of business and the programme of work (ISSS 274). Syndics were invited to suggest matters to be included in the programme of work for 2011-12.

272.   X5 Project

Mr Dampier said that the project was proceeding well although a Project Sponsor was needed to succeed Mr Reavley. Oxford and Cambridge were now more aligned in their outlook. PWC had been engaged for project assurance of the joint project and the Cambridge specific element.

Two PIs had been engaged to help with development of the screens, but more volunteers would be appreciated. An issue was the cost of making the system accessible to casual users and how much customisation to request on a system that Unit 4 wished to make commercially available. It was important that user interface design was not merely a cosmetic matter, but that it be based on ways of working.

The Syndicate asked to receive Project Board minutes.

273.   Review of Information Strategy

The Registrary introduced the report of the Management Systems Strategy Group (ISSS 262) deferred from the previous meeting. The main finding of the Group was that the emphasis should change from implementation of big systems towards identifying needs and serving them.

In discussion Syndics agreed that Cambridge did not and should not aim to write its own enterprise systems, but there had been too little prior analysis of business processes and of the efficiencies and gains of changing them instead of adapting commercial systems. No system need do everything for everybody – a core set of functions, modular add-ons, and good communication between systems, including institutions' own systems, might be a better model. In some cases it might be more efficient for institutions to develop custom IT solutions than to adapt their business processes. Another approach was to cease to think in terms of serving the traditional functional areas for administrative systems (finance, HR…), but of what support was needed for particular roles. Motivation was another important criterion – users had to want to use the system.

Processes behind the screens should be invisible. Usability was perceived differently by different groups and was not a testing issue, but one of fundamental design early in the process. Both casual and expert users at the moment had the same experience, but some did not need access to full functionality and there was no reason why there should not be different screens to suit different users, and students were currently engaged in helping design CamSIS interfaces.

The Syndicate agreed these aspirations should be added to the report, and the ISWG would now combine the four submissions into a single report for forwarding to the IT Review.

The Registrary said how useful the process had been, and thanked the members of his Group

274.   IT Review

The Syndicate noted the IT review's 31 August deadline, and that it would difficult to agree a submission before then. Bearing in mind that the Chairman was a member of the Review Group they agreed that it would be preferable to seek a meeting between the Group and Syndics.

275.   Web content management

Syndics had considered at their previous meeting some proposals for content management systems and agreed that a cover document setting out the overall strategy should be prepared for the next meeting of the ISWG (M258). The revised paper discussed at the ISWG (see M281 below) was circulated as ISSS 275. The Syndicate considered the recommendations and the request for funding and noted that all users would have access to both systems. Templates would also be available under both systems to help with branding and to make it easier to produce a consistent presentation across the site, but the templates would not be compulsory below the top level. Syndics agreed that the Webmasters Forum should be consulted and a report made to the next ISWG.

The Syndicate agreed the TDF could support the development and migration costs, but not the licencing and operational costs (costs to be met from the TDF are underlined in the annex to these minutes).

276.   Student information system – governance

The Syndicate considered the proposed new post-project governance for the Student Information System circulated as ISSS 276, and modelled on the existing HR System and Finance System Committees.

In approving the proposals Syndics noted there were a number of interface issues the new Committee would need to address.   They asked that all Systems Committees' agenda and minutes be made available on the web. They also asked that they should be informed of the CamSIS budget through the annual planning process.

277.   MatLab

The Syndicate had discussed the purchase of MatLab at their meetings on 20 May 2010 (M171) and 2 July 2010 (M178). Dr Padman had now written to propose a centrally purchased and funded site-wide licence, which would cost about £60k pa, or £80k pa if it included students.

The Syndicate agreed that in this specific case a topslice for a University wide licence, to include students and their personal computers, would be advantageous and efficient. A case for funding should be made in the planning return.

On the general issue of how to deal with requests of this sort the Syndicate agreed that a software management process similar to the Journals Co-ordination Scheme should be investigated.

278.   Service reports

MISD's service reports circulated as ISSS 277 were received.

279.   Information Strategy Working Group

The Syndicate approved the changes to the constitution of the ISWG proposed in their minutes (ISSS 280) including the appointment of Dr Steven Hand (Computer Laboratory) as Chairman from 1 October 2011.

280. **Minutes of other bodies**

The Syndicate received minutes of the following:

Finance and HR Systems Review Steering Group (15 May 2011); HR Systems Committee (15 June 2011); Information Strategy Working Group (19 May 2011) (ISSS 278 – 280)

281. **Meeting dates**

Noted: the schedule of meetings for 2011-12.

	BC	Monday 3 October 2011	12pm	Treasurer's Room
ISSS		Thursday 20 October 2011	2.15pm	Syndicate Room
	BC	Tuesday 8 November 2011	12pm	Treasurer's Room
ISSS		Thursday 17 November 2011	2.15pm	Syndicate Room
	BC	Tuesday 20 December 2011	12pm	Treasurer's Room
ISSS		Thursday 19 January 2012	2.15pm	Syndicate Room
	BC	Tuesday 28 February 2012	12pm	Treasurer's Room
ISSS		Thursday 15 March 2012	2.15pm	Syndicate Room
	BC	Tuesday 24 April 2012	12pm	Treasurer's Room
ISSS		Thursday 17 May 2012	2.15pm	Syndicate Room
	BC	Tuesday 19 June 2012	12pm	Treasurer's Room
ISSS		Thursday 5 July 2012	2.15pm	Syndicate Room

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PRAO,
July 2011

Annex

WEB CONTENT MANAGEMENT PROPOSAL

Elements to be funded by the TDF <u>underlined</u>

MISD Costs excluding VAT	*Capital 2011/12*	*Capital 2012/13*	*Capital 2013/14*	*Annual Cost*
Content Management platform setup & licenses	£100,000			
Annual Support				£16,000
<u>Initial configuration of system</u>	**<u>£55,000</u>**			
Technical training	£5,000			
Funds to migrate content from existing institutional web sites	£15,000	£10,000		
<u>Templates creation for new house style</u>	**<u>£10,000</u>**			
Additional hardware Storage	£15,000			£2,250

UCS Costs excluding VAT	*Capital 2011/12*	*Capital 2012/13*	*Capital 2013/14*	*Annual Cost*
Funds to migrate content from existing institutional web sites to CMS	£15,000	£10,000	£10,000	
<u>Templates creation for new house style</u>	**<u>£10,000</u>**			
Additional hardware Storage	£15,000			£2,250
Proxy Servers hardware		£18,000		£2,700
<u>Development of automated archiving to DSpace</u>		**<u>£20,000</u>**		
TOTAL	**£ 240,000**	**£ 58,000**	**£ 10,000**	**£ 20,950**
TDF funding	**£ 75,000**	**£ 20,000**		

<u>PLUS VAT</u>