

University of Cambridge

Information Strategy and Services Syndicate

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 14 November 2013 in the Syndicate Room, the Old Schools.

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

In attendance: Director, MISD; Director, UCS; Mr Wilson and Mrs Boyle (for M456) and Professor Leslie (for M461).

Apologies for absence were received from: Dr Alexander, Mr Carter, Dr Dörrzapf and Mr Matheson.

There were no declarations of interest.

The Syndicate noted that this was Professor Oliver's last meeting and wished him well for the future.

451. Constitution and membership 2013-14

The constitution, terms of reference and membership of the Syndicate were circulated as ISSS 415. The Syndicate:

(a) Noted that Dr Hand had left the University.

(b) Co-opted Mr Weldon for a further term of office from 1 January 2013.

(b) Were informed that following Professor Oliver's resignation as Chairman with effect from 31 December 2013 the Vice-Chancellor had appointed Professor Young as his deputy to Chair the Syndicate from 1 January 2014 until the establishment of the Information Services Committee as its successor body.

452. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the ISSS held on 27 June 2013 were approved. The meeting arranged on 10 October had been cancelled.

453. Matters arising and review of action points

Action points were circulated as ISSS 416. The note included the annual cycle of business and the outline programme of work.

An Operations Manager had been appointed to the Data Centre. The Syndicate asked for clarity about the constitutional and governing structure for the Centre and assumed that it would submit regular reports to the ISSS/ISC. The Syndicate expected to be able to comment on the Centre's purposes.

A report on the new Room Booking system would be available in due course. It was noted that booking examination rooms for candidates with special needs was a particular difficulty which the system might address.

454. Business Committee minutes

Minutes of the Business Committee held on 30 September 2013 were received as ISSS 417.

455. Action taken since the last meeting

(1) The Syndicate had approved by circulation the request for TDF funding for central support for web publishing as set out in ISSS 418. The Syndicate noted that REF preparation had been cited as the reason for urgent approval but in retrospect was not needed to serve that purpose. The support was still needed, but there were issues about departments being

unaware of the templates. Problems of communication could be addressed through the network of IT co-ordinators. The aim was not for all pages to look the same but for the adoption of a corporate style, especially at the higher levels. Adoption of the new content management system should make future style changes easier.

(2) The Chairman had approved the release of £131k of the R12 £210k contingency funding (allocated to and held in the Finance Division) for the purposes set out in ISSS 419.

456. JISC, Google and the Cloud

The Syndicate has expressed concerns about data security on cloud based and hosted systems and at the last meeting (M442) asked to receive draft guidelines and a briefing on other issues to be addressed. That report had been unavoidably delayed by the removal of UCS and MISD and would be received at the next meeting.

The Syndicate had also noted the briefing by UUK dated 23 July 2012 on Cyber Security (ISSS 410); it now received as ISSS 420 a further note on the Information Sharing Partnership, membership of which was open to UK universities.

Mrs Rosemary Boyle from the Legal Services Office briefed the Syndicate on JANET's negotiations with the main cloud services providers, and gave a legal perspective, based on case work, of the opportunities and risks of cloud service provision. The background to the briefing was that Janet, part of the JISC group, whose primary purpose was to provide network infrastructure and related services for schools, colleges and universities in the UK, had announced a major framework agreement with Google Apps for Education <http://www.jisc.ac.uk/news/jisc-signs-framework-agreement-with-google-apps-for-education-08-oct-2013> stating that "The agreement will make it easier for colleges and universities to make the move to Google Apps for Education and open up the free online collaboration and communication benefits it offers to more staff and students."

Mrs Boyle's confidential presentation slides and background documents were circulated as ISSS 421¹.

In a long discussion the Syndicate noted the definitional problems and that use of so-called cloud services was now rife – they were convenient and free and gave ready access for individuals from both personal and work domains. There were risks in terms of data ownership and its location, which some understood and may think the convenience outweighed the risk, but many users were likely to be unaware of them. The risk was limited to individuals' actions. Storage of corporate data was tightly controlled, but alternatives already existed.

Members agreed a security policy was urgent and necessary, and had recently been identified as a need by the Board of Scrutiny to which the Council would have to respond. Members considered the scope of a policy.

A technical solution to denying access to a particular service was impracticable or impossible. An outright ban would be futile, but might be necessary for a particular service if the risk was very high. The risk of some services might be so low as to be capable of endorsement. In-house development of alternatives which provided the same or a better level of convenience and functionality might be an option, but at a cost and the solution would not be immediate. A fifth option was to take advantage of the JISC arrangements and perhaps go further by bringing an increasing range of services within scope of a legal framework.

The policy, the review of the risks, and the response were likely to be progressive. As a first step as much activity as possible should be brought within the JISC framework.

The ISWG was asked (a) to look at the range of services in use and which might be covered by a policy (b) see which were problematic and which could be brought in scope of a framework (c) consider options for in-house development of alternatives and (d) oversee the urgent preparation of a Data Security Policy.

Action: Secretary, ISWG

¹ Commercially sensitive and withheld from publication.

457. Voyager replacement: roadmap

The replacement of Voyager had been registered under the Capital Projects Process and the Project Roadmap was now circulated as ISSS 422. The Syndicate noted its request for College and departmental library engagement had been addressed and that modest upfront costs had necessarily been committed by the UL at this stage to engage a project manager, at the ULs' risk pending approval of the project costs and release of funding. Funding had been earmarked in the annual bid (see M458 below), but the capital requirement may change depending on the recommended solution.

The Concept Paper would be received at the next meeting of the Syndicate including a proposal to release the first tranche of funding and with details of project management and accountability. The project board should be active as soon as possible; the project manager would be engaging with Colleges.

The aim was a single system used by all libraries.

458. Planning Round 2013

A draft ISSS bid to the PRC was circulated as ISSS 423 setting out the annual requests for funding for projects, for the TDF and for other forecast expenditure which was not met from within annual Allocations, for the next year and for the rest of the planning period.

The Syndicate endorsed the transfer of recurrent funding from the project fund to MISD and UCS core allocations with a consequent reduction in this provision; the separate provision for equipment should also be rolled into the UCS Allocation. The equipment fund was not used to purchase School equipment although the UCS might host and operate School purchases.

The Alumni system project was being scoped and provision had been included for the project. A TDF application was probable. The Syndicate noted with concern that the project board did not seem to include IT expertise.

Separate allocations for CHRIS and CamSIS development were endorsed; CUFS development was funded by the Finance Division.

A modest amount had been included for future project development which the ISWG should review.

The TDF had accumulated a considerable surplus from annual underspends and the ISWG was also asked to recommend what level of funding was appropriate.

The Syndicate endorsed the Computing Services planning return circulated as ISSS 424 and approved the Network and Managed Cluster charges for 2014-15 as set out in the paper.

The UCS return did not include provision for the running costs of the Data Centre. Annual costs – including maintenance and utilities - were estimated at £1.8m, £0.7m of which would be met by Cambridge Assessment. One third of the balance would be a cost to UCS and the remainder was a charge to High Performance Computing.

Action: Secretary ISSS; Secretary ISWG

459. X5 Update

The Syndicate received an update on the X5 project circulated as ISSS 433, reporting that the project was now formally closed and the board disbanded. Members noted that despite every effort the low rates of user involvement and feedback during development had continued, but a user group had been formed. There was some concern that the system could not cope with collaborative projects – and that would be raised with the Research Office.

460. R12

The R12 project was on course for implementation in April 2014 and the team was fully resourced. The need for long term planning for the main systems remained, but was made more difficult by the major upgrades being out of step.

461. IT Systems Transition Project Board

The post project report was circulated as ISSS 432. Professor Young, as Chairman of the Project Board said that the potential for major disruption had been averted by the Board's hands-on approach and by the active engagement of all parties. The UCS deserved particular credit for the professional way in which the system migration was managed. The Syndicate agreed congratulations were due – noting that the process had been an experience; the lessons learned were set out in section 4 of the report.

462. Transition Advisory Group

A note of the first meeting was circulated as ISSS 425. Professor Leslie, Chairman of the Group and attending for this item, explained the Group's approach.

- TAG was not intervening in the day to day running of MISD or UCS. The TAG would respond to any request from the Directors if they wished to make changes beyond internal changes.
- TAG had considered the recommendations that it would make to Council on structures beyond the ISC. The approach was not to tie the incoming Director's hands with a set of committees. The Teaching and Learning committee would remain in the same form as at present. The Director would be expected to determine how advice was received and opportunities brought to their attention; business systems would be overseen as determined by the Registry and the Director. Details of the recommendations would emerge later in the term.
- The TAG would be recommending that the HPCS become part of IS when the new Director was in place with the continuation of the Scientific Advisory Committee to formalize user engagement in HPCS decisions.
- It would be sensible to continue with the JNMC under its current title.
- The TAG was gathering information to provide to the incoming Director, in particular how funding worked across all elements of the new IS. TAG hoped to make some recommendations on simplifying funding streams in order to make planning rounds simpler from IS's point of view.
- TAG was wrestling with the issue of broad user engagement (including the administration and Colleges) in IS and may recommend the establishment of a User Champion (with budget) to continually seek views and ideas from a broad range of users.
- The TAG would be producing materials for a consultation on reforming career structure (including future contracts) for Computer Officers to provide greater flexibility, mobility and opportunity.

The TAG should note that School IT committees would continue to exist and unless the ISC was to undertake all the roles of the Syndicate some work would need to be delegated. Noting the Syndicate's annual cycle of business the TAG might wish to consider what roles could be delegated and who to.

463. TDF: application for funding for an IT system for Fundraising

An application for funding from the TDF was circulated as ISSS 426; the Director of MISD confirmed that £20k should be sufficient. The initial funding was for a consultancy (which has already started) and investigation of the options which should be completed by April 2014. A detailed proposal would follow in the usual way.

The Syndicate approved the request for £20k funding from the TDF but were concerned to hear that no IT professional had yet been invited to join the CUDA-led project. That was sensible for any IT project but specifically for this project which it was understood included "Raven for Life" as one element of the strategy.

464. TDF: policy and reports

The latest TDF summary was circulated as annex B to paper ISSS 423 (see M 458 above).

The ISWG at their meeting on 26 September 2013 (see ISSS 431, item 2) had noted that reports were required at the conclusion of TDF funded projects but that in some cases there was a very long interval between approval and completion.

The Syndicate approved the ISWG's proposals that it should be a condition that reports were submitted at intervals of at least twelve months until the project was completed and that TDF bids from sponsors who had not submitted reports on earlier funding would not be approved.

Reports on the following had now been received and would be considered by the ISWG when it next met:

- UAS allocation of TDF – 2011-12
- UAS allocation of TDF – 2012-13
- Project 3 - CamTools transition
- Project 5 – Closure: Search
- Project 6 – Closure: Environmental Monitoring
- Project 7 – Closure: Identity Management
- Project 9 – Final Report – Research Grants Costing Tool
- Project 10 – Final Report – Research Grants Financial Management
- Project 11 – Final Report – REF Support System
- Project 12 – Final Report – Finance and HR Systems Strategy Review
- Project 15 – Web Content Management
- Project 16 – Closure: Web Content Management
- Project 21 – Teaching Space Utilisation (interim report)

See also M 465 below.

465. Moodle project report

An update was attached as ISSS 427 on the pilot sponsored by the ISSS to develop a Moodle capability to support Teaching and Learning in the University. The project had aroused considerable interest at institutional level and implementations were about to go live for English and for the NVST.

The project would need continued funding and would be an element for the current planning round.

466. HEFCE consultation on JISC subscriptions

An e-mail from the chair of JISC to the Vice-Chancellor was circulated as ISSS 428 setting out a new subscription arrangement and referring to a HEFCE consultation (deadline 6 December) at: <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/year/2013/201321/name,83224,en.html>

The HFCE consultation included the following proposal:

"We [HEFCE] have therefore included in the draft financial memorandum (paragraphs 62 and 63 of the draft financial memorandum) a requirement that HEIs subscribe to Jisc from August 2014 to July 2017, at which point we will consider the situation again. Jisc subscription will include the existing subscription to JANET, which HEIs have paid for some time."

The Syndicate noted that the JISC subscription would combine the cost of JANET with the cost of other services. JANET was essential; the University should have a choice over the rest. Other institutions had the same reservation and the point should be covered in the University's response.

467. Annual Report

The Syndicate approved Annual Report, circulated as ISSS 429, to the Council and the General Board and the Senior Tutors' and Bursars' Committees as required by the terms of reference.

The report again mentioned the Syndicate's proposal that support for project management should be a specific funded role, and hoped it would be considered by the Director and the ISC. Otherwise, the report described good progress in a number of areas. The Syndicate had been concerned since the announcement of the IT Review to avoid planning blight and had published its Information Strategy which it hoped would be a useful starting point for the new ISC.

The ISC might also wish to take account of the Syndicate's annual cycle of business.

468. Appointment of Chair, IT Purchasing Group

Dr Kearsley had resigned his chairmanship of the IT Purchasing Group with effect from 1 October 2013. The Syndicate agreed to invite Dr Richard Mee (UCS), who was willing to serve, to chair the Group.

Details of the group were at:

<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/purchasing/groups/it/index.shtml>

469. HEFCE consultation on open access

HEFCE issued a consultation on open access published at <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/year/2013/201316/name.82765.en.html> with a deadline of 30 October for a reply. The University's reply is on the Open Access website at <https://www.openaccess.cam.ac.uk/about>.

470. Operational Reports

The Syndicate received the operational report from MISD as ISSS 430 and the reports from UCS included in ISSS 424.

471. Committee minutes

The ISWG website is:

<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/committee/iss/subcommittees/iswg/> Minutes for the most recent meeting on 26 September were circulated as ISSS 431. The October meeting had been cancelled.

Minutes of the meeting of the Joint Network Management Committee held on 3 October were published on the JNMC website:

<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/> . There had been no additions since the last meeting of the Syndicate.

The HR Systems Committee website was:

<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/cam-only/committee/hr/system/> . The last set of minutes was for 28 February 2013 and the last agenda for 13 May 2013.

Student Information Systems Committee papers were available at:

http://www.camsis.cam.ac.uk/cam-only/boards_groups_and_sigs/sisc/ . Papers and minutes for the meetings of its Business Committee on 9 August and of the Committee itself on 8 November had been published.

Teaching and Learning Steering Group minutes for the meeting on 1 November 2013 were circulated as ISSS 434.

472. Meeting dates

Noted: dates for meetings in 2013-14. This list may change and the latest version should be referred to. Recent changes were identified as follows.

BC	Tuesday 7 January 2014	12.00pm <u>11.00am</u>	Treasurer's Room <u>Professor Young's Office</u>
ISSS	Thursday 16 January 2014	2.15pm	Syndicate Room
BC	Tuesday 25 February 2014	12.00pm <u>3.00pm</u>	Treasurer's Room <u>Professor Young's Office</u>
ISSS	Thursday 6 March 2014	2.15pm	Syndicate Room
BC	Tuesday 29 April <u>28 April</u> 2014	12.00pm	Treasurer's Room <u>Professor Young's Office</u>
ISSS	Thursday 8 May 2014	2.15pm	Syndicate Room
BC	Tuesday 17 June 2014	12.00pm <u>10.00 am</u>	Treasurer's Room <u>Professor Young's Office</u>
ISSS	Thursday 26 June 2014	2.15pm	Council Room

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