



**School IT Committee Meeting**

**Wednesday, 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2018**

**Present:**

Gordon Smith (Chair) (GS)  
Richard Bartlett (RB)  
Caroline Edmonds (CE)  
Matt Burgess (MB)  
Nigel Berryman (NB)  
Bertie Gottgens (BG)  
Andrew Leedham (AL)  
John Sinclair (JS)  
Guy Williams (GW)  
Litsa Biggs (LB)  
Mary Dixon-Woods (MDW)  
Chris Wallace (CW),

**1. Apologies:** Randy Read (RR), Guy Robinson (GR), Lydia Drumright (LD), Soren Brage (SB) and Dennis Norris (DN)

**2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of last School IT Committee meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> November were approved.

**3. Matters Arising**

RB gave the Committee a brief progress update on GDPR. He said GDPR activity had significantly moved on since the last meeting; a toolkit was issued to Department Administrators and Heads of School/Department just after the last Committee meeting, and three subsequent updates had also been issued. The School Division Heads had met to co-ordinate efforts within the School Office. Progress was mixed, and visibility of progress within departments was currently limited. Guidance from the Health Research Authority (HRA), NHS Digital and the Medical Research Council was currently limited given that the bill had not yet been passed (although MDW pointed out that HRA had now issued guidance), and for that reason he expected work on compliance with GDPR to continue throughout 2018. He added it was not expected that the higher education sector would be the highest priority to inspect as soon as the bill became law, although recent events with Cambridge Analytica could change this perception. MDW also reported that the Wellcome Trust had done some good work on guidance in this area. A brief discussion on genomic data then ensued and RB confirmed that these data were not classed as personal data for the time being.

**4. Policy**

RB confirmed that there were no updates on policy.

**5. Information Security**

RB informed the Committee that there was no significant change to the cyber security risk, he added that there was a gradual but continued improvement in security, but previous pockets of poor provision remained. He said he planned to renew efforts to highlight and address those risk areas, taking advantage of the planned promotion of the Data Protection and Cyber Security training resulting from GDPR.

## **6. Strategic planning**

RB gave a brief update on strategic planning. He said that CSCS was currently going through a planning exercise to determine what projects it could deliver in the next 12-18 months; demand for change currently exceeded resources, so CSCS would have to prioritise effectively. Currently committed projects included:

- I. The provisioning of network infrastructure in the new Capella building.
- II. A storage refresh project which would enable CSCS to reduce storage costs for users.
- III. A new Service Desk Management system for CSCS called Ivanti.
- IV. Various development projects, primarily the VLE development backlog and the Autism Research Centre research web application.

A discussion about the University's long term strategy for storage then ensued. RB told the Committee that he thought that CSCS would eventually manage services for users on someone else's hardware (possibly a cloud storage provider). He added that the long term direction of travel would become more apparent in the next year or two.

## **7. Performance**

RB said that CSCS had completed its upgrade to Exchange 2013; it was an almost seamless process except for some knock-on effect on shared mailboxes.

Service performance was averaging 90% year to date, but was trending downwards due to staff recruitment and retention issues within CSCS.

## **8. CSCS Finances**

RB referred to the half yearly report on the finances which was circulated before the meeting. He said that there was nothing extraordinary to report and the finances were fairly healthy.

MDW highlighted the funding issues with grant providers who view IT costs as overheads which they were not obliged to cover, as they were free at the point of use for users. RB advised her that some services could potentially fall into the category of "specialist support services" through categorisation as a "Small Research Facility" and these should be covered (though the process of categorising CSCS services in this way had not yet begun). CE added that under the restructuring of services being planned for UIS, Chest funds might pay for some services and it was important to ensure that CSCS received a share of the UEF/grant awards set aside to deliver these universal services, if they were delivering qualifying services.

## **9. University IT (UIS and ISC)**

AL informed the Committee that the new UIS director was likely to be appointed in early May. He said that the UIS had published a strategic five year plan which included work on:

- An Infrastructure Programme - this programme had seven work streams under it, including: UAS IT infrastructure (ACN), Data Centres, End User Compute, Infrastructure as a Service, Networks, Policy (charging models), and Storage. All of these programmes were still in the very early stages apart from Storage which should deliver a service by the start of the next academic year.
- A Secure Research Computing Project - the board for this new project met for the first time quite recently. GW was a project sponsor and the board members included Vijay Samtani (Chief Information Security Officer, UIS), BG, LD, Carolyn Read (Clinical School Research Governance Officer), Paul Tucker (Department of Engineering) and Neil Walker (Cambridge Clinical Informatics). One of its first tasks would be to define high level user requirements.

- An Identity Management Project headed by Vijay Samtani - this project is currently in its early stage and at present it was not clear what would eventually be delivered; it might be documenting current solutions and improving understanding and resilience but it might also be a newly designed approach.
- A Business Systems Programme – this consisted of ongoing improvements to CAMSiS and a review of CUFs which may result in a reimplemention or replacement in about two years.
- A Data Resilience Programme designed to improve data resilience - testing for this new programme would start the following next week.
- A new intrusion prevention system would be turned on in mid-April - this would hopefully improve network security throughout the University.

RB flagged that currently there were multiple uncoordinated requests from the School to UIS (primarily HPC) for either new computation resource, or changes to existing systems. For example one group would ask for extended queue times on Wilkes/Wilkes2, others would ask for large memory machines, and these requests only carried as much weight as the Institution carried. If the Committee were able to find some way to co-ordinate this at a School level so each request carried the full weight of the School behind it, it would make it easier for UIS to treat these as School strategic requests, and prioritise them accordingly. In addition, it would also allow each Institution to see what use others were making of the HPC facilities which may allow them to develop their own use further. After some discussion about different approaches, the following action point was agreed.

***Action point – RB would write a paper in collaboration with CW for the next Heads of Department meeting, presenting the problem regarding multiple uncoordinated requests to the UIS, how it manifests itself, and the proposed solution/s.***

#### **10. NHS IT matters**

GS said he had discovered that many academics were not aware of the option to use NHS BYOD instead of having a dedicated NHS PC for access to Trust systems.

***Action point - RB agreed to include instructions on how clinically active staff can access EPIC and their Trust email using the University network and BYOD in a subsequent Regius' newsletter, and to also include instructions on how to deal with the issues caused by the Trust upgrading its systems (a known issue).***

#### **11. Any other business**

RB (on behalf of Guy Robinson at CRUK- CI) raised the possibility of aligning best practice across the School once all Campus providers had had their first go at populating the GDPR driven Information Asset Register. The Committee agreed this was potentially a good idea, though they would need to wait to see how much common need there was across the School.

#### **12. Date of Next Meeting**

1pm, Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> June.