



School IT Committee Meeting

Wednesday, 22nd November

Present:

Gordon Smith (Chair) (GS)
Richard Bartlett (RB)
Caroline Edmonds (CE)
Lydia Drumright (LD)
Matt Burgess (MB)
Nigel Berryman (NB)
Bertie Gottgens (BG)
Andrew Leedham (AL)
John Sinclair (JS)
Soren Brage (SB)
Dennis Norris (DN)
Guy Williams (GW)

Apologies: Chris Wallace (CW), Randy Read (RR), Litsa Biggs (LB) Mary Dixon-Woods (MDW), Guy Robinson (GR)

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of last School IT Committee meeting held on 26th July were approved.

RB noted that he had had an action point to draft a brief report on the GDPR to take to the Council of School which would include requirements, actions and any identifiable areas of risk. However this had been delayed as a result of absence of guidance from the centre. He added he was currently waiting for progress to be made on the Information Asset Register Project in the UIS as this would inform his report.

3. Matters Arising

RB confirmed that there were now two Committee members who represented the five MRC Units (Soren Brage and Dennis Norris), and consequently he proposed minor amendments to the Terms of Reference to add MRC unit representatives to 2.2,3 and amend 3.1 accordingly. These amendments were approved.

4. Policy

RB confirmed that there were no updates on policy although the GDPR would undoubtedly cause some amendments.

5. Information Security

RB gave a brief update on information security issues. He said that it continued to be an area of significant risk and there were still pockets of users in the School, not on the CSCS network, with no appropriate data storage or network security. He added that completion of the UIS Cyber Security training should be encouraged, although some of the advice needed amendment for the Clinical School Computing Service managed environment. RB noted that the one of the biggest issues for information security was human error as recent incidents at Uber, UEA and Deloitte had shown. He stressed the importance of staff training and a discussion ensued on how training could be best delivered. He mentioned that, as recommended by the National Cyber Security Council, there was a

strong consensus that training was most effective when delivered immediately after a security incident.

GS asked RB whether it would be possible for spam filters to identify mass mailings from pay to publish journals and wondered whether these adverts could be blocked. BG added that he frequently received unsolicited conference invitations by email. RB advised the Committee that they should forward unsolicited emails to the CSCS Service Desk who would not necessarily be able to block everything, but if patterns were detected they might be able to attach a spam warning to some emails. Please forward the email as an attachment, so the header information was retained.

6. Strategic planning

RB gave a brief update on strategic planning:

He told the Committee that based on feedback he had received from MRC Epidemiology and CBU, he had fed back information on the School's strategic priorities to the UIS Planning Round. He noted that more engagement with senior academic staff on strategic priorities and the most pressing needs would be helpful.

RB said that staffing shortages at CSCS meant that they currently had no major ongoing projects other than an Exchange 2013 upgrade and the introduction of a new Service Management system.

7. Performance

RB drew the Committee's attention to the CSCS Annual Review 2016-2017 which was circulated prior to the meeting. He said that a staff budget plan and business case which included the creation of various new posts and regrading of existing posts had been approved by the School. This plan was designed to address the ongoing problems with staff turnover in CSCS. A discussion then ensued on the ongoing problems with staff retention which was a University-wide problem. RB noted that current grading structure was very inflexible, CE said that pay and grading were two separate issues, LD added that the University needed to address the issues of market pay, and SB highlighted the inequalities which exist on campus between University and Trust staff.

RB also drew the Committee's attention to the CSCS Service Performance Summary. He noted that despite the staffing issues, all performance metrics had improved slightly. He said that there had been a spike in major incidents, however this was partly caused by a repeat issue which was now fixed. He added that there had been no major incidents for two months.

8. CSCS Finances

RB presented a brief report on CSCS finances. He said that the staff budget plan (mentioned under agenda item no 7) had included a 5 year forecast for income and expenditure which was based on the expectation that there would not be any additional UEF funding. As a result of this lack of additional funding, CSCS expected to have a net deficit of around £111,000 for the financial year 2017 – 2018. Investment in network capital equipment would leave reserves low (under £70,000 as opposed to an average of £300,000) but reserves were projected to return to normal by 2020-2021. MB told the Committee that it had been useful to see RB's forecast and he would like to gain a greater understanding of it over the next few months and years.

8. University IT (UIS and ISC)

AL presented a brief report on University IT. He told the Committee that Ian Leslie who had taken over as Acting Director had identified five strategic elements which UIS would be focusing on. These were as follows:

1. Business Systems Strategy - Business systems such as CamSIS and CUFS had become too complex making them difficult to maintain, so the aim is to implement systems closer to their vanilla state and then build in Cambridge specific customisation as additional layers.
2. Identity Management – this was a key project and would involve the development of a central repository for user data.

3. Key Infrastructure – the UIS was committed to building a second data centre, although this would be used for the redundancy backup of existing data rather than making space for additional data. AL said the ultimate goal would be central servers on which departments purchase virtual servers and storage (Infrastructure as a service).
4. Consultancy – despite current resource limitations in this area UIS would like to expand its consultancy services. This would primarily be for UIS services, however a centre for advice on technical issues was also under consideration.
5. Skills- Internal changes to the skills and culture in UIS.

In addition to Ian Leslie's plans, AL reported on the following:

Cyber security – this project was now progressing to business as usual having achieved its aim of raising awareness through development of training and engagement. Development of cyber security policies would remain ongoing at the UIS. AL added that a maturity model would be delivered for the Cyber Security symposium in December. He also said that plans for an Information Asset Register would be taken out of the Cyber Security programme and would now form a separate project.

Development of a certified ISO 270001 safe haven was now an official UIS project, and an internal project team met for the first time last week. A brief discussion then ensued as to who would sit on the board. LD said she would need to be on the board, and the Committee agreed that GW and Prof Ed Bullmore (Head of Psychiatry) should also be invited to join the board.

9. NHS IT matters

LD reported on a number of NHS IT matters:

- She said that the Trust was now a Global Digital Exemplar site and was receiving funding from NHS Digital to develop its electronic medical records. She said that other Trusts would need to adopt their EPIC system and UCL would be the first trust to do so.
- EPIC had now been running for 3 years and Dr Jag Ahluwalia (who has stepped down as Medical Director of CUH) is now Head of Digital at CUH. She said they were currently working on cleaning up various areas in EPIC.
- Clinical Informatics would be developing a new tissue management system on LIMS (Laboratory Information Management System).
- Data sharing project – WBIC was now able to put clinical data into the UIS safe havens.

10. Any other business

SB raised a couple of matters.

- 2-factor authentication was not just required for staff logging on to IT systems but also for 2-way communication with members of the public (sending them confidential results of test and collecting any new information from them).
- The GPU cluster at UIS – the current Wilkes GPU cluster at HPC was not suited to some Clinical Medicine applications. There was a need for a service which met those needs, with a clear pricing structure which allowed researchers to build those costs into grant applications. For example, MRC Epidemiology had secured 90k for a GPU cluster to undertake a Deep Learning project on data from wearables and image recognition but this capability was equally useful for classification of cancer tumours so they would rather invest this in a larger facility rather than host it in-house.

11. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday, 28th March, 1pm-2.30pm