



KNOWLEDGE STRATEGY COMMITTEE

11 October 2019

Web Version

Minute

Present: Doreen Davidson, Court appointee (Convener)
Elizabeth Bomberg, Court appointee
Claire Phillips, Court appointee
Sue Currie, Court appointee
Colm Harmon, Senate appointee
Melissa Highton, Senate appointee
Tina Harrison, Senate appointee
Gavin McLachlan, Vice-Principal, Chief Information Officer and Librarian to the University
Stephanie Vallancey, Student representative

In attendance: Tracey Slaven, Deputy Secretary, Strategic Planning
Jo Craiglee, Head of Knowledge Management & Planning
Melissa Terras, CAHSS representative
Ashley Shannon, Director of Operations, CSG (for Hugh Edmiston)
Libby McCue, Head of Finance, ISG (for Lee Hamill)
Sheila Fraser, Head of IT, CMVM (for Catherine Elliott)
Sue MacGregor, Director of Academic Services
Lewis Allan, Head of Court Services
Mark Parsons, Professor of High Performance Computing (for Item 2)
Tony Weir, Director, IT Infrastructure (for Items 6-8)

Apologies: Siân Bayne, Senate appointee
Alan Murray, Senate appointee
Hugh Edmiston, Vice-Principal & Director of Corporate Services
Lee Hamill, Director of Finance
Catherine Elliott, CMVM representative
Simon Kelley, CSE representative

1 Minutes

Papers A1-A2

The Minute of the meeting held on 24 May and e-meeting concluded on 23 September 2019 was approved. New committee members and attendees were welcomed to their first meeting.

SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS

2 Presentation: City Deal – World Class Data Infrastructure

Verbal

Mark Parsons, Professor of High Performance Computing, presented on the World Class Data Infrastructure (WCDI) element of the City Deal's Data-Driven Innovation programme. WCDI will underpin the Data Driven Innovation programme and build on existing investment in the University's Advanced Computing Facility with a new high

resiliency data centre room to support work with complex, high volume, real-time datasets from across the City Region and beyond. Points raised in discussion included:

- Expanding academic engagement with WCDI and City Deal hubs – a relatively small number of projects are under development in the first instance, with the intention to expand more widely in future. An academic engagement plan has been developed for the College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine and will be developed for the other Colleges;
- Possible impacts if the UK leaves the European Union, particularly in a ‘no deal’ scenario – impacts for WCDI might include data legislation, although it is not currently expected to manage data from EU sources and supply chains for equipment, although supply chains in this area are global, with little sourced from EU member states; and,
- Managing the environmental impact of high performance computing such as the University’s use of a green electricity tariff.

3 Maters Arising & Chief Information Officer Update

Verbal

The Chief Information Officer reported on the University’s success in raising £966,000 to purchase pioneering Scottish geologist Sir Charles Lyell’s (1797-1875) 294 scientific notebooks. The notebooks had been listed for sale abroad but a temporary export bar had given the University and over 1,100 supporters the opportunity to raise funds for their purchase. £200,000 of the purchase price will be met from the University’s own Heritage Collection fund, with the public appeal raising one third of the purchase price and the remaining sum met by external bodies. Permission was now sought for the delegation of authority to the Chief Information Officer to sign the agreement with Sotheby’s to purchase the notebooks. It was agreed to delegate authority subject to final review by the Convener of Knowledge Strategy Committee of an accompanying paper. The Committee expressed gratitude to all contributors to the fundraising appeal and discussed plans to display some of the notebooks in the Main Library, using the notebooks within teaching and research activities and lessons learned from the success of the public appeal and alumni involvement.

Secretary’s note: following review of the paper by the Convener, the delegation of authority was granted and the purchase agreement signed prior to the 15 October 2019 deadline.

4 Sustainable IT: Personal Computing Devices Policy

Paper B

A draft Sustainable IT: Personal Computing Devices Policy was reviewed prior to submission to the University Executive for approval. The intent of the draft policy is to reduce the carbon and environmental impact of University-purchased personal computing devices and reduce the overall cost to the University of these devices; and the associated software, maintenance and power costs. An earlier draft had been the subject of a University-wide consultation and attracted 160 comments. The comments have fed into the current draft, e.g. recognition that homeworkers may require multiple computing devices.

Points raised in discussion included:

- The estimated 600 different types of computing devices used on campus hampers ethical and clean disposal, is costly and inefficient and increases information security risks;
- Communication of the new policy should also consider raising awareness to both staff and students (working with the Students' Association) of the environmental impacts of personal computing devices, advertising the University's work on ethical supply chains and addressing concerns of centralisation and reduced choice in local areas; and,
- Concerns that some academic staff may purchase their own devices if the choice of University approved devices on offer is restricted and does not allow for what an individual academic believes to be the best device for their own research – undermining efforts to improve information security and improve IT support.

5 Collections Management Policy 2020-2030

Paper C

A Collections Management Policy 2020-2030 for the University's Collections was reviewed. Noting that the Policy is required for compliance with the Museums Accreditation Scheme (UK) and had been reviewed and supported by the University Collections Advisory Committee, it was agreed to recommend the Policy for approval by Court. A version including changes from the current Policy marked up was requested for Court.

ITEMS FOR FORMAL APPROVAL

6 HPE Superdome Flex High Performance Computer System Purchase **Paper D**

The purchase of a £600,000 HPE Superdome Flex shared memory system and the delegation of signing authority to the Chief Information Officer was approved. It was noted that the purchase will be fully funded by a capital grant awarded by the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council with recurrent funding for staff to manage the service provided by Information Services Group.

7 Data-Driven Innovation: Internet of Things Service Data Platform Appliance Purchase **Paper E**

The purchase of an Internet of Things Service Data Platform Appliance at a price not exceeding £330,000 and the delegation of signing authority to the Chief Information Officer was approved. It was noted that the purchase follows the capital spending plan agreed within the City Deal's Data-Driven Innovation programme, with revenue funding for staff in place.

8 Digital Research Services Project Programme 2019/20 **Paper F**

The proposed 2019/20 Digital Research Services project programme was reviewed. Noting that the programme supports the most commonly used data services for academic research, with some income from grant recovery where applicable, the proposed budget allocation was endorsed.

ITEMS FOR NOTING

9 Information Security Update **Paper G**

An update on current and planned work being undertaken to address the ongoing information security threat facing the University was considered.

10 Learning Analytics: Pilot of OnTask Data-Driven Feedback Tool **Paper H**

A proposed pilot of a data driven feedback tool (OnTask) to be used within two School of Mathematics courses and six School of Business MicroMasters courses was considered. It was noted that the proposal had been reviewed and accepted by the Learning Analytics Review Group convened as per the Learning Analytics Policy and was now submitted for approval by the Committee rather than for noting as initially envisaged given its institution-wide potential. The Committee approved the pilots within the School of Mathematics and the School of Business, with an evaluation of the pilots to be submitted to the Committee before extension to other courses or Schools.

11 Core Systems Programme Update **Paper I**

An update on the programme to replace HR, Finance, Payroll and Procurement systems was noted. A more detailed breakdown of the implementation timetable was requested within a future update.

12 Information Services Group Capital Expenditure **Paper J**

The updated capital expenditure forecast for 2019/20 to 2025/26 was noted.

13 Committee Reports **Paper K1**

- **IT Committee**

The report was noted.

- **University Collections Advisory Committee** **Paper K2**

The report was noted.

14 Any Other Business

The Chief Information Officer provided an update on the rationalisation of virtual learning environments in use at the University, which have been reduced from 16 to two, as was targeted.

The Vice-Principal Students was invited to make some introductory remarks at his first meeting and welcomed the reduction in virtual learning environments and expressed an interest in learning more on the balance of IT expenditure on research and teaching activities.

15 Date of Next Meeting

Friday, 24 January 2020, 10.00-12.00