THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

KNOWLEDGE STRATEGY COMMITTEE

22 March 2022 (Videoconference)

Web Version

Minute

Present:	Colm Harmon, Senate appointee (Interim Convener)
	Sue Currie, Court appointee
	Tara Gold, Student representative
	Tina Harrison, Senate appointee
	Sarah McAllister, Court appointee
	Gavin McLachlan, Vice-Principal, Chief Information Officer and Librarian to the University
	Kathryn Nash, Court appointee
	Paul Norris, Senate appointee
	Claire Phillips, Court appointee
In attendance:	Lewis Allan, Head of Court Services
	Anne-Marie Coriat, CMVM representative
	Leigh Chalmers, Deputy Secretary Governance & Legal
	Jo Craiglee, Head of Knowledge Management & Planning
	Lee Hamill, Director of Finance
	Barry Neilson, Director of Strategic Change
	Dave Gorman, Director of Social Responsibility and Sustainability (for Item 4)
	Tony Weir, Director of IT Infrastructure (for Item 4)
	Alistair Fenemore, Chief Information Security Officer (for Item 5)
	Jeremy Upton, Director of Library & University Collections (for Item 7)
Apologies:	Siân Bayne, Senate appointee
	Iain Gordon, CSE representative
	Melissa Highton, Senate appointee
	Sue MacGregor, Director of Academic Services
	Catherine Martin, Vice-Principal Corporate Services
	Melissa Terras, CAHSS representative

1   Minute   Paper A

Anne-Marie Coriat, Registrar for the College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine, was welcomed as the College's new representative attending the Committee.

The Minute of the meeting held on 1 February 2022 was approved.

2   Matters Arising   Verbal

There were no matters arising.

SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS

3   Chief Information Officer Update   Verbal

Key activities and updates since the last meeting were reported, including:
- Academic staff and Information Services Group staff are contributing to the protection of Ukrainian cultural heritage by digital preservation. Likely interest from students in contributing to the preservation work was raised and was welcomed;
- The labour market for IT staff and for certain specialist IT skills in particular is buoyant. In response, increased training for existing staff to learn high-demand specialist skills is taking place, with contractors assisting both with shortages in some areas and by cross-training existing staff;
- A consultation on a draft Digital Strategy is underway and the Committee will receive a revised version for review following the consultation.

4   Sustainable IT Update   Paper B

A progress update on Sustainable IT initiatives was presented, including sustainable printing, green data centres and future governance options for the area. It was noted that the sustainable printing initiative had begun prior to the pandemic and the increased confidence with wholly electronic working by many staff during this period has provided an opportunity to make greater progress in reducing printing, although it was acknowledged that the scale of home printing is unknown.

For the green data centres initiative, it was noted that data centres account for the significant majority of IT energy usage at the University, albeit this is influenced by the hosting of major UK-wide research facilities at the University (which is efficient from a UK energy perspective given lower temperatures than in other likely UK locations and the expertise in cooling at the University). The focus of the initiative has been on moving equipment to more energy efficient areas, improving the efficiency of these areas still further and retiring or upgrading unnecessary or less efficient equipment.

On governance, it was proposed that a Sustainable IT Sub-Group be positioned in the governance structure to report to either Knowledge Strategy Committee or to IT Committee (and reporting to Knowledge Strategy Committee via IT Committee), with the latter option supported.

Members and attendees commented on: ensuring that sustainability-related items with wider impacts are presented to the appropriate committees to consider these wider impacts; supporting the emphasis on sustainability as part of the procurement process as a mechanism to make significant improvements; and, refreshing the University's climate strategy, which will consider biodiversity as well as climate, of relevance in this context given the biodiversity impacts of printing and IT supply chains.

5   Information Security Update   **Paper C**

A regular update on Information Security matters was reviewed. Alistair Fenemore, Chief Information Security Officer, thanked members for comments at the previous meeting on the proposal to introduce Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA). This is being further developed before progressing for funding approval. It was noted that there will not be a requirement to use mobile telephones for MFA, with other options available, although many users will find mobile telephones to be an efficient and secure means of MFA. The workload impact on local IT teams of the MFA proposal was queried and it was confirmed that this is expected to be limited but the second phase of the project, updating the Identity & Access Management suite, will likely have a more significant impact and will be considered in the development of the second phase.

The support of the Committee for a refreshed mandatory Information Security Essentials training course was emphasised. It was noted that staff with guaranteed hours contracts are entitled to additional pay for the time taken to complete mandatory training.

6   Digital Estate Presentation   **Verbal**

An overview of the current assessment of the digital estate was presented, with potential priority areas for future investment highlighted as being:
- Multi Factor Authentication and Identity & Access Management;
- Data resilience;
- Proactive cyber protection;
- A new timetabling system;
- A new estates facilities management system;
- Improving carbon efficiency and fire protection for data centres;
- An online examinations and assessment system;
- A platform for continuing professional development short courses;
- Replacement degree finder/programme course information system; and,
- An upgraded Virtual Learning Environment.

7   Library Response to Curriculum Transformation   **Paper D**

A paper reporting on how Library staff have engaged with the curriculum transformation programme to date and exploring opportunities for the Library to contribute further was considered. It was noted that the Library can contribute as a naturally interdisciplinary space, by developing student information literacy skills and by helping academic staff through more efficient service provision. The Library also holds the institutional record, which can help in understanding the distinctiveness of an Edinburgh graduate. The input from Library staff was welcomed and seeking a student perspective on the contribution the Library can make to curriculum transformation was also encouraged. Submitting a paper to the Curriculum Transformation Board was proposed as a next step, noting that this would time well with a second phase of consultation for the programme.

8   Information Services Group Planning 2022/23 to 2027/28   Paper E

An overview of the planning round submission from the Information Services Group was reviewed. Areas highlighted from the submission included: enabling the University to host hybrid conferences and other complex hybrid events; creating a computational notebook platform to train data scientists; follow-through on the People & Money System including creating a technical and operations team and a business intelligence reporting function; and, improving the accuracy of automated captioning of recorded lectures. Considering the impact of projects at a School level and any local resourcing impacts for University-wide projects was raised, noting that wider impacts will be considered as proposals are developed, with School level impacts for the Learn Ultra project (Item 11 below) being considered presently as it is recognised that these will vary by School in this case. There was support for the reintroduction of an Information Services Group Innovation Fund mentioned in the paper. An update on outcomes was requested for a future meeting.

ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL

It was noted that Items 9 and 10 below had been selected in advance by members and attendees for discussion and that the other items would be noted or approved without the expectation of discussion.

9   People & Money Implementation Update   Paper F

An update on the implementation of the People & Money System was reviewed. Key priorities were identified as working towards a successful launch of Phase 2 on 4 April, training staff to use the new functionalities and resolving any potential issues with the payroll component prior to the first payroll run. More generally, given the number of ongoing and planned strategic change projects, work is underway to create a single pipeline of all projects over the five year planning horizon to help identify any timing concerns, likely pinch points, staff impacts and to improve visibility of the projects. The planned submission of a short paper on the topic to a future meeting was welcomed.

10   Collections Strategy 2022-2025   Paper G

A summary of the proposed content for a new Collections Strategy was considered. It was noted that strategy relates to the General Collections, which are Library resources that support teaching, learning and research that are not part of the Heritage Collections given their age, value, scarcity, provenance or local relevance. The inclusion of reference to digital services relating to the General Collections such as the scan and deliver service was suggested.

11   Learn Ultra Early Adopters and Accessibility   Paper H

The proposed move to the Early Adopter Programme to support the upgrade of the Learn Virtual Learning Environment to Learn Ultra was supported, noting the expected improvements in accessibility and inclusion that will benefit students and staff.

12   Library Committee Terms of Reference – Proposed change   Paper I

A proposed change to the Committee's Terms of Reference with regard to the length of member appointment to the committee was approved. It was noted that the intention is to ensure a regular turnover of membership to help bring new ideas and perspectives and to reflect the membership norms for the other thematic committees reporting into Knowledge Strategy Committee – with a membership length set at a norm of two terms of three years for most Library Committee members, with two terms of four years set as the norm for the Library Committee Convener.

13   Network Replacement Programme Update   Paper J

A progress update on the deployment of the new University data network was noted.

14   Enterprise Infrastructure Update   Paper K

A progress report on the replacement of the University's Enterprise Infrastructure was noted.

15   Information Services Group Capital Envelope 2021 – 2027   Paper L

An update on the Information Services Group's capital envelope to 2027 was noted.

16   Committee Reports
   - **Library Committee**   **Paper M1**
   - **University Collections Advisory Committee**   **Paper M2**
   - **IT Committee**   **Paper M3**
   - **Digital Research Services Steering Group**   **Paper M4**

The reports were noted.

17   Any Other Business

There was no other business.

18   Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 24 May 2022, 10.00-12.00