



**KNOWLEDGE STRATEGY COMMITTEE**

**30 January 2023, Brenda Moon Boardroom, Argyle House/Videoconference**

**Web version**

**Minute**

**Present:** Colm Harmon, Senate appointee (Interim Convener)  
Joyce Anderson, Court appointee (by videocall)  
Richard Blythe, Court appointee  
Sue Currie, Court appointee  
Tina Harrison, Senate appointee (by videocall)  
Melissa Highton, Senate appointee  
Sam Maccallum, Student member  
Sarah McAllister, Court appointee  
Gavin McLachlan, Vice-Principal, Chief Information Officer and Librarian to the University  
Paul Norris, Senate appointee

**In attendance:** Lewis Allan, Head of Court Services (by videocall)  
Ken Brooker, Internal Audit (by videocall)  
Anne-Marie Coriat, CMVM representative  
Jo Craiglee, Head of Knowledge Management & Planning  
Kirstie Graham, Deputy Head of Court Services  
Lee Hamill, Director of Finance (by videocall)  
Liz Lovejoy, CAHSS representative  
Barry Neilson, Director of Strategic Change (by videocall)  
Bryne Ngwenya, CSE representative (by videocall)  
Rona Smith, Deputy Secretary Governance & Strategic Planning  
Jamie Tait, Governance Manager  
Jon Turner, Director of the Institute for Academic Development (by videocall) (for Item 3)  
Stephen Roy, Digital Transformation Portfolio Manager (by videocall) (for Item 5)  
Sheila Fraser, Head of IT, CMVM (by videocall) (for Item 6)  
Lee-Ann Simpson, Senior Project and Programme Manager (by videocall) (for Item 11)  
Alistair Fenemore, Chief Information Security Officer (by videocall) (for Item 14)

**Apologies:** Siân Bayne, Senate appointee  
Shereen Benjamin, Court appointee  
Catherine Martin, Vice-Principal Corporate Services  
Tom Ward, Director of Academic Services

**1 Minute**

**Papers A1-A2**

Members and attendees were welcomed to the meeting and apologies were noted.

The minute of the meeting held on 18 October 2022 and the minute of the meeting held by correspondence and concluded on 6 December 2022 were approved.

## **2 Matters Arising**

**Verbal**

There were no matters arising.

## **SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS**

### **3 Information Services Group Planning 2023-24 (2022-27)**

**Verbal**

An Information Services Group (ISG) planning update was presented, noting that the period covered years 2-5 of the 2022-27 plan, along with a new 5-year plan, 2023-2028. The presentation covered key strategies, a reflection on 2022-23, the challenges ahead and a look forward to 2023-2028. It was noted that ISG are seeking input into the planning process, and had already met with two of the three Colleges to consider prioritisation of resources.

A steep upward trend in software costs was highlighted. It was also reported that the University Digital Strategy is expected to launch in October 2023.

### **4 Chief Information Officer Update**

**Verbal**

Key activities and updates since the last meeting were reported, including:

- **Recruitment and retention issues, especially amongst technical staff.**
- **Supply chain delays.** Global issues are continuing, including the closure of some Chinese factories.
- **Artificial Intelligence (AI).** The recent reports of ChatGTP were noted, which appeared to present a step forward in AI that could potentially help with programming. It was noted that potential academic misconduct concerns for universities had been raised in the media.
- **Digital Estates plan.** The Chief Information Officer is working with the Provost ahead of the first meeting of the Digital Estates Prioritisations Group, a short life working group which will report to the Estates Committee.
- **Technicians' Commitment.** The commitment is being updated with input from the University's Staff Experience Committee and from the Vice-Principal Research & Enterprise to broaden the definition of technicians, including anyone supporting research.

The Committee noted both the risks and the potential of AI. It was reported that the Digital Strategy includes methodology for AI, including the requirement for an AI ethics policy.

### **5 University Digital Strategy Consultation Analysis & Feedback and plans for the next stage**

**Paper B**

An update on the development of a Digital Strategy to support the overall University Strategy 2030 was presented. It was noted that feedback from the consultation is being analysed and the paper provides a high-level overview of emerging points. A

Town Hall meeting is planned for spring 2023 to provide feedback on the consultation, with the Strategy likely to be launched in late summer/early autumn, following consideration of the prioritisation of investment in the digital estate by the Digital Estates Prioritisations Group.

The Committee discussed how those unfamiliar with the Strategy would know and understand its aims and objectives. The following key themes were noted: core services should be user-friendly and easy to find; it will provide a focus for where the University takes digital in the future; increased physical and digital accessibility is key; it puts in place a number of key procurement and operational standards and principles; and, includes where future investment will be focussed. The [Digital Strategy Hub](#) was highlighted, a SharePoint site open to both staff and students, that contains the draft Strategy along with summary presentations. Finally, it was noted that the digital estate prioritisation was critical to planning and resources decisions.

## **6 Lothian Health Board Framework Agreement Paper C**

A presentation on the University of Edinburgh and Lothian Health Board Framework Agreement was received.

## **7 People and Money System Update Paper D**

An update on the implementation of the People and Money systems and processes was reviewed. Finance processes associated with research were reported as a key area of focus from an operational perspective, with Professor Dave Robertson chairing a group established to focus on research finance processes. It was noted that the University Court have asked for an external review of the People and Money implementation to be undertaken and this will be discussed at the Court's next meeting, 27 February 2023.

Graphs on trade invoices in the paper were discussed, and whether comparative data from previous years is available. It was noted that it would be difficult to make comparisons due to the significant process changes made, and that tracking spend against budget might be more instructive, albeit with the caveat that the last two financial years have been heavily impacted by Covid. It was also commented that the x axis should specify the value in millions.

The challenges that remain were acknowledged alongside the huge amount of work on the system that continues to be undertaken by colleagues across the University recognised.

## **8 Recommendations for future provision of strategic change and continuous improvement support Paper E**

A paper setting out proposed actions to refine and enhance the provision of strategic change and continuous improvement capabilities and capacity was considered. It was noted that the paper had been developed in November 2022 for the University Executive, which had supported its recommendations and next steps.

The following points were raised in discussion:

- The need to understand how the work is scoped and what is a manageable volume of change;
- Change management training should include staff more broadly and not solely managers;
- The need to build trust and communicate the purpose of, and progress with, change projects better;
- The relationship between change projects and continuous improvement, with the perception that change projects can impede improving business as usual activities (akin to 'planning blight');
- The importance of consulting with Heads of School and Directors of Professional Services in future iterations of this work;
- The importance of linking outputs of the external review of People and Money; and,
- Learning from sectors with well-established approaches to strategic change and continuous improvement could help feed into this work.

## **9 Information Governance Working Group**

**Paper F**

A paper setting out the planned approach for a review of information governance was considered. The membership of the short life review group was discussed, and it was suggested that it would be helpful to include a colleague from the Web Governance Group as well as a nominee from the College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine.

### **ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL**

It was noted that Items 11 and 14 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.

## **10 IT Committee Terms of Reference**

**Paper G**

Minor amendments to the IT Committee's Terms of Reference were approved.

## **11 Learn Ultra Upgrade and Early Adopter Programme – Update on Progress**

**Paper H**

Progress on the Learn Ultra Upgrade and the Early Adopter Programme was discussed. The roll-out is scheduled to begin in May 2023 to allow staff time over the summer to prepare for a go-live date of the start of Semester 1. Discussions have begun with all Schools and Deaneries to map out implementation plans and resource requirements to see where extra support is required. Lessons learned from the Early Adopter Programme are being incorporated into the approach to training and support, which will be available from June. It was noted that twenty student interns will be working on the project over the summer, providing additional support.

**12 Library and University Collections Strategy 2020 - 2025** **Paper I**

A progress report against the objectives set in the Library and University Collections Strategy 2020 – 2025 was noted.

**13 Library Materials Budget 2022/23** **Paper J**

A summary report on the 2022/23 Library Materials Budget position at the end of Quarter 1 was noted.

**14 Information Security Update** **Paper K**

The regular Information Security update paper, providing a summary of the current external threat environment, together with details of ongoing centrally managed technical control improvements, was noted.

**15 Mary Somerville Data Centre and ISG Digital Research Services Move** **Paper L**

A paper summarising a plan to create additional University data centre capacity was noted.

**16 Network Replacement Programme Update** **Paper M**

An update on the network replacement programme was noted.

**17 Enterprise Infrastructure Replacement Programme Update** **Paper N**

An update on progress on the replacement of the University's Enterprise Infrastructure was noted.

**18 Committee Reports**

- **IT Committee** **Paper O1**
- **Library Committee** **Paper O2**
- **University Collections Advisory Committee** **Paper O3**
- **Estates Committee** **Paper O4**
- **Digital Research Services Steering Group** **Paper O5**

The reports were noted.

**19 Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

**20 Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday 21 March 2023, 14:00 – 16:00