# KNOWLEDGE STRATEGY COMMITTEE

## 22 March 2021 (Videoconference)

**Web Version**

### Minute

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| **Present:** | Doreen Davidson, Court appointee (Convener) |
| | Tina Harrison, Senate appointee |
| | Melissa Highton, Senate appointee |
| | Fizzy Aboah Jawad, Student representative |
| | Sarah McAllister, Court appointee |
| | Gavin McLachlan, Vice-Principal, Chief Information Officer and Librarian to the University |
| | Alan Murray, Senate appointee |
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| **In attendance:** | Lewis Allan, Head of Court Services |
| | Leigh Chalmers, Deputy Secretary Governance & Legal |
| | Jo Craiglee, Head of Knowledge Management & Planning |
| | Catherine Elliott, CMVM representative |
| | Lee Hamill, Director of Finance |
| | Simon Kelley, CSE representative |
| | Barry Neilson, Director of Strategic Change |
| | Stephen Roy, Digital Strategy Programme Manager (for Item 4) |
| | Tony Weir, Director, IT Infrastructure (for Items 8, 9 and 10) |
| | Alastair Fenemore, Chief Information Security Officer (for Item 11) |
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| **Apologies:** | Siân Bayne, Senate appointee |
| | Sue Currie, Court appointee |
| | Colm Harmon, Senate appointee |
| | Claire Phillips, Court appointee |
| | Catherine Martin, Vice-Principal (Interim) Corporate Services |
| | Melissa Terras, CAHSS representative |
| | Sue MacGregor, Director of Academic Services |

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| **1  Minute** | **Paper A** |

The Minute of the meeting held on 26 January 2021 was approved.

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| **2  Matters Arising** | **Verbal** |

There were no matters arising.

## SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS

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| **3  Information Services Group Planning 2021/22** | **Paper B** |

An update on the Information Services Group's approach to the 2021/22 Planning Round was reviewed. The intention is to maintain the expenditure budget within the same envelope as the current year given the budgetary pressures brought about by

the pandemic. Key developments over the coming year will be the completion of the network replacement programme, the completion of the People & Money System (both covered in more detail later in the agenda) and retaining the most successful elements of the 'digital pivot' to remote learning and working as the pandemic hopefully recedes, e.g. the scan and deliver library service has been very popular and will continue. Work to understand the likely significant costs should there be upgrading of teaching and meeting rooms for hybrid teaching and meetings is being undertaken. Risks that have emerged or increased over the past year will need to be monitored and mitigated where possible. Risks include the rising costs of software as commercial companies seek to benefit from the greater reliance on their products across the world – this could impact the higher education sector in particular if discounts for educational organisations are reduced or withdrawn. A further risk is the impact from disruption to the IT hardware supply chain, with delays and rising costs likely to continue for a number of years. Members discussed mitigation for these risks, including securing long term contracts for key software packages with price caps included and greater advance ordering of IT hardware.

## 4    Digital Estate Presentation                                              Verbal

An overview of the current condition of the University's digital estate was presented, identifying areas of strength, areas for upgrade or replacement in the coming years and areas that are wholly or largely missing at present. To better aid understanding of the digital estate a map illustrating components and their current condition has been created. This will feed into discussions within a new capital plan working group led by the Principal, which is considering both the physical and digital estate.

Members raised the following points in discussion:
- Whether there is potential to accelerate the replacement or purchase schedule for some projects should there be a strong recovery from the pandemic – this is difficult to answer at present but it is planned to return a three year planning cycle shortly and to a 10 year capital plan, which will aid planning and prioritisation. Information services projects will have to be assessed against other competing demands for investment, e.g. student experience projects and work to meet the 'zero by 2040' carbon emissions goal;
- What the benefits of a customer relationship management system would be – this will allow interactions with external parties to be logged and tracked across the University to aid a more joined-up approach;
- How prioritisation will take place and the governance approach to be used – prioritisation will include consultation with Colleges, Knowledge Strategy Committee, the new Capital Planning Group and other fora, with ultimate governance oversight of capital plans and prioritisation by Court and Policy & Resources Committee;
- The extent to which projects are systems-led or are in response to other drivers for change (e.g. curriculum transformation). There is a mixture of both in the projects highlighted, with some are driven by risk mitigation (e.g. facilities management) and others by potential benefits (e.g. customer relationship management software); and,
- Where digital ethics (the monitoring/storing/governance of research ethics approvals and procedural data for ethical approvals for non-research use of

data), sit within the digital estate – it is not currently intended to procure a separate data ethics system but to instead incorporate within an upgrade or replacement for the research information systems service.

**5      Chief Information Officer Update                                    Verbal**

The Chief Information Officer reported on key activities and events since the last meeting, including planning for the expected gradual relaxation of public health restrictions and the resumption, following consultation, of more library and museum services in modified form. A working group considering hybrid and home working is continuing to meet and is considering the topics of longer term hybrid working and hybrid meetings.

**6      People & Money Update                                    Paper C**

An update on the People and Money system programme to deliver core IT systems for HR, Finance, Payroll and Procurement was reviewed.

**7      Sustainable IT                                    Paper D**

A proposed amendment to the Sustainable IT: Personal Computing Devices policy to extend the replacement lifespan of devices by one year and a recommendation to reduce the number of leased printers by up to 43% ahead of a full re-tender of the printing and print management software in 2024 was reviewed.

Regarding the Personal Computing Devices proposal, members welcomed the plan to test supported devices every six months to mitigate risks from extending the replacement lifespan and discussed the importance of using supported devices for IT security reasons. Non-supported devices will continue to be allowed given the number of staff who need specialist equipment for research purposes or other valid reasons that it would not be efficient to provide centrally.

Regarding the Sustainable Printing proposals, it was noted that printers planned for removal have been identified based on pre-pandemic usage levels but would only be confirmed following discussion with building owners, with scope for negotiation provided that the overall target remains. It was commented that the pandemic has likely changed perceptions given the reduction in printing but that clear communication and explanation of the plans will be important in generating support.

The Personal Computing Devices proposal and Sustainable Printing proposals were recommended for approval by the University Executive.

**ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL**

**8      Digital Research Services Programme                                    Paper E**

A proposed annual budget allocation for the Digital Research Services programme to deliver and maintain a suite of digital services for the University's research community was considered. The budget allocations (totalling £753k revenue, £1.207m capital) were approved as set out in the paper.

**9      Network Replacement Programme Update**                                    **Paper F**

Progress on the deployment of the new University data network, approved by Court in December 2018, was reviewed. The programme continues to hold green status using the red/amber/green rating. The rollout of the new network in University halls of residence is continuing, with a doubling and up to a quadrupling of download speeds recorded in completed properties. The positive feedback received from students and staff who have benefited from the rollout to date was welcomed by the Committee.

**10     Enterprise Infrastructure Procurement Governance**                        **Paper G**

The proposed procurement governance and timescales for the Enterprise IT Infrastructure investment project approved by Court in November 2020 were noted.

**11     Information Security Update**                                              **Paper H**

A regular update from the Chief Information Security Officer was reviewed

**12     Digital Strategy for Adaptation & Renewal – Briefing Paper**             **Paper I**

A progress update on the development of a new Digital Strategy was noted, including the terms of reference for a Digital Strategy governance board.

**13     Information Services Group Capital Envelope**                             **Paper J**

The updated capital forecast for years 2020/21 to 2025/26 was noted.

**14     Committee Reports**
   - **University Collections Advisory Committee**                                **Paper K1**
   - **Library Committee**                                                        **Paper K2**
   - **IT Committee**                                                             **Paper K3**

The reports were noted.

**15     Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

**16     Meeting Dates 2021/22**

Proposed meeting dates for 2021/22 were approved as follows:
   - Monday 11 October 2021, 14.00-16.00
   - Tuesday 25 January 2022, 10.00-12.00
   - Tuesday 22 March 2022, 10.00-12.00
   - Tuesday 24 May 2022, 10.00-12.00

**17    Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday, 25 May 2021, 10.00-12.00