THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Information Policy and Strategy Committee
held on 20 November 2014

Present: Professor S Swain (Chair),
                      Dr D Davies,
                      Ms T MacKinnon,
                      Dr M Piggott,
                      Professor M Rodger (from item 6(b)/14-15)
                      Professor P Thomas,
                      University Librarian.

Apologies: Professor T Jones (Chair),
                      Professor C Hughes,
                      Dr S Mann,
                      Professor J Smith,
                      Professor P Winstanley,
                      Deputy Registrar
                      Director of Campus Services and IT,
                      Miss M Mirza.

In Attendance: Ms J Findlay (Secretary), Deputy Director of IT Services, Digital
                      Preservation Officer (Library) (for items 6/14-15 and 7/14-15), Head of
                      Service Development and Senior Academic Technologist (ITS) (for item
                      9/14-15).

1/14-15   Conflicts of Interest

             REPORTED:

             (a)   That, should any members or attendees of the Information Policy and
                      Strategy Committee have any conflicts of interest relating to agenda
                      items for the meeting, they should be declared in accordance with the
                      CUC Guide for Members of Higher Education Governing Bodies in the
                      UK.

             (b)   That those members present did not raise any conflicts of interest
                      relating to agenda items for the meeting.

2/14-15   Minutes

             RESOLVED:

             That the minutes of the Committee meeting held on 26 February 2014 be
             approved, noting that the meeting of 21 May 2014 had been held by
             correspondence and pertinent matters would be reported in these minutes.

3/14-15   Membership and Terms of Reference

             RECEIVED:

             The membership and terms of reference for the Committee in the 2014/15
             academic year (IPSC.4/14-15).

REPORTED: (by the Chair)

(a)   That the Vice-Chancellor, on behalf of the Senate, had approved joint Chairmanship of the Committee and that the Pro-Vice-Chancellors for research would hold these roles.

(b)   That given the importance of information strategy in all senses to the research agenda, joint Chairmanship by faculty-facing Pro-Vice-Chancellors would signal of the importance of these issues, as well as offering the flexibility role to hold meetings as scheduled in the face of unforeseen engagements.

4/14-15   Meeting by Correspondence 21 May 2014

REPORTED: (by the Chair)

(a)   That the meeting scheduled for 21 May 2014 had been held by correspondence.

(b)   That, by correspondence, the Committee had approved the following:
  (i)   A University Statement on Membership and Access clarifying guiding principles, roles and responsibilities; and
  (ii)   A proposal on standardising the provision and discontinuation of University IT accounts, noting that further work would be undertaken to ensure that the discontinuation timescales were appropriate for common membership categories and activities as well as to define a process for managing deviations from the standards.

(c)   That the above matters relating to membership and access were aligned with the ongoing identity management technology replacement project within IT Services and would be progressed as appropriate in parallel.

5/14-15   Strategic Direction for Institutional Virtual Learning Environment (minute 29/13-14 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Chair)

That the statement regarding the Strategic Direction for Institutional Virtual Learning Environment considered by the Committee at its meeting in February 2014 was shared with the Senate at its June 2014 meeting.

6/14-15   Digital Preservation at Warwick (minute 31/13-14 refers)

RECEIVED:

A presentation from the Digital Preservation Officer (Library) updating on the progress of digital preservation activities at the University.

REPORTED: (by the Digital Preservation Officer)

(a)   That, as previously presented to the Committee, the mission for digital preservation at Warwick was to safeguard the University's intellectual assets by ensuring the authenticity, reliability, integrity and usability of

the digital objects placed within our care by planning and executing appropriate preservation strategies in accordance with best practice.

(b)   That the focus thus far had been on the Modern Records Centre and the Library's digital assets, acknowledging that the underlying practices and facilities would translate into the wider University information context.

(c)   That there remained some key areas to be resolved, namely data integrity monitoring for stored contents and an appropriate access layer to permit retrieval of preserved digital objects.

(d)   That the work being undertaken was closely aligned with Research Data Management project and that it was likely that a collaborative and shared approach, especially towards archival storage, would be beneficial.

(e)   That further consideration and consultation would be required to identify appropriate policy in the longer term for other types of content, such as corporate records, teaching materials and so on.

(f)   That in the longer term, it would be advantageous to use algorithms to discover content, similar to a search engine function, noting however that it would be equally important to ensure a targeted service to allow discovery of individual items.

(By Dr D Davies)

(g)   That a measure of success for digital preservation workflows would be the utility of the contents including the ease of discovery and that therefore collecting enough descriptive metadata would be crucial to allow contents to be retrieved.

7/14-15   Archiving Service

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Deputy Director of IT Services setting out a proposed pilot archive storage service for the University with a focus on the medium and longer term storage of research data (IPSC. 1/14-15).

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Director of IT Services)

(a)   That the proposal had arisen from the Research Data Management Steering Group.

(b)   That it was not feasible for the University to establish an in-house archive storage service for two main reasons:
(i)   The specialist skills and expertise required to ensure the integrity of multiple copies of each object; and
(ii)   The spatial and resource requirements of indefinitely expanding storage.

3

(c)   That whilst other Russell Group universities and the M5 consortium of universities had voiced a service in this arena, it was felt that no offering was be ready for collective progression at this stage.

(d)   That it was recognised that the University would need to define a continuum approach to archiving to ensure that the top-end archive resources were targeted to the data which absolutely required it.

(By the Chair of the Faculty of Science)

(e)   That a priority could be data which lead to successful applications or publications as these carried institutional risk if not retained correctly and that this category could be used to further quantify possible volume of data to be preserved in the top-end archival storage.

(By the Librarian)

(f)   That a further priority category would be research data for secondary use in accordance with the Research Councils UK' Open Access agenda.

(g)   That additionally, data management plans could be used to identify the possible volume of storage required and that although plans were only required for funded projects, the University should give consideration to whether a plan should be completed for all research projects as best practice, for centralised storage and interrogation as an evidence base for a variety of uses.

RESOLVED:

(a)   That the proposal to pilot an archive storage service as set out in IPSC.1/14-15 be supported in principle, with a view to a more detailed paper to come to a future meeting of the Committee setting out priority data areas of the service and any developments for collaboration with other universities or the M5 consortium.

(b)   That the Librarian provide an update on the progress of the wider set of Research Data Management Steering Group recommendations at a future meeting.

8/14-15   <u>Security Incident Response: Potential Enhancements to IT Security Service</u> (minute 27/13-14 refers)

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Head of Infrastructure Services (IT Services) setting out proposed areas of enhancement within the IT Security Service in response to the increasing sophistication and volume of cyber attacks facing universities (IPSC.2/14-15).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Campus Services and IT)

(a)   That the current IT Security Service within IT Services had an increasing workload and did not have any further capacity to take forward any additional development work and therefore the proposals

set out in IPSC.2/14-15 sought to balance an increasing external picture of cyber threat and the mitigation of the perceived risk exposure for the University.

(b)   That centralised log collection (SIEM) and security testing would increase the University's capability to identify earlier, respond to and manage a cyber incident by providing evidence of patterns of activity and ensuring a robust log history for key services and systems.

(c)   That Network Access Control (NAC) would assist in responding to the risks posed by the open nature of the University's physical estate by screening devices wishing to connect to the wired University network and permitting only those which were deemed to be 'trusted'.

(d)   That the IT Services assessed a range of implementation approaches for Network Access Control (NAC) against the likely reduction in risk to identify the most appropriate approach.

(e)   That the cost of NAC would increase proportionately to the extent of the network to be covered additional to a high level entry cost and implementation would be department-by-department to ensure local concerns were resolved appropriately.

RESOLVED:

(a)   That the implementation of centralised logging as set out in IPSC.2/14-15 be supported.

(b)   That the Committee acknowledged in principle the role that network access control could play within the University's cyber defences.

(c)   That the Head of Infrastructure Services undertake further consultation to identify any specific departmental need for network access control as considered alongside other risks.

9/14-15   IT Services for Researchers

CONSIDERED:

A paper, together with oral presentation, from the Head of Service Development and Senior Academic Technologist (IT Services) detailing key findings arising from a study of IT needs of a sample researchers at the University (IPSC.3/14-15).

REPORTED: (by the Head of Service Development)

(a)   That whilst some of the areas presented in the paper had developed, in particular the appointment of the Director of the Research Technology Platform (RTP) Programme, the findings remained relevant and posed areas for further consideration to enhance research practice at Warwick.

(b)   That the study had included semi-structured interviews with researchers new to the University, early career researchers who had

not engaged yet with IT Services and some of the RTP Directors.

(c)   The key findings were as follows:
   (i)   It was becoming uneconomical to archive raw data to the standard networked storage services. Growth would place this under increasing pressure. For long-term preservation, archiving of raw data was essential (albeit offline/slow access storage).
   (ii)   Storage requirements fluctuated across the lifecycle of a research project and required good understanding of the flows and nature of data to make good storage decisions.
   (iii)   Data moved frequently. From instrument capture, to experimental analysis environment, to long-term storage is a common workflow, often including multiple manual transfer steps. This became a noticeable administrative overhead that increases substantially with a trend of growing quantity and complexity of data.
   (iv)   RTPs shared large data sets with clients. The administrative load on researchers to manage the sharing of data responsibly was burdensome. Current options were sub-optimal, particularly with larger dataset sizes.
   (v)   Individual or group IT e-infrastructure needs were not coherently being assessed for researchers upon arrival. These needs could not be solely met by osmosis from peers or departmental input; especially for more nuanced setups.
   (vi)   The impact of heavy research usage of the network for the movement of large datasets (TB upwards) between nodes with other business-critical, campus network traffic, was not well understood by researchers with large datasets.
   (vii)   43% of the researchers interviewed used Apple devices running OS X as their primary interface.

(d)   That it was clear a holistic and co-ordinated approach would be beneficial to meet needs as opposed to Faculty or disciple-centred approach.

(By the Librarian)

(e)   That the findings were well-matched with information gathered under the research data management initiatives and the notion of a research data flow from creation through to archive.

(By Professor M Rodger)

(f)   That it was known that there were datasets which were so large that they would block the network and that this would require resolution if researchers were to transfer data to repositories.

(By Ms T MacKinnon)

(g)   That in her opinion, findings would be similar for practices surrounding teaching activities.

(By the Chair of the Faculty of Science)

(h)   That researchers should also be encouraged to transfer data from local storage (hard-drives, USB etc) into more resilient storage solutions to ensure business continuity.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee be updated on developments and practical recommendations as appropriate at a future meeting.

10/14-15   Thanks to the Secretary

RESOLVED:

That on the occasion of her last meeting, the Committee record its thanks to the Secretary for her service and support.

11/14-15   Minutes of the Faculty IT Committees

RECEIVED:

The unconfirmed minutes of the Faculties of Science and Social Sciences IT Committees (IPSC.5/14-15).

SS\JF\Governance\Shared\IPSC\2014-2015\20 November 2014