

**THE UNIVERSITY *of York***  
**DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY**

**Information Committee**  
**Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 20th October 2008**

Present: Dawn Cartwright, James Chong, Lorna Evans, Ian Jennings (Chair),  
Julie Lord, Paul Waites

**Action**

**08/11 Apologies for absence and committee membership**

There were no apologies. Peter Young is no longer on the Committee. It was agreed that, rather than replace him, we would try co-opting people as required.

**08/12 Minutes of meeting held 11 April 2008**

The minutes were accepted.

**08/13 Matters arising from minutes of meeting on 11 April 2008**

i *08/03 Departmental Bulletin*

The upkeep has transferred to Reception with no issues. Sylvia Haddock and Rebecca Regan will be back-up, although Rebecca has yet to be trained. A new template has been drawn up and will be ready to launch very soon.

ii *08/05 IT Business Continuity*

DC reported that the document went to Strategy Group and there are no subsequent issues.

iii *08/09 Seminars on the web*

This is in hand.

**PRW**

**08/14 IT Projects progress reports**

i *IDM (account and password synchronisation)*

Identity Management is moving forward again since the technical problems have been resolved. There is now a mock-up available for a dry run of students.

ii *Information / document management*

Adrian Walker left after 7 months and has not yet been replaced. DC will discuss funding with DS on Friday as the intention is to reappoint to the post, funds permitting.

**DC**

iii *Calendar / PDA synchronisation*

This is on hold since Adrian was involved in some aspects of it.

iv *Windows Vista Support*

In January 2009, Microsoft will no longer allow companies to have XP pre-installed on new machines. They will all arrive with Vista which will then need to be wiped before XP can be installed. Microsoft will continue to support XP with patches until 2014.

The University is not supporting Vista at the moment. To support Vista departmentally would require a lot of new hardware and money and this is not currently possible. XP is more than adequate for the average departmental user so it has been decided to find ways to allow them to co-exist.

v *New PCs for A004 classroom*

There are now 60 PCs in A004 which is the maximum number that will fit with the current furniture and layout. However, when the Biomedical Science degree is running it is likely that a total refit will be required to accommodate all the students. It would be advisable to think about this in advance of the new degree starting.

The normal upgrade time of the PCs would be Summer 2009 but it would be good to get them done over Easter if there are no scheduling implications. Half would be done at a time so there will always be 30 available during the upgrade period. Students working on their final year projects over the Easter vacation will not number more than 20 so this will not be a problem. IJ will check with ABH about whether there will be any schools visits.

**IJ****08/15 Information needs of a world class university***i Email, Calendar and Collaboration on the Cloud (EC3)*

JPJC reported from SIPIG. The current email system as it stands will not be able to cope with the University expansion and so is looking at the possibility of outsourcing to companies such as Google or Microsoft who also offer document sharing. However, Google cannot guarantee in which country our email server would be located and this might be unacceptable. The University wants to give students and staff an email address for life and also increase file storage. IJ and PRW attended a demonstration which highlighted that the email service seemed to be a more important issue than document sharing, which surprised them. There will be a progress report at the next SIPIG meeting.

*ii Content Management System (CMS)*

The Content Management System was also discussed at SIPIG. It is being trialled at the moment and should reach Biology in January but not as part of the pilot. Although this is a bad time of year to introduce a new project there will not be a tight deadline for completion of transfer of information from the current web pages into CMS. There will be a briefing in November and we should then be able to draw up a plan for migration with each section making its updates at a certain time.

*iii Digital Recording of Lectures*

The University has two working groups exploring this; one looking at high quality podcasting and the other looking at digital recording. Progress is slow.

Although Biology could video-record lectures we do not have the technology to make it interact with PowerPoint, nor to cope with live broadcasts. However, it would be good to implement something at departmental level without having to wait for the University to make some progress and a good place to test the technology would be with visiting speakers. We would then lead the way, picking up ideas of the potential problems in advance. The process would have to be as automated as possible – there is software available but the cost is unclear. It was agreed that this was worth pursuing.

**08/16 Risk Register**

DC reported that the risk definitions have changed and new software is going to be introduced. The IT risks were therefore discussed and changes were suggested and made. DC will talk to HMOL about research information, for example who makes sure that experimental data is correct?

IJ will update all the risks and pass them to DC.

**DC****IJ****08/17 Visiting Associates**

Biology Personnel update the online email address list developed by PRW but the global address book does not get updated with visiting associates. An estimate from Personnel is that there are approximately 120 associates in the Department each year who need to be added and removed. LE has updated the global address book in the past and did not recall that this took up much time. DC will take the issue forward with JCP.

**DC**

**08/18 Photocopying and printing**

All academic staff currently use an M code for their photocopying charges which is proving unwieldy. JAL thinks it would be easier if there was just one Teaching budget from which all staff could photocopy their teaching-related materials. There is a concern from some areas that this would be abused but JAL thinks the benefits would outweigh the disbenefits. IJ said there is a piece of software that would do the accounting but it costs approximately £800 to purchase + £300 p.a. maintenance. JAL will raise it at BUSB.

**JAL**

JPJC is in favour of the idea of one good quality printer per corridor which would be greener than many individuals having their own. This would require networking and cross-charging. IJ will put on the next agenda "Strategy for networking of printers".

**IJ**

**08/19 Date of next meeting:**

IJ will circulate suggestions for dates towards the end of Spring Term.

**IJ**

*LE 23 October 08*