Higher Education Information Directors in Scotland (HEIDS)

Approved Minutes

Tuesday, 22 November 2011
University of Abertay, Dundee

Present:

Chair

Alun Hughes	The University of the Highlands and Islands	AH

Secretary

Fraser Muir	Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh	FM
David Beards	SFC	DB
Gerry Costello	SAC	GC
Gerry Dougan	Scotland's Colleges	GD
Brian Gilmore	University of Edinburgh	BG
Frazer Greig	University of Abertay	FG
Sandy MacDonald	University of Glasgow	SMD
John Maher	University of the Highlands and Islands	JM
Simon Marsden	University of Edinburgh	SM
Kathy McCabe	University of Stirling	KM
Andy McCreath	Robert Gordon University	AM
Ronnie McIntyre	SAC	RM
Catherine McMillan	University of Strathclyde	CM
Tom Mortimer	University of Dundee	TM
Brian Mullins	University of the West of Scotland	BM
Frances Neilson	JANET UK	FN
Moriamo Oduyemi	University of Abertay	MO
Chris Pinder	Edinburgh Napier University	CP
Dean Phillips	University of Aberdeen	DP
Mike Roch	Heriot-Watt University	MR
Fraser Ross	RCS	FR
Jem Taylor	University of the Highlands and Islands	JT
David Telford	Edinburgh Napier University	DT
Mark Toole	University of Stirling	MT
Colin Watson	Glasgow School of Art	CW

1. **Apologies were received from the following:**

Caroline Cochrane	RCS
Allan Doyle	APUC
Michael Turpie	University of Abertay

The chair welcomed Chris Pinder from Edinburgh Napier University to his first meeting of HEIDS.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting:
The minutes of the meeting held at University of the Highlands and Islands on 16 September 2011 were approved.

3. Reports from Shared Services report progress groups:
The Chair introduced the special meeting of the HEIDS group and its purpose as agreed at the previous meeting. Representatives from each of the sub-groups were asked to report back to the group.

Moodle
In the absence of Heidi Fraser-Kraus, Brian Mullins introduced the results of the discussion held by the Moodle sub-group. Discussion was held around the type of service that could and should be offered in particular variations on the theme of hosted servers versus hosted services. APUC indicated that their organisation would be keen to be involved at an appropriate time.

The second part of the meeting was attended by the ULCC Director who presented the ULCC service and offering and how they could absorb the requirements of the HEIDS members Moodle requirements.

The HEIDS group discussed the findings of the group and the ULCC offering, in particular the need to set clear service levels and understand the exact detail of what is needed and offered as part of a hosted service. The group also discussed and agreed the need to involve FE as part of further negotiations, with approximately 50% of FE institutions using this software as their VLE.

The group also discussed the next steps and the need to appoint a new chair of the sub-group as HFK is due to move on. DT from Edinburgh Napier agreed to take on this role. Finally, the group discussed the need to involve those outwith IT, in particular learning technologists in institutions. The group agreed that further information from SMUG previously supported by the RSC should be sought.

DT

Blackboard; licensing and hosting
MT updated the group on the meeting of BlackBoard representatives held at Stirling University and also a separate meeting with APUC representatives. Discussions were held on two strands; single licence and a single hosting option for the community. The group agreed to create two sub groups; to look after negotiations and data feeds and integration.

The HEIDS group discussed the update and again agreed that FE involvement would be beneficial. GD indicated that FE would be interested in anything that would improve service or reduce cost to the institution.

The need to have a competitive alternative to Blackboard in Moodle was also considered useful in both he short and long term. Finally, the group noted that an appropriate exit strategy for a service of this type would be essential.

IT continuity and storage
BM introduced the paper previously circulated to members setting out the discussion held by the sub-group. HEIDS members then discussed the issues and challenges; location, latency, VAT, bandwidth in particular. The dependency on JANET was also noted.

FN updated the group on progress of the JANEWT brokerage scheme and how this would have a positive impact in this area. The group was encouraged to make contact with the project leader, Dan Perry.

It was agreed that all members would send data related to current storage requirements to the sub-group chair.   All

Members then discussed the cross-over between the other groups on   BM/BG/AM
collaboration. It was agreed to convene a general session for interested parties.
It was also agreed to circulate a request to members to ascertain their
institutions storage requirements with a clear definition on what was required.   BM

Collaboration tools
AM introduced the previously circulated paper to members setting out the discussion held by the collaboration tools sub-group. In addition, Telford College had also agreed to host an event on behalf of the sub-group for all HEIDS members as well as interested FE institutions.

The group then discussed the findings of the sub-group so far. APUC updated members on discussions in this area with two suppliers, Microsoft and Adobe and this may lead to a national deal for Scotland. It was agreed that the sub-group should engage with APUC.

The group then discussed possible VOIP/SIP shared services in relation to collaboration tools.

Finally, the chair wound up the discussion by summarising the main themes raised.

4.   **Chair's update on sectoral developments**
The Chair presented the previously circulated paper on developments in the sector where HEIDS was represented by the chair on member's behalf. Particular emphasis was placed on the need to engage with external bodies to ensure that our voice was heard and the group was considered as the appropriate bode to engage with the sector ICT agenda. It was considered that failure to engage would result in changes being made without recognition of the specific requirements of HE.

GD also updated the group on developments in FE, noting particularly that FE institutions appear to be moving more quickly than HE.

5.   **Future models for HEIDS**
GC introduced his paper previously circulated to members. Input had been sought from certain members via email and telephone conversations. Particular highlighted were the need to have HEIDS represented on the Scottish Government Strategy board and the issue of subscriptions.

GC also described what other sectors were doing and how the group could become the vehicle to provide managed services back to individual institutions.

The need to recognise the interaction with FE was highlighted. Finally, the issue of VAT was raised.

The Chair asked members to consider over lunch.

The group broke for lunch and agreed to continue discussion.

5.   **The future of HEIDS continued**
The Chair welcomed back members and summarised the discussion prior to lunch. Questions were invited, particularly on structure, FE membership,

subscription income and the group as a shared services vehicle.

The group discussed the various topics raised by the paper and the chair. With respect to structure, the chair summarised the discussions and agreement achieved regarding the need for a chair, vice chair, secretary and possible treasurer. A business committee could also be formed to ensure projects were advanced on behalf of the wider group.

The group agreed to progress proposals through a sub-group of the current Chair, Secretary, SCURL (MT), UCISA (TM), FE (GD) and GC.

Chair

The group then discussed possible vehicles for delivery of shared services for HEIDS. Members agreed to pursue relationship with APUC to progress at a timescale quick enough to allow consultation but that there could be no commitment without this consultation with HEIDS members.

Members agreed that any finalised arrangement must offer confidence and comfort to the group as a whole.

6. Review of groups
The Chair set out the desire to check whether group reports are still appropriate as well as to receive updates.

6.1 SFC (DB)
Covered elsewhere in the agenda.

6.2 Universities Scotland (DT)
The Chair agreed to seek input from US.

Chair

6.3 JISC (AH/MT)
New interim executive secretary was noted and members agreed that this was a positive appointment.

6.4 JCN/JANET UK (FN)
To follow

6.5 SMCG (MT)
Position paper previously circulated. MT Agreed to circulate finale version to HEIDS and SMCG.

MT

6.6 RSCs
Consolidated at U of Glasgow. RSCs taking advisory role as Colleges regionalise.

6.7 SCURL/SCONUL (MT)
MT to represent HEIDS. MT updated group on progress with shared Library IT systems. SCONUL has created sub-group on shared services, similar to SCURL and is intending to progress a National Digital Library for the UK.

6.8 UCISA CISG (HFK)
Nothing to note

6.9 UCISA Executive
TM reported that UCISA had input into JISC transition group with Peter Tinson and John Cartwright attending.

6.10 APUC

Attention was drawn to mobile and desktop hardware agreement. APUC would also be further restructuring predominantly into category management.

7   AOCB
There was no other business.

8   Venue and Agenda for the next meeting
The venues for the next two meetings would be Glasgow in February 2012 and UWS, Ayr in May.

Fraser Muir
22/11/11