HEIDS

Higher Education Information Directors in Scotland

Minutes of HEIDS Meeting
Robert Gordon University
27 November 2001

Present:-

Chair	Tom Mortimer	Glasgow School of Art (GSA)	TM
Secretary	Paul Dean	Napier University (NU)	PD
	Malcolm Bain	University of St Andrews (UoStA)	MB
	David Beard	SHEFC	DB
	Lynne Berrie	Heriot-Watt University (HWU)	LB
	Jim Buchan	Northern College (NC)	JB
	Brian Gilmore	University of Edinburgh (UoE)	BG
	Fraser Greig	University of Abertay (UoAy)	FG
	Alun Hughes	University of the Highlands Project (UHP)	AH
	Linda McCormick	University of Glasgow (UoG)	LM
	Andrew McCreath	Robert Gordon University (RGU)	AM
	Richard Murphy	University of Dundee (UoD)	RM
	Tony Osborne	University of Stirling (UoSg)	TO
	Graham Prior	University of Aberdeen (UoAn)	GP
	Jean Ritchie	SHEFC ScotC&IT Project	JR

1.   **Apologies**

	Bill Harvey	SHEFC	BH
	Gordon Hunt	RSAMD	GH
	Peter Kemp	University of Stirling (U0Sg)	PK
	Tony Shaw	University of Paisley (UoP)	TS
	David Rundell	Heriot-Watt University (HWU)	DR
	Ian White	Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU)	IW

2.   **Minutes of Previous Meeting**
It was noted that Tony Osborne was erroneously shown as attending the meeting on 27 August 2001, otherwise the minutes were accepted as a correct record.

3.   **Matters arising**
Supporting Disability – TM will organise a session on this subject at a future meeting of HEIDS. He will discuss options with speakers at a session planned to take place shortly within GSA.

Action:- TM

Scottish MANs Video Conferencing Network (SMVCN) – TM had written to SHEFC on behalf of HEIDS expressing concern about lack of funding for the upgrading of SMVCN, see agenda item below.

Scottish University for Industry (SUfI) – DB noted that SufI had adopted SABER as their VLE platform. The situation in FE is still fluid and it is now felt likely that there will be several different solutions adopted, i.e. FE will not univesally follow SUfI down the SABER route.

4. **Information Security**

The item started by discussing points around the implementation of Information Security Policies, points made:-

- UoSg is interested in this area and Price Waterhouse are currently helping them to set up a policy.
- NU has recently implemented a new policy.
- RGU have a policy but feel it is too complicated and requires simplifying. AM felt these policies should be public documents although they are often regarded as confidential to institutions.
- Queries were raised as how a policy should link with RIP, there had a been a discussion on this within ClydeNet.
- The point was made that the policy itself should be short and high level but backed up by good 'Acceptable Use Policies'.
- The area of 'private use' was discussed. Some, e.g. NU, define what is acceptable while some other institutions don't but accept such use within 'reasonable' bounds.
- UHP have a particular problem as all their users are indirect being within the component colleges.
- There was a concern for the status of IT staff when investigating incidents. These included establishing a code of conduct for what they could and could not do, what is the situation when they become involved in handling illegal content, and also some may be personally disturbed by some content.
- A general view that BS7799 provided useful guidance but full compliance would not be appropriate for HE.
- Different approaches to monitoring versus responding to incidents were discussed.

It was decided that the JISC Information Security Service should be invited to the next meeting as there are obviously many areas where the meeting felt it needed guidance.

Also it was proposed that members should share the work the institutions have carried out to date.

Action:- All

5. **Re-procurement of MANs**

The core funding has been secured but there is still on going discussions about the discretionary element. SHEFC have allocated additional funding but it looks as if it will not all be required for the MANs hence some will be allocated to support the upgrading of the video conferencing service and some will be distributed by formula to institutions for LAN improvements. Decision dates are 30 November for FE and 6 December for HE.

The minimum connection speed for FE will be 10Mbps with most getting 34Mbps and some getting 100Mbps LES circuits. This provision is better than SFEFC had initially expected hence they are confident the outcome will meet FE's expectations. It was stated that the situation for on going funding for FE would be clarified at the meeting on 30 November.

LM commented that FE and HE had worked very well together on the project.

6. **Scottish MAN Video Conferencing Network (SMVCN)**
DB reported that Jeremy Sharp of UKERNA had delivered a proposed course of action to SHEFC. This will cost £0.5M and replace one IP/ISDN 'codec' and 'gatekeeper' per HE institution. It was stated that there was insufficient time for a UKERNA led central procurement hence money would be distributed to the institutions. A circular letter will come out from SHEFC after the 6 December meeting.

There was concern about the dangers of institutions buying different types of equipment as there are still inter manufacturer compatibility issues for the IP component. Hence it was proposed that SHEFC should support a framework agreement put together within the sector if UKERNA are unwilling to lead such an exercise. JB pointed out that whatever equipment is purchased it must be compatible with the new JANET service. LM suggested that it may be possible to use the recent UHP purchasing agreement as a basis for a wider deal. PD stated that UKERNA had proposed at an earlier stage that Scottish HE buy through the Welsh agreement.

Other points were:-
- RGU would require the new provision to be of a roll about form.
- Some institutions would require assistance in the configuring of the new equipment.

7. **ScotCIT Project**
JR reported on this project that is finishes at the end of 2001. She distributed a leaflet that was then used as the basis for her presentation and discussion.

Some of the materials that have been prepared are now hosted on the ASSET server at the UoStA. It was noted how important SMVCN had been to the operation of the ScotCIT project.

As part of the closing of the project JR is preparing a report in a similar form to the one she published on the 'Use of MANs' initiative. In addition there will be video conference dissemination event.

TM thanked JR for her work and contributions to HEIDS and expressed concern as to how HEIDS would receive equivalent input in the future.

8. **AGM**
The following was agreed:-
- TM indicted he was willing to continue as Chair for another but final year, this appointment was confirmed by the meeting.
- PD indicted he was willing to continue as Secretary for another but final year, this appointment was confirmed by the meeting.
- The constitution will not be reviewed at this stage.

9. **Any Other Competent Business**
a) Digital Advantage Workshop
Four of there meeting had either taken place or were imminent. Each meeting is made up of 12 invited attendees. A workbook was being issued at the workshops that was designed to help institutions assess their readiness for e-commerce.

b) British Council Meeting

DB and TM had attended this meeting that looked at how easy web sites are to locate from abroad, it was noted that English sites generally were more visible than the Scottish ones. A working group is to be set up that will include DB. It was requested that copies of the slides from the meeting were distributed to HEIDS. TM will check and if possible distribute.

Action:- TM

c) Jim Buchan and Jean Ritchie

TM pointed out that this was the last meeting that JB and JR would attend in their present capacities hence the meeting wished both Jim and Jean success in their future career.

10.   Dates & Locations of Next Meetings

Tuesday	26 February 2002	University of Abertay
	(Later changed to Wednesday 27 February)	
Tuesday	30 April 2002	University of Glasgow