HEIDS

Higher Education Information Directors in Scotland
Minutes of HEIDS Meeting
Held on Tuesday 30 April 2002
University of Glasgow

Present:-

Chair
Tom Mortimer	Glasgow School of Art (GSoA)	TM

Secretary
Paul Dean	Napier University (NU)	PD

Malcolm Bain	University of St Andrews (UoStA)	MB
David Beards	SHEFC	DB
Stuart Brough	University of Strathclyde (UoSe)	SB
Brian Gilmore	University of Edinburgh (UoE)	BG
David Hawly	University of Aberdeen (UoAn)	DH
Fraser Greig	University of Abertay (UoAy)	FG
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
Tony Shaw	University of Paisley (UoP)	TS
Ian White	Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU)	IW

1.   **Apologies**

Morag Carnall	Queen Margaret Univ. Coll. (QMUC)	MC
Bill Harvey	SHEFC	BH
Gordon Hunt	RSAMD	GH
Graham Prior	University of Aberdeen (UoAn)	GP
David Rundell	Heriot-Watt University (HWU)	DR
Alun Hughes	University of the Highlands Project (UHP)	AH
Peter Kemp	University of Stirling (UoSg)	PK

2.   **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Accepted as a correct record.

3.   **Matters arising**

Section 3   Following an event at GSA on 'supporting disabilities' TM had discussed the possibility of the same presenters presenting at a HEIDS meeting, this is being organised for the June meeting.

Action:- TM

Section 3   DR has volunteered to tell the group about how HWU are setting up an Information Security Policy, carried over to the June meeting.

Action:- DR

Section 3   The meeting was reminded about the UCISA management briefs on 27 & 28 May which it was felt may fill up quickly as the events are joint with SCONUL. The first day would be based around 'Digital Signatures & Authentication' and the second day around 'Disaster Recovery'.

Section 6   PD will clarify who should be on the mailing list (JISCMAIL) and then provide RM with the list so he can update the HEIDS web site. Some work done but to be completed before the June meeting.

Action:- PD then RM

Section 8   Some other institutions had expressed an interest in joining the UoStA in tendering to purchase laptops for students. There has been a meeting and a note of this meeting will be circulated to HEIDS.

Action:- MB

4.   **The Draft UCISA Vision Paper**
The above paper was discussed. The paper had been written in the present tense as a description of a University 'C&IT Service' in 10 years time. The authors were a group of experienced members of UCISA, not the executive committee.

Points made about the paper:-
- It is probably impossible to forecast more than 5 years into the future.
- Vision must be linked to the business.
- Part of the motivation for the paper was that SCONUL already have a similar paper.
- The documentation has been used in a HEFCE consultation.
- It is useful to have such a paper even if it is accepted its 10 year horizon may be too long.
- It seems to be an attempt to get technology to lead pedagogy which is the wrong way around. It also needs input from academic staff.
- It is probably correct in its view of equipment ownership.
- Personal computing devices shouldn't be referred to as PCs as this is too restrictive.
- It should emphasise the redevelopment of technical staff.
- It assumes the technology will work perfectly 'out of the box', there was scepticism about this.
- It implies 'added value' by 'contracting out' but it was felt one of the greatest 'added values' is an internal service having a good understanding of the organisation.

Taking it forward:-
- A discussion took place as to whether the policy should be submitted to SHEFC but there doesn't seem to be an appropriate committee. It was felt SHEFC may find it interesting but they would not want to be prescriptive as the diversity of institutions needs to be preserved.
- It was felt that there may be value in setting up a 'HEIDS futures group' which could take input from SHEFC and industry.

- Perhaps we need a SWOT analysis.
- The paper assumes many areas have moved forward at a constant rate but it was pointed out that some issues, such as the 'last mile' in terms of home connections don't seem to progress.
- Perhaps it would be better to consider the component areas separately so thinking on one area doesn't cloud thinking on another area.
- The business issues of institutions vary considerably and this will have a major impact.
- Perhaps it would be useful to think about what we would do if we were setting up a service for a brand new university.
- There was discussion as to whether there was any point in pursuing such an exercise if the resulting document isn't used. On the other hand it was felt that we wouldn't know the usefulness of such an exercise until we progressed it.
- Perhaps we should check whether Universities Scotland would find it helpful for us to progress such an exercise and how it could fit into any futures consultation from them.

To conclude it was pointed out that there had been a lot of lively discussion at the meeting hence there must be interest.

5. **Re- procurement of the MANs**
There are a small number of important issues delaying some lead institutions signing the RPAN agreements with UKERNA, although others have signed. The issues involve complexities around consortiums versus companies (clause 28), and commitment to long term funding of FE. It is not clear when these issues will be satisfactorily sorted out.

The general status is as follows:-

	AbMAN	**ClydeNet**	**FaTMAN**	**EaStMAN**
RPAN	Signed (but they are a company)	Not signed	Signed	Not signed
Consortium agreement	No such agreement as a company has been set up.	Agreed subject to FE issues.	In progress.	Letters of intent to sign from Principals.
Fibres	Ordered	Imminent order	Imminent order	Installation work in progress.
Equipment	Ordered (Foundry)	Supplier decided	Best and final offer stage.	Ordered (Cisco)
Plan	Submitted	Submitted	Submitted	Submitted

6. **Scottish MAN Video Conferencing Network (SMVCN)**
The SHEFC money is now with the institutions (it came in 2 portions).
The framework agreement is in place to allow institutions to order the equipment and many have ordered. Each institution will have a visit from the selected supplier, i.e. MacMillans.
There is some confusion as to the status of the installation of the MCUs by UKERNA and their subsequent management.

7.   Reports From Other Groups

JISC – The 'banding' proposals for network charging have been withdrawn following negative feedback from the consultation exercise. The system for 2002/3 will be as previously but charges will be increased by 35%. Longer term discussions will be reopened with the funding councils. The issue had not been discussed at the last meeting of the JCN. It is felt that UKERNA are keen to have a system based on simple and indisputable statistics. Research income has also to be considered.

It is expected that the future formula will be based on total institutional income, including research monies, which will mean a slight drop in the base figure for most institutions but an increase for the most research active institutions. Year on year increases will continue. The Open University will have to be a special case. It was thought that as there will be no incentive to manage traffic the money may as well be top sliced. There will be sector wide consultation over the summer.

Concern was voiced that at this time of increased network charges the JISC was being profligate in it expenditure on new activities.

It was felt that SHEFC should take a view. It was noted that HEFCE no longer has the dominant role in the JISC due to the addition of FE members to the committee.

SHEFC – The ScotCIT project is being evaluated. In conjunction with FE and Universities Scotland a working party is being set up, to look at the future of e-learning in Scotland.

Universities Scotland – TO reported on behalf of PK. Discussions on network charging have been put on hold pending the discussions within the JISC.

UKERNA/JNT Association – Subject to an EGM in May the company structure will be changed to ensure the control sits with the major funders, i.e. the funding councils. Universities UK are lobbying for a seat on the new board.

JISC Committee on Networking (JCN) – BG reported on the following developments:-
- The first 10Gbps link is now in service in 'mid England'.
- UKERNA are pushing DANTE to improve non US international links.
- The JCN will set up a working party to oversee the expenditure to improve network quality.
- Peter Walker of OFTEL has indicated that the sector will only need a network licence if dealing with the 'real public'.
- Guidelines are imminent on cross sector security when working with NHS networks.
- In the future, probably 2 years out, there will be a requirement for better guaranteed network availability, i.e. 24 by 7, that will impact on MANs. It was felt that FE was driving this change but HE may have to fund it.

JNUG – BG reported that Iain Campbell, chair of JNUG, wanted to consider changing to the structure.

RSCs – It is felt that the Scottish ones have been successful while some English ones have been less successful due to recruiting a manager at too junior a level. It was felt that Glasgow University managing both ClydeNet and the South/West RSC had been particularly helpful

EUNIS – Both MB and TS are delivering papers at the EUNIS conference in June.

SCONUL – PK, together with Michael Breaks, is proposing some joint HEIDS/SCONUL consultations. TM will circulate paper to HEIDS.

Action:- TM

8.   **Any Other Competent Business**

Disability Support – RM reported that the UoD has created a post to look at 'IT and Disabilities' and he was interested in learning from other institutions with similar posts. It was noted that UoP, RGU, UoStA, and UoSg all have such posts either within the IT or student support areas. It was suggested that it would also be useful to contact Angus Annan at Thames Valley University and the person who presented for TVU at the UCISA conference (it is known she has since left TVU).

Institutional Collaboration in Aberdeen – AM pointed out that RGU the UoAn are looking at areas of institutional collaboration. IT and Estates are seen as potentially useful areas for collaboration. A decision will be made in June.

11.   **IBM Presentation**
Following the meeting members were invited by LM to attend a presentation being given to staff of the University of Glasgow by the IBM.

10.   **Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday	25 June 2002	Glasgow School of Art
	(Subsequently changed to 4 July)	
Friday	13 September 2002	Heriot Watt