

HEIDS

Higher Education Information Directors in Scotland

**Minutes of HEIDS Meeting
Held on Wednesday 5 March 2003
Ross Priory, University of Strathclyde**

Present:

Chair		
Paul Dean	Napier University (NU)	PD
Secretary		
Gordon Hunt	RSAMD	GH
Malcolm Bain	University of St Andrews (UoStA)	MB
Stuart Brough	University of Strathclyde (UoSe)	SB
Louise Garden	Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU)	LG
Brian Gilmore	University of Edinburgh (UoE)	BG
Fraser Greig	University of Abertay (UoAy)	FG
Linda McCormick	University of Glasgow (UoG)	LM
Andrew McCreath	Robert Gordon University (RGU)	AM
Garry Main	UHI Millennium Institute (UHI)	GM
Tony Osborne	University of Stirling (UoSg)	TO
Tony Shaw	University of Paisley (UoP)	TS
In Attendance		
Catherine Nicholson	SCURL	CN

1. Apologies

David Beards	SHEFC	DB
Jim Buchan	UKERNA	JB
Morag Carnall	Queen Margaret University College (QMUC)	MC
Bill Harvey	SHEFC	BH
Alun Hughes	UHI Millennium Institute (UHI)	AH
Tom Mortimer	Glasgow School of Art (GSoA)	TM
Richard Murphy	University of Dundee (UoD)	RM
Graham Pryor	University of Aberdeen (UoAn)	GP
David Rundell	Heriot Watt University (HWU)	DR

2. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes were accepted as a true record.

3. Matters arising not elsewhere on the agenda

Section 3 PD to ask TM to circulate a copy of his letter to DB.
Action: PD/TM

Section 5 PD to ask DB to circulate the KETF report if complete.
Action: PD/DB

Section 7 TS had prepared a list of providers of forensic investigation services. The group asked TS to take forward discussions with the police and others to pursue the interests of IT directors and staff in protecting themselves when undertaking investigations. It was agreed that a future HEIDS event on this subject would be desirable.

Section 8 PD had spoken to Mike Turpie who expected to attend the June HEIDS meeting and discuss engagement with FE ICT managers.

4. MAN Reprourement/SMVCN

a. Resilience Working Group

LM reported on the meetings of the working group. Thus had provided commercial and in confidence quotations for a dual connection for each MAN with the second access going to the opposite C-POP. The quotation proved prohibitively expensive. Thus had then examined the option of LES circuits between Aberdeen & Dundee and Edinburgh and Glasgow; two pricing options were supplied with a variation in the up-front capital.

DB had indicated to LM that SHEFC was likely to take the view that some element of institutional funding would be expected. There was no SHEFC funding available in Financial Year 2002/03 and the situation for next Financial Year would become clearer after August/September 2003. There was potential funding available under the SPARK project but this would not necessarily help EaStMAN or ClydeNET. There was a potential mis-match between the length of a contract with Thus and the SuperJANET IV extension contract. The UKERNA SuperJANET Architecture group was considering resilience issues. LM thought that the work of the HEIDs Sub-group would feed into the SuperJANET 5 planning.

The next stage would be to discuss the issues with UKERNA on April 15 and then submit a paper to SHEFC. UKERNA were likely to want to link this issue to the SuperJANET V timetable. The Principal of Glasgow University had already written to Roger McClure expressing concern at the lack of resilience and HEIDS members would need to lobby their own Principals for support after mid-April when the situation is clearer. BG stated that non-confidential figures were needed from Thus. LM commented that this lobbying would be timely in view of recent events and the current prominence of risk assessment exercises. The paper to SHEFC would be circulated before the next HEIDS meeting.

Action: LM

5. HEFCE Developments

PD asked if there was any need for discussion of the potential effect of the English white paper on Scotland. Scottish institutions would be worse off if the English institutions receive extra funding, on the assumption that the current

grants are not cut in the meantime. It was felt that this might happen post-2006 but that there would be an imbalance between Scottish and English funding until then. It was agreed that there was nothing for HEIDS to pursue at present.

6. Reports from other groups

a. Universities Scotland

PK will chair a working group on the implementation of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

b. JNUG

BG reported that JNUG was considering its own structure. The user groups were not matching well all areas that contain potential interest groups and existing groups could not necessarily fulfil the role of representative groups (HEIDS, for example, has no FE representation and so is unsuitable). There was no enthusiasm for a revival of SNIJUG. An email list was one possible solution. It was agreed that users are hard to mobilise until a problem actually occurs.

c. UKERNA/JCN

BG reported on the JCN meeting of 10 February. On network charging, JISC had not been able to put out any information because the assessors had not met. This had been due to happen in mid-February but no news had been forthcoming. Ian Smith had submitted a paper to the assessors warning of the dangers of using network charging to raise revenue by charging more each year. This might result in MANs making their own arrangements to save money. The Chair of JCN would raise these issues at JISC level.

Under the new European Directive OfTel is satisfied that unless institutions are providing chargeable services to the general public via their networks they are not breaking the law. OfTel were interested in large operators, not the levels of business associated with HEIs.

On connection policy, JCN's decision of September 2002 that JANET should never be used for commercial purposes had been overturned in favour of academic and research use with an associated grey area. For sponsored connections, institutions would have to agree them with the MAN which would buy bandwidth from UKERNA. JCN would consider the charges for this, but it would mean an increase in costs for sponsored connections.

d. RSCs

LM reported that the renegotiation of RSCs was not well-handled. It was apparent that there were moves from some quarters to extend services to HEIs. However, the demand for this was questionable and RSC staff cuts would make it difficult to deliver even the current level of service. PD

would write to JCALT for clarification copying the letter to BH, also asking for the results of the recent survey of HEIs on the need for RSC support with particular reference to the Scottish responses.

Action: PD

7. Reports from meetings attended

a. SMCG

MB reported that SMCG had met at the end of January with SPARK as the main topic. SPARK would connect Scottish schools with 4 mb/s to primary schools and 8 mb/s to secondary. A method by which these would be connected to the BAR was being procured with links back to C-POPs. The infrastructure would be in place around July. This might have implications for MANs in terms of getting a quid pro quo for use of their bandwidth.

8. Any Other Competent Business

There was no other business.

9. SCURL Presentation

Catherine Nicholson (SCURL Development Director) and GH gave a presentation. In addition to describing SCURL's activities some joint areas of interest were suggested, such as staff training and network licensing issues. There was some interest in a meeting to explore issues of service convergence.

10. (Un) Paralleled Resilience with OPS – Developments at Strathclyde University

SB gave a presentation on developments at Strathclyde.

11. Dates of future meetings

4 June 2003 University of Stirling

3 September 2003 University of Edinburgh