

MINUTES OF MEETING
of the
STRATEGY COMMITTEE
Wednesday, 27 August 2014
2:00 pm – 4:00 pm
Turing Room

Present:

Johanna Moore (Chair), Jim Bednar, Murray Cole, Michael Fourman, Nigel Goddard, Jane Hillston, Mirella Lapata, Alex Lascarides (for Sethu Vijayakumar), Neil McGillivray, Ron Petrick, Steve Renals, Michael Rovatsos, George Ross, Perdita Stevens, Colin Stirling, Marjorie Dunlop (Secretary)

Apologies: Colin Adams, Sethu Vijayakumar

Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of 25 June 2014 were approved.

Actions from the Minutes of 28 May 2014

Item 1 – Research data management

AS clarified various aspects of the Research Data Management project and its impact on Informatics, in particular the ability to share personal allocation. The Committee indicated that their preference is for a more sophisticated approach to data quotas, that is sensitive to the needs of research groups, and possible solutions should be offered to IS.

Action

AS, with help as needed from MOB, to push through alternative model (AFS)

Further Action

PS to check with AS as to completion of above action

Further Action

MD to check with AS as to completion of above action

Actions from the Minutes of 25 June 2014

Item 2 – Update on draft budget for 2014/15

NMcG reviewed the draft budget projections. We currently are in surplus but this will be eroded in future years through budget commitments so maintaining school performance is important to ensure future growth.

Action

NMcG to query the College Accountant about ECDF

Actioned

Item 3 – Data lab innovation centre, discussion centre

DR gave an update on the Data Lab Innovation Centre. There are four nodes: RGU, UoG, UoE and SICSA. NHS and Scottish Government are industrial partners. Neil Logan is the interim Chair and David Richardson is the interim COO; the lead HEI representative is DR. Anticipated activities include: industrial relationships; collaborative projects relating to mature research; studentship funding; Eng D; community lectures/workshops; masters course provision (linking to the Business Informatics Masters); opportunities for academic involvement and tie-in to CDTs. There will be a launch of the IC around October.

Action

DR to speak with SOA to confirm that the Business Informatics Masters is on track

Actioned

Action

BW to speak with Bob Fisher re Eng D (put on books anyway)

Further Action

Alex Lascarides to tell Bob Fisher

Item 4 – Head of school's business

a) Outline Job Descriptions for Outreach Roles

There was discussion about the funding of a full time admin role to manage outreach on a day to day basis. It was mentioned that there may be opportunities for external funding (College, EPSRC).

Action

JO to investigate funding

b) Teaching Support Staff

MR clarified that the intention of this paper is to improve job descriptions and transparency and to 'not exploit students' in any support roles. There was discussion on this paper particularly with respect to requirements and expectations of students and academic staff. Strategy Committee approves of the aims of the policy but did not adopt it as written.

Action

This paper will be presented for review at the next meeting of the Teaching Committee before being returned to Strategy Committee for policy approval

Action

Until policy approval has been given, ITO is to use this paper sensitively in the run up to the 2014/15 academic year

Actioned

ITEM 1 – MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

JM thanked the previous Head of School, Dave Robertson, for leaving the School in very good shape. She also congratulated Liz Elliot on her position as Director of Population Studies in Informatics in MVM. Andy Davis will assume Liz's previous position as Head of Planning and Communication.

JM welcomed new Directors to the Committee (Murray Cole, ICISA, Michael Rovatsos, CISA; Michael Fourman, Research Committee; Colin Stirling, Teaching Committee) and thanked their predecessors (Mike O'Boyle, ICISA; Alan Smaill, CISA; Jacques Fleuriot, Research Committee; Michael Rovatsos, Teaching Committee) for their contributions to the Strategy Committee.

NMcG and JM will review the membership of the Committee and seek input from people. General opinion indicated that a term of two years, rather than three, would be appropriate for the 'representatives'. Two years would allow more people the opportunity of being on the Committee.

ITEM 2 – ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

JM confirmed the appointments of Adam Lopez as Reader in ILCC and Dragan Gasevic as Chair in Learning Analytics and Informatics (joint appointment with Education).

There is ongoing recruitment of a Reader and a Lecturer in Cyber Security and a special recruitment opportunity in the area of Semantic Models of Computation. The Committee was unanimous in their decision to continue with the recruitment opportunity in the area of Semantic Models of Computation.

Action

JM to speak with JH as to how best to proceed

ITEM 3 – 14/15 BUDGET

NMcG reviewed the draft budget, clarified various points and responded to questions from the Committee members.

There was discussion about the Hoppers Budget.

Action

NMcG to speak with Hoppers to clarify their budget

ITEM 4 – UPDATE ON SPACE

NMcG gave an update on space and responded to various questions (overall Health and Safety, location of exam boards for 2015, heating and ventilation, possible need for portakabins).

Forrest Hall

A contractor has been approved for this refurbishment.

Wilkie Building

Formal plans have been agreed. It is hoped that there will be a seminar room of the size of 2.33.

Action

NMcG to speak to Callum Robertson of E & B re a Plan B if refurbishment of Wilkie Building is delayed

A major quandry is ‘when is the Forum full’. How should ‘fullness’ be measured?

Offices

There was discussion about opportunities to re-configure ‘B’ offices (two B offices equals three C offices). This could result in more bookable meeting rooms but reduce the number of people that could meet in individual offices.

Action

NMcG to ask the KM group to collate suitable data

Action

Committee members to report at next meeting as to how many 4/5 people meetings they hold in their rooms

E & B have quoted about £15K to change two B rooms to three C rooms.

Action

NMcG to speak to E & B re a ‘contract’ for 5-7 room changes (Bs to Cs)

Further moves

There is still a need for another group to move to the Wilkie Building.

Action

Committee members to send ideas to NMcG and JM

ITEM 5 – ADMIN UPDATE

Highlights of the report from NMcG were:

- Admin Management team
 - Teresa Ironside, Head of Student Services
 - Steve Scott, Head of Knowledge Management and Knowledge Transfer
 - Julie Young, Head of Finance and Research Services
- continuing work on staff web pages
- new Theon Staff system
- dedicated Theon Portal screens for institute Admin Offices and Portfolio Managers
- introduction of new CDT admin staff to support the new CDT Executive Boards
- transition of HTBN staff to new Guaranteed Hours contracts

ITEM 6 – COMMUNICATION

General Meetings

It is anticipated that there will be general meetings every month or every other month. The first meeting will be a general meeting (including a welcome to new academics) and subsequent meetings will focus on a single topic.

Modes of Communication

There was discussion about ways to communicate with a group the size of Informatics (100 academics, 600 students, plus supporting admin staff). Suggestions included: a parallel channel to email (social media, Twitter, blogs) but the caution would be (possible worldwide) visibility.

Action

SOA and MF to work with Effie McDonald (Informatics Publicity Officer) on guidance for staff on use of social media

It was noted that Kenny Bell is fully responsible for the Informatics website.

ITEM 7 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Digital Inclusion in Scotland

The Government is pushing to have digital skills everywhere. A change to the school curriculum (core competencies in Science and English) in the UK, including Scotland, will produce opportunities for Informatics (eg backing from Principal and Head of College, involvement with Moray House and lecturers in other schools, external courses and work with Data Science, HSS want more quantification in their degrees, for resources look at opportunities with Data Lab). The UK Government at Westminster is consulting on a similar document.

Action

Email MF if you are interested

ITEM 8 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, 24 September 2014 at 2:00 pm in the Turing Room.