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MINUTES OF MEETING
of the
PLANNING AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
held on
Wednesday, 7 October 2009
2:00 pm – 4:00 pm
Turing Room

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Present:

Dave Robertson (Chair), Colin Adams, Stuart Anderson, Alan Bundy, Gordon Duckett, Mike Fourman, Johanna Moore, Jon Oberlander, Mike O'Boyle, Don Sannella, Alan Smaill, Mark Steedman, Perdita Stevens, Sethu Vijayakumar, Phil Wadler, Bonnie Webber, Chris Williams, Marjorie Dunlop (Secretary)

Outstanding Actions from Notes of Meeting of 16 September 2009.
Item 3 – Gordon will arrange for successful grants to be on a website
Item 4 – Mike set up a blog; it was decided to make the blog public
Item 6 – Still in process; Gordon is actioning the PRAF.
Item 9 – Alan has talked to Gordon Plotkin; Gordon Plotkin needs to be engaged in the process
Item 10 – The schedule has moved back; nothing will happen until January
Item 8 – Jon is on the Research Experience Committee
Item 16 – Dave thanked everyone and said the visit was a great success

Item 3 – Staff Development Arrangements
Bonnie met with Frances Grebenc and a number of issues came up with respect to staff development. Bonnie's aim is to get the Informatics staff development programme running with appraisers and appraisees linked come January. For this we need to design the forms that are used to initiate the staff meetings and record the issues raised. The committee felt that the emphasis in these forms should be on encouraging the appraisees to present their views of their careers and current problems/opportunities rather than pre-defining a standard School view. With this approach to staff development it is important that appraisers, and perhaps also appraisees, are given training in how to get the most out of staff development meetings.

Action
Bonnie will produce a new form
Bonnie will, with the assistance of the admin staff, get the process operational by January

Item 1 – Research Opportunities (Paper A)

IKC
We have joined a bid led by CSBE, with cross-college support. Several other bids are in competition, with one to be chosen to go forward to EPSRC from the University.

Telecomms-SICSA project
There will be a November workshop if all goes well. We should know in the next month whether a large scale programme is likely to be supported.

Edinburgh Climate Change Centre

Plans for focusing effort relating to climate change across Schools were discussed. This is still at an early stage and Informatics is supportive of the initiative but not yet closely involved in it.

Item 1 – Research Recruitment Strategies

There was a discussion about recruitment strategies, following from the previous meeting. We decided at the previous meeting to recruit in the Neuroinformatics and Security areas but there also is an urgent need to reinforce our research in Algorithms (a key strategic area), given a recent staff loss. We decided to go for an appointment in Algorithms in addition to those in Neuroinformatics and Security. Our aim will be to advertise for two Readerships and a Chair.

Action

Gordon to coordinate the PRAF for Algorithms to add to Neuroinformatics and Security

Item 2 – International Review of Informatics Research

Discussion was delayed to a later meeting.

Item 7 – Any Other Business

Admin Restructuring

The admin restructuring was discussed. Concerns were expressed that the staff had not been sufficiently informed. It was noted that every member of admin staff had been spoken to by Dave, Julie, Neil or Gordon. There was, however, a worry that Service Managers are being told different things by Dave, Gordon and Julie. Directors of Institutes also wanted greater engagement with the restructuring of research admin. It was felt that a unified view is required at this stage.

Action

Gordon will talk to the Service Managers, Directors of Institutes and send written information

Item 4 –SFC teaching funding

The consultation document on readjustment of the SFC teaching funding subject price groups was discussed. Although this is favourable for the University as a whole it could be damaging for Informatics because the adjustment could give less funding per student to our area. We believe the root cause of this to be the diversity of approaches to teaching nformatics across Scottish universities, with high quality, lab-based courses such as those in Informatics costing significantly more than less intensive courses. It is important that this is understood by the University when reacting to the consultation document.

Action

Gordon and Dave will arrange to meet with Alexis Cornish

Item 6 – Head of School's Business

There was discussion of the issue of staff approaching the age of 65 who wish to consider continuing to work in the School rather than taking the conventional option of retirement. Each case has to be considered on its merits by Head of School, consulting with others as appropriate,

but as a general principle it was agreed that a principal concern is to cover the full economic cost of continuing employment.

Item 8– Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, 11 November 2009, 2:00 pm-4:00 pm.