<u>**Minutes of the Computer Committee meeting held on 20th January 2020 at 13:00pm in the**</u>
<u>**Godwin Room, Old Court**</u>

Present: Jason Randall, Allison Lewis, Ian Elliott, Charlie Weiss, Aylmer Johnson, Catherine Reid, Ben Cole (UCS)

Apologies: Qi Guo, Rouchelle Sriranjan, Jason Carroll

1. <u>Declarations of Interest</u>

None

2. <u>MMA</u>

CR asked for the previous minutes to be amended slightly with regard to CamGuides as they did not mention a grant that had been received.   **ACTION: IE**

CR also said that it had been decided at the Freshers wash-up meeting to change the way students sign their contracts in future and that JR would be contacted shortly to discuss this. AL said that she had already been contacted and this will be discussed next week.

AJ asked if anything had been sent out to students to remind them about the importance/benefits of using cloud storage. JR said that he had sent information to AJ but not to the students so therefore agreed to send something out.   **ACTION: JR**

JR gave an update on the recent server crashes we have been experiencing. We have installed numerous updates as per the advice of HP and the problems seem to have disappeared although we do not know if this is a result of the updates. We continue to apply patches and updates and are currently 11 days without a crash although it is frustrating to not know 100% why the problems seem to have gone away.

3. <u>Draft budget proposal</u>

JR reported that there is no spreadsheet available yet as it is still early days.

Looking at things more generally we expect a rise in income for the next academic year due to St Regis coming back into operation. All other lines of income should stay stable.

The Bursar has requested a 0% increase from everybody or less if possible.

With regard to Specials we are approaching year 3 in our project to replace network hardware. We are already replacing edge switches on the staircases and the 3rd phase will involve replacing core switches on each site. It is estimated that this last phase will cost around £27.5k.

JR would also like to replace the two photocopiers on F staircase which are now around 6-7 years old and starting to show their age. Both of these copiers were out of action last week due to breakdowns which shows the importance of getting more reliable hardware. The cost will be around 9k and all the quotes should hopefully be in today. JR will then be able to produce the first draft of the special request to give to Deborah Hoy who will pass it to the Bursar for discussion at the next Estates Committee.

AJ asked how long the new switches would be expected to last. JR said that he would expect it to be a minimum of ten years with a maximum of fifteen years.

4. IT Department update

AL was in over the Christmas period to replace the switches on F staircase (x2) and also in the FML. The switches in N attic, O3, Castlebrae and Castle End have also been replaced. There are still around ten more to do but they are already set up and ready to be installed. AL said that it would be preferable to install these switches during office hours so asked BC when the best time would be. After a little discussion it was agreed that mornings (after 9:00/9:30) would be best as this is when most students attend lectures and this would also give them time to check emails etc. first thing before leaving. The work will involve a complete loss of network connectivity including wi-fi.

AL also mentioned the power downtime for Memorial Court over the Christmas period which went well with no problems as a generator was in place. The power was only down for one day as opposed to the originally planned three days.

JR asked CR about a leak that had occurred in the undercroft in the FML. CR confirmed that this had happened early last term when one of the boilers failed and when Maintenance attempted to fix it found that there was a second leak. Both leaks were fixed but JR was concerned as our main network distribution point is housed in the FML basement. The undercroft is quite deep though so any future leaks would have to be major for this to affect our equipment. We do need to know of any future issues though so JR will speak to James Claydon to discuss this.

JR has distributed the annual report.

AJ asked if there were any new developments with the relationship with King's. JR said that we are currently hosting their art database (they are planning to use a different product for it though) but that's about it. Quarterly meetings are held and we are still interested in utilising their web developer as and when we move to a new Drupal based solution.

CR asked if there was any further development with the website project. JR said that Jonathan Goodman was expected to call a meeting last term but this has not yet been arranged. Our current website is being hosted once more by Network Design as they had been unable to get it to work on the MWS. They are confident that these security requirement issues have now been resolved which would enable us to move it back there. However UIS are currently debating the future of the MWS which is running at a huge loss and a meeting will be held next quarter to discuss their options. One of these options is outsourcing which would probably see the cost of using the service increase.

JR has been asked to create a short paper to Council regarding the blocking of .doc and .xls files being sent via email into Clare. This has been causing concern for all those involved with Admissions (both staff and fellows) due to the high level of documents being sent to them in the old format.

JR has explained the reasoning behind the decision which is quite simply to minimise the risk of infected documents arriving in people's inboxes. Most macro related viruses and auto running links are sent using the .doc and .xls format which is at least 12 years old now and really should not be used anymore. The safer .docx and .xlsx formats have been around for a long time now but unfortunately there seem to be a lot of legacy forms throughout the University that have never been updated hence the scale of documents being blocked.

Since we initiated these security measures 125 infected emails have been blocked which proves the effectiveness of what we are trying to achieve which is the integrity of the Clare network. Information has been provided to those affected explaining how to resave the documents in the new format before sending them. Auto replies also tell the sender what has happened and what they need to do.

JR has asked the Tutorial office to contact the University regarding the outdated forms but in the meantime has created an exception in the blocking rule for emails sent to admissions@clare which is obviously a huge security risk. He is also worried that a formal request may come from Council to remove the block so AJ asked CW to support its continuation at the next Council meeting.

IE has been very busy upgrading Windows 7 PCs to Windows 10. Currently just five desktop PCs remain outstanding plus a few laptops. He has already completed around 50 upgrades over the last couple of months.

As of last Friday we are no longer running any Windows Server 2008 machines as this has also gone end of life.

5. <u>UCS Report</u>

BC had nothing to report.

6. <u>MCR Report</u>

RS was not present but JR is hoping that he will receive an update on the project to enlist King's help with the revamp of the MCR website.

7. <u>AOB</u>

None

<u>Date of next meeting</u>

Monday 27th April 2020, 13:00, Thirkill Room