

Minutes of the Computer Committee meeting held on 25th January 2021 at 13:00pm via Teams

Present: Jason Randall, Allison Lewis, Ian Elliott, Charlie Weiss, Catherine Reid, Jason Carroll, Larry Paulson, Ignas Budvytis, Max Lycke (MCR)

Apologies: Aylmer Johnson, Ben Cole (UCS), Qi Guo

1. Declarations of Interest

None

2. MMA

The annual report will be delivered by CW at Council later today.

3. Draft Budget Proposals

JR said that it wasn't worth drafting a budget with so much uncertainty so he has decided to summarise a few items which he thinks will be worth putting forward should we have the scope. Nothing over £3k (per item) will be proposed as the specials budget is already severely constrained by buildings work and it will be very hard to make an argument for capital investment at this time.

JR proposed a network rewire for the Housekeeping building (the Gatehouse) near the rear entrance to Ashby Court which currently has a CAT 5 cable running to it from the FML and was installed around 20 years ago. Housekeeping are now looking to install extra PCs, phones and potentially wi-fi in this area and because they currently have two PCs running off a mini switch in this building it has been decided to get a quote for a fibre connection. The quote has been received and comes to around £2.5k inclusive of VAT.

There is a common room in the refurbished St Regis which JR thinks would benefit from having an MFD copier so the Graduates can copy, scan and print in colour up to A3. This would fall within the MCS budget line. We already have funding in place to provide an MFD copier for the Colony this year but this will be put on hold due to both the current pandemic and the flooding which has occurred in the Castle House MCS Room.

JR said that AL had suggested swapping the location of the Castle House MCS room with the current site of the Gym which is sited underneath Castle End dining room. JR thinks this is a very good idea as the location of the current MCS room is less than ideal due to its basement location and is more suited to being the site of the Gym. This would also give the Gym an area three times the size of its current location so JR will put this forward as an agenda item at the next Estates Committee.

CR asked about access to the current Gym and JR explained that it was at ground level which makes it more suitable for disabled access. It is split level inside with three steps leading to a lower level but we would be able to provide accessible computing facilities on the upper level. It would also make it easier to install an MFD copier in this room and JR believes there to be around £10k in the BEST Investment Fund for Information Technology which could fund this. Downsizing the current MCS facilities at the Colony also makes sense under current circumstances and we could always look to expand in the future should the situation change.

JR asked the committee to provide him with any other suggestions or thoughts although we have plenty of time as no budgets have been requested yet.

4. IT Dept Update

AL and JR came in over Christmas and replaced our internet switch which was supplied by UIS. This replaced the previous one which was ten years old.

In early January JR replaced the UPS located in the FML.

Since the last meeting IE has been busy helping three elderly Fellows who have had their accounts compromised. AL has also helped to advise Fellows in similar situations. JC asked if they had all been victims of the same people but JR confirmed that they had all been separate incidents. JR has since sent out an email as part of an ongoing programme of giving cyber security tips and advice.

IE has also been busy building/configuring laptops for both staff and Fellows to use from home. All of the laptops have been delivered to college and there are now just a couple still to be completed.

AL has been updating osTicket and is looking to introduce user registrations to the system. This has become necessary due to the amount of tickets raised by people using different email addresses and typing errors. This makes the job of extracting accurate reports from the system extremely difficult and this is why AL is now looking at implementing a registration system.

AL and JR have been busy installing access points at St Regis and also connecting up the CCTV and door access control. This has gone well and there have been no complaints about the wi-fi so far which is good considering UIS carried out upgrades over the Christmas period to try and fix power issues with this particular model of access point. The hope is that these upgrades have resolved them.

A web based management system has been implemented in each of the Porters Lodges which initially will be used as a key management system. When you request a key your access card will be scanned along with the RFID tag on the key thus linking you to that particular key. This will make it easier to track keys and should anyone fail to return a key an automated email will be generated reminding the person to return it. It is hoped that the system will also eventually be expanded over the coming months so it can also track parcel collections, bicycle registrations and car parking permits.

There has not been a huge demand for the MCS facilities in the temporary area set up in Castle End dining room. We can always provide more machines should the need arise. CR asked if the MCS facilities were actually open to students as she had been told that they weren't. JR was unaware of this and agreed to speak to the Head Porter for clarification copying in CR.

JR recently had cause to work on a member of staff's PC and noticed that Windows updates had not been applied for three months. He has therefore made changes to group policy which will force PCs to restart automatically (thus installing the updates) if they are not installed manually within seven days.

The Clare website has been migrated back to the UIS Managed Web Service which has also had the effect of fixing the issue where emails were not being sent by web forms. It will have to be migrated again to a third party before October as the MWS is closing at that time.

JR has been working to make the Clare website an https website thus making it more secure. Unfortunately UIS currently has issues with its security certificate system so once this has been resolved JR will be able to complete this.

5. UCS Report

None

6. MCR Report

ML confirmed that the MCR website is almost ready and is awaiting confirmation regarding content.

The University security team (CERT) contacted us earlier this week regarding a php file on the MCR website which was visible to the outside world and could potentially give away technical information regarding the website. JR asked ML to remove it or hide it.

7. AOB

JC asked if the Hermes to Exchange Online migration was being done centrally from UIS or if intervention was needed by ourselves. JR explained that although migration can be carried out manually by anyone it was also being handled centrally by UIS. JR will be sending out emails to this effect at some point as users of Pine may well have issues with their migration.

LP expressed his displeasure with the forced migration to a system that will make it impossible to continue accessing his email once he retires.

JC said that he had lost his Sent Mail following the migration and JR said that this is why an early migration is best because you can move any "lost" mail from Hermes to Exchange Online manually

CR asked if it would be possible to have a backup MFD copier installed on site as it would help reduce student numbers in the FML. JR said that this could be looked at when we replace the printer in Lerner Court where a smaller MFD could be a possible solution for this

Date of next meeting

Monday 15th March 2021 at 13:00