



## UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

### SCHOOL OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES IT COMMITTEE

Unconfirmed Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2016

<b>Present:</b>	Abbi Abbioui (Pharmacology)	Jon Holgate (UIS)
	Nabeel Affara (Chair/Pathology)	Mark Holmes (Vet School)
	Jenny Barna (SBS/UIS)	Marko Hyvonen (Biochemistry)
	Phil Brereton (Pathology)	Henrik Jönsson (Sainsbury Laboratory)
	Tracey Brown (Minutes)	Paul Judge (Genetics)
	Ian Clark (Genetics)	Alwyn Scally (Genetics)
	Alistair Downie (Gurdon Institute)	Christof Schwiening (PDN)
	Lydia Drumright (Medicine)	Paul Sumption (SCBS)
	Christopher Gilligan (Plant Sciences)	Andrew Welchman (Psychology)

#### 1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Graham Ladds (Pharmacology), Andy Judd (UIS/Vet School), Richard Bartlet (CSCS), Richard Farndale (Biochemistry), Graham Ladds (Pharmacology), Richard Fieldsend (Psychology), Gabriella Rustici (Genetics) and Wentao Song (PDN).

The Chair informed the meeting that Felicity Webster (Finance Division) passed away last week, The Committee will miss her guiding hand in terms of finance.

The meeting welcomed Jon Holgate from University Information Services (UIS) to discuss Information Management and Cyber Security and Lydia Drumright from the School of Clinical Medicine to contribute to the Research Governance and relationship with the Clinical School.

#### 2. Declaration of Interests

No declarations of interest were received.

#### 3. Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2016

The minutes of the meeting were accepted after corrections to the spelling of the following committee members' names; Christof Schwiening, Alastair Downie and Marko Hyvonen.

#### 4. Matters arising

##### 4.1. Structure of UIS

The Chair reported that there was nothing further to report. Jenny Barna will circulate in the next Newsletter a link to the IT Review Progress, a report which came out in last week's Reporter.

**ACTION: Jenny Barna**

#### 4.2. Review Sub-group IT in Teaching and Administration

Christof Schwiening gave a brief history of the origins of the review sub-group set up by the faculty board. He also indicated that individual funded projects (lecture capture, use of computers for exams, student interaction systems) are in place that emerged from the University-wide Digital Learning Sub-committee. It is hoped that the Digital Learning Sub-Group would provide a strategic steer for the introduction of IT into teaching. The committee will invite Graham Virgo to provide a brief on the development of IT in teaching and administration (probably in September). Christof was not able to attend the recent meeting of the Digital Learning Group, so was unable to update us with the latest reports on the trials. Jenny Barna reported that she now has full access (which others can also request) to the lecture capture and IT based examinations project websites and can now keep the committee informed of developments. Christof reported on the feedback received from Teaching Committees for both the Natural Sciences and Medical and Veterinary students within the faculty. There are significant problems in lecture capture with the material we present and the way we lecture. There is little enthusiasm for lecture capture and even less for typing of Tripos essays on computers given current technology. In contrast, Marko Hyvonen reported that the student feedback on lecture capture is very positive; students can search keywords which will allow them to go to a particular place in the lecture. Students are also emailing course organisers when they are unable to attend lectures due to ill health to check if the lecture is being captured so they can catch up. Alwyn Scally raised the point that it was undoubtedly a good idea but it could add to the students teaching learning burden. The Chair confirmed that we need to identify the advantages and disadvantages in order to brief Council.

#### 4.3. Network Upgrade

Jon Holgate reported that they have been in the process of upgrading core and distribution routers (40Gb), which are the backbone of the University Data Network; this will allow 10Gb Pops for institutions and faster speeds if required. Jon directed the committee to the UIS website (<http://www.uis.cam.ac.uk/>) where you can view the indicative costs. It is hoped to circulate an email to all Institutional Computer Officers in January to ask if they need to swap-out their Pops.

#### 4.4. Information Management Programme

This item was covered under 4.3.

#### 4.5. Virtual BioCloud in 2014

Paul Sumption was asked to take responsibility to report back to this Committee. Paul reported that BioCloud is part of the new Peta 5, a large computer cluster with associated storage funded by large collaborative grants.

#### 4.6. Computer based exams

This item was covered under 4.2.

#### 4.7. Joint Schools Project update

The Chair reported that the project for a Joint Schools Computing Service is not continuing. The position of the SBS Council is that it will be up to departments to decide how they want to meet their computing provision, either from UIS, the Clinical School or having a mix of their own IT staff on the ground working with either of these organizations.

## 5. General UIS update

### 5.1. New and improved storage services

Jenny gave an overview and will circulate the website links in the next newsletter (<https://www.uis.cam.ac.uk/initiatives/storage-strategy/researchstorageservices>)

Paul Sumption reported that there are five beta testers, one of which is from Biochemistry primarily using HPC storage for back-up of large data-sets. Paul would like to know who else from this Committee would be interested in Beta testing.

### 5.2. Cyber Security Programme

UIS are thinking of offering four models of firewall out to institutions, based on capacity. There are two management options; the first being a fully UIS managed Firewall appropriate for small institutions; the second is a partially managed Firewall option with periodic releases of updates. Jenny Barna reported on the introduction of an IPS (Intrusion Protection System) which sits between us and our internet provider that can detect and block cyber attacks. Initially this will be installed as an IDS (Intrusion Detection System) and switched over at a later date to an IPS.

## 6. Governance of Research Computing (formerly known as HPCS)

Ian Clark presented a paper on the governance of research computing and the readiness of the hardware to offer the BioCloud service that led to an extensive discussion. Given the development of the Peta 5 project, it was agreed that the hardware and resources for the BioCloud should be rolled into the much larger mixed computing model. Access to and training for users is now available and Jenny Barna should be consulted to enable both. Lydia Drumright (School of Clinical Medicine) confirmed that this is designed to service research computing for all in the biological and biomedical sciences, in addition to the physical sciences and engineering. Paul Sumption is now working on developing further the interface for access to the system for those in the biological sciences. The cost model is likely to offer a certain level of access free (to encourage users to sign up) with additional use charged in relation to CPU time. This is being worked out and would allow users to factor such costs into grant applications. A proposed two tier governance structure for all of research computing has been put forward with an over-arching committee for the entire University and a second level committee for individual schools. Individual schools would be represented on the higher committee. It was agreed that this was a sensible arrangement and that the School of Biological Sciences should work closely with the School of Clinical Medicine in terms of representation and objectives at the higher committee. The Chair will work on a model for the tier 2 Governance committee that draws in representatives from the departments requiring research computing and circulate this to the Committee for consideration. **ACTION: Chair**

## 7. Any other business

Alistair Downie wished to gauge interest within the school for an electronic lab notebook system which could be deployed by UIS. Paul Sumption reported that there is a working group addressing this issue and that Tim Dickens has a strong interest in this area. It was noted that a unified system would be much more preferable than many individual solutions. It was agreed that Alistair Downie should invite Tim Dickens to brief the committee on his experience with electronic lab books in pharma and any developments at UIS. A further meeting to discuss this issue is scheduled for the 13/14<sup>th</sup> January which will be attended by Marko Hyvonen and Paul Sumption. Marko Hyvonen reported that 90% of his students would like to use electronic lab notebooks but that senior staff are less enthusiastic. Lydia

Drumright also raised the fact that she has secured a University Licence for ProCuro which is ready to be deployed and will be enquiring if UIS can enable its roll-out to interested parties. ProCuro is not a LIMS System but a freezer and sample storage system.

**ACTION: Alistair Downie**

**8. Date of next meetings**

Lent Term 2017:	Mar 23rd
Easter Term 2017:	Jun 22nd
Michaelmas Term 2017:	Sept 28th