



UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

SCHOOL OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES IT COMMITTEE

Unconfirmed Minutes of the Meeting held on the 23rd March 2017

Present:

Abbi Abbioui (Pharmacology)	Andy Judd (UIS/Vet School)
Nabeel Affara (Chair/Pathology)	Graham Ladds (Pharmacology)
Jenny Barna (SBS/UIS)	Liz MacRae (Zoology)
Phil Brereton (Pathology)	Alwyn Scally (Genetics)
Tracey Brown (Minutes)	Mark Sharpley (CSCR)
Ian Clark (Genetics)	Andrew Welchman (Psychology)
Mark Holmes (Vet School)	Wentao Song (PDN)
Henrik Jönsson (Sainsbury Laboratory)	

In attendance: Tim Dickens (Chemistry)

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Karl Wilson (SBS), Richard Farndale (Biochemistry), Gabriella Rustici (Genetics), Christof Schwiening (PDN), Marko Hyvonen (Biochemistry) and Alistair Downie (Gurdon Institute)

2. Declaration of Interests

No declarations of interest were received.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 8th December 2016

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.

4. Matters arising

4.1. Network Upgrade

Henrik Jönsson raised the issue of the low network traffic used by the Sainsbury Laboratory and wondered if it was equally low in other departments. Ian Clark (IC) said that this information is available from the UIS network info site and that traffic varied considerably between Departments. It was agreed that despite low network usage at this time by some departments and institutes, it would be prudent to proceed with the 10Gb upgrade to increase capacity as investment into infrastructure that will be used in the future.

5. General UIS update

5.1. BioCloud

Jenny Barna reported that existing HPC users have been added to the BioCloud and that a Governance Group with the Clinical School will be established. The Chair confirmed that this will be covered under item 7.

5.2. Virtual Servers

Jenny Barna reported that this was in Beta test and pricing had yet to be established. JB urged users to try it.

5.3. Cyber Security Programme

Jenny Barna informed the committee that the University has made Cyber Security a priority, more information is available via the link provided in the March Newsletter.

6. **Electronic Notebook Survey**

Jenny Barna gave a brief report on the survey on behalf of Alastair Downie; this indicated a demand and, therefore, need to provide digital recording (80% interest in Institutional support for an ELN system with 60% already experimenting with using personal/cloud software). Following on from a one-day ELN meeting in January a working group consisting of Mark Holmes, AL, JB and Paul Sumption has been set-up to investigate possible providers and produce a shortlist of 3-4 products to be trialled. Small groups of volunteers from SBS will help with the trials, they will be assigned an ELN system to use for 30 days, watch short vendor sales pitches via YouTube videos and complete a feedback questionnaire. Paul Sumption will explore and test compatibility of each product with University storage and authentication systems. It is not clear how licensing for a preferred ELN system will be funded in the future.

Tim Dickens (Head of IT in the Department of Chemistry and IT Coordinator for SPS) gave a brief presentation of his experience of ELN systems and their introduction into the working environment and that they add value to research activity if managed, supported and funded correctly. There are new ELN systems coming onto the market all the time with a trade-off between complexity and simplicity of use, Lab Step offer a system focussed on biological research. Jenny Barna added that the working group has set out a matrix of must-haves and nice-to-have and will continue to report on progress. The general discussion highlighted the need for flexibility and a number of important issues to be taken back to the working group.

7. **Governance of Research Computing**

The Chair reported this needs to be set-up and referred the committee back to the paper Ian Clark presented at the last meeting for the proposed structure which is now confirmed. There will be an over-arching Research Computing Governance Committee for all schools and each school will have a sub-committee. The committee agreed that the SBS Governance Sub-Committee members will be Gos Micklem, Alwyn Scally, Mark Holmes (as the new Chair of the SBS IT Committee), Nabeel Affara (who will stand until he retires in September) and Jenny Barna and will meet once a term. It is felt that there is a need for strong representation at the top. The Chair confirmed that the Clinical School are creating a similar committee headed up by Lydia Drumright and that we will work closely with them to present a unified front for the medical and biological sciences. A meeting to be arranged soon.

ACTION: Chair

8. **Any other business**

8.1. New Chair of SBS IT Committee

The School has agreed that Mark Holmes become the SBS-IT Committee Chair as Nabeel Affara retires in September and that the handover will occur officially in May.

ACTION: Chair/MH

9. Date of next meetings

Easter Term 2017: Jun 22nd
Michaelmas Term 2017: Sept 28th