UNIVERSITY OF KENT
Information Services Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2008

Present: Professor J Baldock (Chairman), Professor A Chadwick, Professor MD Fischer, Mr NSR Jackson, Dr J Mills, Miss S Newnham (for Helen Palmer), Mrs C Pickaver, Mr PV Slater, Mr J Sotillo, Mr S Thornton, Dr AH Ward, Ms G Woodhams, Mrs JC Hornsby (Secretary).

Apologies: Professor D Chadwick, Ms KM Doyle, Mr J Pink.

01/08-09 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 June were approved.

02/08-09 TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP 2008-2009

The current Terms of Reference and Membership of the Committee (ISC 01/08-09) were received.

03/08-09 REPORT TO SENATE 2007-2008

The Committee's annual report to Senate for 2007-2008 was received (ISC 02/08-09).

04/08-09 COMPUTER USER PANEL

Draft minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2008 were received (ISC 03/08-09). Under 8.1 it was agreed to support the request to C&DO for a website to be set up for ex-Kent members of staff. The Committee recorded their thanks to the CUP Chairman, Professor Chadwick for his continued work with the CUP.

ACTION: SECRETARY

05/08-09 LIBRARY USER PANEL

Minutes of the meeting held on 27 November were not available at the time of the meeting, and will be presented to the next. However, the Chairman of LUP gave a verbal report on proceedings. Discussion had centred on members' concerns about a proposed 25% cut in book stock, which had been explained by the Head of Library Services, also present at the Panel meeting. The figure of 25% had been arrived at following a survey of the stock management/weeding policies of the top 30 UK HEIs; Kent’s stock weeding has been at a much lower level than these other institutions, and the conclusion was reached that had Kent managed its collection the way other institutions had managed theirs, then stock would have been 25% less. The figure is an estimate, rather than a policy. It refers to duplicate stock as items are now available electronically. Academic integrity of the Library is paramount and will not be compromised.

06/08-09 DRILL HALL LIBRARY USER GROUP

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2008 were received (ISC 04/07-08). The Committee recorded thanks to all who contribute to this group, and acknowledged the difficulty in getting three separate institutions with differing protocols, to work together in this way.
07/08-09 IS REGULATIONS REVISIONS 2008

The Committee noted that revisions to Regulations relating to Information Services were approved in September 2008 by the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor, on behalf of Senate and Council (ISC 18/08-09)

08/08-09 WEB STRATEGY AND STEERING GROUP

The Committee received the minutes of the meetings held on 31 October 2008 (ISC 05/08-09), together with notes and guidance on Blogging (ISC 06/08-09); and minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2008 (ISC 07/08-09), together with an update paper on proposals for a Content Management System (ISC 08/08-09).

(i) Blogging

It was agreed that the guidelines on blogging supplied by WSSG were excellent, and required only slight amendment to make explicit the responsibilities of all parties in the case of joint/group/departmental blogs. Subject to this, the Committee approved the guidelines and the launch of the pilot in January 2009. An updated version of the guidelines approved by the Chairman after the meeting is circulated with these minutes (ISC 06A/08-09).

(ii) Content Management System

The Committee noted the change of preferred product – from MySource Matrix to Drupal, and also the enthusiasm of the WSSG for the latter, and agreed to accept the recommendation of the WSSG and approve the adoption of Drupal.

09/08-09 REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

A separate report from the Director of Communications and Development was not supplied in time for the meeting. It is circulated herewith (ISC 19/08-09).

10/08-09 REPORTS FROM THE DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION SERVICES

(i) Director’s Report June 2008 – November 2008

Paper ISC 09/08-09, the Director of Information Services’ Report for the period June-November 2008. The Director of Information Services spoke to the report and highlighted the following

A: Services

More publicity for the changes and improvements to IS services is needed, and this has been recognised; the IS newsletter will go to students as well as staff from Spring Term 2009. Additionally, a note being sent out to staff next term will outline improvements made to services – this should also be copied to students, particularly in view of the NSS 2009, which will be running at the same time.

The SU representative reported that Faculty Representatives were in the process of setting up Faculty student newsletters, and that IS might be able to contribute to these. It was agreed that the names of the Faculty representatives would be forwarded to the Director of Information Services and the Head of Library Services for this purpose.

ACTION: SU REPRESENTATIVE

B1 Reading List Management Software

New software has been introduced to facilitate the submission of reading lists, following the poor submission rate in previous years. Rates are still relatively low, despite good feedback on the software. Training for staff in the use of the software will be offered from January 2009. The Committee were concerned that availability of reading lists, and therefore the Library’s ability to ensure stock is available to meet demand is very important for students, not least because of the very negative impact it has on
satisfaction – and in NSS. It is also an issue that should be easily solved, with the support of Senior Management.

It was agreed that the Committee’s concern about the availability of Reading Lists should be brought to the attention of both the Learning and Teaching Board and the Managers’ Forum, with the recommendation that Faculties and Departments are required to supply full Reading Lists to the Library.

ACTION: SECRETARY

C3 Moodle
The pilot Moodle service will commence at the start of the Spring Term 2009.

C7 VERDI
The Committee congratulated IS on securing JISC funding for this project.

Woolf College Network Infrastructure
It was reported that the standard of installation has been found to be very poor and that this will cause problems for years to come.

Withdrawal of Public PC Room at Medway
It was reported that a Public PC Room had been withdrawn from use in the Medway building, to be used for other purposes. Feedback will be monitored, but there are still significant numbers of public PCs available on that campus.

(ii) Vista Student PC Service for 2009/10

The Committee noted that the rollout of Vista will take place in the academic session 2009/2010 as outlined in paper ISC 10/08-09

(iii) New Email and Calendaring System for Staff

The Committee received paper ISC 11/08-09 detailing arrangements for the rollout of the new Exchange email system for staff, from January 2009. It was noted during discussion that POP will no longer be supported and that IMAP should serve the needs of those using POP. IS are approaching those users known to use POP to ensure that they are aware of the change and their needs can be met. There was particular concern expressed about the security of email archives under IMAP. The proposal that Out of Office messages should be restricted to internal addresses only was not supported by the Committee. While they recognised the need to filter SPAM, they were equally concerned that by so restricting these vacation messages, the University would be leaving itself very vulnerable, and the incidence of SPAM had in any case been drastically reduced in recent months. A balance must be struck between sensible business practice and protection against SPAM, but this was not the means to do it.

ACTION: INFORMATION SERVICES

(iv) Information Services Response to the University’s Research Strategy 2008-2010

The Committee received and supported the general thrust of paper ISC 12/08-09, but believed that it should be redrafted into a short proposal which can be presented to the Director of Finance by the Chairman, Director of Information Services and Head of Library Services.

ACTION: STEVE HOLLAND

(v) Value for Money Review: Academic Liaison & Research Services (ALRS)

Discussion of this item was deferred to the next meeting of ISC pending an updated action plan.

(vi) Support for International Students Action Plan 2008/09
The Committee received paper ISC 14/08-09, detailing actions to be taken to support international students within Information Services, which it was reported, had the support of the LUP and the International Office. The Committee noted that many of the items listed would benefit both international and home students and agreed to endorse the plan.

ACTION: INFORMATION SERVICES

(vii) Information Services Surveys 2008

The IS Head of Planning spoke to papers ISC 15/08-09, ISC 16/08-09 and ISC 17/08-09 relating to the latest IS staff and student surveys. It was not clear whether the Learning and Teaching Board were made aware formally of the survey results and actions and so the Committee agreed that all three papers should be forwarded to that committee for their consideration.

ACTION: SECRETARY

11/08-09 RETENTION OF ASSESSED WORK AND DATA PROTECTION

At their last meeting, the Learning and Teaching Board noted that some departments retained assessed work as examples for future cohorts. The Board agreed that departments were not obliged to dispose of assessed work after one year (as outlined in the policy), although, they must adhere to the requirements of the Data Protection Act (DPA). The Board had agreed that the implications of the DPA with regard to this matter should be referred to the Information Services Committee for further consideration.

As the University Data Protection Officer, the Secretary reported that assessed work was not in itself personal data, but that making such work public risked identifying the author, so steps should be taken in the first instance, to anonymise work put to such use. Additionally, good practice and courtesy would dictate that the consent of the authors to use their work in this way should be sought as a matter of course. It was agreed to inform Learning and Teaching Board of this opinion.

ACTION: SECRETARY

12/08-09 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

5th March 2009, at 11.00. Venue to be arranged.