

University of Cambridge

Planning and Resources Committee

Teaching Space Utilisation Working Group

Note of a meeting of the Group held on Tuesday 8 July 2014 in The Old Schools.

Present: Professor Young (in the Chair); Dr Cowley, Mr Edwards, Mr Norman and Mr Walston with Mr Wilson (Secretary).

Apologies: Dr Edwards, Mr Peet,

1. Note of the fifth meeting

A note of the fifth meeting held on Thursday 23 January 2014 had been circulated..

2. Room Booking Project

The Mosaic Space Report (TSUWG 7 – received at the January meeting) had been made widely available for comment; the comments on the report and a summary of the comments had been circulated to the Group (TSUWG 9).

Responses were generally positive and there was nothing to suggest the Group was not on the right lines. A number of expectations were expressed which, with the Report itself, could now be the basis of a statement of requirements and an invitation to tender for the Group to review.

The Group had an open mind about solutions. The Report had identified a number of serviceable options but none were outstanding. There may be others not so far evaluated and it would be useful to discuss with some other institutions – such as Oxford and Imperial – their experience of their systems.

The API would be fundamental to encouraging use. There should be a discovery phase when the preferred supplier had been selected and if commercial products were not wholly satisfactory another possibility was to develop the front end in-house with the proprietary system behind it.

There was some funding available in UIS to employ a business analyst. The Group agreed the next step was to develop the statement of requirements. The current system was not ruled out, and it should be evaluated against the system offered by any preferred supplier. The aim was to roll out the new system in 2015-16

There needed to be a clear statement of value. A general or at least site-specific room booking system was a pre-requisite for site developments which assumed shared teaching space. The data provided by the system would be valuable, but the University needed to be able to do its own analysis from raw data and not rely on pre-formed output.

A business case would be needed, and the estimated costs should be updated for the next planning round. It should also be clear who will be the system owner.

The Group was moving to the more formal stages of procurement and project management and probably needed reconstitution for the next phases. Proposals would be brought to the next meeting.

Action: Mr Edwards

3. Monitoring room usage

64 spaces were now bookable through Micad and there had been many requests to be given access to the system. 32 rooms were monitored of which 13 rooms were in the 64 bookable spaces. Monitoring equipment was now included as standard in the design requirements for new buildings but retrospective fitting at £1k/unit throughout the estate would be very expensive.

The Group thought the unit cost ought to reduce considerably and the additional data transmission would be a trivial load on the network or wifi. Monitoring must integrate with the eventual room booking system but would also produce valuable data in its own right: Mill Lane data was already available, but it was not yet clear who should interpret the data and what should be done with it. It might, for example, be useful in the context of the Mill Lane redevelopment in estimating the size and amount of replacement teaching space.

Action: Mr Walston

4. Website

The Group noted that it now had a dedicated website:

<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/planning/building/teachingspaceutilisation/index.html>

5. Next meeting

The Group agreed to meet again after about six weeks. [Post meeting note: the availability of the business analyst means the meeting will now be scheduled in October.]

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