

**Information Systems Planning Group**  
**2:00pm, 9 December 2009**  
**Robertson Wing Meeting Room, General Register House**

**Present:** Dave Brownlee (chair); David Brown, Keith Dargie; Grayham Mount, Jenny Cutts (secretary).

**Apologies:** Rob Mildren.

## **1. Staffing issues**

1.1 Dave Brownlee welcomed the attendees and staff changes were reported. Rob Mildren, Head of ICT Branch is on long term sick leave and Keith Dargie is acting as temporary branch head. Since the last meeting Hazel Anderson, Online Resources Team Leader, retired and the vacancy has not been filled in line with the strategic business policy. Maggie Pucklicz has been appointed to the advertised team leader post within Digital Imaging Unit and her team member post has not been back filled. Keith Dargie reported that Paul Meikleham and Lee Dailly have joined ICT Infrastructure and Applications section. He added that there remains a B2 Web and Applications Development team vacancy. Filling this web development position would be useful, both in terms of tackling the forthcoming applications development programme and for enhancing specialist web graphic design skills within this team, though it is understood that the default position is not to fill vacancies during the present financial situation. Keith Dargie suggested that the planned applications analysis evaluation would provide the opportunity to measure the productivity and delivery benefits that could be realised by filling this position. Dave Brownlee agreed this post may be reviewed following the ICT element of the strategic business review.

1.2 It was noted that Hazel Anderson, Head of Online Resources Team, has retired since the previous meeting and there are no immediate plans for replacement.

## **2. Progress reports**

### *2.1 IT Infrastructure and Web & Applications Development Team*

2.1.1 Infrastructure support was discussed. Keith Dargie explained that there are four members of NAS staff responsible for supporting 54 NASnet and 23 ScotlandsPeople servers together with approximately 500 desktop computers and other IT equipment. For this reason configuration standardisation is important.

2.1.2 ICT intend to further investigate 'virtualisation' in order to reduce the number of physical servers. A virtualised test network environment will be created shortly and may be used by ICT and non-ICT staff as required. It will be possible to book the test network via. theOracle and for the ICT Infrastructure team to reset the test servers and PCs to their original configurations after use.

2.1.3 The ScotlandsPeople Centre network suffered a hardware failure that resulted in the Centre having to be closed for 2½ days. By working through the night with Dell engineers, the ICT Infrastructure team resolved the hardware issues the following day,

and after re-copying any corrupted data to the servers, the Centre was re-opened to customers. A revised business continuity paper has been submitted to the ScotlandsPeople Executive Board. Keith will also submit an NAS business continuity ICT paper to senior management for decision making shortly. The Keeper intends this to be incorporated into a wider business continuity plan covering all aspects of the organisation.

2.1.4 Keith Dargie noted that the key stages of the NAS strategic business review should ideally be completed before initiating the ICT applications and innovations workshops. As the analysis phases of the programme will take several weeks to complete, the final quarter of 2009-2010 will be used to tackle priority developments whilst the analysis work is on-going. The systems identified for priority development include the Solemn database, SC1 System and the Online Central Enquiries System. David Brown highlighted development resources for the Scottish Archives for Schools website. Although resources are not available to achieve this before April 2010, Keith Dargie agreed to discuss this with the Education Officer.

## *2.2 Digital Access Team*

2.2.1. Grayham Mount reported that the file renaming issue regarding e-sasines remained unresolved. Registers of Scotland (RoS) are pursuing a solution with BT. Dave Brownlee suggested that he write to RoS asking for a progress report on the matter. It is expected that Registers Direct will become available in 2011 after which time the NAS RAC search tool will not be supported. An improved access facility for digitised and e-sasines will be considered as part of the Innovations theme.

Action: Dave Brownlee to write to RoS about e-sasine file renaming solution.
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2.2.2 Susan Corrigan had met with Keith Dargie and Grayham Mount regarding the DDA2 scoping study and a progress summary had been published on the Oracle. Dave Brownlee added that Susan will give a short presentation about the scoping study to attendees at the Strategic Review meeting to be held on 16 December.

2.2.3 It was noted that DIMCAT has been decommissioned following a meeting with Collections Development Branch regarding the image library.

2.2.4 Proposals for revised fees and charges for document copies provided by the digital imaging unit have been submitted to senior management for a decision. Alison Horsburgh's review of public service covers digital copies and a paper on Digital Policy will be forthcoming.

2.2.5 Grayham Mount explained that DIU completed a significant amount of work supporting the Open Secret exhibition and release of files event in September 2009.

2.2.6 Digitisation of the lighthouse registers has been completed.

2.2.7 Keith will submit proposals for enhancing DIU's production capacity and workflow management systems to senior management in January 2010. These proposals, which will build on the current production line processes, will provide

improved transparency and cohesion between the production capabilities of DIU and the on-demand and the various project digitations programmes. Keith Dargie also considers that it would be beneficial to establish service level agreement documents between DIU and its main customers and to publish regular capacity and production achievement statistics.

2.2.8 Digitisation of the UCS collection was discussed. David Brown and Linda Ramsay have met with Grayham Mount concerning progress and timescales. It was noted that discrete projects such as work on the UCS photographs provide DIU staff with variation in their tasks. DIU staff members work on a variety of tasks in rotation in order to maintain productivity levels.

2.2.9 It was reported that the microfilm, SC70, identified as part of the DIU microfilm survey has now been digitised by Hi-Scan Ltd and the digital images will be added to Virtual Volumes in the next couple of months.

2.2.10 Calm re-indexing times were improved by the server change but the time taken to re-index has steadily increased thereafter. Keith Dargie confirmed that has been a common pattern in the past with this software. It was noted that the supplier suggests not re-indexing every night. David Brown insisted, however, that daily re-indexing is essential to enable cataloguing staff to see the previous day's catalogue entries.

2.2.11 A paper outlining the feasibility of stationing of a digital camera at West Register House to meet customer copy demands has been presented to senior management. It was noted that most of the documents required by WSR customers are stored in TTH.

2.2.12 Dave Brownlee noted that the Family Search volunteers will soon be in a position to work on different series of records. Suggestions are currently being considered. Grayham Mount noted that the DIU on-demand and project digitisers work on imaging whole sasines volumes when additional capacity becomes available.

2.2.13 The top level of shelving in the Mathieson Dome may soon be filled with digitised volumes of sasines. Dave Brownlee resolved to discuss plans with Linda Ramsay.

Action: Dave Brownlee to discuss Mathieson Dome shelving with CSB.
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2.2.14 Digital Preservation in the heritage sector was discussed. Grayham Mount noted comparative meetings with the National Library of Scotland and Dave Brownlee explained that the Keeper had been approached by the International Council on Archives (ICA) to host a digital preservation event at NAS.

### *2.3 Online Resources Team*

2.3.1 As acting Branch Head, Keith Dargie reported on the Online Resources Team (ORT) in Rob Mildren's absence. The Catholic Registers have been launched on ScotlandsPeople and Valuation Roll access is under discussion. Keith is working with ORT colleagues to review their future work strategies and priorities.

## *2.4 Calm and OPAC*

2.4.1 David Brown reported that, excluding the re-indexing issue already discussed, Calm is performing adequately. A meeting will be scheduled with the supplier Axiel in early 2010. It was noted that the company is less proactive about meeting with customers and organising the user group meetings, but will respond when approached. It was thought that customers amongst English archives are pursuing the re-instigation of the Requests for Enhancements system.

2.4.2 The NAS OPAC is working well. An alternative application has been suggested but the existing system operates successfully and is familiar to staff and readers. Keith Dargie added that the ICT development agenda will identify priorities from all suggestions presented.

2.4.3 Development of AtoM under the ICA's aegis is ongoing. Rob Mildren had taken a programme supervisory role in this work before going on sick leave. Jane Jamieson, SCAN catalogues officer, has been asked to analyse the AtoM functionality in comparison to Calm.

## **3. Information systems security**

3.1 Keith Dargie explained that a major review of IT/IS security is ongoing and that a specification for a specialist supplier to undertake penetration testing of the NAS network has been tendered for. NAS will also conduct an internal review of its IT policies including internet use, encryption and USB management, with proposals being prepared for senior management consideration and decision making. On successful completion of these wide ranging assessments, NAS would be in a favourable position to seek accreditation to the Government Secure Intranet (GIS) should it wish to do so. Keith noted that accreditation would likely require a large amount of additional documentation to be produced.

3.2 The configurations of the new 'NASnet2' desktops will incorporate relevant IT security policy decisions taken. Windows XP will be retained but desktops will be upgraded to the latest XP configurations, along with upgraded versions of Microsoft Office, Internet Explorer, Adobe Reader and other relevant software utilities. The design of the new desktop will be presented to an extraordinary meeting of the ISPG at which Claire Renwick (the lead ICT Infrastructure team analyst for this project) will demonstrate the new system. The ICT User Forum representatives from each business area will be asked to test the new systems initially. Around 75 new PCs will be deployed as part of this programme, which are *Windows 7* 'ready', facilitating the adoption of this operating system at a future point (likely to be deployed in 2011). Once the new PCs have been deployed, the software upgrades will be performed in three phases (XP server pack 3, applications, followed by group policies and configurations settings) and this will be achieved remotely by the ICT Infrastructure team. It is expected that test PCs will be issued in February/March, with the formal rollout taking place from April 2010.

3.3 Keith Dargie noted that some of the production NASnet server hardware are around 6 years old and any serious failure could result in several days' disruption to business activity. ICT will consider the upgrading of older servers as part of its business continuity review for NASnet. It is possible that upgrading of the hardware will be done at the same time that Windows Server 2008 R2 is deployed (the latest version of Microsoft server software). He added that it would be beneficial to upgrade the firewall software in advance of the contracted IT security penetration testing work.

3.4 Cabinet Office requirements regarding data security were explained. It is possible that NAS training seminars on data handling will also incorporate other relevant training, such as Data Protection policy and procedures, archive document security and physical security. Password and encryption measures will also meet Cabinet Office data compliance. It was acknowledged that the issue of proportionality is relevant and that NAS is concerned with providing access to information rather than protecting government data.

#### **4. Matters arising from ISPG Minutes of 22 April 2009 (circulated)**

4.1 [1.6] Following review the IT supplement will be retained for qualifying posts for a further 3 years at the current level. ICT job descriptions must be mapped onto the SFIA framework.

4.2 [2.3.1] The Ministerial event to launch Catholic registers information to ScotlandsPeople was successful.

4.3 [5.1] The previously reported problem with Legal Search Room printing persists though additional local printers have been provided and the legal searchers are able to print one page at a time to alleviate the known (Virtual Volumes) print delay problem.

#### **5. Any other business**

5.1 The digitisation requirements of academic projects were discussed. It was noted that academic researchers also tend to use open source systems such as LINUX.

#### **6. Date of next meeting**

The next meeting is due to be held in April 2010. It is expected that an extraordinary meeting of the Information Systems Planning Group will be called in January 2010 to consider the NASnet2 desktop designs and to discuss other ICT related NAS strategic business review matters.

Jenny Cutts  
30 December 2009