

Minutes of Information Systems Planning Group
Tuesday 10th October 2006
Robertson Wing Conference Room, GRH.

Present: Dave Brownlee, David Brown, Keith Dargie, Grayham Mount, Rob Mildren and Laura Martin (minutes).

Apologies: N/A

1 Staffing Issues

ICT are currently seeking two B1 candidates from the recent B1 ICT assessment centre to fill the vacancies in the Infrastructure and Web & Applications Development teams. Anne Moises will contact Dave Brownlee shortly after she has considered the post allocations for the successful candidates.

Margaret Fox has moved to Court & Legal Records Branch. Margaret's previous post in ORT may be modified to include both Web and Digitisation work in order to give the new post holder greater work variety.

2 Progress Reports

2.1 IT Infrastructure

Keith updated the meeting:

- Remote Access: The new system is currently being tested by selected members of the ICTB, with further testing by nominated colleagues from each of the branches commencing shortly. Keith reiterated that only e-mail and access to *theOracle* facilities will be provided initially. Seminars will be held in November to formally launch the availability of the system across the office. Keith will discuss with Senior Management any Health and Safety and business procedures that need to be considered prior to the formal launch. The next phase will be to consider making additional facilities available (including access to the branch network drives) and to consider further the use of hand held devices to enable *on the move* connectivity to the office systems. It was confirmed that it was possible for 25 concurrent users to access the system, but that this can be increased should this prove necessary.
- Anti-Spam: While there has been some delays in the processing of the revised contract agreements, Keith is hopeful that Star Internet will be able to implement the enhanced solutions within the next few days. Once implemented, all core Spam messages will be blocked automatically at source, which will account for around 60% of the spam e-mail currently received. The remainder will be handled by the Spam Manager facility, which will enable users to manage and retrieve any blocked messages. Users will receive a daily alert message to highlight any messages that have been blocked. Spam Manager retains blocked messages for 14 days before they are permanently removed from the system.
- RAC Search Tool: Plans are in hand to progress the aims of making the search tool and the EOS available to the legal search firms remotely. Keith will contact shortly RSB colleagues and BT to discuss and agree the processes necessary to achieve these aims. It was confirmed that we intend to make the EOS available within the RAC search tool.
- Helpdesk: There are a number of significant developments planned to improve further the effectiveness and operation of the Helpdesk. Much work has already

been completed, and steps are being taken to ensure that all of the various supports teams are able to manage their calls to the required standards. Discussions are also underway to consider the possible inclusion of FAB to the Helpdesk system. Keith will also shortly submit an options paper to Senior Management on the feasibility of extending the Helpdesk hours of operation. A new ICT team webpage facility (made available via. *theOracle*) is being planned to help publicise the enhanced services and facilities; this will include access to information on server/systems availability, access to useful guidance and training resources and how to apply to use Microsoft Office software on home PCs.

- Printer Review: The review is underway and a paper summarising the findings and recommendations will be completed by end of October. This will not only outline the existing printing infrastructure, but will also outline requirements and strategies for deploying and managing our print services in the future.
- NAS/GRO Joint Telephony System: While there has been some communication difficulties experienced, work is now underway to discuss and agree requirements and the future support and implementation of any new system. The ICT & Intranet User Forum will be contributing to this process at its meeting on 18 October.
- SFHS: A technical design and implementation plan has been produced by the ICT Infrastructure team, although GROS has yet to finalise their requirements. There may be changes to the way that GROS stores its images. Once Keith has published these plans, work will get underway to implement the new systems with the aim of completing the implementations by the end of March. There is, however, much work to do to analyse and finalise the wide ranging technical issues. The till systems have been chosen with the procurement team due to confirm the successful supplier shortly.
- WRH: Work to review the network performance issues at WRH began today. The consultants employed to undertake this review (ACS UK Ltd) will carry out a range of tests and monitoring of our network traffic and configurations. Keith will present the findings in due course.
- theOracle: Keith reported that issues with *theOracle* had been resolved, with 100% availability established over the last month or so.
- ISA Server: The ISA server has also stabilised considerably. The Infrastructure team will, however, continue to investigate appropriate failover solutions to further improve stability and availability.
- Web hosting: Work to outsource the hosting of the NAS corporate front-line web site facilities is underway. To minimise risks relating to the use of obsolete hardware, work has been accelerated to put in place these new arrangements by the end of the year. There will be no disruption to services during these changes.

2.2 Digital Access Team

Grayham updated the meeting:

- RAC: Sasine images are still being produced from fiche and this phase of the project will be completed in November. There remains significant performance problems with the online search tool application, which BT are currently investigating. BT may start testing out of hours or at quiet times in an effort to identify the cause of the problems. ISPG agreed that it was essential that BT resolve these issues, which is affecting the confidence of legal search firms in the worth of the system, as a matter of urgency. Dave stated that planning is underway to make the paper indexes readily available to legal searchers when they move to the Robertson Wing, in case they want to double check the search results

produced by the application. The legal searchers seem happy with the quality of the scanned abridgements, so they do not need to be moved.

- DDA Project: This project is on schedule.
- GIS: A working group has been established. ISPG acknowledges that a dedicated IT GIS Administrator post needs to be established to enable this initiative to be progressed effectively. There was some discussion on possible options for identifying this resource. While the ICTB will progress the arrangements necessary to put in place the required resources, it was agreed that it is not feasible to undertake any work until the 2007-08 financial year due to other major pre-planned project commitments, including the SFHS project. GIS will require a new server and further consideration of the software to enable it to be deployed via a standard browser application. It was suggested that the utilisation and integration of GIS solutions to the NAS business strategies could be included as a key discussion item in next year's corporate planning processes
- Online Image Library Project: The options have been agreed by senior management. This system will be hosted externally with a target implementation date of the end of the current financial year.

2.3 Online Resources Team

- Scot Doc 2: Rob reported that the planning and development of the Scottish Document 2 website is on schedule. Local Authorities will act as external testers. A website feedback week has been arranged in November. There may also be an opportunity to undertake work with the Scottish Prisons service.

2.4 CALM and OPAC

David updated the meeting:

CALM: the performance of Calm-OPAC appears to be temperamental currently, therefore David and Helen Bull are discussing this matter with the supplier, DS CALM v7 testing is ongoing, although a number of problems have been identified that DS have been asked to resolve. David is not very happy with how DS are applying the routine updates to the OPAC, with the agreed update schedules not appearing to be met.

3 Energy Efficiency Paper

Keith presented a paper on improving the energy efficiency of the NASnet workstations. ISPG agreed that the software would contribute to the department's initiatives on sustainable development and were happy for the recommended solutions to be taken forward. Keith is still investigating whether a facility to power down printers can be included. Keith will report the findings of the detailed evaluation of the recommended solutions in due course, and will liaise with Dave Brownlee regarding the formal implementation

4 IS Security

No security breaches or viruses to report. Internet usage was raised and staff may need to be reminded that our use of the Internet is monitored constantly and that any personal use of IT facilities must be carried out in line with the published policy on use of e-mail and IT facilities. The issue of volunteers accessing the NASnet IT facilities was also raised. To ensure that the necessary procedures are being applied consistently, Dave Brownlee will issue branch heads with guidance on this matter.

5 Any other business

5.1 Information Systems Policy

Keith will provide Dave with his comments on this document shortly.

5.2 Progress on Inter-Building Links

Keith reported that he has met with the suppliers (Thus/Demon) of our inter-building data and communications links to discuss a number of service provision and upgrade issues. It appears, however, that to upgrade bandwidth capabilities, it will be necessary to install new cabling and associated infrastructure. Costs and options have been requested. Depending on the outcome, it may be necessary to undertake a tender process for the provision of any enhanced services

6 Date of next meeting

This will be due in January 2007 and Dave will canvass for dates nearer the time.