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**The 25<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Department of Computer Science and Technology  
Buildings and Environment Committee**

**Tuesday, 28 November 2023, 10.30  
Room FW11, William Gates Building**

## **MINUTES**

### **Attendance**

Prof Richard Mortier, Chair (RMM)  
Dr Pietie Brooks (PB)  
Celia Burns, Secretary (CB)  
Thomas Bytheway (TB)  
Dr Andrew Caines (APC) to item 7(l)

Ali Digby (AJD)  
Martin McDonnell (MJM)  
Daniel Porter (DRP)  
Malcolm Scott (MAS)  
Caroline Stewart (CS) to item 7(l)

### **1. Committee Membership**

Since Luis A. Saavedra del Toro, former PhD Representative, has now left the Committee, it was agreed that CB would ask the Postgraduate Education office to advertise for a new representative.

**Action: CB**

### **2. Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

### **3. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2023 were approved.

### **4. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

### **5. ★ Reducing Energy Consumption**

**(a) Monitoring energy consumption:** the Committee noted that both the University and the Department would want to celebrate and communicate the solar panel installation once the works are completed.

The Committee discussed acquiring historical energy usage data from the Centre. AJD said she would contact the Sustainability team about this.

**Action: AJD**

## 6. Building Occupancy

RMM reported that he had spoken to the Head of Department about building occupancy, and the general feeling was that people were coming back into the building and there were no particular concerns. There are places in the building that are not being used, and it would be useful to know if there are discrepancies between what people are doing and what they are saying they are doing in terms of building usage. RMM will talk to the Head of Department to see if he would like the committee to follow this up.

**Action: RMM**

## 7. Building Matters

### a) Department Café

RMM reported that he had spoken to Graham Matthews, Director of Estates, about the status of the catering space in the building. Graham had said that his team would look into this, but RMM had not heard anything from them.

*Post-meeting note:* RMM has now had a response from Andrew Smart (Director of Estates Operations, in Graham's team) who said he is following up on this issue and the Equans issue (item f ii). RMM has let him know that we think this issue is now under control as AJD is in touch with UCS.

AJD reported that she and the Head of Department had met with the Head of Catering, who had understood the Department's need for the provision of food and had agreed to let the Department repurpose the space. Subsequently the Head of Department had sent an email to the Wednesday group, requesting feedback on a proposal for franchising out the café space. It was agreed that the proposal should also be sent to PSS for their feedback too.

**Action: AJD**

### b) Drinks Vending Machine

AJD reported that she is waiting to hear back from the University Catering Service about the currently out-of-action drinks vending machine, after which we can arrange to get rid of the current machine and get a new one from Cambridge Vending.

**Action: AJD**

### c) Lighting

#### i) **LED whole-building upgrade**

AJD reported that the Sustainability team had pulled the money on all LED lighting upgrades and had handed the project to Estates Maintenance. AJD was in touch with Roger Lin, the electrician for the project. She has communicated that the lighting in the Lecture Theatres is a priority and that it should take place in the summer, at the same time as the audiovisual equipment upgrades.

**Action: AJD**

#### d) **Fire strategy for the William Gates building**

AJD reported that the roof vents were scheduled to be replaced the following week, with the crane scheduled for 6 December (dependent on the weather) and the need for the front car park to be closed for one day. Reception would be informed.

**Post-meeting note:** AJD has been informed that, due to the vents not being available, the whole project (replacement of the vents and the electrical installation work) has now been rescheduled to the week commencing 8 January.

**e) Verex security system**

DRP, MAS, and AJD were looking into options for the replacement of the Verex security system, which is currently working but running on old software and at significant risk of failure. DRP reported that UIS are currently gathering requirements for a central system, of which it is hoped we could be an early adopter. MAS noted that it would be a year before the first phase; however, it would be preferable to plan to be an early adopter of the new central system than to potentially waste a year's effort updating the Verex system, only for it to be replaced by a new UIS system. RMM suggested that DRP and MAS stay in contact with UIS about this, particularly in terms of monitoring the expected timeline.

**Action: DRP and MAS**

**f) Building management system (cooling and heating)**

- i) **★ Heating problems:** the heating issues are long term, with the building not capable of producing a comfortable working environment for some areas even when it is working as optimally as it can. A solution will require a big infrastructure change.
- ii) **Ventilation:** AJD reported that the ventilation problem in the second-floor west corner of the building should be resolved by the replacement of a part, which is scheduled for 7 December.

RMM reported that he had emailed Graham Matthews, Director of Estates, last month about the Equans ticketing issue around these and other works. Graham had said that his team would be in touch, but RMM had not yet received a response. RMM will contact Graham again. AJD noted that there had been a good response on simple tickets, but the complicated jobs were still being made more complicated.

**Action: RMM**

*Post-meeting note:* RMM has now had a response from Andrew Smart (Director of Estates Operations, in Graham's team), who said he is following up on this issue.

**g) Refit of the WGB Library**

AJD reported that she had still not had any contact with Alan Gleaves (the Department's surveyor) about the library refit, but she thought that it was achievable for the refit to go ahead in the summer (especially as it is being funded by the Department). AJD will follow this up and involve others if necessary.

**Action: AJD**

**h) ★ Cleaning service**

AJD reported that this item should stay on the agenda. Central Procurement is bringing in a new cleaning framework that the Department will be obliged to join at the end of August 2025, which is why the Department has been asked to extend the contract with the current provider for two years rather than one year. She noted that once the new cleaning

framework is in place, we would need to have an extremely strong reason to manage a contractor ourselves.

**i) Clearing of FN11 Machine Room**

MAS reported that the next step is to salvage anything worth keeping from the non-sensitive equipment now left in the room. RMM said he would be happy to help in any decision making around this.

**Action: MAS**

**j) Downpipe Leaks**

AJD reported that this matter is on the list of several ongoing issues with Alan Gleaves, the Building Surveyor.

**k) Portable Appliance Testing (PAT)**

MAS reported that he had discussed with the technician the possibility of him taking on occasional PAT requirements, but the Technician had been concerned about how much testing that might involve. The Committee agreed that it would be useful to arrange for a contractor to do the overdue general testing in the building first and then be clear about what additional testing that would leave. It was also agreed that we would not be responsible for PAT testing visitor's equipment (for a trade fair, for example) as it is the visitor's responsibility to make sure it has been PAT tested; and we would not need to test new equipment. The Technician had suggested providing training in visual inspection for equipment, which would add an additional safety check.

**Action: AJD**

**l) Generator Provision for GN09**

MAS reported that the problem with the new transfer switch tripping occasionally when tested is ongoing. Whenever a switchover is required, there is a 50/50 chance of one circuit tripping out. Any work to resolve the problem would be disruptive and expensive. Given that it is only ever up to one circuit that trips (even though it is not possible to predict which one), it was felt that the risk was reasonable.

Chris Purnell (Estates) had made the suggestion to run a cable from the Roger Needham Building generator. AJD reported that Chris had suggested getting everyone together (Estates and both departments with their surveyors) to discuss this. AJD said she would follow this up with Alan Gleaves.

**Action: AJD**

**m) Improvements to the Ventilation and Extraction in the Hardware Lab**

TB reported that he is progressing with ideas for improvements to the ventilation system in the Hardware Lab, and he will be putting some information together to present to the Head of Department.

**n) Visitor Car Park Barriers**

The lockable bollards project has been paused due to the redesign of access to the Department's car parks (caused by the Whittle extension works). The Committee agreed that we would revisit this item in January when the current phase of the Whittle extension works is complete.

**o) Refurbishment of the Audiovisual Systems in the Lecture Theatres and FW26**

DRP reported that the refurbishment works are scheduled for the week commencing 22 July 2024.

**8. AV Matters**

**a) Projectors in FW26**

MJM reported that the additional projector has been installed and was working. This item can now be removed from the agenda.

**9. Electricity Devolution Project (EDP)**

**(a) Solar panels**

AJD reported that MainTech, the solar panels contractor, had carried out some of the electrical work related to these works on the previous Saturday. This had involved an electrical shut down. A second shutdown to accommodate further works would be much longer, probably lasting at least 8 hours. This would mean a lot more work for MAS and less capacity for backing up systems. MAS noted that these works would require a shutdown entirely of GN09, leaving a bare minimum of infrastructure and the inability to cool the equipment in GN09.

The proposed date for the second shut down was Sunday, 14 January. Since this would be just days before the beginning of term, the Committee discussed potential risks and agreed that if the 14 January shutdown caused any problems, there was a very low chance that they would still be an issue at the beginning of term on the Thursday, but that the risks would be manageable. However, AJD agreed to see if the contractor would be available to reschedule the works to the Sunday of the week before (7 January) to give us 10 days (rather than 3) to fix any potential problems before the beginning of term.

**Action: AJD**

**10. ★ Whittle Extension**

AJD reported that she was now getting weekly in-person updates about works affecting the William Gates Building. However, as nothing was known about the Department of Engineering's long-term plan, RMM said he would ask the Department of Engineering about this.

**Action: RMM**

**11. Any Other Business**

**Planning Permission Notification, Vet School**

AJD reported that she had received a planning permission notification relating to Vet School plans for the construction of a permeable paving area, the movement of a bin storage area, and the temporary siting (for four years) of an MRI trailer. The Committee did not have any objections to the plans.

**12. Date of Next Meetings**

The dates and times for the next meetings are as follows:

- Monday, 22 January 2024, 11.30 – 12.30
- Tuesday, 30 April 2024, 11.00 – 12.30
- Tuesday, 18 June 2024, 10.30 – 12.00