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**The 29<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Department of Computer Science and Technology  
Buildings and Environment Committee**

**10.30, Thursday, 17 October 2024  
Room GC22, William Gates Building**

**MINUTES**

**Present:**

Prof Richard Mortier, Chair  
Sarah Bainsfair (Observer)  
Dr Piete Brooks  
Celia Burns, Secretary  
Thomas Bytheway  
Dr Andrew Caines  
Ali Digby

Gabrielle Gaudeau  
Dr Markus Kuhn  
Dr Ian Lewis  
Martin McDonnell  
Daniel Porter  
Malcolm Scott  
Caroline Stewart

**1. Welcome**

The Chair welcomed two new committee members, Markus Kuhn, Lecturer, and Ian Lewis, Director of the Adaptive City Programme.

**2. Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

**3. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 July 2024 were approved.

**4. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

**5. Reducing Energy Consumption**

**(a) Building System Upgrade (BMS).** \* The software update has been done and we are awaiting parts for one repair.

**(b) Recording energy use and solar panel contributions.** Ali reported that everything is now on the BMS system, including the solar panels and metering. The solar panels were self-powering for most of the day for many days in the summer but at this time of year, we are using more power and creating less. A large proportion of power is still coming from the solar panels (we are unable to feed power back in; the panels shut down one by one if we produce too much power).

## **6. Building Matters**

### **a) Department Café \***

Ali has discussed the franchising of the café space with the Head of Department and a meeting with Procurement is planned.

### **b) Snacks Vending Machine \***

A refrigerated vending machine with healthy food and drink for out of hours will be included as part of the café space franchise (See item 5a above). This item will be removed from the agenda.

### **c) Lighting**

#### **i) LED upgrade**

Collacotts have been appointed as contractors for the LED lighting upgrade for the ground floor (not including the Library space), The Street and Lecture Theatres. Work will commence on 9 December. Lecture Theatre 2 has been booked in first for over the Christmas break and will be done by the start of the Lent term. Next, the contractors will move on to The Street and then the ground floor offices and corridors. Ali has asked the contractors for a prediction of how many offices can be done in a week so that people can be advised when to expect work to be done in their office. Lecture Theatre 1 will be done over the Easter break.

In response to a question about how to prevent light shining onto the projector screens, Ali said she will check this out with the contractors. Dan asked the committee whether it was ok to go ahead with integrating the audio-visual system with the lighting system, and the committee concurred.

The committee discussed storage options for the contractors, noting that the more LED supplies the contractors could store on site, the more flexible they could be in carrying out their work. It was agreed that Ali would find out whether the risk lies with us or the contractors and take it from there.

In response to an observation that a lot of the existing lights on the first and second floors are not working, Ali noted that lights that are replaced on the ground floor will be harvested and used in the rest of the building, so there should be an improvement to the lighting on the first and second floors.

Markus noted that the brightness of the current lighting in the offices can be adjusted via the dimmer switch found at the end of the light casings.

**Action: Ali**

#### **d) Verex security system**

Malcolm reported that the UIS project manager tasked with implementing the proof of concept for a potential new University system has left the University. The project still exists, but there is no-one running it, and the current Verex system is running on old software and at significant risk of failure. A main concern is the significant work that would be required to integrate the system with other University systems, which Malcolm was hoping UIS would do.

It was agreed that Ian would contact Abraham Martins (UIS) to follow up on this issue.

**Action: Ian**

**e) Building management system (BMS; cooling and heating) \***

**Heating problems.** A document outlining the background to the heating problems and possible mitigations was circulated on 8 May 2024 to Departmental staff for information (BEC-2024-07-5f). Richard noted that the heating seemed better now, and Ali noted that things did seem to be working more effectively. Ali also noted that she was monitoring Monday morning temperatures as these had been very low in the past.

**f) Re-fit of the WGB Library**

Ali asked the committee what was wanted from the library space, noting that the latest plans were from 2019 when the plan was to split it into three teaching spaces. The committee discussed those latest plans, including the various options that had been included in the 2019 costing. It was agreed that Ali and Ian would discuss this item together with regard to options and costing and get back to the committee with proposals to take to the Head of Department.

**Action: Ali and Ian**

**g) Clearing of FN11 Machine Room \***

The clearing of the room is now complete, and this item will be removed from the agenda.

**h) Downpipe Leaks \***

Ali reported that this is an Estates Division issue, which will be a big job, potentially involving removal of plant. There is a new surveyor working on this.

**i) Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) \***

Ali is going to contact the Safety Office about the general testing of the building.

**j) Generator Provision for GN09**

There had been a suggestion to run a cable from UIS's Roger Needham Building (RNB) generator. Then it was thought that Engineering might be moving into the RNB and there might have been a possibility for some collaborative use of space (in accordance with the Reshaping Our Estate initiative).

Richard reported on his latest understanding, which was that the RNB will probably undergo a complete refurbishment for which we don't have any input. Richard agreed to talk to the Head of Department to see if he has any further information.

**Action: Richard**

**k) The Hardware Lab**

Richard reported that he had spoken to the Head of Department about the proposal to relocate the workshop to what is currently the bin store. The Head of Department had asked that whether there were other spaces on the West Cambridge site where we could collaborate. These may not preclude our plans for a workshop in the bin store, but we need to be aware of them. Thomas agreed to look into this.

Thomas reported that he had looked into what would be required for the relocation of the workshop to the bin store. Some substantive changes would be required (e.g., to the outer doors, additional power feeds). These would not be difficult but, because they went beyond just furniture and painting, they would involve Estates.

**Action: Thomas**

**l) Visitor Car Park – Lockable Bollards \***

Ali reported that the lockable bollards for two of the three parking spaces had been installed, with the ones for the remaining space to be done very soon.

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

The refurbishment works are now complete, and this item can be removed from the agenda.

**n) Ground Floor Showers \***

Ali reported that people had been in in September and in October to fix the showers but now they are in a worse state than they were to begin with. These works are still with Equans and CPS.

**o) Pool Table \***

Ali is sourcing a supplier to re-cover the pool table.

**p) Meeting Pods \***

Caroline reported that she and Ali had discussed the request for more meeting pods and noted that the main issue is where to locate them. The question was raised as to whether they were sound proofed enough to be located next to one another. Ian and Richard agreed to test this out.

**Action: Ian, Richard, Ali, Caroline**

**q) Smoking/Vaping by the Cafeteria Area**

Signs had been put up by the café doors making it clear that the area there is a non-smoking area; however, people were still smoking there. Martin agreed to keep an eye on the area and to talk to relevant individuals.

**Action: Martin**

**r) Use of the Garden on the South Side of the Building**

A request had been made to make use of the fenced off garden on the south side of the building as a quiet place. Ali reported that the area is the department's curtilage, but it is maintained by Estates, so she will need to talk to the new surveyor about this.

**Action: Ali**

**s) Hybrid meeting rooms**

UIS were going to be asked to re-quote on different rooms that would be cheaper to equip than the original rooms quoted. Daniel reported that UIS had come in to have a look at GS15 and had offered a bigger sample kit that they had available for the price of a smaller kit. He noted that another space could be found for a smaller sample kit next time. Daniel said he would look into the possibility of moving the bigger kit to a different room later, if required.

**Action: Daniel**

**7. Out of Hours Use of Rooms on the Public Side of the Building**

The Head of Department had asked the Committee to propose a Departmental policy for the use of rooms on the public side of the building during out-of-hours periods. Caroline noted that she had not had an opportunity to do work on a draft. Markus offered to share a 2015 policy that he was aware of.

**Action: Markus**

**8. Student Feedback**

Gabrielle noted that it had been brought to her attention by a student that a ticket had been posted at the end of June about a broken door in the GN corridor that had not yet been addressed. Ali assured Gabrielle that Building Services does not ignore tickets and that she would follow up on what had happened with this.

**Action: Ali**

**9. Any Other Business**

**Demobilisation of Equans:** Ali noted that from 31 October, Equans will no longer be working with the University. They will have three months from that date to complete any outstanding works. From 21 October, the Estates helpdesk will bring all works back in house.

**10. Date of Next Meeting(s)**

The next meeting is scheduled for 11.00 on Friday, 15 November 2024.