

IT Strategy Committee, Department of Computer Science and Technology 21st January 2025  
at 14:00 SW00, William Gates Building

## AGENDA

### **Membership**

Richard Mortier, Chair [RM]	Thomas Sauerwald, Deputy HoD [TS]
Mark Cresham, Secretary [MC]	Daniel Porter, IT Support Manager [DP]
Tim Jones, UTO Rep [TJ]	Sam Nallaperuma, Research Staff Rep [SN]
Rob Harle, Director UG Teaching [RH]	Abraham Martin Campillo, UIS Rep [AM] Helen Francis, PSS Rep [HF] Malcolm Scott, IT Infrastructure Specialist [MS] Nic Lane, GPU resourcing strategy lead [NL]

### **1. Welcome & apologies [RM]**

### **2. Approval of the Minutes of the previous meeting [RM]**

Unconfirmed Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd December 2024 are attached for approval.

### **3. Matters arising [RM]**

### **4. Actions from the previous meeting [RM]**

- (i) GPU Upgrades [NL]
  - NL will decide whether to implement a trial for a full course or limit it to select projects.
- (ii) Legacy Services [DP,MS]
  - DP and MS will collaborate to produce a list of services earmarked for decommissioning. This list will enable discussion, provide support for their decisions, and potentially assist in prioritising the decommissioning process.
- (iii) Network Upgrades [MS]

- MS will provide Sarah with an update on the network timeline before the end of February.
- (iv) Separation of Department Websites [RM]
  - RM will inform Markus (mgk25) of the plan to separate the (cl) website from the (cst) website.
- (v) Website Migration
  - MS will compile a list of independent external websites within the Department.
- (vi) Cisco to Teams Phone Migration
  - DP will produce and circulate a plan for phone decommissioning, ensuring that it addresses edge cases such as the Street phone.

## 5. Standing items

- (i) \* UIS update [AM]
  - AM to provide a verbal or written update on any relevant developments from UIS, including updates on the door locking system.

## 6. Main business

- (i) Matlab Licensing [RM]
  - RM to lead a discussion on the Department's need for MatLab licensing. The committee will consider the potential impact on the Department if the central license is discontinued. Additionally, the committee will discuss whether it recommends contributing to the funding of a license in collaboration with other departments.
- (ii) IT Team Recruitment [DP, MS]
  - DP and MS will provide an update to the committee on both upcoming and longterm staffing plans for IT Services.

## 7. Any Other Business [RM]

- (i) Rearrange April Meeting [RM]
  - RM will lead a discussion on rescheduling the next meeting, originally set for April 29th, 2025, at 14:00, due to his unavailability.

## 8. Date of next meeting(s) [RM]

- (i) Confirmation of the date, time and location of the next meeting(s).

~~Date: 29th April 2025~~

~~Time: 14:00 – 15:00~~

~~Location: SW00~~

Date: 17th June 2025

Time: 14:00 - 15:30

Location: SW00

- SharePoint – has been rolled out to HR, planning to have PSS rollout completed by start of next academic year
- Hybrid AV – Favourable installation quote has been received, currently discussing timescales with installers & equipment suppliers – should hopefully be done within a few weeks
- AV Facility Audit – Plan to carry out audit of existing AV equipment in meeting rooms. Partly with view to financial planning but also with view to reducing number of existing “bespoke” facilities to accommodate additional hybrid spaces
- Putting plan together for handling Windows 10 EOL
  - Upgrade compatible devices
  - Replace old hardware
- DS-Print – We have received working Linux PaperCut client from Engineering. Testing is being undertaken on Department Managed & ‘common’ Linux platforms with view to greenlighting Phase 3 in Summer 25 to remove all legacy Department printers & old CUPS server

# Telephone Migration Plan

Daniel Porter 02/12/2024

## Background

From 1st January 2025 UIS will no longer be supplying any new Cisco telephony services to institutions on the University's central Microsoft Office365 tenancy. It will also no longer be possible to purchase new Cisco VoIP handsets from them.

Whilst there is currently no confirmed timescale for the end-of-life for the Cisco system, this is the first step towards a full decommissioning. It makes sense for the Department to be ahead of that curve to minimise the impact of such an announcement and make the migration process smoother and more manageable.

## Numbers

- 149 total extensions assigned to Department
- ~30 already migrated to Teams Phone
- ~7 Unassigned
- ~40 PSS remaining

## Proposal

A multi-stage migration of existing Cisco lines onto Teams Phone system, including removal of physical handsets.

Standard headsets can be provided to users if required.

1. Migrate all simple PSS to Teams Phone
2. Opt-out migration for all other phone users
3. Establish special case phone lines and plan for depreciation/replacement
  - a. e.g. faxes, street phone

4. Migrate remaining users once UIS have announced end-of-service 5. "Red line"  
phones handled by Estates

# ITSC report:

## Infrastructure January 2025

Malcolm Scott

### **Email forwarding**

We have completed the migration of our email forwarding from UIS's MX service to Forward Email over Christmas, just in time for UIS's January deadline. This was mostly successful though – inevitably for a replacement of a decades-old complex bespoke system – there have been a few unexpected teething troubles (such as a short period during which mail forwarded into Exchange Online was bouncing, due to a suspected Microsoft DMARC problem that we have since worked around). We still have work to do to tidy away some of our legacy email setup.

As part of this migration, Forward Email committed a not-insignificant amount of development time towards implementing custom changes for us, though their service is also a little less stable than we had hoped, probably as we happened to join at a time when they were making some major infrastructure changes.

At the time of writing there is a problem preventing email from department members to lists.cam.ac.uk mailing lists, under investigation with UIS. We currently believe that this is not related to the migration to Forward Email, but we should have more information by the time of the meeting.

A small number of users (including several retired members of the department) are still storing their mail on filer, and we would like to withdraw that service as there is a considerable amount of complex legacy email infrastructure that we cannot decommission whilst this facility is still in use – plus filer is known to perform very poorly for handling mail due to NFS locking issues.

## **Network upgrade**

The next step towards our upcoming network upgrade will be to procure new firewalls. We will take this opportunity to rationalise our network security as much as possible, most likely ramping up a long-running background project to gradually move away from VLANs per research group or per machine type, and towards VLANs which represent different levels of trust. Generally, machines will either be internal with access to other internal systems but with no services open to the public, or external with no access to internal systems except via certain secure protocols. Self-managed systems may start to be more restricted from using some internal services, to reduce the risk of compromise of sensitive data or systems by devices that we cannot be confident are secure.

## **New GPU servers**

The EPSRC-funded shared GPU server mentioned last time has been ordered and should be arriving within a couple of weeks, though has been delayed due to supply chain issues. This will replace the existing shared GPU VM devgpu-1, providing more GPU capacity for development and testing, as well as a newer OS. The overall capacity of the GPU pool will not be changing significantly, however.

## **AWS accounts**

We are close to being able to migrate the AWS accounts in our Organization into the Jisc OCRE cloud procurement framework, which will provide slightly better pricing as well as (hopefully) simpler management and invoicing. The cost savings will be passed on to the relevant grants automatically once accounts are migrated.

We have five very longstanding AWS accounts, presumably owned by old research projects circa 2014-2017, which predate our AWS Organization and were purchased using a previous Jisc framework via a reseller, Arcus (now called Digital Space). The IT team has no visibility over them whatsoever, including no knowledge of who they actually belong to, and have for the last several years found Arcus/Digital Space very uncooperative. We have been paying for them with departmental money (a little under £11 per month) for years because we don't know who should be paying. It is possible that they only contain resources that have accidentally been left running for years, as the daily cost never changes. We are trying again to get these moved off



Digital Space and to the new Jisc framework in the hope that it helps us to determine whose they are and/or close them down.