

ISC11D033

Title: IT Strategy
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Issue

Description of the consultation to inform the formulation of an IT Strategy

Recommendation

ISSC is asked to consider whether any wider consultation would be beneficial.

Resource Implications

None for this paper.

Equality and Diversity

New services will be subject to Equality Impact Assessments as they are implemented.

Timing of decisions

Decisions need to relate to the timescale of the work of the IT Strategy group, chaired by the Registrar.

Further Information

Enquiries about the content of the paper should be addressed to Jonathan Colam-French (j.colam@uea.ac.uk – ext 3994)

Background

This paper describes the consultation arrangements in place to help inform the work of the IT Strategy Group chaired by the Registrar. The Terms of Reference of the group are included as an appendix.

Discussion

IT Strategy Review Group

The first meeting of the IT Strategy Review Group is scheduled for 25 January. At this first meeting the group will agree the structure and approach that will be taken for the review. Consultants from the National Computing Centre (NCC) Group have been engaged to assist with the development of the IT Strategy and to act as trusted advisors to the University. Dr Christine Sexton, IT Director at Sheffield University will also advise the group.

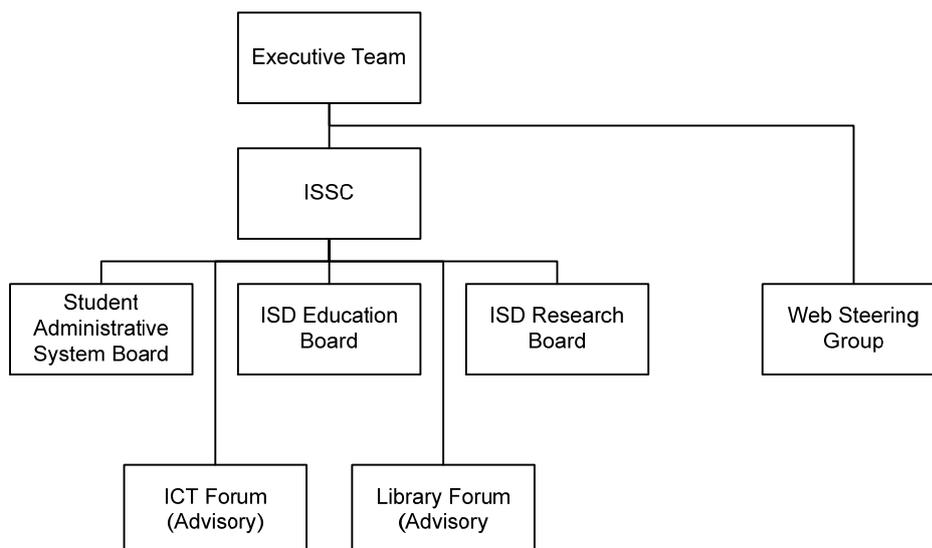
Some early consultation has taken place, and this includes a number of 1-1 interviews and a workshop session with the ISD Research Board. The following additional workshops are being planned (subject to agreement by the IT Strategy Review Group):

- IT Forum
- Student Administrative System Board
- Workshop with recently employed research staff
- Workshop with academic staff at the fore of technology assisted
- Workshop with PGR students and Post Docs
- Workshop with undergraduate students
- Workshop with ISD Service Heads

ISSC is asked to consider whether any wider consultation would be beneficial.

A copy of the terms of reference for the review group is included as an appendix. The fifth action for the review group is to assess the effectiveness of the governance of IT in the University, including procedures enabling ISD to respond to the academic and business priorities of the Faculties and other services, the composition and remit of ISSC, and procedures for reporting to ET.

The diagram below provides a summary of the current governance structures.



Given the vital role that ISSC plays in the governance of IT at UEA the view of ISSC on this particular aspect is sought and will be reported to the IT Strategy Review Group.

IT REVIEW

Terms of Reference

The primary purpose of the Review Group will be to engage with the development of the 3-5 year IT strategy, a complementary process to the development of the new Corporate Plan. It will seek external independent endorsement of the way forward and buy-in from the University community. Certain elements of the strategy (such as teaching and learning) will be embedded in the appropriate sections of the Corporate Plan. While it is not possible to be precise about time-scales at present, completion should be within the first quarter of 2012.

In more detail, the task of the Group will be to:

1. review existing strategy documents including, the Network and Systems Strategy which are due to be submitted to ISSC in November. The Group will need to consider whether there are any gaps in the IT strategy, whether all appropriate opportunities have been reviewed (particularly for collaboration and outsourcing) and the horizons scanned;
2. consider the appropriateness of the financial plan and level of expenditure which form part of the strategy, including benchmarking against sector (and wider) norms;
3. consider the appropriateness of the human resource plan which forms part of the strategy, including benchmarking against sector (and wider) norms;
4. take stock of the work of the Web Steering Group led by Dean (HUM) and ensure appropriate articulation between it and other aspects of IT strategy;
5. assess the effectiveness of the governance of IT in the University, including procedures enabling ISD to respond to the academic and business priorities of the Faculties and other services, the composition and remit of ISSC, and procedures for reporting to ET.

The Group will commend a 3-5 year strategy to the Executive Team.

There are a number of other strands of work underway, and in many cases well advanced, which respond to the difficulties we have faced in relation to our IT services over the past eighteen months, and which should be reviewed by the Group. They may also have relevance to the development of strategy. Notably:

A security audit of UEA network and systems by 7-Safe

The recommendations from this audit have not been adopted by ET as being disproportionately costly when judged against future risk. The Group will consider whether the matter should rest there or whether investment should be made over time. The Group can also consider any issues which arise from the early security audits which we have resourced.

Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP) Audit and the Review of “Lessons to be Learned” from the Failure of the Core

These two related internal audit reports are complete or virtually complete. The Group will consider these reports and management responses. We may conclude that we need much faster recovery times for a significant number of important systems. The bill for this could be substantial.

Project Management

SUMS is undertaking a review of project management methodology particularly around the implementation of SITS. The Group should receive this and the recent internal auditors report on SITS (which included only 3 low priority recommendations) and form a view on the adequacy of future project management processes.

Composition of the Review Group

The proposal is:

- Registrar (Chair)
- Pro-Vice-Chancellors – Academic and REE
- Dean HUM
- Director of ISD
- Graham Jones, new Council member, recently retired as General Counsel and Company Secretary with Aviva Plc, who has agreed to serve on ISSC
- A “trusted advisor”, appointed perhaps from NCC as we have done in the past to help with this
- A JISC representative*
- A senior IT professional from another University*

Administrative support for the review group will be provided by VCO.

* if suitable individuals can be identified.