Research Data Storage Project
Project Board 500: Minutes
8th Feb 2012

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0.1	16th Feb 2012	First draft of minutes for circulation	Max WILKINSON	
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Approvals

This document requires the following approvals

Name	Signature	Title	Date of Issue	Version
Max Wilkinson		Head of Research Data Services		
Jacky Pallas		Project Board Chair		
Gavin McLachlan		Project Sponsor		
Project Board				

Distribution

This document has been distributed to:

Name	Date of Issue	Version
Research Data Project Board	9th May 2012	0.2

Contents

1. Meeting 500

These are the minutes for the UCL Research Data Service project board (500). Held at 14:00 on the 8th Feb 2012. Room 602, Central House, 14 Upper Woburn Place.

1.1. Attendees

Jacky PALLAS (Chair) (JP)

Max WILKINSON (MW)

Gavin MCLACHLAN (GM)

Simon FARRELL (SF)

Mike COPE (MC)

Anthony FINKELSTEIN (AF)

Samuel MASSIAH (SM)

1.2. Apologies

Richard CATLOW (RC)

Paul AYRIS (PA)

Martin Moyle (MM)

Peter COVENEY (PC)

Alejandra GONZALEZ-BELTRAN (AGB)

2. Minutes of previous meeting and Actions

The minutes of the previous meeting (400) were accepted.

3. Outcomes from this meeting

Outcome	Status
Progression of procurement from PQQ short list to construct the ITT	Agreed
Requirements analysis and use cases to be circulated	Agreed
External representation will be sought	Agreed
Circulate the document summarising Research data policies from funders	

4. Actions

4.1. Previous Actions

Action	Description	Owner	Status
A4.1	MW to schedule a series of meetings for 2012, beginning Feb 2012	MW	Closed
A4.2	MW to update the Board membership to reflect deputies for each member	MW/All	Closed

A4.3	GM agreed to provide a Bloomsbury network map indicating backbone nodes and connection speeds together with projected upgrades	GM	Tabled, carried over
A4.4	MW to provide examples of titles for job descriptions to the Feb Board meeting.	MW	Closed
A4.5	MW to provide more formal reports from the PoCs for the Feb 2012 board meeting	MW/DH	Closed
A4.6	MW to keep standing line Item for RDP budget	MW	Closed

4.2.   New Actions

Action	Description	Owner	Status
A5.1	Discussion of Bloomsbury Network Map tabled as action A4.3	GM	New
	What do you mean by an action and an outcome?		New
	Actions highlighted in the minutes are listed as agreed outcomes above		**New**
			New
			New
			New

5. Notes from Meeting

Agenda

Item	Paper	Action	Description	Owner	Time (min)
1. Welcome	*502*	*A/D*	Agree agenda and accept minutes from the previous meeting (24th Nov 2011)	Chair	5
		I	Review Actions from previous meeting	Chair	10
2. Governance		*I*	Board Frequency / Secretariat	All	5
	503	*D*	Board membership/Deputies	All	5
3. Project Update*	(slide deck)	*I*	Highlights	GM/MW	10
	(slide deck)	*I*	Timelines	MW	5
	(slide deck)	*I*	Recruitment Status	GM/MW	10
4. Procurement Status	*504*	*I*	PQQ/PoC results & recommendation	MW	20
	(slide deck)	*I*	Procurement Options	MW	10
		D	Compose and issue ITT	GM/MW	20
5. Working Group Report		*I*	ntr	MW	0
6. Budget*	(slide deck)	*I*	Expenditure reporting and FY Forecast	MW	5
7. Risks*	(slide deck)	*G*	Selected Critical Risks & Issues	MW	10
8. Next steps		*A*	Agreed Actions and Next Steps	MW	5

*Standing Item

I – Information, G – Guidance, D – Decision, A - Agreement

5.1. Item 1: Welcome

Agree agenda and accept minutes from previous meeting.

The minutes from the previous project board (400/24th Nov 2011) meeting were accepted. There were no specific actions requiring further attention from the board.

MC notified the Chair that he may not be able to stay for the entire meeting.

JP suggested that the agenda be re-ordered to prioritise discussion on the procurement status as this was a critical decision for the Board.

Review actions from Previous meeting (400)

JP welcomed project Board and requested review of actions from the previous meeting.

MW presented the actions from the last meeting and all were accepted and closed.
GM tabled the current network diagram but discussions for this were postponed until the next Board meeting.

5.2. Item 2 – Project Board Governance

Current Board memberships and deputies were accepted and there was discussion regarding the communication of this project more widely.

MW reminded the Board of existing email lists but these had become stale while the project was on hold.

AF suggested a more creative and personal approach, e.g. 1-2-1 meetings with key persons in order to 'cascade' vision and expectations. In addition a formal link with the Publications Board was suggested as this project Board should focus on the research data project rather than research data strategy (considered a role for the wider initiative).

MW would discuss this with Paul Ayris as he was formulating a UCL research data strategy. MW was tasked with creating a UCL Research Data roadmap that would 'realise' any such policy and was activity of the wider Research Data Service rather than this project.

MC supported this activity as he recognised expectations regarding this project and the risks of further delay.

MW noted that a communication plan or strategy would be useful for managing these activities and suggested that in addition to an internal communication external representation would be useful politically.

GM agreed that external representation on the Board was always planned and also believed it to be useful.

> **ACTION 5.1:** MW to circulate by email a list of potential external candidates to invite onto the Board and also invite additions to the list. MW will approach individuals and report back.

5.3. Item 3 – Project Update

Timelines

MW provided a brief status update on the project and noted that re-establishing momentum had been greeted with general enthusiasm from users (pilot user groups) and strategic stakeholders (e.g. RIISG). As such he was confident the project RAG status could be moved from RED to AMBER.

There was still a significant delay that was impacting the project that was being mitigated by compacting the procurement specification and re-planning the phases.

JP noted that the key decision from this Board meeting would be to agree the progression of the procurement from the evaluated PQQ and short list (paper 504) and issue an ITT to the shortlisted candidates.

5.4. Item 4 – Procurement Status

Process

MW provided an overview of the accelerated/restricted process the procurement was following and that even with the significant delay the technical evaluation agreed we were able to progress. One concern was the error in PQQ

issue for a public contract rather than a framework agreement. MC suggested there could be some wiggle room with this and did not see it as a serious issue. For example, re-tendering could be specific and focussed, thus less competitive and rapid.

SF noted that there were quite a few unknowns in this procurement and this could increase risk and increase the delay as cannot currently specify detail in tender.

AF noted that the critical risk for this procurement is not the hardware but the service wrap that fulfils the requirements and makes the service useful. He recommends specifying the minimal level of procurement to implement the service and then focus on the service wrap.

SM agreed that the biggest resource allocation will likely be software development.
MC separated the concepts into vertical service wrap and horizontal hardware scaling.
MW noted that the current intention was to front load effort into the vertical software development once a 'smaller than originally planned' hardware deployment had been procured.

JP noted that this was alluded to in the PQQ as up to 1 Pb, but we could scale back to 500Tb.
MW and MC agreed and the budget had allowed for this first phase to be in the region of £500,000.
AF suggested hardware could be scaled back further and the focus would begin with simple utility for the hardware then scaling down the service wrap to accommodate the '80%' users that need simple storage while scaling up the hardware provision.

AF inquired whether the pilot groups were ready to engage with the system in a system-functional manner, e.g. stress testing and API testing?
MW noted that from re-engaging activity he had undertaken the pilots groups remained enthusiastic but he could not confirm their readiness or capability to conduct users testing to the degree required. Validating their ability to test and use the pilot service will be integral to the initial deployment and for part of the acceptance testing.

MC/GM noted that we could start again with a different procurement pathway, e.g. competitive dialogue, but this would create a further and significant delay in the order of 6 months, without any significant benefit
GM/MW suggested there was still a lot of learning from both the vendors and us on the services requirements.
JP/SF noted that user requirements between the archive and repository interface were not clear but delaying the procurement further would not mitigate this

Requirements

JP suggested that a lot of work still needs to be done regarding the user requirements.
AF suggested that the validation of the user requirements against use cases would be a necessary starting point to requirements analysis.
MC suggested business analysis would also be useful though this would require resource from within the SmartIT process.
MW noted that there had been a series of requirements analyses conducted by Andrew Richards and asked if the board had seen these. They had not and so MW suggested he would circulate these together with the use cases Daniel Hanlon and SF has constructed.

SM asked if funder requirements had been considered.
MW responded that while not is a formal sense he considered the activity surrounding user requirements and scenarios to have covered these specific, requirements. In addition Daniel Hanlon had created a short summary of funders expectations and the relationship with the research data project but it was not circulated widely.

> **ACTION 5.2:** MW to circulate the user requirements, use cases and funder summary expectations to Board members.

Resource

JP inquired from MW if there was sufficient resource to construct and evaluate the possibility of 6 ITT responses. MW / SF suggested that there would be sufficient resource though timelines are tight and without additional resource, in the way of a project manager to own the procurement, there would be delay.

MW noted that recruitment had not been successful and the current team would need to progress the ITT until further resource could be appointed. Current estimates recruit would be 3-4 weeks for a contractor, 3-4 months for a fixed term post.

MW presented the minimum periods of time between the stages of the procurement process but noted that current planning aimed to issue the ITT in mid-March with a return time of 1 month, evaluation of a further month with a view to award the ITT in early May. Day 1 would thus be in May.
MW advised the Board that this time scale was the expected minimum and will slip as recruitment was unsuccessful, though re-planning and use of existing resource would control this delay.

MW noted that expected delay was not considered critical given the impending ISD moves, SmartIT recruitment cycles and the possible disruption caused by the Olympics. Realistic deployment was not expected until June/July.

AF noted that while timelines are tight we should not delay procurement further as there is another checkpoint where a decision is required once tenders have been evaluated.

Resource provision.

AF noted and MW agreed that given the current recruitment freeze and history of this project, we are reliant on effort from individuals that are not specifically resourced. AF suggested it would be appropriate for this to be confronted with concerned individuals and their line managers to agree some form of remuneration for the effort spent on this project so far.
> **ACTION 5.3**: MW to begin these talks to remunerate current efforts.

Communicatiion

MW noted that communications were difficult in projects that were significantly delayed and he had experienced a variety of expectations that were sometimes outside the scope of the project. He suggested formulating a communication plan and stakeholder map to manage the key messages for the project and assure consistency in promotion.
SM agreed key messages need to be clear and accurate.

MW noted that this was activity he was continuing in regards to internal policy, with Paul Ayris and external stakeholders, e.g. incorporating the RCUK data management principles into the UCL Research Data Roadmap and specifically responding to the EPSRC research data management expectations.
> **ACTION 5.4:** MW to update communication activities at each Project Board.

5.5. Item 5 – Engagement of user groups and ToG

This agenda item was not discussed

5.6. Item 6 – Budget

MW tabled a revised budget for the Board (Paper 505). Due to time constraints this paper was accepted but not discussed.

5.7. Item 7 – Risks

Project risks were not discussed due to time constraints

5.8. Item 8 – Next Steps

- The Board would like to review external representation suggestions and are invited to provide their own suggestions to MW
- The Board would like to review with current requirements analysis, use cases and research councils expectations summaries
- Recruitment into the organisations is expected to start in March 2012
- MW to develop communication plans and stakeholder maps

Date of next meeting: May 9th 2012, 11:00-13:00 Central House 602.

CLOSE: