University of Cambridge
Open Access Project Board

Minutes – 27 February 2014

Meeting held at 15.30-16.30 on Thursday 27th February 2014
in the PVC Meeting Room, The Old Schools

<u>Present:</u> Professor Lynn Gladden (Chair), Professor Steve Young, Professor Richard Prager, Professor Martin Daunton, Professor Andy Parker, Mr Graham Allen, Dr Peter Hedges, Mrs Anne Jarvis, Mr John Norman and Dr Gill Rands (Secretary).

<u>Apologies:</u> Professor Paul Luzio.

<u>Declaration of Interest:</u> No new declarations were made.

The Chairman welcomed Professor Richard Prager (Head of the School of Technology) and Dr Peter Hedges (Head of the University Research Office) as new members of the Project Board.

1. Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising – OAPB-21

1.1 The draft minutes of the meeting held on 23 October 2013 were approved (OAPB-21).

1.2 Members reported on the progress of actions as follows:
- <u>Action 2.2:</u> Comparative data on APC payments and publisher performance had not yet been received from Imperial and Oxford but information so far indicated a broadly equivalent picture to that at Cambridge. Research Libraries UK was also conducting a survey.
- <u>Action 2.4:</u> Peter Hedges was now taking forward the data analyst post.
- <u>Action 4.5:</u> An initial meeting about 'Researcher Pages' in November 2013 had been followed up by a second meeting in February 2014 but there was still little to report. In the meantime, the immediate focus of OA work had moved onto providing OA compliance information rather than researcher profiles, as outlined in the project report (OAPB-22).
- <u>Action 6.8:</u> Open data issues had been raised with the EPSRC representative at the Framework meeting in December 2014 (see item 4 below).
- <u>Action 6.9:</u> The proposal for an open data costs working group had been postponed in light of the workplan approved by the Project Board after the last meeting; it had been agreed that in-depth case studies with individual Principal Investigators would offer a more informative approach at this stage.

2. Open access to research publications – OAPB-22

2.1 John Norman highlighted a number of points from the project report (OAPB-22) and responded to Project Board comments:
  a) We were approaching the end of the first year of the RCUK APC payment policy and anticipated having spent around 65% (£750k) of the block grant in the first year. This was expected to meet the criterion in the RCUK email saying that reasonable roll-overs to 2014-15 would be allowed.
  b) The decision to hold the publication fund centrally was validated by the unpredictable distribution of APCs across departments (OAPB-22, Table 2). The low take-up in social sciences was partly due to the relatively low numbers of Research Council grants in this area. Only a small proportion of the total expenditure had been on page

and colour charges. A significant number of queries relating to non-RCUK funders were also handled by the project team but not reflected in these figures.

    c) We were far from reaching the levels of author demand that would ultimately be expected and there was still considerable risk in relation to the size of the publication fund.

    d) Once the HEFCE policy had been published (expected in late March), the project team aimed to hold meetings before the summer with the 20 departments that represented 70% of the University's research funding.

    e) Currently, access to the publication fund was in effect controlled by Raven authentication. The implications of this needed to be better understood in order to ensure that all those requesting payment were eligible for support.

    f) Significant recent OA policy developments in the US were consistent with the anticipated HEFCE policy.

2.2 **Action:** John Norman to investigate whether it was necessary to introduce a further filter after Raven log-in to ensure that access to the publication fund was available only to University and College employees.

3. Potential role of Symplectic in open access – OAPB 23

3.1 The Chairman noted that there was to be a review of the potential roles of the Symplectic Elements system ('Symplectic') at Cambridge, not only in relation to a future REF but also in other contexts including open access. OAPB-23 had resulted from an action from the Research Policy Committee meeting on 16 January 2014, at which John Norman had been asked to work with the REF Office to prepare a paper, initially for the Project Board, about the potential role of Symplectic in plans for open access.

3.2 The Project Board noted both the value and the current limitations of Symplectic in relation to OA requirements, and endorsed the conclusions and recommendations in OAPB-23 as input to the University's Symplectic review. An important criterion for any system was to make the academic user experience as straightforward as possible.

3.3 **Action:** Peter Hedges to convey OAPB-23 to the Chairman of the University's Symplectic working group, Professor Neil Dodgson.

3.4 It was noted that Symplectic senior executives were keen to talk to Cambridge and other key users about potential developments. The Project Board agreed that it would be important to work with members of the Russell Group, particularly Oxford, to share the cost of any bespoke modules that might need to be added to Symplectic.

3.5 **Action:** Peter Hedges and John Norman to discuss with Russell Group colleagues the potential for closer cooperation on Symplectic development.

4. Open access to research data – OAPB-24

4.1 John Norman introduced OAPB-24, which summarised the project's recent work in the area of open data and sought the Project Board's advice on the direction of further work, including the promotion of good research data management practices across the University through training and support.

4.2 Project Board members expressed concerns about embarking on any large-scale plans to investigate or support research data management and openness when the current parameters of any such exercise were ill-defined and, for some fields, entirely unrealistic. At the EPSRC Framework meeting in December 2013, the University had sought clarification from EPSRC of what constituted compliance with EPSRC's strategy. The feedback was that this was still a work in progress. There was no agreed taxonomy of the types of research

data and their 'usefulness'. EPSRC was clear that no new funding stream was available for such activity.

4.3 Recent Russell Group discussions had, however, been useful. Peter Hedges reported that at the Research Directors meeting, EPSRC had effectively defined the data covered by their policy in a limited way as 'the data behind the publication'; and had described the anticipated storage provision as a 'virtual shoebox', with data retrieval being at the user's expense. Lynn Gladden reported that the PVCs for Research had agreed that the universities should seize the initiative and work together to define what could/should be delivered rather than waiting for further directives from funders.

4.4 The Project Board therefore agreed two guiding principles for further work:
   a) To focus on the minimum action needed for compliance with funder policies, until value for money was clearer. Further iteration with EPSRC would be needed to confirm that our approach would meet their policy objectives. The actions taken should be consistent with establishing best practice with respect to data storage and management, which the University would be seeking to deliver regardless of the open data initiative *per se*.
   b) To work with Russell Group colleagues to develop realistic approaches to open data.

4.5 **Action:** Peter Hedges and John Norman to discuss open data approaches with Russell Group colleagues.

4.6 Building on the data case studies summarised in OAPB-24, the Project Board agreed that the next step should be a more detailed study of research data and data management practices in one or two Departments – preferably at least one that was in the EPSRC domain and whose members were active users of the OA publication fund. This would form the basis of a report to the next Project Board meeting.

4.7 **Action:** John Norman and Gill Rands to develop one or two case studies of departmental research data and data management practices.

5. Remarks on open access made in Discussion – OAPB-25

5.1 The Project Board noted the remarks made by Professor Gillian Evans at the Discussion on 21 January 2014 (OAPB-25), and the Council's response published in the Reporter on 26 February[1]. It was agreed that no further response was needed at present, although the University would certainly contribute to any HEFCE consultation about open access in relation to monographs when the opportunity arose.

5.2 The HEFCE Monographs and Open Access Project mentioned by Professor Evans had established an Expert Reference Group to advise on the evidence needed to understand open access publishing for monographs. It was noted that this Group included Professor Peter Mandler (History Faculty and Royal Historical Society) and Mr Richard Fisher (CUP, representing the Publishers' Association).

6. AOB

6.1 The Project Board agreed that there needed to be ongoing dialogue with CUP. Anne Jarvis and John Norman were in touch with Mr Peter Philips (Chief Executive) and Mr Richard Fisher (Managing Director, Academic).

6.2 The next meeting would be scheduled for around the end of May 2014.

---

[1] http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/reporter/2013-14/weekly/6340/section1.shtml#heading2-6