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Foreword

Jisc has a distinctive part to play as the sectors’ own company dedicated to working integrally with colleagues UK-wide to deliver the solutions that universities and colleges need to innovate and become ever more efficient and effective in the rapidly developing digital age.

That is why again this year huge effort has been put into continuous reshaping and development of Jisc to further enhance our own effectiveness and cost efficiency. Jisc is committed to this process of ongoing transformation to remain at the top of its game and a first class partner for all our stakeholders in such challenging and rapidly changing times, and to do this while continuing to deliver its agreed services and project priorities to very high standards.

A focus for the board continues to be our value proposition and demonstrating the value and efficiency of Jisc. A key step has been taken with the launch in October 2014 of a Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI) Yellow Paper, which sets out the agenda for important future consideration of Jisc’s public value and the need for integrated digital infrastructure and resources. The paper describes the hidden investment that Jisc makes in providing this infrastructure and the danger to UK education and research if the world class infrastructure is not maintained.

Activity continues as part of our commitment to support further education and skills across the UK, to ensure we offer providers effective and coherent solutions which meet their needs and improve their use and utilisation of technology. As the financial environment in which Jisc and our sector colleagues exist continues to present challenges, we continue with our prudent financial approach and are actively looking to the future and are exploring ways of bringing additional income from other sources, which should help sustain investment in sector priorities for both existing and new services.

The next year will again see significant change. The board and I remain committed to working closely with the Jisc executive team to ensure that the significant progress made in the last year continues unabated.

Professor Martin Hall
Vice chancellor, University of Salford and chair of Jisc’s board
Jisc is the UK’s expert body for the use of digital technology in education and research. Our role is to take on the tasks such as negotiations with global IT companies or publishers, or the provision of shared digital services and infrastructure, that it makes sense to do on a UK level once; rather than at an institutional level many times over across the country.

Our aim in so doing is to ensure that forward looking, collective, cost-effective use of digital technology helps keep UK education and research at the forefront.

To achieve that aim we must work in close dialogue and partnership with our stakeholders and customers, and ensure that everything we do is driven by a deep and sustained understanding of their needs and the opportunities to help them with the challenges of the future. In 2014 our key priorities were all underpinned by the requirement to make this interaction work ever better.

First and foremost, therefore, was to take how we engage and work with our customers and stakeholders to a new level. Building on the existing co-design process, our new customer services organisation and stakeholder architecture achieved further strong progress in this area. Secondly, we worked on better elaborating our value and efficiency: how we can evidence and demonstrate the multiple benefits of Jisc for our customers and communities and the efficiency with which we deliver those benefits. Thirdly, we took important steps in developing our technology presence for high impact. Finally, we continued to drive forward relentlessly the on-going transformation and optimisation of Jisc itself including further extensive organisational change.

In 2015 we will build on this progress; a top priority will be to truly expose the full value of Jisc to every customer and stakeholder, and at the sector level, in language and metrics that resonate and are clear. This is crucial as, to date, the benefits of Jisc and the UK’s shared digital infrastructure have been ‘just there’ and accordingly somewhat taken for granted; now we must ensure they are visible and understood.

We will of course also continue to focus on cost optimisation through various measures including comprehensive Jisc-wide ‘product’ and service lifecycle management. However, we will also pursue vigorously the opportunity to generate new income for Jisc, partly through the creation of our commercial trading arm, Jiscom, in order to reduce the need for sector funding and/or provide more capacity for investment in new areas of sector benefit.

Jisc is not a vendor or third party organisation: it is the sectors’ own organisation under its own oversight and direction and dedicated entirely to its own collective needs. In the ever more demanding times ahead the UK has a distinct advantage over other nations as a result. We already have the organisation and expertise that organisation has an exemplary track record of success with major recent achievements such as Janet6 and the Jisc shared data centre delivered on time and within budget. In addition the organisation has transformed itself over the last three years to do its work even better at a third less cost.

We look forward to continuing to work with all our colleagues in 2015 and beyond to harness the unique advantage of Jisc for their further collective benefit.

Professor Martyn Harrow
Chief executive

Jisc value proposition

» One organisation
» One purpose: to support you
» Trusted advice for your benefit
» Scales to meet your needs
» Works in partnership with you, efficiently
» Saves you more than £200m a year

Only Jisc
...owned by the sector, for the sector
Saving the sector money
Over £200m each year.

Total cost of ownership
Supporting the transition to open access and reducing the extra costs for institutions.

Shared data centre
Enabling efficiency and collaboration for six world class research institutions – and growing.

Summer of Student Innovation
20 teams. >500 votes each. £5000 grants.

Augmented reality in FE
Introducing the wow factor into learning.

Cloud services
Conducting due diligence with global companies from Microsoft to Google.

Digifest:
Sharing knowledge across the sector. 592 delegates, 132 speakers. 62 workshop hours. 15000 tweets.

E-books for FE
£900,000 investment in more than 13m e-book pages, with a print equivalent value of £1112,399.
Our key achievements

2014

Co-design

Co-design is the collaborative innovation model we launched in 2013. Steered by customer priorities, it is designed to help us to exploit new opportunities and address pressing issues in higher and further education and skills through technology. Co-design ensures funding is allocated to those things that matter right now or that offer rich promise in the future. Once we have allocated funding we continue to work closely with customers throughout the projects to scrutinise progress and decide whether to change their focus, speed them up or stop them completely.
Enterprise
and efficiency

Janet, the high performance network for UK education and research, enables universities to communicate with each other and the world outside academia. The network and associated core services saves the sector £101 million every year.

Compared with using a commercial ISP, Janet provides more secure and cost-effective connectivity for the academic community.

From the heart of Janet, Jisc provides connections directly to suppliers, such as Google, the BBC, Microsoft and Amazon.

In 2013/14 our network services offered the sectors support and the opportunity to make cost savings across a range of areas from cloud and security deals to a shared data centre and high performance computing brokerage.

Putting money into shared services like these is money well spent. In addition to cost savings and efficiencies, it enables collaboration, helping to push the traditional boundaries of teaching, learning and research methods.

Jisc shared data centre
In September 2014, we launched the first Janet-connected national shared data centre for UK research with £900,000 funding from Hefce. It allows its users to consolidate their sensitive data in one safe environment and enable greater collaboration, as well as saving them operational and procurement costs. Operated by specialist data centre company Infinity in Slough, it houses the IT of a consortium of six of the UK’s most successful scientific and academic organisations, a community that is expected to grow over time. The data centre has capacity for up to 3,000 racks across 80,000 sq feet and is connected to the heart of Janet with two 100Gbit/s connections.

Building cloud deals
Jisc Technologies has been working with some of the world’s largest tech companies to improve how they offer their cloud-based products to higher education. We have been helping to build agreements and negotiate contracts that meet the needs of the sector. The deals include exclusive amendments to Microsoft’s legal documents for Office 365, and the due diligence on Google Apps. This provides institutions with crucial clarity and reassurance in relation to security, resilience, legal and data compliance, and functionality.

Security savings
Due to the aggregated deal that we have secured for our customers, our Janet Certificate Service issued 11,000 security certificates over the past year which represents a saving of £470,000 to the sector compared with standard market pricing. We were agile enough to step in quickly when some of our customers were affected by the “Heartbleed” (Open Secure Sockets Layer) bug, offering 700 free replacement certificates and saving the sector £280,000.
Making sign-on simple
Jisc Technologies is also working to deliver a single sign-on system which will be piloted with Microsoft’s Azure. It will introduce federated identity into the service in a way that suits the needs of education and research.

Frictionless supercomputing
We’ve been working with the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) and Innovate UK to support institutions wishing to share high value capital equipment and expertise with each other and industry. Computer-based modelling and simulation is critical to businesses as diverse as high frequency trading, manufacturing and transport systems. However, there are enormous capital costs associated with setting up a high performance computing (HPC) centre. We have developed a brokerage service at HPC Midlands that facilitates access to £60m worth of UK’s HPC expertise and facilities for the research community and industry.

Aurora2
The National Dark Fibre Infrastructure Service (NDFIS) Janet joined forces with EPSRC, which has provided £2.5m to equip the dark fibre network and enable researchers to do R+D on it. Ultimately, it will allow researchers to develop the underpinning communications technologies for the future internet. It opens up exciting possibilities for collaborative work not just between UK universities but also with commercial organisations in the UK and even further afield.

“We’re all about collaboration and this shared activity promotes collaborative activity - if we can bring together large datasets in this way it means that people can work across them without incurring large costs.”

David Fergusson
Head of scientific computing, the Francis Crick Institute
Learning is more efficient – and more interesting – using online tools. This is why we’ve been investing in digital resources, from multimedia for engineers to 3D bone specimens for medical students, to enable students from all sectors to learn more easily, efficiently and effectively. We’ve also been working with learning providers to embed digital innovation in the classroom (and outside it), from augmented reality to flipped learning.

**Films for engineers**
Jisc Collections’ partnership with the Institution of Engineering and Technology makes the teaching and knowledge of engineering and technology experts instantly accessible to students. The archive includes over 3,000 presentations filmed at lectures, seminars and conferences from 2002-2012, and is accessible through the Jisc MediaHub.

**BoB**
As a result of work with the BBC, we’ve expanded the BoB National (Box of Broadcasts) service to enable subscribers (150,000 users in the 56 subscribing institutions so far) to search for and view over one million off-air TV and radio programmes dating from 2007.

**London’s Pulse**
With the Wellcome Library, we’ve made available 5000 fully searchable reports from 1848 to 1973 detailing the health of Londoners through the yearly reports of the Medical Officers of Heath, recording vital statistics on births, deaths and illness and infectious disease.

**Digital bone library**
We’ve made possible an online collection of 1,600 specimens of diseased human bones digitised using a combination of 3D laser scanning, CT and radiography, providing a unique opportunity for students and researchers all over the world to examine both the internal and external changes caused by chronic diseases.
Augmenting reality in the classroom

South Staffordshire College was looking for innovative ways to deliver more for less while still trying to capture the imagination of young people. We worked with the college on a cheap but effective way to introduce a “wow” factor to practical lessons – augmented reality.

Digimap

Digimap allows students and researchers to access and use Ordnance Survey data and maps that would otherwise have to be individually licensed at high cost – it is estimated that maps with a commercial value of over £40m were downloaded during the 2013/14 academic year.

© Ordnance Survey via Flickr

Digital resources can unlock our past for a variety of audiences, in Wales and around the world. This very special digital archive will be widely used for education and research purposes, especially as we approach the centenary of the outbreak of World War One.”

Huw Lewis
Welsh government minister for education & skills

Learning co-design learning challenges

From prospect to alumnus
Using all the information stored about students to provide a joined-up digital student experience from pre-application to employment for the 21st century.

Effective learner analytics
Using data and analytics to support students and improve satisfaction, retention and graduation rates.

Digital capabilities
Providing tools that staff in universities, colleges and providers can use to ensure they have the skills and confidence required to make full use of digital technology.
Jisc Collections saves the sector £85 million per year through its expert negotiation of collective purchasing.
Research

In 2013/14 we’ve continued to support institutions and publishers as they adopt open access policies and practices and comply with funders’ open access mandates. We are also working with them as they respond to the Hefce proposal that all articles and conference papers submitted for the Research Excellence Framework after 2016 should be open access and accessible through an institutional repository.

Total cost of ownership
The RCUK open access mandate means that some higher education institutions face twice the cost with the same publishers as they both maintain subscriptions to journals and pay for article processing charges for open access. Our task was to support this transition to open access and reduce that extra cost for institutions. We gathered data on the extra cost of article processing charges and used it to model offset systems publishers could introduce to reduce the cost. Then, on behalf of the sector, we began discussions with all the major publishers of scholarly journals. The result was acceptance of our offset systems by a number of publishers, including two of the largest commercial publishers. These offset systems will reduce the extra cost to institutions of publishing with those publishers by around 75%.

National Monograph Strategy
One of our co-design pilot projects, the National Monograph Strategy, has seen us work alongside librarians, funders, publishers and academics to address some of the core challenges that confront the provision and support of the scholarly monograph. The result has been a roadmap – a series of practical, doable ideas – for making the existing model of monograph publishing sustainable and paving the way for a new digital-only future. If successful, these approaches and tools might be applied to other scholarly communication channels, including research journals.

Open Access Good Practice project
We have been working to reduce the burden on higher education institutions in implementing funders’ open access requirements and have helped universities, working with others both within and beyond the sector, to develop IT tools, standards and services, and the related workflows and organisational arrangements, for open access implementation. Nine pathfinder projects are working to produce case studies and guidance.

Research at risk
Realising a robust and sustainable research data management infrastructure and services to enrich UK research.
“The E-books for FE project has given us access to a collection of free e-books that would otherwise have been beyond our means. Having a collection tailor made for the needs of FE has been welcomed by both staff and students and the e-books are now increasingly becoming established as part of the curriculum.”

Hilary Richmond, e-resources librarian at Cheadle & Marple Sixth Form College

Enhancing our offer to the FE and skills sector has been a priority in 2013/14. Following the Further Education Learning Technology Action Group (Feltag) report, and the government’s response to it, Jisc has created and led a Feltag Implementation Group of 26 representative bodies, providing practical understanding and means of delivery of the Feltag recommendations.

Outcomes include creating an FE online academy to upskill teaching practice, providing advice to governing bodies, and enhancing a central repository of shared e-learning materials.

E-books for FE
In the last 12 months Jisc Collections has invested a further £900,000 to provide additional content to the E-books for FE project, which is available on a free subscription to FE colleges across the UK. The project has seen further education learners use more than 13 million e-textbook pages. The e-books for FE project has improved access to resources and saves learning providers on average £18,800 annually.

MediaHub
In October 2013 we offered FE providers free subscription to Jisc MediaHub. It enables direct access to over 130,000 images, films and audio files, licensed for educational use and also provides a search for over one million additional items available in various public collections.

Helping colleges improve through IT
An impartial e-learning review carried out by Jisc contributed to an improved Ofsted rating for South Worcestershire College. Taking our advice and suggestions on board, the college formulated a package of improvements which has led to more consistency in the use of information learning technology across the college. When Ofsted visited the college in November 2013, they praised the improved use of technology and subsequently awarded the college a grade 2 – Good – up from a grade 4.
South Downs College uses digital resources that would cost £253,482 a year more without Jisc’s intervention.
Following the success of 2013’s Summer of Student Innovation, digitally savvy further and higher education students were once again offered the opportunity to create technology solutions that could change the education landscape. Each successful team won a £5000 prize and, more importantly, the opportunity to work with mentors from the sector to turn their ideas into reality.

“Tools like the Open Access Button can help catalyse change and create a world where science has more impact, is more efficient and importantly available to everyone.”

Professor Randy Schekman, Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2013

Open Access Button

A simple tool that will search the web for a version of an academic research paper that can be accessed immediately and freely. If there isn’t one available, the Button will email the author and look for more information about the paper.

“The student experience is one of the most important concerns for most institutions. Digital technology plays a big part in providing a compelling student experience. Therefore, it’s really important to work closely with students to explore their ideas for how technology can make education, research and the student life better for them and their peers.”

Andrew McGregor, Jisc deputy chief innovation officer

Research & Development

Our research & development work identifies emerging technologies and develops them around your particular needs. We test and learn on your behalf, ready for you to take advantage of new technologies as they arrive. Find out more about the 34 projects that we are currently running, how we innovate, and how you can get involved.

jisc.ac.uk/rd
Unitu - building online academic communities
Enhancing the student experience by tightening the feedback loop between staff, course representatives and students within their academic departments.

Lingoflow - learn and remember foreign languages
A web and mobile app that helps learners master foreign languages by enabling them to manage, learn and review their vocabulary effectively and with ease.

Konnect2
Of the first Summer of Student Innovation wave, the Konnect2 App, providing real-time interactive “ask the audience” functionality to the lecture room, is now available on the App store. Another project, Call For Participants, an online crowd-sourcing tool for creating research cohort groups, is already being used by 105 universities in the UK and 92 internationally.
Expenditure on charitable activities and movements in reserves

Breakdown of expenditure

- Digital infrastructure: £70.8m
- Digital resources – licensing: £24.4m
- Digital resources – other: £14.0m
- Futures: £15.3m
- Value realisation: £10.3m
- Governance costs: £1.1m
- Increase in restricted reserves: £19.9m
- Increase in general reserves: £5.2m

Total: £161m
Financial position

Jisc has adopted a clear and prudent financial approach since our transformation into a corporate body in December 2012. This is in the context of anticipated and continuing financial reductions from core funders and the shift in sector funding requiring the introduction of a Jisc subscription funding component, in higher education at least. It has led to the following financial position at 31 July 2014, full details of which are given in the Jisc Trustees’ Report and Financial Statements.

A large proportion of the total cost of Jisc is based on funding from the higher and further education funders in the UK, broadly on a two-thirds HE, one-third FE split, and a percentage split across countries. FE colleges are not currently charged a Jisc subscription as this is wholly funded by FE funders.

Income and expenditure account for the year ending 31 July 2014

Income for the year totalled £161m, comprising £42m of primary purpose trading, being licensing income, security certification of servers, subscriptions and optional second connections, and £119m of grant income, of which £36m was restricted. The licensing income included above amounted to £26m and represents the pass through of payments to publishers on behalf of Jisc’s customers. The customers benefiting from Jisc’s expertise and negotiations.

Restricted income: Restricted income is subject to specific restrictions imposed by the originator of the income. These include grants and contracts from institutions for provision of specific activities or services.

Overall expenditure

Total resource expended in the year was £136m with remaining expenditure of £20m of restricted funds and £5m of unrestricted funds to be completed in 2015 and beyond.

Pie chart: Overall expenditure which shows the components of £136m, including the breakdown on the charitable activities (i.e. digital infrastructure £70.8m, digital resources licensing £24.4m, digital resources other £14.0m, digital futures £15.3m and value realisation £10.3m etc).

Looking forward

A financial forecast has been prepared that looks ahead to 2017. It assumes income in 2016-17 will be in line with that estimated in 2015-16. While such a forecast may be unrealistic given the current financial uncertainty, the figures demonstrate the need to operate extremely prudently in 2015-16 and 2016-17 and justify the prudent approach adopted since 2012 as fairly modest reductions over and above that assumed will lead to a situation where our funding available for new priorities is depleted and the UK’s core infrastructure may be put at risk. This would be unacceptable given the need for Jisc to provide essential infrastructure services to universities and colleges which they depend on every day to operate. Jisc will be working to develop further medium term projections and models.
A key thread in the development of Jisc is our strategy for income generation and we have now established a commercial trading arm, called Jisc Commercial Ltd (“Jiscom”). The purpose of Jiscom will be to generate more value from our asset base for our stakeholders through the development of additional profitable business to business revenue streams. Initially, a significant asset to be more widely exploited is the Janet network and associated services.

Jiscom will be a company limited by shares and a wholly owned subsidiary of Jisc. The articles of association have been carefully drawn up to ensure that Jisc has appropriate control over this commercial subsidiary. The Jisc board has agreed a number of principles that will apply to Jiscom, including the need to ensure that existing services and project commitments must not be compromised; any significant risks, especially concerning state aid or internal cross-subsidy must be avoided or appropriately mitigated; that Jisc charitable status is protected; and that Jisc must not be exposed to unacceptable financial or other liabilities.
We estimate that through cost reduction and cost avoidance associated with our products and services, higher education institutions collectively make direct savings of over £200 million each year. We are working to increase this to nearly £300 million in the next few years.

Our members: saving money through Jisc
In spring 2014, we launched a new institutional membership structure, open to all eligible higher education institutions and further education colleges across the UK. With Jisc membership comes automatic membership of the VAT Cost Sharing Group, which means that members will not pay VAT on their Jisc subscription (where this applies) and a range of other Jisc services. It’s one of the largest VAT cost sharing groups in the UK and will save the sector over £2m a year. By 31 July 2014, 93% of higher education institutions in the UK had applied to become Jisc members.

Our key priorities

Jisc has four key priorities during 2013-14 which continue into 2014-15. These are:

1. Engagement: Developing the mechanisms and means for effective day to day and strategic interaction with our stakeholders and customers.

2. Value and efficiency: Making a compelling case for Jisc 2017/18 and beyond in terms of value, efficiency, the service portfolio, innovation pipeline and forward funding/subscription options.

3. Technology presence and innovation: Ensuring our services, projects and innovation span the technology agenda optimally and deliver the value that customers need and want.

4. Jisc itself: Continuing to shape Jisc for outstanding, focused performance and high efficiency across all that we do.
A look ahead to our work in 2015

These are just a few of the projects and events Jisc is taking forward into 2015

**A second shared data centre:**
Building on the success of the shared data centre in the south of England, we’re working on a second data centre elsewhere in England.

**Brisskit:**
A service that enables biomedical researchers to integrate their data with patient and clinical data from the NHS in a secure and anonymised environment.

**Co-tutor:**
A student and staff relationship management system. Staff can use Co-tutor to communicate with and manage their personal tutees, project students, industrial placement activities and module cohorts.

**Kit-Catalogue:**
Kit-Catalogue is an online system that can help any organisation effectively catalogue, record and locate their kit. This might be laboratory equipment, workshop machines, ICT and specialist tools.

**Effective learning analytics:**
A basic learning analytics dashboard and a student app, both focused on student retention and attainment.

**Business intelligence shared service:**
Replacing the Hesa’s Higher Education Information Database for Institutions (Heidi) system with an improved production service – Heidi-Plus – to bring better business intelligence to a wider range of staff roles, alongside Heidi-Labs for insights, benchmarking, training, advice and support.

**Call for Participants:**
Coming from 2013’s Summer of Student Innovation, this research and participant matchmaker app is so promising that we are working with the team of students to establish whether it can be supported by Jisc as a sustainable service.

**Digifest**
Will be back in 2015 on the theme of “connect more”, bringing people together through digital technology across UK education and research to position the UK at the forefront of international practice.
Our mission:

To enable people in higher education, further education and skills in the UK to perform at the forefront of international practice by exploiting fully the possibilities of modern digital empowerment, content and connectivity.
Share our vision to make the UK the most digitally advanced education and research nation in the world

jisc.ac.uk