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Dear Tim,

The UCISA Executive discussed the proposals from JANET (UK) regarding regional delivery of JANET Services. A number of issues were identified during the discussion which Chris Sexton, as Chair of UCISA, and I should like to discuss further with you. In particular the Executive were disappointed that UCISA was not consulted about the proposed changes prior to the announcement to the MANs. Before I outline these issues, I should like to note that

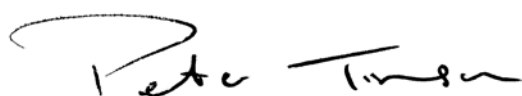
- UCISA recognises that the MANs differ in the services they provide their customers and that this can cause a perception of different levels of service for JANET (UK) customers.
- ICT Directors strive to ensure that all ICT services provided for and within their institutions are delivered in an efficient and cost effective manner. We are already seeing the impact of the current economic downturn with service departments within institutions being faced with significant funding cuts. Consequently ICT Directors will be looking at all services including those provided by JANET (UK) and the MANs to ensure that they are being provided in a cost effective way.
- JANET has an international reputation built on the current delivery model. We are keen to ensure that the quality of services provided is maintained during and beyond the transition and that both the network and its related services continue to evolve.

We should like to meet to discuss the following further so that we can better understand the reasoning behind the plans and to seek assurances on the quality of the service delivery proposed. The specific issues are outlined below:

1. Paragraph 9 of the document *Regional Delivery of JANET Services: strategic direction for 2010 onwards* notes that there are “underlying structural inefficiencies embodied in the JPA model that work against the need for improved flexibility, responsiveness, consistency of service provision and value for money in JANET regional delivery”. It would be helpful if the assumptions that have been made during the costings could be outlined. We believe that JANET (UK) would strengthen its case for moving to a direct model if evidence demonstrating a more cost effective service delivery for the majority of HEIs was published.

2. HEIs are being encouraged to play a role in meeting the needs of the wider community in their region. One Director noted that, without a MAN in his region, there was no focal point for a city wide initiative to engage with the HEIs' network provider. The aims of many such initiatives are to ensure the benefits of digital technology are available to all in the city/region concerned and an integrated approach with JANET (UK) would allow of JANET to play a lead role in delivering the 'Knowledge network for the nation'. How is JANET (UK) planning on assisting HEIs to engage with such initiatives? Alternatively how does JANET (UK) plan to engage with local authorities, health service trusts, etc to develop networked services in the community?
3. A number of the MANs are delivering improved network resilience to their customers through the provision of multiple connections to institutions. However, paragraph 15ii of the document *Regional Delivery of JANET Services: strategic direction for 2010 onwards* notes that additional connectivity above the single JANET connection provided under JISC funding is subject to the necessary funding being available. The UCISA Executive believes that dual connectivity is a prudent step and one that all institutions should implement as part of their business continuity arrangements. We are anxious to ensure those institutions that have taken such steps are not penalised for implementing best practice. What additional funding sources are being investigated to allow such institutions to maintain their current level of connectivity? Is JANET (UK) making a case to the funding bodies for dual connections to all higher and further education institutions?
4. In addition to providing dual connections, a number of the MANs have implemented additional technical services on behalf of their members (for example MessageLabs for email filtering, InTechnology contracts for off-site storage/backup). Whilst we acknowledge that a national procurement exercise may offer better value to the whole community, many effective national shared services are borne of small scale local collaborations and developments. The MANs have provided forums where such initiatives can be discussed and piloted. How will JANET (UK) capture such thinking in the new *modus operandi*? Does JANET (UK) see this as a role that UCISA-NG could fulfil?
5. Some services identified and provided by MANs may meet specific regional agendas (eg Welsh). Where this is the case it makes sense for these services only to be delivered within the region. How does JANET (UK) plan to deliver such services?
6. Paragraph 12 of the document *Regional Delivery of JANET Services: strategic direction for 2010 onwards* states that "JANET(UK) will consult individually with connected organisations to understand their views as to what additional services they value and would wish JANET(UK) to consider when further developing its strategy in this area". None of the Directors present at the meeting had received any communication from JANET (UK) in their capacity as heads of institutional IT services regarding the additional services provided in their area. We would like to know how these consultations are being managed.

Yours sincerely



Executive Secretary, UCISA