

**NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED**

Minutes of the Council meeting held on 14 December 2010.

**Those attending:**

Professor Sir Tom Blundell FRS (BBSRC Chair)  
Professor D Kell (BBSRC Chief Executive and Deputy Chair)  
Professor Sir David Baulcombe FRS  
Professor A Dell CBE FRS  
Professor P Fryer  
Mr Jim Godfrey OBE  
Mr D Gregory  
Professor P Grindrod CBE  
Dr D Lawrence  
Professor K Lindsey  
Professor C Pollock CBE  
Dr J Stageman  
Dr A Richards  
Professor M Weir

**Also present:**

Mr S Visscher  
Professor J Allen  
Dr P Burrows  
Mr P Gemmill  
Mr P Swinburne  
Mr D Eggar (items 7 & 8 only)  
Mr J Neilson (BIS representative)  
Dr C Miles (items 7 & 8 only)  
Miss K Okonska  
Miss J Rutherford (secretary)

**Courtesies**

1. Apologies were received from Professor John Coggins, Professor Quintin McKellar, Dr Celia Caulcott and Mr David Parfrey.
2. Chair asked Council members to check, and amend if necessary, their entries in the Council conflict of interest register.

**ITEM 1: MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 12 OCTOBER 2010 (BBSRC 38/2010)**

3. The minutes from the last meeting were **AGREED**.

**ITEM 2: MATTERS ARISING (ORAL)**

4. There was none.

**ITEM 3: CHAIRS AND CHIEF EXECUTIVES BUSINESS (ORAL)**

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### Chairman

5. Chair updated Council with a number of visits he had made since its last meeting. These included visits to Syngenta, the Rothamsted Research Science Day, Babraham Institute, Beijing and the British Embassy in Lisbon. He has also attended the BBSRC Biotech YES competition. He said that it was a well organised event with a good mix of science areas and asked that congratulations be relayed to the BBSRC team that had organised the event.

### Chief Executive

6. Professor Kell informed Council that there was to be a reorganisation in the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and that Mr John Neilson would consequently be changing responsibilities so would no longer deal with BBSRC and therefore would not attend Council meetings following these changes.
7. Council thanked John Neilson for his support for BBSRC and wished him well in his new role.
8. Professor Kell went on to update Council with a number of visits and meetings he had attended since the last Council meeting. These included a workshop with AHRC on data visualisation. He had also attended a meeting with Research Council CE's and the new permanent secretary at BIS, Mr Martin Donnelly. Professor Kell had been informed that collaborations with India were high up the Coalition's agenda and that Mr David Willetts MP, Minister for Universities and Science, was due to visit shortly. It was noted that scientists in Rothamsted, IBERS and IAH had considerable experience in collaborations with India and it would be beneficial to use their knowledge.
9. BBSRC was also to look at where it could better focus its current interfaces within an in-depth review of its scientific mission.
10. *The remaining update contains information relating to the running of an Institute, the peer review process of applications and work in progress and is therefore recorded separately due to its Protect: Policy security marking..*

### ITEM 4: BOARD APPOINTMENTS (BBSRC 39/2010)

11. Chair introduced this item which invited Council to approve a number of reappointment to the Strategy Advisory Board.
12. Council **NOTED** the current membership of the Board and **APPROVED** the reappointments of Professor Ottoline Leyser, University of York; Professor Maggie Gill, Scottish Government; Professor Carole Goble, University of Manchester and Dr Fiona Marston, RFM Associates for a further year until 31 December 2011

### ITEM 5: INSTITUTE UPDATE/ANNUAL STATEMENT TO COUNCIL ON INSTITUTES OPERATIONS (BBSRC 40/2010)

*Mr Paul Gemmill and Mr Peter Swinburne declared a conflict of interest as members of the IAH Corporate Trustee Team, Mr David Gregory declared a conflict of interest as a member of the Institute for Food Research Governing Body and Dr David*

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*Lawrence declared a conflict of interest as a member of the Rothamsted Research Board of Directors, however, they all remained in the room for discussion of this item.*

13. Mr Swinburne introduced this item which provided an update on the major issues impacting on the Institutes. He said that the paper was looking forward to the next financial year of 2010/11 rather than reflecting on the last.
14. Institutes would decide which Pension Scheme they would offer to new staff, however, subject to Treasury confirmation, current members of staff would have the option of remaining in the Research Councils' Pension Schemes. With regard to this, and other current terms and conditions, Council said that Institutes' Governing Bodies needed to be comfortable with what was being proposed before they could make decisions and it was recognised that sufficient information and explanations needed to be provided. In addition, Mr Visscher, confirmed that due diligence processes would include sustainability assessments which should provide reassurance to Governing Body members that they were taking the right decisions.
15. BBSRC was aware that the Institutes' ISPG outlines had been written and submitted before the allocation for the next Spending Review Period was known. The Executive would work with Institute Directors to assist in any revisions to the outlines subsequently required and informed Council that this possible issue and the proposed way forward was covered within the Draft Delivery Plan.
16. Council **NOTED** the update.

**ITEM 6: COMPREHENSIVE SPENDING REVIEW AND DELIVERY PLAN: UPDATE (BBSRC 41/2010)**

17. *This item relates to work in progress as is therefore recorded separately due to its Protect: Policy security marking.*

**ITEM 7: INDUSTRIAL BIOTECHNOLOGY: THE BIG PICTURE (ORAL)**

**ITEM 8: INDUSTRIAL BIOTECHNOLOGY: THE USE OF BBSRC SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY TO SUPPORT ENERGY, CHEMICALS AND HEALTHCARE INDUSTRIES (BBSRC 46/2010)**

18. Chair welcomed Dr Duncan Eggar, BBSRC Biodiversity Champion, and Dr Colin Miles, BBSRC Head of Integrative and Systems Biology to the meeting for the following two items.
19. Professor Kell provide a presentation to Council which covered the development of BBSRC Industrial Biotech Forward Strategy, the inclusion of this priority in the BBSRC Strategic Plan 2010-2015, a description of BBSRC's national-level interactions, the knowledge based bio-economy, a summary of present EU thinking and suggestions on what BBSRC's role may be within this area.
20. Following on from this Dr Colin Miles presented to the Council and covered a description of industrial biotechnology, why it is important and the BBSRC financial investments in biotechnology.

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21. The Industrial Biotechnology Review Panel had taken forward a study in this area and its initial observations were as follows:
  - BBSRC bioscience models and technology are a *unique* platform for the development of future feedstocks and energy solutions.
  - Most research is conducted in university departments and there appears to be a lack of critical mass in these institutions.
  - Investment in the area as a whole is on the decline and this trend will continue unless there is intervention.
22. The Panel had made various recommendations on the next steps for BBSRC which included how BBSRC could become a leader in Industrial Biotechnology, how BBSRC could work with Industry, the use of post-graduate training resources, the promotion of collaborative approaches/cross-disciplinary research and how it could promote industrial biotechnology to its community
23. Council was supportive of the recommendations outlined in Dr Miles's presentation and also the paper "BBSRC Support for Bioenergy and Industrial Biotechnology". It agreed that communication with the BBSRC community was essential to determine what they required and therefore where BBSRC should focus its efforts. The use of sponsored events such as interactive workshops with participants from different disciplines in order to network and develop new ideas was encouraged by Council. BBSRC should also make clear that its Industrial Biotechnology strategic priority also covered bioenergy and bioprocessing.
24. It was **AGREED** that the Strategy Advisory Board would take forward the implementation of the recommendations and report to Council.
25. Chair thanked Professor Kell and Dr Miles for their presentations and also thanked Dr Eggar for his attendance.

**ITEM 9: MINUTES OF THE STRATEGY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING HELD ON 3 AND 4 NOVEMBER 2010 (BBSRC 42/2010)**

26. Council was presented with the minutes of the Strategy Advisory Board meeting held on 3 and 4 November 2010.
27. Council **NOTED** the minutes.

**ITEM 10: STRATEGY ADVISORY BOARD STRATEGIC ISSUES LOG (BBSRC 43/2010)**

28. Council was presented with the Strategy Advisory Board Strategic Issues Log which was a list of high-level strategic issues upon which the BBSRC Executive or Council may wished to seek advice and input from Strategy Advisory Board (SAB). It was intended as a means of logging issues and suggestions as they arose, and would be used to help inform the forward-looking SAB agenda.
29. Council **NOTED** the Strategic Issues Log.

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**ITEM 11: MINUTES OF THE AUDIT BOARD MEETING HELD ON 2 NOVEMBER 2010 (BBSRC 44/2010)**

30. Council was presented with the minutes of the Audit Board meeting held on 2 November 2010.
31. Council **NOTED** the minutes.

**ITEM 12: FINANCIAL REPORT INCLUDING BBSRC ACCOUNTS (BBSRC 45/2010)**

32. Council was informed that the BBSRC Annual Accounts for 2009/10 had not yet been formally signed off by the National Audit Office (NAO). BBSRC was still awaiting advice from NAO regarding consolidation of the Institute Accounts into BBSRC's, however, in all other aspects the accounts were completed and audited. Draft accounts had been lodged with the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) & NAO.
33. Council **NOTED** the position with the 2009/10 accounts, the projected outturn for 2010-11 and the financial planning activities for beyond 2010/11

Council Secretariat  
December 2010