

MINUTES of the Council meeting held on 5 October 2011.

Those attending:

Professor Sir Tom Blundell FRS (BBSRC Chair)
Professor D Kell FSB (BBSRC Chief Executive and Deputy Chair)
Professor Sir David Baulcombe FRS
Professor J Coggins OBE FRSE
Professor A Dell CBE FRS
Professor R Foster FRS
Professor P Fryer
Mr J Godfrey OBE
Dr M Goosey
Mr D Gregory
Dr D Lawrence
Professor K Lindsey
Profess C Pollock
Dr A Richards (dinner only)
Dr J Stageman
Dr W West
Mr J Clayton

Also Present:

Mr S Visscher
Dr P Burrows
Dr C Caulcott FSB
Mr P Gemmill FSB
Mr D Parfrey
Mrs S Carpenter
Miss K Okonska (Secretary)

Courtesies:

1. Apologies were received from Professor Peter Grindrod, Dr Andy Richards and Professor Janet Allen.
2. Chair welcomed Mrs Sharon Carpenter to her first meeting in her role as acting Deputy Head of Council Secretariat.
3. Members were reminded to check their details currently held on the Council conflict of interests register, which was tabled at the meeting, and update as necessary. Members were asked to raise any conflicts that may arise during the course of discussion.

ITEM 1: MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 7 JULY 2011

4. The minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2011 were **AGREED** subject to amendment in paragraph 7 of Annex 2 to read as follows:
...and the discussions with University of Surrey to offer its facilities were ongoing.

ITEM 2: MATTERS ARISING (ORAL)

5. There were none.

ITEM 3: CHAIR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BUSINESS (ORAL)

Chair's Business

6. Chair updated Council on his recent visits since the last Council meeting, which included his visit to Brazil. He emphasised that there were many opportunities to collaborate with Brazil in particular in the area of agriculture.

Chief Executive's Business

Global Food Security Champion

7. Council was informed that the Global Food Security (GFS) programme had appointed Professor Tim Benton (University of Leeds) as a GFS Champion to take on key role of coordinator and spokesperson for the programme. He had been employed by BBSRC on behalf of GFS.
8. Chief Executive went on to update the Council on recent news stories and activities as follows:
- A new variety of broccoli with higher levels of a key phytonutrient had been made available in the UK shops. The new broccoli, which would be known as Beneforté, had been developed at two institutes: the Institute of Food Research (IFR) and the John Innes Centre (JIC), which both receive strategic funding from BBSRC.
 - A new Joint Synthetic Biology Initiative had been announced inviting researchers to apply for funding to explore the potential applicability of synthetic biology to the UK's current and future national security and defence needs. The £2.4M initiative was funded by BBSRC, the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory, EPSRC and MRC.
 - Mr David Willets MP, Minister for Universities and Science, would attend a 'topping out' ceremony on 24 October 2011 to mark milestones in construction of a brand new high containment laboratories at the Institute for Animal Health, Pirbright. The event provided an important opportunity to discuss the next phase of the development.

RCUK Shared Service Centre Ltd

9. *This item related to information deemed protect: management and was therefore recorded separately.*

ITEM 4: INSTITUTE UPDATE

10. Mr Steve Visscher introduced this item. He said that the Members' Agreements and Articles for IFR and JIC were being signed and from this point all institutes, apart from the Institute for Animal Health (IAH) would be employers of their new staff on local terms. The institutes were working on new employment conditions for their staff.
11. *The remaining paragraphs related to information deemed protect: management and were therefore recorded separately.*

ITEM 5: COUNCIL SUB-GROUP ON STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT INTERIM REPORT (ORAL)

12. Dr David Lawrence, Chair of the Council subgroup on Strategy Development, introduced this item.
13. Council had agreed to the formation of the subgroup at its July 2011 meeting to clarify the role of Council and its relationship with the Strategy Advisory Board, its ways of working and how strategy advice was formulated in general.
14. He provided an update from the first meeting of the subgroup which had been held on 21 September 2011 as follows:
 - Council was accountable for BBSRC's high-level strategy, based on the proposals from the Executive.
 - Council was accountable for the extent to which BBSRC delivered its strategic objectives. Council therefore needed:
 - regular updates on the 'routine' business of BBSRC, with opportunities to ask questions
 - more opportunities to review BBSRC's progress in implementing its strategy.
 - The Executive should make more use of the knowledge and expertise of Council members through earlier involvement in high-level strategy and policy development.
 - BBSRC should make better use of Council members to communicate its strategy and to promote the value of UK bioscience directly to the Government - this would be easier if Council is better informed about BBSRC business.
15. The subgroup had also discussed the annual agenda cycle, which should be more predictable and structured with a fixed annual theme for each of the four meetings and one flexible strategic workshop meeting.
16. Council members **WELCOMED** the interim report of the subgroup and suggested the following:

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- Measuring BBSRC's performance against set strategic objectives and developing a scorecard would be very useful and provide an indication of achievement to the Executive.
 - The Chair of the Bioscience for Society Strategy Panel should be involved more in BBSRC activities.
17. It was **NOTED** that the subgroup would make its final report to Council at its meeting in December 2011.

ITEM 6: UPDATE ON NORWICH RESEARCH PARK AND BABRAHAM RESEARCH CAMPUS (ORAL)

18. Mr Steve Visscher gave a presentation outlining Norwich Research Park (NRP) developments. He said that the HM Treasury had approved the business case for the NRP Campus and funding of £26M over three years had been confirmed. Project management structures and governance had also been agreed.
19. The investment would be made in infrastructure, commercial space, science and technologies facilities and interface space (New Enterprise Centre on University of East Anglia site).
20. It was noted that working capital was being sought from NRP partners for an NRP Operating Company which would manage and promote the NRP. The business support environment and access to venture / business angel investment capital would be important aspects to be addressed alongside physical infrastructure. It was highlighted that there would also be a need for private investment from large organisations in subsequent phases of the NRP development.
21. The NRP enterprise vision encompassed a world-class centre for environmental and life sciences with links between research, technology and business. There would be self-generating spin out companies supported by excellent business and financial infrastructure. The innovation culture would attract small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs).
22. Chair thanked Mr Steve Visscher for his presentation and handed over to Dr Celia Caulcott, who provided Council with an update on the Babraham Research Campus Capital project. She said that HM Treasury had also agreed the business case for the funding of £44M from the Government which would be used to increase the impact of bioscience in the UK and enable a vibrant and sustainable Bioscience Innovation Campus.
23. Council noted that the project was on schedule. The benefits to be realised from the project would include support to new startups, growth of some existing companies and an extended research capability offered to all companies on the campus. Another benefit the campus would bring would be to enhance engagement between academic and business-based researchers.
24. Council **NOTED** that more updates on Campus developments would come back to Council in the future.

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ITEM 7: UPDATE ON DOCTORAL TRAINING AWARD PROCESS (ORAL)

25. *This item related to information deemed protect: policy and was therefore recorded separately.*

ITEM 8: REMIT OF REMUNERATION BOARD

26. Mr Steve Visscher introduced this paper, which set out the proposal to change the remit of the Remuneration Board.
27. The remit of the Board was to advise on salary increases and performance awards for BBSRC senior staff on PC1 personal contracts. Reward for staff on PC2 contracts was considered by local Remuneration Panels. At the last Remuneration Board it had been agreed to change the remit to review the pay and performance awards of all BBSRC Swindon Office Executive including the one on PC2 contract.
28. Council **AGREED** to the proposal of changing the remit of the Remuneration Board to include grade PC2.

ITEM 9: REPORT ON FOOD SECURITY MISSION TO US AGENCIES

29. Mr Steve Visscher introduced this paper which reported the main findings from the Food Security mission to Washington DC in July 2011. The overall aim of the mission had been to strengthen scientific relations with the US, primarily in the area of food security, but also in ageing and synthetic biology.
30. Council **NOTED** the development of closer links with the US and **ASKED** that Council was kept informed of responses to the letters sent by Mr Steve Visscher as well as any further developments.

ITEM 10: MINUTES OF THE APPOINTMENTS BOARD MEETING HELD ON 15 SEPTEMBER 2011

31. Professor Peter Fryer (Chair of Appointments Board) introduced this item which provided Council with the draft minutes from the Appointments Board meeting held on 15 September 2011.
32. Professor Peter Fryer said that it would be useful for Council to be informed of progress with responsive mode funding and that there was a need to keep the balance of members across the four committees under review. He also reported that there had been a reduction in the number of women applying and proposed for appointments.
33. Council :
- **NOTED** the minutes;
 - **APPROVED** the reappointment of Dr Mark Carver, Fujifilm Diosynth Biotechnologies, as Chair of the Bioscience for Industry Strategy Panel for a further year until 31 December 2012.

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- **APPROVED** the reappointment of Sir Roland Jackson, British Science Association, as Chair of the Bioscience for Society Strategy Panel for a further 3 years until 31 December 2014
- **APPROVED** the reappointment of Professor Ottoline Leyser CBE FRS, University of Cambridge, as Chair of the Bioscience Skills and Careers Strategy Panel, for a further a year until 31 December 2012.
- **APPROVED** the reappointment of the Training Awards Committee Chair Professor Ian Roberts, University of Manchester, for an exceptional 1 year extension until 31 December 2012 and the appointment of Training Awards Committee *Shadow* Chair Professor Richard Bardgett, Lancaster University, for 1 year in first instance from 1 January 2012.
- **APPROVED** the appointment of the Training Awards Committee Deputy Chair Professor Martin Sheldon, Swansea University, for 1 year in first instance from 1 January 2012.
- **APPROVED** the appointment of Professor Alison Smith OBE, John Innes Centre, as Chair of Food Security Strategy Advisory Panel for one year in first instance from 1 October 2011.

ITEM 11: STRATEGIC LOLA FUNDING 2011

34. Council **NOTED** the award of four Strategic Longer Larger grants.

ITEM 12: BBSRC ACCOUNTS 2010-11

35. Mr David Parfrey introduced this paper which provided an update on BBSRC Accounts 2010/11.
36. It was noted that the accounts for 2010-11 were with the National Audit Office and it was expected that they would be cleared by Audit Board in November 2011 for approval by the Chief Executive in his role as Accounting Officer.
37. Council **NOTED** the progress of the 2010/11 Annual Report.

ITEM 13: RESEARCH COUNCIL'S PENSION SCHEME ACCOUNTS 2010-11 (BBSRC 34/2011)

38. *This item related to information deemed protect: management and was therefore recorded separately.*

ITEM 14: FINANCIAL REPORT

39. Mr David Parfrey introduced this item. Council was informed that BBSRC was expected to spend all of its allocations with the exception of Administration, where he was presently forecasting an underspend of approximately £1M due to the number of vacancies currently being carried. BIS had been made aware of this forecast underspend. Council invited Mr David Parfrey to consider providing a little more detail in future.

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40. Council **NOTED:**

- BBSRC's financial position at the end of August 2011, and the early forecast for the full-year outturn for 2011-12; and
- the report at Annex A on commitment to date on the Strategic Opportunities Fund.

Council Secretariat
October 2011