

NERC Management Board (NMB) Meeting

Summary of discussions

23 April 2020

Held via Zoom

Members present:

Ms A Robinson (Chair), Ms C Bault, Mr N Bird, Mr R Gledhill, Mr P Hayden, Mrs V McMyn, Professor S Waldron, Dr I Williams.

Apologies: Professor Sir DJ Wingham.

Other attendees:

Mr B Dark (NERC Corporate Health and Safety Advisor, item 3), Mr R Gillies (Associate Director UKRI Environmental Sustainability/ Head of Futures, item 4), Dr P Heads (NERC Organisational Development Lead, items 7 & 8), Ms A Bek (Interim NERC Risk Business Partner, item 9), Mr S Caswell (NERC Finance Business Partner, item 10).

Secretary: Mrs SJ Morrell.

Executive Chair Update

Mrs Alison Robinson opened the meeting and welcomed members. She gave an update on NERC's response to the Covid-19 pandemic and the re-prioritization of activities.

Delivery Plan progress reporting

The Board was advised that further work had been made on the Delivery Plan, taking on board NMB's comments in February. The aim was to complete it by June to present it to Council.

H&S policy update and Quarter 3 NERC report

The Board received a summary of the H&S report which was comprised of information and data from the British Antarctic Survey (BAS) and the British Geological Survey (BGS), and included the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) and the National Oceanography Centre (NOC) until they became independent. The Board were informed that all four Centres continued to maintain their external accreditation for their safety management systems.

Reputational risk management 6-month review

The Board reviewed and discussed the risk log for the past six months. They requested the reputational risk elements of the Centres be filtered through to NMB and agreed to review the risk log again in six months.

Antarctic Infrastructure Modernisation Programme Phase 2

NMB were provided with background information on Phase 1 of the programme, the plans for financing phase 2 of the programme, and the potential impact of Covid-19.

Full business case for the UKGEOS programme

The Board was given an overview of the project and informed that work on the first site was almost complete. The Science Advisory Group had provided three options and recommendations for completing the second site. NMB discussed the various options and approved the option recommended by the Science Advisory Group.

New Arrangements for Future Centre Assurance to NERC

NMB discussed the proposed new arrangements for providing UKRI-NERC with assurance about the governance, management and financial sustainability of the research centres, and on their delivery of in-flight national capability activities commissioned by NERC.

NMB agreed the new arrangements but requested that it should be flagged early if the financial reporting did not provide sufficient assurance.

Updated NERC agreement for BGS, NCAS and NCEO

The Board was given an update on the progress of the Agreements and was reminded that the Agreements had been extensively reviewed and amended by all relevant parties and the aim was to have all three Agreements signed by the end of April.

Matters arising from UKRI meetings

The Board was provided with updates from recent meetings.

Standing items

NMB also noted a couple of standing items including the monthly finance update, the risk register review and the rolling programme of business.

Date of next meeting

The next NERC Management Board meeting would be held on 29 June 2020.