

## OFFICIAL

### UKRI ENGINEERING AND PHYSICAL SCIENCES RESEARCH COUNCIL

#### APPROVED MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD VIRTUALLY ON 6 DECEMBER 2022

Council Members: Professor Mark E. Smith (Chair)  
Professor Alison Etheridge  
Professor Dame Lynn Gladden  
Professor Deborah Greaves (from 10:00)  
Professor Nick Jennings  
Professor Dame Jane Jiang  
Ms Siân John  
Professor Miles Padgett (except 13:00-14:30)  
Professor Martin Schröder (except 9:00-10:00)  
Dr Joe de Sousa  
Dr Peter Williams (except 10:25-14:40)  
Professor Tim Whitley  
Professor Andy Wright

Observers: Professor Stephen Belcher (CSA)  
Professor Sir Anthony Finkelstein (Items 2-6 only)

Executive: Ms Rachel Bishop (Item 13 only)  
Dr Andrew Bourne  
Dr Amanda Chmura (Item 11 only)  
Dr Joanna Cox (Items 2-6 only)  
Dr Nicola Goldberg (Items 11-15 only)  
Ms Helen Morgan (Items 6 and 8-13 only)  
Ms Jane Nicholson  
Dr Kedar Pandya (until 16:00)  
Professor Mark Parsons (until 16:00)  
Dr Neil Viner

Others: Dr Lisa Coles (Item 11 only)  
Dr Andrew Lawrence (Item 13 only)  
Professor Dame Ottoline Leyser (Item 9 only)  
Ms Ruqaiyah Patel (Item 11 only)  
Dr Neil Robinson  
Dr Louise Tillman (Item 6 only)

Secretariat: Mrs Beth Amer  
Ms Tracy Keys  
Ms Kerry-Anne Young

#### 1. Closed session

1.1 A closed session was held with Council.

#### 2. Feedback from the Council closed session

2.1 Council welcomed an update on the process to find EPSRC a replacement Executive and Deputy Executive Chair (DEC). Council looks forward to the announcement of EPSRC's new DEC. **Minute not included as contains exempt material, at the time of publication, under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.** Council thanked EPSRC colleagues for their continuing hard work.

#### 3. Meeting Formalities

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- 3.1 No apologies were received. There were no new declarations of interest from Council members.
- 3.2 Council members welcomed Professor Sir Anthony Finkelstein from the UKRI Board to discuss the recruitment campaign for EPSRC's new Executive Chair. **Minute not included as contains exempt material, at the time of publication, under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.**
- 4. Draft Minutes of the Meeting 4 October 2022**
- 4.1 Council agreed with the record of the last meeting.
- 5. Actions and Matters Arising**
- 5.1 There were seven actions from the last meeting. Council noted those which were either completed or in hand.
- 6. Executive Update**
- 6.1 The Executive Update covered a wide range of topics.
- 6.2 Council received an update on EPSRC's work with government departments. These departments include the Department for Transport, the Ministry of Defence, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, and the Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy. Council commended EPSRC for its work on these collaborations, the significant progress achieved and for realising tangible outcomes that will benefit the UKRI community and taxpayers.
- 6.3 Council was updated on the emerging UKRI Operating Model workstreams. Council recognised that work continues at pace in UKRI and looked forward to future engagement.
- 6.4 **Minute not included as contains exempt material, at the time of publication, under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.**
- 6.5 Council noted updates on Horizon Europe, welcoming the ongoing commitment to seeking association with the programme. Council thanked UKRI for its work in this area.
- 6.6 Council received an EPSRC Communications update. The update included recent successes including Ministerial visits and media stories. Future known activity was outlined, including an infographic highlighting the value of funding discovery-led research and an activity on the journey of research. Council looks forward to future updates on this.
- 6.7 Council discussed the UKRI Funding Service project. Council noted that the current project timelines are subject to change; however, eight weeks' notice would be given to the community prior to closure of Je-S and Siebel as part of the transition to the new system.
- 7. Council Effectiveness Review**
- 7.1 A discussion was held regarding the 2022 EPSRC Council Effectiveness Review results. UKRI Councils are expected to periodically review their effectiveness and ensure that they are operating efficiently and in keeping with their Terms of Reference as determined by the Higher Education and Research Act. **Minute not included as contains exempt material, at the time of publication, under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.**
- 7.2 **Minute not included as contains exempt material, at the time of publication, under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.**

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### 8. UKRI Board-Council Meeting and discussion ahead of UKRI CEO Session

- 8.1 Council discussed the recent UKRI Board-Council Meeting held on 8 November 2022. Council agreed on topics that would merit discussion with UKRI's CEO.

### 9. Discussion with UKRI CEO

- 9.1 Council was pleased to welcome UKRI's CEO, Professor Dame Ottoline Leyser, to the meeting. Council greatly appreciated the time spent discussing diverse topics, including perspectives on UKRI's internal structures, government perspectives of the research and innovation landscape, talent and skills, and the ongoing work on peer review.

### 10. Reflection on discussion with UKRI CEO

- 10.1 Council reflected on the discussion with UKRI's CEO. **Minute not included as contains exempt material, at the time of publication, under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.**

### 11. EPSRC Engagement Presentation and Q&A

- 11.1 Following the success of October Council's poster session, Council wished to engage further with EPSRC colleagues and the EPSRC portfolio. EPSRC colleagues presented Council with two updates on Delivering Impact from our Portfolio and Engineering Net Zero.
- 11.2 Council found these updates engaging and informative and was particularly impressed with the collaborations across UKRI partners, government departments and wider stakeholders. **Minute not included as contains exempt material, at the time of publication, under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.** Council looks forward to further engagement with different areas of the EPSRC portfolio at future meetings and thanked EPSRC colleagues for their continuing hard work.

### 12. Evolution of EPSRC's Advisory Structures

- 12.1 The outcomes of EPSRC's Strategic Advisory Structures review were presented to Council. **Minute not included as contains exempt material, at the time of publication, under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.**
- 12.2 **Minute not included as contains exempt material, at the time of publication, under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.**
- 12.3 Council approved the outcomes and was content that the efficiency savings created by the proposed changes would bring significant benefits to EPSRC without major risk. **Minute not included as contains exempt material, at the time of publication, under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.**
- 12.4 Council agreed that the EPSRC's Executive and Council SIM would communicate the outcomes of EPSRC's Strategic Advisory Structure Review to UKRI's CEO and Chair.

### 13. EPSRC Response to Tomorrow's Engineering Research Challenges

- 13.1 Council thanked EPSRC colleagues for their continuing work on the Tomorrow's Engineering Research Challenges (TERC) report, which Council last discussed in July.
- 13.2 The EPSRC Engineering Theme presented an Action Plan to Council. This Action Plan clearly outlined how EPSRC will respond to the TERC report's recommendations. The

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Action Plan intends to stimulate similar action from the relevant UKRI and external stakeholder communities.

13.3 **Minute not included as contains exempt material, at the time of publication, under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.**

### 14. EPSRC Risk Register

14.1 Council received its biannual report on risk management and EPSRC's risk register. A detailed and thorough discussion took place where Council agreed to remove several risks, and new risks were discussed and agreed.

14.2 **Minute not included as contains exempt material, at the time of publication, under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.**

### 15. Any Other Business

15.1 Council agreed on which points of interest from this meeting would be included in a report to the UKRI Board.

15.2 **Minute not included as contains exempt material, at the time of publication, under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.**

### 16. Next Meeting

16.1 The next EPSRC Council meeting would be held in person, venue to be confirmed, on 1-2 March 2023.

17. **Minute not included as contains exempt material, at the time of publication, under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.**