



**Minutes of the Joint UKRI Board and Executive Committee Away Day**

**Date:** Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2022  
**Location:** 58 Victoria Embankment, UKRI  
**Time:** 10:30 – 16:00

<b>Board Members and Observers</b>	
Sir Andrew Mackenzie (Chair)	Priya Guha
Professor Dame Ottoline Leyser (UKRI, CEO)	Ruwan Weerasekera
Professor Julia Black	Lord David Willetts
Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz	Siobhan Peters (UKRI, CFO)
Professor Sir Ian Boyd	Jo Shanmugalingam (BEIS)
Dr John Fingleton	Ruth Elliot (UKRI, Deputy CFO)
Professor Anthony Finkelstein	

<b>Executive Committee Members and Observers</b>	
Professor Christopher Smith (Exec Chair, AHRC)	David Sweeney (Exec Chair, RE)
Professor Melanie Welham (Exec Chair, BBSRC)	Professor Mark Thomson (Exec Chair, STFC)
Professor Alison Park (Interim Exec Chair, ESRC)	Isobel Stephen (UKRI, Exec Director of Strategy, Performance and Engagement)
Dr Kedar Pandya (EPSRC, Director for Cross Council Programme) – <i>deputising for Lynn Gladden</i>	Tim Bianek (UKRI, COO)
Indro Mukerjee (CEO, IUK)	Chris Ball (UKRI, CPO)
Professor John Iredale (Interim Exec Chair, MRC)	Katrina Nevin Ridley (UKRI, Director of External Relations, Communications and Public Engagement)
Professor Sir Duncan Wingham (Exec Chair, NERC)	Daniel Shah (UKRI, Director of Investment Strategy and System Insight)

<b>Attendees</b>	
Paul Gemmill (UKRI, Programme Director)	Patrick Middleton (UKRI, Deputy Director of Communications and Engagement)
Stuart Pritchard (UKRI, Head of Stakeholder Relationships)	Dan Hodges (IUK, Deputy Director of Strategy)

<b>Secretariat</b>	
Hannah Berriman	Tim Russell
Samantha Richardson	

<b>Apologies</b>	
Lord John Browne	Nigel Toon
Professor Dame Lynn Gladden	

## **1. Welcome and Introductions**

- 1.1. Andrew Mackenzie welcomed members of the Board and the Executive Committee to the meeting and noted apologies. In particular, Andrew noted that it was David Sweeney's last Board and ExCo Away Day as he is due to retire. Andrew and the Board thanked David for his time as Executive Chair of Research England since its establishment in 2018.
- 1.2. Andrew highlighted that even though there are significant changes in Government happening, it is important that we maintain momentum, noting that we have worked closely with Government to develop a clear vision and secure freedom to operate.

## **2. UKRI Organisational Change Update**

- 2.1. Jo Shanmugalingam noted that the Independent Review of UKRI report was due to be published shortly. Ottoline explained that this was an opportunity for us to maintain momentum in our development as an organisation, building on the progress we have made, noting that the majority of the recommendations in the Grant review are covered by existing work.
- 2.2. Tim Bianek provided an update on the operating model work, highlighting the progress on organisational change work since the last Board meeting in May. Tim noted that Operating Expenditure targets from Government are unlikely to change and are challenging. However, Tim noted that the driver for change is not to just meet targets set by BEIS, but to move UKRI towards the type of organisation we would like it to be.
- 2.3. The Board noted that Tim and team are working closely with the Organisational Change Committee and highlighted the key objectives and KPIs for UKRI's organisational change. Tim explained that at an ExCo away day in June, the design principles and overall implementation approach for the Operating Model were agreed; this includes 10 workstreams being set up, each led by a member of ExCo (supported by a Senior Director). To ensure healthy challenge in the implementation process, the Board noted that a devil's advocate role has been established for each workstream to ensure the design and implementation is creative and ambitious enough. Chris Ball will chair the Design Authority.
- 2.4. Indro Mukerjee, Duncan Wingham and Siobhan Peters introduced the workstreams they are leading on (Supporting Business, Funding Ideas, and Governance and Decision Making respectively), highlighting the need to work closely with colleagues across the organisation. The Board noted the importance of linking the workstreams together.
- 2.5. Tim reiterated the importance of coordinating work on the Operating Model, noting that UKRI is a complex organisation that requires an integrated plan. Tim also noted the importance of keeping momentum going on the programme, highlighting the need to ensure communications to internal and external stakeholders clearly demonstrate what we are doing and the progress being made.
- 2.6. Andrew Mackenzie highlighted that we had worked closely with David Grant and welcomed the publication of the Grant Review. The Board agreed the importance of ensuring our messaging is consistent for both internal and external audiences. The Board requested the comms team develop a set of key messages to help both Board and ExCo when communicating with stakeholders.

**ACTION:** Katrina Nevin Ridley will have shared key messages regarding the UKRI Independent Review with the Board and ExCo by end of July 2022.

### **3. Working together to deliver our strategy**

- 3.1. The Board and Executive Committee discussed the emerging programme of work on the operating model and how our delivery of the strategy can be supported by some of the long term drivers we know exist.
- 3.2. The Board and ExCo agreed that despite the current political unrest, we have an opportunity to move forward at pace and continue to push our agenda.
- 3.3. Andrew highlighted the importance of ExCo and the Board owning activities across UKRI collectively, highlighting the need to continue to work closely together. Board and ExCo highlighted topics they would be keen to discuss further, this included;
  - the economy
  - skills and talent (including international talent)
  - sustainability of the research and innovation system
  - geopolitics (including the Trusted Research Programme)
  - UKRI's reputation and relevance (including communications)
  - climate change

**ACTION:** Secretariat to update forward schedule to reflect discussions.

### **4. AOB**

- 4.1. No AOB was raised at the meeting.



**Minutes of the UKRI Board Meeting of 13<sup>th</sup> July 2022**

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**Date:** Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2022  
**Location:** Zoom only  
**Time:** 10:15 - 16:15

<b>Board Members and Observers</b>	
Sir Andrew Mackenzie (Chair)	Professor Sir Anthony Finkelstein
Professor Dame Ottoline Leyser (UKRI, CEO)	Priya Guha
Professor Julia Black	Ruwan Weerasekera
Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz	Siobhan Peters (UKRI, CFO) – from item 4 onwards
Professor Sir Ian Boyd	Jo Shanmugalingam (BEIS)
Dr John Fingleton	Ruth Elliot (UKRI, Deputy CFO)

<b>Attendees</b>	
Isobel Stephen (UKRI, Exec Director of Strategy, Comms, Analysis and Governance)	Tim Bianek (UKRI, COO)
Chris Ball (UKRI, CPO)	Daniel Shah (UKRI, Director of Investment Strategy & System Insight) – for items 6 -10
Louise Chambers (Senior Governance Manager, UKRI Secretariat) – for items 1-3	Sian Zarkow (UKRI, Corporate Planning Lead) – for item 6
Jo Alison (UKRI, Deputy Director, Strategy) – for item 6	Amal Osman (UKRI, Planning and Performance Specialist) – for item 6
Professor Christopher Smith (AHRC Executive Chair & UKRI International Champion) – for items 7 - 9	Tom Crawley (UKRI, Head of Strategy, Balance and Narrative) - for item 7
Mark Bradley (UKRI, Head of Project Delivery Profession) – for item 7	David Rogers (UKRI Deputy Director, Investment Strategy) – for item 7
Frances Wood (UKRI, international Director) – for items 7 - 9	Martin Langran (UKRI Senior Security Advisor) – for items 8 & 9
Karen Salt (UKRI Deputy Director, R&D Culture and Environment) – for items 8 & 9	Daniel Brooker (UKRI China Director) – for items 8 & 9

<b>Secretariat</b>	
Hannah Berriman (Board Secretariat Lead)	Tim Russell (UKRI Head of Governance & Secretariat)
Samantha Richardson (Board Secretariat)	

<b>Apologies</b>	
Lord John Browne	Lord David Willetts
Nigel Toon	

## 1. Welcome and Introductions

- 1.1. Andrew Mackenzie welcomed the Board members to the meeting and noted apologies. Andrew noted that Lord John Browne has formally resigned from the Board, with his tenure formally ending in October 2022. Andrew confirmed Lord Browne will not attend any further board meetings.
- 1.2. The Board noted the importance of moving forward with the Non-Executive Member recruitment.

## 2. a) Minutes of 11<sup>th</sup> May b) Minutes of correspondence paper c) Action Log and d) Forward Schedule

- 2.1. The Board approved the minutes of 11<sup>th</sup> May 2022 and the additional correspondent minute of the Annual Report and Accounts approval which was sent to the Board on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

**DECISION:** The Board approved the minutes for 11<sup>th</sup> May 2022 Board meeting and the correspondent minute.

- 2.2. The Board noted the action log and forward schedule, noting that going forward the Forward Schedule will be aligned to the UKRI Strategy.

**ACTION:** By September 2022, the Board Forward Schedule will be aligned to the UKRI Strategy.

## 3. Board Committee updates

### a) Nominations and Remuneration Committee (NomCom)

- 3.1. Andrew provided a verbal update on Nominations and Remuneration Committee, which was held ahead of the Board meeting, including;
  - An update on the recruitment of Non-Executive Directors to the Board, noting that members will be asked to encourage suitable candidates to apply. Andrew noted that he and Jo Shanmugalingam will be on the interview panel alongside external people (as yet to be decided).
  - An update on Exec Chair recruitment, noting that the Research England Executive Chair had been appointed and would start the role in September 2022. Andrew noted that the ESRC Executive Chair campaign had been relaunched and that Professor John Iredale's term as interim Executive Chair of MRC had been extended until 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023.
- 3.2. Andrew noted that a Board Effectiveness Review is due to take place shortly, but that the timeline has not yet been confirmed. Tim Russell, Head of UKRI Corporate Governance and Secretariat gave an update on the scope and objectives of the effectiveness review.

### b) Audit, Risk, Assurance and Performance Committee (ARAPC)

- 3.3. Ruwan Weerasekera (Chair of ARAPC) provided an update on the Audit, Risk, Assurance and Performance Committee (ARAPC). Ruwan noted that the committee have been very involved in the Annual Report and Accounts (ARAs), thanking Ruth Elliot and her team for the large amount of work that has been ongoing. Ruwan noted that a lessons learned exercise will be completed ahead of starting next year's ARAs.

- 3.4. Ruwan highlighted that Risk Appetite has been discussed recently at ARAPC and will be coming to the Board for further discussion in September.

**c) Board Investment Committee (BIC)**

- 3.5. Priya Guha (Chair of BIC) provided an update on the Board Investment Committee, noting that there has not been a BIC meeting since the last Board meeting in July (it is due to be held on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2022). Priya noted the committee have been working offline to progress developing the committee, including how it fits with the broader BEIS and HMT processes.
- 3.6. Priya noted that in order to ensure the committee is complementary to BEIS and HMT processes and adds value they are looking at the following;
- Terms of Reference
  - Criteria for BIC business cases (ensuring consistency)
  - Looking at the overarching investment profile and ensuring they have a clear oversight of historical investment
  - Working with ARAPC regarding how the committee looks at investment risk.

**d) Organisational Change Committee**

- 3.7. On behalf of Nigel Toon (Chair of OCC), Ruwan Weerasekera provided a brief update on the Organisation Change Committee. Ruwan noted that the OCC aims to be an agile committee that can be both supportive and challenging to change programmes across the organisation.

**4. CEO Report to Board**

- 4.1. Ottoline highlighted that the CEO report is an opportunity for her to flag highlights and also any current concerns or issues. Ottoline noted that this is an extraordinary and pivotal time for UKRI now that the Strategy has been published and we move towards publication of the Corporate Plan and Strategic Delivery Plans, noting we have the opportunity to push for an innovation-led economy that drives productivity.
- 4.2. Ottoline noted that the UKRI Strategy is transformative by providing a clear framework for what we do as an organisation and the changes we are aiming to effect. The Board acknowledged that the Strategy would, for example, allow for a more coherent Annual report and Accounts in 2022/23.
- 4.3. Ottoline emphasised the importance of working with Other Government Departments, highlighting our role as an organisation in helping departments work better together and be more joined up. The Board noted that UKRI works closely with the Chief Scientific Advisors network, ensuring relationships are strong.
- 4.4. Ottoline noted that Indro Mukerjee, CEO of Innovate UK will lead on commercialisation and will bring a think piece to the Board in September. The Board noted that Indro has strong ideas on how to develop our existing commercialisation programmes.
- 4.5. The Board requested an update on Intellectual Property to be brought to a future Board meeting for further discussion..

**5. CFO Report to Board**

- 5.1. Ruth Elliot presented the Chief Finance Officer's Report, which covers the period from 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2022 to 28<sup>th</sup> June 2022. Ruth noted that the UKRI Director of Finance is due to retire in September, but they hope to make an announcement shortly on a replacement.
- 5.2. Ruth provided a verbal update on the Annual Report and Accounts (ARA) noting that it will be laid before Parliament tomorrow. Ruth thanked the finance team and ARAPC for the hard work that has gone in to producing the ARA.
- 5.3. The Board requested an update on the pensions landscape. Ruth noted it will be included in the CFO report in September.
- 5.4. Chris Ball provided an update on the People Survey, noting that further results and analysis will be shared with the Board at the September meeting. The Board expressed concerns that the People Survey results had not been shared widely with councils' Councils. Chris noted they had been shared with all Chief Operating Officers (COOs) and that he will work with councils' Councils Senior Independent Members (SIMs), Executive Chairs and COOs to ensure the results are shared consistently across UKRI

**ACTION:** Chris Ball, CPO, will have ensured all Council SIMs have sight of the Council specific breakdown of the People Survey results by end of July 2022.

- 5.5. The Board noted that we are in the final stages of negotiation for new office space in London and continue to work closely with BEIS and the Cabinet Office.

## **6. Council Strategic Delivery Plans (2022-25) and Corporate Plan (2022-23)**

- 6.1. Ottoline introduced the item, highlighting that the Strategic Delivery Plans (SDP) and Corporate Plan aim to describe in more detail the priorities and ambitions set out in the UKRI Strategy. Ottoline clarified that the Strategic Delivery Plans cover a three year period, while the Corporate Plan focuses on one year deliverables, but does include a three year overview of our activities.

The Board noted that all Research Councils have developed a Strategic Delivery Plan, with the exception of Research England who will work with their new Exec Chair to finalise their SDP when they start in October 2022. Isobel Stephen thanked the Board members for their engagement in developing the SDPs, noting that they are aligned closely with our Strategy and follow the same structure. The Board requested the following amendments;

- Strengthened narratives within the SDPs in relation to our integrated capability and how we work across UKRI to deliver our Strategy, followed by council specific details of the activities to do this;
  - Clearer, stronger references to levelling up and place, 2.4% and private sector investment and sustainability.
  - A consistent approach to references to the operating model, presentation of budgets and spend (helping the reader to follow the money where possible).
- 6.2. The Board requested all SDPs should be harmonised so that they take a consistent approach, follow the same structure and ordering of objectives, prior to them being finalised, acknowledging that the SDPs all speak to specific communities. All plans should be as clear and concise and possible.
  - 6.3. The Board noted that the Corporate Plan will need ministerial sign off, while the SDPs can be agreed by the UKRI Board, and that we hope to publish both in the Autumn. Isobel noted

that we had hoped to showcase the SDPs to Government, but they had been postponed due to the political changes that are ongoing. The Board were supportive of engaging with the incoming Minister as soon as possible on the Corporate Plan and SDPs.

- 6.4. The Board agreed they were happy to delegate final approval of the Strategic Delivery Plans and Corporate Plan to Ottoline as CEO, encouraging the team to ensure the documents are harmonised and highlighted how much work is done across councils. The Board suggested some areas which could be brought out more strongly, including levelling up and resilience. The SDPs and Corporate Plan will be shared with Board members once they have been agreed.

## **7. Update on Association to Horizon Europe or Alternatives**

- 7.1. Christopher Smith introduced the item, providing an update on the developments relating to the UK's relationship with Horizon Europe and the extensive work that continues across UKRI to develop transitional and longer-term alternatives to Horizon Europe in the event that association is not possible.
- 7.2. Christopher highlighted some key risks to the Board, including the delay in a decision meaning the capacity to spend the allocated funds within the spending review period is more difficult. Christopher also highlighted that the more complicated the alternatives are, the more staff will be needed to deliver them.
- 7.3. The Board noted the importance of communicating with the sector and communities directly involved, noting that a BEIS stakeholder engagement plan is due to be released. The Board noted they were happy to act for advocates on behalf of UKRI, but would welcome a brief on key messages.

**ACTION:** Christopher Smith will have shared a one page brief with key messages on Horizon Europe and Plan B to help inform Board members discussions with external stakeholders before the Board meeting in September 2022.

- 7.4. Christopher Smith thanked the team for all the hard work that had gone in to navigating this complex landscape, and acknowledged the close working relationship with colleagues in BEIS.

## **8. Trusted Research and Innovation: Programme Update, Security Briefing and Geopolitics**

- 8.1. Siobhan Peters introduced the item, updating the Board on the progress of the work to implement the Trusted Research and Innovation (TR&I) programme, including the anticipated timelines and when we expect specific protocols and controls in place. Siobhan updated the Board on the current political, legal and reputational risks associated with this work, including the sensitive geopolitical contexts.
- 8.2. Karen Salt noted that we are operating in a much more positive risk aware culture and are able to examine partnerships we already have in place and analyse whether those relationships need to be changed. Karen noted that the hope is some of the actions within the TR&I programme can be automated, to ensure it is not too time and labour intensive.
- 8.3. The Board agreed that the framework allows us to work with international partners while protecting our interests, and recommended applying the framework in a spirit that allows a greater degree of collaboration to grow and flourish. The Board agreed that there should not



be blanket bans on working with specific countries, but that we should ensure we are in a position to defend our partnerships if needed.

## **9. Deep Dive on UKRI's activities related to China**

- 9.1. Christopher Smith introduced the deep dive, updating the Board on UKRI's current engagements with China, key achievements to date and current priorities for engagement with the world's largest and dynamic research and innovation system. Daniel Brooker, Director of UKRI China joined the meeting via Zoom.
- 9.2. Christopher noted that Daniel Brooker is embedded in the British Embassy within China, noting that their position reflects the confidence in the UKRI Trusted Research and Innovation Programme. Daniel noted that UKRI China are working closely with partners to maximise the opportunities available, while minimising the risk. UKRI China are also working with other international partners to share our learning.
- 9.3. The Board noted that the Chinese R&I system is very complex, and that it can be considered world leading in many areas. The Board thanked Daniel, Christopher and Team for the Deep Dive.

## **10. AOB**

**10.1.** No AOB was raised.

**10.2.** The Board noted the following;

- UK Research and Innovation Health and Safety Report (Q4 FY 2021/22)
- Senior Appointments Update
- Summaries of Council Meetings (April 2022 – June 2022)
- Board Committee meetings;
  - Executive Committee (26<sup>th</sup> April 2022 and 24<sup>th</sup> May 2022)
  - Audit, Risk, Assurance and Performance Committee (28<sup>th</sup> March 2022)

## **11. Non-Executive Session**