



**Council Meeting
Thursday, 2 February 2023
MEETING SUMMARY**

Welcome and Introductions	
1.	The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, in particular, Helen Cross, the new Director of Research and Innovation at the Scottish Funding Council.
2.	JC acknowledged that this would be the final meeting for members, Richard Armour and Kellie Beirne, whom she thanked for their contribution. Richard was one of the founding members of RE Council. In addition to sitting on the Research England Development (RED) Fund panel, he has contributed to various other RE panels and working groups; has been the Council lead on Trusted Research, security, and international issues; and has represented RE at cross-UKRI events. Kellie has also made a significant contribution to Council, including sitting on the HEIF Eligibility Sub-Group.
UKRI Strategy Update	
3.	<p>Dan Shah (UKRI Strategy Directorate) provided an overview of recent, current, and planned future activity, to include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Autumn Statement at the end of last year did not re-open the existing R&D settlement.• There has been work to ensure that the Horizon Europe allocation was provided to the devolved administrations.• The National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) has been established, the first meeting of which will take place at Cabinet level next week.• The Integrated Review, describing the Government’s vision for the UK’s role in the world over the next decade, is going to be refreshed, possibly in the Spring.• There is increased government interest in the Place agenda (RE’s Executive Chair is the SRO for UKRI on Place).• The report from the independent review of the research, development and innovation organisational landscape led by Professor Sir Paul Nurse was released at the end of January.• Internally, a lot of work is underway on the operating model and on increasing UKRI’s efficiency and effectiveness.• The risks and opportunities associated with Horizon Europe are being considered.• UKRI is responding to change in the dynamic policy environment.• The UKRI Performance Framework has been shared with RE Council: Councils can use the framework structure to help with their own monitoring.• The Government position remains that Horizon Europe association would be best. There is a lot of work going on behind the scenes to respond at pace and to provide transitional stabilising measures within a short time frame, if necessary.• Concerns lie around doing the best possible job under impossible constraints; making the best use of public funds; mobilising and engaging with the community/ sector; and challenges around deliverability (OpEx, resource constraints).
Executive Chair’s Report	



4.	Since the last meeting, the Executive Chair has continued a programme of meetings and engagement, including an Eastern Arc meeting at the University of Essex, and a University of Sunderland visit.
5.	Research England responded quickly at the end of December to assist with the allocation of some pre-decision Horizon Europe funding via the QR mechanism.
Future Research Assessment Programme (FRAP) Update	
6.	The Director of Research and Associate Director of Research Environment provided an update on FRAP to include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The FRAP Programme Board met in January to discuss proposals for the next exercise, weighting of assessment elements, and timing of the next exercise.• There will be a change in the title of each of the three categories of assessment.• It was agreed to expand the understanding of excellence to cover these three categories.• Agreement has not yet been reached on weighting between the elements.
7.	The full set of initial decisions on the next REF emerging from the FRAP programme will be discussed at the May RE Council meeting.
RE EDI Action Plan	
8.	The Director of Insight & Engagement EH provided an update on the RE EDI Action Plan. The RE Council mini session held in December was very helpful and helped to shape thinking.
Knowledge Exchange (KE) Review	
9.	The Associate Director of Knowledge Exchange provided an overview of the review of KE funding. In February 2022, RE Council endorsed objectives, timetable and workplan for a review of KE funding and related policies. A sub-group, chaired by Carol Bell and involving Richard Armour and Kellie Beirne, was set up to consider HEIF eligibility with a view to advising the RE Executive Chair. The sub-group has made good process, has sought views, and is preparing options for eligibility criteria.
Strategic Delivery Plan (SDP) Update	
10.	RE Council was asked to note the latest draft of the SDP and timeline in the lead up to publication.
Risk, Assurance and Governance Report	
11.	The Council SIM provided an overview of the Risk, Assurance and Governance report, noting that the overall risk tendency is represented as having a downward trajectory in spite of increased environmental uncertainty. A review of strategic risks has been carried out, the findings of which shall come to Council in May. The May Risk, Assurance and Governance Report will also include a section on Whistleblowing and Speaking Up. The RE risk that appeared on the UKRI corporate risk register has now been removed.

Date and Time of next Meeting: Thursday, 23 May 2023