

**Minutes of the 3rd Board meeting in 2022**

**24th – 25th May 2022**

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| **Location:** | UKAEA Rotherham, Surrey Room |  |  |
| **Members** |

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| David Gann (Chair)Ian Chapman Stephen BarterMark BayleyAntonia JenkinsonRichard HookwayStephen HillierLuc BardinEithne Birt |

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| **Attendees** | Tim BestwickLyanne MacleanAdam Baker (BEIS)Lyndsey Mooring (Secretariat) |

**MINUTES**

# chair’s opening remarks – Day 1

## The Chair began the meeting by introducing the Board to the new Board secretariat, Lyndsey Mooring. An update on the progress of hiring new Board members was given – 70 applicants have been received for the 2 posts and the list of those chosen for interview was expected within the week. Members discussed the need for increased diversity and were confident the process will support this.

## No interests were declared; no apologies given.

# executive board report

## The CEO provided the fulsome update on the status and mitigations to Euratom association as requested at the previous Board Meeting. Progressed understanding was given in the context of the wider political landscape.

## The possible routes and mechanisms that are being explored by UKAEA and BEIS for mitigations in a non-association scenario were outlined. In a verbal update a package of potential mitigation activities crafted by UKAEA and BEIS in response to a Treasury request were outlined to the Board. This includes a phased approach of activities from ones with current approvals that can be stood up on Day 1 of a pivot from Association, followed by a portfolio of longer-term items that would need working through standard approvals (ie. Business cases).

## The Board were updated on a number of items including:

### The sad passing of Dr Bernard Bigot, Director-General of the ITER Organisation.

### The UKAEA’s STEP siting recommendation provided to the Minister for Science and the Secretary for State – this was covered in greater depth in a separate agenda item.

### The CEO’s invitation to give evidence at a special inquiry devoted to fusion by the House of Commons Science and Technology Select Committee on 25th May.

### That several political and external landscape activities have highlighted the need to steer messaging around fusion to focus on “fusion energy” in narratives. **The Board requested a “Messaging Guide” be brought to the July meeting - Action UKAEA(22)3/1**

### The status of major programmes, particularly Fusion Foundations, and the impact of inflation. The different mitigation approaches being taken dependant on stage of project were outlined; the Board encouraged UKAEA regarding an overarching approach of staying at pace. The chair of the Property Sub-Committee congratulated the team, highlighting the confidence held that they would deliver.

### The increasing media coverage and plethora of events where fusion is gaining wider attention were discussed. **The idea of seeking a celebrity champion for fusion was raised** – **and requested to be considered more fully as a item of the September meeting – Action UKAEA(22)3/2**

### In addition, **the Board offered their help in supporting strategic introductions for UKAEA – they requested a list be compiled for the September meeting - Action UKAEA(22)3/3**

# Strategy session

## The CTO presented outputs from several Director Strategy Days held by UKAEA. Proposed revised Goals were discussed at length with the Board, with the members providing recommendations around strengthening the messaging of co-creation, international landscape and altering the wording regarding “workforce”.

## An area of focused discussion was how the goals reflect the future of the organisation regarding the relationship with a future STEP entity, whilst remaining concept agnostic.

## The Board agreed generally with the new direction of the Strategy and Goals, and requested additional opportunities to input further – goals to be updated accordingly with suggested amendments and focused strategy session outside of Board Meetings to be arranged – Action UKAEA(22)3/4

# chair’s opening remarks – day 2

## No interests were declared.

# Technical Update

## The Board were updated on the progress and activities of the Fusion Technology Business Unit and the CHIMERA facility in construction at the Rotherham site.

## It was reviewed that the Business Case for CHIMERA is not solely reliant on ITER for its customer base.

## It was highlighted that an adjacent plot to the current UKAEA one is available and presents the best option for expansion. In addition, the benefit of a second catchment area for recruitment already proving beneficial was raised.

## The design and build programme was discussed; the actions being taken now with the supplier were presented and options considered. The Board supported the exploration of co-ownership with the supplier and asked to be informed as this progresses.

# minutes and actions

## The Board reviewed and approved the minutes of the March meeting.

## Actions were updated as follows:

### UKAEA(21)6/2 – Owing to illness this action has been pushed back – Due date changed to July 22

### UKAEA(21)6/4 – The Board will attend a BEIS organised briefing in London on Friday 27th may – Action closed

### UKAEA(22)1/4 – The Board agreed to amend due date to after the event – Due date changed to Jan 23

### UKAEA(22)2/1 – The action will be covered in the briefing event of the 27th – Action closed.

### **UKAEA(22)3/5 - New Action – Seek SC level clearance for all NEDs**

# Finance update

## The Director of Finance updated the Board on salient points from P12. This included the recognition of another £1m of revenue, which decreases the variance previously seen and aligns the P&L back to expectations.

## The Director of Finance drew the attention of the Board to underspends on programme lines and explained these are being worked on with BEIS regarding any impacts coming into the 22/23 FY.

## It was noted that preparations are underway for Audit, with main Audit starting 6th June.

## The Board requested that a clearer final anticipated cost for Fusion Foundations and CHIMERA be included in the next meeting.

## It was noted that even though we are now in a 3-year Spending Review period, work on rolling programming, via BEC, is underway, yet being more planful was still vital, i.e., phasing per year still necessary.

## The Board considered the slight difference in narrative coming from the KPIs and variance. This was ascribed to 2 major programmes, Fusion Foundations and STEP, driving the variance, which is not captured in the KPIs. It was agreed to consider a portfolio of KPIs as the Strategy evolves.

# subcommittee updates

## The Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee updated the Board verbally on aspects of work, with an anticipated full update due next Board once the meeting is held:

### The Committee is looking at the lifetime plan and considering the effectiveness of forecasting.

## The Chair of the People and Remuneration Committee commented that the next meeting will be in June, and the focus will be on the People Strategy, to be presented at Board in September.

## The Chair of the Property Sub-Committee updated the Board verbally on the outcomes of the meeting, held the day before:

### The Harwell Joint Venture progress was assessed, and a recommendation brought to the Board during this agenda, under AOB.

### The status of the CCDP project was discussed by the Committee, with the Chair complimenting the team on keeping the project under control in the face of difficult issues regarding delayed planning consent and increasing inflation.

### The expansion of the Culham site opportunities were captured. These are at an early stage, and the Board noted the strong strategic basis.

# Corporate Plan 2022/23

## The submitted plan was discussed, with minor changes from the Board noted, to be actioned offline.

# PAC Update

## An update was provided to the Board on the recent Programme Advisory Committee’s 3 Day Annual review of UKAEA’s major programmes.

## The Chair explained that the PAC is there for scientific advice and that they had 3 charges for the review: 1) comment on the coherence of the overall UKAEA scientific strategy; 2) comment on the strategy for the technical programmes; 3) comment on the tokamak science programmes and how they support ITER, STEP and DEMO.

## An in-depth summary of feedback across these aspects was given and are captured in the supporting paper. The Board commented on the usefulness of the PAC review and findings.

# STEP Siting Update

## An overview of the site selection process was provided to the Board, concluding with the recommendation to the Secretary of State.

## The Board considered details of the recommended site in respect to the others on the short list and approved the decision to prepare for acquisition. UKAEA(22)3/D1

# US-UK Update

## The CTO provided further context around the paper presented including an event timeline; background; “where we are now”; “what we want to achieve” and “what happens now”.

## A comparison of US versus UK thought leadership was discussed. The Board requested the paper stays as a live piece of work, with sections added on risk and IP leakage.

# any other business

## UKAEA Ltd. - The Board approved incorporation UKAEA(22)3/D2

## Extension of Harwell Joint Venture – The Board approved entering into agreements to extend the HSIC LP UKAEA(22)3/D3