

Disclosable

RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE COMMITTEE

The 85th meeting of the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee was held on 1 June 2022 at 10am via MS Teams.

PRESENT:

- Professor Lesley Yellowlees (Chair)
- Mhairi Harrington
- Professor Irene McAra-McWilliam
- Caroline Stuart
- Professor Anne Anderson
- Dr Caroline Cantley
- Professor Nicholas Fyfe
- Dr Jano van Hemert
- Professor Julian Jones
- Dr Helen Reddy
- Ms Sara Rae
- Professor Jonathan Seckl
- Professor Andy Porter
- Professor Wayne Powell

OFFICERS:

- Dr Cat Ball
- Fiona Bates
- Gary Bannon
- Morag Campbell
- Dr Stuart Fancey
- Jenny Jamieson
- Hazel McGraw
- Lyn Muronzi
- Andrew Youngson

OBSERVERS:

- Caroline Reeve (BEIS)
- Kirsty Grainger (UKRI replacement)

SCOTTISH
GOVERNMENT: Laura Dougan

APOLOGIES: Helen Cross, UKRI
Gillian Galloway, HIE
Dr Alicia Greated, Committee member
Derek Shaw, SE

1. Welcome from Chair (Oral)

The Chair welcomed Kirsty Grainger, UKRI Head of Talent and Skills Strategy and Inga Burton, University of Engagement Manager, HIE who were replacing Helen Cross and Inga Burton at this meeting only.

The Chair also welcomed Lynn Muronzi to the Executive who will be dealing with the administration of the monitoring function for SFC's non-core strategic investment.

Directors' update (RKEC/22/13)

The Director presented the update paper for the August meeting that provide a summary of recent developments of interest to members. This paper will be published on the website.

2. Minute of previous meeting on 24 February 2022 (RKEC/22/min1)

The minute was agreed.

3. Research Excellence Framework (REF), Research Excellence Grant (REG) and Future Research Assessment Programme (FRAP) (RKEC/22/09)

Morag Campbell introduced this item, noting that the completion of REF 2021 and the updating of REG had taken the Scottish university sector to a new point in SFC's support of research. While the challenges of REG and REF (and the opportunities of FRAP) are live and current, consideration of the issues which might be debated by RKEC on how Scotland moves forwards seemed appropriate.

Members were invited to:

- discuss REF results overall and areas for future analysis and examination in future RKEC deliberations.
- note amendments to the REG allocation formula in line with their recommendations

- discuss the impacts these changes have had on allocations when taken alongside REF results
- note progress with FRAP
- consider the issues the above raise for Scotland and for future RKEC agendas.

The Committee noted the following:

- With these results, it was important to develop a positive and coherent narrative about the quality of research in Scotland and its dynamic environment.
- The sector should be able to build and claim a reputational strength whilst recognising areas that need development
- Changes in allocation meant that certain regions could be negatively impacted and that a watching brief was required by the Committee
- The sector should feel empowered to influence the process and from within a Scottish perspective, so areas of need are not overlooked
- The FRAP consultation had finished and the feedback from this would be managed over the summer and before the August meeting
- The executive would bring further analysis on REF and REG to the next meeting

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KE & I consultation: Summary of responses and direction of travel (RKEC/22/10)

Gary Bannon introduced this item that updated the Committee on the responses and next steps from the KE&I consultation and sought Committee advice on specific areas of focus ahead of our update to SFC Board (24 June)

Members were invited to:

- Note the responses to KE & I consultation and next steps
- Offer advice on developing plans particularly relating to the Entrepreneurial Campus Strategy, Infrastructure investment process and university and college Knowledge Exchange and Innovation Fund (KEIF)
- Provide comment on our direction of travel, areas of synergy and the opportunities brought by the changing landscape.

The Committee noted the following:

- The aim of the consultation was to develop an IC Strategy
- Commercial and social enterprises will play a key part across the college sector.
- Co-design should be applied across both sectors in equal parity and for greater impact
- Whether collaboration across ICs could be increased

- There will be an impact from technology adoption, the behaviour changes that follow and the wider social and economic impact.

5. Update on people and culture (RKEC/22/11)

Cat Ball introduced this paper that provides a summary of SFC's activity in support of people and culture in research and innovation, including the development of an SFC Advisory Group on Supporting Scotland's Postgraduate Researchers and our involvement in concordats and related groups. It also highlighted the implementation of Review recommendations in this space, including linking with the growing momentum from research funders around culture and the UK R&D People and Culture Strategy.

Members were invited to:

- Consider the summary of SFC's activity in support of people and culture and future plans to implement key Review recommendations
- Provide comment on our direction of travel, areas of synergy and the opportunities brought by the changing UK research landscape.

The Committee noted the following:

- The Advisory Group will be co-chaired by Professor Nick Fyfe, Vice Principal for Research at Robert Gordon University (and RKEC member) and Dr Kay Guccione, Researcher Development Manager at the University of Glasgow. A further update would be provided at the August meeting.
- Early career and postgraduate researchers must be able to access broad networks that will articulate to them the opportunities that exist within HE and wider.
- Our ambition to cultivate research environments that can hold diverse and inclusive cultures must be bold.

6. Forward agenda (RKEC/22/12)

At the meeting of 14 October 2020, RKEC agreed to revise the forward agenda to take account of the emergency years 2020-22 and consequential policy adjustments due to the impact of the pandemic. This paper notifies the Committee of proposed agenda items for the future business of the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee. These items take account of views expressed by Committee members.

To enable alignment with the SFC Council, the attached forward agenda plan follows the same format as that used for the SFC Council, for easy mapping.

Recommendations

The Committee is invited to **note** the proposed agenda items and **suggest** any further additions or amendments to this list.

The Committee suggested the following:

- Future Research Assessment Programme (FRAP) should be scheduled for a future meeting.

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The Chair and members noted that this was Dr Fancey's last RKEC meeting as Director of Research and Innovation at SFC due to his new position at the University of Strathclyde. Warm wishes were shared from across the committee and from Dr Fancey in return.

Members noted that the next meeting of the Committee would take place at 10am, 24 August 2002 and would be a face-to-face meeting at SFC offices at Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh.