NERC Management Board (NMB) Meeting
Summary of discussions
20 February 2018
BEIS Conference Centre, 1 Victoria Street, London

Members present:
Professor DJ Wingham, Mr PJ Fox, Professor T Wheeler, Mr R Gledhill, Mr P Hayden, Dr P Heads, Mrs J Maddock.

Apologies: Ms A Robinson.

Other attendees: Ms H Jevon (Associate Director Operations and Research Careers item 2), Dr C Batchelor (Head of Corporate Planning item 3), Mrs C Turner (Director Finance, item 11), Miss N Probert (Risk & Assurance Manager, item 10).

Secretary: Mrs SJ Morrell.

Chief Executive Update
The role of Chair was shared between Mr Fox and Professor Wingham for this meeting. Mr Fox opened the meeting and welcomed members.

Professor Wingham informed NMB that the new Council would consist of nine members, which is smaller than the current one and official letters to the new members would be sent out soon.

Professor Wingham had agreed to act as sponsor for plastics for the ISCF (Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund) call in which NERC would lead a bid with two other research councils.

The Board noted that the Minister had signed off the budgets for the Councils.

Future NERC Funding Governance
The Board were shown the slides to be presented at the Council Retreat at the end of February. NMB suggested some amendments and that the number of slides be reduced before being presented to the Council Retreat.

Environmental Management Analysis
NMB was reminded of the background to this exercise and provided with an update on the desk study, outlining the results and the analysis of them.

NMB were offered 3 options as to how NERC might implement the strategy to grant holders without placing an onerous burden on them or reduce the quality or range of science NERC funds.
An option was chosen, but it was agreed that it would require some further thought and cover a broader range than originally proposed. Further engagement with the community and a wider communications campaign would be the next steps. A new recruit would be employed to implement the environmental management strategy.

Professor Wingham expressed his thanks to those who had been involved with the process.

NERC Strategy

UKRI have asked all councils to prepare a new strategic delivery plan for publication in April 2019. NMB was presented with the slides that would be rehearsed at the Council Retreat at the end of February. The content of NERC’s strategy must be consistent with a template provided by UKRI. It will be developed and rehearsed with stakeholders during 2018.

NERC had also been asked to make an input into the UKRI Strategy, which would be published in May 2018.

EU Figures for NERC staff and students

NMB were reminded that the figures provided quarterly updates on the proportion of NERC staff and students recorded as EU nationals to enable NMB to assess any impact Brexit may have on these figures. The Board was advised that the proportions seemed to be increasing. There was no evidence of a decline or any impact on NERC.

NERC Showcase 2018: Impact Awards

The Board was told that the event for 2018, to be held at a venue in London, would focus on the impact awards and would target key stakeholders. The theme would be around earth observation illustrating the impact of science from space.

The call for the impact awards had gone live on 19 February.

NMB commented that the 2017 showcase in Edinburgh had been a good event.

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)

Professor Wingham advised that he had attended meetings of the Joint UKRI Board and the UKRI Executive Committee. He said that the Act gave autonomy, subject to the delegation framework, to each of the organisations once the budgets had been awarded, however these were awaiting ministerial sign off.

Governance, Responsibility and Ownership (GRO) Project update

NMB received an update on Governance, Responsibility and Ownership project. They were informed that CEH and NOC were now in the preparation stage and business systems had been procured.
The Board was advised that six people had been appointed to the BGS Board and the project was now in a position to go live.

**Draft UKRI Internal Audit Plan**

NMB was advised that this paper had been withdrawn.

**Standing items**

NMB also noted a couple of standing items including the monthly finance update, the risk register review and the rolling programme of business.

**Date of next meeting**

The next NERC Management Board meeting will be held on 23 March 2018.