

SCOTTISH SCIENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**Minute of meeting held on:
15 March 2007 at 13:00, at
Scottish Executive,
Victoria Quay,
Edinburgh**

Present:

Professor Anne Glover (Chair), Professor Muffy Calder, Professor John Coggins, Professor Julie Fitzpatrick, Professor Chris van der Kuyl, Dr Stuart Monro, Professor Peter Morgan, Professor Sir Kenneth Calman, Professor Jonathan Seckl, Graham Wren, Professor Joyce Tait, Dr Andy Bishop, Anna Milne (Minute Secretary)

For Item 1-3 Only: Professor Peter Strike – Napier University
Professor Ian Young – University of Abertay

Item 1: Welcome and Introductions

1. Professor Glover welcomed members of the committee to the meeting. She introduced Professor Ian Young from University of Abertay and Professor Peter Strike from Napier University who would be giving the committee presentations on how post-1992 universities could develop their research capabilities.

Item 2: Presentation by Professor Ian Young, University of Abertay

2. Professor Young gave a presentation on how the University of Abertay was developing and could develop further their research capabilities.

Item 3: Presentation by Professor Peter Strike, Napier University

3. Professor Strike gave a presentation on how Napier University was developing and could develop further their research capabilities.

4. Professor Glover thanked the speakers for their presentations, which she said had given the committee much to think about. Following the two presentations the committee discussed the issues raised and agreed that:

- post-1992 universities were very business-focussed and as a result were producing industry-ready students
- funding for post-1992 universities continues to be an issue
- the make up of the student body i.e. the socio-economic grouping was different in the post-1992 universities to traditional universities. They therefore played an important role in encouraging students to embark on higher education courses who previously would not have considered it.
- pooling could be extremely beneficial to the post-1992 universities.

Item 4: Apologies

5. Professor Glover said apologies had been received from Professor Steven Beaumont, Professor Stuart Reid, Dr John Nicholls, Professor Geoffrey Boulton, Professor Peter Grant and Dr Barbara Spruce.

Item 5: Minute of the Last Meeting

6. The minutes of the last meeting on 18 January 2007 were accepted as an accurate account of the meeting.

Item 6: Matters Arising

Scottish Institute for Life Sciences (SCILS)

7. Professor Glover reported that since the last meeting she had visited the University of Dundee and had met with Sir Philip Cohen to discuss SCILS.

Energy Technologies Institute

8. Members of the committee updated Professor Glover on the progress with the Energy Technologies Institute. It was reported that there had been good level of interest in hosting the institute and that the Scottish proposal had received a positive response.

Chief Scientific Advisers Committee (CSAC)

9. Professor Glover reported that the next CSAC meeting may be held in Edinburgh on the 6 June. If the meeting was held in Edinburgh it would allow discussions to take place between the SE CSA's and their Whitehall counterparts.

Review of Past Work

10. Members discussed progress with the action points arising from the last meeting.

Remaining Work Agenda for SSAC

11. Members discussed progress with the action points arising from the last meeting.

12. Professor Glover reported that the work on producing video cameos of people who were successful in S&T fields was being progressed by Careers Scotland.

Item 7: Future of SSAC – Status, Structure and Process

13. The committee members discussed two possible models for how the SSAC may function in the future.

Item 8: Options for Future Work Programme

14. Professor Glover explained that she had asked the committee members to propose ideas for a future work programme for the committee in advance of the meeting. The main areas of priority that were identified by this exercise were innovation, public engagement with science and science education.

Professor Glover suggested that a template be produced to assist the committee in the future when considering what topics to examine. The template would allow the committee to consider each topic in a consistent and considered way.

Item 9: Update on Science Strategy

15. Professor Glover updated the committee on progress with the Science and Innovation Strategy.

Item 10: Public Opinion into SSAC – Capturing a broader opinion base

16. Professor Tait led a discussion on how the committee could capture a broader opinion base.

Item 9: Any Other Business

17. Professor Glover reported that OCSA had commissioned research on how Scotland compared with the rest of the UK, Europe and G8 countries in terms of research impacts. Professor Glover reported that the data would be published by the Executive.

Item 10: Date of Next meeting

The next meeting of the SSAC would be on Tuesday 26 June 2007.

SSAC Secretariat
April 2007