



Note of the 9th Meeting of the Physical Sciences & Engineering Advisory Panel held on 7 January 2021

- STFC's Strategy, Planning and Communications Directorate gave an update covering:
 - UKRI governance
 - the Spending Review
 - STFC strategy development, including the draft Light Sources Strategy on which the Panel had been consulted
 - Infrastructure prioritisation – the panel recommended for future exercises it would benefit from a clearer understanding of the purpose of the exercise and more time to complete the assessment
- STFC provided an update on the international facilities
 - The UK would not be a Founding Observer of the ELI ERIC
 - The upcoming long shutdowns for ISIS and ILL overlapped. There are opportunities to apply to other global facilities.
- The Panel Chair had attended a meeting between Science Board and the Advisory Panel Chairs on 4 November 2020. Science Board had committed to improving interactions with the advisory panels.
- The panel discussed its interactions/profile within STFC and with the community. It was agreed that better communication and co-ordination between panels would be beneficial. It was important to raise the profile of the panel amongst the community. It was suggested that the panel could invite Science Board members familiar with the facilities to panel meetings or specific agenda items. The number of panel meetings could be increased to two a year, with the main meeting at RAL and then a shorter, virtual interim meeting.
- The Panel discussed the impact of Covid-19 on science and experiments at the large facilities. Although there had been some positive effects, such as reduced travel time and investment in remote access capabilities, the pandemic's impact on science at the facilities had been very serious. Remote access to experiments had limitations and was not feasible for all experiments. The impact had been particularly severe on PhD students.
- Robert McGreevy gave a presentation on the ESS and the future landscape for neutrons followed by a discussion with the panel.