

LIFE SCIENCES & SOFT MATERIALS ADVISORY PANEL

The Life Sciences and Soft Materials Advisory Panel (LS&SM AP) held their 6th meeting on 21 Feb 18.

The following items were discussed:

- The forthcoming establishment of UKRI and what that will mean for STFC.
- Implications of BREXIT on e.g. ERICs that the UK is a member of.
- The establishment of a UKRI Research Infrastructures Roadmap and the requirement of input from the LS&SM AP to that Roadmap in the coming year.
- John Collier (CLF) provided an update on progress with the Extreme Light Infrastructure (ELI) project. This was followed by a discussion on the proposed user consultation for ELI that will likely be organised during 2018. The LS&SM AP were:
 - interested in ELI and the science that it would enable;
 - believed it would be beneficial to the UK if there was an ELI hub, similar to a CDT, in order to offer training opportunities;
 - noted that funding of ELI should not be at the expense of the CLF or other national facilities.
- STFC provided updates on the following areas of activity:
 - Balance of Programmes Exercise – skills
 - Neutron Strategic Review 2016/17
 - Concern was raised that there could potentially be a cut to the provision of neutrons by 2/3^{rds} and there did not appear to be a plan stating how this will be dealt with. The LS&SM AP felt support for neutrons for the foreseeable future was essential.
 - Detectors and Instrumentation Strategic Review 2016/17
 - Accelerator Strategy
- The Panel highlighted the increased demand for Cryo-EM facilities and felt it would be beneficial if there was a Cryo-EM distributed facility in the UK with a focal hub based at Diamond; they were keen to stress that they did not want to see a return to the old-style “ticket system” in order to fund such a facility.
- The Panel agreed that there was no requirement for a community consultation exercise during 2018.

The next meeting will be held in Jan 19; exact date to be arranged in autumn 18.