

Cross Party Group on Science and Technology

Minute of Meeting on 25 October 2016

1. Attendance

MSPs: Patrick Harvie; Stuart McMillan; Maree Todd; Daniel Johnson; Maureen Watt. **MSP staff:** Eleane Kazakou.

Non-MSPs: Bristow Muldoon; William Hardie; William Duncan; Susan Lennox (all Royal Society of Edinburgh); Neva Haites (University of Aberdeen); Maria McPhillips (Microbiology Society); Stephen Benn (RSB); Gordon Eadie (RSE Business Innovation Forum); Andrew MacKenzie (Physiological Society) David Cole-Hamilton (EuCheMs).

2. Apologies

Clare Adamson MSP

3. The implications for science of Brexit

Professor Neva Haites and Bristow Muldoon led off the discussion talking about the implications for science of Brexit, based on a recent RSE Advice Paper on the subjectⁱ.

Among the main points that they raised were:

- The high standing of the UK research base
- That the closest possible association with the EU research system should be maintained
- Free movement of people made a great contribution to research in the UK - 18% of academics and an even higher proportion of active researchers were from the EU 27 countries
- International students make a major contribution to the culture and vitality of universities as well as their research contribution
- It is unlikely that we could retain full access to the EU research community if the UK pursues a restrictive migration policy with regard to the EU27

Professor David Cole-Hamilton, President of the European Chemical Sciences group, EuCheMS, then made a contribution based on his experience working with European partners in recent years and reinforced many of the points made by the opening speakers.

There was then an open discussion around the issues, within which there was a broad agreement that in terms of research it was to the benefit of science and research in the UK and throughout Europe if maximum ongoing co-operation and partnership could be maintained.

Meeting closed at 1930

ⁱ RSE July 2016: <https://www.rse.org.uk/advice-papers/leaving-the-european-union-implications-and-opportunities-for-science-and-research/>