

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH IN NUCLEAR SCIENCE

GOVERNING BOARD ✓

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held in the Board Room,
Treasury Buildings, Whitehall at 2.45 p.m. on
Wednesday 29th July, 1959.

PRESENT:-

Lord Bridges (in the chair)
Professor P. M. S. Blackett
Sir John Cockcroft
Professor J. Diamond
Professor W. V. D. Hodge
Sir Harry Melville
Professor N. F. Mott
Professor R. E. Peierls
Sir Donald Perrott
Dr. B. F. J. Schonland
Professor D. H. Wilkinson
Dr. T. G. Pickavance
Mr. P. Bowles
Dr. J. A. V. Willis (Secretary)

Apologies for absence were received from Dr. Aitken, Mr. Gridley,
Professor Massey, Sir James Mountford and Sir George Thomson.

The Chairman recalled that the meeting had been
arranged as one for the General Purposes Committee
but that it had been decided to turn it into a
meeting of the Governing Board so that approval
could be given to the draft estimates.

1. Minutes of the last meeting of the General Purposes Committee

The meeting approved the minutes of NI(GP)(59) Second Meeting.

2. Matters dealt with by correspondence (General Purposes Committee)

The Chairman reported that after reference to the Committee
by correspondence he had approved on their behalf the contract action
proposed in papers NI(GP)(59)18 (drift tubes and hydrogen compressors)
and NI(GP)(59)23 (Modifications to the magnet power supply). He had
also approved the appointment of Consultants for the Phase II
buildings, as reported to the Committee in paper NI(GP)(59)21.

3. Proposed contract for magnet pole pieces

Dr. Pickavance introduced paper NI(GP)(59)26, the report on
tenders for the main pole pieces. He said that the recommendation
was for the acceptance of the lowest tender, that of Messrs. English
Electric. This was technically satisfactory. Another tender was
technically preferable, but was not considered worth the extra money.
Dr. Pickavance also drew attention to the probability, mentioned in
the paper, that some amendments to the contract would be necessary as
the work proceeded, raising the cost to a figure not expected to

exceed £250,000. This was however, within the sum allowed for this item when working out the approved estimates.

ACTION 1 The meeting approved the placing of a contract for the main pole pieces with the English Electric Co. at a fixed price of £226,959 on the basis of their amended tender, and authorised the Project Committee to make subsequent amendments if necessary, raising the cost to not more than £250,000.

4. Staffing Proposals for the Rutherford Laboratory

The Chairman, introducing paper NI(GP)(59)22, said that the proposals represented a great change from the original plan when the Institute was first formed. The change was due partly to a change in policy in the A.E.A. and partly to a large increase in the number of staff now estimated to be needed at the laboratory. He asked the meeting first to discuss the broad principle, developed in the first seven paragraphs of the paper, that the Institute should employ their own staff on terms similar to those of the A.E.A., except in the case of University-type research staff.

There was some discussion of the Institute's resident nuclear physics research staff. Dr. Pickavance said that their number was estimated at 40, as compared with an estimated number of 60 research workers from Universities at any one time. He hoped that in the main they would be short-term staff engaged for not more than 5 years. The three men already engaged on these terms had been told that the appointments were not renewable, though they would not be debarred from applying for any posts which were open at the time their appointments ended. All of them had appeared to think these terms satisfactory. There would however be a need for a small number of more senior research staff on permanent appointments.

The Chairman asked Dr. Pickavance to develop the proposals concerning research scientists of university status in more detail in a paper for a future meeting. Subject to this, the meeting approved the broad principles of the paper.

Among the more detailed proposals, the Committee noted and approved the "transitional technique" described in para 10 and the proposed N.I.R.N.S. complement for 1959/60.

Professor Peierls asked for details of the proposal in Appendix A that the Institute should take over as soon as possible the provision of some theoretical physics staff. Dr. Pickavance explained that in the earlier years the work in mind was that connected with the accelerators and beam handling. Later on, when theoretical work on fundamental particle physics was involved, he agreed that the kind of staff and their supervision would need careful consideration.

Another point discussed was the wording of para 6(b). It was agreed that "free interchange of staff between the Institute and the Authority" is not intended to imply that an individual employed by one would have the right to transfer to the other, but that movement is very desirable and should be facilitated.

In connection with the staff numbers, Dr. Schonland drew attention to the large increase in N.I.R.N.S. staff forecast in 1960/61. He queried whether this increase would be achieved, but offered assistance with the recruiting effort. Dr. Pickavance welcomed the offer. The Secretary said that a fairly large expansion was going on

in 1959/60. Hitherto, this had been just an expansion of A.E.A. staff, but if the proposals in the paper were approved, the new recruits should no doubt in future be appointed under the transitional technique. In 1960/61 the detail in Appendix B disclosed an increased A.E.A. staff on NIMROD which would add to the number engaged under the transitional technique rather than directly by the Institute. The Chairman said that the transitional technique ought to be used to avoid rushing the Institute into recruiting themselves before they were ready to do so.

ACTION 2 The meeting approved the general policy proposed in paper NI(GP)(59)22, subject to later consideration of more detailed proposals concerning research scientists of university type. The introduction of the "transitional technique" described in the paper, and the proposed N.I.R.N.S. complement of 43 for 1959/60 were authorised.

5. Estimates

Dr. Pickavance described the items of estimated capital expenditure listed in paper NI(GP)(59)24.

There was some discussion of the question whether expenditure on a possible second site was feasible by the dates indicated. Dr. Pickavance said that he thought it just possible that a large accelerator could be thought of and started by the time indicated. This was frankly unlikely, but was the basis of the estimate. The estimate would alternatively provide against a possible requirement for a smaller accelerator which might perhaps develop more suddenly. The Chairman said that the provision for a second site was still rather precautionary, and he would not be surprised if it proved to be optimistic but he would prefer to leave it as it stood, with the addition of an explanatory note. The meeting agreed.

Professor Diamond drew attention to the concentration of work of different kinds in 1961/62 and asked whether anything could be moved out of that year. Dr. Pickavance agreed that it would be a hard year, and that some work might be squeezed out of it.

Dr. Pickavance explained that the provision for university research reactors was subject to decision whether the Institute should be responsible for them. The Chairman said that this point was still not settled, but was under discussion with the U.G.C. and the D.S.I.R. Recommendations would be made to the Board as soon as possible. In the mean time the provision should be left in the estimates with a suitable note. Professor Diamond queried the distribution of the money between years. The present distribution would imply the choice of only one University to receive a reactor in 1960/61 whereas at least two would be fully ready to start at the beginning of that year.

Sir Donald Perrott confirmed that the overall deduction of 10% from the 1960/61 capital estimate, to allow for delay somewhere in the programme, accorded with the practice which he had imposed in the A.E.A. estimates.

The Secretary described the items of estimated recurrent expenditure listed in Schedule 4. He said that more than half the expenditure represented salaries and overheads on them, and these estimates were based upon the complement estimates in paper NI(GP)(59)22.

Sir John Cockcroft queried the amounts shown as A.E.R.E. charges in 1962/63. The Secretary said that the charges for "Administration etc" included overheads on N.I.R.N.S. staff, and were in this estimate calculated at the present rates although by 1962/63 we might have taken

over so much of the administration as to reduce the overhead rates substantially.

Professor Diamond gave estimates for the running costs of university research reactors, which, the meeting agreed, should be included on the same basis as the capital cost of the reactors. The figures were:-

<u>Year</u>	<u>Average No</u>	<u>Running Cost</u>
1960/61	1 reactor	£20,000
1961/62	3 reactors	£60,000
1962/63	4 reactors	£80,000
1963/64	5 reactors	£100,000

Subject to the above points, the meeting approved the draft estimates. The Chairman expressed appreciation of the careful work which had gone into them.

ACTION 3 The meeting approved the draft estimates contained in paper NI(GP)(59)24 subject to the addition of provision for recurrent expenditure on University research reactors, if it is decided that the Institute shall be responsible for them. They authorised the Secretary and Dr. Pickavance to make any necessary minor corrections and revisions before transmitting the Estimates on their behalf to the Atomic Energy Authority.

6. Five-year Estimate of Capital Expenditure

The Secretary introduced paper NI(GP)(59)25, produced as requested at the last meeting. He said that this agreed with the estimates just considered, except for the addition of round sums in 1962/63 and later years, which represented no more than a guess at expenditure on projects not yet conceived. The meeting accepted the paper as a reasonable attempt at a long-range forecast.

7. Institute Accounts

Sir Donald Perrott introduced paper NI(GP)(59)27 containing recommendations on technical accounting points, including the appointment of the Comptroller and Auditor-General as Auditor to the Institute. The Chairman said that he had considered these proposals in detail with Sir Donald Perrott, and agreed with them. The meeting concurred.

ACTION 4 The meeting approved the recommendations in paragraph 6 of paper NI(GP)(59)27.

8. Contract for the Phase II Buildings

Dr. Pickavance introduced paper NI(GP)(59)28. He recalled that the original recommendation of the Chief Architect, A.E.R.E., which he had previously put to the Committee, was that competitive tenders should be obtained for the main group of Phase II buildings. On further consideration it was now seen that to bring in another Contractor to extend buildings while Messrs. Chivers were still working at high pressure on the site would make intolerable confusion. Further, it would be very unlikely to result in a lower price. He apologised for not realising this in the first instance. The Chairman pointed out that Chivers had agreed to do the work on the same terms as the existing contract. Sir Donald Perrott said that in similar circumstances the A.E.A. would see no objection to extending the current contract.

ACTION 5

The Meeting approved the extension of Messrs. Chivers existing contract to cover the building and civil engineering aspects of the Phase II buildings (excluding the second Arcon building already dealt with) and the extension of the appropriate current contracts for Mechanical and Electrical Engineers' Services to cover these services in the same buildings. The total expenditure under this approval is not to exceed £330,000.

9. Tercentenary of the Royal Society

The Chairman said that he had received a request from the Royal Society for a visit to the Rutherford Laboratory to be combined with a visit to the A.E.R.E. on July 26th, 1960, during the celebration of the Society's tercentenary. Dr. Schonland confirmed that he had been asked to receive the visit to A.E.R.E., and would be glad to make plans jointly with Dr. Pickavance. The meeting welcomed the proposed visit to the Rutherford Laboratory.

10. Housing

The Secretary said that owing to the developments in staffing discussed earlier in the meeting, it would be necessary to provide some housing for the permanent staff which the Institute would now be engaging. He had discussed housing with the Town Clerk of Abingdon, whose Council would probably be prepared to build houses to our specifications for rent to our staff, if we would give a guarantee to find tenants for 15 years. Alternatively we could seek funds from the Treasury to build our own houses. The Secretary asked for authorisation to develop a detailed proposal with the Abingdon Urban District Council, on the basis of 25 houses in the first instance, to be completed in about 18 months time.

Sir Donald Perrott said that the Treasury would be unlikely to make funds available to us for building if we were able to have the houses built by the Local Authority. The A.E.A. were now getting houses built by the Local Authority, for example at Winfrith. The meeting expressed a preference for this method.

ACTION 6

The Meeting authorised the Secretary to develop with the Local Authority a detailed scheme for the provision of 25 houses, to be referred to the Committee before a commitment was definitely made.

11. Membership of the Physics Committee

Professor Blackett reported that the D.S.I.R. Research Grants Committee had decided to disband their present Nuclear Physics Sub-Committee (which has a similar membership to our Physics Committee) and form a very small committee for the purpose of recommending grants. They proposed however to form a large advisory committee of nuclear physicists and suggested that this body should be advisory to the Institute as well. Details would be discussed further with the Institute staff. The Meeting noted this development.

12. Next meeting

The date of the next meeting was not fixed.

J.A.V. Willis
Secretary.

Rutherford High Energy Laboratory,
Harwell.

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