

 UK Atomic Energy Authority	<b>BOARD MEETING</b> Meeting Reference UKAEA(25)5	
<b>Date</b>	Wednesday 19 November	
<b>Time</b>	0915 - 1630	
<b>Location</b>	UKAEA Board Room, C7, Culham Campus	
<b>Members</b>	Bernard Taylor (Chair) Luc Bardin Tim Bestwick Ruth Elliot <del>Claire Flint</del> Sue Gray	Robin Grimes Richard Hookway Stephen Hillier Mary Ryan Lee McDonough
<b>Attendees</b>	Madhav Bakshi (DESNZ) David Gann (UKIFS Chair) Justin Kingsford (UKAEA COO) <del>Heather Lewtas (UKAEA CDO)</del> Nina Tomlin (Sec)	

## MINUTES

### Items

#### 1. Opening Remarks and Declarations led by B Taylor.

- 1.1. Apologies were noted from Heather Lewtas, who would join for Item 10 only, and Claire Flint.
- 1.2. **Declarations** of interest were received from Sue Gray and Mary Ryan, which would be recorded in the register of interests. None relevant to today's agenda.

#### 2. Minutes and Actions Review, UKAEA(25)M5, led by B Taylor:

The minutes were **approved**, subject to the following being correcting:

- Details of members leaving and re-joining the meeting
- Clarifying that the ARAC had reviewed the audit of annual bonuses
- Clarifying that the Fusion Foundations programme had received a green/amber evaluation.

#### 2.1. The open actions due by November were reviewed:

Action	Owner	Due	Status	Update
UKAEA(25)1/1 [Security Briefing]	J Kingsford	Mar-25	Open	A session would be scheduled at the January 2026 Board meeting to include DESNZ briefing on context and policy position flowing from this; as well as UKAEA briefing on baseline security measures compliance and on broader related strategic positioning. (A Baker, J Kingsford, N Furlong, L Mooring).

				The owner of the action was changed to reflect this update.
UKAEA(24)6/3 [Regulators' invitation to Board]	T Bestwick	Sep-25	Open	Invitations to the January 2026 meeting had now been issued.
UKAEA(25)4/2 [Flywheels]	L McDonough	Sep-25	Open	Engagement is in hand – <b>close action.</b>
UKAEA(25)4/3 [Technical challenges and impacts]	P Methven	Nov-25	Open	Confirmed as coming to January 2026 Board.
UKAEA(25)5/3 [Chimera]	T Bestwick	Nov-25	Closed	Update being provided under Item 3. <b>Action closed.</b>
UKAEA(25)5/5 [PRemCo Chair meeting]	L McDonough	Nov-25	Open	Done – <b>close action.</b>
UKAEA(25)5/6 [CEO recruitment]	B Taylor	Nov-25	Closed	Separate item on the agenda. <b>Action closed.</b>

### 3. UKAEA Group Executive Board Report, UKIFS Executive Report & Risk Report, led by T Bestwick, R Elliot, J Kingsford, H Lewtas

#### UKAEA(25)6 - UKAEA Executive Board Report

- 3.1. The Board heard that safety remained a major focus across the organisation, as did security and cyber security. Addressing the latter would require additional investment.
- 3.2. A brief report was provided on UKAEA attendance at the IAEA Fusion Energy Conference in Chengdu, China. The Board requested a full briefing at their next meeting.
- 3.3. The Board heard an update on the Chimera facility.
- 3.4. Discussion focused on plans for equipment maintenance and single points of failure; the refreshed HMG Fusion Strategy and updated UKAEA Strategy; UKAEA demonstrating global leadership in fusion and translation into UK industrial value; and flagship deliverables. The Board heard that UKAEA would be placing more emphasis on Impact and Benefits Monitoring.
- 3.5. The US-UK Technology Prosperity Deal was discussed ahead of the planned meeting in Washington DC in March 2026.
- 3.6. RE confirmed that a paper on the West Burton site options exercise would be circulated to Board for approval before the end of December.
- 3.7. Updates were provided on workforce management and contingent labour and BT requested additional information on contingent labour involved in critical systems.

#### Actions:

Reference	Action	Actionee	Due
UKAEA(25)6/1	Provide a briefing on UKAEA attendance at IAEA Fusion Conference in China.	T Bestwick	Jan 2026
UKAEA(25)6/2	Bring complete list of flagship deliverables to Board.	T Bestwick	Jan 2026

UKAEA(25)6/3	Provide a report on contingent labour involved in critical systems.	J Kingsford	Apr 2026

#### UKAEA(25)6 - UKIFS CEO Report

- 3.8. PM provided an update on the location of the plant at West Burton and on Whole Plant Partner Procurement, as well as investment options and other procurements. A deep dive on the technical challenges of STEP would be presented to the Board in January 2026.
- 3.9. The Board discussed UKIFS CPMs and the UKIFS IP Strategy, the latter of which required approval by the Secretary of State.

#### 4. Sub-Committee reports, led by R Grimes, R Hookway and B Taylor

##### PAC Report (verbal)

- 4.1. The PAC interim meeting had been held the previous Friday. The written report had been distributed, and RG would provide a more detailed update at January's Board meeting.

##### UKAEA(25)6 – ARAC Report

- 4.2. The Board received an update on the most recent ARAC discussions, which covered the impact of UKAEA's SR settlement on the JDR programme, a deep dive on emergency response planning, cyber security within UKAEA and the supply chain, and an audit of the health physics facility.
- 4.3. The Board discussed infrastructure and estate planning, which now benefited from a single senior lead on Estate and Facilities Management, with an Estates Strategy currently being developed. Planning of relevant skills development would need to underpin this work. Compliance and UKAEA's risk and broader culture was also covered.

##### UKAEA(25)6 – PRemCo Report, led by STaylor

- 4.4. The most recent PRemCo focused on Board skills and experience mapping in support of Board succession planning – the Board skills profile would be updated this month – and a first outline of the People and Culture Strategy being developed, with a three-year horizon and an emphasis on inclusion, alignment with UKAEA's organisation strategy and capability building.
- 4.5. The Board queried whether the appointment of Non Executive Directors to the Board required approval by No 10. LMcD would check what approvals were required and confirm.
- 4.6. The Board heard that the grading and pay project was progressing well, targeting implementation in March 2026.

##### Actions:

Reference	Action	Actionee	Due
UKAEA(25)6/4	A detailed report on the PAC interim meeting to be provided to Board.	R Grimes	Jan 2026

UKAEA(25)6/5	Confirm what approvals were required for NEDs being recruited onto the Board.	L McDonough	Jan 2026
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**5. Risk Report/Dashboard, led by R Elliot**

**UKAEA(25)6 – Board Risk Report – November 2025**

- 5.1. The Board requested a review of how UKAEA’s risk appetite was defined.
- 5.2. There was agreement that the risk appetite statement and definition of top risks should be amended.
- 5.3. The Board requested an updated risk dashboard with re-worked top five risks to be brought to January’s Board meeting, in consultation with DESNZ expertise as required.

**Actions:**

Reference	Action	Actionee	Due
UKAEA(25)6/6	The Board requested an updated risk dashboard with re-worked top five risks to be brought to January’s Board meeting.	R Elliot	Jan 2026

**6. Finance update, led by R Elliot**

**UKAEA(25)6 – Finance update Nov25**

- 6.1. The Board heard that underspends were being balanced against additional costs that had come through – no additional levers were currently required. Any underspends were currently being brought to PSRE ExCo for approval, rather than being locally recycled.
- 6.2. RE reported on efforts to improve process efficiencies.

**7. SR update, led by R Elliot**

**UKAEA(25)6 – SR25 latest November 2025**

- 7.1. A report was provided on changes to the distribution of the SR settlement since September, in response to pressures and areas of uncertainty. UKAEA had requested a re-profile across the four years covered by the settlement, which was being discussed with DESNZ. The Board agreed with the approach outlined in the paper.
- 7.2. The Board discussed the importance of communicating the outcome at the appropriate time.

**8. Commercial, led by R Elliot**

**UKAEA(25)6 – Commercial Paper Nov 2025**

**UKAEA(25)6 – Commercial – Deep Dive – Nov 2025**

- 8.1. Members of ARAC had requested that the Commercial key risks deep dive be shared with the full Board, which focused on resource challenges and on changes due to the new Procurement Act 2023, which had come into effect earlier this year.
- 8.2. P Barham described changes being made to processes and approaches as a result of these developments. The Board requested a separate update on the SRN piece of work.

8.3. The Board asked for additional information on the new SME working group.

**Actions:**

Reference	Action	Actionee	Due
UKAEA(25)6/7	Provide a written update on the SRN piece of work within commercial.	R Elliot	Jan 2026
UKAEA(25)6/8	Circulate details of the SME working group, including TORs and membership.	R Elliot	Jan 2026

**9. CEO Recruitment update**, led by B Taylor

9.1. The Board heard an update from S John, Perrett Laver, on the UKAEA CEO recruitment, which had just concluded long-listing.

**10. TAE Beams**, led by H Lewtas

**UKAEA(25)6 – TAE Beams UK JV cover page plus 5 annexes**

- 10.1. The Board heard that UKAEA has an agreed protocol to agree spin out companies; which included classification by ONS, agreeing subsidy control issues with HMG, and checking whether any spin out was subject to approvals under the National Security Investment Act.
- 10.2. Details included in the papers were explained further, with an overview of proposed arrangements provided, including the financial contribution being made by UKAEA.
- 10.3. Discussion focused on valuation and shares calculation – being checked by an independent economist – IP licencing, and due diligence undertaken.
- 10.4. The TAE Beams UK JV was **approved** subject to contract, with final sign off delegated to TB.

**Decisions:**

Reference	Decision
UKAEA(25)6/D1	The TAE Beams UK JV was <b>approved</b> , with final sign off delegated to TB

**11. Tritium JV**, led by T Bestwick

- 11.1. The Board were told that the intention was to be in a position to sign the Shareholders Agreement before the end of the year. Negotiations were ongoing. The Board raised questions regarding shareholder reserved matters and UK value creation.
- 11.2. S Wheeler was asked to circulate a summary of the Full Business Plan, term sheets and financial model to the Board.
- 11.3. A sub-section of the Board would meet in early December to approve the final agreement, to include BT, RH, LB, TB and RE.

**Actions:**

Reference	Action	Actionee	Due
UKAEA(25)6/9	Additional information from the Business Plan for the JV to be circulated to the Board	H Lewtas	Dec 2025

UKAEA(25)6/10	A sub-section of the Board to meet to approve final agreement	H Lewtas	Dec 2025
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## 12. H3AT Tritium Loop Collaboration, led by T Bestwick

### UKAEA(25)6 – UKAEA H3AT Tritium Loop Collaboration

12.1. The Board received further information on this collaboration, including the extensive due diligence carried out, and discussed payment terms and risk analysis. The collaboration would sit under the Government-to-Government MOU and action plan with Canada.

12.2. The Collaboration was **approved** subject to contract and additional due diligence being carried out. Authority to negotiate was delegated to S Wheeler, with final approval delegated to TB, provided the final details were broadly in line with those discussed today.

12.3. The Board suggested that questions raised in relation to spin outs, JVs and collaborations should be captured systematically for future reference.

#### Actions:

Reference	Action	Actionee	Due
UKAEA(25)6/11	Innovation Team to capture the questions that need to be addressed every time spin outs, JVs and collaborations are considered by Board	H Lewtas	Mar 2026

#### Decisions:

Reference	Decision
UKAEA(25)6/D2	The Collaboration was <b>approved</b> subject to additional due diligence being carried out.

## 13. Plasma Technical Deep Dive, led by T Bestwick

13.1. F Militello provided a presentation on the scientific and technical details and challenges of Plasma, including the significance of recent MAST U results and other recent achievements.

13.2. The Board discussed the timing of a planned power outage. LMCD and JK would seek to discuss further with SSE.

13.3. F Militello was asked to provide a further session on Plasma within the next year.

#### Actions:

Reference	Action	Actionee	Due
UKAEA(25)6/12	Discuss power outage length and timing with SSE	LMCD and JK	Jan 2026
UKAEA(25)6/13	Schedule another Plasma update for Board	NT	Jun 2026

**14. STRIDE**, led by R Elliot

**UKAEA(25) – STRIDE Progress Update**

14.1. RE provided a progress report. A Business Case would be going to DESNZ PIC and CAB for approval.

**15. Cyber-Security**, led by J Kingsford

**UKAEA(25)6 – Acceleration Cyber Security Improvements Nov 2025**

15.1. The Board discussed details of the acceleration plan, with timelines for baseline and enhanced standards for cyber security having been brought forward.

15.2. Concrete numbers and plans would be brought back to Board in January.

15.3. DESNZ would report back on the potential impact of not meeting cyber essentials, on the basis of other government organisations’ practice.

**Actions:**

Reference	Action	Actionee	Due
UKAEA(25)6/14	Bring a detailed cyber security plan back to Board in January	JK	Jan 2026
UKAEA(25)6/15	Report back to Board on effect of not meeting cyber essentials in government organisations	LMcD	Jan 2026

**16. AOB**, led by B Taylor

**UKAEA(25)6 –Signatories**

16.1. The addition of two new signatories as Deputy Authority Secretaries was **approved**.

**Decisions:**

Reference	Decision
UKAEA(25)6/D3	The addition of Jill Evans and Heather Lewtas as signatories as Deputy Authority Secretaries was approved.

The meeting closed at 1627.

For information papers:

**1. Non-Executive Director Guidance Note – Expenses September 2025**

**Attendance record:**

Position	Name	Present	Absent
Members	Bernard Taylor	/	
	Ruth Elliot	/	
	Tim Bestwick	/	
	Richard Hookway	/	
	Luc Bardin	/	
	Claire Flint		/
	Sue Gray	/	
	Stephen Hillier	/	
	Mary Ryan	/	
	Robin Grimes	/	
	Lee McDonough	/	
Attendees	Nina Tomlin	/	
	Justin Kingsford	/	
	David Gann	/	
	Madhav Bakshi	/	
	Heather Lewtas	/ - for item 10 only	

**End of Minutes**