

Following the IoP HEP conference at Lancaster, I shared my understanding of the STFC situation with John Womersley, resulting in the following comments:

Funding:

- The shortfall of £80 M remains. We cannot rely on anything being done to change this. It is not on the agenda for discussion by the Wakeham review of physics.
- Uncommitted under-spends of the order of £20 M will be carried forward from the 2007-08 financial year and help to ameliorate some of the short-term problems.
- It is possible that further money could be borrowed from other Research Councils.
- STFC are liable to changes in international subscriptions (eg CERN) arising from currency movements, although there is the possibility to “discuss” with DIUS liabilities over a threshold.
- It is recognised by STFC that spending on redundancies is both expensive and may negatively impact skills that will be needed later.
- Any adjustments in the spending on individual programmes within Particle Physics and Astronomy resulting from the current panel exercise will be made without transferring money between the two areas.

Physics Priorities:

- A panel has now been set up as part of the programmatic review exercise. It is hoped that the panel will reflect the views of the community and will report to PPAN its recommended changes in relative priority of the different programmes. There is still time to avoid harmful cuts to important physics programmes, like LHCb, and every effort should be made to influence STFC through the committee. In this context, harm to the UK’s international reputation is an important consideration and international opinion is relevant input to the committee.
- The UK’s official withdrawal from the “current ILC” is a Council decision and will stand, but generic LC R&D can and will be supported.
- The hope is to soften the precipitate ending of axed programmes, thereby enabling a phased transfer of staff and the avoidance of redundancies, and to ensure that useful, long-term work is not jeopardised. Thus, detector development for ILC should be re-evaluated in the context of its usefulness as generic research.