

Dear Keith Mason,

I had hoped to speak to you on the phone before sending the attached statement, agreed at RAS Council on Feb 7th.

Although you will find it critical of STFC, I hope you will interpret it in a positive light, as a guide to reestablishing the confidence of the community.

Several of us met with Peter Warry [Chair of the STFC Council] last week and raised most of these issues.

I know that STFC is trying very hard to do more in the way of informing the community and that you intend to set up an advisory structure below PPAN [Particle Physics, Astronomy and Nuclear Committee].

So I do ask you to see whether you can avoid a defensive reply to this statement (I entirely accept that you would be able to mount a strong defence of STFC) and try to use it to reengage with the community.

If I may give a couple of examples. Keith O'Nions [Director General of Science and Innovation at the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills] told me on Friday that he thought that STFC was the only research council that did not publish its minutes. I understand from Peter Knight [Chair of STFC Science Board] that Science Board is now publishing its minutes. This is a very good step in the right direction.

I also do not see why you cannot publish the Programmatic Review ordered list, without at this point specifying where the cut is likely to fall (I appreciate that this remains uncertain for the moment).

I know that your first reaction is likely to be one of irritation at our lack of confidence in STFC. However I'm sure you are aware of a rather widespread view that we should be calling for even more drastic measures.

I will not be sending this out to RAS members until tomorrow, to give you some time to think about it. We do not intend to put out a press release on this or to send it to DIUS. I can be reached on my mobile [number given].

Regards, Michael