

STFC must be more transparent, says board

□ The Science and Technology Facilities Council must establish a more open dialogue with the physics community, its Science Board has warned.

The advisory body met on 23 and 24 January to discuss the STFC's programmatic review with the Particle Physics, Astronomy and Nuclear Physics Science Committee and the Physical and Life Sciences Committee.

The meeting concluded that the STFC's council, board and committees must all produce regular communications on their work and be more transparent about how STFC spending works to achieve its stated goals.

It added that future "discretionary" spending on any significant scale should be decided via a peer review process.

The advice comes after scientists complained that they were not openly consulted about the STFC's plans to make cuts in certain areas to accommodate its flat cash comprehensive spending review settlement.

Both PPAN and PALS presented the board with a prioritised list of activities as part of the STFC's ongoing programmatic review. However, these have not been published.

As part of its presentation to the board, PPAN recommended that the STFC should not consider transferring money from the rest of its programme to plug the 25 per cent cuts being made to grants.