BGS BOARD
Summary of fifth meeting
Friday 12 April 2019

Present
Sir Keith O’Nions (Chair), Sir Mike Dixon, Paul Fox, Dr Donna Kirkwood, Professor John Ludden, Dr Mike Patterson, Olivier Peyret, Professor Richard Williams, Joanne Wilson, David Simpson, Neil McCarthy (Secretary)

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS
There were no interests declared relevant to the agenda.

MINUTES OF 25 JANUARY 2019 MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING
The minutes and public summary of the 25 January 2019 meeting were approved without further amendment.

BOARD LEVEL RISK REGISTER
The board discussed the proposed board-level risk register, which they agreed captured the risk categories identified at the board’s discussion on 24 January. Further work would be done on the register so it presents the most significant new or ongoing specific risks in each category. The proposed risk categories were reviewed in turn and were agreed as Governance; Infrastructure; Financial Performance; Business Continuity; Health and Safety; Reputation; Operations and HR; Science quality and delivery; Business plan; and IT and Cybersecurity.

HEALTH AND SAFETY
The board was informed of the adoption of a new Health and Safety reporting framework. It was emphasised that BGS is not a high-incident organisation. The board noted the current focus on international travel, and was informed of the process for sign-off of travel to higher risk countries and that the new UKRI Health and Safety portal will offer a facility to track staff who are overseas.

CEO UPDATE
The board was informed that the new science strategy will be launched at stakeholder events in London (17 June) and Edinburgh (19 June). The board discussed expenditure on the BGS Public Science Role (PSR) in 2018-19, and will receive a report on the PSR delivery in 2018-19 at its next meeting on 31 July.

BOARD APPRAISAL EFFECTIVENESS
The board had met earlier to undertake an appraisal of its first year performance. It recognised that in terms of its composition and capabilities, these meet the present requirements for the board to function well, but it will keep this under review. The business plan is a key deliverable for the board to reach steady-state operations, and until this is completed it will not achieve the effectiveness that
it aspires to. The board recognises the challenges imposed by changes in leadership and restructuring and felt that these risks have been adequately handled at this stage. It will continue to monitor the situation.

BOARD LEVEL KPIs

The board discussed proposed top-level KPIs and was informed how the proposed KPIs had been derived from the large number of indicators which BGS has to report on to UKRI/NERC. It was felt that there is a lot of qualitative information in the KPIs, and that more quantitative data would be valuable, particularly in measuring science quality, external income, commercialisation and growth. It was recognised that this is work in progress and agreed that the framework would be developed with the intention of bringing a revised framework to the July board meeting so it can be considered alongside the draft business plan.

BGS SCIENCE PROGRAMME REORGANISATION

The board was updated on the science programme reorganisation and progress with making appointments to the Chief Digital Officer post and the remaining Chief Scientist posts. Board members are closely involved in the appointment process. The board was reassured that staff are supportive of the new science strategy.

FINANCE

The finance report was considered, and the board was informed that although the end-year process is still ongoing, it is expected that BGS will have ended 2018-19 with a budget surplus of circa £2.1m (this related to prior year income). The full end-year position will be presented to the July board meeting. It was proposed that a full financial budget for 2019-20 should be prepared pending a business plan. This will need board sign-off.

ESTATES

The board discussed the BGS estate and covered a range of points, including the new business plan needing to contain a statement on the potential size and shape of BGS and the possible estate requirements; the frequency of NERC’s condition surveys of its estate; wider local authority plans around the Keyworth site; and partnership working to deliver the strategy and business plan. The board view was that clarity on the business plan requirement for estates is needed and that work will need to be done to look at the possible estate requirements to inform the business plan.

SIR KEITH O’NIONS
Chair of the BGS board

31 July 2019