

1. The Chair welcomed Polina Bayvel to her first meeting, noted apologies from Michael Lamb, Jim Al-Khalili and Vicky Pope, and asked each member to briefly introduce themselves. She then asked the Secretary to summarise policy developments in the Council that had consequences for science & engineering.
2. He reminded SEAG of the Council's definition of cultural relations (building relationships and trust for the UK) and the three big challenges under this, which translated into three programme areas. He then explained the different programme strategies and how science & engineering could help deliver the objectives of these. He also noted the importance of science as one of the Council's charitable objects. The Advisory Group asked for a schematic explanation of the connection between programme areas, geographical regions, sectors and the commissioning process. They also asked for details of how their advice was being fed into Council thinking, for example on the Darwin 200 project.
3. The Secretary's update was followed by a *tour de table* to learn of new developments in the activities of each member. Sustainable development and climate change issues were high on people's agenda. Neil Champeness, on a visit to Brazil, had noted a lack of knowledge on hydrogen power there and also that the UK had a reputation for starting things but not carrying them through.
4. The Chair then asked Claire McNulty to explain the proposed 'Opening Doors' global product, designed to facilitate international cooperation among early-stage researchers. The product will provide for thematic workshops, follow-up travel grants and career development. Steve Walters followed with an explanation of the proposed 'Science for Sustainability' product, which took in a broad view of sustainability and ecosystem services including education and biodiversity.
6. In discussion of Opening Doors, SEAG noted that the term 'knowledge exchange' rather than 'knowledge transfer' should be used, and that for monitoring and evaluation purposes there was a need to keep longitudinal records of the people who participate and make lasting contacts. Turning to sustainability, the importance of faith groups to climate change was noted as part of re-positioning climate change outside the conventional discourse and within human values and culture. Similarly here, the nature of the challenge was now about culture; why the solutions weren't happening. Lastly, science communication was discussed as an area of work. SEAG felt it should be a central part of all existing and proposed products, encouraging people to build science communication skills, rather than a distinct, separate product.
5. Discussion of these two proposals was followed by a debate about a general brief for products that would deliver against a research & innovation objective under the Knowledge Economy programme area. The Advisory Group, in discussing scientific topics and promoting mechanisms, emphasised the need to always look for the unique Council angle; the cultural dimension of the issue, tending towards revealing the softer, values-driven opinions of different cultures and an understanding of these local differences in assisting cooperation on international scientific issues. Looking at sustainability, for example, the Council could focus on 'towards greater sustainability' or 'local attitudes to global sustainability'. It was important to understand the social, economic and psychological barriers to change in different cultures and why behaviour doesn't change, so that these can be addressed.