

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH IN NUCLEAR SCIENCEGENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held in the Board Room, Treasury Buildings, Whitehall at 2.45 p.m. on Monday, February 9th 1959.

PRESENT:

Lord Bridges (in the Chair)
Professor J. Diamond
Sir James Mountford
Sir Donald Perrott
Professor D.H. Wilkinson
Mr. P. Bowles
Mr. G.W. Dixon
Dr. T.G. Pickavance
Dr. J.A.V. Willis (Secretary)

The Chairman said that he had invited Professor Diamond to join the Committee during Professor Peierls absence in the U.S.A.

1. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Committee approved the minutes of their fourth meeting of 1958.

The Secretary said that there was an error in his statement recorded in the third sentence of minute 6. The words "it was for items not provided for under Civil Service and A.E.A. Regulations for ordinary staff" should be replaced by "all entertainment authorised by N.I.R.N.S. staff would be charged to this account".

2. MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING ON JANUARY 16th 1959.

The Committee approved the minutes of the special meeting subject to deletion of the second paragraph:- "In answer to questions.... if the contract were placed with either."

3. QUARTERLY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS ON THE 7 GeV PROJECT

Dr. Pickavance introduced N.I.(GP)(59) 2 and referred first to the increase of £340,000 in the estimate. He pointed out that the increase occurred mainly in the vacuum chamber section of the plant budget and said that this was not wholly attributable to the change in design of the vacuum chamber. He believed that the original estimate was low for the original design. In reply to Professor Diamond, he confirmed that the change in design was the result of further study in the course of the design, and not the result of information from other accelerator projects. The Chairman recalled that so far this is the only item on which complete redesign involving greatly increased cost has been found necessary.

ACTION I The Committee approved the increased estimate now totalling £7.77M.

The Chairman asked Sir Donald Perrott to report the increase to the Treasury at the proper time.

Turning to Appendix 2 the Committee noted that an estimated under-expenditure in 1959/60 now appeared for the first time in addition to the large estimated under-expenditure in 1958/9. The Chairman said that there were however some new items on which the Institute would seek to start expenditure in 1959/60.

The Committee noted that the latest estimated total cost appearing on the third graph in Appendix 5 does not agree with the figure in Appendix 1.

[SECRETARY'S NOTE: The total shown on the graph includes the estimated effect of the cost variation clause CVC 2 in the building contract. This is not included in Appendix 1 since the Treasury will not allow its inclusion in the estimate - see (NI(GP)(57) Second Meeting Minute 2(g)]

4. QUARTERLY GENERAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The Secretary said that paper N.I.(GP)(59) 3 was intended to present the current general financial position and proposals in a manner analogous to the presentation on the 7 GeV project.

The Committee noted that the information on expenditure in 1958/59 given in Table 1 of the paper shows a large estimated over-expenditure on recurrent items as compared with the approved estimates. This is greatly outweighed by the very large estimated under-expenditure on capital projects.

The Committee considered that the presentation in Table 2 of approved and proposed expenditure should be improved so as to bring out more clearly which items are a matter of record and which are requests for approval by the Committee. The Secretary said that capital items b1, b3, and b5 were the subjects of separate requests for approval which would come before the Committee later in the meeting. Item c1 would be the subject of a separate request at a later date. Items c6 and c7 were requests for approval of expenditure on individually small items within the total stated. Recurrent item a7 and the increase in recurrent item a4 (on the second page of the table) were requests for increases in the amount of money which might be spent on work at Universities and in Industry. Individual cases would be referred to the Committee if they were outside the limits of delegation to the Director, Rutherford Laboratory. (N.I.(GP)(58) 20).

ACTION 2. The Committee approved the following additional expenditure in 1959/60 subject to approval being obtained for individual items of amounts exceeding the delegation already given, and subject to the availability of funds.

Expenditure on small capital items under University Agreements.	£10,000
Minor Works at the Rutherford Laboratory	10,000
Recurrent expenditure on University agreements, (in place of £20,000 previously authorised).	40,000
Recurrent expenditure on research in industry.	10,000

Sir Donald Perrott suggested that a proposal should be put to the Governing Board that they should adopt the policy of putting out to Industry and the Universities as much research and development as possible rather than undertaking it within the Institute. It was agreed that such a paper should be prepared.

Professor Wilkinson asked when the planning of expenditure in 1960/61 would be started. It was agreed that this should be started in good time and Dr. Pickavance and the Secretary were instructed to get in touch with the universities so that their views would be known before the 1960/61 estimates were prepared next summer.

5. SECOND PHASE OF BUILDING AT THE RUTHERFORD LABORATORY

In dealing with paper N.I.(GP)(59) 4 the Chairman first asked whether the Committee agreed with the recommendation that the time had now come to draw the line between amendments to the original scheme and the inevitable further development of the Laboratory. The Committee agreed that apart from certain small items, such as items 2 and 3 of the paper, which were clearly best regarded as amendments to the original scheme, the present proposals should be treated as phase 2 of the development of the Laboratory.

Dr. Pickavance detailed the purpose each building, as indicated in the paper, and explained that approval of items 2, 6 and 9 was not at present requested, and that item 3 had already been approved. He also drew attention to the proposal, in paragraph 4 of the paper, that a small number of A.E.R.E. staff not working for the Institute, would be accommodated at the Rutherford Laboratory as a matter of convenience. Sir Donald Perrott said that the Authority would be perfectly ready to pay a rent for this accommodation if the Institute wished.

Mr. Dixon tabled plans and a drawing of the Laboratory after completion of the proposed scheme. After discussion the Committee generally approved the recommendation in paragraph 10 of the paper, but decided that the sum of money asked for in the case to be submitted to the A.E.A. and the Treasury should be reduced by 10%, on the ground that the estimate in the paper contained a contingency allowance of this amount.

NOTE The figure added up at the meeting as the total for which approval was asked was £419,000 (the sum of items 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, and 10). It was decided to cut this by 10% to £380,000. However, the cost of the new main road should have been included making the total £429,000 before the cut, and say £390,000 after it. In addition, the 10% fees have to be added to the sum requested from the Treasury, making the total to be asked for £430,000.

ACTION 3 The Committee approved the general scheme and layout presented in paper N.I.(GP)(59) 4 and drawing 470/HAL/20A. They instructed the Secretary to prepare a submission to the A.E.A. and the Treasury for approval of the scheme except items 2, 3, 6 and 9 at an estimated cost 10% less than that shown in the paper, and for expenditure of £80,000 of this in 1959/60, the same sum being surrendered from the estimated expenditure on the 7 GeV project in 1959/60.

Dr. Pickavance stated that as the plans developed he would discuss the details of accommodation with potential users.

6. MODIFICATIONS AND REFURNISHING OF COSENNERS HOUSE

Mr. Dixon tabled plans of the proposed modifications referred to in paper N.I.(GP)(59) 5. The Committee expressed satisfaction with the general nature of the plans but noted that no assessment of the probable annual operating loss was included in the paper. The Secretary was instructed to prepare a forecast profit and loss account including the proposed rents for submission to the Chairman before tenders were obtained for the modifications.

7. PROPOSED FLATS FOR VISITORS WORKING AT THE RUTHERFORD LABORATORY

Mr. Dixon produced outline plans for a block of 12 versatile flats averaging three bedrooms each but capable of arrangement in a large variety of individual sizes. As indicated in paper N.I.(GP)(59) 6 the roughly estimated cost would be £45,000. Mr. Dixon said that this represented £3,000 each for the flats (£2.10s.0d. per sq. foot) 6 garages at £1,000 each, a boiler house at £4,000 and fees £4,000.

The Chairman said that this proposal must still be regarded as being at a somewhat preliminary stage. He asked the Secretary to enquire from the University Grants Committee how the cost compared with accommodation being provided for example at Keele. Sir Donald Perrott pointed out that the cost per flat was £750 more than the Authority pay for 3 bedroomed houses.

The Committee considered that a case ought to be made for providing family accommodation and invited Professor Wilkinson and Dr. Pickavance to look into this. The Committee also considered that a forecast operating account including the rents to be charged, should be prepared. In this connection Sir Donald Perrott suggested that the rents should provide for long term interest on the capital cost and for maintenance costs.

The Secretary said that although the plans submitted related to construction on an existing A.E.R.E. site at Oxford Road, Abingdon, the availability of this or any other A.E.R.E. site remained a matter for negotiation.

The Committee considered that when the points mentioned above had been attended to, the proposal should go before the Board.

8. PATENTS

The Committee considered that the proposals in paper N.I.(GP)(59)7 were reasonable but should be brought to the attention of the University Grants Committee and D.S.I.R. for their comments. Subject to any such comments the proposals should go before the Board.

9. SECRETARIAT STAFF

The Committee approved the proposals in paper N.I.(GP)(59) 8.

ACTION 4. The Committee approved the secondment of one Senior Executive Officer and one Senior Scientific Officer and up to 4 more junior staff from the A.E.R.E. to the N.I.R.N.S. Secretariat.

10. SHORT-TERM STAFF

In discussion of paper N.I.(GP)(59) 9 the Committee expressed preference for a smaller selection board for the appointment of short-term staff and suggested the omission of one member of the Visiting Committee and of the representative of the A.E.R.E. Establishment Branch.

Dr. Pickavance reported that it would be necessary at present to delete from the proposed advertisement the reference to F.S.S.U. benefits since the F.S.S.U. Central Committee had so far not accepted the Institute as a participating Institution.

ACTION 5. Subject to the above points the Committee approved the proposals in paper N.I.(GP)(59) 9 including the increase in the number of short-term posts from 3 to 5.

With regard to the difficulties over superannuation, the Committee approved the recommendation of Dr. Pickavance and the Secretary that a renewed application should be made to the F.S.S.U. for acceptance of the Institute as a participating Institution for the benefit of the short-term research staff.

10. D.C. GENERATORS

ACTION 6. The Committee considered paper N.I.(GP)(59) 10 and approved the recommendation to accept the tender of the General Electric Company for 4 motor generator sets at a total cost of £52,897.

11. NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was not fixed, but is expected to be during May 1959.

J.A.V. WILLIS
Secretary

Rutherford High Energy Laboratory,
Harwell, Berks.

13th February 1959.