

MINUTES OF MEETING

Title/Subject: Diamond User Committee Meeting #2

Venue:	Diamond House, Room G59	Chairman: Dr Joanna Collingwood
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Time/Date:	Friday 12 th February 2010	Secretary: Dr Dominic Semple
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PARTICIPANTS

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION

DUC members

Stuart Clarke
Bill Clegg
Joanna Collingwood
(Chair)
Ian Hamley
Malcolm McMahon
Keith Meek
Peter Moody
Pagona Papakonstantinou
Johan Turkenburg

Institution

University of Cambridge
University of Newcastle
University of Warwick

University of Reading
University of Edinburgh
University of Cardiff
University of Leicester
University of Ulster
University of York

**Diamond Light Source
representatives:**

Steve Collins
Andy Dent
Sarnjeet Dhesi

Gwyndaf Evans
Susan Judge
Fred Mosselmans

Nick Terrill

Kathryn Poulter

Trevor Rayment
Dave Stuart
Dr Chiu Tang

Richard Walker
Martin Walsh

Materials Village Coordinator
Physical Sciences Coordinator
Surfaces & Interfaces Village
Coordinator
MX Village Coordinator
User Office Manager
Spectroscopy Village
Coordinator
Soft Condensed Matter Village
Coordinator
Science Division Project
Controller
Director, Physical Sciences
Director, Life Sciences
Engineering & Environmental
Science Village Coordinator
Director, Technical Division
Life Sciences Coordinator

APOLOGIES

Emyr MacDonald,
University of Cardiff

1. INTRODUCTIONS AND OPENING REMARKS

Joanna Collingwood welcomed everyone and meeting participants all introduced themselves.

Apologies were received from Emyr McDonald.

2. MINUTES AND ACTIONS

The Minutes of the meeting held on 30th July 2009 were approved.

Action 1.1 - Completed with the appointment of Joanna Collingwood as Chair for a period of 2 years until June 2011.

Action 1.4 – Gwyndaf Evans reported that there was an ongoing review to look at the information required by the safety Group.

Actions 1.5 & 1.6 – would be addressed in the User office talk. It was reported that Phase II of Ridgeway House had begun.

All other actions were completed.

3. ESUO

Joanna Collingwood reported that she had attended the first European Synchrotron User Organisation meeting in Lisbon. Malcolm Cooper was the formal UK representative, and Joanna was attending (as Chair of the DUC) as an observer. The aim of ESUO was to act as a European voice, to support best practice in support of Users, and to lobby on behalf of synchrotron Users.

4. USER REPRESENTATIVES REPORT

Malcolm McMahon led this item which discussed issues raised by Users.

i) “Lack of meaningful feedback” on proposals

Trevor Rayment accepted that the quality of feedback on some proposals could be better, and that sometimes the panels got their feedback wrong. He commented that this was an issue for all facilities. He reported that the key to the feedback was the person who took the notes at the panel, and this would be a Beamline or Support Scientist who was from a different Village to avoid conflicts of interest. Trevor suggested that if Users were unhappy with their feedback and if they had a genuine issue, then they should e-mail the appropriate Science Director with the User Office copied into the correspondence. Trevor added that new Users could apply for undertaking preliminary experiments or use of the offline laboratories with help from Diamond staff.

ii) Vending machines

It was noted that things had improved, but that problems still remained. The DUC was informed that one issue was that there was a site wide contract for vending. Meetings had taken place with the contractor and an automated system was being trialed on one vending machine for letting the contractor know when a vending machine was empty.

iii) Beamtime Allocation Panels

Trevor Rayment explained that a panel Chair would be appointed after he/she had served at least one year on the Panel. The Chair would then be appointed for a period of 2 years. Trevor acknowledged that this may not have been the case in the early years of Diamond, and informed the DUC that Sue Judge would ensure that the information regarding the period of office of a Panel Chair would be made clear on the website/Usernet.

Action: Sue Judge.

It was noted that one User had mistakenly thought that only 1.5 shifts were available on each beamline per day, and so they had been awarded less time than they had hoped for. Trevor explained that all operational beamlines awarded 3 shifts per day, although only 1.5 shifts/day were currently available on B23 due to the required commissioning time. Sue Judge was requested to update the website/Usernet with clear information regarding the number of shifts/day available on each beamline.

Action: Sue Judge.

The DUC were further informed that if a User received an unfeasibly small amount of beamtime, then they should contact the relevant Science Director.

iv) "Idle beamlines"

Concerns had been raised about beamlines which appeared to be lying idle, and whether they could be used by Users. Trevor Rayment explained that beamlines which appeared to be idle may be amidst commissioning, or may have problems. Indeed, some software or controls changes could only be made when there were no Users. Diamond was optimising the processes needed to allow Users to gain access to beamlines at short notice if this was required due to problems on other beamlines. However, most beamlines were different, and even if time was available on another beamline it would not mean that the experiment would be possible. Diamond's aim was for flexible and versatile beamline access. Dave Stuart added that User self-scheduling was close to release.

In response to a question, Sue Judge explained that Diamond would fund up to 3 Users per run/project, but that Diamond would fund 4 if this was required for safety reasons. This was made clear on the Notification Form. Trevor added that Diamond would also pay for an additional prior-visit if that was required.

v) Number of application rounds/timings

Diamond was asked if it could move to 3 application rounds per year, and put the submission deadlines out of synchronisation with the ESRF. It was noted that the Diamond deadlines were already 1 month different to the ESRF deadlines, and that increasing the number of application rounds would create a lot of extra work when there were currently higher priorities for Diamond. It was noted that some PBSs were e-mailing the beamline schedule to the scheduled Users giving them the opportunity to comment, and this was seen as a highly desirable practice.

vi) Publications database

Trevor informed the DUC that this was currently being worked-on. One aim was to be able to import data from the Web of Science (for example) and to link to the online proposal system. Users had requested that the publications database be made compatible with commonly used referencing software such as EndNote.

vii) Other issues/feedback

Malcolm McMahon summarised feedback from the Users:

- The Users had reported that the support from the Diamond Beamline staff was excellent;
- There had been a significant improvement in the hospitality at Ridgeway House which “was fantastic”;
- Evening meals at Ridgeway House were “working quite well”.

Diamond was asked if it could publish guidance for (new) applicants on the website on how proposals would be judged, and what they should include when writing a proposal.

Action: Sue Judge.

The Chair suggested that the names of the Village Coordinators should be posted at the beamlines and vending facilities, and Diamond management agreed to this.

Action: Sue Judge

Peter Moody noted that he had received many comments of a minor nature which he did not feel it was worth raising at the meeting, but had raised with the relevant Village Coordinator before the meeting. It was also noted that the Users should be encouraged to raise these concerns directly with Diamond rather than through representation on DUC. The Chair asked for the minor comments to be sent to her, and it was agreed that one DUC Member per meeting would volunteer to examine the ‘minor’ comments before each meeting.

5. MACHINE UPDATE REPORT

Richard Walker gave a presentation to update the DUC on developments and performance with the machine.

6. PHYSICAL SCIENCES REPORT

Trevor Rayment gave a presentation to update progress on the physical sciences beamlines.

After the presentation Trevor asked the DUC for comments on the style of presentation, and whether the information given was what the DUC required.

Trevor was asked if the demand ratio data could be put on the Usernet, but he explained that he would not wish the data to discourage people from applying for beamtime.

7. LIFE SCIENCES UPDATE

Dave Stuart gave a presentation to update progress on the life sciences beamlines.

A discussion ensued as to whether Diamond could publish data on successful proposals on the website. There was concern from Diamond management that as even the titles of projects were very specific, that this would give away information on what was being done. The PI name and the HEI/affiliation was already published.

8. OFFLINE LABORATORIES

Trevor Rayment gave a presentation to update progress on the offline laboratories.

In response to questioning, Trevor informed the DUC that the system for Users applying for use of the offline laboratories should be in place by June 2010, for Users to make use of them from the Autumn AP. There is already an informal system in place. The Chair requested that information on what laboratories/facilities were available should be made available as soon as possible.

Nick Terrill pointed-out that some of the facilities could be used on-line, so it was important that there was interaction with the relevant PBS.

Stuart Clarke stated that he was very pleased with the facilities available, and that Diamond's approach was excellent.

There was discussion on synchrotron building access, and the length of time that access was granted. Sue Judge explained that Diamond needed to monitor who was on site, and to ensure that the relevant health and safety training had been undertaken before granting access. She added that more general access was possible depending on the individual and the requirements.

Trevor added that there were still issues to be addressed, and that a document on Access Issues would be circulated to the DUC and to the beamline staff for comment.

Action: Trevor Rayment

9. USER OFFICE REPORT

Sue Judge gave a presentation to update progress in the User Office.

In response to questions Sue confirmed that:

- copies of all new proposals would be available in the new system;
- the User office would send out a final e-mail to Users confirming what had been booked;
- the User Office would send a graded ERA back to the Users;
- the problems with copying text in the proposal system had been recognised, and that the aim would be to allow a downloadable template which could be edited and then uploaded as a pdf;
- travel claims forms still need to be submitted in hardcopy.

Dave Stuart explained that any scheduling always required the intervention of the PBS before being fixed.

Keith Meeks stated that the Users were very happy with the User Office which was judged to be very efficient, friendly and patient.

Sue explained that with the BAGs, access to the online Notification Form (for giving information on who was coming to Diamond etc) was available to the PI and the alternative contact. Access to a PI/contact from each group could be enabled by the overall PI, but that the information which was submitted should not be changed after submission.

Diamond was informed that at the ESRF information on who was coming (including accommodation bookings) could not be completed/submitted until all of those coming had passed the safety test. This was deemed a good idea.

10. BUDGET UPDATE

Gerd Materlik gave a presentation to update the DUC on the budget situation.

11. USER MEETING

Laura Holland, the Diamond Events Manager joined the meeting for this discussion. During discussions she showed the DUC a slide illustrating the current planned events/workshops.

Workshop	Venue	Audience	Date
IR community meeting	Diamond	User (60)	April/May (TBC)
XAFS training	Diamond	Post-doc/early stage (20)	June
XRMS-10 Conference	Diamond	User (100)	June
SRMS-MEDSI	Saïd Business School	User (materials) and SR engineer (300)	July
SAXS workshop	Cardiff	User (60)	September
BCA/CCP4 meeting (DLS visit)	RAL	User (50 TBC)	September
SI village workshop	Diamond	User (50)	September/October TBC
SR Summer School	Diamond/Oxford	PhD/Early stage (30)	September
EPM Workshop	Diamond	User (40)	November

There was much discussion on the potential User meeting, whether there should be a single general meeting and whether there should be plenary and parallel sessions. It was suggested that people would not come to a general User meeting, but would come to specialised workshops. MX turn-out was particularly bad at the large User meeting-type events.

There was discussion (without agreement) as to whether leaving the name "Diamond" out of the meeting title would encourage more attendees.

Fred Mosselmann explained that at the EXAFS workshop there were ~50-55% PIs in attendance, and that there had been an open session where anyone could give a 5 minute talk.

It was felt that posters (with poster prizes) were to be encouraged, as these promoted interdisciplinarity as the poster sessions were where the interactions took place. It was deemed important to get a good cohort of students.

The DUC recommended that:

- The idea for a general User Meeting with the traditional format should be dropped;
- A limited number of specialist workshops should be organised to be co-located and coincide (at Diamond): these would run during the mornings, and early afternoon, with an activity bringing all the workshop attendees together in the late afternoon/evening;
- Poster sessions should be organised, with a competitive element;

- The idea for Plenary sessions should be dropped, and replaced with a joint poster session in the late afternoon, and a single good and entertaining speaker who could speak, perhaps before the Conference Dinner. Suggestions for *Big Name* speakers were requested to be sent to the Chair as soon as possible.

Action: ALL

- The DUC were asked to send the Chair ideas for topics for workshops and suggestions for speakers *that they wished to hear*.

Action: DUC

- The Village Coordinators were asked to seek input from their User Communities for workshop ideas, to feed back to LH and the Chair by 26th February. **Action: LH/Chair**

It was **agreed** that the next DUC Meeting should be held the morning before the “User meeting” Started, and that there should be a shorter wash-up meeting immediately after the event.

Subject to confirmation of dates, **the next DUC Meeting** will take place on the morning of :

Wednesday 8th September 2010.

12. AOB

It was agreed that future DUC Meetings should have a 30 minute break-out session where the DUC members could have meetings with the relevant Village Coordinators to discuss issues and problems. These break-out sessions should take place early in the meeting.

Action: Dominic Semple/Kathryn Poulter

Annex A: New Actions

Action	Actionee	Target Completion Date / Status
To update the Diamond website/Usernet to make clear the term a Peer Review Panel Chair would serve.	Sue Judge	
To update the website/Usernet with information regarding the number of shifts available per day on each beamline accepting beamline proposals.	Sue Judge	
To put guidance on the website/Usernet for new applicants on key points for writing a proposal.	Sue Judge	
To post the names of the Village Coordinators at all beamlines and vending facilities (where users would gather).	Sue Judge	
To circulate a document on beamline access to the DUC and beamline staff	Trevor Rayment	
To send Joanna Collingwood suggestions for Workshop sessions and speakers they would wish to hear.	Village Coordinators; DUC	
To send suggestions for <i>Big Name</i> speakers to Joanna Collingwood.	ALL	
To organise future DUC Agendas to allow a break-out session early in the meeting for DUC members to meet their Village Coordinators and discuss issues.	Dominic Semple/ Kathryn Poulter	