



CaSE Briefing in advance of the Estimates Day Debate, Monday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2008, on the:

## Science Budget Allocations

### Campaign for Science & Engineering (CaSE)

- CaSE (formerly Save British Science) is an advocate for increased investment and support for science and engineering in the UK. We are a membership organisation comprised of individuals, companies, charities, universities, learned and professional societies.

### Science Budget

- CaSE welcomed the overall increase in the Science Budget announced in the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review. However, CaSE shares the concerns of the Innovation, Universities, Science and Skills Committee that the increase in the Science Budget was not sufficient to cover both existing commitments and new priorities, such as increasing the rate of Full Economic Cost, the Technology Strategy Board and Cross-Council Research Programmes.
- **The Government must not undermine the UK's funding for fundamental research as it is critical for training a highly skilled workforce, retaining and attracting corporate R&D, and improving the UK's international standing in science.**

### Science Budget Allocation Process

- CaSE strongly supports the Haldane Principle, which stipulates the independence of Research Councils from government control. We are concerned about the application of the Haldane Principle in the latest Science Budget Allocations. The Government has used the Haldane Principle to avoid taking responsibility for decisions it made – the overall level of funding for Research Councils and their delivery plans.
- **CaSE supports the IUSS Committee's recommendation to make the Science Budget Allocations process more transparent by publishing any guidance from the Government to Research Councils. Without this information it is impossible to assess the degree to which the Government is directing Research Councils and who should be held responsible for decisions.**

### Science and Technology Facilities Council (STFC) Funding Allocation and Delivery Plan

- CaSE shares the particle physics and astronomical communities' concerns about the STFC Funding Allocation and Delivery Plan. Although the Government should not interfere in deciding between research projects, it should take responsibility for its role in determining the STFC's funding allocation and approving the delivery plan, which could lead to a reduction in research grants. **There should be no irreversible cuts to research in this area until the Wakeham Review reports. The Government must respond constructively to the Review's findings in order to maintain the UK's international standing in science.**

### Science Budget in Context

- It is critical to note that the Science Budget constitutes one part of the Government's support for R&D in the UK. The Government must increase Departmental investment in R&D and create the environment necessary for corporations and research charities to invest in R&D. Otherwise there will be greater pressure for Research Councils to focus on government priorities and commercial opportunities at the expense of fundamental research. This would be short-sighted as the UK's research base is an extremely valuable asset to the country and should not be stretched too thin.

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