

Summary Annual Review

Campaign for
Science &
Engineering
in the UK



A digest of CaSE's activities over a year

July 2006 to June 2007

Throughout the year, CaSE carries out a vast range of campaigning activities on behalf of science and engineering in the UK. This summary gives a few highlights. More details of CaSE's work can be found on our website: www.sciencecampaign.org.uk

The past year has been a remarkably busy one for CaSE as we have redoubled our efforts on behalf the membership. Across all three of the major priorities identified last year, we have been campaigning at the heart of Parliament and Government.

First, in the area of science education, CaSE's Advisory Council formulated a set of strong arguments and engaged at the highest levels of Government.

On the issue of making the UK an attractive place for private sector research and development, CaSE held a major Opinion Forum, at which our members and supporters interacted with senior figures from the Treasury.

After his speech about science policy, CaSE prompted the Prime Minister to say he would review his Government's policies on university funding - our third major priority.

As this Summary Annual Review shows, these highlights are part of a much wider programme of meetings, publications and media activity, backed up by continual engagement with the science and engineering communities across the public and private sectors. From references in Parliamentary reports to interviews on network television and presentations to business audiences, CaSE is constantly speaking up for the science and engineering community.

The formation of a new Government by Gordon Brown will present fresh challenges for CaSE in the coming year. It will be crucial for us to build strong links with new ministers and officials. We have already started that process, and are confident that CaSE will continue to be one of the strongest voices campaigning for the health of British science.



Representatives of universities, companies and learned societies participate in CaSE's Opinion Forum for Member Organisations

CaSE's Chairman Prof Hugh Griffiths and Director Dr Peter Cotgreave with Baroness Sharp of the Advisory Council

Professor Hugh Griffiths
Chairman

Dr Peter Cotgreave
Director



CaSE's people

CaSE's activities would not be possible without the support of thousands of scientists and engineers, many universities, companies, societies and other individuals and organisations that have joined as members. CaSE relies on the dedication and hard work of its small team of staff, together with the members of its Executive Committee and Advisory Council.

During the year, CaSE:

- has appointed an outstanding Assistant Director, Dr Hilary Leever, who has strengthened and expanded our work, especially in the field of education.

- has increased its membership across a range of sectors, with new members including the Institution of Chemical Engineers, Institute of Food Research, the Ordnance Survey, Lancaster University and London Metropolitan University.

- commemorated Professor Richard Joyner's ten years as Chairman and elected Professor Hugh Griffiths as his successor.

- used the collective authority of its Advisory Council to secure a crucial meeting with Treasury ministers.

- continued to strengthen its network of contacts, holding meetings with representatives of companies, pressure groups, learned societies, trade associations, trades unions, academic associations and other organisations.

New Assistant Director Dr Hilary Leever meets outgoing Chairman Prof. Richard Joyner

Lord May of Oxford (left) meets Dr Norma Morris and Prof. Don Braben of CaSE's Executive Committee on the occasion of his Annual Distinguished Lecture on *How to stimulate creativity and how to stifle it*

Writer and broadcaster Simon Singh and Professor Mike Smith of Sheffield Hallam University both spoke at this year's Opinion Forum for Member Organisations

CaSE regularly visits organisations that subscribe to membership, such as Newcastle University, Sharp Laboratories and Bradford University.

July 2006

CaSE focuses on science in schools, publishing its evidence to a House of Lords inquiry, meeting with the Shadow Education Secretary and giving an interview for BBC Radio.



August 2006

Focusing on the commercialisation of university research, CaSE publishes letters and articles in the Financial Times, The Scientist and Innovation Policy Review.

September 2006

A major Opinion Forum involving the Treasury, business and academia allows CaSE to examine ways in which the UK's level of investment in research and development can be enhanced.

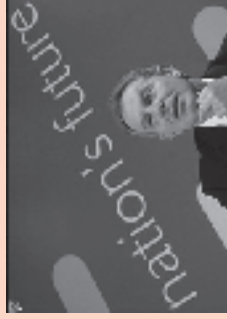


October 2006

A whole variety of CaSE's activities focus on ensuring that public policies allow the economic benefits of science to be realised. These include taking part in meetings, delivering talks, commenting in the broadcast and print media, giving evidence to inquiries and participating in events with ministers.

November 2006

CaSE is at the forefront of discussions about the future of science policy, tackling the Prime Minister following in speech about science and reacting in the media.



December 2006

CaSE focuses on European science policy, leading the criticism of European Union plans to create a new Institute rather than addressing underlying weaknesses in funding mechanisms.



January 2007

A meeting of distinguished scientists and engineers on CaSE's Advisory Council prepares a letter to the Chancellor to urge greater action to address the problems of science in schools.



February 2007

CaSE leads the science community in condemning the cuts to the Science Budget announced by the Secretary of State for Trade & Industry. An important article in the Guardian, comment on BBC radio and elsewhere, meetings with Treasury and DTI officials, and an uncompromising letter to the Trade Secretary ensure our message gets across.

March 2007

A major area of concern - the poor advice children receive about careers in science - is addressed in an Opinion Forum document, publishing the views of a wide range of interested groups.



April 2007

Leading the debate about the profile of science in Government, CaSE published an article in the Daily Telegraph calling for science to have a stronger place at the Cabinet table, and follows this up with another article in the Financial Times.



May 2007

An editorial in Nature, the world's leading scientific journal, urges the science community to support CaSE's important campaigning work on behalf of British science and engineering.



June 2007

As a new Government takes office, CaSE meets with ministers and officials, sets out an agenda in the broadcast and print media, addresses two meetings in Parliament, engages with Opposition front benchers, helps backbenchers draft Parliamentary questions, and holds discussions with businesspeople, academics and schoolteachers, proving that CaSE remains at the forefront of the campaign to sustain and enhance the health of UK science and engineering.

CaSE in Westminster and Whitehall

CaSE's main work is to influence Government policies on science and engineering. To do this, we meet directly with ministers, civil servants and advisers, and engage with backbenchers and Committees in both Houses of Parliament.

During the year, CaSE:

- has engaged regularly with top levels of Government, including with the Prime Minister and at senior level with the Treasury.
- has held meetings with the Science and Higher Education Ministers, and other ministers and officials from the Department of Trade & Industry (DTI), Department for Education & Skills (DfES), Office of Science & Innovation (OSI), Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE) and other agencies, including Lord Sainsbury's independent review of science and innovation policies.
- has given presentations at several meetings in Parliament.
- has regularly met and corresponded with Shadow ministers from the main Opposition parties.
- included Treasury officials and Parliamentarians from both Houses in its Opinion Forum events and other meetings.
- has been regularly and repeatedly cited in various Parliamentary and Government reports.

■ has assisted backbenchers in both Houses in drafting Parliamentary Questions and speeches, including helping members of the main Opposition parties respond to various Government announcements.



House of Commons
Science and Technology
Committee

Scientific Advice, Risk
and Evidence Based
Policy Making

Seventh Report of Session 2005–06

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Science and Technology Evidence ix 35

26 May 2006 Dr Richard Price, Professor Martin Taylor, Dr Caroline Wallace and Dr Peter Craggs

Q187 Mr Nield: I suspect the rest of the panel agree with that.

Dr Craggs: Could I just add something which is worth looking at when we think about this scientific advice? It tends to be going on at the lowest levels of individual civil servants working in departments on the daily grind of working on policies. I think that is the main reason there is great confusion in the department. We would say that often they are looking for a quick fix and not having something well.

Q188 Mr Nield: Dr Craggs, you have been known to comment that there is a need to distinguish between decisions which have been based on evidence and those that are judgment calls.

Dr Craggs: Yes.

Q189 Dr Nield: Do you think the Government does the very well or poorly or do you think they when there is a gap and the role that scientific advice is playing in that decision should be made more transparent?

Dr Craggs: The answer to the first question is that I do not know because the answer to the second question is yes it needs to be more transparent and I do not know whether the Government is making those decisions as clearly as it should because that process is not transparent. If you take something like the fact that there is a decision about whether you have got a deal even with that the you could do everything from, in the one end, nothing to, in the other end, being very clear and being in the UK to sign the deal. We have to do something in between those two things and you have to believe the risk that the time will spend with the risk to the private industry and all the other associated risks.

- evaluate scientific advice from external sources and identify the implications for policy.⁶⁵

43. Clearly, departments will need to buy in external expertise to supplement their in-house expertise but the memoranda we received also highlighted the need for the civil service to maintain sufficient scientific literacy to render it an effective, or 'intelligent', customer of science and research. The Campaign for Science and Engineering (CaSE) told us "it is only possible for Government to handle risk and science appropriately if it has a sufficiently expert and critical in-house capability to allow it to formulate the questions it needs to ask of external experts."⁶⁶ The Centre for Evidence Based Policy and Practice also said that "securing scientific advice depend[ed] on an in-house capability to handle it—identifying when science can contribute to policy, working it out from a wide range of sources and interpreting its relevance to policy."⁶⁷ In addition, the Science Council expressed concern that "often the department or unit responsible for handling an issue on behalf of government will have little or no in-house expertise in the area of policy under review", citing the example of "the HSE lead on MRI and the EU Physical Agents Directive"—the subject of one of our case studies.⁶⁸

65 Not published

66 p.110

67 p.112

Parliamentarians from both houses and other members of CaSE's Advisory Council meet at the House of Lords

Throughout the year, CaSE has met, questioned and corresponded with ministers including Tony Blair, Alistair Darling, Gordon Brown and Bill Rammell

Parliamentary reports, such as one of scientific advice to Government, regularly draw on CaSE's evidence

Parliamentarian Lord Jenkin of Roding and Treasury Official Caroline Barr address two of CaSE's Opinion Forums





CaSE in Scotland, Wales & Northern Ireland

CaSE has an active programme of engaging with parliamentarians, ministers and civil servants in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Highlights during the year included:

- CaSE's publication of Party leaders' responses to questions about their science policies, in advance of the elections to the Scottish Parliament and National Assembly for Wales.

- CaSE's publication of an *Opinion Forum* about science education in Northern Ireland based on meetings with a wide range of interested individuals and groups.

- CaSE's involvement with other science organisations in events held in Edinburgh and Cardiff, called *Science & the Scottish Parliament* and *Science & the Welsh Assembly*.

- meetings, correspondence and discussion with politicians and officials from the devolved administrations including Welsh First Minister Rhodri Morgan AM, Scottish Chief Scientist Professor Anne Glover, and Ulster Unionist frontbencher Ken Robinson MLA.

- discussions and meetings with representatives from institutions as diverse as Aberystwyth University and Shell in Aberdeen.

- participation in an event about science policy with Welsh First Minister Rhodri Morgan and publication of a major article in the journal of the Institute of Welsh Affairs about the future of science in Wales.

- CaSE being repeatedly cited in the Welsh Assembly's review of science policy in Wales.

- publication of CaSE's *Agendas* for science policies in both Wales and Scotland, backed up by quantitative analysis.

- comment in the devolved media, including Radio Scotland, *Ballyclare Gazette*, *Scotsman*, and the *Aberdeen Press & Journal*.

Scottish Chief Scientific Adviser Prof. Anne Glover (right) meets CaSE staff in Edinburgh

A major article from CaSE about Welsh science policy in the journal of the Institute of Welsh Affairs

Ken Robinson, Ulster Unionist Member of the Legislative Assembly of Northern Ireland (second from left), and colleagues meet CaSE's Rosemary Davies

The invitation to *Science & the Welsh Assembly*, which involves CaSE and a wide range of other scientific organisations

