From Rt Hon Norman Lamb MP, Chair

Sir Mark Walport
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27 February 2019

Dear Sir Mark,

Thank you for meeting me in January to discuss open access policy and ‘Plan S’, I found it very helpful to discuss the background to UKRI’s support for Plan S and the likely next steps in determining what this means in practice.

As I mentioned when we met, the Royal Astronomical Society’s submission to the Committee’s ‘My Science Inquiry’ process proposed that an inquiry should be held into Plan S and open access. Following Dr Robert Massey’s pitch to us on 29 January the Committee agreed that I should write to you to ask you to respond to his concerns.

I enclose a copy of the relevant part of the transcript of Dr Massey’s pitch for your reference. In particular I would be grateful if you could respond to the following points:

- What are the specific aims of adopting Plan S? Do they include cutting costs or curbing excessive publisher profits?
- How would researchers without a grant (including early career researchers) be supported to publish their work through a ‘Gold’ open access route?
- How should the impact of Plan S on learned societies be managed?
- How would the implementation take account of international collaborations between researchers in the UK and other countries that are not signed up to Plan S?
- Does Plan S take account of existing free-to-access dissemination routes, including repositories such as arXiv?
- How does UKRI intend to consult with the community on the implementation of Plan S, and on what timescale?
- When will the operational details of implementing Plan S in the UK be known?

The Committee would expect to publish your response and my letter to you on our website. It would be helpful if you could respond by Friday 15 March, if possible.

Rt Hon Norman Lamb MP
Chair