**National Institute for Health and Care Excellence**

Senior Management Team

# Minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2020

## Present

Gill Leng Chief Executive

Paul Chrisp Director – Centre for Guidelines

Jane Gizbert Director – Communications

Judith Richardson Acting Director – Health and Social Care

Alexia Tonnel Director – Evidence Resources

Catherine Wilkinson Acting Director – Business Planning and Resources

## In attendance

Sarada Chunduri-

Shoesmith Associate Director – System Support – Health and Social Care (item 6.6)

David Coombs Associate Director – Corporate Office (minutes)

Nick Crabb Programme Director – Science Advice and Research

Fiona Glen Programme Director – Centre for Guidelines (item 6.6)

Helen Knight Programme Director – Centre for Health Technology Evaluation (item 6.2)

Mirella Marlow Programme Director and Deputy Centre for Health Technology Evaluation Director

Danielle Mason Associate Director – Brand and Marketing Communications (item 6.4)

Rachel Neary-Jones Programme Manager – Quality Standards – Health and Social Care (item 6.5)

Elaine Repton Corporate Governance and Risk Manager (item 6.3)

Ian Watson Senior Technical Adviser – Methods – Centre for Health Technology Evaluation (item 6.2)

## Apologies (item 1)

1. Apologies were received from Meindert Boysen who was represented by Mirella Marlow.

## Declarations of interest (item 2)

1. The previously declared interests were noted. There were no conflicts of interest relevant to the meeting.

## Notes of the previous meeting (item 3)

1. The minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2020 were agreed as a correct record subject to the correction of the timescale for completing the interim methods and process guide update for rapid guidelines in paragraph 7.

## Matters arising (item 4)

1. The actions from the meeting held on 23 June 2020 were noted as complete or in hand.
2. SMT discussed the arrangements for a follow-up strategy session in the Autumn. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions and challenges around travelling and face to face meetings, SMT agreed that the session planned for Warren House in October should be cancelled. Instead, SMT would hold another ‘virtual retreat’ in September.

ACTION: DC/GL

## Coronavirus (item 5)

1. There were no decisions from the gold group to confirm.

## Non-executive directors – roles and input to NICE (item 6.1)

1. Gill Leng presented the draft paper on potential ways to increase the Non-Executive Directors’ (NEDs) involvement in NICE’s work, and asked for SMT’s feedback before the paper is shared with the Chairman and then the Board.
2. SMT supported the proposed areas for additional NED involvement, with the addition of implementation and integrated care.
3. SMT discussed the proposed Information Technology Advisory Committee (ITAC) and agreed this could be a helpful addition to the governance structure. It was agreed that the proposals should be refined to take account of the digital assurance board’s existing role to review progress with the roadmap, and to clarify that the new committee would not undertake a detailed review of delivery. Rather, the committee would carry out pre and post investment scrutiny of significant projects, while maintaining an overview of the entirety of the digital spend to give context to this scrutiny. The committee could also consider opportunities for insourcing and outsourcing, and consider the balance between internal and external spend.
4. It was agreed that Alexia Tonnel would update the proposals for the ITAC accordingly, and then Gill would update the paper for discussion with the Chairman.

ACTION: AT/GL

## Centre for Health Technology Evaluation (CHTE) methods review: emerging evidence paper 1 (item 6.2)

1. Mirella Marlow presented the proposed paper to the Board that set out the emerging findings in the CHTE methods review ahead of the final report and consultation in the autumn. This was the first of two reports to the Board and focused on modifiers and discounting.
2. SMT discussed the section of the report on modifiers and agreed that the approach taken by other health technology assessment agencies should be added to the table in paragraph 20. Also, the report should note that modifiers could be a topic for a relaunched deliberative public engagement forum to explore further.

ACTION: IW/NC

1. SMT discussed the section on discounting and noted there are differing stakeholder positions on this issue. It was agreed that the questions for the Board should be amended slightly to ask if the Board has a preference for a discount rate. It was agreed that the report should also note that changes to the approach to value assessment in CHTE, such as discounting, could have implications for NICE’s guidelines programme. Subject to these amendments, the report was approved for submission to the Board.

ACTION: IW

## Business risk register (item 6.3)

1. Elaine Repton presented the latest version of the corporate risk register following review by individual directors. Three new risks are proposed; two risks have increased in their rating; and six reduced.
2. SMT discussed the three proposed new risks and agreed that:
	* Risk 27/20 should be amended to refer to the inappropriate use of MS Teams and staff not adhering to the holding position agreed by SMT on 16 June.
	* Risk 28/20 should be redrafted into two separate risks: one relating to the Innovative Medicines Fund, and a second relating to the use of managed access, particularly in the context of earlier timescales for appraisals.
	* Risk 29/20 on internal social care capacity should be added to the risk register, but with amended wording and an amber rating.
3. SMT supported the revised ratings for the risks set out in the cover paper. It was agreed that risk 04/20 that relates to the risk to delivering planned outputs in the revised business plan should remain amber given current performance, and did not require escalating to red.
4. SMT agreed that the following risks should be merged:
* Risks 05/20 and 25/20 to have a single risk on contested/contentious guidance.
* Risks 17/20 and 22/20 to have a single risk on staffing.
* Risks 19/20 and 20/20 to have a single risk on meeting NICE’s statutory and key financial obligations.
1. It was agreed that Elaine Repton would draft these amendments and circulate a revised register to SMT members to review and add timescales for the planned actions.

ACTION: ER

## Virtual events proposal (item 6.4)

1. Dani Mason presented the proposal for a series of five virtual events in October/November 2020. Detailed content, including proposed speakers, would then be developed once SMT has approved the broad topics for the sessions.
2. SMT discussed the proposed four topic-based events and agreed that:
	* Session 1 should be refocused to look at how COVID-19 will affect NICE’s future guidance work. Depending on the current situation with the pandemic, it would also discuss the plans for updating the COVID-19 rapid guidelines. It was agreed that it would be helpful for the session to include a case study of how the rapid guidelines have been used in practice.
	* Session 2 should look at how NICE is working with the life sciences industry, with the precise content finalised nearer the event to ensure it was timely.
	* Session 3 would be retitled to more clearly reflect its focus on social care, and also look at NICE’s guidance on infection prevention and control.
	* Session 4, on reducing health inequalities, should be run in conjunction with Public Health England if possible, and also targeted at local authority public health teams in addition to primary care.

ACTION: DM

1. SMT discussed and supported the proposals for a virtual shared learning awards event. Given the cut-off date for submissions was in early March, it was agreed to seek further submissions for a new award on how NICE’s COVID-19 rapid guidelines have been used in practice.

ACTION: DM

1. SMT confirmed the importance of the events looking professional, and discussed options for delivering the events, including engaging a virtual events company. SMT agreed to explore the potential for utilising enhanced functionality in Zoom, and trial any changes at a future all staff meeting. If successful, this would offer a more cost-effective option and provide the ability to run a wider programme of virtual events more flexibly. It was agreed that in parallel, Dani should liaise with finance to confirm if resources are available to procure a virtual events company for these upcoming events if Zoom is felt to not be sufficient. It was agreed that a further update should come back to SMT, including the approach to financing the events.

ACTION: DM

## Reducing the number of quality standards committees (item 6.5)

1. Rachel Neary-Jones presented the proposal to reduce the number of Quality Standards Advisory Committees (QSACs) from three to two, and allocate the current QSAC 1 members across QSAC 2 and 3. In response to a question from SMT, Rachel confirmed that two committees would give sufficient capacity to develop 18 topics per year, which is more than the planned output for 2020/21 prior to the COVID-19 disruption.
2. SMT approved the proposal.

## NICE’s approach to the Equality Act 2010 (item 6.6)

1. Fiona Glen and Catherine Wilkinson presented the paper that reflected on NICE’s approach to the Equality Act 2010 and set out proposals for better integrating consideration of equality issues into NICE’s work.
2. SMT supported the proposal for HR to organise and facilitate a series of listening events with staff and the committees to help develop an organisational culture where everyone is clear about their responsibilities for equality and diversity. The outputs will be collated by HR and used to help shape the new approach to equality and diversity, including organisational governance structures, objectives, and broader decision making. To incorporate the feedback from these events, SMT supported the proposal to push back the annual equality report and revised equality objectives to the November Board and agreed that the August Board Strategy meeting should receive a briefing on the proposed engagement events.

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ACTION: CW/FG

1. Catherine and Fiona highlighted SMT’s decision to re-establish a post to coordinate NICE’s equalities work and outlined a proposal for this role to focus on non-workforce equalities issues and report to a Programme Director in one of the guidance producing issues to help give traction and senior level oversight over equalities consideration in guidance development. Under this approach, HR would continue to lead on workforce equalities issues to help ensure the new role’s remit was manageable. SMT discussed the proposal and mixed views were expressed on whether the role should instead also look at workforce equalities issues in addition to guidance development, and also whether it should sit in, and report to, a corporate function such as the corporate office. It was agreed that Gill, Catherine, and Fiona would meet to discuss this further and report back to SMT.

ACTION: GL/CW/FG

## Support from NICE for the COVID-19 response (item 6.7)

1. SMT agreed the proposed paper to the Board that provided an update on NICE’s support to the health and care system’s response to COVID-19. It was agreed that the report should be sponsored by Gill Leng given the cross-cutting nature, and text should be added to the introduction to clarify it did not cover all of NICE’s COVID-19 work.

ACTION: PC/JR

## Board meeting arrangements (item 6.8)

1. Gill Leng briefly outlined potential changes to the structure of the Board meetings proposed by Sharmila Nebhrajani, the new Chairman. She will discuss these further with Sharmila, with a view to taking a paper to the Board in July or August.

## EU exit (item 7)

1. There was no update to discuss.

## London office move (item 8)

1. There was no update to discuss.

## Any other business (item 9)

1. Alexia Tonnel noted the ongoing issues where staff are temporarily locked out of their accounts after changing their password. To address this, it is proposed to remove the requirement for staff to frequently change their password. Instead, staff will be required to have a longer and more complex password, and only change this when it was compromised or forgotten. This would align with current best practice. SMT supported this proposal.

ACTION: AT

1. SMT noted this was Mirella Marlow’s last day at NICE and thanked Mirella for her outstanding contribution.