**National Institute for Health and Care Excellence**

Executive Team

# Minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2021

## Present

Gill Leng Chief Executive

Meindert Boysen Director – Centre for Health Technology Evaluation

Paul Chrisp Director – Centre for Guidelines

Jane Gizbert Director – Communications

Felix Greaves Director – Science, Evidence and Analytics

Jennifer Howells Director – Finance, Strategy and Transformation

Judith Richardson Acting Director – Health and Social Care

Alexia Tonnel Director – Digital, Information and Technology

## In attendance

Rebecca Threlfall Chief of Staff

Elaine Repton Corporate Governance Manager (minutes)

David Coombs Associate Director – Corporate office (item 6)

Nick Crabb Programme Director - Science Evidence & Analytics (item 9)

Zoe Garrett Senior Technical Advisor – Science Evidence & Analytics (item 9)

Lisa Appleyard Associate Director – Corporate Communications (item 10)

## Also present

Lynne Copp SCW Consultants (item 7)

## Apologies (item 1)

1. Apologies were received from David Coombs.

## Declarations of interest (item 2)

1. The previously declared interests were noted.

## Organisational design engagement update (item 3)

1. Lynne Copp joined the meeting to give a progress update on SCW’s work. ET reviewed the top 6 ranked design criteria which had been produced following analysis of ET’s survey feedback. Lynne raised a question about the absence of ‘innovation and creativity’. Innovation had not been ranked highly by ET in the survey but there was a consensus that it was important and should be included. Lynne agreed to look at building a theme of ‘innovation’ into all six criteria rather than have it as a standalone, and also to review the use of ‘customer’ as opposed to ‘stakeholder’, which have different meanings for NICE. It was agreed that a final version would be circulated to ET for sign off which will then allow SCW to move to the next stage of suggesting organisations for benchmarking against.

**ACTION: LC**

1. Lynne discussed the importance of capturing feedback from the wider employee base and advised that SCW was intending to carry out two further focus groups and to circulate a survey to all staff. In view of the recently published pulse survey, it was agreed that Lynne be asked to share SCW’s survey with Jane Gizbert and Jennifer Howells to avoid duplication of questions and to sense check the language. It was agreed to split the staff survey into 3 categories based on role type (senior staff above AD level, technical staff and below AD level who did not consider their role to be technical). It was agreed that the HR Team be asked to provide SCW with details of job roles by category. The staff survey responses will go back to SCW.

**ACTION: JG/JH**

1. Rebecca Threlfall queried whether the various C-19 workstream groups looking at future working practices and principles, should be more sighted on SCW’s work as there could potentially be overlap of their remit and what SCW are seeking feedback on. It was agreed that the Comms Team be asked to inform staff of the SCW survey to ensure everyone is aware of what is coming out and why. Meindert also asked whether SCW could provide a summary of their progress for ET members to share with their senior teams. Lynne agreed to provide ET with a copy of SCW’s project highlight report.

**ACTION: JG/LC**

## Notes of the previous meeting (item 4)

1. The minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

## Matters arising (item 5)

1. The actions from the meeting held on 19 January 2021 were noted as complete or in hand.
2. Jennifer Howells reported that DHSC had not provided a template or a brief for the additional information they have requested to support funding bids for 2021/22 but Jennifer was planning to submit further details this week.
3. ET discussed whether there were other engagement channels through which to ‘lobby’ for support of NICE’s ambitions when meeting with external partners. It was agreed that Jane Gizbert and Rebecca Threlfall be asked to agree a process for sharing all ET and the chairman’s engagements, in order to share opportunities for influencing discussions and promoting NICE.

**ACTION: JG/RT**

## January Public Board meeting (item 6)

1. ET reviewed arrangements for the 27 January public board meeting. Gill advised that she has been discussing progress with the strategic plan with Tim Irish and he is particularly interested in progress with digital technologies, which he may raise. David Coombs agreed to circulate the list of board attendees for the January meeting and to confirm with the chairman whether she would be presenting the paper on the Remuneration Committee ToR.

**ACTION: DC**

1. It was noted that a paper on the lessons learned from moving to virtual committee meetings, including the impact on the productivity of meetings, was planned for the February board but may be deferred to March.
2. Gill Leng advised that the chairman had requested that Director’s board papers should be limited to five pages maximum for the March meeting onwards, with more focus on specific deliverables against the business plan and key metrics. Meindert Boysen added that the senior teams like the opportunity to share with the board updates on their key projects but if the board is to be focussed solely on the strategic objectives, this will not happen. Gill commented that in previous years agendas became too full and the director’s reports were overlooked; therefore, a balance was needed. It was agreed to have a further discussion of a ‘core content’ for the director’s reports to the board with a focus on the key deliverables.

**ACTION: GL/DC**

## Hot topics (item 7)

1. No items raised.

## Gold group terms of reference (item 8)

1. ET reviewed an updated draft of the terms of reference and agreed further amendments to:
* strengthen Gold group’s role in leading DR/BC plans rather than maintaining
* Sit-rep to be presented to the Coronavirus Response Group rather than Gold group in future
* an additional aim for Gold group to agree how NICE will transition out of the acute COVID-19 phase into the recovery phase, with the Coronavirus Response Group providing the longer term operational guidance, with support from Workstreams 1 – 4.

ACTION: ER

1. It was agreed that Gold group has the strategic decision making role with operational support from the CRG and the workstream task and finish groups. The weekly Gold meetings would be kept under review between now and March, but the key was for the workstreams to capture the lessons learned in responding to the acute phase of the pandemic and be planning future working arrangements across NICE in the post-COVID environment.
2. ET noted that it was important for the workstreams to have sight of ET and Gold group decisions so that their agendas and discussions are aligned. It was agreed to re-organise the Gold group agenda to deal with the immediate pressures and to take a more forward look at transitioning out of the pandemic, and to interface this with the strategic plan and the organisational design work.

**ACTION: ER**

## European Co-operation in HTA (item 9)

1. Nick Crabb and Zoe Garrett advised ET that NICE’s involvement in the EUnetHTA was coming to a close in May 2021 when the third joint action ends and sought views on proposals for future collaborations in the HTA field, now the UK had exited the EU.
2. ET discussed whether there would be a benefit to retaining current EU networks or whether looking to other parts of the world for collaborations was likely to be more successful, such as Canada and Australia. It was agreed that there should be a further strategic analysis of the wider opportunities and risks to predict where NICE would be best aligned, and to bring a further paper to ET.

ACTION: FG/NC

## Senior leaders & ET Retreat (item 10)

1. Rebecca Threlfall sought approval of the draft agenda for the second senior leaders and ET joint retreat on 1 February 2021. ET members were supportive of the first session to review progress with the strategic plan, agree the deliverables for 2021/22 with the senior leaders group and share the immediate priorities for Q4. However, the second session was queried in terms of whether gathering feedback on the strategy from their wider teams, on a Zoom call would work, and whether sufficient staff would be available to attend.
2. The timescale for feedback on the strategic plan (19 February), was also queried as some teams were more engaged than others. It was agreed that the end of February would be acceptable.
3. Gill Leng suggested re-ordering the agenda to have the consolidated list of business plan priorities for 2021/22, which would allow everyone to have sight of the deliverables and understand how they link to the strategic plan. David Coombs to be asked to format and circulate the list.

**ACTION: DC**

1. It was agreed that Gill and Rebecca would finalise the agenda.

ACTION: RT/GL

## London office move (item 11)

1. Jennifer Howells advised that the final issues at Redman Place were being resolved, subject to the AV/VC. Alexia reported that the LAN problems were almost concluded but the AV/VC solution was still a risk.

## Gold group (item 12)

1. The ET noted the following decisions made at the Gold group:
* that requests from staff for TOIL are to be considered only in exceptional cases and on an individual basis, in consultation with the line manager and the HR team
* to agree the list of activities to be paused in CHTE, Corporate office and HR/OD Team as presented by Meindert Boysen and Jennifer Howells
1. Elaine Repton was asked to produce a consolidated list of the work areas to be re-prioritised, which have been agreed at Gold group.

ACTION: ER

## Strategy and business planning (item 13)

1. Nothing raised.

**Review of the meeting (item 14)**

1. ET agreed that the shorter agenda was preferable. The EUnetHTA item should have been under a strategic section, which needs to be re-instated.

**ACTION: ER**

## Other business (item 15)

1. None.