**National Institute for Health and Care Excellence**

Executive Team

# Minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 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 and Risk Manager (minutes)

Martin Davison Acting Associate Director – Finance (item 6)

John Pegington Acting Head of Management Accounts (item 6)

Eric Power Programme Director – Centre for Guidelines (item 8)

## Apologies (item 1)

1. There were no apologies.

## Declarations of interest (item 2)

1. The previously declared interests were noted.

## Notes of the previous meeting (item 3)

1. The minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2021 were agreed as a correct record, subject to an amendment to paragraphs 12, 30 and 34.

## Matters arising (item 4)

1. The actions from the meeting held on 2 February 2021 were noted as complete or in hand.
2. Gill Leng reminded Directors to review their business plan objectives for 2021/22 by Thursday this week, with a view to making them specific and reducing them in number where possible.
3. Judith Richardson confirmed that a report from the Field Team on how their work adds value to the health and care system will come to ET on 16 March.
4. ET considered whether the list of reprioritised work should be shared with the Sponsor Team at DHSC. It was agreed that only decisions to delay work which will impact the business plan deliverables needed to be shared with the DHSC, and also with the Board. Gill Leng asked that she be provided with a note of the impact on core outputs in the balanced scorecard (MTEP, DAP, TA, QS and indicators) and when the programmes will be back to normal, to include in her CE’s report to the February board meeting.

**ACTION: MB/JR**

## Hot topics (item 5)

**The NHS White Paper 2021**

1. Following recent press articles, the ET considered the possible implications of the Government’s legislative plans in the draft white paper in terms of opportunities for NICE and any potential changes to NICE’s legal status, if parts of the Health & Social Care Act 2012 are reversed. When the white paper is formally published, ET would re-visit whether NICE needed to take specialist legal advice.
2. ET discussed the importance of maintaining relationships and collaborations to be able to successfully deliver the strategic plan in a future changing environment. The plan does not currently have a name, and “innovation and integration” was suggested. Gill Leng advised that she had added a slide to the presentation on collaboration and partnerships.

**Staff pulse survey results**

1. Jane Gizbert circulated a first draft of the pulse survey results which had sought staff reflections on the strategic plan slides and an update on home working and their wellbeing.
2. The homeworking feedback showed that the majority of staff continue to feel homeworking is going well, however the number who have said it is not going very well has risen from 4 to 12% since the last survey. ET accepted that this was not surprising given the time of year and the prolonged period of restrictions, added to the fact that workloads are demanding.
3. Overall feedback on the strategic plan was positive, with staff saying they understand and support the need for change but have requested more clarity on ‘how’ and ‘when’ the objectives will be delivered (the roadmap) given current workloads and the transformation programme. ET agreed that staff engagement to help shape the next phase - ‘the how and when’ was critical to its success, but had to be agreed together, working in partnership, rather than staff feeling the change is being done to them.
4. ET members commented that their senior teams do not feel they have the capacity at present to deliver the transformation, business plan objectives and the strategic plan ambitions. Gill Leng asked ET members to take the lead by agreeing the priority work programmes in their areas to make the change happen. Jane Gizbert was asked to request some amendments to the language in slides 9,10 and 11 to be less subjective.

**ACTION: JG**

1. It was agreed that Gill Leng would share some of the key messages in her daily emails this week and cover the results in more detail at the February all staff meeting, at which staff will be encouraged to get involved in taking the strategic plan forward.

**ACTION: JG/GL**

## Draft budget 2021/22 (item 6)

1. Jennifer Howells presented a draft budget for 2021/22 which included a number of uncertainties, both positive and negative, in expected funding and expenditure commitments which are still to be resolved in order to set the business plan assumptions. The ET noted the current budget deficit position and the considerations around efficiency savings and key recruitment decisions.
2. ET discussed what the likely impact of the Organisational Design work and other transformation activities would have on efficiency savings, which were anticipated but not yet quantifiable. Jennifer stated that her team were looking at a process to drive out efficiency savings. Going forward finance colleagues will be having regular meetings with centres and directorates to discuss a programme of efficiency measures.
3. The list of bids and cost pressures submitted by centres and directorates was reviewed. Jennifer agreed to speak with Felix Greaves separately to reconcile funding for new posts in SEA against external funding bids.

**ACTION: JH/FG**

1. ET agreed the 2% cost improvement target that will apply to all centres and directorates, a 5% vacancy rate and the recruitment proposals set out in appendix A, all subject to the outcome of the spending review and DHSC GIA allocation.

## Organisational design engagement (item 7)

1. This item was deferred to 16 March 2021.

## UK/EU trade and co-operation agreement (item 8)

1. Eric Power joined the meeting to present a draft board paper detailing the impact of the UK:EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement and associated regulatory changes and outlining how NICE will manage risks and pursue the opportunities this presents.
2. Gill Leng queried whether the report should go further to propose ideas for future strategic collaborations for the board to begin considering, for example the previous EUNetHTA discussion. It was agreed that the paper be amended to clarify this is the position at present, but there will be a further paper on proposed next steps, aligned to the strategic plan ambitions.

**ACTION: EP**

1. ET discussed the issue of UK collaborations and agreed it would be useful to understand technology decisions in England compared to Scotland, by comparing data on medicines approved over a period of time, as requested by the NICE sponsor team. Gill Leng agreed to take the discussion off-line with Meindert Boysen.

**ACTION: GL/MB**

## London office move (item 9)

1. Alexia Tonnel reminded ET of the discussions with the DHSC regarding the capital bid for the purchase of AV equipment in Redman Place meeting rooms. Alexia advised that the DHSC had queried NICE’s intended use of the meeting suite and whether the highest spec kit was justified for all three rooms. It was agreed that one meeting room should have the best possible option for board meetings and for face to face advisory committee meetings which it was proposed will take place one per year. The question of whether future meetings would be recorded or live streamed was still being considered by the CRG workstream 2.
2. It was agreed that an estimate of the number of board and committee meetings likely to be held in person be provided to the DHSC as soon as possible.

**ACTION: AT**

## Gold group (item 10)

1. There were no decisions made at the Gold group for noting by ET.
2. ET further discussed the ‘NHS Recovery phase’ item from Gold group. ET considered how NICE could optimise its work to support the health and care system to recover from COVID-19. It was agreed that Directors articulate their proposals in the next iteration of their business plan objectives for 2021/22.
3. Paul Chrisp referred to the Prioritisation Panel meeting he attended with DHSC and NHSE. The next one was taking place in May at which he will be asking partners which topics they need NICE to prioritise. Paul also agreed to produce an additional slide for the strategic plan presentation showing the ‘touch points’ between the 3 ecosystems across which NICE operates.

**ACTION: PC**

## Strategy and business planning (item 11)

1. Jennifer Howells confirmed that feedback on the business plan was expected this week for sign off at the Strategy Development Group on 17 February before submission to the February board meeting. ET noted other supporting work underway to finalise business plan objectives, the budget (TBC), a draft list of outputs, success measures and a roadmap.
2. In relation to the roadmap, objectives in years 1 and 2 were proposed but years 3 to 5 required further discussion. ET members were asked to look at their objectives which will need to be segmented into years 3 to 5.

**ACTION: All**

1. Gill Leng confirmed that two stakeholder meetings were planned for this week to present the draft strategy, as well as at the ALB CEO’s meeting. The ET panel members for the stakeholder meetings was agreed. Rebecca Threlfall was asked to circulate the final presentation slides to ET.

**ACTION: RT**

**Review of the meeting (item 12)**

1. Nothing raised.

**Other business**

**Manchester office refurb plans**

1. Jennifer Howells advised ET that the refurbishment plans for the back entrance area in the Manchester City Tower office, constitute a change of use which requires a licence to alter to be drawn up and executed as a deed under the NICE seal. The problem being that an Executive director and a NED are required to be present to sign and to witness the signing of the deed. This is causing difficulty under the current lockdown restrictions.
2. Jennifer advised that a number of options had been explored to avoid people having to go into the office, but it was not possible to witness the signing of a deed virtually, it had to be done in person. An option was to make an amendment to Standing Orders under emergency powers by the chairman and chief executive, to allow the signing of the deed to be undertaken by one Executive and one other person to act as witness.
3. It was agreed to make the arrangements outside of the meeting. Meindert Boysen offered to go into the Manchester office if needed, with Michelle Rowlands acting as the witness.

**ACTION: JH/DC**