**National Institute for Health and Care Excellence**

Executive Team

# Minutes of the meeting held on 16 February 2021

## Present

Gill Leng Chief Executive

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

## In attendance

Jeanette Kusel Director – NICE Scientific Advice

Alison Liddell Programme Director – Strategy and Governance, DIT

Rebecca Threlfall Chief of Staff

Elaine Repton Corporate Governance and Risk Manager (minutes)

**External guests**

Lynne Copp SCW Consultants (item 7)

Catherine Thomas SCW Consultants (item 7)

## Apologies (item 1)

1. Apologies for absence were received from Meindert Boysen and Alexia Tonnel who were represented by Jeanette Kusel and Alison Liddell respectively.

## 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 9 February 2021 were agreed as a correct record, subject to amendments to paragraphs 10 and 17.
2. Under paragraph 10, Judith Richardson and Jane Gizbert had agreed to bring a summary of the new health and care bill to a future ET meeting for discussion.

**ACTION: JR/JG**

## Matters arising (item 4)

1. The actions from the meeting held on 9 February 2021 were noted as complete or in hand.
2. Gill Leng was awaiting the list of paused work that will have an impact on the core programme outputs, to share at the February board meeting.
3. It was agreed that a summary of the pulse survey feedback on home working will be included on NICE Space for staff to review. The feedback on the draft strategic plan was to be discussed by ET members in their senior team meetings, some of which will be attended by Gill Leng, and will also include any early feedback from the SCW survey.
4. Rebecca Threlfall agreed to share the pulse survey feedback slides with the Senior Leaders Forum.

**ACTION: RT**

1. Gill Leng advised that CHTE were collating data on medicines approved in Scotland as part of a piece of work to explore the potential for closer working across the UK administrations, post EU Exit. A meeting was being planned for late Spring/early Summer with the DHSC and NICE’s UK counterparts.
2. Jennifer Howells confirmed that Michelle Rowlands has the data on the number and type of meetings booked into the meeting room suites prior to lockdown, in order to provide the DHSC with evidence of NICE’s future requirements, to assess the AV fit out requirements for Redman Place. The other ALBs have also been asked about their future needs for the meeting rooms.
3. It was noted that the strategic plan stakeholder meetings went well. Gill Leng agreed to include a summary of the outcomes in her report to the February board. Judith Richardson agreed to send some additional bullet points on social care.

**ACTION: GL/JR**

## Hot topics (item 5)

### Tocilizumab request

1. Paul Chrisp informed ET that NICE had received a request to undertake a rapid review of tocilizumab following positive trials. ET noted the discussions with NHSE to identify patients who would benefit most from the treatment should there be supply issues, given that it is already prescribed for arthritis. Gill Leng agreed to include this in her CEO report to the board.

**ACTION: GL**

1. ET discussed the likelihood of more commissions for rapid guidance being received – potentially for aspirin next and vitamin D, therefore teams needed to be flexible to respond quickly.

### Re-prioritisation list

1. Jennifer Howells reported on a discussion at Gold group following feedback from CRG that teams are not feeling a lightening of workload pressures despite the list of paused work. Preparation of board reports are having an impact on some teams. Gill reminded ET that the board has requested shorter reports, so that should help, but agreed to raise workload pressures with the board again in her CEO report.

**ACTION: GL**

1. Given the many pressures at present, the need to also celebrate successes was emphasised. Rebecca Threlfall agreed to speak with Mark Minchin to provide the stats that showed NICE’s increasing speed in producing HTAs which had been celebrated at the recent PAMP meeting (Patient Access to Medicines Partnership), for sharing with the board.

**ACTION: RT**

## Finance report (item 6)

1. Jennifer Howells presented the finance report showing the position at the end of January 2021 and highlighting the key variances. ET asked to be advised of the numbers of staff by directorate who had requested to sell back annual leave.

**ACTION: JH**

1. Jeanette Kusel advised that some of the delays in the TA/HST programme in January had been due to a number of different issues with the companies, not just COVID related or capacity issues within CHTE. It was agreed to reflect the reasons correctly in the board paper. ET asked whether there was a feel for the likely ongoing impact of the C-19 restrictions on the TA/HST programmes. Jeanette agreed to ask Jenniffer Prescott to give a more informed view for the CEO’s board update paper.

**ACTION: JH/JK**

## Organisational design engagement (item 7)

1. ET received an initial and high level overview of the early messages in the organisation design survey feedback. The response rate was very good and there was a significant amount of free text comments provided.
2. SCW advised that they have asked their data team to provide further analysis of a number of ‘hotspots’ to allow a deeper dive into the feedback which will help to shape the design options. ET also asked for some areas to be further explored. This will be provided at the next session.
3. SCW recommended one of the highest priorities to address was management development, training and mentoring for managers.
4. ET also requested SCW’s opinion on the potential ‘capability gap’ against the ambitions in the new strategic plan, in terms of what feels like it is moving in the right direction, and areas which could be barriers, so that they can be addressed. SCW agreed to provide their view in the next presentation.

**ACTION: SCW**

1. It was agreed that Gill Leng would share some key messages at the all staff meeting on 17 February and give a general update on next steps, notably that staff engagement in this work was really important. ET noted two new posts to help take this work forward – one interim role reporting to Gill (Programme Director – Organisational Design and Change) and a permanent role of Chief People Officer.

ACTION: GL

## London office move (item 8)

1. Jennifer Howells advised that the handover of work from the joint project board into business as usual was continuing. The AV equipment for the internal meeting rooms has now been placed. Discussions were on going with the DHSC about the AV for the external meeting suite. Next steps were agreement on office etiquette once more people are using the office, and the issue of culture and collaborative working in a shared space.
2. Gill Leng mentioned that whilst some board meetings will be face to face in London, she had been speaking to Chris Connell and Annie Coppell about the need for the new board to travel to NHS trust venues to hear what people have to say about NICE and its work.

## Gold group (item 9)

1. There were no decisions taken at the Gold group for noting.
2. ET reflected on the long discussion at Gold group on the pulse survey results, which it was agreed to split into the two parts – home working and strategic plan feedback. In relation to home working, 30% of staff had stated that they were really struggling with work at the moment. ET recognised that this was likely due to a number of factors, not just schools being closed, and considered how staff could be supported.
3. Gold group noted from the PDs in attendance, that the list of work being paused/slowed down, did not appear to have filtered down through the organisation and that some staff did not feel empowered to say no to additional work.

## Strategy and business planning (item 10)

1. Jennifer Howells confirmed that final edits to the strategic plan and presentation from ET were being made by Tracey Barr for signing off at the SDG meeting on 17 February, ready for presentation to the February board meeting.

**Review of the meeting (item 11)**

1. ET commented that the shorter agenda was preferred.