**National Institute for Health and Care Excellence**

Senior Management Team

# Minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2020

## Present

Andrew Dillon Chief Executive

Meindert Boysen Director – Centre for Health Technology Evaluation

Paul Chrisp Director – Centre for Guidelines

Gill Leng Director – Health and Social Care

Alexia Tonnel Director – Evidence Resources

Catherine Wilkinson Acting Business Planning and Resources Director

## In attendance

Moya Alcock Associate Director – Corporate Communications and Deputy Communications Director

David Coombs Associate Director – Corporate Office (minutes)

Nick Crabb Programme Director – Science Advice and Research

Martin Davison Acting Associate Director – Finance (item 7.1)

Fiona Glen Programme Director – Centre for Guidelines (item 7.3)

Grace Marguerie Associate Director – HR (item 7.3)

Michelle Rowlands Estates and Facilities Manager (item 7.5)

## Apologies (item 1)

1. Apologies were received from Jane Gizbert who was represented by Moya Alcock.

## Freedom of Information and publication scheme (item 2)

1. The final minutes will be made available on the NICE website subject to the redaction of any exempt material.

## Declarations of interest (item 3)

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

## Notes of the previous meeting (item 4)

1. The minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

## Matters arising (item 5)

1. The actions from the meeting held on 25 February 2020 were noted as complete or in hand.

## Board meetings (item 6)

1. SMT noted the actions from the February Board strategy meeting.
2. SMT discussed the level of detail that should be included in the corporate business plan on consultancy spend and agreed that the finance section should note the centre and directorate budgets which include consultancy spend and the purpose of this expenditure. In addition, it was agreed that the final centre and directorate plans should be sent to SMT by email to ensure visibility of any planned developments and expenditure that are not featured in the corporate business plan.

ACTION: MD/DC

1. The agenda items for the March Board meetings were noted. It was agreed that the paper that asks the Board to delegate its powers to a committee while the number of non-executives is below the statutory minimum should be brought to SMT for prior review.

ACTION: DC

## Health spending and prioritisation exercise (item 7.1)

1. Catherine Wilkinson presented the paper that set out the request from the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) to provide information to inform a prioritisation and savings exercise. Catherine stated that she has raised with the sponsor team the benefit of adopting a strategic approach across the Department and recognising the savings delivered by the ALBs that have adopted the smarter working agenda.
2. SMT discussed the request and agreed that in the context of the savings already delivered, there is limited scope to deliver further savings without disestablishing significant and high-profile work programmes or increasing the level of income. It was agreed that Martin Davison and Catherine Wilkinson should prepare a response for Andrew Dillon and Gill Leng to review and sign-off later this week. The response should also note the need for investment to deliver the NICE Connect transformation.

ACTION: CW/MD/AD/GL

## NICE guideline programme (item 7.2)

1. Paul Chrisp presented the proposed paper to the March Board meeting that provided an update on the proposed changes to the guidelines programme. Initial engagement with system partners on the case for change has been positive. The next step is to form a task and finish group with representatives of DHSC, NHS England/Improvement, Public Health England and the social care sector to formulate draft principles, a process and a clear rationale for the changes.
2. SMT reviewed the paper and agreed that it should be expanded to include more information on NICE’s ambitions and objectives for the discussions with partners. In particular, it would be helpful to include the draft principles and the draft terms of reference for the task and finish group. It was agreed that Andrew Dillon would review and approve the amended paper for the Board.

ACTION: PC/AD

## Equality objectives 2020-24 (item 7.3)

1. David Coombs presented the paper that set out options for NICE’s next equality objectives. He highlighted that the equality and diversity group and HR team have reviewed relevant data and identified the potential areas of focus; it is recommended that SMT select 2 or 3 of these to recommend to the Board as objectives for the period 2020 to 2024.
2. SMT first reviewed the progress made in delivering the current equality objectives, which sought year on year increases in the proportion of committee member applications from people from black and Asian and minority ethnic groups, and in the proportion of staff from these groups in senior roles (band 7 and above).
3. It was noted that the year on year variation in the proportion of committee members from black, Asian and minority ethnic groups may not be significant and could reflect the disclosure rates. Also, that it is difficult to conclude whether the variation reflects the nature of the committee vacancies in each year or the impact of the action plan. It was agreed however that it would be helpful to retain focus on this issue, with a revised objective that seeks year on year increases in the representation of people who are from black, Asian and minority ethnic groups on the advisory committees.
4. Similarly, SMT noted and welcomed the increased proportion of staff from black, Asian and minority ethnic groups in senior roles but agreed to retain this as a formal equality objective in order to drive further progress.
5. SMT discussed the options for new equality objectives set out in the paper and supported the recommendation from the equality and diversity group for a new objective to reduce inappropriate variation when carrying out equality impact assessments during guidance development.
6. SMT agreed that the paper should be amended for the Board to set out these three recommendations for equality objectives for 2020-24, with further information included on the progress with the existing 2 objectives. It was suggested that training for committee chairs and staff could form part of the action plan for the proposed revised objective on committee membership. Andrew Dillon would review and approve the amended paper for the Board.

ACTION: DC/CW/AD

## Travel booking system internal audit report (item 7.5)

1. Catherine Wilkinson presented the internal audit report on the travel booking system and the management response. The audit opinion was a limited assurance rating and the report made four recommendations for improvement.
2. SMT discussed the report and noted that completion of the retrospective management review of bookings was the main area for improvement. SMT confirmed the importance of these checks and requested amendments to the weekly email sent to budget holders in order to aid this review process. SMT approved the management response for submission to the Audit and Risk Committee.

ACTION: MR/CW

## Business Planning and Resources directorate input into SMT papers (item 7.4)

1. Catherine Wilkinson set out proposed changes to the template for SMT papers to clarify the process for seeking input from the Business Planning and Resources Directorate (BPRD) to SMT papers.
2. SMT discussed the proposal and the rationale. It was agreed that the name of any BPRD staff who have been asked to comment on the financial, legal or HR implications should be noted in the paper to help ensure clarity on the input to the paper. It was agreed that the SMT member sponsoring the paper would then have a responsibility to ensure that any advice from the BPRD is accurately included in the paper and it was not necessary to share the paper with BPRD colleagues before submitting it to an SMT meeting. The SMT discussion would be an opportunity to ensure the wider organisational implications of the proposals in the paper have been appropriately identified and considered.
3. It was agreed that the SMT paper template should be updated accordingly.

ACTION: DC

## EU exit (item 8)

1. Meindert Boysen briefly noted that the UK’s negotiating mandate envisages limited alignment with the EU and this could have implications for medical devices. It was agreed that Meindert would prepare a short presentation for the morning session of the March Board to inform a discussion on the risks and opportunities arising from EU exit in the context of the negotiating mandate.

ACTION: MB

## NICE Connect (item 9)

1. Gill Leng gave positive feedback from the latest lunch and learn sessions with staff. She noted that the NICE Connect business plan is almost finalised and the steering group will review information on benefits realisation which then be shared with the Board.

## London office move (item 10)

1. Catherine Wilkinson stated that the IT helpdesk will likely require additional resources in order to facilitate the roll-out of laptops to all staff. This will require funding from central underspends.

## Chair and Chief Executive appointments (item 11)

1. Current progress with the final approvals was noted. It was agreed that it would be helpful for a member of SMT to attend the Chair-elect’s pre-appointment hearing at the Health and Social Care Select Committee. David Coombs was asked to clarify the date and time.

ACTION: DC

## Weekly staff SMT updates (item 12)

1. SMT agreed the staff updates.

ACTION: DC

## Other business (item 13)

1. SMT discussed the implications of Coronavirus and the information to be provided to staff.
2. SMT noted the latest travel advice from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and agreed that NICE staff should continue with work-related travel to places unaffected by FCO advice, providing staff are willing to do so. Catherine Wilkinson was asked to confirm whether the travel insurance provider have placed further restrictions on cover. SMT agreed that staff should be strongly discouraged from undertaking personal travel to areas subject to FCO advisory notices.

ACTION: CW

1. SMT discussed the implications of a pandemic on committee meetings and staff being unable to attend the office for their usual working activities. It was noted the Digital Services team will trial working at home in order to identify any issues, given this would represent a new way of working. In addition, it was agreed that the ability to hold all or part of a committee meeting with virtual attendees should be tested. While it is understood most staff currently have the ability to work from home, it was agreed that it would be helpful for directors to identify the extent members of staff in their area are currently unable to. In addition, it was agreed to re-distribute the details of how to access webmail.

ACTION: AT/CW/SMT

1. SMT agreed there should be a dedicated NICE space page on Coronavirus that would provide advice on travel and other key issues. It was agreed that the initial information should be shared with Andrew Dillon and Gill Leng for review and approval later this week. It would then be regularly updated and include the facility for staff to submit questions.

ACTION: MA/AD/GL