**National Institute for Health and Care Excellence**

Senior Management Team

# Minutes of the meeting held on 19 May 2020

## Present

Gill Leng Chief Executive

Meindert Boysen Director – Centre for Health Technology Evaluation

Paul Chrisp Director – Centre for Guidelines

Jane Gizbert Director – Communications

Judith Richardson Acting Director – Health and Social Care (for items 1 to 7.2 and 7.6 to 11 inclusive)

Alexia Tonnel Director – Evidence Resources

Catherine Wilkinson Acting Director – Business Planning and Resources

## In attendance

David Coombs Associate Director – Corporate Office (minutes)

Nick Crabb Programme Director – Science Advice and Research

Phil Hemmings Associate Director – Editorial and Publishing (item 7.1)

Helen Knight Programme Director – Centre for Health Technology Evaluation (item 7.2)

Jeanette Kusel Director – NICE Scientific Advice (item 7.3)

## Apologies (item 1)

1. None.

## Declarations of interest (item 2)

1. The previously declared interests were noted. There were no conflicts of interest relevant to the meeting.
2. Paul Chrisp asked that his declaration is updated to reflect his spouse’s work in medical communications may involve new drugs relating to COVID-19.

ACTION: ER

## Notes of the previous meeting (item 3)

1. The minutes of the meeting held on 5 May 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

## Matters arising (item 4)

1. The actions from the meeting held on 5 May 2020 were noted as complete or in hand.
2. It was noted that following further discussions with the event organisers, the current thinking is to defer NICE’s annual conference from November 2020 to spring 2021 and hold virtual events in 2020, including a virtual shared learning award. Views on this proposal will be sought at tomorrow’s Board meeting. The implications of NICE’s co-hosting of the HTAi conference in June 2021 for this proposal will need to be considered further.

## Coronavirus (item 5)

1. There were no decisions from the gold group that required confirmation by SMT.

## May Board meetings (item 6)

1. SMT noted the agenda, papers, and arrangements for the Board meetings on 20 May 2020.
2. SMT discussed the corporate virtual backgrounds prepared by the communications team for use at the public Board meeting. It was agreed to seek further feedback from staff on the issues raised at the all staff meeting about the backgrounds, and if possible, amend these before circulation to the SMT and Non-Executives.

ACTION: CW/DM

1. It was agreed that if the backgrounds could not be amended in time for the meeting, then the existing versions should be circulated and used tomorrow.

ACTION: DC

## Annual report and accounts 2019/20 (item 7.1)

1. Phil Hemmings presented the draft annual report and accounts for SMT’s review. He noted that this draft incorporates the changes requested by the Board, Audit and Risk Committee and SMT, when reviewing earlier versions.
2. SMT reviewed the draft and identified further minor amendments.

ACTION: PH

## CHTE methods review: progress and priorities (item 7.2)

1. Helen Knight presented the proposed paper for the June Board meeting that outlined progress with, and priorities for, the review of NICE’s methods of health technology evaluation.
2. SMT discussed the paper and the methods review more generally. SMT supported the paper for submission to the Board and agreed it should be accompanied by a slide set that outlines the background to, and history of, NICE’s health technology assessment programme including the links to the cancer drugs fund and innovative medicines fund. The slides should also summarise the ambitions for the review and what NICE is seeking to achieve.

ACTION: MB/HK

1. Gill Leng stated that she would liaise with David Coombs to ensure sufficient time, preferably an hour, is allocated on the Board agenda for this item.

ACTION: GL/DC

## Joint NICE/MHRA/NIHR evidence collection guide for COVID-19 medicines (item 7.3)

1. Jeanette Kusel presented the proposed guide to evidence collection for developers of medicinal products for the treatment or prevention of COVID-19, which had been jointly developed by NICE, MHRA and NIHR. Some issues are still to be resolved, including the references to contact tracing and to clarify how the guide will be updated. In addition, further amendments may be necessary following review by the MHRA’s senior management. Jeanette noted that the guide will also be shared with NHS England and the Department for Health and Social Care’s therapeutics taskforce before publication.
2. SMT reviewed and supported the guide. It was agreed that it should be amended to include a cross reference to the evidence standards framework for COVID-19 diagnostics that NICE’s diagnostics assessment programme is currently producing, and the term ‘COVID-19’ should be consistently used throughout the guide. It was also agreed that Jeanette should investigate with the MHRA and NIHR whether acute kidney outcomes and any other acute complications should be highlighted in the guide. Subject to these amendments, SMT approved the evidence collection guide for publication as a jointly owned document between NICE, the MHRA and NIHR. It was noted that the arrangements for publishing the guide are still to be confirmed.

ACTION: JK

## Publication Executive terms of reference (item 7.4)

1. Alexia Tonnel presented the proposed updated membership of the Publication Executive (PE) following restructuring and acting up arrangements in the Health and Social Care directorate.
2. SMT discussed the updated membership and whether PE should be expanded to include representation from the Centre for Guidelines (CfG) and Centre for Health Technology Evaluation (CHTE). It was agreed that representation from these guidance producing centres was not required as PE considers secondary products, rather than the guidance produced by CfG or CHTE. The existing terms of reference give scope to invite colleagues from these centres to the meetings if necessary for a particular item, and therefore no further changes are required.
3. SMT noted that the terms of reference have been amended to state that if the acting Director of Health and Social Care, a medical practitioner, is unable to attend, a medically qualified deputy will attend. It was agreed that the terms of reference should be amended to state that if the Acting Business Planning and Resources Director, a qualified accountant, cannot attend, then a financially qualified deputy should attend given the group’s role in reviewing resource impact assessments. Subject to this amendment, SMT approved the revised terms of reference.

ACTION: DC

## Office 365 Support Spend Control (item 7.5)

1. Alexia Tonnel presented the request to use resource from the existing call-off contract with CapGemini to access Office 365 (O365) operational technical support for 4 days a week over the next 5 months to provide business continuity of O365 services until the appropriate resources are recruited permanently, and an expert architect advisory service for 1 day a week over the same period.
2. SMT approved the requested expenditure, which would be taken from the existing NICE Connect non-pay budget for 2020/21.
3. It was agreed that a paper should be developed for SMT that outlined the expenditure to date with CapGemini and what has been achieved, along with a plan for the next steps. This would enable SMT to have a strategic discussion in the summer about the future use of consultancy and the balance between in-house and external capacity, with a view to bringing a business case for the next phase of investment to the Board in September.

ACTION: AT

1. Meindert Boysen highlighted the importance of being able to demonstrate the benefits of this work for staff. He noted this raised a more general point about ensuring SMT papers clearly outline the links to NICE’s strategic ambitions and objectives. Gill Leng asked Meindert to consider further whether the SMT paper template needs to be amended to ensure this information is included.

ACTION: MB

## Guideline committee chair appointment (item 7.6)

1. Paul Chrisp presented the proposal to appoint Rachel Johns to the position of chair of the NICE Guideline Committee on integrated health and care for people who are homeless through being roofless. Given the priority nature of the topic and to shorten the scoping phase, agreement is sought to appoint a chair without the usual appointment process. This is permitted under NICE’s appointments to advisory bodies policy and procedure, subject to SMT’s agreement in consultation with the NICE Chair. The proposed appointee has previously been a vice chair of a Public Health Advisory Committee (PHAC) and is a Deputy Regional Director at Public Health England. She does not have any interests specific to the guideline.
2. SMT approved the appointment of Rachel Johns as chair of the guideline committee, subject to agreement from the NICE Chair. When seeking the Chair’s approval, it was agreed that it would be helpful to note the recruitment process used to appoint Rachel to her previous PHAC role.

ACTION: PC

## EU exit (item 8)

1. SMT agreed that NICE’s operational planning should recommence in light of the wider activities across Government in readiness for the end of the transition period in December.

ACTION: MB

## NICE Connect (item 9)

1. Given SMT members now all attend the NICE Connect steering group it was agreed this standing update was no longer required at the weekly SMT meetings.

ACTION: DC

## London office move (item 10)

1. Catherine Wilkinson advised that the Stratford office could be available, in an unfinished state, for use from mid-October. She noted that in the meantime, the senior facilities staff are developing plans for returning to the London and Manchester offices for discussion at the gold group on 10 June. Catherine stated that if the Stratford office is available from October then SMT will need to consider whether to focus the London planning on moving straight to Stratford and not reopen Spring Gardens.
2. Gill Leng highlighted the need to consider both issues in tandem, starting with a strategic discussion on the purpose of seeking to reopen the offices, followed by consideration of the steps that would be needed to achieve this. As part of the discussion it will be important to understand the facilities that will be available in Stratford in October. It was agreed that on 29 May the gold group should consider further the information required for this discussion on 10 June.

ACTION: CW

## Any other business (item 11)

1. Alexia Tonnel highlighted a question from IT as to whether Skype for Business should be installed on the new laptops given Microsoft are withdrawing support for this software at the end of the year. She noted that it would be a logistical challenge to remove Skype from the new laptops later in the year and staff are now increasingly using MS Teams for instant messaging and video calls. Also, staff could continue to access Skype through VMware until the end of the year. SMT supported the proposal to not install Skype on the new laptops, subject to clarification of whether NICE staff would still be able to join Skype meetings hosted by external organisations without this software on their laptops.

ACTION: AT