**National Institute for Health and Care Excellence**

Senior Management Team

# Minutes of the meeting held on 25 August 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

## In attendance

Moya Alcock Associate Director – Corporate Communications (item 7.4)

Emily Bloomfield Senior Communications Manager (items 7.1 and 7.2)

David Coombs Associate Director – Corporate Office (minutes)

Kevin Harris Patient Safety Lead (item 7.6)

Phil Hemmings Associate Director – Editorial and Publishing (items 7.1 and 7.2)

Jeanette Kusel Director – NICE Scientific Advice (item 7.7)

Grace Marguerie Associate Director – HR and Acting Deputy Business Planning and Resources Director

Ann Richardson Communications Manager (items 7.1 and 7.2)

Elaine Repton Corporate Governance and Risk Manager (item 7.3)

Mark Salmon Programme Director and Deputy Evidence Resources Director

Victoria Thomas Head of Public Involvement (item 7.5)

Rebecca Threlfall Chief of Staff

Jennifer Watts Interim Programme Director – Health and Social Care (item 7.4)

## Also present

Jennifer Howells Director – Finance, Strategy and Transformation from 1 September 2020

## Apologies (item 1)

1. Apologies were received from Alexia Tonnel and Catherine Wilkinson who were represented by Mark Salmon and Grace Marguerie respectively.

## Declarations of interest (item 2)

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

## Notes of the previous meeting (item 3)

1. The minutes of the meeting held on 18 August 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

## Matters arising (item 4)

1. The actions from the meeting held on 18 August 2020 were noted as complete or in hand.
2. Gill Leng stated that the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) has confirmed NICE cannot add to the initial submission to the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) to include the response to the Independent Medicines and Medical Devices Safety Review.
3. Judith Richardson stated that following discussion with Jane Gizbert she will ask Chris Connell to triage the public questions at the Board meetings.

ACTION: JR

## Coronavirus (item 5)

1. SMT confirmed the decisions at the gold group to
* proceed with the development of the RAPID-C19 output presenting key trial results and ensure it can be incorporated in an existing COVID guideline framework to be developed by the COVID unit.
* recycle the spare desks and chairs that will be removed from the Manchester office to allow for social distancing.
* retain the meeting pods in the Manchester office and re-assign these as a one person working space.
* trial white board paint in one of the larger meeting rooms in Manchester which will be used as a collaboration space in the phase 2 return to the office and also, if possible, washable paint to aid cleaning.

## Board meetings (item 6)

1. SMT noted the draft actions from the Board Strategy meeting on 19 August 2020. David Coombs stated that he would circulate the draft minutes and action log once the Chairman had provided feedback on these.

ACTION: DC

1. SMT agreed the draft agenda items for the Board meetings on 16 September. It was agreed that the update on the RAPID-C19 should be presented to the public session. Meindert Boysen agreed to feed this back to the team so the paper could be updated accordingly. Gill Leng stated that she was meeting with Rosie Lovett to discuss whether revised proposals for deliberative public engagement would be ready for the September Board meeting, or if more time is required to address the Board’s feedback.

ACTION: MB/GL

## Digital accessibility: policy and progress (item 7.1)

1. Phil Hemmings presented the update on progress being made on digital accessibility in the context of new legislative requirements. SMT are asked to approve the new policy on digital accessibility and process for producing alternative formats that have been produced as part of this work. Phil noted that the approach has been informed by legal advice.
2. Mark Salmon highlighted that an accessibility audit indicated extensive work, costing several hundred thousand pounds, is necessary to enable the HDAS service to meet accessibility requirements. Following discussion with Health Education England it is proposed to decommission the service as resources are not available to fund this work. SMT noted that the service remains a valued resource and agreed that the scope for applying an exemption to the regulations on the grounds of the remedial work being a ‘disproportionate burden’ should be explored. It was agreed Mark and Phil would discuss this further and seek legal advice if necessary.

ACTION: MS/PH

1. SMT discussed the approach to addressing accessibility issues with content already on the NICE website and the approach to future content. SMT noted the extensive volume of content on the NICE website as part of the Institute’s commitment to openness and transparency, and also that some of the background material uploaded during guidance production are generated by third parties – for example evidence submissions. SMT affirmed the Institute’s commitment to complying with the regulations but highlighted the need for a proportionate approach to existing and future content, and applying the ‘disproportionate burden’ exemption where appropriate. It was agreed that NICE’s core guidance output should be prioritised, and there should be a measured approach to the rectifying existing guidance publications, which would take account of usage and whether the guidance is likely to be updated in the future.
2. SMT approved the new policy on digital accessibility and the process for producing alternative formats. It was agreed that training should be available for staff to aid their compliance with the new requirements.

ACTION: PH

## Improving the presentation of our Board papers on the NICE website (item 7.2)

1. Emily Bloomfield presented the proposed changes to the way Board papers are presented on the website. The changes set out in the recommended option will ensure the papers meet accessibility regulations, are easier to use online, and ensure the internal process of collating, checking, and publishing the papers.
2. In response to questions from SMT, Ann confirmed that pdfs no longer represent a more secure medium than MS Office files, and that teams would be supported to ensure MS Office files are created in a way that minimises the file size. SMT discussed the proposed changes to the process for submitting Board papers and noted that submitting the draft paper to the communications team at the same time it is submitted for SMT’s review will provide more time to rectify any accessibility issues.
3. SMT supported the recommendations in the paper. It was agreed to implement these with effect from the November Board meeting, as many of the papers for the September Board meeting have already been written and there would be limited time to rectify any issues given staff may be on leave. SMT also agreed that appropriate training was required for staff in advance of preparing the next set of public board papers. SMT confirmed that the September Board meeting papers would therefore be uploaded in the usual way, with these published prior to the regulations taking effect on 23 September.

ACTION: EB/AR/DC

## Corporate risk register (item 7.3)

1. Elaine Repton presented the latest version of the corporate risk register following updates by the individual directors. There are no new risks or any risks recommended for removal.
2. Subject to minor amendments to the mitigations for risk 24/20 and updating the risk leads to refer to Jennifer Howells and Felix Greaves, SMT supported the register for submission to the Audit and Risk Committee on 9 September.

ACTION: ER

1. SMT agreed that prior to the next update in November, the directors should undertake a more extensive review to identify where the register could be rationalised.

ACTION: SMT

## Interim report for the implementation study (item 7.4)

1. Jennifer Watts presented the interim report from the implementation study. The planned next steps were paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, there is now a risk of overlap and potential duplication between this project and others underway to implement recommendations from the former Medicines and Technologies programme product review, NICE’s organisational strategy development and the Board’s implementation ‘deep dive’ in December. It is therefore proposed to disseminate the interim report now and recommence the other elements of the project in early 2021, when the outcomes from the other activities should be available.
2. SMT noted the findings which had been discussed at an earlier strategy development group meeting, and agreed the proposals for taking this work forward. It was agreed that the slides on the findings should be submitted to the morning session of the September Board meeting along with a short covering paper that would explain the approach being taken, and that the Board will have the opportunity to discuss the findings further as part of the strategy work in October and implementation ‘deep dive’ in December. The cover paper should highlight some questions for the Board to consider, and information should also be provided in the slides to briefly note the findings from the previous implementation survey and any key changes in this latest feedback.

ACTION: JR/JW/MA

## Public involvement programme annual report (item 7.5)

1. Victoria Thomas presented the annual report from the public involvement programme for SMT’s review prior to submission to the September public Board meeting.
2. SMT welcomed the report and agreed this for submission to the Board subject to minor drafting changes. Given the importance of public involvement to NICE’s work, SMT agreed that the communications team should publicise the report after the Board meeting, with these plans noted in the cover paper to the Board.

ACTION: VT/JG

## Independent Medicines and Medical Devices Safety (IMMDS) review (item 7.6)

1. Kevin Harris presented the draft report for the September public Board meeting that outlined NICE’s engagement with the IMMDS review and the proposed response to the review’s recommendations.
2. SMT reviewed the report and agreed this for submission to the Board subject to amendments and clarifications. It was agreed that Kevin would attend the Board meeting to present the report.

ACTION: KH

1. SMT agreed that the report should be publicised after the Board meeting, with these plans noted in the cover paper.

ACTION: KH/JG

## NICE-AHSN knowledge exchange workshop and future relationship (item 7.7)

## EU exit (item 8)

1. No further update.

## London office move (item 9)

1. No further update.

## Any other business (item 10)

1. SMT noted the recent announcement that Stephen Lightfoot has been appointed chair of the MHRA from 1 September 2020.