**National Institute for Health and Care Excellence**

Senior Management Team

# Minutes of the meeting held on 6 October 2020

## 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

David Coombs Associate Director – Corporate Office (minutes)

Rebecca Albrow Associate Director – Diagnostics Assessment Programme – Centre for Health Technology Evaluation (item 6.5)

Helen Knight Programme Director – Centre for Health Technology Evaluation

Alison Liddell Programme Director and Deputy Digital, Information and Technology Director

Grace Marguerie Associate Director – HR (items 6.2 to 6.4)

Eileen Platt Employee Relations Manager (item 6.4)

Rebecca Threlfall Chief of Staff

Nicola Tyson Organisational Development Specialist (items 6.2 and 6.3)

Ian Watson Senior Technical Adviser – Centre for Health Technology Evaluation (item 6.1)

## Apologies (item 1)

1. Apologies were received from Meindert Boysen and Alexia Tonnel who were represented by Helen Knight and Alison Liddell 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 22 September 2020 were agreed.

## Matters arising (item 4)

1. The actions from the meeting held on 22 September 2020 were noted as complete or in hand.
2. Jane Gizbert highlighted that the review of the NICE Charter is scheduled for the November Board meeting, and suggested that the review is deferred until 2021 so that it can take account of the new strategy and the CHTE methods review. She noted that NICE is not required to review the Charter annually. Gill Leng agreed it seemed sensible to defer the review and would raise this with the NICE Chairman.

ACTION: GL

## Coronavirus (item 5)

1. SMT confirmed the decisions at the gold group:

* To purchase a health and safety e-learning course for home working for roll out to all staff, subject to checking of the content.
* That Judith Richardson would be the executive lead for health inequalities, supported by Jennifer Howells.
* To approve the updated temporary homeworking policy.
* That headsets should not be shared between staff coming into the office and therefore staff should be reminded to bring these.

## CHTE methods review proposals for consultation (item 6.1)

1. Helen Knight presented the draft paper for the October Board meeting that set out proposals for changes to NICE’s methods in the health technology evaluation programmes. Helen reminded SMT of the two-stage approach. This first stage considers the evidence and considerations affecting the methods to establish whether there is a case for changing them. The second stage will be to consider responses from stakeholders to these cases for change, develop a unified decision-making framework, and implement the changes in an updated programme manual. Ian Watson summarised the key proposals in the first stage, in particular around modifiers, discounting, and uncertainty.
2. SMT reviewed the paper and agreed that prior to the Board meeting it should be amended to:

* Include a short summary of the background to the review and how NICE’s methods have evolved since 1999.
* Clarify that the proposals relate to the evaluation of a wider range of technologies than medicines, including digital technologies.
* Refer to the links to NICE’s other guidance programmes, with the addition of a new question that would ask consultees for views on the implications of the proposals for NICE’s other work, in particular guidelines.

ACTION: HK/IW

1. Gill Leng noted that she is meeting with Helen Knight to review the proposals in further detail tomorrow, and as part of this, it would be helpful to consider whether additional information could be added to clarify the rationale for the proposals and the intended benefits.

ACTION: GL/HK

## NICE Values and behaviours (item 6.2)

1. Grace Marguerie presented the proposed set of organisational values and behaviours, which have been amended following SMT’s feedback on earlier proposals reviewed in August. It is also proposed to commission an external designer to create a set of graphics and other digital materials to help bring the values to life.
2. SMT supported the values and behaviours subject to some minor changes. It was agreed that the supporting text around ‘empowered’ and ‘dynamic’ should be refined to ensure it clearly reflects the intention to empower staff to take decisions while taking appropriate risks.
3. SMT highlighted the importance of an implementation plan to ensure the values and behaviours are embedded appropriately, and supported the intention to integrate these into HR practice such as recruitment, induction, appraisals, and routine line management discussions. SMT supported the proposal to commission an external designer to create a set of graphics and other digital materials that will help bring the values to life, and agreed care should be taken to appropriately coordinate these materials with the upcoming review of NICE’s corporate branding. SMT welcomed the staff involvement in developing the values to date and agreed that staff feedback should be sought on the approach to embedding the values and behaviours. Staff should also be given the opportunity to comment on a range of options produced by the external designer.

ACTION: GM/NT

1. Gill Leng stated that she would brief staff on the values and behaviours at the next all staff meeting.

ACTION: GL

## The Active Bystander programme (item 6.3)

1. Grace Marguerie and Nicola Tyson presented the proposal to commission a new staff development programme which aims to equip employees with the skills and confidence to identify inappropriate behaviour and tackle it in a constructive manner. The proposals support the existing Freedom to Speak Up arrangements, complement the ‘unbossed’ framework, and respond to feedback in the recent equality and diversity listening events and staff survey.
2. SMT discussed the proposals and concluded that it would be beneficial to undertake further work to help staff challenge inappropriate behaviour. It was agreed that any such initiative must align to, and support, the new values and behaviours discussed in the previous agenda item. As such, it was agreed this should not be a separate programme, but part of the work to implement the values and behaviours. It was agreed to commission this development support following due procurement process, with the aim of it being delivered before 31 March 2021.

ACTION: GM/NT

## Reinstatement of the carer leave policies (item 6.4)

1. Eileen Platt presented the proposed addendums to the parent policy, flexible working policy and time off work policy to reflect the flexibilities that aim to support staff to return to normal contracted hours by 1 November 2020, along with the proposed guide for managers. Eileen stated that she has written a blog to highlight the changes and there will be a series of HR ‘surgeries’ to support managers and staff.
2. SMT approved the managers guide and policy addendums. It was agreed there should be a communications plan to support the changes, which should be reviewed in the new year.

ACTION: GM/EP/JG

1. SMT agreed that the provisions for staff on maternity leave to return for ‘keeping in touch’ (KIT) days should be reviewed, given that during current home working, there may be demand these staff joining colleagues for part of a day rather than a full day.

ACTION: EP

## Medtech Innovation Briefings to support the Department of Health and Social Care’s COVID-19 testing strategy (item 6.5)

1. Helen Knight and Rebecca Albrow presented the update on the Diagnostic Assessment Programme’s plans to produce Medtech Innovation Briefings (MIBs) on viral detection tests for COVID-19. They confirmed that the programme are keen to undertake this work, but there are a number of issues to resolve in order to operationalise the process.
2. SMT supported NICE undertaking this work. It was agreed that the proposed process should be reviewed with the aim of enabling the MIBs to be produced in 2 weeks rather than 3 as currently envisaged. It was noted that the COVID-19 rapid guidelines provide learning that can be utilised in terms of the internal process changes that could shorten timescales, including ensuring the multidisciplinary team is in place, and additional Guidance Executive meetings are scheduled if required. SMT supported a positive response to the Department of Health and Social Care on NICE’s willingness to undertake this work and agreed that the work should commence prior to resolution of the funding request if necessary.

ACTION: HK/RA

1. It was agreed that the Centre for Guidelines and Centre for Health Technology Evaluation would discuss further outside of the SMT meeting how to position this work alongside the COVID-19 guidelines as part of an integrated COVID-19 offer.

ACTION: HK/PC

## EU exit (item 7)

1. No further update.

## London office move (item 8)

1. Alison Liddell noted that she is attending the office move programme board during Alexia Tonnel’s absence.

## Any other business (item 10)

1. SMT discussed the information about the strategy work that should be shared with the centre and directorate senior teams prior to the Board Strategy away-day. It was agreed that the draft strategic objectives and key feedback from the interviews to date could be shared with the senior teams to seek feedback that could be fed into the Board’s discussions. Directors should however highlight the draft nature of the material, including that it has not been discussed by the Board. Gill Leng asked Rebecca Threlfall to liaise with Tracey Barr to provide this material to the directors.

ACTION: RT/TB