



Medicines & Healthcare products Regulatory Agency

Minutes

CET/17/033

Title of meeting	Corporate Executive Team formal monthly meeting
Date	06 December 2016
Time	09.00 – 13.00
Venue	RT-410, BPR
Chair	Ian Hudson
Attendees	CET

CET Attendees

Ian Hudson	Chief Executive (Chair)
Christian Schneider	Director of the National Institute for Biological Standards & Control
Rachel Bosworth	Director of Communications
Jon Fundrey	Chief Operating Officer
Vanessa Birchall-Scott	Director of Human Resources
[Redacted]	deputising for Director of Devices
Jonathan Mogford	Director of Policy
Gerald Heddell	Director of Inspection, Enforcement and Standards
John Quinn	Director of Information Management
Janet Valentine	Director of the Clinical Practice Research Datalink
Paul Wright	DH Legal Services
June Raine	Director of Vigilance and Risk Management of Medicines
Siu Ping Lam	Director of Licensing

Additional attendees

[Names redacted under section 40 of the FOIA (personal data)]

Andy Gregory (Policy) for item 4: Post-EU referendum - update and discussion and item 8: International Strategy

Richard Humphreys (F&P) for item 15: Finance and Procurement Report

1. Apologies and Announcements

1.1 Apologies were received from John Wilkinson.

2. Draft minutes of the 8 November Corporate Executive Team meeting (CET/16/326) including table of actions and final minutes of the 4 October Corporate Executive Team (CET/16/327)

2.1 The draft minutes were agreed. The CET reviewed and provided updates on the table of actions. The final minutes of the 4 October meeting were noted.

3. Draft minutes of the Agency Board meeting of 14 November and final minutes of the Agency Board meeting of 14 October (CET/16/328)

3.1 The draft minutes of the Board meeting of 14 November, and the final minutes of the Agency Board meeting of 14 October were noted.

STRATEGY

4. Post EU Referendum – update and discussion (CET/16/257)

4.1 [Redacted under section 35 of the FOIA (Formulation of government policy)]

5. CHMP consultation on first in human trials - update/discussion (CET/16/330)

5.1 The CET were updated on the CHMP consultation on first in human trials and discussed processes for providing comments on the draft proposal. [Redacted under section 35 of the FOIA (Formulation of government policy)]

6. A strategy for Biological Standards (CET/16/331)

6.1 [Redacted under section 35 of the FOIA (Formulation of government policy)]

7. Accommodation update (CET/16/332)

7.1 [Redacted under section 43 of the FOIA (Commercial interests)]

8. Needs and Vision update (CET/16/333)

8.1 Following on from the accommodation, Rachel Bosworth also presented an update from the Needs and Vision group. The work on space planning so far has worked on the basis that project areas will be included with space for small informal meetings, equipped with touch down areas and docking stations. It was noted that space will be tighter than the existing space at BPR. There is a very strong preference for teams to remain together with fuzzy boundaries. A paper on smarter working will be brought to the January CET meeting for consideration.

Action: bring paper on smarter working to January CET.

9. Operational Transformation (CET/16/334)

9.1 [Redacted under section 35 of the FOIA (Formulation of government policy)]

GOVERNANCE & DELIVERY

10. Agency Skills and Capability Planning update (CET/16/336)

10.1 Vanessa Birchall-Scott presented an update on the skills and capability planning work. Four areas of capability were identified as a priority for the Civil Service as a whole; digital skills, project delivery, leading and managing change, and commercial skills and behaviours. The leads, supported by Learning & Development, are responsible for developing plans to build skills and capacity in these areas, tailored to the needs of the different parts of the organisation. A paper was taken to CET in November on digital skills. In project capability development, a programme and project management community is being established; 63 members of staff have been identified for the Agency community. A project management competency assessment tool will be published in January. On leading and managing change, this is referenced to 2 major change programmes – the accommodation

move and Brexit. There has been a delay across the civil service regarding establishing the professional workstream for commercial skills and behaviours; however this is being taken forwards.

10.2 CET approved the direction of travel in all four areas, and continued to support progress on the action plans. The CET suggested that fast streamers could be included in the programme.

11. People Survey (CET/16/337)

11.1 Vanessa Birchall-Scott presented feedback from the People Survey 2016 results. Further analysis was provided to the Agency and a decision was made to focus attention on the pan-Agency subcategorisation of staff results in the Senior Leadership Group meeting in December 2016 and on the division/centre comparator data presented in the paper. Divisional action plans should be submitted by 17th February, for sign off in March 2017. The CET noted that the cross-Agency group could be refreshed, at least in part each year to bring fresh thinking to bear in addressing the survey results. Some case studies could also help to share learning about actions taken which worked in each Division.

12. Pre-employment screening across the Agency (CET/16/338)

12.1 [Name redacted under section 40 of the FOIA (personal data)] presented a paper on pre-employment screening across the Agency. The resourcing team was required to respond to the Governments recent “Ban the Box” initiative, meaning we will no longer be able to ask applicants to disclose current or former criminal convictions at the point of application. This will require changes to current recruitment processes, specifically at pre-employment screening stage and has possible implications in terms of cost/risk. This review led to a review of the Agency’s entire pre-employment screening process. Currently the Agency only takes a signed statement that individual doesn’t have a criminal conviction; this is not usually double checked apart from for NIBSC employees. It was proposed that pre-employment screening is undertaken across the whole Agency.

12.2 The CET noted the paper and endorsed the new approach to pre-employment checks; it will still be possible to consider whether a conviction is relevant prior to making an offer. There will be additional costs of Basic Disclosure Scotland checks and animal rights connection and internet mining checks per successful candidate; There are some areas of the Agency where a higher vetting process is required, such as in enforcement or at NIBSC on top of the standard vetting proposed and endorsed. The CET noted that lead times for disclosure statements can be fast. All disclosures investigations will be undertaken at the point of offer; it will be possible to remove an offer should an issue be raised. It was noted that due to the nature of the Agency’s work, there are roles which should be exempt from the rehabilitation of offenders act and therefore spent convictions must also be taken in to account, as well as current convictions. CET asked that process were further developed specifying how and by whom decisions will be made in relation to convictions, proposing this would be joint between line management and HR. More broadly it was suggested the whole process of pre-employment checks could be brought together into a single process, including, for example checking professional status with the GMC in the case of physicians being employed by the Agency, as well as strengthening the process of reviewing references and involving line management in such reviews.

Action: HR to bring together all elements of the pre-employment checks into a single process.

13. CPRD quarterly update (CET/16/342)

13.1 Janet Valentine presented the CPRD quarterly update, covering: staff restructure; data collection, processing and linkage; Vision; EMIS; SystemOne; CPRD data processing; data linkage; GP recruitment; a Joint RCGP CPRD Quality Improvement project; the MHRA response to the National Data Guardian Review; CPRD Annual User Group and representation at ICPE; an observational research update; the DECIDE intervention study; and clinical research services. The CET noted the success with the staff restructure, and noted that 26 new staff members have been recruited including the last of the SMT members, the Head of Observational Research, who will join CPRD in April 2017. The CET noted the issues with TPP, and congratulated Janet and her team on the successes with EMIS.

14. Recruitment Principles – an update on recent audit findings and lessons learnt (CET/16/339)

14.1 [Name redacted under section 40 of the FOIA (personal data)] presented an update on recent audit findings in recruitment principles and lessons learnt. Further to the audit carried out in August 2015 and subsequent visit in October 2015 Resourcing in the Agency currently has a red risk rating as determined by the Civil Service Commission. The Agency's processes and improvement plans have been under constant review by the Resourcing Manager and Commission. Vast improvements have been noted but there are still areas of concern and lessons learnt that the Agency can improve on. There are some areas the Agency is still not fully compliant on including consistency and justification in selection of candidates to shortlist—Recommendations were made to the CET regarding training for hiring managers on recruitment principles; consideration around whether it would be mandatory for a trained person to be on each panel; to ensure all documentation had been returned to HR before an offer was sent out; and that the process and forms should be the same for all candidates applying for a post.

14.2 The CET endorsed the recommendations including for training for hiring managers and having a trained person on each panel in due course. An abbreviated training session should also be held at a CET MAD session. Divisions should discuss specific challenges or concerns about the current policy with respect to specific posts with their HR business partner.

Action: set up training sessions for hiring managers. Set up CET MAD session on recruitment principles.

15. Finance and Procurement Report (CET/16/340)

15.1 Richard Humphreys presented the finance and procurement report for the first 7 months of the financial year. After allowing for Dividends and Financing, after seven months of the year the Agency has a retained surplus of £2.2m which is £2.5m above budget. The Agency is forecast to deliver a retained surplus in 2016/17 of £5.6m which is £5.1m above budget. The Regulator is forecast to deliver a retained surplus of £4.7m (£4.6m above budget). NIBSC is forecast to deliver a retained surplus of £0.3m (£0.8m above budget) and CPRD is forecast to deliver a retained surplus of £0.6m (£0.3m below budget). The CPRD forecast includes an expectation that the second £1m of income from the DECIDE clinical trial will now be received in 2017/18. The forecast for ICT costs is being reviewed further to determine the timing of delivery of existing projects which may bring forward expenditure into 2016/17.

16. Timetable to the Board & Annual Report (CET/16/341)

16.1 Rachel Bosworth introduced a paper outlining the proposed timetable and approach for the production of the Annual Report and Accounts for 2016/17. The CET agreed to the proposal to replicate last year's structure in terms of the narrative and to make greater use of infographics to make the report more appealing; and agreed to using the annual report more proactively this year as a communications vehicle to key stakeholders as part of the Brexit communications and external relations strategy, as well as including details of our public health work. Any questions should be raised with Comms division.

17. Removal of GSI from emails (CET/16/343)

17.1 [Name redacted under section 40 of the FOIA (personal data)] presented a paper regarding the proposal to remove 'gsi' from the MHRA email addresses, as part of the package of improvements to email. The move away from GSI is occurring across Whitehall; Cabinet Office completed the move in early 2015 and DfE are undertaking the move now. The Comms team at DfE shared lessons learnt from the exercise; these points are of reassurance to stakeholders. There will be some external impact, which will need to be managed carefully. Comms and IMD are working closely on this. The proposal was made to run the old gsi email address in the background for a period of time, initially for a period of 3 months (with then a review to determine whether to continue beyond the three month period). The cost for keeping the GSI email address running is £50k a year. The CET endorsed the recommendations in the paper, and noted that the Agency will need explicit reassurance that the core central government email traffic will be received with no issues. An updating activity to stationary, business cards, templates, Yellow Cards and so on will need to be undertaken.

18. Agreement of team briefing notes

18.1 The items appropriate for circulating to staff as team briefing were agreed by the CET.

INFORMATION

19. NIBSC SMT update (CET/16/345)

19.1 The minutes from the NIBSC SMT update from November were noted.

20. Draft minutes of the 22 November Regulatory Group meeting (CET/16/347) & final minutes of the 18 October Regulatory Group meeting (CET/16/348)

20.1 The draft minutes of the 22 November Regulatory Group meeting and the final minutes of the 18 October Regulatory Group meeting were noted.

21. Updates from Cross-Agency teams

21.1 These updates were noted by the CET:

Information Management Governance Board (IMGB) (CET/16/349)
Finance Sub Committee meeting (CET/16/350)
Policy and Procedures Committee (CET/16/351)
Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (CET/16/353)
Risk and Audit Liaison Group (CET/16/354)

22. Agreement of 13 January 2016 CET agenda (CET/16/356)

22.1 The CET agreed reviewed and commented on the draft agenda for the 13 January CET meeting. It was agreed that a number of items had still to be confirmed; relevant directors would advise Directorate.

23. AOB

None.