

Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency Board Meeting

15 December 2017

Board / Executive interaction – update

<p><u>Issue/ Purpose:</u></p> <p>To update the Board on progress on Board/ Executive interaction since the topic was discussed at the Board / Corporate Executive Team (CET) joint away day in January 2017.</p>
<p><u>Summary:</u></p> <p>At the Board/CET away day on 27 January 2017, the Board and CET discussed how interaction between the executive and the Board could be enhanced. Specifically, the Board asked that further consideration be given to help the Board to learn more about the work of the Agency and explore opportunities for the Board members to provide advice to the Agency and therein raise the profile of the Board within the organisation and among staff. What follows is a progress report on this strand of work over the past year.</p>
<p><u>Suitable for team briefing? (Yes)</u></p>
<p><u>EU Referendum implications:</u> Not applicable</p>
<p><u>Timings:</u></p> <p>Following the Board meeting on 15 December 2017, there will a further discussion of Board / Executive interaction at the Board / CET away day on 29 January 2018.</p>
<p><u>Action required by Board:</u></p> <p>The Board to consider the update and to provide any comments.</p>
<p><u>Links:</u> n/a</p>
<p><u>Author(s):</u> Dr Ian Hudson, Chief Executive; Aidan McIvor, Directorate</p>
<p><u>Which of the five themes in the Corporate Plan 2013/2018 does the paper support?</u></p> <p>Relevant to all</p>
<p><u>CET Sponsor:</u></p> <p>Dr Hudson, Chief Executive</p>

Board / Executive interaction – update

Introduction

1. At the Board / Corporate Executive Team (CET) away day in January 2017, the Board and Corporate Executive Team (CET) discussed interaction, and how it could be enhanced. Dr Hudson, Chief Executive, summarised the many changes that had taken place in terms of Board/Executive interaction in 2015 and 2016. These included the move to a unitary Board in September 2015, the launch of public Board meetings in February 2016, the opening up of Board meetings to all executive members, as well as to observers from the devolved administrations.

Board's perspective

2. At the away day in January 2017, the Board thought that the level of Board / executive interaction was good, and that the Board was much stronger in January 2017 than in the past. The Board thought the atmosphere was inclusive, friendly, and collaborative, with a willingness by all to contribute. The informality of the Board's proceedings was one of its strengths, but always with clarity on achieving the Board's objectives. The Non-Executive Directors (NEDs) offered to be involved more in the work of the Agency, and advised that they would be happy to respond to requests.

Executive's perspective

3. Many CET directors said that they greatly valued the opportunity to interact with the NEDs and would like more interaction, including with their staff, e.g. at divisional and/or Senior Management Team (SMT) meetings.

Aim

4. What follows is a progress report on the work that has taken place during 2017 to enhance Board/ Executive interaction and to raise awareness of the Board within the Agency.

Board champions

5. On an individual basis, each member of the Board has an opportunity to meet with CET directors and staff as part of their 'sponsor' role, which was adopted in 2015. This gives each NED a particular area of Agency work, for which they are the Board contact.
6. The sponsor roles for each NED are as follows:
 - **Martin Hindle** (Deputy Chairman): business planning, Human Resources; Mr Hindle has provided advice on the Agency's one-year business plans, its current Corporate Plan, and work on Operational Transformation Programme, as well as on the Academic Health Science Networks. Mr Hindle is also a member of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC).

- **Dr Barbara Bannister:** broader public health – works closely with Policy Division and leads on Conflicts of Interest. Dr Bannister is a member of the Remuneration Committee.
 - **Dame Valerie Beral:** Vigilance and Risk Management of Medicines (VRMM); works closely with VRMM and the Clinical Practice Research Datalink (CPRD).
 - **Professor Bruce Campbell:** medical devices – works closely with Devices Division. Professor Campbell, along with Matthew Campbell-Hill, is preparing a paper on the regulation of machine learning / artificial intelligence. Professor Campbell is a member of the Remuneration Committee.
 - **Matthew Campbell-Hill:** Communications - works closely with Communications Division, Human Resources (mentoring and Equality and Diversity), Information Management Division and Devices Division on a range of work. Mr Campbell-Hill is a member of the Advisory Board of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, which leads on the Government's digital agenda. Mr Campbell-Hill is a member of the Remuneration Committee.
 - **Stephen Lightfoot:** Operational Transformation (OT) – Mr Lightfoot is the Agency's Board champion for Whistleblowing and provides advice on business planning. Mr Lightfoot is also a member of ARAC.
 - **Sir Alex Markham:** Sir Alex is the Board's champion on CPRD, attending its regular Executive Committee meetings. Sir Alex is also a member of ARAC.
 - **Deborah Oakley:** Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) – Ms Oakley is Chair of ARAC, which meets five times a year.
 - **Professor David Webb:** NIBSC - Chairs the Board's Remuneration Committee, as well as the Scientific Advisory Committee at the National Institute for Biological Standards and Control (NIBSC).
7. Specific examples of Board members' working with staff on specific projects or areas of work:
- *Operational Transformation Programme* - All of the Board's non-executive directors have provided input, advice and constructive challenge for the OT programme.
 - *Whistleblowing champion* - Stephen Lightfoot was appointed as the Agency's Whistleblowing Champion in 2016 to oversee its Whistleblowing policy and its implementation.
 - *Conflicts of Interest work* – Dr Barbara Bannister is the Board's representative on the Agency's Conflicts of Interest Group, which meets every three months. Previously, Martin Hindle carried out this role until he was appointed to ARAC.
 - *Academic Health Scientific Networks* – work between Martin Hindle and Dr Bonnerjea and colleagues in Licensing Division.
8. There are two sub-committees of the Board, the Remuneration and Audit committees, where the Board members of those committees interact with the

relevant specialist functions that support them and engage with a range of agency staff depending on the topic.

Other areas of engagement with the executive and other staff

9. *Public board meetings* – The Agency's programme of public Board meetings, which many members of the executive attend, affords the Board a higher profile. Additionally, members of staff are invited to attend and have done so. Immediately before and after the meetings, members of Board meet with staff observers and members of the public.
10. *Board lectures*: An informal programme of lunchtime lectures by members of the Board members for staff has been reintroduced. So far, three members of the Board have given talks in 2017 (two at NIBSC and one at the Agency's offices in Victoria). Arranging these is dependent not only on the availability of Board members but of meeting room space.
11. *NIBSC scientific lunchtime lectures* – Board and the members of the executive have an open invitation to attend the regular cycle of lunchtime scientific lectures at NIBSC, which some Board members have attended.
12. *DH seminars* - Members of the Board are invited to attend a range of seminars and talks at the Department of Health and wider central government events, which, on occasion, some CET directors also attend.

Collaborative working with divisions/ meeting staff

- *Cross-agency groups*: Board members attend meetings of a number of the Agency's cross-agency working groups. Matthew Campbell-Hill attended one of the quarterly meetings of the Equality and Diversity Group in 24 May 2017. Mr Campbell-Hill provided advice on disability access provision at the Agency's offices in London (Victoria) and at NIBSC in 2015 and subsequently.
- *Meeting staff / raising the profile of the Board members* – Board members have standing invitations to attend the Agency's six-monthly All Staff Meetings in London and NIBSC. Board members also have an opportunity to meet staff and stakeholders at high profile events, such as the Annual Lecture.
- *Divisional and other staff meetings* - Board members also attend divisional staff and senior management team (SMT) meetings, e.g. Mr Hindle, Deputy Chairman, attended Human Resources Division's monthly team meeting in September.
- *EU Staff Network* – In July 2017, Dr Barbara Bannister, along with Dr Hudson and Mrs Birchall-Scott, Director of HR, attended a meeting of the Agency's EU Staff network. Dr Christian Schneider, Director of NIBSC, also attended - as a member of the EU Staff Network. The network has invited Dr Bannister to attend future such meetings and has expressed its appreciation for having a Board representative at such meetings.
- *Raising awareness of the Board via Insite* - profile pieces and interviews have been published on Insite.

Other activities

- *Visits / tours* – In order to raise further the awareness of the work of the Agency, tours have been arranged for members of the Board of the laboratory facilities and Stem Cell bank at NIBSC and of the Agency's laboratories, including those of the British Pharmacopoeia Commission at Teddington. The latter will take place in February 2018.
- A tour of the Agency's new building in Canary Wharf will also take place in May 2018 (to be confirmed).

Follow up to the January 2017 away day

13. At the away day in January 2017, the following recommendations were made:

- *Away day format* - It was suggested that we should consider alternative formats for the six monthly Awaydays.

Action taken: the away day format was changed for the meeting in July 2017, with a move to cabaret seating, an informal dress code, and a lead speaker for each session who would encourage interactive discussion. This format worked well in July 2017 and will be replicated at the next away day on 29 January 2018.

- *External speakers at or around Board away days:* We could use the six monthly away days as an opportunity to invite an external speaker (on the basis of Chatham House rule) for a specific session. The speaker could be from the pharmaceutical sector, academic research, other health-related arms-length bodies and relevant departments of state.

Action taken: Sir Andrew Witty, former Chief Executive of GSK, spoke at a Board dinner in July. Options for a similar type of guest dinner speech are being explored for 2018.

- *Mentoring* – It was suggested that, where possible, Board members could provide some form of mentoring to staff drawn from the talent management programme.

Action taken: Since the late summer three members of the board have offered to assist HR with some form of coaching or mentoring.

Next steps

14. A further paper will be prepared for Session 4 (on Board/ Executive interaction) of the Board/ CET away day on 29 January 2018.