

Minutes of VMD Management Board meeting held on 8 December 2020

Members

Julia Drown (Chair)
David Catlow
David Corner

Present

Peter Borriello - VMD
Abigail Seager – VMD
Mike Griffiths – VMD
Linda Simmons – VMD
Gill Clarke – VMD
Olwyn Jenkins – VMD (observer)
Chris Abbott – VMD (note taker)

1. Announcements and apologies for absence

- 1.1 The meeting was held by video conference. Apologies had been received from David Kennedy and Christine Middlemiss.

2. Declarations of interest in the matters to be discussed

- 2.1 None.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2020

VMDMB 20/34

- 3.1 The minutes were agreed.

4. Matters Arising/Actions

VMDMB 20/35

- 4.1 VMD reported that staff responsible for maintaining VADER (Veterinary medicines Availability and Disease and Emergency Response) were clear of their roles and this would be added to the new VMD organogram.
- 4.2 VMD had considered allowing customers to pay by direct debit but this would be difficult to implement with the variations in timing and invoice value and are instead looking at online payments using Gov.uk Pay.

5. Regulatory Science Strategy

VMDMB 20/36

- 5.1 The Head of the Pharmaceuticals team, Gill Clarke, updated members on the VMD's regulatory science strategy which has been established to ensure that a framework is in place to deal with the innovative medicines and scientific challenges arising outside of usual business over the next 5 to 10 years. The strategy, which contains 6 main goals, has been sent out for public consultation until 31 January. Issues of particular interest are borderline products, environmental impacts and statistical modelling. VMD staff have been assigned to look at novel pharmaceutical and biological products and Peter Borriello is a member of the working group on emerging zoonoses chaired by Lord Trees.
- 5.2 An action plan will be drawn up after the consultation closes. The VMD plans to collaborate with other agencies and external experts in order deal with the challenges which arise and has membership of VICH and the Quints regulators' forum with Canada, US, New Zealand and Australia.
- 5.3 Members noted the wide scope and great potential of the strategy and its capacity to keep staff engaged in interesting work. It was agreed to revisit the subject when milestones are in place.

6. CEO's Report (and annexes)

VMDMB 20/40 & VMDMB 20/41

- 6.1 The CEO's report was reviewed. It was noted that the VMD's virtual open day on 18 November had been very successful with over 2,000 viewers so far. The receipt of the first

joint labelling application with New Zealand was a noteworthy development which will benefit companies. There was increasing interest in the effect of neonicotinoids on the environment, although it was not yet clear how much veterinary medicines contribute to this, and in resistance caused by their improper use, and VMD intends to conduct further research with the help of the VPC. It was agreed to consider the topic further at a future meeting.

7. Delivery against the Business Plan 2020/21

VMDMB 20/37

7.1 Delivery against the Business Plan was reviewed.

8. Transition and Trade activities

- 8.1 The Veterinary Medicines and Residues (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020 has cleared debate in parliament and will come in to force on 1st January. A successful information day had been held with Industry in November and 96% of companies said they were confident they had what they needed for the end of the transition period. The plan for converting centralised (CAP) products has been confirmed and companies were content for nearly all of these products to be given UK MAs. All stakeholder communications have been completed.
- 8.2 The ongoing level of access to EU databases and systems was now largely known but still required some clarification. As expected, the UK will not have access to EU meeting networks. Free trade negotiations with the US have been paused awaiting the new government.
- 8.3 Veterinary consumables have been added to the list of products needing priority treatment if there is border disruption, and the VMD are involved in discussions aimed at avoiding the possible shortage of syringes and cold storage due to Covid-19 priorities. VADER preparedness will be increased from 28 December.
- 8.4 Industry were keen on the new authorisation opportunities in the year ahead. There were no plans to increase regulatory charges and unlikely to be tariffs on medicines. Availability of medicines in Northern Ireland had been addressed for the next 12 months. VMD staff who were EU nationals had been offered support but were content.

9. Finance report

VMDMB 20/38

9.1 The Finance report was noted.

10. Management Board work plan

VMDMB 20/39

10.1 It was agreed to consider the revised Communications Strategy at the next meeting.

11. Any other business

11.1 Following the recent changes to VMD's senior management structure, its EMB now consisted of 6 heads of divisions and offices reporting to the CEO. It was proposed that representatives at MB and ARAC be the CEO, deputy CEO and the Chief Operating Officer (a new role for the head of Business Support) with the heads invited to attend the meetings in rotation. The NEDs would reflect and let the CEO know if in agreement.

12. Dates of future meetings

12.1 The next meeting would be held on 18 March.

**Veterinary Medicines Directorate
December 2020**