

<b>Agenda item:</b>	10
<b>Attachment:</b>	

## HRA Board paper

### 18 September 2019

<b>Title of paper:</b>	Approach to refreshing the HRA Strategy
<b>Submitted by:</b>	Juliet Tizzard, Director of Policy
<b>Summary of paper:</b>	To outline a proposed approach to refreshing the HRA strategy
<b>Reason for submission:</b>	For approval
<b>Further information:</b>	<p>The paper covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why we need to refresh our strategy</li> <li>• How we should go about it</li> <li>• A timeline</li> </ul>
<b>Budget / cost implication:</b>	Engagement costs to be covered by the Policy and Engagement budget
<b>Dissemination:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff to be informed about the approach to refreshing our strategy via HRA News</li> <li>• Published on HRA Website</li> </ul>
<b>Time required:</b>	15 minutes

## Approach to refreshing the HRA Strategy

### 1. Background

- 1.1. It is important for any organisation to have a strategy. A strategy provides direction and purpose to the organisation and signals intent to its external stakeholders. It enables that organisation to plan, prioritise and measure its performance.
- 1.2. The HRA's first strategic plan was published in 2013, built around five strategic objectives. The plan focussed on streamlining research approvals, building partnerships across the research system and developing our staff and volunteers. We refreshed those objectives in 2017, with an added emphasis on external engagement and modernising our technology:
  - Championing health and social care research
  - Making it easier to conduct high quality research
  - Developing a proactive, strategically-focussed organisation
  - Capitalising on technological developments
  - Ensuring the HRA is governed effectively and provides value for the tax payer
- 1.3. These strategic objectives have guided us well, particularly around annual business planning, and our staff have a good understanding of them. However, the time is right to review those objectives because:
  - we have a new HRA Chair and a number of new non-executive directors
  - the external environment has significantly changed since 2017 and will change further in the coming three years
  - our tight financial position means that we must prioritise work and focus on activity which will have the most benefit.
- 1.4. We should take the opportunity of a strategy refresh to address some of the gaps in our current strategy:
  - Consider our overall vision and purpose: we have articulated this in different ways since 2013 and haven't settled on one clear vision, sometimes causing confusion.
  - Consider *how* we will work to achieve that vision: we have described well *what* activities we intend to carry out to achieve our strategic objectives but have not described how we will work as an organisation. This is about our tone, ways of working and policy approach in key areas and links to our stakeholder engagement strategy and our approach to public involvement.
  - Develop further the way we articulate and measure the expected impact and benefit of our activities: we have started to articulate benefits in our 2019-20 business plan and incorporate that into our strategic performance reporting, but could enhance this further, both in how we report to the Board, but also how we make that public.
- 1.5. The purpose of this paper is not to discuss the contents of the strategy at this point. Rather, it is to enable the Board to agree how, when and with whom we will refresh the strategy.

## 2. Proposed approach

- 2.1. Despite the need to review our strategic objectives because of changes in both HRA leadership and in the external environment, that review does not need to be radical one. Our staff and our key stakeholders have a good understanding of our role and purpose and we are known for our collaborative approach to working across the UK. In that sense, we should see it as a refresh rather than a full review.
- 2.2. However, we need to ensure that the strategy is effective and chimes with both our staff and external audiences. It should therefore be informed by an understanding of:
- The external environment, now and in the foreseeable future
  - Our own strengths and weaknesses
  - The organisation's financial position for the next three years
  - The perspective of stakeholders – public, professional, staff and volunteer audiences
- 2.3. We discussed a possible timeline and approach for developing a new HRA strategy at the July Board meeting, though acknowledged this was contingent upon when our new Chair started in the role and to what extent we want this to be a root and branch review. The proposed timetable is now as follows:

Date	Activity
October/ November 2019	Early development phase: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• informal discussions internally</li><li>• individual meetings with key stakeholders</li></ul>
10 December	Board seminar to develop draft strategy
January 2020	Consultation phase: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Publish draft strategy and online survey (6-31 January)</li><li>• Hold stakeholder workshop</li><li>• Staff engagement</li></ul>
5 February	Board meeting: review feedback from survey and agree changes to draft strategy
18 March	Board meeting: sign off new strategy and 2020-2021 business plan
April	Launch new strategy at a stakeholder event

## 3. Recommendation

- 3.1. Board members are asked to consider and agree the proposed approach to refreshing the HRA strategy.