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| Agenda item: | 9 |
| Attachment: | A-C |

# HRA Board Cover sheet

# 9 November 2020

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| Title of paper: | Transformation Programme – Developing the way forward |
| Submitted by: | Ian Cook |
| Summary of paper: | This paper intends to offer the Board a detailed summary of the context and rationale of the HRA’s Transformation Programme and the developing work around prioritisation, dependencies, and benefits |
| Reason for submission: | The Board have been keen to have an enhanced understanding of how the Transformation Programme is approaching the challenge of delivering a substantial programme of change. The paper offers the opportunity to the Board to reflect and make comment on each of the aspects covered in this paper |
| Further information: | The paper will cover the following1. The strategic context
2. The programme portfolio and governance
3. The approach to prioritisation/dependency mapping
4. Deliverables for 20/21 and 21/22
5. Benefits

It is also worth noting that a comprehensive cross programme of work is in train to review and deliver ‘3’ by the end of the calendar year |
| Budget / cost implication: | Resources for each programme within the Transformation Portfolio have been agreed and are within the current budget envelope for 2020/21, however this will be subject to further scrutiny as the business planning process for 21/22 is carried out and the result of the comprehensive spending review becomes known.  |
| Dissemination: | As a part 1 paper it is a public document. |
| Time required: | 15 mins |

1. **Introduction**
	1. The HRA Transformation Portfolio includes a number of exciting and potentially ground-breaking pieces of work that will significantly enhance and improve the health research environment. Services will be redesigned around users and our new technology platform will deliver a world-class hub for health and social care research in the UK. This will enable smooth and intuitive access to research approval, study management, best practice guidance and lay-friendly information about the results of research. Our people-focussed programmes will support a strong research culture, with high ethical standards and a focus on transparency, patient involvement and trustworthy use of patient data.
	2. This work will be clearly align with the HRA’s own strategic aims and map strongly to the Governments Industrial Strategy and the linked priorities identified by Lord Bethell
	3. The Government’s vision for life sciences and the clinical research environment and our own experiential learning acquired from the impact of Covid-19 have offered the opportunity to consider the further prioritisation of programme activities so that it remains on course to deliver improvements to the sector in line with the governments ambition and the associated measurable benefits.
* 5.94 million p.a. of efficiency savings across the sector by 2023[[1]](#footnote-1)
* Reduction of rework on applications to less than 2% by 2023 (currently around 30%)
* 98% of all CTIMP applications flowing through the new PEGA/IRAS system by 2023 with a 20% reduction in timelines for REC and MHRA approvals
* Radically increased levels of self-service and 24 hr availability
* Piloting a fast track service that accelerates the approval process for critical studies – potentially reducing turnaround times for some studies to <10 days (conditional on long-term funding being made available)
	1. For the HRA benefits will be realised in the following areas:
		+ Reduction in HRA staff time due to automation/digital enhancement of services (0.35m p.a. already realised)
		+ Reduction in time required for rework equivalent of 2 fte per week by 2023
		+ Significant reduction in HRA estates footprint from current avg of 8.09 sqm/fte
		+ Cost reduction and value add in IT infrastructure
	2. It is important to note these benefits and others will be incrementally delivered over the whole period and will be regularly monitored and reported to the Board
1. **The Portfolio**
	1. The Transformation Portfolio consists of the programmes presented in the graphic below which intends to demonstrate the connected relationships between each of the constituent parts and the wider relationships that a number of programmes have with external bodies



* 1. The programme is supported by a robust governance structure with oversight provided by the Transformation Board (TB) whose membership is the same as the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT). The SLT focusses on strategy, business planning and the day to day operational performance of the organisation. As part of strategy development, SLT approves which programmes are included in the transformation portfolio and their funding.
	2. The TB acts as the delivery arm for our strategy and oversees the successful deployment of organisational change associated across a number of programmes of work applying the principles of good programme governance.
	3. If TB identifies that there are insufficient resources allocated to the programmes or insufficient capacity to support the programmes for core infrastructure then this is escalated to SLT and a decision is taken whether resources can be made available or agree which programmes we prioritise and which we stop / defer.
	4. The programme is supported by the investment in dedicated and experienced programme and project management expertise for all areas, which is line with the governments stated ambition to ensure critical programmes of work are led and driven by programme management professionals.
1. **Prioritisation and dependencies**
	1. There remains work to do in this area particularly in light of the Comprehensive Spending Review and also the impact of Covid has had on thinking related to future models of working. To facilitate this a number of internal workshops have been arranged in November to consider prioritisation. The discussion will take a number of factors into account:
2. The link to Government’s vision
3. The potential scale of customer/societal/financial benefit that will be realised
4. The risk associated with ‘non-delivery’
5. The criticality of timelines (what has to be delivered)
6. The scale of investment
7. The funding envelope (availability of budget)
8. The level of dependency and connectivity
	1. This work will not only consider the prioritisation of programmes but also the activity within programmes. As an outcome of this it may be that the portfolio of activity within the Transformation Portfolio would be adjusted and this would be fully addressed during the business planning process for 21/22
	2. However, notwithstanding this exercise, the following represents a broad commentary on the developing thinking around prioritisation which intends to assist the Board in contributing to the ongoing discussion.
	3. Although the work on prioritisation has yet to be completed it is clear that the **Research Systems Programme (RSP) inc. IRAS Website** remains the **key priority** as it is required to meet the need to move off legacy contracts, will contribute the most to overall benefits, has the greatest level of both financial and reputational risk, and is the recipient of the greatest level of investment. It is the mechanism by which significant changes to the set-up and delivery of research in the UK will be delivered and embedded. It will provide a new ideal path for the research journey, ensuring that all relevant parties have visibility of key information and status of research studies, with consistent and compatible workflows for research in the NHS across the UK. Given the level of cross-system, UK-wide business change that needs to be finalised and delivered through the technology, this programme consumes significant resources across the Approvals directorate as well as more obviously through the Research Systems team, along with considerable supporting activity in other directorates.
	4. The **Combined Ways of Working Programme (CWOW)** programme **must also be completed** in order to deliver the benefits associated with its investment. CWOW is a cross-organisation programme between the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and the UK Research Ethics Service, with the Health Research Authority providing digital technology. By working together to deliver approvals in parallel rather than in sequence, researchers are seeing significantly reduced overall start-up timelines. The programme will need to complete roll out during 2021, providing a single, integrated, competitive clinical trials approval system for the UK before the EU starts the transition to the EU Clinical Trials Regulation. There is remaining Research Systems work scheduled up to June 2021, while the roll out will expand work across the Approvals Operations and Support divisions during the whole of 2021.
	5. The **Research Review Programme (Pilot)** has been initiated to build on the momentum of the learning achieved from delivering approvals of research studies within the Covid environment and has been identified as a **key priority by the Board**. It aims to agree an evolved model for research ethics review which is more proportionate, in terms of risk and impact, joined up, streamlined and user friendly for researchers and research sponsors, meets the needs of study reviewers (ethics service and other regulatory checks), supports good practice in research, protects the interests of research participants, patients and the impact of research on wider society
	6. Although these three areas potentially may be considered the priority programmes, it is important to recognise the importance and criticality of other programme areas which still remain high profile and reputationally important.
	7. The **Study Set-up programme** and its contribution to the UK compatibility programme are the key places where business change is being led that will be embedded in RS. This is the programme that is creating the UK ideal path that the RS will deliver.
	8. **Streamlining data-driven technologies** has been funded by NHSX with a clear associated delivery timeline.
	9. **Transparency** remains a key area of work which has resulted in a high level of expectation amongst a number of key stakeholders and interested parties.
	10. There is a similar story on programmes of work that have more of an internal focus
	11. The **Estates Strategy** requires the HRA to align with government strategy and priorities in relation to our estates’ portfolio. **Key lease events must be managed over the next 12 months and cannot be deferred**. Importantly this offers the HRA to improve our spaces enabling a productive, technology enabled environment and **reduce our future estates costs by 25%**. Majority of work is planned to be completed by the end of this financial year.
	12. The continuing **ICT infrastructure programme** will enable the full transition to adoption of Office 365 to support our people to work well, anywhere, easily collaborate and provide necessary security and resilience. This has the potential, when combined with the estates strategy to **generate significant cashable and non-cashable benefits**
	13. Both the external and internal facing programmes are absolutely dependent on ‘good people’ The **Supporting our People** and **Valuing our Volunteers** programmes are therefore vital to ensure that we have the necessary capacity and capability to deliver our services.
	14. In considering these factors it is not just a case of simply ‘doing’ one programme instead of another, but more a case of structuring the overall programme to ensure that the most critical products are delivered within required timescales. **To do this it is imperative to identify the dependencies between activities** to ensure that resources are effectively focussed in the right areas at the right time and that plans are adjusted to reflect these decisions which may result in ‘non’ critical activity being delayed, deferred or descoped to enable priority work to continue to be delivered.
9. **Deliverables**
	1. It is important to highlight that much transformational change has already been achieved by the HRA since its establishment through the delivery and implementation of the single approval process and the associated comprehensive organisational restructure that was required to enable this.
	2. In addition, significant improvements have been delivered to the HRA infrastructure including automation of many manual processes (expenses, mandatory training, annual leave), roll out of Windows 10, Office 365 (partial) and improvements to commercial / procurement processes. It is the combination of these improvements that has enabled the HRA to work in a radically different way during the COVID-19 pandemic and deliver such nationally important impact.
	3. The delivery of these capabilities has set the foundation for the next stage which will have a clear focus on the **wide scale digitalisation of internal and external services.** The HRA will use digital technologies as a strategic enabler, improving efficiency by significantly reducing the need for manual processing, enhancing insights by delivering new capabilities in data and analytics, and transforming the experience of stakeholders accessing our systems and processes
	4. The HRA also intends to deliver a reconfigured ethics review model (funding permitting) and a fit for purpose organisational structure and capability that will effectively deliver this new model and all our other services.
	5. The estates and technology aspect of the programme will support our people to continue to work well, anywhere. All of this work will build on the significant lessons learnt and experience gained before and during the pandemic and continue to be driven by government priorities.
	6. In terms of the detail, the plan at Annex A Illustrates a ‘swim lane’ view of deliverables planned for 20/21 and early 21/22. Detailed planning continues which will result in a more sophisticated longer-term view which will show how the timing of deliverables take into account the work on prioritisation, dependencies and resourcing and will also offer a greater clarity of understanding on when benefits will be delivered.
10. **Benefits**
	1. The ‘point’ of all this work is to deliver tangible and measurable benefits (a number of benefit headlines were picked out in paras 1.4 and 1.5).
	2. Behind these headlines significant work has already been carried out to produce associated detailed benefit profiles for each of the programmes and this is being translated into a benefit delivery plan.
	3. To offer the board an illustration of how this work will be translated into a plan, Annex B offers an example, using the RSP.
11. **Conclusion**
	1. Although there remain many significant challenges to the successful delivery of the portfolio, strong foundations are in place. Key programmes of work have been identified and scoped, experienced PM resource has been engaged, the PMO offers a robust co-ordinating service and a strong governance structure is in place.
	2. As this paper highlights the current work focusses on prioritisation and dependency mapping to ensure that delivery priorities are identified and that there is a clear critical path to those priorities. This work will be completed before the end of the calendar year and will be used as the basis for future reports to the board.
	3. The delivery of the Transformation programme is ambitious and challenging, however if the necessary resourcing is made available through a positive Comprehensive Spending Review outcome, It remains achievable over the next 3 years.
1. Reduced researcher time - achieving efficiencies of up to 0.06% of the total value of research to the UK economy

= 5.94m p.a. (Assuming the total value of the UK research sector is £9.5 billion [↑](#footnote-ref-1)