

Management in Confidence

HRA Board meeting minutes (Part 1 – Public Session)

Date:	18 March 2020	
Time:	10.30am – 12.00pm	
Present:	Teresa Allen (TA)	Chief Executive
	Ian Cook (IC)	Director of Transformation & Corporate Services
	Richard Cooper (RC)	Non-Executive Director
	Graham Clarke (GC)	Non-Executive Director
	Professor Andrew George (AG)	Non-Executive Director
	Dr Nicole Mather (NM)	Non-Executive Director
	Dr Janet Messer (JM)	Director of Approvals Service
	Juliet Tizzard (JT)	Director of Policy
	Professor Sir Terence Stephenson (TS)	Chair
	Karen Williams (KW)	Deputy Chief Executive & Director of Finance
In attendance:	Mary Cubitt (MC)	Research Systems Programme Director
	Jonathan Fennelly-Barnwell (JFB)	Deputy Director Approvals Service
	Katherine Guerin (KG)	Deputy Director Corporate Services
	Stephen Tebbutt (ST)	Head of Corporate Governance & Risk
Observers:	None to note	
Apologies:	None to note	
Venue:	Via teleconference	

No.	Record of discussion	Action owner
1	<p>Welcome, introduction and apologies</p> <p>TS welcomed everyone to the meeting. No apologies were noted.</p> <p>The Board noted the meeting was due to be held at the Newcastle office however, following the Government announcement requiring social distancing following the Covid-19 outbreak, the meeting now needed to be held virtually. The Board noted the HRA website had been updated with dial in details for this call with members of the public and HRA staff able to join the meeting if they so wished.</p>	
2	<p>Conflicts of interest</p> <p>AG advised he may have a conflict of interest to declare in the future relating to research into Covid-19. AG advised he had been contacted by a company, due to his immunological / immunotherapy background, which is in discussion with the Department of Health & Social Care (DHSC) about developing a research</p>	

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	trial relating to Covid-19. At present the Board agreed this was not a conflict and would await further details from AG in due course.	
3	<p>Review of minutes from meeting held on 5 February 2020</p> <p>The Board reviewed and accepted the minutes of the previous meeting as a true and accurate record of events without amendment.</p>	
4	<p>Review of actions from previous meeting / matters arising</p> <p>Action: ST to add CAG update to Board forward planner. Complete – scheduled for quarter 4 2020/21.</p> <p>Action: IC to liaise with Staff Forum representatives to provide feedback to Board at March meeting. Cancelled – was scheduled however with meeting moving to teleconference decision was taken to postpone. The Board noted a separate teleconference meeting with RC and another NED with staff forum representatives was being arranged instead.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Action: RC to provide feedback at the next meeting</i></p>	
5	<p>Update from Chair</p> <p>Chief Executive recruitment The Board noted the DHSC Remuneration Committee had supported the decision for TA to retire and return on a part time basis in October last year. TS advised the DHSC Remuneration Committee however had stipulated the requirements of the Chief Executive role at the HRA were such that it could not be undertaken on a part time basis for an infinite period of time and therefore added a caveat that the HRA should put in place plans to appoint a substantive Chief Executive in the near future.</p> <p>The Board noted the HRA was in the processes of appointing an executive search agency to support this recruitment with an interview date provisionally held for July with a fallback date scheduled in September if required.</p>	
6	<p>Chief Executive update</p> <p>The Board received and noted the update from TA.</p> <p>TA advised, following the Covid-19 outbreak, the HRA had been required to change its business activity therefore much of the report was now out of date. All staff had been asked to work from home on the evening of Monday 16 March and Research Ethics Committee meetings had moved to being held virtually.</p> <p>The Board noted the change in working arrangements would have an impact on the HRA's business plan as priorities are shifted to manage the pandemic. Business continuity plans had been enacted with a focus on critical priorities at present. The move to virtual REC meetings was intended to release capacity in the wider NHS, in particular for expert clinical members.</p>	

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	<p>The Board noted the HRA did not have clinical staff itself to release to the front line however noted, if there was spare capacity due to a decrease in non-Covid-19 related research, it may be possible to release staff to support the wider system.</p> <p>The Board noted guidance had been added to the HRA website regarding the fast track review process including what researchers should do if they wished to apply via this route. The Board was assured the quality and standard of review was not affected when a study was reviewed using fast track review.</p> <p>The Board noted the HRA was also working with sponsors on reducing the timeline to publish a summary of the approved Covid-19 research applications on the HRA website to allow greater transparency, noting the potential commercial sensitives.</p>	
7	<p>Directorate update</p> <p>The Board received and noted the Directorate update.</p>	
8	<p>HRA Strategy</p> <p>The Board reviewed the strategy, noting it was a one-year, light touch, refresh of the previous strategy. The Board agreed the strategy should make obvious and clear the role of the HRA in approving research through Research Ethics Committees. The Board approved the new strategy however noted the findings from the recent Board effectiveness review should be considered when the next version of the strategy is prepared.</p>	
9	<p>HRA Estates Strategy 2020-25</p> <p>The Board reviewed the paper noting it provided an update on progress of the delivery of the Estates Strategy 2020-25 including the development of the new London office in Stratford.</p> <p>The Board approved the following decisions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To move the existing Bristol office at the lease end (January 2021) and agree in principle to sharing office space with Care Quality Commission in Bristol government hub from December 2020 2. To agree in principle to move the existing Nottingham office at the lease end (June 2021) to either the new Government Hub or the DHSC building in Nottingham. <p>Whilst the Board noted the cost per square foot of the new offices was more expensive than the current offices it recognised the facilities at the Government Hub's would offer an improved experience to users and allow more effective working with smarter and more collaborative use of space.</p>	
10	<p>Performance report – Quarter 3 2019/20 including January 2020 Finance report</p>	

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	The Board reviewed and approved the latest performance report and January finance report. The Board noted the finance and technology tabs on the executive summary had a RAG rating of red. The Board noted this was partly due to the Research Systems business case awaiting consideration at the 30 April DHSC investment committee after which a decision could be expected.	
11	<p>Corporate Risk Register – Quarter 3 2019/20</p> <p>The Board reviewed the register noting it reflected the risk position at the end of December. The Board noted the current risk profile was higher than demonstrated in this report following the announcement that further ministerial sign off is required for the additional funding requested.</p> <p>The Board discussed the timing of the review of the report by the Board and the challenge in presenting real time information. The Board noted review is required at Leadership Team and Audit & Risk Committee prior to review by Board which does result in a time lag in the information presented.</p>	
12	<p>Standing orders, reservation and delegation of powers and Standing Financial Instructions & Scheme of Financial Delegation</p> <p>The Board reviewed the documents, noting they had been reviewed and approved at the previous Audit & Risk Committee meeting. The Board approved the updated documents.</p>	
13	<p>Summary of Audit & Risk Committee meeting</p> <p>The Board noted the summary from the Audit & Risk Committee meeting held on 4 February 2020.</p>	
14	<p>Out of session items</p> <p>None to note.</p>	
15	<p>Any other business / agenda items for next meeting</p> <p>None to note.</p>	
16	<p>Questions from members of the public</p> <p>None to note.</p>	
17	<p>Date of next meeting:</p> <p>20 May 2020</p>	