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| **Agenda item:** | **8** |
| **Attachment:** | **G** |

**HRA BOARD COVER SHEET**

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| **Date of Meeting:** | 21/01/2015 |

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| **Title of Paper:** | UK Policy Framework for Health and Social Care Research |
| **Purpose of Paper:** | The HRA as a NDPB has new functions for research policy and for research ethics policy in England. A UK Wide Steering Group has been working to develop a new UK wide policy framework to replace the Research Governance Framework.  The steering group met on 14th January 2015 to discuss an advanced draft of the new framework. In line with the project plan this means the first Board meeting of the HRA as a NDPB is able to receive, *in confidence,* the draft framework which will be issued for comment shortly in each Country, ahead of formal consultation and adoption later in the year. |
| **Reason for Submission:** | The Board is asked to comment on the progress and ‘direction of travel’ by receiving the draft framework. Board approval is sought for delegation of the decision to issue for comment and sign off for consultation by the UK Wide Steering Group. |
| **Details:** | **Background**  The HRA as a NDPB has new functions for research policy and for research ethics policy in England; essentially the functions that previously sat with the DH in England that were delivered through the provision of the Research Governance Framework (RGF) and Governance Arrangements for Research Ethics Committees (GAfREC).  These policy matters are devolved and there are currently separate RGFs in each country although there is one harmonised version of GAfREC, with NRES Standard Operating Procedures adopted and managed UK wide. The harmonised version of GAfREC was developed by DH in England using the UK Ethics Committee Authority (UKECA) and 4 nations meetings as the forum for discussion and sign off UK wide. NRES SOPs are formally signed off by UKECA and the 4 nations meetings, although practically this sign off is delegated to the UK wide REC operations Group that sits underneath UKECA and is Chaired by Joan Kirkbride. UKECA and 4 nations meetings are chaired by Janet Wisely.  **Development of the new UK policy framework**  The HRA and Devolved Administrations agreed to a collective ambition in January 2014 to develop a new policy framework for research in the UK, that would enable the separate RGF’s to be withdrawn. The HRA established a UK wide steering group, chaired by the HRA. The intention has been to produce a UK wide high level policy document, with operational policies sitting underneath (including NRES SOPS) that would be coordinated and compatible UK wide but in some cases would fall short of full harmonisation e.g. HRA Approval is England.  To inform this new framework there have been a set of projects looking at key issues and these have been tested back in each country for relevance and calls for comment managed according to individual need. This has enabled the consideration of key issues for the new document, including public dialogue, ahead of the development of the framework itself.  **Current status**  The steering group met on 14th January 2015 to discuss an advanced draft of the new framework. In line with the project plan this means the first Board meeting of the HRA as a NDPB is able to receive *in confidence* the draft framework which will be issued for comment shortly in each Country, ahead of formal consultation and adoption later in the year. The Board is asked to comment on the progress and ‘direction of travel’ by receiving the draft framework.  **Approval of the new policy framework**  The new framework enables the HRA to deliver its new policy functions in England, and these are recognised as statutory functions for the HRA. However, the benefit of the new framework in presenting a structure to support and facilitate good quality research is much enhanced for researchers by the work led by the HRA to enable this to be presented as a UK wide document. Each country will need to manage and coordinate separate consultations and formal sign off in due course.  For the purpose of sign off to issue for comment and later sign off to issue for consultation the HRA Board is asked to delegate these final decisions to the UK wide steering group. The Board will receive the version as submitted to the Steering Group and be given opportunity to comment. The version issued and comments received will also be received by the Board at the next convenient meetings. Delegation of the sign off of the version for consultation will enable efficient project management across all four countries. In the meantime, the HRA satisfies its policy responsibilities under cover of the extant RGF for England and the UK-wide edition of GAfREC.  The HRA Board will need to formally sign off the final version that enables the current RGF in England to be withdrawn.  **The members of the steering group are:**  Janice Baillie Health and Social Care Research & Development, Northern Ireland  Claire Bond National Institute for Social Care and Health Research, Welsh Government  Catherine Blewett NRES Improvement and Liaison Manager, HRA  Sue Cartwright Department of Health  Clive Collett HRA Ethics Guidance & Strategy Manager  Bill Davidson Policy Projects Lead, HRA  Louise Dunstan National Institute for Social Care and Health Research, Welsh Government  Jim Elliott Public Involvement Lead, HRA  Gordon Harrison Head of Communications, HRA  Amanda Hunn Patient and Public Engagement Project Manager, HRA  Janet Messer Associate Director - Collaboration & Development, HRA  Alex Newberry National Institute for Social Care and Health Research, Welsh Government  Mike Stevens Chief Scientist Office, Scotland  Stephen Tebbutt Board Secretary and Chief Executive Business Manager, HRA  Janet Wisely Chief Executive, HRA, (Chair) |
| **Time required for item:** | **20** |

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| **Recommendation / Proposed Actions:** | **To Approve** | | **Y** |
| **To Note** | |  |
| **For Discussion** | |  |
| **Comments** |  | |

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| **Name:** | Janet Wisely / Bill Davidson |
| **Job Title:** | Chief Executive / Policy Projects Lead |
| **Date:** | 14/01/2015 |