

NATIONAL BLOOD TRANSFUSION SERVICE

JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE FOR THE CENTRAL LABORATORIES

MINUTES OF MEETING OF 13 DECEMBER 1978

- CORRIGENDA -

1. Page 2 , item 3 - TERMS OF REFERENCE.
In paragraphh 4, line three "discussions" should read " decisions".

2. Page 5, item 8 - Membership of the Finance Sub- Committee.

The last paragraph should read as follows -

" The members of the Sub- Committee would be :

Mr Harley - Chairman
Mr Lee
Professor Mollison
Dr Waiter
Mr Dutton

Dr Lane and Dr Holburn and the Senior Administrative Officer at the
Blood Products Laboratory would attend the meetings.

A representative/ representatives of the Department's Finance Division
would be present at the meeting, but would not be members of the
Sub-Committee."

GRO-C

DHSS
January 1979

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NOT FOR PUBLICATION

NATIONAL BLOOD TRANSFUSION SERVICE

JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE FOR THE CENTRAL LABORATORIES

Meeting at the Department of Health and Social Security, Alexander Fleming House,
13 December 1978.

PRESENT

MEMBERS

Dr E L Harris (Chairman)	Deputy Chief Medical Officer, DHSS
Mr W P N Armour	Regional Personnel Officer, NW Thames RHA
Mr A Bradshaw	Head of General Administration and Service Planning Division, NW Thames RHA
Mr J Harley	Assistant Secretary, HS2, DHSS
Mr D G Lee	Principal Assistant Treasurer, NW Thames RHA
Professor P L Mollison	Professor of Haematology, St Mary's Hospital, Paddington
Dr G H Tovey	Consultant Adviser to DHSS on Blood Transfusion Service
Dr Sheila L Waiter	Senior Medical Officer, MEDSM4, DHSS

DIRECTORS

Dr A M Holburn	Director, Blood Group Reference Laboratory
Dr R S Lane	Director, Blood Products Laboratory

SECRETARY

Mr T E Dutton	Principal, HS2, DHSS
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IN ATTENDANCE:

Dr H Glass	Regional Scientific Officer, NW Thames RHA
Mr P G Perry	Under Secretary, P2, DHSS
Mr J H James	Assistant Secretary, FB2, DHSS
Mr G Brechin	Principal, FB2, DHSS
Mr W J Littlewood	Assistant Secretary, HBA, DHSS
Dr D Walford	Senior Medical Officer, MEDSM1, DHSS
Mrs S C Yuille	Higher Executive Officer, HS2, DHSS

1. CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

Dr Harris explained that following the curtailment of the Lister Institute's activities the North West Thames Regional Health Authority had agreed to take on the day-to-day administration of the 3 Central Laboratories until the long-term management arrangements had been decided. The purpose of this Committee was to oversee the management of the Laboratories in which task they would be assisted by advice from experts whenever needed.

2. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

The membership was agreed, but it was accepted that additional members could be co-opted whenever necessary.

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE - Circulated at the meeting

Paragraph 1 - It was agreed that in view of Welsh Office interest in the products of the Central Laboratories in line 1 "Secretary of State" should read "Secretaries of State".

Paragraphs 2 and 3 - These were agreed.

Paragraph 4 - This was agreed. Members also agreed to a proposal that a Departmental financial officer should be present at the meetings, but he would not normally be party to the discussions. This would ensure that financial advice was always available when required.

Paragraph 5 - It was suggested that for senior staff appointments the standard NHS procedure should be used, the appointments being approved by the Committee, while junior staff were appointed by the Directors of the Laboratories in association with the RHA. It was agreed that the Department and the RHA would consider the question of appointments further and prepare a scheme for ratification by the Committee.

Paragraphs 6 and 7 - These were agreed.

It was decided that wherever necessary the terms of reference could be modified at a later date.

4. ALLOCATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES FOR MANAGEMENT BETWEEN THE RHA AND THE DHSS

After discussion it was agreed that the RHA

1. employs and pays laboratory staff;
2. assumes the personnel function for the laboratories (subject to any direction by the Secretary of State);
3. ensures that the laboratories stay within cash limits;
4. is responsible with the Directors for the maintenance, safety and security of premises;
5. contributes, through the Joint Management Committee, to the formulation of policy regarding the laboratories. In all these matters the RHA acts on behalf of the Joint Management Committee.

The Department

1. exercises its normal functions vis a vis the RHA in personnel and accounting matters;
2. provides central funding for the laboratories via the RHA;

3. receives advice, through the Joint Management Committee as well as other sources, which contributes to the formulation of its policy regarding the laboratories.

It was agreed that it was important that the Directors knew to whom they were responsible for particular matters and the Secretary was asked to prepare draft letters of appointment for consideration at the next meeting.

5. THE COMMITTEE'S PLACE IN DETERMINING LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE LABORATORIES

Members agreed that the Committee had an important role to play in any consideration of the long-term management arrangements, and that a special meeting would have to be called to discuss the matter further.

ASTMS's involvement in discussions on the long-term management of the Laboratories was raised and it was decided that although it would not be appropriate for ASTMS to be present at the Committee's meetings, the Association should be asked for their views after the JMC and officers have had an opportunity to explore the various alternative management arrangements.

6. THE PURCHASE OF THE LISTER ELSTREE SITE AND THE RE-LOCATION OF THE BLOOD GROUP REFERENCE LABORATORY

Mr Littlewood explained that the District Valuer had negotiated a provisional figure for the purchase of the Elstree site with the Lister Institute's agent.' However, the drainage works on the site were thought to be in need of repair and a firm of consulting engineers had been commissioned to prepare a report and estimate the likely costs of any repairs which might be needed. It was hoped that the report would be ready by Christmas. If the repair costs were likely to be substantial the Lister Institute would be asked to reduce the cost of the site accordingly.

It was anticipated that, although the exchange of contracts would be earlier, the Department would not purchase the site until the next financial year.

The question of whether a deposit on the purchase price might be required in the financial year was discussed. This was thought to be unlikely, but Finance Branch asked for ample notice of any such possibility.

The arrangement under consideration whereby (apart from the domestic properties) formal leasing arrangements would not be entered into in respect of Lister property which BPL found it convenient to use and vice versa, was discussed. The advantages of such an arrangement were recognised, but Finance Branch nevertheless thought that formal leases were to be preferred.

Regarding the move of the Blood Group Reference Laboratory from its present Chelsea site, Mr Harley explained that Dr Holburn and members of the Department had viewed the Harkness Building on the Old Radcliffe Infirmary site in Oxford. If additional space could be made available the site might be suitable although it was not ideal. The Department had written to the Area Health Authority indicating its interest in the Harkness Building and asking the Authority to allow a feasibility study to be undertaken. The Department hoped to receive a reply shortly. In the meantime the Department was looking for other London sites which might be suitable. The Department felt that the cost of conversion of the Giltspur Street premises was too high to be justified to Ministers.

7. THE PERSONNEL POSITION AT THE CENTRAL LABORATORIES - JMCCL(78)2

Mr Armour explained that when NW Thames RHA took over personnel responsibility for the staff of the Central Laboratories on 1 October 1978 the Authority became the legal employer. By direction of the Secretary of State continuity of service was granted to all staff and authorisation had been given to continue to apply Lister Institute conditions to all protected and new staff. All staff had become compulsorily subject to the NHS Superannuation Scheme.

It had originally been proposed that staff should, at the time of transfer, or thereafter, be allowed to choose whether they wished to remain on protected Lister Institute conditions of service or be assimilated into the appropriate NHS grade, but ASTMS objected in principle to any transfer to NHS conditions. The RHA and the Department would have to consider the relative pay scales and other conditions of service before negotiations with ASTMS could begin. The aim should be to settle all personnel matters within a year, but it was appreciated in the light of other similar changes that this was an optimistic target.

Members agreed that they would wish to be consulted on any proposals which were made about the future terms and conditions of staff. Dr Lane hoped that the question of long-term management of the laboratories and the discussions on the appropriate terms and conditions of staff could be considered together since the Blood Products Laboratory functioned more like a factory than a traditional laboratory and thus had to compete with factories for process workers. It was thought, however, that the 2 questions should not be linked although it was recognised that if it became quite apparent that none of the existing Whitley grades were appropriate for certain Blood Products Laboratory staff new grades might have to be devised.

8. THE FINANCIAL POSITION OF THE CENTRAL LABORATORIES - JMCCL(78)3

Mr Lee explained that the alternatives for handling the financial work of the 3 Laboratories when this responsibility was taken over from the Lister Institute were:

1. all the work to be handled at the RHA with perhaps one person working at each laboratory to send in payroll changes, invoices etc; or
2. all the work to be handled at Elstree by 4 or 5 staff who were either on Dr Lane's staff or outposted Regional Treasurer's staff.

The RHA proposed that the financial work in connection with the running of the Blood Products Laboratory and the Plasma Fractionation Laboratory should be undertaken at Elstree under Dr Lane's management starting from 1 April 1979, the financial work for the Blood Group Reference Laboratory being handled entirely by the RHA from the same date.

Mr Lee said that for 1978/79 the Department had fixed a cash limit for the 3 Laboratories of £1,816,474 which was equal to the revised estimates. No provision had, however, been made for RHA staff costs incurred between 1 July 1978 and 31 March 1979. The RHA pointed out that the management costs were rising as more tasks required to be done, but the Department repeated their assurance that the RHA would be fully reimbursed.

Members agreed that a Finance Sub-Committee should be set up to consider Mr Lee's paper together with other financial questions, including estimates and cash limits, pay and pay staff location and accounting arrangements.

The members of the Sub-Committee would be:

Mr Harley - Chairman

Mr Lee

A member/members of the Department's Finance Division

Professor Mollison

Dr Waiter

Mr Dutton

Dr Lane and Dr Holburn and the Senior Administrative Officer at the Blood Products Laboratory would attend the meetings

9. THE EMPLOYMENT AND LOCATION OF STAFF NEEDED TO ENABLE THE RHA TO MANAGE THE CENTRAL LABORATORIES - JMCCL(78)4

Mr Armour said that the additional work caused by the transfer of the day-to-day management responsibility to the RHA meant that extra staff would have to be appointed expressly for this purpose.

It was agreed that the Department would examine sympathetically all requests for additional staff submitted by the RHA.

Mr Armour explained that arrangements were being worked out which would ensure that the estate and premises were secure and properly maintained.

10. ANNUAL REPORTS AND ESTIMATES OF THE CENTRAL LABORATORIES - JMCCL(78)5

It was decided to refer these matters to the Finance Sub-Committee.

11. LICENSING UNDER THE MEDICINES ACT

Dr Walford explained the position under the Act. All manufacturing activity at the Blood Products Laboratory and Plasma Fractionation Laboratory would have to comply with the standards which would apply to similar products made elsewhere. The Department's Medicines Inspectorate, who were responsible for assessing the manufacturing conditions, would be visiting the Blood Products Laboratory early in the New Year. A note on the requirements of the Medicines Act and the conditions which BPL and PFL would be required to fulfil to meet requirements would be presented at the Committee's next meeting. The Committee agreed that any Inspectorate report should be brought to the Committee's attention so that they, the Department and the RHA could decide on the action to be taken.

12. INSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS

At present the Lister Institute's fire and other insurance policies for the Central Laboratories were being maintained. It was decided that the Department's Finance Branch should be consulted about insurance policies for the future, but meanwhile all insurances should be maintained.

13. THE FUTURE OF THE VIROLOGY AND OTHER WORK UNDERTAKEN IN DR TURNER'S LABORATORY

It was decided to defer this matter to the next meeting when a detailed report would be presented to the Committee.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Dr Harris suggested that a Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee should be set up to advise on the development of the Central Laboratories, probably replacing the Central Laboratories Sub-Committee. This was agreed to be necessary; the Sub-Committee would need to include processing and commercial experience as well as scientific expertise. The Chairman asked Professor Mollison whether he would agree to be Chairman. Professor Mollison agreed and would discuss the matter further with Dr Harris. Proposals concerning the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee would be put to the Management Committee as soon as possible.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 21 February 1979 at the Blood Products Laboratory, Elstree. Arrangements will be confirmed later, but it is planned to look around the laboratories before lunch (which Dr Lane will kindly provide) and to begin the main business of the Committee at 2 pm.

JANUARY 1979

DHSS