

IN CONFIDENCE

CENTRAL BLOOD LABORATORIES AUTHORITY

Minutes of the twenty-ninth meeting of the Central Blood Laboratories Authority held on 26 March, 1987 in The Crest.

Present: Mr R D Smart (Chairman)
Mr R Braithwaite
Dr B W Cromie
Dr H H Gunson
Mr W V S Seccombe
Dr D P Thomas
Mr C Walker
Mr G A Wilson
Mr R Wing

In attendance: Mr W P N Armour
Dr G Bird
Mr B J Crowley
Dr R S Lane
Dr R Moore
Dr A Smithies

PART 1

23/87 Apologies for Absence

No apologies were received.

The Chairman welcomed the two new members.

24/87 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes were accepted subject to the following amendment:

22.3 National Blood Transfusion Service

"Mr Wilson reported that in December we had a very good half-time Steering Committee re the Management Services Study of the National Blood Transfusion Service. It is hoped to go over a draft final report at the next meeting which will be on April 28th."

5.3 Delete second paragraph from 'He' to 'storage'

25/87 Matters Arising from the Minutes

25.1 Commercialisation of anti-D Reagent

The Director for BPL had nothing further to report on Biotest and Celltech.

62/104

25.2 Future of Central Committee for R & D in Blood Transfusion

Dr Moore said the position had not changed since the last meeting and that it still had not been agreed by the Scottish Directors.

25.3 Implications of Virus Inactivation in BPL Products

The Director for BPL said that we were proceeding with a variation to the Virology Building so that spiking with viruses, including HIV, could be done in that area when refurbished.

Dr Smithies asked for assurance that the HSE would be involved in the construction. The Director BPL replied it would be built within set regulatory requirements of standards of containment for virus spiking and the HSE would be invited to inspect the building prior to commencement.

The Director for BPL reported on the meeting with the Health Services Committee dealing with the problem of AIDS. The role of the Transfusion Centres was discussed, also plasma supply and its availability; and the deleterious effects of cash limitation. It was felt that additional money should be available for R & D. The Chief Executive had invited members of the Committee to visit us at Elstree.

Dr Gunson said the rest of the discussion concerned BTS and that the emphasis was not on cash but on quality.

26/87 Plasma Supply

Dr Moore had nothing to report.

27/87 Redevelopment of BPL

Reports CBLA 87/13 and 87/14 on the development were received and noted.

27.1& The Chief Executive reported that at a special meeting
27.2 cost, audit findings and commissioning were discussed with a view to refining and implementing procedures to control costs and finish the building as soon as possible. The new commissioning programme was now run with Mr G Rosser as Commissioning Manager. He had worked before for Merck Sharp & Dohme and on buildings done by MHE(S). Pressure is being put on MHE(S) to keep to a tight schedule.

The Director for BPL reported that the first group of BPL staff would be going into the new building to start work in April which was very good for morale. The whole of the ground floor is now ours and by mid-April most of the process floor would be under our control.

All members of the Authority were pleased to hear of the progress.

27.3 Warehouse and Q.A. Building

The formal AIP for Phase II had been received. Currently interviews were being held to select Architects, Quantity Surveyors, Mechanical and Electrical Engineers and Structural Engineers. A decision would be made within two weeks.

27.4 Pilot Process Plant

The Chief Executive reported that in the past a number of good presentations had been made; however it had been decided to rewrite these, with a stronger financial and marketing emphasis before resubmission to the Department. We would hope to receive AIP within the next financial year.

27.5 Masterplan

A copy of CBLA 87/15 was received and the contents noted.

The Chairman said that BDP would make a presentation in due course.

28/87 Finance

28.1 A copy of CBLA 87/16 was received and the contents noted. The Secretary reported on the eleven month spend. He said that the cash limit had been received late which had caused the problem of most of the spend being in the later part of the year which could well put pressure on next year's cash limit.

28.2 The Secretary reported that we had received the audited accounts but that there was a qualification on them. It was decided that the necessary papers would be sent to members prior to the meeting on 23 April when this matter would be discussed further.

28.3 Cash limit for 1987/8 had been received. A response was being prepared as it was far less than we need. The appropriate budgetary action was being taken.

29/87 Production

Copies of CBLA 87/17 and 18 were received and the contents noted.

The Director for BPL reported that production of Factor 8 and Albumin had been kept above their targets. The staff were to be congratulated on the output from Building 25 with all its difficulties.

30/87 Untested Plasma

Dr Moore reported that as yet no decision had been reached from the Expert Committee meeting as to what was to be done with it. A meeting needed to be set up with the Ministers to get a decision as soon as possible, hopefully within a month.

31/87 Commercial Review

Copies of CBLA 87/19 were not circulated, the Director for BPL gave the report verbally.

The Authority agreed that a half page advertisement should go into the Medical China Journal.

International Blood/Plasma News: It was agreed to entertain their research group in the Autumn for a day as this would give us free publicity in their journal.

AMEC: Preliminary enquiries were going on in several areas, with an initial visit to Kenya planned for April. The Authority's approval would be sought before entering into any long term commitments.

The Swiss Red Cross would like to purchase immunoglobulin paste, which is excess to NHS requirements. Lengthy correspondence with the DHSS Medicines Division had so far not received any co-operative assistance. The Director for BPL had told SRC that he would give them a reply by mid April. Once we have a licence this problem would not occur but until we get into the new building this was not possible.

32/87 Official Opening

The Opening Ceremony would be held in the coffee lounge of Building 27 therefore numbers have had to be restricted.

Details of the opening and a list of guests were available at the end of the meeting for inspection by the Members.

33/87 Accountability Review

A copy of CBLA 87/20 was received and the contents noted. The reserve Authority meeting date of the 23 April was decided to be used to discuss the Accountability Review in detail.

34/87 New Staff Structure

The Secretary reported that the SG Structure was being implemented and that the Wages Department were working two weekends to get everyone paid before the end of the financial year.

The Secretary circulated the members with a paper on Implementation of the SG Structure for Senior Management Grades SG9 Appointments. The Authority recommended that this be accepted.

35/87 Albumin

Continued The Director for BPL said that because of the state of Building 25 increasing levels of bacterial endotoxin were being found in the product. This represents declining environmental control in Building 25. Although this was now monitored continuously an improvement could not be expected until Building 27 came into use, when the problem should disappear.

36/87 Diagnostic Reagents

The Director for BPL wished to draw to the members attention the unhelpful attitudes being adopted by some Regional Transfusion Centres as an example of the increasing requirement to improve BPL's image in the market.

37/87 Patents - Dehns

The Director for BPL reported that we had recently commissioned Dehns to act on our behalf. Previously the MOD had dealt with this for us. Co-operation between Dehns and the MOD seemed to be very good.

Cedars-Sinai had alleged an infringement through their solicitors, Simmons and Simmons on the production of Factor VIII, this has now been withdrawn.

38/87 AMEC

The Director for BPL gave details of the proposed visit to Kenya in April.

As yet an agreement over our fees had not been concluded.

The DOTI were supporting the arrangement.

39/87 TV Documentary on Blood Products

A copy of CBLA 87/21 was received and the contents noted. The Secretary reported that two companies were interested in doing a training film. The other option to provide a Horizon type film would cost only marginally more.

Dr Moore asked about publicity filming for the opening. These needed to be done at least a week beforehand. Dr Moore was assured by the Chief Executive that this presented no problem.

40/87 Election of a Vice-Chairman

Mr Vernon Seccombe was unanimously elected.

41/87 Any Other Business

41.1 Thanks to the Secretary of the Authority

The Chairman said that this was Mr Armour's last meeting and he felt, speaking for everyone present, that he would like to give him our sincere thanks for all that Mr Armour had done to help in the establishment and progress of the CBLA. Mr Armour had been a friend to everyone who worked here at Elstree and all would be sorry to see him go.

Mr Armour replied that he had enjoyed his time at Elstree and enjoyed working with the members of the Authority. He was leaving with some sadness but felt that the Authority would go from strength to strength.

The Director for BPL wished to add his personal thanks to Mr Armour for his loyal support and hard work.

Dr Moore said that it had been a pleasure to work with Mr Armour and wished him well for the future.

41.2 Visit from Mr Len Peach, Chief Executive of the NHS Management Board

Mr Len Peach had recently visited Elstree and been shown round Building 27 and our other facilities. Some very useful discussions had been held afterwards. It was a cordial meeting and useful to both sides.

41.3 Clinical Trials of F8Y

Dr Smithies asked about clinical trials of F8Y and the appointment of a clinical co-ordinator. The results are to be published as soon as possible.

41.4 Intruders

The Secretary reported that it had been found that the intruder reported to the last Authority meeting had been identified as Peter Graham Bambridge. So far no connections with the Animal League or a pharmaceutical company had been found but this was still being pursued.

41.5 Royal College of Pathologists

The Chairman reported on the presentation to the Royal College of Pathologists, our BPL poster and presentation had created a great deal of interest.

41.6 Incident List

The Director BPL told the members that the incident list was to be given to Mrs Chapman who would make it available to them at any time.

41.7 National Blood Transfusion Service

Mr Wilson reported that a major meeting of the Steering Committee of the Management Services Study of the NBTS would be held on the 28 April, and he hoped to be able to say something at the next meeting here on the 28 May.

41.8 Staff Recruitment

Mr Braithwaite asked how our staff recruitment was handled and offered his expertise. The Chairman said the Authority would always gladly accept advice from Members.

Date of Next Meeting - 23 April 1987 to discuss the Accountability Review and the Qualification of the Accounts.

Next Full Authority Meeting - 28 May 1987.

PART II

Matters In Confidence

The Chief Executive resigned as Chairman of Merck Sharp & Dohme (Holdings) Limited in the UK last December. He has been asked to take up this position again for 12 months in a non executive capacity. It is non-remunerative and non-controversial, so there would be no conflict of interest. The members found this acceptable.

Director BGRL

This had not, as yet, been advertised as it was essential to get the timing right.

The Chief Executive would like to talk to Dr Anstee and Dr Fraser. Mr Seccombe suggested he should visit Bristol where he would have the opportunity of talking to them both privately.

Dr Gunson felt that a morale problem was being created at Oxford as it was felt that a Director might not be appointed and that they might come under the Director of BPL.

It was felt that a progress report on BGRL should become an agenda item.