

National Blood Transfusion Service - Joint Committee for the Central Blood Laboratories.

Agenda for the 4th Meeting to be held at 2pm on Wednesday 12 September 1979 in room D101 Alexander Fleming House.

- 1 Apologies for absence
- 2 Minutes of the previous meeting - JMC Minutes (79)3 - already circulated.
- 3 Matters arising:
 - (i) Terms of Reference for (a) The Joint Management Committee - JMCCL(79)14 (b) The Scientific and Technical Committee - STC(79/7) - enclosed.
 - (ii) Progress in setting up machinery for maintaining the extended BPL estate - oral report by the Department.
 - (iii) Progress with the Harkness Building - oral report by the Department
 - (iv) The arrangements for managing BPL & BGRL building, projects and the role of the ad hoc Building Sub-Committee - oral report by the Department.
 - (v) The replacement of plant, the breakdown of which could not have been foreseen - oral report by the Department.
 - (vi) Dr Lane's job description and salary.
- 4 Report of the Medicines Inspectors on the Blood Products Laboratory, Elstree.
- 5 The position of the Stop-gap development. - oral report by the Department.
- 6 The outcome of a meeting held on 31 August 1979 with the staff interests - oral report by the Department.
- 7 Suggested scheme for approving overseas travel by senior staff of the Central Blood Laboratories - JMCCL(79)15 enclosed for information.
- 8 Any other business.
- 9 Date of next meeting

DHSS August 1979

Minister's potential views.

Devolution of central financing of
NBS essential

Extract money from user, 32/220

CONFIDENTIAL TO MEMBERS

ADDENDUM TO THE MINUTES OF THE JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE FOR THE CENTRAL
BLOOD LABORATORIES (79)3 OF 13 JUNE 1979 (MEMBERS' COPY)

Professor Mollison has drawn my attention to the omission from these minutes of any record of the reference which was made to the future of the Plasma Fractionation Laboratory and his observation that sooner or later the justification for continuing this Laboratory as a separate production unit must be examined.

It is suggested that this Addendum might be affixed to page 4 of the minutes at the Section headed "The Scientific and Technical Committee".

T E DUTTON
Secretary

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NOT FOR PUBLICATION

NATIONAL BLOOD TRANSFUSION SERVICE

JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (DHSS/NW THAMES RHA) FOR THE
CENTRAL BLOOD LABORATORIES

Next Meeting
Amnaga
May 2nd.
2.15.

1979

Minutes of the 4th Meeting held on Wednesday 12 September in Room D101 Alexander Fleming House.

PRESENT: Dr E L Harris (Chairman)
Mr W P N Armour
Mr L A Bradshaw
Mr J Harley
Dr A M Holburn
Mr R P Kosin (in place of Mr Lee)
Dr R S Lane
Professor P L Mollison
Dr R M O Oliver
Dr D M Walford
Mr T E Dutton (Secretary)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr J G Brechin
Mr G K Brennan

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence, but Dr Harris welcomed Mr Kosin who was attending on behalf of Mr Lee, Mr Bradshaw (NW Thames RHA), and Mr Brennan (DHSS). Dr Tovey had earlier intimated that he would probably be out of the country when the meeting was held.

2. MATTERS ARISING

i. a. Terms of Reference of the Joint Management Committee and it's title

These were agreed subject to the title of the Committee being changed to:

"Joint Management Committee (DHSS/NW Thames RHA) for the Central Blood Laboratories"

and the NW Thames Regional Health Authority having an opportunity at their next meeting of considering the amended terms of reference.

Mr Harley explained that if there were any particular matters in respect of which the Authority felt in need of the protection which a direction afforded, the Department was always very willing to consider the matter.

i. b. Terms of Reference of the Scientific and Technical Committee

These were agreed subject to the substitution of "associated financial" for "economic" in line 2.

ii. Progress in setting up machinery for maintaining the extended BPL estate

The Department explained that the purchase of the estate had now been completed and steps were being taken to merge the original BPL lease (which MRC would surrender) into the Elstree freehold.

The RHA was currently carrying out a survey of the buildings on the estate and a report would shortly be available. Arrangements were in hand within

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the Department to establish the microbiological safety of the unoccupied buildings and if necessary to deal with any dangerous conditions which might be revealed.

The RHA were preparing a programme to manage the grounds, following a recommendation by the Department's works officers that the Authority should try to "borrow" a grounds maintenance officer, if there was not already one in the Region. Mr Armour confirmed that a start had been made with this task. The Chairman referred to the need to ensure that the estate was adequately fenced, both for general security reasons and to avoid any accidents to children who might wander onto the estate.

Negotiations between the Department and the Lister Institute to put on a formal footing the arrangement whereby the Department formerly occupied Lister property and the Institute temporarily occupied property now part of BPL were nearing completion.

Dr Lane confirmed that money was available to remedy the defects known to exist in the sewage plant and estimates to put it right would be obtained. Dr Lane undertook to proceed in conjunction with the appropriate Works Officers.

The Committee discussed the security arrangements at BPL which Dr Lane stated were quite inadequate. It was agreed that if the money was available in the allocations for this year, he should be free to appoint both security and maintenance staff. After Mr Brennen had explained the practice adopted when "letting" NHS houses, it was agreed that the vacant cottages at BPL should first be offered at NHS rentals to BPL staff or prospective staff, to occupy as long as they remained employed at the laboratories. It was agreed that if security and maintenance personnel could not be attracted on this basis, the Committee would have to reconsider the position although it was anticipated that there would be numerous obstacles to the extension of the tied cottage system whereby accommodation was provided at a low rent or rent free.

The Chairman referred to the need to remember that all aspects of the management of the Central Blood Laboratories were likely, sooner or later, to come under the scrutiny of the Exchequer and Audit Department.

iii. Progress with the acquisition of the Harkness Building

The Department outlined the connection which existed between the enquiry into the future of the Cowley Road Hospital, Oxford and the likely availability of the Harkness Building. Although there were grounds for believing that the Harkness Building would eventually be available to rehouse BGRL, the other possibility had to be faced and the Department's Regional Liaison Officers for the 4 Thames Regions had been asked to make discreet enquiries about properties available in the London area which might be suitable.

Dr Holburn pointed out that the cost of relocation was likely to increase by about 20% each year and he was concerned that the money might not be available if the move was further delayed. Mr Brechin explained that "slippage" in building projects, when there was good reason, was usually regarded as a priority item in the subsequent year, but with all the competing claims on resources he could not give any undertaking about the future.

It was agreed that 2 possibilities in London, (i) relocation in property owned by the Trustees of St Bartholomew's Hospital or (ii) at the London Hospital, were worth considering.

iv. The arrangements for managing BPL and BGRL building projects

Mr Harley described the circumstances which led to the setting up with the Chairman's agreement of the ad hoc Building Sub Committee and the steps which were being taken to ensure that any contracts which BPL may have entered into are put on a formal footing. Dr Lane expressed his satisfaction with the way the ad hoc Committee was working.

v. The replacement of plant, the breakdown of which could not have been foreseen

Mr Brechin explained that there were no contingency reserves within the Department, but they would clearly have to take a realistic view of the situation if such a breakdown occurred, so far as wider financial considerations allowed.

vi. Dr Lane's job description and salary

A job description had been prepared which Dr Lane was currently considering. Mr Armour said that the Authority would prefer to deal with the matter in the normal way referring to the Committee only if a matter of principle arose. The Committee agreed.

The Department confirmed that a job description was being prepared for Dr Holburn on which he would shortly be invited to comment.

3. The Report of the Medicines Inspectors on the Blood Products Laboratory, Elstree
The current situation was discussed in some detail but no firm decision had to date been taken.

It was confirmed however that "stop gap" had only been halted until the requirements became clearer.

4. THE OUTCOME OF THE MEETING OF 31 AUGUST WITH STAFF INTERESTS

Mr Armour reported that the meeting had progressed in a cooperative and friendly manner and had proved most useful. The staff now appeared to accept that it was in their own interests to tidy up their Terms and Conditions. He would circulate copies of the minutes of the meeting to members of the Joint Management Committee. It was recorded in the minutes that the staff were afraid of the possibility that the laboratory might be closed, particularly in view of what had happened to the Lister Institute laboratories, and there was a need to give the staff a firm assurance about their future. The Chairman accepted that a statement was needed if apprehension was not to grow to an extent which would impair the existing working of the laboratory. He invited Mr Armour to tell the staff interests that the Joint Management Committee were firm in the view (and would recommend to Ministers) that the Blood Products Laboratory was needed, in both the short and the long term. The Committee was not in a position at the present time to know what the eventual arrangement for the management of the laboratories might be; this might depend on the Government's reactions to the Royal Commission's Report and on proposals for restructuring the National Health Service. There was no doubt however that the position of bodies such as the NBS whose activities extended across the NHS would have to be looked at in a special way. The Joint Management Committee was also sure that the Government would not be prepared to see the voluntary unpaid donor system, which was the envy of many countries, impaired in any way.

Mr Armour referred to the staff interests' wish to receive copies of papers of general interest in addition to the Joint Management Committee minutes. After discussion, it was agreed that copies of the minutes of the Scientific and Technical Committee and the Finance Sub Committee could be made available to them together with copies of papers which the RHA and Department thought that it would be of mutual benefit for both management and staff to have studied.

5. SUGGESTED SCHEME FOR APPROVING OVERSEAS TRAVEL FOR SENIOR STAFF (JMCCL(79)15

The scheme was agreed.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Secretary explained that the Department's Legal Branch had been asked for their opinion on the position of the Regional Health Authority and that of Dr Lane as the "person responsible" under the Medicines Act in the event of a BPL product causing injury to a patient. Their reply was awaited.

Dr Lane outlined the situation which had led to a senior manager requesting premature retirement on medical grounds and the steps which he had taken subsequently in conjunction with the Regional Health Authority. This action had been agreed with Dr Harris who emphasised the necessity for ensuring that all the required procedures were observed because it often happened that staff who sought premature retirement subsequently come to regret their action.

Dr Lane also described the arrangements which he was making for BPL to be covered from PFL on a split/shared basis, action which had also been agreed with the Chairman.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

19 December 1979, 2.15 pm.