

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

JMC.CL(81)34

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

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RLA/3/6
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MINUTES OF THE 13TH MEETING HELD ON THE 23 OCTOBER AT THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND SOCIAL SECURITY, HANNIBAL HOUSE, ELEPHANT AND CASTLE, LONDON SE1

2263

PRESENT:

Mr Armour (Chairman)
Mr Lee
Professor Mollison
Dr Lane
Dr Walford
Mr Smart
Mr Godfrey } Secretariat
Mr Green }

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Collins

APOLOGIES

1. Apologies had been received from Dr Harris, Dr Holburn, Dr Gunson and Mr Harley.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING - JMC CL(81)28

2. These were agreed.

MATTERS ARISING

- a. Occupancy of Lister Crest
3. Mr Godfrey reported that arrangements had been made for Mr Roderick to move into one of the upgraded cottages once a rent figure had been agreed with the district valuer. Mr Collins confirmed that the RHA were preparing a draft lease.
- b. Progress on Appointment of DD(A) and Head Engineer
4. Mr Armour reported that following the unsuccessful appointments board for the Chief Engineer, DHSS Personnel Division had been asked to revise their assessment of the Head Engineer's salary. On the DD(A) appointment, Dr Lane asked to be involved in drawing up the revised advertisement.
- c. BGRL move to Oxford
5. Mr Collins reported that because of delays in preparing the cold-room and sterile suite facilities, the conversion programme was slightly behind schedule and it was unlikely that the move to Oxford could take place before Xmas, Mr Godfrey explained that the District Valuer had been asked to advise on the reversionary value of the current lease. St Martin's Property Corporation had indicated that they were unwilling to meet the valuation. The Committee would be kept informed of the outcome.

d. BPL Upgrading Programme

6. Mr Collins reported that the MARP 01 element of the programme was on line for a completion date of January 1983. However, owing to unforeseen problems, the first phase of the Coagulation Factors laboratory upgrading was 7 weeks late on completion. The contractor and designer were trying to minimise the delay. It was anticipated that cold room 2 would be closed down for 3 weeks from 4 January. However Dr Lane did not expect the closure to halt production as there was a stockpile of intermediate material to finish off. Although albumin production would be disrupted in 1982, he expected the projected production levels to be met.
7. Mr Harris asked how the upgrading of BPL would fit in with the redevelopment of the Laboratory. Dr Lane explained that one of the tasks of the proposed feasibility study would be to examine to what extent the existing facilities could be used in the redeveloped BPL. Dr Lane would try to keep to a minimum capital expenditure for 1982-83. He pointed out that much of the plant was 10 years old or more, was unreliable and would require replacement if it were not for the redevelopment.

e. BPL Site Security

8. Dr Lane reported there were considerable difficulties in attempting to introduce a comprehensive security system with so many contractors on site. It was agreed that Dr Lane should prepare a report on a limited surveillance system for discussion with the RHA.

f. Long-Term Management Arrangements

9. Mr Godfrey reported that Ministers were still considering the management structure for the Central Blood laboratories. The importance of an early decision had been emphasised by officials. The Committee stressed the difficulties that would occur if the matter were not decided before the completion of the proposed feasibility study on redevelopment.

g. ASTMS representation on the JMC - JMC CL(81)20

10. The Committee noted that Dr Harris had written to BPL and BGRL's ASTMS representatives (JMC CL(81)29) as discussed at the last meeting.

SALE OF EXCESS BLOOD FRACTIONS/PLASMINOGEN - JMC CL(81)31

11. Dr Lane reported that he had been approached by a number of organisations interested in the purchase of surplus blood products. BPL were carrying out a quantitative exercise to identify accurately the fractions contained in the waste with the aim of determining a realistic selling price. Mr Godfrey said that both Finance Division and Supplies Division had been considering the level of charges for surplus materials and had concluded that, whilst BPL should not take undue advantage of its monopoly position, it should seek to obtain the best price for this material.

POLICY STEERING GROUP ON THE REDEVELOPMENT OF BPL-REPORT BY MR SMART

12. Mr Smart reported that the Group had agreed to meet as and when necessary and had done so three times to date. Its work was hampered to an extent by the lack of Ministerial decision on long-term management arrangements but, working within the terms of reference agreed by the JMC, the PSG had made decisions on the following matters:

i. PFC Liberton

The Group were anxious to encourage greater collaboration between BPL and PFC. It had been agreed that two members of BPL should participate in PFC's shift working experiment and that Mr Hibbert should visit Liberton as an observer.

ii. Time-scale for redevelopment of BPL

A 3 year target had been set for completion of the redevelopment. The Group had noted that CAPRICODE requirements must be met.

iii. Technology

The Group had agreed that cold ethanol precipitation process should be used; and that a modular construction should be adopted, with two separate production lines, to facilitate operation at varying levels of capacity. The target capacity had not yet been decided. It had been calculated that, at present yields, 435,000 kg of plasma would be required to enable England and Wales to be self-sufficient in blood products.

After consultation with DHSS Supplies Division the Group had decided that no provision should be made for large scale fermentation though BPL's design would need to be sufficiently flexible to be adapted to advances in technology.

iv. Feasibility Study

The PSG had considered prospectuses from several consultancy companies for the Feasibility Study. On the basis of members' first-hand experience the Group had concluded that Matthew Hall Norcain (MHN), the most qualified and experienced organisation in the type of work required, should be appointed. The PSG therefore sought JMC's approval to commission MHN to prepare a Feasibility Study at a cost of £38,500 plus VAT of such figure as may be negotiated.

After discussion the Committee approved the appointment of MHN. The Committee emphasised that no commitment for work beyond the feasibility stage should be given at this time.

It was agreed that Dr Lane should notify MHN of the JMC's decision. MHN's contract with the RHA would commence on 29 October with a view to completing the study by 10 December 1981. This would enable the PSG to complete the architect's brief by the end of the year.

v. Project Management

The PSG sought the approval of the JMC for the appointment of Mr Collins as project manager. This was agreed.

vi. Involvement of staff

The Group recognised the importance of involving BPL's staff. It was agreed that Mr Armour and Mr Smart should arrange to meet the staff's representatives.

vii. Treasury Approval

Mr Harris reported that Treasury approval in principle had been obtained. Economic justification for decisions on capacity, technology etc would be required: Mr Smart said the Group were prepared to produce economic analyses for Treasury's consideration.

viii. Alternative accommodation for BPL.

Lord Elton, Parliamentary Under-Secretary, had suggested to Dr Harris that the Group should consider the adaptation of an existing factory. The Group had considered this option but, after consulting ABPI, had found no suitable premises available. Most existing buildings were within industrial complexes and totally unsuitable for BPL's purposes. It was intended, however, to make maximum use of existing buildings on the BPL site.

PFL OXFORD - MEDICINES INSPECTORATE REPORT - JMC CL(81)32

13. Dr Lane reported that the Inspectorate's final report contained a number of inaccuracies. He had received a paper from Oxford which set out what was being done at PFL as a result of the report.
14. Dr Lane was not surprised at the findings of the Inspectorate but questioned the practicality of complying with the report's main recommendations since the bulk of the production side of Oxford's work would eventually be transferred to Elstree. Dr Lane had provided Medicines Inspectorate with the proposals for the future of PFL (JMC CL(81)24).
15. The Inspectorate's report recommended that the existing sterilisers should be brought up to HTM 10 standards. Dr Lane considered this an impossible task but had agreed with the RHA Sterilising Engineer that the sterilisers should be brought up to an acceptable level.
16. The Committee asked the Scientific and Technical Committee to study the report and Dr Lane's formal response (when available) together with Dr Lane's proposals for the future of PFL.

BPL: NEED FOR REPLACEMENT STERILISERS - JMC CL(81)33

17. Dr Lane explained that because of their age, type and use the 3 sterilisers in use at BPL failed to meet accepted safety and production standards. The JMC's approval was therefore sought for expenditure of around £90,000 (plus fees etc) on 2 replacement units - a hot air oven for vial drying and a porous load machine - and an upgrading of the third steriliser to operate as a standby porous load machine. Dr Lane reported that the exercise could be incorporated in the MARP 01 project and completed by April/May 1982 and that the new sterilisers would be able to be used on the redesigned BPL. Details of the proposals were tabled (JMC CL(81)33 attached).

18. Mr Lee confirmed that the proposed expenditure in 1981/82 could be met within the cash-limit and the Committee agreed that the sterilisers should be replaced as part of BPL's upgrading programme.

CBL's EXPENDITURE - JMC CL(81)30

19. The Committee noted Mr Lee's report on expenditure in the first half of the financial year. Mr Lee reported estimates for 1982-83 would be submitted shortly.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

20. This will be on Friday January 22 at 10 am in Room 65 Hannibal House.