

CENTRAL BLOOD LABORATORIES AUTHORITY

Minutes of the ninth meeting of the Central Blood Laboratories Authority held on 23 November 1983 in the Library. BGRL, Oxford.

Present: Mr R D Smart (In the Chair)  
Professor A L Bloom  
Dame Phyllis Friend  
Dr H H Gunson  
Dr E L Harris  
Mr A S Jerwood  
Dr G A Stewart  
Dr D P Thomas

In attendance: Mr W P N Armour (Secretary)  
Dr A M Holburn (Director, BGRL)  
Dr R S Lane (Director, BPL and PFL)  
Mr P Winstanley (DHSS)

The Chairman welcomed Dr Thomas to his first meeting after he had spent much of 1983 working abroad. He also welcomed members to BGRL and said that it would be desirable to hold Authority meetings there on a regular basis.

Part 1

89/83 Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was received from Mr M G Storey.

90/83 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 1983 were approved and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendment:-

Item 83/83 1st sentence to read, "Dr Lane informed members of this clinical trial which had been carried out at BPL and said that after an interim period of six months it had been discovered that a short incubation time non A non B hepatitis virus was evident".

91/83 Matters Arising from the Minutes

91.1 MRC Committee on AIDS

Dr Harris reported that the Chairman of the MRC's Committee on AIDS had welcomed co-operation with the CBLA's Working Group on AIDS and it had been agreed that minutes of the two committees would be exchanged. It was noted also that Dr Gunson would be invited to meetings of the MRC Committee at times when his expertise would be considered valuable.

91.2 Collaboration with Wellcome

The Chairman said that he had held a further meeting with the Chairman of Wellcome and although there had been a slight delay owing to the lawyer's illness, a final document would be completed within the next few weeks.

91.3

Cash Limits. Meeting with Lord Glenarther, 22 November 1983

The Chairman confirmed that he, along with Mr Jerwood and the Secretary, had met Lord Glenarther on the preceding day at DHSS.

The Secretary reported that the Minister had accepted the reasons why the Authority required open ended funding for its variable costs and, as a result, he had agreed that its cash limit should be increased by £½ million within the current financial year. This increase would be carried forward into the cash limit for 1984/85. The Secretary said that the money was being found by adjusting the revenue and capital spend on the Central Vote. The Minister accepted that, as far as pricing was concerned, there was a need to operate with sensitivity to the market. He had recognised the need for a greater injection of finance for Research and Development and the Chairman stressed the importance therefore of collaboration and keeping up to date in this field. The Minister was informed of the progress on the Redevelopment.

Dr Thomas expressed concern that the Authority's budget did not adequately cover Research and Development at the current time and he stressed the importance of devoting adequate resource to this activity. Dr Harris said that, although no specific figure was given for Research and Development the MRC had funds and suitable projects could be put forward to them; in his view quite a lot of work carried out at BPL and BGRL was development work although not included in expenditure described as R & D.

After further discussion the Chairman said that the two Directors and the Central Committee for Research and Development should advise the Authority of fruitful avenues in R & D and the resources needed. The CBLA could then decide what funds could be allocated.

91.4

Laying of Foundation Stone

The Chairman reported that 23 March 1984 had been agreed for the Secretary of State to lay the foundation stone for the new factory at BPL. An appropriate invitation list would be drawn up for the event.

91.5

UK Transplant Service - Anti D Monoclonal Antibodies

The Secretary reported that he had written to DHSS confirming that the Authority should take on this activity and reiterated the Authority's agreement at its February meeting that it would be appropriate to do so. Dr Lane said that BPL wished to commence immediately on this project and Dr Holburn stressed the need for BGRL to have equal access in it.

Mr Winstanley said that BTG were currently looking to see who should take the activity further. Dr Lane said that although BPL had no specific funds for this it should, in principle, be involved and it was agreed that the Secretary would again write to DHSS stressing the need for CBLA to be involved and also for it to take a lead in the collaboration.

91.6 Biological Laboratories, Ballina Ltd

Subject to the satisfactory outcome of a meeting between Mr Armour and Dr Holburn with a representative of Ballina Ltd the following Wednesday, 30 November 1983, it was agreed that a formal proposal should be put to the Authority.

92/83 Finance

92.1 Budget Statement

A copy of the budget statement and Secretary's report (CBLA 83/84) was received and noted.

92.2 Forecast Estimates 1984/85

A copy of the report on forecast estimates 1984/85 (CBLA 83/49) was received and noted.

It was noted that increases in the budget for the following year took into account the expansion of the laboratories to deal with increased production. In answer to a question raised by Mr Jerwood, Dr Lane enlarged upon the build up of staff, supplies and expenditure necessary for the re-development in order that training could take place to ensure the earliest possible operational date. Dr Thomas reiterated the need to have a separate head for Research and Development.

After discussion it was agreed that the presentation of the figures needed to be revised and extended and a sub-committee consisting of Mr Smart, Mr Jerwood and Dr Thomas should meet the following week to carry out this exercise before the estimates were submitted to DHSS for approval. It was agreed that the two Directors should also be present at the sub-committee meeting.

In regard to PFL it was noted that the Secretary of State's permission would be required for its formal closure.

92.3 Report on BPL Products

A copy of the report on the production and issue of BPL products (CBLA 83/50) was received and noted.

Dr Gunson raised a question with regard to the hold up last year of Factor VIII production and whether or not it had been recovered as many RTC's had to buy supplies during this period. Dr Lane said that the requirement for Factor IX was now occupying time and plant which could otherwise be used for recovering the position on Factor VIII; he could thus not guarantee that the Factor VIII shortfall could be made good during the next year.



92.4 Report on BGRL Products

A copy of the report on BGRL production (CBLA 83/51) was received and noted.

Dr Holburn reported that BGRL was currently producing more reagents than current demand and he referred specifically to Reference reagents where a large surplus had built up. The Chairman felt that it was necessary to inform RTC's of the advantage to them of obtaining supplies from BGRL. Dr Gunson said that RTD's were endeavouring to come to some agreement on this and a Working Party was looking at the problem.

Dr Holburn also referred to a surplus of Anti-A and Anti-B Monoclonal products and the problems connected with these supplies. Dr Lane expressed the view that Product Data services could be useful whereby lists of products available are taken to hospitals to let them know what is available. After discussion it was agreed that Dr Holburn should try to produce for the next meeting of the Authority proposals for using up the surplus material.

92.5 Product Pricing

A copy of the report on Product Pricing (CBLA 83/52) was received and noted.

The Chairman said that arising out of discussions with the Minister the day before, greater flexibility with regard to product pricing would be needed and, therefore, the Secretary would have further discussions with DHSS, after which a revised paper would be brought back to the Authority for approval.

92.6 Supplementary Pensions

A copy of a report on supplementary pensions (CBLA 83/53) was received and approved.

93/83 Redevelopment of BPL

A copy of the report on the Redevelopment Project Control Committee (CBLA 83/54) was received and noted. The Secretary reported that the design work on engineering was causing concern, but specific arrangements were being made to improve the project programme to return it to timetable. Dr Harris emphasised the need to keep a careful watch on engineering in projects of this size. The Chairman said that the Project Manager, who was a former Glaxo employee, knew Matthew Hall Norcain Engineering as consulting engineers very well and would watch their progress closely.

94/83 Central Committee for Research and Development in Blood Transfusion

A copy of the minutes of the second meeting of the Central Committee for Research and Development in Blood Transfusion held on 7 November 1983 (CBLA 83/55) was received and noted.

Dr Gunson informed members that a second meeting of the Working Party on AIDS would take place early in the new year and he enlarged upon discussions currently taking place concerning genetic engineering. With regard to heat treatment of Factor VIII, the Authority endorsed the Committee's recommendations that clinical trials should commence as soon as possible.

95/83 Advisory Committee on NETS

Dr Gunson informed members that the Advisory Committee had met on 17 October 1983, and he enlarged upon the discussions that had taken place with regard to inter and intra charging, stock control and record keeping and the charging for reagents at non NHS hospitals.

96/83 Annual Report

The Secretary raised the question of timing and production for the Authority's annual report and after discussion it was agreed that a draft report would be submitted for CBLA approval at its January 1984 meeting. The draft report would take into consideration details/figures up to the end of October 1983.

97/83 Medicines Inspectorate

Dr Lane reported that an inspection of the laboratory at Elstree had been carried out some weeks earlier by a member of the Medicines Inspectorate and a formal report had now been prepared to which he had prepared a formal reply. It was agreed that the Medicines Inspectorate final report should be discussed at a CBLA meeting.

Dr Lane highlighted the current difficulties with regard to recruitment and also to problems between union and management as a result of delays in finalising a staff structure. The Secretary referred to meetings with DHSS which so far had ended without agreement. Dr Harris expressed the opinion that if this could not be settled internally then the Chairman should write to the Minister advising of the impasse in this matter.

98/83 Technical Grade Protein

Dr Lane requested approval to issue more widely and on a formal basis, details of technical grade protein to other organisations and subsequently charge to cover BPL's costs.

It was recommended that the DHSS approve this sale along with a flexible pricing policy.

99/83 NHS Management Inquiry (Griffiths Report)

The Chairman confirmed that he had received an invitation to reply to the Griffiths Report and he asked members if they had any points to raise on it.

It was agreed that mention should be made of the fact that some of the activities of the CBLA were outside the NHS and that it did need flexibility to act. Dame Phyllis Friend requested that the role of

\* Authority members under Griffiths should be clarified. Dr Harris endorsed the opinion that the Authority in its semi-commercial role should not be impeded. The Chairman would arrange for copies of his reply to be provided for members.

100/83 Authority Meetings 1984

A schedule of dates for Authority meetings in 1984 (CBLA 83/56) was received and noted.

It was agreed that a reserve list should also be prepared which could be used if the Authority wished to call a special meeting to discuss a particular topic.

101/83 Any Other Business

101.1 Celltech

Dr Lane outlined for members the basis of the Celltech agreement for producing an Anti-body against human Factor VIII. The agreement with Celltech would be finalised in the next two weeks, taking into account the need for a detailed feasibility study and appropriate return for CBLA.

101.2 The Secretary informed members of the impending retirement of Mr F Hepworth after 37 years with the Lister Institute and said that CBLA members were invited to his farewell party on 19 December 1983 at 4.00 p.m. when Sir William Maycock, former Director of the Blood Products Laboratory, would be making the presentation.

102/83 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would be held on 25 January 1984. The Directors having completed their contributions, received the thanks of the members for their attendance and withdrew.



Part II

103/83     Matters in Confidence

103.1     Central Committee for Research and Development  
in Blood Transfusion

Dr Gunson expressed concern that the Central Committee had not been kept fully aware of activities within BPL which he felt were of a Research & Development nature. It was subsequently agreed that the Director BPL and Director of BGRL should submit to Dr Gunson a full report on present activities with regard to Research & Development. It was also agreed that a special meeting of the Authority would be arranged for the new year to discuss Research & Development.

103.2     Directors' Salaries

Members noted information sent to the DHSS by the Secretary in regard to the salaries of the Director, BPL and Director, BGRL.