

CONCLUSION OF THE TOWN MEETING TO DISCUSS THE UK STEM CELL CO-OPERATIVE 5 JULY 2006

SUMMARY

The meeting was attended by 75 delegates from the stem cell community and was chaired and facilitated by Lord Naren Patel. The overall conclusion was to introduce an interim solution with an independent chairman and steering group which would exist for approximately two years prior to further discussion about future structure and operations. The following details were accepted.

PRINCIPLES OF OPERATION

- The majority of attendees agreed that the UK required a body to act as the National voice for the UK stem cell community
- There was overwhelming support for the overall activity to be called the UK NATIONAL STEM CELL NETWORK

The NETWORK should be:

- Flexible and responsive
- Open and inclusive in its membership
- Fully representative of UK interests in stem cells
- Independent and accountable with measurable outputs

The NETWORK should not:

- Replace or replicate the activities of existing networks
- Sponsor scientific research
- Broker exploitation activities

HIGH LEVEL ACTIVITIES

The high level activities agreed for the **UK National Stem Cell Network** were:

- The co-ordination of existing activities primarily through sharing expertise and technology
- Communication with the media, public and society about stem cells
- The focal point for interaction with overseas researchers about stem cells
- The national “voice” to policy makers and regulators about stem cells
- Facilitation of interactions to promote the uptake and use of stem cells by the scientific, business and medical communities.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS TO BE UNDERTAKEN

These were as follows:

- Establish the Network for an interim period of two years based within the Research Councils using existing Research Council funding.
- Appoint a Chairman, recognising the agreed principles of the Network (ie to be flexible and responsive, open and inclusive, fully representative of UK interests in stem cells, independent and accountable).
- Appoint a steering group (n= between 4 and 6 members) following a nomination process involving all attendees at the Town Meeting.
- Recruit a manager and appropriate support staff in an office in the research councils.
- Plan the detailed timescale for assessment of progress (and after two years) organise a further Town Meeting to discuss the evolution and future location of the Network.