

UK NATIONAL STEM CELL NETWORK ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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Minutes of the second meeting of the UK National Stem Cell Network (UKNSCN) Advisory Committee held on 15 January 2010 at the Medical Research Council (MRC), Park Crescent, London.

ATTENDANCE

Advisory Committee (in person)

Dr Catherine Prescott	Biolatris Ltd (Chair)
Dr Joshua Brickman	University of Edinburgh
Professor Nagy Habib	Imperial College London
Professor Alicia el Haj	Keele University
Mr Gerry Kamstra	Bird and Bird LLP
Mr John Meech	ThermoFisher Scientific
Mrs Shirley Nurock	Lay Member
Dr Sophie Petit-Zeman	Association of Medical Research Charities
Mr Peter Raymond	Medcell
Professor Andrew Webster	University of York
Professor Melanie Welham	University of Bath

Advisory Committee (by teleconference)

Professor Ruth Chadwick	University of Wales, Cardiff
Professor Neil Hanley	University of Manchester
Professor Richard Oreffo	University of Southampton

Secretariat

Mr Ben Sykes	UKNSCN Executive Director
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Sponsor Observers

Dr Helen Bodmer	BIS
Dr Colin Miles	BBSRC
Dr Amanda Chmura	EPSRC
Dr Catriona Crombie	MRC

Other Observers

Dr Glyn Stacey	UK Stem Cell Bank
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APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received in advance from Professor Hollander, Professor Frampton, Mr Sharp, Dr Riley, Professor Salter, Dr Allsopp and Professor Young.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Oral

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the second meeting of the new UK National Stem Cell Network Advisory Committee and notified the Committee of apologies for absence as above. In particular, the Chair welcomed new member Dr Petit-Zeman to her first meeting, and also Dr Meech who was deputising for Mr Sharp. In addition, a specific welcome was extended to Dr Stacey who was attending for the first time as

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an observer from the UK Stem Cell Bank. The Chair invited members to briefly introduce themselves.

- 1.2 The Chair reminded members that they were entitled to reasonable travel and subsistence expenses incurred in attending meetings of the Advisory Committee, and that claim forms were available to be taken away from the meeting.

2. MINUTES OF FIRST MEETING

UKNSCN01/10

- 2.1 The minutes of the first meeting held on 16 September 2009 were presented for information only, having been approved by the Committee through correspondence during late September 2009. The Committee was reminded that the minutes had been published unabridged on the UKNSCN website in mid-October and that it was UKNSCN's intention to continue publishing the minutes in this way for the community's benefit.

3. MATTERS ARISING

Oral

The Chair introduced this item, noting actions that were completed and seeking clarification on those where further work was required.

3.1 Para 2.2

The Chair informed the Committee that this action was in hand and had been included in the revised Delivery Plan for 2009/10 as project 16.

3.2 Para 5.2

The Chair informed the Committee that the website hyperlinks library required further work. Members who had contributed links so far were thanked for their contributions, and all members were encouraged to continue sending through hyperlinks to useful resources and information.

ACTION: All members to forward hyperlinks

3.3 Para 5.3

The Chair informed the Committee that the Network's monthly and interim e-bulletins had been redesigned to include internal hyperlinks for ease of movement around the document, and that the inclusion of articles on scientific developments and new grant awards was now underway.

3.4 Para 5.4

The Chair informed the Committee that the Network's single existing position statement on stem cell tourism remained to be complemented by others, possibly focusing on high-profile medical conditions. Members were encouraged to forward ideas to the secretariat, and to begin drafting text in conjunction with the Executive Director.

ACTION: All members/Secretariat

3.5 Para 5.5

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The Chair informed the Committee that it was unlikely that separate one-day policy workshops would be held before the end of the current Delivery Plan year, given the 8 parallel workshops which were being organised at the annual conference in July. The Committee agreed that it might still prove necessary to have more in-depth meetings later in the year to continue the themes discussed in the parallel workshops in July, and that the action should be retained in the new 2010/11 Delivery Plan pending the outcome of the workshops at the July conference.

ACTION: Secretariat

3.6 Para 5.6

The Executive Director informed the Committee that the new UKNSCN Small Awards Scheme had been launched on 8 January following approval – by correspondence - from Committee members during December. A first application had already been received from the University of Manchester.

3.7 Para 5.7

The Chair informed the Committee that its revised 2009/10 Delivery Plan had been approved by the Management Board on 8 October and had subsequently been published on the UKNSCN website and also circulated to the UKNSCN's membership at the end of October.

3.8 Para 8.2

The Chair reminded the Committee that the Network's 2009 report on *Barriers to the Commercialisation of Stem Cells* was being maintained as a working document, and that most of the issues raised in the report were being discussed further through one or more of the 8 parallel workshops planned at the UKNSCN annual conference in Nottingham.

3.9 Para 9.3

The Chair informed the Committee that the new UKSCB Open Forum, which was set to replace the former Stem Cells User and Clinical Liaison Committee, would take place alongside the UKNSCN's Nottingham conference on the third day (14 July). Dr Stacey informed the Committee that a programme for the Forum was in preparation.

3.10 All other actions from the September meeting were either completed or covered by agenda items at this meeting.

4. REPORT FROM MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING HELD 8 OCTOBER Oral

4.1 The Chair introduced this item, informing the Committee of the key discussions which took place at the 8 October meeting of the UKNSCN Management Board at which both the Chair and Executive Director were present. These included the completion of appointments to the Advisory Committee, the revised objectives and role of the Advisory Committee, future funding options for UKNSCN from April 2011, and the approval of the revised Corporate Plan and Delivery Plan.

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5. 2010 UKNSCN ANNUAL SCIENCE MEETING – PLANNING/FUNDRAISING UKNSCN02/10

- 5.1 The Chair invited the Executive Director to introduce this paper, which set out a full and detailed report on progress with the planning, funding and sponsorship of the third UKNSCN annual science meeting in Nottingham in July. The Committee was then invited to comment upon any aspect of the planning and fundraising for the meeting.
- 5.2 The Committee was informed that a fourth sponsor had recently been secured, bringing the total sponsorship accumulated to £15.5k at the time of the meeting. Twenty-five registrations had been completed and a marketing campaign was underway. The projected net cost of the meeting to UKNSCN was estimated at £23k against a real cost of approximately £200k. This compared with a net cost of £70k for the 2009 conference in Oxford.
- 5.3 The Committee was informed that the programme for the conference was nearing completion under the guidance of the Conference Steering Group, with just two overseas speakers remaining to be confirmed, along with the five expert participants in the *Meet the Experts* breakfast sessions on the second day.

6. 2011 UKNSCN ANNUAL SCIENCE MEETING – PLANNING UKNSCN03/10

- 6.1 The Chair invited the Executive Director to introduce this paper, which set out the progress to date concerning the organisation of the UKNSCN's 2011 annual conference. The Committee was then invited to comment upon the proposed venue and the current ethos of the annual meeting.
- 6.2 The Executive Director informed the Committee that a provisional booking was being held at the University of York for 30 March to 1 April, and that a contract was ready to be signed. The meeting was being returned to the spring time in line with the first two years, and the venue had been secured at 2010 prices. The venue included all the necessary features: large auditorium, trade exhibition space and on-site accommodation for delegates.
- 6.3 The Committee questioned the decision to return the conference to the spring time, and in particular expressed concern about its proximity to the BSDB/BSCB annual joint spring meeting. The Executive Director was asked to investigate the feasibility of moving the conference to the first two weeks in September 2011 at either York or another suitable venue, and to report back to both the Committee and the Management Board.

ACTION: Executive Director

- 6.4 The Committee also exchanged views on the ethos of the conference, with some members keen to steer the meeting down a strongly academic route and to include a greater proportion of international speakers than has been the case previously. The Chair recommended that a balance is maintained broadly in line with the first three meetings and that a Conference Steering Group be appointed to begin developing the programme as soon as the dates and venue were resolved. The Committee suggested several members of the community to serve on the Conference Steering

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Group, alongside Professor El Haj and Professor Habib from the Advisory Committee.

ACTION: Executive Director/Chair

- 6.5 The Executive Director informed the Committee that UKNSCN was already being solicited by academic groups/venues interested in hosting the 2012 conference, and that he would be seeking the Management Board's advice on planning this far in advance, given the demand for venues and the likely financial requirements regarding deposit payments.

ACTION: Executive Director

7. REVIEW OF UKNSCN ONE-YEAR DELIVERY PLAN UKNSCN04/10

- 7.1 The Chair invited the Executive Director to introduce this paper, which presented the 2009/10 Delivery Plan and allowed the Committee its first formal opportunity to review progress and update the plan where necessary.

- 7.2 The following projects were removed from the Delivery Plan, having been superseded by other activities launched elsewhere:

Project 12: on-line interactive UK geographic map of stem cell groups

Project 13: on-line searchable stem cell expertise database

Project 22: secretariat provision for QA forum for stem cells

- 7.3 The following projects were added to the Delivery Plan:

New: public engagement event on stem cells, for patient groups and the general public

New: in-house searchable database for UKNSCN membership (2000+)

- 7.4. In discussing the possibility of UKNSCN organising and hosting a public engagement event in 2010 or 2011, Mrs Nurock and Dr Petit-Zeman agreed to investigate the demand for such an event amongst their public and charitable contacts.

ACTION: Mrs Nurock/Dr Petit-Zeman

- 7.5 The Executive Director was tasked with updating the Delivery Plan and presenting the changes to the next UKNSCN Management Board scheduled for 26 January.

ACTION: Executive Director

8. PRELIMINARY SURVEY OF FUTURE FUNDING FOR UKNSCN UKNSCN05/10

- 8.1 The Chair invited the Executive Director to introduce this paper, which presented his progress in conducting an initial survey of companies and organisations for their views on becoming corporate sponsors of UKNSCN. It was clear from the initial work that securing cash sponsorship for the Network would be arduous, but that this had little to do with the content of the Delivery Plan and much more to do with the

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economic downturn and the limited availability of company funds for marketing and sponsorship. The Delivery Plan was generally considered to be entirely appropriate by those industrialists contacted, who did not have particularly strong views on additional activities that they might like to see for their sponsorship. There was also a clear preference from companies to sponsor discrete activities or events, as opposed to providing broad corporate sponsorship.

- 8.2 The Committee discussed the options for future funding and raised a number of questions for the Management Board to consider at its meeting on 26 January. These include the extent to which UKNSCN should pursue a further market survey, the amount by which the sponsors were expecting UKNSCN to offset existing commitments from the public purse, and whether it was possible for the UKNSCN to become a charitable foundation from April 2011 without forfeiting the current hosting arrangements within the UK Research Councils building.

ACTION: Executive Director/Chair

- 8.3 The Committee recommended that a detailed membership subscription model be prepared for further consideration by the Committee and piloting during the 2010/11 planning year. This should be based upon a detailed analysis of the existing UKNSCN membership and a differential fee system according to category of membership.

ACTION: Executive Director/Chair

9. DISCUSSION PAPER FROM PETER RAYMOND UKNSCN06/10

- 9.1 The Chair introduced this item, reminding the Committee that Mr Raymond's paper had been circulated to the full Committee on 22 December alongside the draft agenda for this meeting. She invited discussion on recommendations 4, 6 and 8 of Mr Raymond's paper, suggesting that the remaining recommendations should be taken up with the newly-constituted Regenerative Medicine Industry Group (RIG).

- 9.2 The key points arising from the discussion of the three recommendations were as follows:

9.2.1 The UKNSCN should investigate whether its current bimonthly patents digest can be expanded to include precise information on IP that is now available for licensing.

9.2.2 The UKNSCN should consider whether it is appropriate for it to provide resources for consortium-building, with a view to enabling such consortia to bid competitively for funds.

9.2.3 The UKNSCN should consider working more closely with the NHS Technology Adoption Centre, NHS Commissioners and Chief Executives of PCTs to raise awareness of new stem cell technologies and promote their adoption.

ACTION: Executive Director

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- 10. UK STEM CELL BANK UPDATE** **Oral**
- 10.1 The Chair invited Dr Stacey to update the Committee on recent developments and activities at the UK Stem Cell Bank. Dr Stacey highlighted the UKSCB Open Forum which would take place at the Nottingham conference in July, and explained to the Committee how the Bank was already collaborating with the UKNSCN on marketing events, publicising its services and attending conferences jointly to represent the UK.
- 11. MEMBERS' OPEN FORUM** **Oral**
- 11.1 The Chair invited the Committee to raise any issues it wished concerning the Network and stem cell research, translation and policy in general. No significant issues were raised.
- 12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING** **Oral**
- 12.1 The Chair reminded the Committee that the third meeting of the Advisory Committee would take place alongside the annual meeting in Nottingham on the evening of the first day (12 July).
- 13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS** **Oral**
- 13.1 There was no other business. The Chair closed the meeting by thanking members for their attendance and contributions.