

# Minutes of the meeting of the Human Tissue Authority (HTA) Board

---

**Date:** 9 March 2023

**Time:** 10.00 – 12.00 hrs

**Venue:** 2RP

**Meeting Number:** 103

**Protective Marking:** OFFICIAL

---

## Attendees:

### Board Members

Lynne Berry, HTA Chair  
Tom Chakraborti  
Professor Gary Crowe  
Helen Dodds  
Ellen Donovan  
Andy Greenfield  
Dave Lewis

### Apologies

Professor Deborah Bowman  
Maria Nyberg, Deputy Director Health  
Ethics, DHSC  
Jacky Cooper, Team Leader Human  
Tissue Policy and Ethics of Consent,  
DHSC

### HTA attendees

Dr Colin Sullivan, Chief Executive  
Louise Dineley, Director of Data,  
Technology and Development  
Nicolette Harrison, Director of  
Regulation  
John McDermott, Deputy Director for  
Performance & Corporate  
Governance  
Richard Sydee, Director of Resources  
Debra Smith, Lead of the Private  
Office  
TJ O'Connor, Executive Assistant  
Alison Margrave, Board Support  
(minutes)

### HTA Staff Observers

Paul Lawrence, Business Portfolio  
Manager  
Dee Noonan, Project Manager

## Item 1 – Welcome and apologies

1. The Chair welcomed Board Members, HTA Staff and HTA Staff observers to the meeting.
2. Apologies were received from colleagues in the Department of Health and Social Care and Professor Deborah Bowman.

## **Item 2 – Declarations of interest**

3. The Chair asked Members if there were any declarations of interest of relevance to the agenda; none were declared.
4. The Board noted new declarations of interest for a Board Member (though no conflicts were thought to arise), and that the Private Office will update the HTA records accordingly.

## **Item 3 – Chair’s Report**

5. The Chair provided an oral update on the following items:
  - Attendance at the Fuller Independent Inquiry.
  - Attendance at the Chair and CEO Meeting of ALBs with DHSC.
  - Meeting with William Vineall, the HTA’s senior sponsor in DHSC.
  - Participating in the staff Weekly Exchange Call.
  - One-to-one meetings with all Board Members.
  - Reviewing the results of the recent Board Effectiveness Review.

## **Item 4 – Chief Executive’s Report (HTA 01/23)**

6. Dr Colin Sullivan on World Kidney Day took the opportunity to recognise the role of HTA Board Members in approving living organ donations and the positive impact this has on the lives of many patients.
7. Dr Colin Sullivan introduced the report and highlighted several key issues in Quarter 3 and the beginning of Quarter 4. He noted that the HTA’s work has been impacted by the number of vacancies it carried previously in the year during Q2 which has affected several of the KPI’s. He spoke about the additional restrictions applied by DHSC on public spending to ensure greater Value For Money and the need for business cases to receive Ministerial approval.
8. He provided further information on the Fuller Independent Inquiry and informed the Board that the phase 1 report is currently expected in the summer. HTA’s revised guidelines for both the Post-Mortem and the Anatomy sectors have been published. He informed Board Members that Northern Ireland will introduce Deemed Consent for deceased organ and tissue donation from 1

June and this means all parts of the United Kingdom will then have Deemed Consent in place. He also highlighted HTA's work with other ALB's; work around the creation of HTA's redefined vision, mission and values and the approach to portfolio management work.

9. In response to a Board member's question, he confirmed that HTA does have a working list of areas for discussion with the Department about possible changes / refinements to legislation and the Director of Data, Technology and Development undertook to share this with the Board, for information.
10. In response to a question, the Chief Executive provided the Board with further information about the outcomes and learning flowing from the Critical Incident Response Plan testing.
11. The Board discussed staff engagement, especially regarding articulating our public service values and the importance of these. Concern was expressed regarding the IT vacancies and the impact this has on being able to deliver several projects. The Executive were urged to think creatively to fill these roles so that HTA's ability to deliver on projects is not further affected.
12. The Board noted the report.

## **Item 5 – HTA Performance Report (HTA 02/23)**

13. Dr Colin Sullivan introduced the report and provided highlights to Board Members regarding operational performance; the financial position; the review of the Strategic Risk Register; KPI reporting in the data annex and on staffing/personnel matters.
14. In response to a question, he provided further information on the 3 KPIs which are currently showing red (more than 10% below target) out of a total of 9 key targets. He noted the KPIs were stretch targets and, overall, performance was holding.
15. In response to a question, the Director of Regulation provided further information about the process for licence applications and how this KPI is affected by delays in receiving responses from prospective applicants. This raised questions about how realistic some of this year's KPIs might be so that the HTA is only judged on what it can be held accountable for. The Board

acknowledged that KPIs cannot be amended mid-year but questioned whether the presentation of this material could be amended to highlight the difference.

16. The Board discussed the financial underspend, noting the impact that staff vacancies has had on the ability to deliver on key projects. The shortage of IT expertise was again acknowledged, and the possibility of secondments from other parts of the public sector was discussed.
17. The Board welcomed how the HTA is engaging better and more frequently with its stakeholders and how this can help drive forward HTA's work.
18. The Board noted the report.

### **Item 6 – Update from DHSC Sponsor Team**

19. This item was deferred to the next meeting.

### **Item 7 – HTA's differentiated, risk-based approach to developing the inspection programme 2023/24 (HTA 03/23)**

20. Nicolette Harrison, Director of Regulation, introduced the paper and provided further information about how HTA is using data to map out the profile of inspections for the coming year. She provided further details about the different inspections undertaken and the drivers for change. She referred to the paper which was presented to the Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee in January of this year, in relation to relative risks across the different sectors regulated by the HTA.
21. The Board discussed the paper in-depth, noting the importance of the proposed Regulatory Insight Model and Index work.
22. The Board endorsed this direction of travel and asked whether lessons could be learnt from the approaches taken by other regulatory bodies. This will be one aspect of the Review of Inspections project. The Board expressed thanks to the regulation team for the paper.
23. **Action 1** The Board noted HTA's developing approach to using data to inform sectoral risk assessment through the implementation of a segmented approach

to its inspection work. The Board noted this approach has been used to inform the inspection programme for 2023/24.

### **Item 8 – Review of HTA’s Risk Tolerance (HTA 04/23)**

24. Richard Sydee, Director of Resources, introduced the report and explained the proposed changes and the discussions which the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee had during their meeting in January.
25. The Board discussed the proposals and proposed that risk 2 should be further amended to read “consent, if required”.
26. **Action 2** The Board approved the revised risk tolerance statements for the HTA’s strategic risks 2, 3 and 7.

### **Item 9 – Business Plan 2023/24 (HTA 05/23)**

27. John McDermott, Deputy Director for Performance & Corporate Governance, introduced the draft business plan for 2023/24 and stated that this plan assumed the same level of funding as previously secured. A departmental settlement had not yet been confirmed. He spoke about the proposed changes to the KPIs and how to best record the HTA’s performance.
28. He informed the Board of some further proposed changes including rewording of IT and HR core operations. He stated that a revised business plan would be circulated to the Board via email by 17 March and the Board would be asked to provide any further feedback no later than 24 March. This would ensure that the final business plan could be submitted to DHSC before the end of March.
29. The Board discussed the areas for rephrasing some of the wording to make it stronger and provide greater clarity.
30. The Board discussed the role of social media within HTA’s communication strategy and whether HTA was measuring the right parameter in this regard.
31. The Board discussed the setting of targets, providing appropriate stretch for the organisation, but that such targets should be realistic and achievable.

32. In response to a question, further information was provided on the proposed Horizon Scanning expert group and the likely expertise that might be included.
33. **Action 3** The Board approved, in principle, the HTA Business Plan for 2023/24 subject to the final draft being distributed via correspondence, and taking into account the proposed changes agreed at the Board Meeting.

### **Item 10 – Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee Update (HTA 06/23)**

34. Professor Gary Crowe, Chair of the Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee, presented the report to the Board. He provided several highlights to the Board on the Committee's discussions.
35. He stated that the Committee had received updates on the Data Security and Protection Toolkit, noting that HTA has more to do to attain full compliance. He stated that preparations for the external audit are progressing well, and several issues have been addressed for the internal audits.
36. The Board noted the report.

#### **Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee Terms of Reference**

37. Richard Sydee, Director of Resources, presented the revised ARAC Terms of Reference to the Board and explained the two minor amendments recommended by the Committee.
38. **Action 4** The Board agreed the amended Terms of Reference for the Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee.

### **Item 11 – Remuneration Committee Update (HTA 07/23)**

39. Ellen Donovan, Chair of the Remuneration Committee, presented the report to the Board. She provided several highlights on the Committee's discussion regarding staff remuneration, organisational development and communication.
40. She spoke about the Committee's role in supporting the organisation in personnel matters and was keen that RemCo governance and meetings (virtual

as needed) could be arranged quickly when that was needed so that decision making could be timely.

41. The Board noted the report.

### **Item 12 – Shared Services Update (HTA 08/23)**

42. The Board noted the information report presented to the meeting on Shared Services.

### **Item 13 – Minutes of 3 November 2022 (HTA 09/23)**

43. The Board agreed the draft minutes as an accurate record of the meeting on 3 November 2022.

### **Item 14 – Matters arising from 14 July 2022 (HTA 36/22)**

44. The Board noted the matters arising report.

### **Item 15 – Any other business**

45. There being no further business, the Chair thanked members for their contributions and closed the meeting. She also thanked all staff who had prepared papers and attended the meeting.

### **Date of Next Meeting**

29 June 2023 at 2 Redman Place.

### **Meeting actions**

#### **Action 1**

The Board noted HTA's developing approach to using data to inform sectoral risk assessment through the implementation of a segmented approach to its inspection work. The Board noted this approach has been used to inform the inspection programme for 2023/24.

**Action 2**

The Board approved the revised risk tolerance statements for the HTA's strategic risks 2, 3 and 7.

**Action 3** The Board approved, in principle, to the HTA Business Plan for 2023/24 subject to the final draft being distributed via correspondence, and taking into account the proposed changes agreed by the Board Meeting.

**Action 4**

The Board agreed the amended Terms of Reference for the Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee.

DRAFT