

Cross-Party Group on Life Sciences

Tuesday 16th November 2021, 5.45pm-7.15pm

Minute

Opening, Welcome and Introductions

The Convener welcomed all those attending, reminded them of online meeting etiquette, and outlined the agenda for the meeting.

Minutes of the previous meeting (15th June 2021) including AGM and reconstitution

The minutes of the previous meeting were proposed by Graham Simpson MSP and seconded by George Davidson.

Ministers Update: Ivan McKee, Minister for Business, Trade, Tourism and Enterprise

- In the week following COP26, Mr McKee said he recognised the important role that the life sciences sector was playing in addressing the health-related impacts of climate change.
- Mr McKee, alongside other ministers, had attended COP26 to engage with international delegations from a cross-section of global industries that wish to play their part in halting climate change and was able to talk about the role that can be played by Scotland's life sciences sector, particularly industrial biotechnology, in helping achieve those ambitions.
- The Scottish Government is working on a new Innovation Strategy as well as continuing to focus on supporting entrepreneurs, spin outs and start-ups in life sciences.
- The Programme for Government reiterates ministers' commitment to the Scottish Health and Industry Partnership (SHIP) to bring together the NHS, academia, and industry to improve the flow of innovation and adoption into the NHS.
- Mr McKee said he has been involved in discussions around how Scotland can align with the UK Life Sciences Vision, with a particular focus on areas of strength for Scotland such as vaccines, cancer treatment, early diagnosis, treatment and prevention of chronic disease, AI, and digitisation.

- The government will publish a 10-year National Strategy for Economic Transition to identify the challenges and opportunities for Scotland over the coming decade, including supporting the skills innovation and entrepreneurship of the sector.
- In answer to a question on government investment in life sciences projects, Mr McKee said that Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise and South of Scotland Enterprise were all able to offer access to a mix of financial support. However, the Government's driver is to make sure that Scotland, with an ecosystem of innovation centres, academia, businesses, and the NHS, is a good place to invest, and to allow companies to scale up to serve global markets.
- The Convener commended the investment at Royal DSM in Dalry in Ayrshire, the seeds of which were sown at a meeting between Mr McKee and the Netherlands Chamber of Commerce several years ago.
- The meeting discussed the importance of skills to the National Economic Strategy and how to attract more people into STEM careers.
- Following a question on the priorities of SHIP, Andrew Fowlie agreed to share an update of the work towards publishing a demand plan for the NHS to create opportunities Scottish life sciences companies to support the NHS recovery.

Presentation on GSK's Sustainability Ambitions and Investment at Irvine

Jim Miller, Engineering Director, GSK Irvine

Jim Miller, Engineering Director for GSK at Irvine gave a presentation on the company's global environmental ambitions and targets, and also the work that is being done to meet the very high energy demands of the medicines produced by large-scale fermentation and large-scale solvent recovery on the site, from renewable sources.

- Mr Miller says the focus on sustainability dates back to 2007 and a series of steps have been taken since then to introduce renewable energy generation through installing two wind turbines, and a CHP anaerobic digester using the site's own waste to generate power, alongside a series of measures, to reduce waste and water usage.
- In September 2021, the company unveiled a 20-year power purchase agreement, buying renewable energy from a third party, that will see the construction of a 20 MW solar farm covering 56 acres of land on the Irvine site and the erection of two further wind turbines capable of generating 4 MW each. The project also involves installation of a new underground cable to a

grid connection 11.5 km away near Kilwinning. Mister Miller said this project alone will reduce the sites carbon footprint by 10,000 tonnes per year.

- GSK globally has set a target of having a net zero impact on the climate and net-positive impact on nature by 2030.
- The Convener commended the company for its work. He noted that this 20-year agreement represents a commitment to continued manufacturing in Irvine. He added that sharing best practice has become a key focus of the Parliamentary committee he convenes, The Finance and Public Administration Committee.
- Mr Miller agreed to share GSK's experience with other companies examining ways to make their operations more environmentally sustainable.

Scottish government sustainability strategy for NHS Scotland

Phillip McLean, Head of Capital Planning and NHS Facilities, Scottish Government

Mr McLean talked about the Scottish Government's recently published Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy for NHS Scotland, pointing out that it sought to balance the decarbonisation with increasing biodiversity, reducing resource use and adapting the NHS to climate change.

- The strategy sets an ambition of the NHS being net zero by 2040 (previously it was 2045) through meeting a series of targets along the way for emissions from vehicles, medical gases, resource use and waste to landfill. He noted that the decarbonisation of the electricity grid by 2035 will play a significant part in achieving the targets.
- Mr. McLean talked about the role that a net-zero supply chain could play. He encouraged companies selling products to the NHS not only to decarbonise their manufacturing processes but also examine how their products can be disposed of without having an impact on the environment. The Scottish Government, he said, will look to incorporate environmental sustainability into decisions about what goods to purchase.
- Mr. McLean said that there was currently a focus on the greenhouse gas emissions associated with anaesthetic gases and respiratory inhalers, explaining the work being done by anaesthetists including to capture and 'crack' these gases into their non-greenhouse gas components, the potential of reducing prescribing of inhalers containing greenhouse gases, and saying the Government is keen to understand the recycling of items such as inhalers.

- Asked by the Convener about the financial help being made available to support the strategy, given concerns that funds might be diverted from frontline care, Mr McLean said that NHS boards have existing sustainability teams but, currently, these are under resourced for the scale of the challenge. However, a gap analysis is being undertaken to make the case for specific funding for sustainability projects.
- During the discussion, Mr. McLean explained that there are significant opportunities through power purchase agreements and placing renewable generation facilities on NHS land and buildings. He said that, while the intention is to move to an electric vehicle fleet, ambulances, due to their need to be on the road all the time, are not yet suitable to be moved across to battery power.
- Clare Morrison from the Royal Pharmaceutical Society in Scotland highlighted the organisation's recently published sustainability policy and told the meeting that pharmacists have an important role to play, adding that there is a need for the environmental impact of medicines to be included in NHS prescribing guidance and formularies so that both patients and prescribers can make environmentally informed decisions.

IQVIA and Scotland's bioscience and health data potential

Gary White, Senior Director, strategic site solutions, IQVIA

The Convener introduced Mr White, explaining that IQVIA is a world leader in using data, technology, advanced analytics, and research expertise to help customers drive healthcare forward. He said the company had recently announced a major expansion of its Q2 Solutions laboratory operations at its Alba Campus in Livingston, adding new services and creating 150 new jobs.

Mr White talked about the organisation and its work in Scotland.

- IQVIA employs around 86,000 people worldwide and 1,200 in Scotland making it the biggest life sciences sector employer – some 70% of the Scottish workforce being female.
- The team at Livingston analyse some 9 million clinical samples returned from trials taking place across Europe every year and are currently investing \$17 million in the expansion of the Livingston operation, with support from Scottish Enterprise to help them focus on developing skills and training to support that work.
- Scotland offers a unique opportunity for clinical research by having a single healthcare provider across the whole of the country, a stable population of around 5.8 million people, a high prevalence of chronic disease and a world-renowned medical records system – all of this backed by an ecosystem of renowned universities and academic research facilities.

- 10 years ago, IQVIA chose Scotland as a 'Prime Site', one of a network of investigator sites that the organisation commits to develop by allocating resources, staff and investment to grow its contract research organisation in support of pharmaceutical companies. Another reason for making the Prime Site designation was access to linked datasets and a single route into all hospital teams through national research Scotland.
- Mr White told the Cross-Party Group that two weeks previously the company had decided to remove Prime Site status from Scotland at the end of 2021 and, although there were no job losses, resources would now be reallocated to other Prime Sites. He explained that, although Scotland has approximately 10% of the UK population and might have been expected to recruit 10% of the patients into UK wide clinical research, outside Covid, Scottish sites were contributing less than 1%.
- He expressed IQVIA's disappointment that there appeared to have been little action taken on a White Paper submitted by IQVIA to the Scottish Government in 2020 making recommendations on how Scottish clinical research could benefit from some of the positive process changes in Clinical Research and data usage, made in response to the COVID pandemic.
- The organisation had advised that there would be significant benefit to a single delivery plan for a unified Scottish research policy, a key element of which would be that individual NHS hospitals should be able to benefit directly from the investment into trials they were running to allow reinvestment in supporting further research, instead of funds going back into a central pot.
- On the key issue of data, he said the future for Scotland lay in connecting data and analytics – instead of safe havens within each of the regions, creating a single and unified national NHS Scottish dataset.
- The recommendations also included supporting GPs to direct people to clinical trials – and helping patients self-referring through websites such as clinicaltrials.org.
- Mr White said that he hoped the decision to withdraw Prime Site status could be a catalyst for Government, NHS and the wider sector to now move ahead and make the changes needed to realise Scotland's status including some of the recommendations industry have submitted to government.
- During the discussion that followed Mr White agreed to an invitation for further discussions from The Data Lab and Andrew Fowlie at SHIP.

Closing Remarks

The Convener thanked all the speakers and all those at the meeting.

He reminded the Group that it is the members role than the office bearers who choose the areas of discussion and invited anybody who had ideas for future presentations and discussions to the group to contact Claire Headspeath at the Group secretariat.

Present

MSPs

- Kenneth Gibson MSP
- Graham Simpson MSP
- Minister Ivan McKee MSP

Invited guests

- Jim Miller, Engineering Director, GSK Irvine
- Phillip McLean, Head of Capital Planning and NHS Facilities, Scottish Government
- Gary White, Senior Director, strategic site solutions, IQVIA

Non-MSP Group Members

- Aditi Jayakar (Accenture)
- Alex Dalrymple (Scottish Enterprise)
- Alexandra Morera (Strathclyde University)
- Alison Culpan (ABPI)
- Andrew Fowlie (Scottish Government)
- Annie McRobbie (SSERC)
- Claire Headspeath (ABPI)
- Clare Morrison (Royal Pharmaceutical Society)
- Daphne Stewart (Orion)
- Dave Tudor (CPI)
- David Littlejohn (Strathclyde University)
- Deborah McCreath (Strathclyde University)
- Fiona Hamill (Janssen)
- Frank Gunn-Moore (SULSA)
- Gary White (Quintiles)
- George Davidson (GSK)
- Giles Hamilton (ODX Innovations)
- Graeme Rose (Novartis)
- Hammad Mukhtar (Strathclyde University)
- Heather Rankine (Exact Sciences)
- James Crichton (Scottish Government)
- Jim Miller (GSK)
- John Macgill (Ettrickburn)
- John Mackenzie (Edinburgh University)
- Julie Cetingoz (Accenture)
- Lindsay McClure (NHS)
- Linsey Nicolson (Merz)

- Mark Wilkinson (The Data Lab)
- Matt Barclay (Community Pharmacy Scotland)
- Neil Roderick Macdonald (Merck)
- Philip Jones (BioAscent)
- Phillip McLean (Scottish Government)
- Richard Mole (Moredun)
- Sally Hughes (Teva UK)
- Sandra Auld (Healthcare Public Affairs)
- Sharon Baillie (GSK)
- Steve Brown (Roche)
- Steve Kerr (Department of International Trade)
- Steven Burke (PPD)
- Suzanne Graham (Scottish Government)
- Tracey Bowden (Map Bio Pharma)

Apologies

- Sir Michael Ferguson (Dundee University)
- Fulton MacGregor MSP
- Miles Briggs MSP
- Ken Sutherland (Medical Canon)

Agenda item 1

Ministerial Update

Agenda item 2

A presentation on the ground-breaking solar and wind power development at GSK's Irvine facility

Agenda item 3

A presentation by the Scottish Government on Sustainability.

Agenda item 4

A presentation by IQVIA