

Corporate Strategy Development**Emerging Strategic Themes**

27 May 2021

1. Summary and Purpose of Paper

We have kicked-off our corporate strategy development process with a two-day workshop with the Executive Team. This paper summarises the emerging strategic themes and will inform our plans for how we progress the development of the NHSBT corporate strategy.

2. Action Requested

We would welcome discussion on these emerging strategic themes and whether you feel there is anything missing that should be included.

3. Developing the corporate strategy

There has been some debate among the Executive Team about the purpose of our corporate strategy. The corporate strategy will set out our core purpose, the level of our ambition, what we need to do and how we need to change as an organisation to deliver that ambition. It will provide us with a framework for prioritising where we focus our efforts and invest our resources and will drive synergies across the services to ensure we are more than the sum of our parts and reduce duplication between directorates. As part of the development of our corporate strategy we will be looking at the external environment we are operating in and seeking input from external stakeholders.

Over the next three to six months the strategy team will be working with Executive Team to lead the development of a new corporate strategy for the next 3 to 5 years, building on the work done pre-Covid whilst recognising that the pandemic has brought many changes that have created new opportunities and challenges that this strategy will need to respond to.

4. Background

Development of our corporate strategy builds on the work started in 2019, which included engagement across the organisation to build on the strengths of the organisation and plan for our future. This was set out in the January 2020 Board Paper *NHSBT Strategic Review – Defining Our Future*¹ which identified **four strategic shifts** for the organisation that support our ambition to save and improve even more lives:

- **System leader:** Historically NHSBT has positioned itself as a stand-alone ALB providing products and services to the NHS. However, as a national provider operating in a federated system of local hospitals we are well placed to step up and be more proactive in bringing players together to drive improvements and reduce variation in patient care and optimise the use of resources across the system.
- **Pro-active and clinically responsive:** Being on the front foot and being more proactive in anticipating and planning for changing patient needs and clinical practice and aiming

¹ The January 2020 Board Paper *NHSBT Strategic Review – Defining Our Future* is included for reference as Appendix 1.

to take responsibility for being the change we want to see rather than waiting for or expecting someone else to take the lead.

- **Modern and agile:** Building on the opportunity to adopt more modern tools and practices, without sacrificing our commitment to quality and safety. We aspire to be a modern organisation that embraces innovation and new technology and able to react quickly in response to new requirements and opportunities.
- **Top choice for talent:** Be recognised as a great place to work and destination of choice for top talent by assuming a more visible, promoting our commitment to diversity and inclusion and creating career paths that identify and nurture talent at every stage of people's careers.

A key objective of the workshop was to revisit these shifts, confirm whether they remain relevant and still resonate given the changing environment, and discuss what they mean from the perspective each of the service areas and the implications for the enabling strategies. We will continue to refine these in line with the strategic pillars set out in our 2021/22 business plan which align more with our operating model.

5. Day One: Strategic Themes

Our Day One discussions focused on the external trends, the four strategic shifts and the opportunities and challenges these represent for each of the individual services in better meeting the needs of patients.

Theme 1: Our role in the system

A recurrent theme throughout the day was the need to clearly define NHSBT's role in the health and care system and create a clearer vision as to how it contributes to improving patient outcomes, reducing health inequalities and optimising the use of resources across the system.

Theme 2: System Leader

Opportunity: All the service areas recognised this as an opportunity but highlighted that it would look different across the organisation. Some are already very well placed to be system leaders because of their established and strong market positions (ODT, Blood). In others where the market is more competitive and fragmented it may mean leveraging our expertise to develop our leadership as part of wider system collaboration (cellular therapies, TES). And in others we are leveraging unique expertise alongside other parts of the health system (pathology, plasma).

What's changed: The pandemic has brought a change of narrative and the system is more open to collaboration. The space has always been there but, with this change, NHSBT has been able to step into that space more easily and has made an impact (e.g. ODT) and built new relationships at the national level (e.g. plasma). We have an opportunity to build on this not only for ODT but for other parts of the business.

Ambition: We want to increase our visibility and be the 'go-to' organisation sitting at the right top table to drive improvement, set standards, reduce variation in clinical outcomes and inequalities for patients, optimise use of resources and ensuring that the UK is at the forefront of innovation.

Enablers: We will need to be more visible, create more space to develop networks and partnerships building on our existing relationships and strengthen our influencing skills at all levels, using our data, insights and international links to leverage our position. We will also need to identify where we are uniquely placed, due to our national footprint and/or specialist expertise, to add value and improve outcomes through strengthening our role in the system.

Theme 3: Proactive and Clinically Responsive

Opportunity: To move from being reactive to changes that impact our ability to provide services that meet patient needs, better anticipate and more proactively identify and address future 'gaps', and better understand our impact on clinical outcomes. Changes can arise from a number of sources, such as longer term changes in supply (e.g. donor attitudes, behaviours, donations), demand (e.g. patient demographics, diversity, needs, emerging new diseases) and clinical practice (e.g. treatments). Responding to these changes may require a different volume and/or mix of products and services or create opportunities for new products and services.

What's changed: Changing donor behaviours and attitudes, changes in clinical practice (ODT), demand shift for more personalised components (blood) along with innovative technologies that enable us to better understand and match our donors to patient needs (clinical services) and optimise the usability and extend the 'life' of our donor products.

Ambition: NHSBT is able to provide everyone who needs our products/services (blood, organ, tissue, stem cells) with something that matches their specific needs and has the knowledge and insight to know how and where to target our efforts. This has a strong link to the role we play in reducing health inequalities.

Enablers: We will need to build a bigger donor base and reimagine our model from donor to patient, including changing how we type and match donors. This will need to be supported by improved intelligence and predictive analytics for demand and supply management and patient outcomes. We will need to attract and retain donors to meet evolving clinical need and, in parallel engage more proactively with the clinical community to better understand and meet demand. We will look to strengthen our partnerships with academic and research bodies and support them to get innovations to market and adopted in practice.

Theme 4.1: Modern and Agile

Opportunity: Modernise our ways of working, optimising the use of data, technology and automation and develop our culture, governance, processes, and competencies to enable us to be more agile. This will enable us to move faster in the future whilst maintaining quality and safety. We also need to develop our cultural competencies to ensure we understand and communicate and engage effectively with different cultures and communities across the UK.

What's changed: Rapid pace of change of real-time data, analytics, digital technologies, and AI is impacting all our businesses. There has been a step-change in the digital infrastructure and greater information sharing across the system to coordinate the response to Covid-19 with increased use of digital communication channels and sharing of data with patients.

Ambition: To react and respond quickly to new opportunities and be able to see integrated data across the end to end pathways from donor to patient.

Enablers: Build from solid foundations to implement planned modernisation programmes which may require new facilities and to progress the organisation development work that is already underway. Data, technology, and inter-operability with NHS systems will be key to underpin the modernisation of services and liberate data from closed systems.

Theme 4.2: Modern and Agile / Efficient and Productive

Opportunity: Continue to seek opportunities to improve our efficiency and productivity and to better use our estate and resources, ensuring we secure the benefits of scale, integration, co-location and maximise use of our capacity. Ensure we have the best geographic strategy for service delivery that aligns our services and operations to meet our customers' needs.

What's changed: Closer working and greater integration between NHSBT services with an increasing shift to 7-day working across the NHS.

Ambition: NHSBT optimises use of its resources, including in the context as part of the wider health and care system, and the benefits and synergies from the different services that sit within it. This could result in growth in some areas, and changes in the scope of services in others.

Enablers: Develop a better understanding of our customer's changing needs and ensure our footprint is aligned to meet these changing needs. Draw on benchmarking and leverage insights from across the system to identify opportunities to increase productivity and optimise use of resources within NHSBT and for the system.

Theme 5: Top Choice for Talent / A Great Place to Work for Everyone

Opportunity: Greater visibility and promotion of NHSBT, attracting the current and next generation of pioneers and influencers and better forward planning to ensure we have the rights skill sets and capabilities to deliver our plans, including multiple priorities in parallel. To shift the culture to one with greater autonomy, delegation and more empowered teams and a commitment to diversity and inclusion and a shift in our engagement both internally and externally.

What's changed: We will need to expand our pool of existing skills as well as develop new skills sets (e.g. influencing, data analysis, new discipline of medical science) to deliver our plans. The impending retirement of clinical pioneers creates succession planning challenges.

Ambition: To be a destination of choice for top talent and recognised as a great place to work for everyone.

Enablers: Strategic workforce planning recognising the new skills sets that will be needed to deliver our plans (including succession planning).

6. Day Two: Key Enablers

Our Day Two discussions focused on what the implications of the strategic themes discussed on Day One have for the enabling strategies. The top three priorities emerging from these discussions are summarised by area.

Stakeholders and Partnerships

1. **Stakeholder Management:** We need to develop a better understanding of who our key stakeholders and customers are, their priorities and a deeper understanding of what they want / need.
2. **NHSBT Brand:** We need to be more visible and better explain, communicate, and actively promote who we are, what we do, and how we can help.
3. **External Focus:** Use thought leadership and data and evidence to increase our visibility, build networks and engage more with partners across the system.

Funding and Pricing

1. **New Funding Sources:** We need to think differently about how we fund investment and explore other funding options, such as commercial, R&D, sponsorship, fundraising.
2. **Investment Strategy:** We need a longer-term approach to financial planning looking beyond the 1 to 2-year horizon linked to what we need to deliver our strategic priorities.
3. **Communicate our Value:** We need to review our pricing strategy and develop clear value propositions that support multi-year investment and enable service development, alongside ensuring best use of resources and consideration of our cost base and efficiency.

Commissioning

1. **Influencing:** Better understand the needs and priorities of commissioners and position ourselves to respond to those needs and to influence them working closer in partnership.
2. **New commissioning models:** A new strategic commissioning relationship with NHSE where we establish our role in setting standards, agree what we are commissioned to do on behalf of the NHS and an approach to co-commissioning at national and sub-national level.
3. **Skills and capabilities:** We need to develop / strengthen our skills and capabilities in influencing/persuading, commercial awareness/understanding, business development.

Infrastructure

1. **Better use our estate:** We need to review the footprint and adapt our estate accordingly from both an efficiency and geography perspective, to ensure we make best use of resources and are aligned to meet the changing needs of our customers.
2. **Smarter working:** Optimise our infrastructure by exploiting smarter ways of working such as hybrid/collaborative or co-working space, alongside developing a culture that embraces innovation and new ways of working.
3. **Procurement:** Build on the work done in preparing for Brexit to understand and plan for any potential impacts on the business from global shortages and future cost inflation.

Workforce

1. **Skills and Capabilities:** Develop technical, information, clinical and business skills and explore opportunities to 'grow our own' and better support internal movement of staff.
2. **Fair, inclusive and values driven:** Promote diversity and inclusion within NHSBT by developing cultural competency at all levels, recognising and rewarding 'good' behaviour and ensuring our policies are fair.
3. **Modern Management:** Improve our management capabilities, including developing a flexible workforce and succession planning and promoting for people leadership and management abilities not just technical skills.

Technology

1. **Skills:** Develop the skills and capabilities to understand, use and identify and develop opportunities to exploit technologies.
2. **Investment:** Sustained investment with multi-year plans and priorities combined with the ability to exploit emerging opportunities. We need to treat technology as a strategic enabler rather than purely as a cost or invest-to-save option.
3. **Principles:** To support decisions around how and when to use technology, for example automate repeatable tasks, outsource non-specialised work, and human centred design.
4. **Partnerships:** Identify partnerships with tech giants where their interests align with ours and aim for integration / interoperability with the wider NHS.

Data

1. **Capabilities and skills:** Develop the skills and platforms to enable the potential to exploit data, including embedding data analysis into our ways of working.
2. **New data:** Improve data in specific areas, such as clinical outcomes and clinical usage, health inequalities, diversity, and inclusion, and explore where we can access more data in the future, such as NHS patient records and genomics.
3. **Data strategy:** Develop a comprehensive data strategy which includes an understanding of the data we have and need, ability to extract insight and use it to drive improvements, liberate data from closed systems and integrate data architecture with the wider NHS. Invest in building new data platforms to enable a data driven strategy.

7. Next steps

Over the next three to six months we will be continuing to develop the strategic priorities, building on the themes from our workshops earlier this month. To inform this we will be continuing to build on diagnostic work, including horizon scanning and undertaking some more detailed stakeholder engagement work. We will bring updates to the Board and would welcome discussions with the Non-Executive Members to talk through and test as the work develops.

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