National

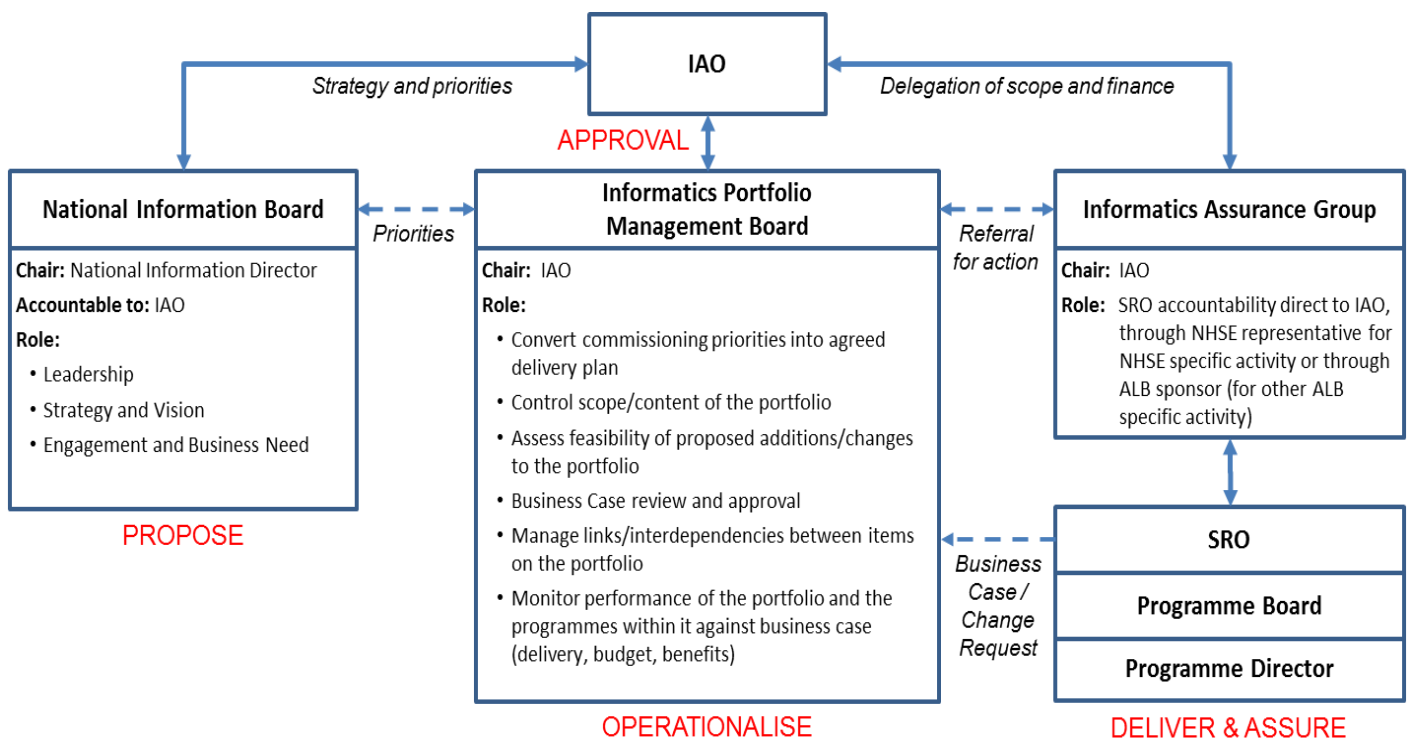**I**nformation

Board

NATIONAL INFORMATION BOARD

Terms of Reference

November 2014

1   CONTEXT

As technology and our use of information develop rapidly there is an unprecedented opportunity for the health and care system[1] to use information and technology to enable safer, more effective and efficient health and care. This also means we have a great opportunity to build responsive public services which put patients, service users and the public firmly in control and to ensure that those services join up and integrate well. DH has set up the NIB in order to set the strategic direction in respect of the priorities and commissioning for information technology across the health and care system. This Terms of Reference defines the role of the National Information Board (NIB) and its role within the health and care system. For reference, the following is a diagram showing the Informatics Governance model:

Version 1.0

1.1   THE NATIONAL INFORMATION BOARD (NIB)

By delegation from the Department of Health, the NIB defines and agrees strategy, requirements and priorities for informatics across the system; ensuring that system leaders work collectively to guarantee the successful delivery of the system wide strategy. Through appropriate membership the NIB will ensure that important system wide assurance groups such as the Independent Information Governance Oversight Panel (IIGOP) are represented

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[1] Health and care system includes NHS, public health and social care

and that system wide principles are agreed adopted and maintained throughout implementation of the strategic framework.

1.2   Informatics Portfolio Management Board

The Informatics Portfolio Management Board (IPMB) is responsible for converting the strategy and commissioning priorities defined by the NIB into an effective delivery plan; developing a cohesive portfolio of informatics programmes that collectively deliver the outcomes required by the strategy, achieving maximum benefits whilst ensuring best value for money.

1.3 Informatics Assurance Group

The Informatics Assurance Group (IAG) is responsible for the assurance of individual programmes within the Health and Care System Informatics Portfolio and serves as a vehicle through which the Informatics Accountable Officer (IAO) can hold Senior Responsible Officers (SRO) to account for the performance of their programmes. It also serves as a point of escalation for issues or concerns raised by SROs.

2   BACKGROUND

The NIB has an important high level leadership role to play within the Informatics governance arrangements. It has the crucial role of setting the strategy and direction for the health and care system on information technology and information. It will achieve this through engagement with the system and by developing the necessary strategic 'consensus' with partner health and care system Arms Length Bodies (ALBs), stakeholders and others through membership and involvement activity. It will engage public, citizen and patient 'voice' in its decisions and it will ensure professional input through its clinical reference structures. The strategic direction agreed by the NIB will then steer the priorities and commissioning for information technology and information services delivered by the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) and by other ALBs and system partners where appropriate.

3   PURPOSE

The purpose of the NIB is to:

- o provide **leadership** across health and care organisations on information technology, information and informatics strategy
- o design and develop the vision, **strategy and direction** for the health and care system through engagement with partners and stakeholder (including industry) groups as appropriate
- o through the strategy ensure **clarity on priorities** for investment and delivery taking account of the wider context of achieving VFM and benefits realisation; government and wider policy drivers
- o provide the **annual commissioning priorities** for HSCIC with the Informatics Portfolio Management Board responsible for converting the commissioning priorities into an agreed delivery plan
- o **engage effectively** with health and care system organisations, stakeholder groups and the public to inform the direction and strategy

o Please note that NIB strategy and priorities are translated into delivery through the IPMB

4 SCOPE

The scope of the NIB business includes informatics and information technology and information activity across the health and care system, for which it will agree and set a high level strategy and vision. The NIB strategy, developed under the leadership of the NIB, and agreed on behalf of the Department will provide strategy direction on all informatics programmes. It will also provide advice and guidance (via the strategy) to the DH Informatics Accountable Officer (IAO) as to how centrally provided resources should be most effectively deployed to achieve the aims of government policy as reflected in the NIB strategy.

It will also aim to provide strategic coherence for programmes of activity led and resourced from other parts of the system (e.g. by individual ALBs) to ensure that, as far as possible, synergies and benefits are maximised with centrally led programmes. It does not have direct influence or decision making power over programmes of work or activity funded directly by individual ALBs.

5 OBJECTIVES

The NIB's primary functions and objectives are:

o To provide a forum to bring together health and care system ALBs to enable a joined up and **coherent approach to informatics** and information technology and information across the system
o On behalf of the system to develop a **5 year Strategy Framework** which will include a roadmap to guide commissioning of information technology and information programmes and related activity (to be reviewed and updated annually)
o To provide the **annual commissioning priorities** for HSCIC with the Informatics Portfolio Management Board responsible for converting the commissioning priorities into an agreed delivery plan
o To provide **advice to the IAO** on resource attribution and prioritisation. The Informatics Portfolio Management Board will then translate the NIB strategic priorities into delivery, as necessary identifying new programmes of work to take the delivery forward, or amending the scope of existing programmes of work
o To provide **leadership** to the informatics function across the system
o To maintain a forward look on **innovation and developments** within the informatics field and ensure these are appropriately influencing strategic direction
o To develop, share and showcase **best practice developments** to encourage adoption
o To produce an **annual report** to the Informatics Accountable Officer (IAO) covering progress on delivery of the Strategy
o To ensure that key system wide principles, such as **Information Governance** are agreed, adopted and maintained throughout implementation of the strategic framework.

6   NIB RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER ROLES AND GROUPS

The Department of Health is accountable to Parliament for the performance of the health and social care system; the framework in which services are delivered; the governance arrangements which are in place; the way in which the system is regulated; and the way in which that system is resourced.

It has appointed an Informatics Accountable Officer (IAO) to have responsibility for the overall oversight and assurance of those aspects of the health and social care system relating to the provision of information, information technology and data. The IAO is therefore responsible for the framework within which informatics services are delivered; for the governance arrangements that are in place; for the way in which the system is regulated and held to account; and for the way in which benefits are derived.

The **National Information Director (NID**) will account for NIB activity to the IAO, who in turn is accountable to the DH Permanent Secretary, Secretary of State and Parliament for the activity of the NIB and other elements of the informatics governance structures. The IAO/NID channel will be the main route through which government policy is articulated to the NIB.

The **NID** will chair the NIB. The NID will be appointed by the DH Permanent Secretary and be accountable to the DH IAO.

The **NID**, in chairing the NIB, will be responsible for ensuring that the Board delivers its business in accordance with these Terms of Reference and in support of the objectives and goals as may be specified by the IAO.

The NIB will commission and direct specific supporting work through a **sub-group structure. This will** ensure that specific tasks and work activities are appropriately developed. The NID determines the requirements for and of sub-groups or other supporting work commissions. Sub-group structures might be either advisory or operational depending on requirements.

As the leadership group within the system, the NIB has an important role to play in setting the **strategic framework** and direction. It will work co-operatively with all other parts of the system (see diagram at paragraph 1) to enable the delivery of the strategic framework. In particular it will have key interdependencies with:

The IPMB – will be responsible for ensuring join up across programmes and to manage interdependencies as well as ensuring that the programme of work continues to deliver overall the strategic ambitions of the NIB.

The Informatics Assurance Group (IAG) – supports the IAO in assuring delivery on specific programmes and in providing approvals for expenditure on individual programmes.

The Health and Care System Arms-Length Bodies (ALBs) – the NIB membership will comprise of all health and care ALBs. It will work collegiately with members to ensure synergies and coherence as far as possible across the system.

The Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) – the HSCIC will be the main delivery partner for programmes of activity identified as within the NIB strategy. HSCIC will play a vital role in helping to shape technical and other standards to support programme delivery.

7 MEMBERSHIP

Membership will comprise all DH ALBs. Other representative or interest organisations may be invited to become temporary or permanent members by agreement of a majority of NIB members on the recommendation of the chair. A full list of member organisations is at **Annex A**.

Each member organisation will identify a named lead member of appropriate seniority who is able to speak on behalf of their host organisation. This person will be the expected attendee at all meetings unless otherwise agreed in advance with the Chair via the secretariat. Deputies should not attend as a matter of routine.

Members will be expected to attend on a regular basis and membership may be revoked by the chair where this is not the case.

Expert external (lay) membership may be provided in the following areas:

i) Openness/Transparency specialist;
ii) Citizen/public/patient/user interest
iii) Others as agreed necessary

8 MEETINGS

There will be 2 levels of meetings:–

The Leadership Group, which will meet 3-4 times per year and will include Chief Executive Officers and lead director. The agenda for these meetings will be strategic and high level and will focus on making important strategic decisions relevant to all or some member organisations; for example, formally agreeing the NIB Strategy or commissioning plans. Leadership Group meetings may be 'live-streamed' in full or part.

The Director Group will meet 6 times per year and will consist of functional lead directors from member organisations. The agenda will focus on developing specific subject areas and work themes across member organisations. Meetings will not normally be public sessions.

Meetings will normally be for a duration of up to 3 hours and will be held in different venues notified in advance by the secretariat. Supporting meeting papers will be made available on request from the NIB secretariat.

Agendas for meetings will be developed collaboratively with member organisations. They will usually comprise three elements:

i) Policy and Strategy;
ii) Update information on the progress of the delivery of the strategy. It will be the portfolio boards responsibility for preparing this update information
iii) External Challenge/provocation e.g. by academic, citizen perspective, pressure/interest groups

9 SECRETARIAT

The secretariat for the NIB will be provided by the DH. It will carry out the day to day work to service and support the NIB, administer meetings and engage with stakeholders.

A virtual secretariat will act to ensure all members are briefed and prepared for meetings and can participate in the agenda setting process. The virtual secretariat will include representatives from all member organisations.

10 ANNUAL REVIEW

The NIB's structure, objectives and membership will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure it remains fit for purpose and is delivering on its key purpose.