



Department
of Health &
Social Care



Infrastructure
and Projects
Authority

To: **Dermot Ryan**, Director of Frontline Digitisation, NHS England

From: **Shona Dunn**, Second Permanent Secretary, Department of Health and Social Care and
Nick Smallwood, Chief Executive Officer of the Infrastructure and Projects Authority

7 November 2022

Dear Dermot

APPOINTMENT AS SENIOR RESPONSIBLE OWNER FOR THE FRONTLINE DIGITISATION PROGRAMME

We are writing to confirm your continuing appointment as Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) of the *Frontline Digitisation* programme with effect from 1st April 2021. This letter sets out your responsibilities and the support you can expect from your department and the Infrastructure and Projects Authority.

As SRO you are responsible to Tim Ferris, the NHS' National Director for Transformation; directly accountable to myself, Second Permanent Secretary for the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and the Accounting Officer for the Transformation Directorate's portfolio; and under the oversight of the Permanent Secretary as Principal Accounting Officer for the DHSC, and Lord Markham, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the DHSC.

Your programme forms part of the Transformation Directorate portfolio, under the oversight of NHS England's Executive Transformation Group (ETG) and the DHSC Portfolio Oversight Board, and is included in the Government Major Projects Portfolio (GMPP).

You have personal responsibility for the delivery of the programme and will be held accountable for the delivery of its objectives, with policy intent and outcomes expected. This encompasses securing and protecting its vision, ensuring that it is governed responsibly, reported on honestly, escalated appropriately and for influencing the context, culture, and operating environment of the programme. You are also responsible for ensuring the ongoing viability of the programme and recommending its pause or termination if appropriate. Where issues arise which you are unable to resolve, you are responsible for escalating these to the ETG.

You remain accountable to the NHS England Executive and are expected to abide by their decision-making arrangements, and for DHSC Capital spend you will be accountable to the Department. You should deliver the programme in accordance with the objectives and policy intent as set by the NHS England Executive and by Ministers.

In addition to your internal accountabilities, SROs for GMPP projects and programmes are personally accountable to Parliamentary Select Committees. This means that, from the date of this letter, you will be held personally accountable to and could be called by Select Committees to account for and explain the decisions and actions you have taken to deliver the programme.

It is important to be clear that your accountability relates only to implementation, within the agreed terms in this letter; it will remain for the Minister to account for the relevant policy decisions and development.

More information on this is set out in [Giving Evidence to Select Committees - Guidance for Civil Servants](#), sometimes known as the Osmotherly Rules. Information on the roles and responsibilities of the SRO are detailed in the Infrastructure and Project Authority's guidance on [the role of the senior responsible owner](#). You should also make yourself familiar with the [Government Functional Standard for Project Delivery](#), the requirements of the Government Project Delivery Framework, and the guidance and requirements for project delivery as set by the ETG.

Time commitment and tenure

This will be a full-time role to enable effective delivery of the role and execute your responsibilities in full.

You are required to undertake this role until programme closure. Progress towards this will be reflected in your personal objectives. Any changes to the agreed time commitment or tenure of the role, as set out above, will require both departmental and Infrastructure & Projects Authority consent.

Objectives and performance criteria

The health and care system's underpinning strategy for digital transformation continues to be to digitise health and care services in line with core standards that ensure that information is safe and is able to flow through the system to where it is needed, creating shared records of care that enables the integration of services and supports the digital tools and service transformations that will allow social and economic benefits to be realised.

The policy intent supported by this programme is stated in in:

The NHS Long Term Plan commitments for digital transformation (Chapter Five):

- 5.22 - All providers, across acute, community and mental health settings, will be expected to advance to a core level of digitisation by 2024.
- 5.23 A new wave of Global Digital Exemplars [now called Digital Aspirants] will enable more trusts to use world class digital technology and information to deliver better care, more efficiently”.

The Department of Health and Social Care's Technology Vision (chapter two):

“Digital Services: Staff across the whole health and care sector deserve high-quality digital services that remove time-consuming or inconvenient processes and reduce their workload, ultimately freeing up time for care. They should not have to waste vital time logging on to systems, or transcribing clinical data by hand or over the phone.”

HMT Priorities as part of the Spending review 2020:

1. Levelling up economic opportunity across all nations and regions of the country by investing in infrastructure, innovation and people – thus closing the gap with our competitors by spreading opportunity, maximising productivity and improving the value add of each hour worked.

2. Improving outcomes in public services, including supporting the NHS.

The vision is a digitally enabled health and care system where the health service and its users have the digital services and access to the data they need to effectively manage and improve health and wellbeing. The Frontline Digitisation programme is the large and foundational part of achieving this vision. It will support achievement of the vision by levelling up integrated care systems, clinical and operational, to a baseline level of digital capability as set out in What Good Looks Like (WGLL) which will enable frontline clinical staff to make better use of digital technology to deliver care efficiently, effectively and safely, reducing variations and improving clinical quality and outcomes.

Frontline Digitisation Programme objectives are:

- **Making the case** for digitisation by articulating the costs and benefits of the foundational digital capabilities
- **Fund** systems to level up their digital maturity to the Frontline Digitisation minimum viable product (a subset of What Good Looks Like).
Outcome: Systems and providers have the necessary foundational digital capabilities to deliver increased safety, efficiency and quality of care and support further innovation.
- **Support** creating a sustained sharing culture via knowledge networks and blueprinting to maximise the chances of success and accelerate adoption.
- **Assure** organisations delivery.
Outcome: organisations successfully implement and exploit digital capability and value for money can be demonstrated from central investment.
- **Develop a commercial strategy** to ensure an enduring and vibrant supplier market.
- **Ensure standards** (defined elsewhere) are incorporated into purchasing requirements.
Outcome: supplier marketplace delivers innovative, value for money products that comply with agreed standards.
- **Policy Alignment:** Remain in step with key elements of policy such as the Long Term Plan and the transition to Integrated Care Systems
Outcome: Frontline Digitisation policy objectives of Long Term Plan achieved.

Your personal objectives and performance criteria which relate to the programme are:

- Own and ensure the programme's Business Case is subject to, and receives, all required approvals
- Overall financial management of the programme including agreeing budgets and resources managed effectively ensuring value for money
- Ensuring the programme remains aligned with the wider health system
- Establishing appropriate governance mechanisms to ensure successful delivery and account for the central funds invested locally
- Oversight of Programme Director and programme team and all programme activity
- Providing programme reporting via GMPP on a quarterly basis and ensuring that the programme is subject to IPA Gateway review at key decision points identified in the IAAP

You are expected to run your project in accordance with the [Government Functional Standard for Project Delivery](#), the other [Functional Standards](#) as applicable to this programme and the requirements of the Government Project Delivery Framework.

Extent and limit of accountability

Finance and Controls

HM Treasury spending controls will apply on the basis set out within the department's delegated authority letter. Where the programme exceeds the delegated authority set by HM Treasury, the Treasury Approval Point process will apply, and the details of each approval process must be agreed with your HM Treasury spending team. You should consult departmental finance colleagues on how to go about this.

You should note that where expenditure is considered novel, contentious, repercussive, or likely to result in costs to other parts of the public sector, HM Treasury approval will be required, regardless of whether the programme expenditure exceeds the delegated authority set by HM Treasury. If in doubt about whether approval is required you should, in the first instance, consult departmental finance colleagues before raising with the relevant HM Treasury spending team.

The overall estimated budget, resourcing requirements and tolerances for your programme will be agreed as part of the approval process. You will be expected to deliver within these tolerances and report quarterly on these as part of GMPP reporting.

You should operate at all times within the rules set out in [Managing Public Money](#). In addition, you must be mindful of, and act in accordance with, the specific HM Treasury delegated limits and Cabinet Office controls relevant to the programme. Information on these controls can be found here: [Cabinet Office controls](#).

Delegated authority

You are authorised to:

- approve expenditure of £50,000 subject to business case approvals and compliance with the relevant Standing Financial Instruction (SFIs) within DHSC, NHSE&I and NHSD.
- approve changes to Tier 2 milestones. Changes to Tier 1 milestones, objectives and performance measures are authorised by the ETG.
- recommend to ETG the need to either pause or terminate the programme where necessary and in a timely manner.

These authority limits are subject to change and other conditions or tolerances may be set as part of the business case approval and ongoing monitoring processes which you should then operate within.

Where issues arise which take you outside of these authority limits which you are unable to resolve, you are responsible for escalating these issues to the ETG.

Appointments

You should appoint a full time programme director/manager to support you in the management of this programme and make other appointments as required for the control and delivery of your programme within your delegated authority.

Governance and assurance

You should pay attention to ensuring effective governance for your programme, including the establishment of a programme board with appropriate membership and clear terms of reference.

As primary owner, you must ensure that the programme secures business case approval from the ETG, the Joint Investment Committee and HM Treasury, along with all relevant Cabinet Office Spend Controls. You should also ensure that the programme remains aligned to the strategic outcomes, costs, timescales, and benefits in line with the approved business case as well as monitoring the context within which the programme is being delivered to ensure it remains valid.

Where a change impacts the scope, costs, benefits, or planned delivery milestones agreed as part of an agreed business case, you are responsible for following the agreed change request approval process and setting a new, approved, business case baseline.

You should ensure that an accounting officer assessment is completed alongside the approval of the business case and that this is published on GOV.UK as part of the government's transparency requirements on major projects. You are responsible for bringing to the attention of the accounting officer any material changes in the programme which could require a new accounting officer assessment to be completed and published. [Guidance on completing accounting officer assessments](#) for major projects is available from HM Treasury.

Although you are directly accountable for this programme, you are also expected to support delivery of the department's overall strategic objectives. This means that you are expected to work collaboratively with other SROs and programme directors in adjacent programmes and the Transformation Portfolio Office to manage dependencies, resources, schedules, and funding to support delivery of the overall change the department needs to achieve its strategic objectives.

You should ensure that appropriate and proportionate assurance is in place and agree on the level and frequency of assurance reviews through the maintenance of an integrated assurance and approvals plan. You should develop this plan and its maintenance in collaboration with the Departmental Assurance Coordinator and the Infrastructure and Projects Authority.

Programme status, reporting and transparency requirements

The programme status at the date of your appointment is reflected in the most recent quarterly return on the programme to the Infrastructure and Projects Authority and is the agreed position as you assume formal ownership of the programme.

You are responsible for ensuring the honest and timely reporting on the position of the programme to the Infrastructure and Projects Authority while it remains on the GMPP and for providing reports and information to the DHSC portfolio management office as required. In future reporting should include carbon measurement, and other sustainable development goals in accordance with evolving government policy and standards. Information on the programme will be published annually by the Infrastructure and Projects Authority.

You are responsible for publishing on GOV.UK a summary of the accounting office assessment completed in line with the approval of the Outline Business Case and summaries of any subsequent assessments should they be required.

Development and support

As SRO of a GMPP programme, you have completed the Major Projects Leadership Academy.

To widen experience and understanding of the role, SROs are also expected to become accredited assurance reviewers and to lead or participate in such reviews for other government departments, the

wider public sector, and other areas of Health and Social Care as appropriate. Becoming an assurance reviewer and completing a review will form part of your time at the Major Projects Leadership Academy. To maintain your accreditation, you will be required to participate in a review at least once every 12 months.

The department will assist you in securing the necessary resources to support the programme, and will set clear guidance, requirements and standards, which align to the [Government Functional Standard on Project Delivery](#), to enable good governance and effective delivery. You will be part of the department's cohort of major project leaders who will be expected to support each other, share good practice and lessons learned and to collectively develop solutions. You should liaise with the department's Head of Profession for project delivery to discuss the maintenance and development of your delivery and leadership skills.

The Infrastructure and Projects Authority will be available to you for support, advice, and assurance throughout the programme's time on the GMPP.

Following approval of the business case and entry onto the Transformation Directorate portfolio, the ETG will provide ongoing oversight and support and will take steps to help resolve and escalate risks, issues or constraints that are acting as a blocker to successful delivery.

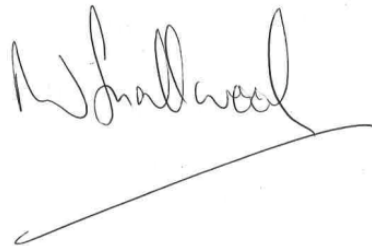
We would like to take this opportunity to wish you every success in your role as SRO.

Yours sincerely,



SHONA DUNN

Second Permanent Secretary
Department of Health and Social Care



NICK SMALLWOOD

Chief Executive Officer, Infrastructure and
Projects Authority

CONFIRMATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF APPOINTMENT

I confirm that I accept the appointment of Senior Responsible Owner for the programme, including my personal accountability for implementation, as set out in the letter above.



Dermot Ryan

8 Nov 22