



## **Independent Reconfiguration Panel (IRP)**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2025 online**

#### **Members present:**

Sir Norman Williams, Chair  
Simon Brake  
Mark Cheetham  
Graham Jagger  
Rajesh Khanna  
Ann Lloyd  
Angela McNab  
Luke March  
Tony Schapira  
Rohan Sivanandan  
David Stout  
Elaine Strachan-Hall  
Miles Wagstaff  
Andrea Young

#### **In attendance:**

Richard Jeavons, IRP Chief Executive  
IRP Secretariat

#### **Apologies received:**

Tansi Harper  
Suzy Walton

### **1. Welcome, declarations of interest and minutes of the previous meeting**

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed new member Mark Cheetham to his first IRP meeting.
- 1.2 No new interests were declared. The minutes from the IRP meeting held on 12 November 2024 were formally approved.

### **2. Chair's update**

- 2.1 The Chair thanked members for their contributions to the government's engagement exercise for the new 10 Year Health Plan. The IRP's organisational response was submitted in December to the online portal.
- 2.2 A meeting was held between the IRP Chair and officials in the sponsorship team in the Department of Health and Social Care in December to discuss committee business. The Chair received an update from DHSC on the current approach to managing call in requests that have been submitted to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care asking for a ministerial intervention in local NHS reconfiguration proposals. Potential ways of working were discussed to better support ministers with the call in requests by involving the IRP at an earlier stage in the process to advise on use of the call in powers, as had already been agreed in DHSC's statutory guidance published in January 2024.
- 2.3 Officials in DHSC had acknowledged the letter sent by the Chair to the Secretary of State to request an introductory meeting to discuss policy priorities in October. It was expected that a meeting will be arranged in the coming months between the Chair and the Minister of State for Health, as the minister responsible for NHS reconfigurations.

- 2.4 Members noted that DHSC had published an advertisement for four new IRP members on the Cabinet Office's public appointments website to replace those members whose terms were due to end in September 2025. The closing date was 28 January with interviews expected in early April. The advertisement had been shared with the regional NHS clinical senates and members were encouraged to share with their own networks to potential candidates who may be interested.
- 2.5 In December, the Chair, Chief Executive and Secretariat attended a roundtable discussion on NHS service reconfiguration with NHS leaders and DHSC officials, hosted by the NHS Confederation.

### **3. NHS reconfigurations update**

- 3.1 Members received a briefing on the most significant NHS reconfiguration proposals in the pipeline across England along with a parliamentary business roundup of NHS reconfiguration issues that had been raised in Parliament since the last IRP meeting.
- 3.2 In light of the ongoing local debate on the future of the North Birmingham Urgent Treatment Centre, members Simon Brake and Mark Cheetham both stated for transparency that they will take part in the NHS West Midlands Clinical Senate review of urgent care across the Birmingham and Solihull system in April. The IRP's register of interests was updated.
- 3.3 It was noted that the Secretary of State had decided in December not to call in NHS Somerset Integrated Care Board's proposal for stroke services that will result in the closure of the hyperacute stroke unit at Yeovil District Hospital. The local MP was seeking to challenge the decision and had asked DHSC to clarify the process.
- 3.4 The Chair confirmed that, to date, the IRP had not been commissioned for advice from the Secretary of State on any of the NHS reconfiguration proposals that had been disputed nationally with ministers, either via a call in request or in other correspondence.
- 3.5 The meeting was closed.