



Independent Reconfiguration Panel (IRP) 10 March 2026 meeting minutes

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The meeting on 10 March 2026 was held virtually.

Attendance

The members present were:

- Professor Sir Norman Williams - Chair
- Professor Simon Brake
- Tansi Harper
- Graham Jagger
- Dr Rajesh Khanna
- Ann Lloyd CBE
- David Stout
- Dr Elaine Strachan-Hall
- Dr Suzy Walton
- Andrea Young
- Angela McNab
- Christine Morgan

- Professor Gordon Carlson CBE
- Kate Denham
- Dr Rob Ghosh
- Mark Cheetham

Also in attendance were:

- Richard Jeavons - IRP Chief Executive
- the IRP Secretariat

Welcome, declarations of interest and minutes of the previous meeting

The Chair welcomed all members to the meeting. No apologies were received and no declarations of interest were noted.

The minutes from the last IRP meeting held on 11 November 2025 were formally approved, with one minor change highlighted.

Chair's update

The Chair and Panel members reflected on the decision taken by the Secretary of State not to call in the Humber Acute Services reconfiguration proposal, following consideration of the IRP advice and broader evidence. All decisions on whether to call-in NHS proposals remain a matter reserved for the Secretary of State.

The Chair informed the Panel that Richard Jeavons (RJ) will step down as Chief Executive of the IRP with effect from 31 May this year. The Chair highlighted RJ's significant contribution since the IRP was established. Panel members and the Chair expressed their thanks and best wishes, and RJ said that it had been a privilege to work for the IRP.

DHSC policy update

Jason Yiannikou (JY), senior sponsor for the IRP in DHSC, joined the meeting for this item to present a short update for members.

JY said that, in light of upcoming changes to the IRP, with both RJ leaving and the Chair due to step down at the end of September 2026, the Department had been giving some provisional thought to how the IRP would operate going forward and was seeking ministers' views. JY emphasised that the independence of the IRP's advice would remain central.

NHS England guest speakers

Development session: NHS England Assurance

The Chair introduced:

- Dr Mark Hendy, Director of System Assurance and Regulation, System Architecture, NHS England
- Ali Parsons, Head of Service reconfiguration NHS England London Region
- Emily Webster, Head of Clinical Senate London Region

NHS England colleagues talked through NHS England's assurance process for service change, including the difference between the national and regional role. This covered the different stages of assurance, factors that can affect level of assurance, the core assurance framework, best practice and the common failure points.

NHS England colleagues also provided an overview of the role of clinical senates, including the purpose, process and result, and ran through an example of a clinical senate review process.

There was discussion around the definition of substantial change, including how this is attached to the duty to consult the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committees and how a joint understanding of substantial service change between local authorities and NHS organisations, can be encouraged by putting in place a Memorandum of Understanding. There was also discussion about NHS organisations duty to involve the public, and determination around appropriate level of involvement.

Members discussed the role of clinical senates, how assurance arrangements have evolved, the importance of remaining focused on the problem to be addressed, and how the progress, implementation and outcomes of service change could be kept under review.

The Chair thanked all those present and closed the meeting.