

North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board

**Minutes of the Extraordinary Board meeting held
on 16 June 2025 at 3pm**

Present: Professor Sir Liam Donaldson, Chair
Ken Bremner, Foundation Trust Partner Member
Levi Buckley, Chief Delivery Officer
David Chandler, Chief Finance Officer
Deb Cornell, Director of Corporate Governance and Board Secretary
(deputy for Claire Riley, Chief Corporate Services Officer)
Tom Hall, Local Authority Partner Member
Professor Sir Pali Hungin, Independent Non-Executive Member
Professor Eileen Kaner, Independent Non-Executive Member
Dr Hilary Lloyd, Chief Nurse and AHP Officer
Dr Saira Malik, Primary Medical Services Partner Member
Jacqueline Myers, Chief Strategy Officer
Dr Rajesh Nadkarni, Foundation Trust Partner Member
Dr Mike Smith, Primary Medical Services Partner Member
David Stout, Independent Non-Executive Member

In Attendance: Christopher Akers-Belcher, Healthwatch Representative
Mark Kirkham, Forvis Mazars, External Audit
Lisa Taylor, Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise
Representative.
Toni Taylor, Board and Legal Services Officer (minutes)

B/2025/27 Welcome and Apologies (agenda item 1)

The Chair welcomed colleagues to the extraordinary meeting of North East and North Cumbria (NENC) Integrated Care Board (ICB).

Apologies were received from Sam Allen, Chief Executive; David Gallagher, Chief Contracting and Procurement Officer; Dr Neil O'Brien, Chief Medical Officer and Claire Riley, Chief Corporate Services Officer

B/2025/28 Declarations of Interest (agenda item 2)

Members had submitted their declarations prior to the meeting which had been made available in the public domain.

B/2025/29 Quoracy (agenda item 3)

The Chair confirmed the meeting was quorate.

Final Draft ICB Annual Report and Accounts 2024/25 (agenda item 4)

The Board Secretary introduced the Final Draft Annual Report advising the report was structured in line with NHS England guidance. The report included a performance report, an accountability report and financial statements, as well as the Chair's foreword and a statement from the Chief Executive.

The performance report provided an overview of performance and analysis during the year as well as selected highlights from key areas of work of the ICB. The Corporate Governance report provided an overview of the ICB's Governance Framework and included the statement of accountable officers' responsibilities and the annual governance statement which detailed the ICB's Governance Framework, committee performance, risk management arrangements and provided sources of assurance.

The Head of Internal Audit Opinion was also included in the report and was included as an agenda item at this meeting.

It was confirmed that the Final Draft Annual Report had been prepared and reviewed by relevant subject experts, the ICB executives and Executive Committee, and the Audit Committee. The Audit Committee had approved the draft Annual Report for submission to the Board.

The Chief Finance Officer explained the ICB Annual Accounts were included in the Annual Report and had been reviewed by the Audit Committee.

ICB Accounts Briefing Note (agenda item 5)

The Chief Finance Officer explained that the briefing note had been shared with the Audit Committee and provided an overview of the ICB Annual Accounts in terms of key items. It was explained that all NHS bodies produce their Annual Accounts in line with national timescales and using a national template.

The Chief Finance Officer drew members' attention to Note 19 which summarised achievements against key financial targets and confirmed the ICB achieved the following three key statutory targets:

- maintaining overall expenditure within available revenue resource,
- maintaining administration spend within running cost allowances,
- maintaining any capital spend within capital allocations.

An overall revenue surplus of £12,189k was delivered in line with previous forecasts.

It was noted there were some minor disclosure adjustments made following the audit process however they did not change the overall accounts.

B/2025/32

Management Letter of Representation (agenda item 6)

The Chief Finance Officer explained the Management Letter of Representation would be signed by the ICB Chief Executive, alongside the submission of the annual report and accounts, and be sent to the external auditors as part of their audit of the ICB financial statements. The Management Letter of Representation set out the relevant responsibilities of management, including assurances and representations to support the audit of the accounts.

RESOLVED

The Board **RECEIVED** the Management Letter of Representation and **NOTED** that this would be signed by the ICB Chief Executive.

B/2025/33

Internal Audit Annual Report and Head of Internal Audit Opinion (agenda item 7)

The Board Secretary explained the Internal Audit Annual Report provided the Board with the Head of Internal Audit Opinion for the year ended 31st March 2025, which gave the opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the ICB's system of internal control. It also gave an analysis of performance of the internal audit service received during the year ended 31st March 2025 and provided assurances regarding conformance of the internal audit service with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

The report also provided a summary of all the audits undertaken during the year.

The Board Secretary noted the opinion gave overall good assurance with no significant control weaknesses identified. A summary of the report is included in the Annual Report and has been received by the Audit Committee.

RESOLVED

The Board **RECEIVED** the Internal Audit Annual Report for year ending 31st March 2025 (including Head of Internal Audit Opinion) for assurance.

B/2025/34

External Audit Completion Report (agenda item 8)

The External Auditor from Forvis Mazars LLP advised the report represented the significant findings of the statutory external audit of the ICB's 2024/25 financial statements. There were no concerns about the statement of accounts and no significant risks in respect of Value for Money arrangements.

The External Auditor noted the full and complete cooperation of management, which was crucial for meeting the tight audit timetable and completing detailed testing of expenditure and other items in the accounts. Additionally, the External Auditor highlighted the quality of the

working papers prepared by management to support the draft statement of accounts, which facilitated the audit process.

The External Auditor explained that the conclusions in the Audit Completion Report will be followed by the annual Auditors Report, which will include a more detailed commentary on the ICB's arrangements for securing Value for Money.

The Chair of the Audit Committee provided an overview of the work of the Audit Committee in respect of the Annual Accounts and liaising with both Internal and External Auditors.

RESOLVED

The Board **RECEIVED** the updated Audit Completion Report for assurance.

B/2025/35

Approval of ICB Annual Report and Accounts 2024/25 (agenda item 9)

The Board had an opportunity to consider the annual report and accounts. The Board had received assurances around the ICB's systems and internal controls in the form of the Head of Internal Audit Opinion and the management assurances set out in the letter of representations.

The Board had also heard from External Audit who have given their unqualified opinion and confirmed that there are no significant matters to raise in relation to the ICB's Value for Money position.

On that basis, the Board members were asked if they were in agreement to recommend approval of the annual report and accounts; with authority to be delegated to Sam Allen, as Chief Executive of the ICB to sign the necessary statements.

RESOLVED

The Board **APPROVED** the ICB Annual Report and Accounts 2024/25 for submission to NHS England.

It was confirmed that following completion of the process for submitting the Annual Report and Accounts to NHS England the documents would be published on the ICB's website and presented at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in July, along with a summary report. At the AGM a more in-depth overview of the report would be provided to the public.

The meeting closed at 3.15pm