



North Central London
Integrated Care Board



North West London

**North Central London ICB and North West London ICB
Board of Members Meeting in Common
28th January 2026**

Report Title	Transition Update	Date of report	16 th January 2026	Agenda Item	2.1
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Report Author	Ian Porter	Email / Tel		ian.porter3@nhs.net	
Name of Authorising Finance Lead	Stephen Bloomer, Chief Finance Officer	Summary of Financial Implications The West and North London ICB will need to meet the £19 per head cost requirement from 1st April 2026. The timely and successful delivery of the transition programme is a critical enabler of this requirement and will result in significant reductions to the future capacity of the newly merged organisation.			
Report Summary	Following the update to the North Central London (NCL) ICB and North West London (NWL) ICB Board of Members in-common in December 2025, this paper provides the Boards with a further update on the transition programme and the merger of NCL and NWL ICBs on 1st April 2026. The paper includes updates on the organisational design / staff consultation process, merger assurance process, and other updates from key workstreams.				
Recommendation	The Boards are asked to NOTE the progress made and next steps for the transition programme.				
Identified Risks and Risk Management Actions	The significant reductions to ICBs, and the associated timescales, present a number of key risks – including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Financial risk in achieving cost reduction requirements – with merger and the new organisational design being key to mitigation.Staff and partner organisation uncertainties – part mitigated through robust communications and engagement plans.Dependencies on NHS England guidance and timelines – mitigated through regular and structured check-ins with NHSE London.				

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future organisational capacity – with clear prioritisation of key activity, including in the context of the nationally set Model ICB, being an important factor in mitigation.
Conflicts of Interest	Not applicable.
Resource Implications	<p>Significant financial, HR, Communications & Engagement, senior leadership and wider staffing resources are being utilised to deliver all aspects of the transition programme.</p> <p>Property resources are also impacted with a planned rationalisation of corporate office estates across the two ICBs.</p>
Engagement	Extensive engagement with staff, trade unions, and stakeholders through briefings, FAQs, and joint intranet content.
Equality Impact Analysis	A further equality impact assessment will be undertaken as part of the outcome of the current staff consultation on future organisational design.
Report History and Key Decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • July 2025: Boards agreed to merge. • September / October 2025: update to Boards • November 2025: National approval for voluntary redundancy scheme. • December 2025: update report to NCL and NWL Boards in-common
Next Steps	<p>A significant amount of work lies ahead – with key milestones including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of staff consultation and production / publication of outcomes document – February 2026 • Due diligence checkpoint 3 – 20th February 2026 • Ongoing programme delivery through quarter 4 • Confirmation of Transfer Order in March 2026 • Merger go-live on 1st April 2026.
Appendices	Not applicable.

Transition Update – Creation of West and North London Integrated Care Board (ICB)

1. Introduction and Overview

Further to the update report to the North Central London (NCL) and North West London (NWL) Boards in-common on 4th December 2025 regarding the transition to the West and North London ICB, this report provides a further update on the progress over the last six weeks.

Work has continued with pace and momentum through December and January to prepare for the merger of the NCL and NWL ICBs and to meet the requirement to reduce the ICBs' running costs by 50% - both with effect from 1st April 2026.

Working with the Executive Director of Transition, a fully functioning Programme Management Office (PMO) Team is now in place – providing dedicated leadership, support, oversight, co-ordination and risk-assessment of the merger programme.

Components of the critical path to successfully delivering the merger for 1st April have been identified and mapped – and include arrangements for:

- Financial ledger and budget setting
- Payroll
- Contracts novation
- Audit, counter-fraud and insurance
- Banking and cashflow
- IT Systems
- Data Sharing Agreements
- Policies
- Organisational design and the associated change programme
- Office accommodation
- Branding
- NHSE Assurance

2. Merger Assurance

The ICBs' remain in a positive position with regards to delivering the merger programme. A key milestone in December was the completion of the 'checkpoint 2' assurance submission to NHS England. The submission included a comprehensive assessment across all of the key areas that are aligned to the ICBs' workstreams in place to deliver the merger programme:

- People
- Corporate, Governance & Accommodation
- Finance and Contracting
- Information Technology and Information Governance
- Communications and Engagement
- Transfers of Functions

Whilst a significant programme of work remains ahead through quarter 4, the assurance submission has not identified any significant current concerns across each of the

workstreams. Work continues with NHSE regional colleagues to progress all of the assurance requirements – and further checkpoint and data submissions will be required in February and March.

3. Organisational Redesign and Staff Consultation

As part of the change programme, the formal staff consultation on proposed changes to establish a new operating model for WNL ICB commenced on 8th December 2025 and is due to conclude on 25th January 2026.

During the consultation process, regular engagement continues with staff, trade unions and other key stakeholders on the proposals, responding to staff questions and providing as much supporting information as possible – including through a shared intranet space providing easy and consistent access for all staff in both ICBs. The ICBs' Joint Transition Committee was provided with an update at its meeting on 12th January 2026.

Once the consultation period has closed, all feedback will be considered and a summary of the key themes, how they have been considered, and any resulting changes to the proposals will be presented to staff in the consultation outcome document. It is expected that staff will be provided with the consultation outcome in February. An updated Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) will also be produced, and Individual Impact Assessments will be refreshed.

Thereafter the consultation outcome and filling posts in the new structure will be managed in accordance with the ICBs' Change Management Policy.

A key part of the merger due diligence process will require the ICBs to provide a full staffing schedule to NHS England 28 days prior to the transfer.

4. West and North London ICB – Constitution

As part of the governance workstream, the work to draft a Constitution for the new ICB has been completed. The work started from a position of strength, with both NCL and NWL ICBs having robust and aligned Constitutions and in accordance with statutory requirements.

The draft was presented to the ICBs' Joint Transition Committee in January and also to the respective ICBs' Audit Committees. The Constitution will be presented for endorsement to the ICBs' Boards in-common on 28th January 2026, prior to its submission to NHS England London for formal approval. Dialogue has taken place with regional colleagues through the drafting process – and there are no areas of concern.

The formal committee structure will also play an important part in the corporate governance arrangements for the new ICB. A top-level committee structure has been developed – with the objective of ensuring a robust governance framework that reflects the new purpose and operating landscape for ICBs. The proposed committee structure was discussed at the ICBs' Joint Transition Committee in January – with support for the four committees reporting to the Board:

- Strategic Commissioning
- Performance
- Audit
- Remuneration

As part of these arrangements, it is proposed that:

- A Primary Care & Medicines Optimisation sub-committee will report into the Strategic Commissioning Committee
- The Performance Committee will incorporate all oversight and monitoring arrangements regarding performance, finance and quality.

Detailed work will continue through February and March to develop the full corporate governance arrangements, sub-structures and interfaces. The new Board of Members, at its meeting on 1st April 2026, will be asked to approve the Terms of Reference of the committees that are directly accountable to the Board.

5. West and North London ICB – Board of Members

Another key element of the corporate governance arrangements for the West and North London ICB is the appointment of its Board of Members. It is proposed that the Board will comprise 20 voting members: the Chair, Non-Executive Members, Partner Members (local authority, Trusts/Foundation Trusts and Primary Care) and ICB Executives. Role profiles have been developed for Non-Executive and Partner Members – and the recruitment (including, where required, the mandated nominations process) will take place in February and early March.

6. Finance & Contracting

The Finance & Contracting workstream has continued to progress both:

- merger due diligence checklist activities including critical path activities and policy development; and
- (Integrated Single Finance Environment) ISFE2 post go-live activities.

Preparing for the ledger merger, the inaugural monthly SBS project board meeting took place during January. Updates to the due diligence checklist and further engagement with programme leads on templates are ongoing. The team is endeavouring to ensure readiness for the finance function at merger go-live, with close attention to compliance with NHS England requirements and dependencies such as payroll (ESR) integration. In addition to delayed and outstanding matters requiring guidance from NHSE, decisions on Standing Financial Instructions (as part of the Policies work at section 8 below) and non-pay budget allocations are pending. Overall, technical and operational preparations remain broadly on track, with problem-solving and risk management processes actively underway.

Regarding ISFE2 post go-live, the mapping of direct reports to the new Executive Directors has largely been finalised. While significant progress has been made on cost centre mapping to enable dashboard views, the team may need to defer full completion until 1st April, depending on ongoing assessments.

In addition, weekly procurement meetings are in place to manage audit contracts and a draft paper outlining procurement options is being developed.

7. Information Technology & Information Governance

The digital and IT leadership team across the two ICBs has established a joint ICT merger delivery group with responsibility to deliver the related transition plan. The workstream links into the corporate merger planning arrangements to help ensure overall readiness for 1st April.

There are four key objectives for this work – and positive progress has been made through December and January:

- **Collaborate** – To share files and folders seamlessly, work collaboratively on projects, and to be attached to a single email domain. Work has progressed in priority areas including HR and Comms - and IT colleagues are working to enable seamless access across other directorates.
- **Connect** – To enable all staff to work seamlessly from any of the West and North London ICB sites, regardless of whether their IT originated in NCL or NWL.
- **Access support** – To have a single point of access for support and aligned processes (for e.g. starters, movers and leavers). The service desk teams across NWL and NCL ICB are working more closely than ever with a view to having a single front-door for all users from 1st April. A request was successfully submitted to NHSE to establish an organisation code for the new ICB and this has now been received. Preparations continue to move the ICB over to this new arrangement from 1st April.
- **Align** – To run future IT procurement strategically, with a view to standardising contracts as and when the existing contracts expire. Scoping has been completed of related policies, systems and contracts for alignment, taking into account contract end dates, notice periods etc.

To support our preparations in the context of data security, both ICBs are undertaking an early annual Data Security Protection Toolkit process during quarter 4, with independent support from respective internal auditors.

8. Policies

Policy alignment is another key area of the transition programme – of both internally and externally facing policies.

A comprehensive analysis has been undertaken across the transition workstreams to identify those policies that are critical for aligning in time for 1st April. Work is now being undertaken to plan the alignment of these critical policies with the aim of the respective ICBs' governance approving the alignments in quarter 4 – enabling single policies to be carried forward into the new ICB on 1st April and ratified by the new Board of Members accordingly.

This work also includes developing clear plans for aligning all other policies in the period beyond 1st April.

9. Transfer of Functions

NHS England has recently released an updated document setting out expectations for ongoing accountabilities and responsibilities for a range of ICB functions previously identified for potential transfer-out, as set out in the initial 'Model ICB Blueprint' guidance published in May 2025.

In the context of these ongoing ICB responsibilities, the proposed structures for WNL ICB (as set out in the current staff consultation document) are broadly in line with the revised narrative on ICB functional responsibilities.

The key gap is in relation to the System Co-ordination Centre (SCC). The publication references that ICBs should "provide or commission" this service – and the ICB will need to consider next steps in this regard. In the meantime, the NCL and NWL ICBs' SCC capacity remains in place to support the respective systems through the winter flow challenges.

In line with the ICBs' discussions and agreements in December 2025, the work on the future delivery of Complex Care responsibilities continues and is unaffected by the national changes to ICBs' roles for 2026/27, as referenced immediately above. A clear plan is in place and is progressing well. Once final details are worked through, the ICBs will be in a position to provide a further update including next steps, in advance of the Boards in-common discussion and decision in March.

10. Communications and Branding

Delivery of a range of communications and engagement activity regarding transition continues, including with our staff in relation to the organisational design / consultation process. The work has also included a comprehensiveness analysis of all partnership meetings involving North Central and / or North West London ICBs – ensuring suitable representation remains in place through this key phase of transition.

As part of our preparations to stand up the new organisation, work has taken place to develop a brand architecture and visual identity for West and North London ICB. While this work has been delivered at pace, it has followed a structured process of research, sector analysis and engagement across residents and colleagues.

Our key objective is to develop a clear, trusted and coherent brand that reflects the vision of the new West and North London ICB, enabling residents and partners to understand it and staff to feel part of something positive and new. We want the new brand to feel modern, confident, innovative and accessible, but rooted in the communities we serve and reflective of the values and principles of the over-arching NHS brand.

Following feedback from a three-stage engagement process involving residents, qualitative interviews and two staff workshops, we have worked with a local design agency to develop a new look and feel, alongside detailed brand guidelines and templates.

This brand positions the NHS as the parent brand, supported by a new design device that will be used across local platforms and materials. This device is deliberately bright, bold and flexible. At full size, the ribbon includes the letters W and N to reflect our locality, alongside

13 different colours to reflect our local boroughs. It can be used at full scale, or zoomed in, creating flexibility in the way it is used in different settings.

The core brand is supported by a secondary logo for West and North London ICS, to be used in settings where the system has worked together on a project or programme and needs to reflect partnerships beyond the NHS.

We will move to this new branding on 1st April 2026 – with examples as follows:



11. Corporate Office Accommodation

Work continues at pace to move to a single office headquarters for the West and North London ICB at Ferguson House on Marylebone Road, the current headquarters of NWL ICB.

This transition will provide a single platform to build a strong, positive culture for everyone working in the new organisation and a positive and professional working environment.

New branding, as above, will be introduced throughout each of the ICB's floors. Our work includes ensuring an optimum balance of meeting spaces and workstations throughout the building and ensuring good use of the best supporting equipment currently available across both ICBs.

A clear plan is in place to ensure a timely exit from the current NCL office locations at Laycock Street and Euston Road – and we have agreed minimal exit costs.

We have briefed all staff of the forthcoming changes and will continue to support everyone through this element of the transition programme, recognising the sensitivity of the timing.



12. Next Steps

While good progress has been made through December and January to deliver what is an extensive, complex and time-pressured transition, we are mindful that a significant programme of work remains ahead up to and beyond the point of merger on 1st April 2026.

We recognise and are grateful for all of staffs', Board Members' and partner colleagues' support for all aspects of the transition – and at a time when there is uncertainty for many and during a challenging winter period across the North Central and North West London footprints.

The Transition Committee will be provided with a further progress update at its next meeting in early March.