



To: James Bolton, Senior Responsible Owner for the Health Transformation Programme

From: Peter Schofield, Permanent Secretary, Department of Work and Pensions and

Karina Singh, Government Head of Profession for Project Delivery and the Deputy Government
Head of Function for Project Delivery

25th June 2026

Government Major Project Portfolio (GMPP)

Dear James,

Appointment as senior responsible owner for the Health Transformation Programme

We are writing to confirm your continued tenure as Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) of the Health Transformation Programme with effect from 1st April 2024. This letter sets out your responsibilities and the support you can expect from your department, Government Project Delivery and the National Infrastructure and Service Transformation Authority (NISTA).

As SRO, you are directly accountable to Neil Couling, Director General for Fraud, Disability and Health, under the oversight of the Permanent Secretary as accounting officer for the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), and Rt Hon Sir Stephen Timms, the Minister for Social Security and Disability.

Your Health Transformation Programme forms part of the DWP Services and Fraud Group, under the oversight of the Strategy and Transformation Board and is included in the Government Major Projects Portfolio (GMPP).

You have personal responsibility for the delivery of the Health Transformation Programme and will be held accountable for the delivery of its objectives, policy intent and outcomes. 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 Health Transformation Programme. You are also responsible for ensuring the ongoing viability of the Health Transformation 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 appropriate governance forum.

You remain accountable to Ministers, as set out in the Civil Service Code, and should deliver the project in accordance with the objectives and policy intent as set 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 Health Transformation 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 Government Project Delivery's guidance on [the role of the senior responsible owner](#),

You are expected to run your project/programme in accordance with the [Government Functional Standard for Project Delivery](#), and the requirements of [other functional standards](#) as required, which are mandated for government departments and Arm's Length Bodies. You should also make yourself familiar with [The Teal Book](#), Government Project Delivery's code of practice for project delivery, and any further guidance and requirements set by the DWP Departmental Change Portfolio Office.

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 achievement of Programme Closure, planned for Q3 2030/31. 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 NISTA consent.

Objectives and performance criteria

The policy intent supported by this programme is modernising benefit services to vastly improve customer experience, build trust in our services and the decisions we make, and create a more efficient service for taxpayers. This Programme does not have specific objectives related to Net Zero or greenhouse gas reduction.

Any proposed changes to scope which impacts on this intent or the realisation of benefits must be authorised by the DWP's Investment Committee and may be subject to further levels of approval.

The vision of the Programme is a high quality and efficient service that enables disabled people and those with health conditions to access the help, advice and support they need. Its objectives are:

- Increased customer trust in services and decisions
- More efficient service with reduced demand for health assessments
- Increased take up of wider support and employment
- Improved customer experience with shorter journey times
- Transformed in-house data and IT infrastructure that is secure

It will do this by modernising health and disability benefit services to improve customer experience and efficiency, build trust in our services and decisions and support people to enter or remain in work, through:

- transforming the end-to-end Personal Independence Payment (PIP) service;
- creating a new customer-focused Health Assessment Service;
- supporting the development of a coherent employment support offer for disabled people;
- providing a platform for change - the flexible capability to trial new ideas and support delivery of policy reform.

The Programme also aims to:

- Transform the customer experience and deliver a more personalised service, designed in consultation with stakeholders, with the intention of:

- offering a modern digital experience that allows greater control and visibility;
- increasing trust and transparency.
- Deliver an integrated service where assessments are:
 - delivered by the most appropriate organisation(s);
 - supported by a common digital platform and service design.
- Transform service delivery through improved effectiveness and efficiency, aligned to the Department's 2030 strategy, by exploring:
 - greater automation, freeing up time for higher value interventions;
 - appropriate data sharing to give a richer picture of a claimant's needs and reduce duplication;
 - smoother, faster workflows on a new digital platform;
 - creation of a flexible delivery model that enables continuous improvement, supports policy change and allows for further transformation opportunities.

Your personal objectives and performance criteria which relate to the Health Transformation Programme are:

- Senior Responsible Owner for the Health Transformation Programme:
 - Visible leadership, articulating a clear sense of purpose and direction;
 - Delivery of major change to support DWP's strategic aims and objectives;
 - Overall accountability for delivery of the Health Transformation Programme and its business case benefits;
 - Execution of all SRO duties as defined by the Cabinet Office;
 - Strong financial control of all Programme related spend.

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 Health Transformation Programme exceeds the delegated authority set by HM Treasury, the Treasury Approval Point (TAP) 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 project/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 Department's specific HM Treasury delegated limits and with the wider approach to functional controls set out in the Department's Memorandum of Understanding with HM Treasury, in relation to a multi-disciplinary, single approval point within the Treasury Approvals Process.

Delegated authority

You are authorised to:

- approve expenditure up to £1m;
- approve project rescheduling of agreed milestones, where slippage does not impact on subsequent key milestones and deliverables. Agreement beyond this must be through the Health Transformation Programme Board; and
- recommend to the Health Transformation Programme Board 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 within which you should then operate.

Where issues arise which take you outside of these authority limits and which you are unable to resolve, you are responsible for escalating these issues to the Health Transformation Programme Board.

Appointments

You should appoint a full time programme director 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 Health Transformation Programme secures business case approval from the Health Transformation Programme Board, DWP Investment Committee and HMT. You should also ensure that the Health Transformation 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 Health Transformation 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 Outline Business Case and that this is published on GOV.UK as part of the government's transparency requirements for major projects. You are responsible for bringing to the attention of the accounting officer any material changes in the Health Transformation 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 the Health Transformation 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 project directors in adjacent projects and programmes 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 NISTA.

Health Transformation Programme status, reporting and transparency requirements

The Health Transformation Programme status at the date of your appointment is reflected in the most recent quarterly return on the Health Transformation Programme to NISTA 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 Health Transformation Programme to NISTA via the Government Reporting Integration Platform (*GRIP*) while it remains on the GMPP, and for providing reports and information to the Departmental Change Portfolio Office as required. This Programme does not require reporting against Net Zero pathways. Information on the Health Transformation Programme will be published annually by NISTA.

As part of the government's commitment to transparency on major projects, you are responsible for publishing on GOV.UK:

- Business cases for projects and programmes that form part of the Government Major Projects Portfolio (GMPP). This business case may be a Summary Business Case, a Full Business Case or a Programme Business Case. The business case must be published within four months of the project or programme receiving HM Treasury approval
- A summary of the Accounting Officer assessment completed in line with the approval of the Outline Business Case and summaries of any subsequent assessments should they be required

Guidance on the [publication of business cases](#) and on the completion of [accounting officer assessments](#) is available from HM Treasury.

Evaluation

Evaluation of major projects is a requirement. Given the scale and complexity of major projects, it is essential that they are evaluated properly to learn lessons and help ensure accountability. As an SRO of a GMPP project, you are responsible for ensuring that your project/programme has proportionate and suitably resourced evaluation in place. Evaluation planning should begin from the very start of the policy development and the initiation of the programme or project. Progress with the development and implementation of evaluation plans will be monitored through the major project assurance process.

You are also responsible for registering all planned, live and completed evaluations on the Government [Evaluation Registry](#). [Guidance on using the evaluation registry](#) is available on GOV.UK.

Development and support

As a graduate of the Major Projects Leadership Academy, you are expected to maintain your continuing professional development as a project leader.

The department will assist you in securing the necessary resources to support the Health Transformation 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.

NISTA and Government Project Delivery will be available to you for support, advice, and assurance throughout the Health Transformation Programme's time on the GMPP. Government Project Delivery's suite of standards, guidance, tools, templates and services can be accessed from projectdelivery.gov.uk and we encourage you and your team to register for accounts.

Following approval of the business case and entry onto the DWP Change Portfolio, the Change Portfolio Board 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,



Peter Schofield

Permanent Secretary

Department for Work and Pensions



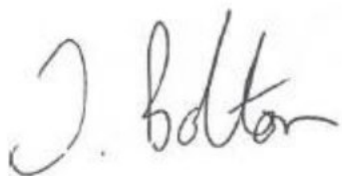
KARINA SINGH

Government Head of Profession for
Project Delivery and the Deputy
Government Head of Function

National Infrastructure and Service
Transformation Authority

CONFIRMATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF APPOINTMENT

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



James Bolton

25/06/2026