

Governance and implementation



Overview of actions

This section covers the governance and decision-making framework that underpinned the Pledge. The approach balanced operational agility with stakeholder input, supported by clear reporting cycles and governance principles that promoted flexibility and continuous improvement.

Structure and oversight

To maintain strong oversight, the Pledge was embedded within existing governance structures.

- **Governance structure** – Managed through the NEL HCP Workforce Group, reporting to the Workforce Investment Committee and then the ICB Board, aligning with the ICB's Breakthrough Programme.
- **Reporting regularity** – Updates were provided to NEL HCP Workforce Group members monthly during the two-year pilot phase, with quarterly reports to senior leadership.
- **Transparency measures** – Regular written reports and evaluation documents supported accountability and informed decision-making.



Decision-making

Decision-making combined operational agility with stakeholder input.

- **Operational leadership** – Sharon Stead, Programme Lead, led operational delivery and decision-making, supported by Louise Fadina, Programme Director, for strategic direction and communication of decisions to senior leadership.
- **Collaborative input** – Employer-specific needs (e.g., scope of recruitment packages) were addressed with support from the NEL HCP Workforce Group, which includes 12 major partners from across the region.

Governance principles

Governance was underpinned by clear principles to ensure consistency and adaptability.

- **Strategic integration** – Alignment with existing workforce strategy.
- **Regular oversight** – Commitment to reporting and evaluation cycles.
- **Flexibility** – Ability to adapt based on stakeholder feedback.
- **National alignment** – Compliance with existing frameworks where required, such as Skills England, Institute for Apprenticeships, and Gatsby benchmarks.





Key decisions

- Monthly reporting during the pilot and quarterly updates for leadership groups maintained transparency without overburdening stakeholders.
- Established a clear pathway for governance updates, from the NEL HCP Workforce Group to ICB Board, ensuring strategic oversight.
- Opted for a flexible governance model that allowed operational decisions to be made quickly while incorporating stakeholder feedback for strategic matters.

Key learning

- Involving major regional health and social care providers in governance ensured decisions reflected real workforce needs within the area.

“Initially with the two-year pilot phase, governance was via the NEL HCP Workforce Group, with progress and updates provided to the ICB Workforce Investment Committee and subsequently to the ICB Board. This remains the case, with direct reporting to the ICB Board following the Committee’s closure.”

Sharon Stead, Programme Lead, NEL HCP

