



House of Commons
Health and Social Care
Committee

Appointment of the Chair of NHS England

Tenth Report of Session 2017–19

*Report, together with formal minutes relating
to the report*

*Ordered by the House of Commons
to be printed 10 September 2018*

Health and Social Care Committee

The Health and Social Care Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration, and policy of the Department of Health & Social Care.

Current membership

[Dr Sarah Wollaston MP](#) (*Conservative, Totnes*) (Chair)

[Luciana Berger MP](#) (*Labour (Co-op), Liverpool, Wavertree*)

[Mr Ben Bradshaw MP](#) (*Labour, Exeter*)

[Dr Lisa Cameron MP](#) (*Scottish National Party, East Kilbride, Strathaven and Lesmahagow*)

[Rosie Cooper MP](#) (*Labour, West Lancashire*)

[Diana Johnson MP](#) (*Labour, Kingston upon Hull North*)

[Johnny Mercer MP](#) (*Conservative, Plymouth, Moor View*)

[Andrew Selous MP](#) (*Conservative, South West Bedfordshire*)

[Derek Thomas MP](#) (*Conservative, St Ives*)

[Martin Vickers MP](#) (*Conservative, Cleethorpes*)

[Dr Paul Williams MP](#) (*Labour, Stockton South*)

The following Members were members of the Committee during the Session

[Dr Caroline Johnson MP](#) (*Conservative, Sleaford and North Hykeham*)

[Maggie Throup MP](#) (*Conservative, Erewash*)

Powers

The Committee is one of the departmental select committees, the powers of which are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No 152. These are available on the internet via www.parliament.uk.

Publication

Committee reports are published on the Committee's website at www.parliament.uk/hscocom and in print by Order of the House.

Evidence relating to this report is published on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are Huw Yardley (Clerk), Masrur Ahmed (Second Clerk), Seth Roberts (Second Clerk), Laura Daniels (Senior Committee Specialist), Lewis Pickett (Committee Specialist), Joe Freer (Clinical Fellow), Cecilia Santi O Desanti (Senior Committee Assistant), Ed Hamill (Committee Assistant), and Alex Paterson (Media Officer).

Contacts

All correspondence should be addressed to the Clerk of the Health and Social Care Committee, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA. The telephone number for general enquiries is 020 7219 6182; the Committee's email address is hscocom@parliament.uk.

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1 Appointment of Chair of NHS England

1. On 22 March 2018, the Minister of State for Health wrote to inform us that the second term of Sir Malcolm Grant’s tenure as Chair of NHS England would be concluding on 31 October 2018, with a new Chair of the organisation due to be in post by 1 November 2018. The Minister invited us to hold a pre-appointment hearing once a preferred candidate had been selected. On 5 September 2018, the Secretary of State informed us that the Government proposed to appoint David, Lord Prior of Brampton, as Chair of NHS England and asked us to hold a pre-appointment hearing to consider this proposal. The hearing took place on 10 September 2018. A transcript of the session is available on our website.

2. The hearing addressed Lord Prior’s background in the health and social care sector and as a Minister, his commitment to patient care and his views on the challenges facing NHS England and its board. We examined Lord Prior’s views on the governance of NHS England, its ability to respond to new models of care delivery in the NHS and the core purpose of the organisation. We also asked Lord Prior to discuss how, if appointed, he would approach matters relating to the recent funding settlement for the NHS announced by the Prime Minister, the impacts of Brexit on health and social care, and NHS England’s relationship with other health regulators and commissioners.

3. We questioned Lord Prior particularly on his holding of the Conservative whip in the House of Lords. He told us that he had “agonised” over whether he should relinquish the Conservative whip should he be appointed as Chair of NHS England, but had concluded that, since he had been a Conservative Member of Parliament, a Conservative member of the House of Lords, and a Minister in a Conservative government, it would “not be credible” for him to sit as an independent. He told us that he would give “serious consideration” to a recommendation from us that he should relinquish the whip, but was not able to give an assurance that he would do so if we requested it.

4. On the basis of the discussions during the pre-appointment hearing, **we are satisfied that Lord Prior has the professional competence and experience required of the Chair of NHS England. We also consider that he has the ability to demonstrate the personal independence required of the post. However, we consider that his continued holding of the Conservative whip—taken together with his recent service as a Conservative government minister—would compromise that independence. We acknowledge that Lord Prior will continue to be known as a Conservative even should he not hold the Conservative whip during his appointment. Resignation of the whip would be a practical demonstration that, for the duration of his appointment, he would not be taking instruction from any political party on the way in which he should vote on any issue before Parliament, and would bolster his credibility as an independent holder of this important office.**

5. *We therefore recommend that Lord Prior relinquish the Conservative whip for the duration of his appointment as Chair of NHS England. If he agrees to do so, we are pleased to endorse his appointment.*

Appendix 1: Letter to the Chair of the Committee from Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, 5 September 2018

I am writing to inform you that following the conclusion of an open recruitment process, my chosen candidate for appointment as Chair of NHS England is Lord David Prior.

Lord Prior's career has spanned business, politics and healthcare. He is a former Health Minister, and chaired both the Care Quality Commission and the Norfolk and Norwich University NHS Foundation Trust. I have attached a copy of his CV.

I have also attached a background paper on the recruitment process and copies of the candidate information pack and advertisement for the recruitment campaign.

I understand the Select Committee has scheduled the 10 September for a pre-appointment hearing. Lord Prior will attend and I look forward to receiving your report following the hearing.

I have copied this letter to Lord Prior; Libby Watkins, Senior Independent Panel Member and Rt Hon David Lidington CBE MP Minister for the Cabinet Office.

Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP

Secretary of State for Health and Social Care

Appendix 2: Candidate CV

David Gifford Leathes Prior, Lord Prior of Brampton

Training (1974-80)

- Cambridge University, Law MA (Exhibition)
- Bar Exams, Barrister, Grays Inn
- Trainee, Lehman Brothers, corporate finance
- Associate, Lazard Freres, corporate finance

Steel industry and manufacturing (1980-95)

- Managing Director, British Steel Service Centres
- Executive committee and commercial director, British Steel plc
- Management buyout various steel processing businesses
- Established Dillon Read Industrial Capital Fund
- Various acquisitions

Politics (1995-2002)

- Member of Parliament, North Norfolk
- Select committee, Trade and Industry
- Chief Executive and Deputy Chairman, Conservative Party

Healthcare (2002-15)

- Chairman, Norfolk and Norwich University NHS FT.
- Chairman, Care Quality Commission
- Advisor, Health Authority of Abu Dhabi
- Various investments in health related businesses
- Established Inspiration Trust, educational charity

Politics (2015-17)

- House of Lords
- Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Health, particular responsibility for NHS Productivity, property and procurement and Life Sciences

- Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, particular responsibility for Industrial Strategy including life sciences, technology, rail, education

Current:

- House of Lords
- Chairman, University College London Hospital (UCLH)
- IPPR Commission on UK Health and Social care
- Member of the NHS Workforce Race Equality Standard Committee
- Member of the Commission on Mission-Orientated Innovation and Industrial Strategy: Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose, UCL
- Industrial Strategy Implementation Committee at BEIS
- Senior Advisor, Lazard Financial Advisory

Formal minutes

Monday 10 September 2018

Members present:

Dr Sarah Wollaston, in the Chair

Mr Ben Bradshaw	Andrew Selous
Diana Johnson	Dr Paul Williams
Johnny Mercer	

Draft Report (*Appointment of the Chair of NHS England*), proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 5 read and agreed to.

Papers were appended to the Report as Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

Resolved, That the Report be the Tenth Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chair make the Report to the House.

Ordered, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 134.

[Adjourned till Tuesday 11 October at 2.00pm.]

Witness

The following witness gave evidence. The transcript can be viewed on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

Monday 10 September 2018

David Gifford Leathes Prior, Lord Prior of Brampton

List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament

All publications from the Committee are available on the [publications page](#) of the Committee's website. The reference number of the Government's response to each Report is printed in brackets after the HC printing number.

Session 2017–19

First Report	Appointment of the Chair of NHS Improvement	HC 479
Second Report	The nursing workforce	HC 353 (Cm 9669)
Third Report	Improving air quality	HC 433 (HC 1149)
Fourth Report	Brexit: medicines, medical devices and substances of human origin	HC 392 (Cm 9620)
Fifth Report	Memorandum of understanding on data-sharing between NHS Digital and the Home Office	HC 677
Sixth Report	The Government's Green Paper on mental health: failing a generation: First Joint Report of the Education and Health and Social Care Committees of Session 2017–19	HC 642 (Cm 9627)
Seventh Report	Integrated care: organisations, partnerships and systems	HC 650 (Cm 9695)
Eighth Report	Childhood obesity: Time for action	HC 882 (Cm 9531)
Ninth Report	Long-term funding of adult social care	HC 768
First Joint Special Report	Children and young people's mental health—the role of education: Government Response to the First Joint Report of the Education and Health Committees of Session 2016–17	HC 451