



**Councillor George Duggins
Leader of Coventry City Council
Longford Ward**

Simon Trickett and Crishni Waring
CWHW ICB

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8 July 2026

Dear Simon and Crishni,

Thank you for sharing the proposals regarding future Integrated Care Board footprint arrangements and for inviting the views of local government partners. We welcome the opportunity to comment in advance of the decision being made and I also appreciate that this matter was a discussion at the Coventry Health and Wellbeing Board on 8 July 2026 and that feedback will also feed into how this matter progresses.

As leader of the City Council I support the proposal to merge the existing Coventry and Warwickshire and Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care Boards on the current cluster footprint from April 2027. I am taking this position as I recognise the significant uncertainty that remains regarding local government reorganisation and future devolution arrangements across parts of the cluster area and agree that maintaining stability during this period is a sensible and pragmatic approach.

As set out in the Government's wider direction of travel, alignment between NHS commissioning geographies and strategic mayoral authority footprints is fundamentally a question of *when, not if*. While we accept the need for an interim solution at this stage, we would expect the future review which you identify for 2028/29 to be clearly defined in order to deliver this alignment.

Recognising that although our ICB footprint will remain unaligned with the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) I would compel you and your team to continue to recognise Coventry's relationship with the WMCA to ensure that Coventry's interests are appropriately represented in any future health and wellbeing discussions linked to regional devolution arrangements.

Looking ahead, our principal interest is not solely the geography of NHS structures but the impact those structures have on the health and wellbeing of our residents. As the NHS undergoes further organisational change, we are keen to hear more about how the future ICB intends to lead and drive health improvement across its population, particularly in relation to prevention, reducing health inequalities, improving healthy life expectancy and tackling the wider determinants of health. These are areas where strong partnerships between local government, the NHS and regional bodies will be essential.

Overall, I support the proposed merger as a practical and proportionate response to the current circumstances. We believe it provides the stability needed in the short term while preserving the opportunity to deliver on the requirement for longer-term alignment with devolved arrangements once the wider landscape becomes clearer.

We look forward to continuing to work closely with you and other partners to ensure that future NHS structures are designed around improving outcomes for local people and reducing health inequalities across our communities.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'George Duggins', with a stylized, flowing script.

Councillor George Duggins
Leader of Coventry City Council
Longford Ward Councillor

cc. Cllr Kamran Caan
Julie Nugent