

Parliament Call for Views: IJB Voting Rights

As an IJB Chief Officer, I believe the voice of lived and living experience is crucial in defining / redesigning services and in setting strategic priorities. We have a strong history of this representation through our IJB Stakeholder Forum at a formal level, as well as a range of lived experience groups and panels.

Our IJB Stakeholder Forum is formally represented on our IJB, alongside carers, patient, third and independent sector representatives. This works well and allows appropriate, well-balanced advice to be given to the IJB in support of effective decision making.

There is the potential risk of these representatives not perhaps fully reflecting the views of their constituent groups, and this could be problematic in the event of challenging decisions being taken at the IJB should they have voting rights.

Ultimately, at a local level, I believe the funding bodies carry equal decision-making authority and seek and listen to the appropriate advice from the non-voting members, including professional advisers and those with lived and living experience. There is a maturity of relationships across the IJB, and while consensus is typically reached (there has only been one vote in the 10-year history of the IJB), this is not at the expense of healthy debate and discussion.

As Chief Officer of my IJB, I am therefore of the view that extending voting rights to lived experience representatives would not provide added value. I also firmly believe however, we need to ensure their voices continue to be heard as part of the decision-making processes we have in place.

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Chief Officer
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