**ALL-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP ON MATERNITY**

**MINUTES OF THE INAUGURAL MEETING**

**Held at 3pm on Monday 10 March 2025**

**In Room Q, Portcullis House, Houses of Parliament**

**Parliamentarians in attendance** (45): Lewis Atkinson MP (Sunderland Central), Antonia Bance MP (Tipton and Wednesbury), Paula Barker MP (Liverpool Wavertree), Lee Barron MP (Corby and East Northamptonshire), Rachel Blake MP (Cities of London and Westminster), Juliet Campbell MP (Broxtowe), Dr Danny Chambers MP (Winchester), Ben Coleman MP (Chelsea and Fulham), Lizzi Collinge MP (Morecambe and Lunesdale), Jen Craft MP (Thurrock), Emily Darlington MP (Milton Keynes Central), Shaun Davies MP (Telford), Rt Hon Anneliese Dodds MP (Oxford East), Helena Dollimore MP (Hastings and Rye), Mark Ferguson MP (Gateshead Central and Whickham), Jodie Gosling MP (Nuneaton), Amanda Hack MP (North West Leicestershire), Sharon Hodgson MP (Washington and Gateshead South), Sally Jameson MP (Doncaster Central), Louise Jones MP (North East Derbyshire), Laura Kyrke-Smith MP (Aylesbury), Amanda Martin MP (Portsmouth North), Helen Morgan MP (North Shropshire), Dr Simon Opher MP (Stroud), Lee Pitcher MP (Doncaster East and the Isle of Axholme), Joe Powell MP (Kensington and Bayswater), Sarah Russell MP (Congleton), Oliver Ryan MP (Burnley), Dr Jeevun Sandher MP (Loughborough), Ali Strathern MP (Hitchin), Robin Swann MP (South Antrim), Adam Thompson MP (Erewash), Dr Marie Tidball MP (Stocksbridge and Penistone), Henry Tufnell MP (Mid and South Pembrokeshire), Matt Turmaine MP (Watford), Laurence Turner MP (Birmingham Northfield), Melanie Ward MP (Cowdenbeath and Kirkcaldy), Paul Waugh MP (Rochdale), Michelle Welsh MP (Sherwood Forest), Andrew Western MP (Stretford and Urmston), Michael Wheeler MP (Worsley and Eccles), Sean Woodcock MP (Banbury), Rosie Wrighting MP (Kettering), Baroness Wyld, and Steve Yemm MP (Mansfield).

**Others in attendance**: Clo Abe (Five X More), Abbie Aplin and Stuart Bonar (Royal College of Midwives), Jo Cruse (Delivering Better), and Zoe Russell (Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists).

Helen Morgan MP (North Shropshire) opened the meeting. She had been Chair of the Maternity APPG prior to the General Election. All APPGs cease to exist when Parliament is dissolved ahead of an election, and must be re-established post-election.

Dr Danny Chambers MP (Winchester) then took over as chair of the Inaugural Meeting, and welcomed attendees. He started to work through the Agenda.

**DECISION ON THE NAME OF THE GROUP AND ITS PURPOSE**:

The meeting confirmed without dissent the proposed name of the group as the *“All-Party Parliamentary Group on Maternity.”*

The proposed stated purpose of the group was then discussed, with amendments proposed and agreed. It was further agreed that the final wording would be tidied up and submitted along with the other Inaugural Meeting paperwork.

The group’s purpose is: *“To raise awareness of the value of maternity services to the health and wellbeing of women and babies as well as to wider society, and to identify and push for improvements across the entire maternity care pathway, specifically including making birth safer and the elimination of inequalities.”*

At 47 words, this is within the 50-word limit set out in the APPG rulebook.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Election of Chair:

Michelle Welsh MP (Sherwood Forest) indicated that she would like to stand to be Chair of the APPG, and gave a speech setting out why and how she wanted to lead the group, particularly maternity safety, and her support for maternity staff.

She was nominated by Sharon Hodgson MP (Washington and Gateshead South), with the nomination seconded by Paula Barker MP (Liverpool Wavertree). The only nominated candidate, Michelle Welsh MP was duly elected Chair of the Maternity APPG by acclamation.

Following her election, Michelle Welsh MP chaired the remainder of the meeting.

Election of three Officers (Vice Chairs):

Dr Marie Tidball MP (Stocksbridge and Penistone) indicated that she wanted to stand to serve as an Officer, and spoke about her campaign on inclusive maternity care. Dr Danny Chambers MP similarly indicated that he would be happy to serve as an Officer, as did Baroness Wyld.

Dr Marie Tidball MP was nominated by Sharon Hodgson MP, seconded by Paula Barker MP. Dr Danny Chambers MP was nominated by Helen Morgan MP, seconded by Baroness Wyld. Baroness Wyld was nominated by Helen Morgan MP, seconded by Dr Danny Chambers MP.

There being three duly nominated candidates for three vacant positions, all three were separately elected by acclamation as Vice Chairs.

It was confirmed that the four Officers of the group collectively met the rules for APPGs, being that there were four of them, that each was an MP or Peer, that at least two (including the Chair) were MPs, at least one was from the party of government and that at least one was from the main party of opposition.

It was also formally confirmed to the meeting (which had an attendance of 45 Parliamentarians) that the group had the support of at least 20 MPs and / or Peers, as required by the APPG rulebook.

Appointment of Secretariat:

The Royal College of Midwives was approved by acclamation as the Secretariat for the APPG, as it had been for the group in the preceding Parliament. The main point of contact would be Stuart Bonar, the RCM’s Public Affairs Advisor, who had acted in that role previously. Stuart Bonar spoke about how the RCM and he had worked as the Secretariat previously and outlined some of the work that they had done and the group had done in the previous Parliament.

**DISCUSSION OF FUTURE WORKPLAN FOR THE APPG**

There was a wide-ranging discussion on potential priorities.

Michelle Welsh MP spoke about the need to focus on maternity safety and that the group should look to set out a future course for the service that would feed into the 10 Year Health Plan.

There followed a discussion where women’s choice over their care was raised by several MPs, including by Helena Dollimore MP (Hastings and Rye).

Paul Waugh MP (Rochdale) spoke about the need for that choice to be informed, with more information and more evidence about the options open to women. He mentioned problems for maternity services, including such as understaffing as well as poor leadership and poor culture.

Dr Marie Tidball MP emphasised the need for every woman’s voice to be heard, citing her campaign on inclusive maternity care. She suggested that the several APPGs with a focus relating to maternity should work more closely together.

A discussion ensued that called for the APPG to work on inequalities, including both those between Black and Asian women and white women and those relating to socioeconomic differences.

Lizzi Collinge MP (Morecambe and Lunesdale) spoke about the links between inequality and poor maternal outcomes. Anneliese Dodds MP (Oxford East) spoke about the need to work with organisations such as Five X More to address inequalities.

Helen Morgan MP referenced the disparity data and spoke about the importance of informed consent, and how this had featured in last year’s report by the Birth Trauma APPG. Separately, she spoke about the need to make maternal mental health a priority.

Amanda Hack MP (North West Leicestershire) spoke about the importance of tackling maternal mortality.

Jo Cruse, from Delivering Better, spoke about inviting women to APPG events so that they could speak about their experiences directly with Parliamentarians. She spoke about the urgency of the issues involved and questioned whether that sense of urgency is shared by the Government. She accepted the need for maternity to feature in long-term plans, but that it also needed more immediate intervention. She mentioned a roundtable that she is organising in Parliament on 8 April.

The meeting closed.