



NHS GRAMPIAN  
Meeting of the Grampian Area Partnership Forum (GAPF)  
Thursday 17 February 2022 - 10am to 12noon  
Microsoft Teams

Board Meeting  
02.06.2022  
Open Session  
Item 14.5

**Present:**

Rachael Little, Elected Staff Side Chair/Employee Director (Co-Chair) – Chaired the meeting  
Adam Coldwells, Director of Strategy and Deputy Chief Executive (Co-Chair)  
Mike Adams, UCATT  
Paul Allen, Director of Facilities, Estates & eHealth  
Diane Annand, Staff Governance Manager  
June Brown, Executive Nurse Director  
Susan Carr, Director of Allied Health Professionals & Public Protection  
Ian Cowe, Health and Safety Manager  
Albert Donald, Non-Executive Director/Whistleblowing Champion  
Jamie Donaldson, Elected Staff Side Chair of Health & Safety Representatives Group  
Dianne Drysdale, Executive Business Manager  
Stuart Falconer, RCN (deputy for Alistair Grant)  
Alan Gray, Director of Finance  
Caroline Hiscox, Chief Executive  
Gemma Hood, SOR  
Stuart Humphreys, Director of Marketing and Corporate Communications  
Steven Lindsay, Unite  
Deirdre McIntyre, RCOP  
Martin McKay, UNISON  
Patricia Morgan, Service Manager, Health and Social Care Moray  
Gavin Payne, General Manager of Facilities and Estates  
Alex Pirrie, Strategy and Transformation Manager, Aberdeenshire HSCP  
Tom Power, Director of People & Culture  
Cheryl Rodriguez, Head of Occupational Health and Safety  
Sandy Reid, Lead – People & Organisation, Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership  
Kathleen Tan, CSP  
Joan Anderson, Partnership Support Officer

**In Attendance:**

Observers:

Kay Diack, Chief of Staff, Aberdeen City HSCP – part one  
Sharon Robb, Assistant HR Manager  
Ashley Waterston, Assistant HR Manager

People presenting items:

Gavin Doherty, Interim HR Manager, Integration - for item 4c  
Lorraine Hunter, Head of HR Service Centre (HRSC) – for item 5b  
Derek Morgan, Head of Projects - for item 7a  
Gareth Evans, Property Transactions Manager - for item 7b  
Mo Gillespie, Space Solutions, 10am to 11am for Hybrid Working

	Subject	Action
1	<p><b>Welcome and Apologies</b></p> <p>Everyone was welcomed to the meeting and apologies were received from:</p> <p>Janet Christie, BAOT  Joyce Duncan, Non-Executive Director, Chair of Staff Governance Committee  Alistair Grant, RCN (deputy Stuart Falconer)  Gerry Lawrie, Head of Workforce &amp; Development  Cameron Matthew, Divisional General Manager, Acute  Philip Shipman, Acting Head of People and Change  Kerry Ross, Deputy Business Manager, Mental Health and Learning Disabilities</p>	
2	<p><b>Minute of meeting held on 20 January 2022</b></p> <p>The minute of the last meeting was approved</p>	
3	<p><b>Matters Arising</b> - none</p>	
4	<p><b>Involved in Decisions</b></p> <p>a. Operation Iris/Omicron Plan</p> <p>Caroline Hiscox explained that she would attend GAPF meetings quarterly. She went on to give her reflections on the Omicron Plan and Operation Iris.</p> <p>The Omicron Plan had been developed using a robust planning process. The plan had not required to be enacted but would be available if ever required in the future. Adam Coldwells had commissioned a review of Operations Rainbow, Snowdrop, third wave and Iris, which would involve Partnership, with the learning looked at and fed back into Partnership processes.</p> <p>NHS Grampian would remain in Operation Iris until end March 2022. Some key points were given as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Concept of building on devolved System Leadership from a hierarchical process to system decision making, using daily connect and weekly system meetings. These meetings were developing well, responding to demand and protecting critical services.</li> <li>2. Colleagues across system in number of areas struggling. There was the need to help staff stay safe and maximise wellbeing. The continued work on this needed to be person centred.</li> <li>3. Working with communities to keep the benefits gained and discuss a sustainable future. Plan for the future/Strategy to be submitted to NHS</li> </ol>	

Grampian Board in June 2022. This would be submitted with a medium term financial plan package of proposals to make best use of assets.

4. Importance of Partnership and transformation. Discussions on how to stabilise the system, provide care and move into a place of real transformation. The workforce and Partnership working would be critical in this.

5. Cultural survey had been launched on 14 February 2022 to Nursing & Midwifery and Facilities and Estates staff for completion. It was important to understand how colleagues experience work and interact with colleagues.

Questions and comments were discussed with Caroline as follows:

- Continue to produce “Ask Caroline” videos. Staff had commented on the personal aspects of these videos.
- Hybrid/home working – a lot of questions had been raised by staff with many issues not addressed to date. A need for a long term strategy to ensure people were not working long hours and burning out. Short, medium and long term issues to be worked on, with a long way to go on the journey. Some staff had anxieties about moving from working at home. Staff should all be treated individually
- Caroline Hiscox and the Chief Executive Team needed to be at the forefront and seen by staff. Reduce the gap between the Board and NHS Grampian employees who interact with our citizens.
- 8<sup>th</sup> decade paper contained five priorities one of which was putting the workforce centre stage. This needed shaping, achieved by listening to staff.

Mo Gillespie from Space Solutions, had been working with the Property Asset Development Team regarding staff returning to work. A programme would be fully developed over the next week. Space requirements in offices had changed. There was a number of practicalities to take forward eg IT Kit, storage, depersonalise desks, etc. It was change management with a lot of engagement needed. Departments would all be considered individually and personal circumstances taken into account. Fully support people to make hybrid working work for them. Communication would be shared with staff once ready.

Martin McKay explained that UNISON Grampian had undertaken a local member’s survey and once the data was ready and shared with members he would share this with Caroline Hiscox for information.

b. The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee – DL (2022) 02

Tom Power referred to the circular, which outlined that an additional day of annual leave had been granted to all NHS staff to commemorate the Queens Platinum Jubilee (on a pro-rata basis for part time staff).

	<p>An SBAR, previously circulated, which had been discussed informally with Trade Union/Professional Organisation representatives of GAPF, highlighted all the key considerations for decision making as to whether an existing public holiday would be moved to either 2 or 3 June 2022.</p> <p>It was noted that some of the Trade Unions/ Professional Organisations in Scotland did not agree with the circular contents and that the circular had not been discussed at a national partnership committee. If an additional public holiday had been allocated it would have been much clearer.</p> <p>GAPF supported the following recommendation:</p> <p>“It is recommended that NHS Grampian not move an existing Public Holiday to commemorate the Platinum Jubilee, and instead enable our workforce to request leave at a time that is most convenient to them (whether that be to commemorate the Platinum Jubilee, to cover childcare resulting from school closures, or at another time of year which suits both personal and service requirements) and that there is wide organisational communication regarding the decision. To enable this, services will need to put in place local arrangements to accommodate an anticipated increase in annual leave requests.”</p> <p>The SBAR would also be discussed at the Weekly System Decision Making meeting. Once a decision had been reached, communication would be developed and circulated widely.</p> <p>c. Policy for the Recording of Business Meetings or Hearings within Formal Policies</p> <p>Gavin Doherty presented an amended policy. The policy review group had made some small changes taking account of comments made at the December 2021 GAPF. In addition reference to the NHS Grampian Classification and Controls for placing data into Microsoft Teams Framework was also included.</p> <p>Gavin noted that the policy review group had felt that typing notes or minutes routinely from a recording for a formal hearing was time consuming and it was better to have someone present at the meetings taking notes. Recording may only occur if a notetaker was absent or the matter was complex.</p> <p>GAPF approved the updated policy.</p>	
<p>5</p> <p>*</p>	<p><b>Well Informed</b></p> <p>a. Finance Update</p> <p>Alan Gray gave a short presentation on the current year, 2022/2023, and the next 5 years (presentation slides attached).</p>	

Mike Adams noted that issues which had been a concern to the organisation prior to the pandemic, hidden due to Covid monies were coming to the fore again. This needed to continue to be highlighted.

It was Alan Gray's last meeting before he moved on to a new role with the Scottish Government. Rachael Little thanked Alan for his valued support over the years and for taking an extremely complex subject and helping the group understand it. She noted Alan would be a great loss to the organisation and on behalf of GAPF wished him every success and happiness in his new role.

b. NHS Pension Scheme (Scotland) Consultation

Lorraine Hunter asked GAPF members to note the content of the paper, previously circulated, in relation to the NHS Pension Scheme (Scotland) consultation, which may be helpful in consideration of a response to the consultation. The consultation period is from January 2022 to 27 February 2022.

The group thanked Lorraine for explaining a complex situation in an understandable way.

Martin McKay noted that the proposed changes to pension contributions meant lower paid staff would pay more and higher paid staff would pay less pension contributions. He encouraged everyone to respond to the questionnaire. Nationally the trade unions and professional organisations were discussing the proposals and hopefully would submit a response to the consultation.

Adam Coldwells questioned why an equality assessment was only going to be carried out on the proposals after feedback was received rather than before. The proposal did not feel aligned to an anchor organisation or NHS philosophy.

Lorraine Hunter explained that the Scheme Advisory Board information showed participation rates over pay bands and staff groups and age ranges. Participation rates drop in the 55-65 age group, likely due to some of the high earners were reaching their life time allowance or annual tax allowance. The proposals take into account tax relief at source, but can't take the additional life time and annual allowance tax charges that individuals pay, and those individuals likely pay the higher rate of contributions. The Scheme Advisory Board wished to minimise opt outs at all levels.

GAPF noted the paper and encouraged feedback during the consultation period.

c. GAPF Terms and Conditions Sub-Group Annual Report

Diane Annand and Gemma Hood attended the meeting to present the GAPF Terms and Conditions Sub-Group annual report.

	<p>Gemma Hood highlighted some of the completed tasks during the last year, like Recruitment and Retention Premia (RRP) and the range of covid related T&amp;C's. She thanked Mike Adams for deputising for her as co-chair of the group for part of the last year.</p> <p>Gemma explained that the group discussed difficult issues well and agreed communications to staff on circulars, etc. Discussions on Paid as if at Work (PAIAW) had been particularly complex and were ongoing.</p> <p>Diane Annand took the group through the ongoing items for the group, which continues to meet monthly. A paper on PAIAW had been submitted previously to GAPF outlining that there were now two different payment systems for Agenda for Change staff. Discussions had begun on how fixed rosters can be identified elsewhere in the organisation. Further information would be received from the sub-group on this issue. Salary sacrifice schemes were being scoped, sponsored by Adam Coldwells, as to whether NHS Grampian will offer a range in the future.</p> <p>Annual leave buy back monitoring had begun. The Scottish Terms and Conditions Committee (STAC) would be asking Boards to submit information. As at 14 February 2022, there had been 87 individual claimants for buy back of annual leave. Staff could claim up to 10 days leave in total from the three applicable years. Payroll have had to remind staff that they could only claim a maximum of 10 days to be paid. A monthly reminder had been in the Daily Brief however communications would be expanded to the wider System Leadership Team (SLT) cohort and also to System Connect meetings to ensure as many staff as possible received the information and to emphasise the 31 March 2022 deadline for Agenda for Change staff. Medical and Dental staff had a deadline of the end of their personal leave year.</p> <p>Rachael Little thanked the co-chairs of the sub-group for their report and highlighted the amount of work the group took on.</p> <p>Mike Adams explained that a lot of work had gone into the RRP application for some Estates staff. It had been approved by the Scottish Government however the process had changed and there would be a mid-term review to be completed. RRP was being highlighted to other services as other areas were having difficulties with recruitment and retention. He welcomed the wider communication regarding the buy back of annual leave as the deadline was not being remembered.</p>	
6	<p><b>Appropriately Trained and Developed</b></p> <p>a. GAPF Development Day – themes/timing/venue</p> <p>A link to a short survey was circulated to the group to complete asking for views on the type of day they would wish, virtually or face to face or both, and themes and content for the day.</p>	

	<p><a href="https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=veDvEDCgykuAnLXmdF5JmgAoSsDsHopIIpnuMGYhUGRUQkpVRINESUxJUIQ0VkxCQUFXQU5WUIVZOC4u">https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=veDvEDCgykuAnLXmdF5JmgAoSsDsHopIIpnuMGYhUGRUQkpVRINESUxJUIQ0VkxCQUFXQU5WUIVZOC4u</a></p> <p>Everyone was asked to complete the survey to shape the focus for the day, to share good practice and lessons learned. It was important to be involved as the development event was aimed at the future of the Area Partnership Forum.</p> <p>b. Turas Applications for eLearning:</p> <p>i. 010/22 Hazardous Healthcare Waste</p> <p>ii. 011/22 Non Hazardous Waste</p> <p>These items were deferred to the next meeting.</p>	
7	<p><b>Provided with a continuously improving and safe working environment, promoting the health and wellbeing of staff, patients and the wider community</b></p> <p>a. Transport and Site Safety Policy</p> <p>Derek Morgan presented the Transport and Site Safety Policy which had been in development over a number of years. Close working had taken place across a range of specialists and the Policies Sub-Group. The policy brought together all the arrangements and key roles across Grampian for transport and site safety.</p> <p>GAPF approved the policy.</p> <p>b. Smarter Working</p> <p>Gareth Evans reported on work from the Smarter Working Programme Board. Staff should continue to work from home, where this is possible, until 31 March 2022 however it was not expected that staff would all return to the office from working from home on 1 April 2022. There would be discussion and a short, medium and long term plan to agree what was the best option for staff. A communication to staff was being prepared.</p> <p>Results from surveys undertaken by the Smarter Working Programme Board showed that 74% of respondents indicated the wish for some form of hybrid working to continue. In larger office areas e.g. Westholme and Summerfield House this was a higher percentage.</p> <p>Following research and further questions from the survey, it showed a blended/hybrid approach offered a good balance of the gains made during the pandemic e.g. working remotely had helped colleagues and it had been an interesting test case. The pandemic had given an opportunity to test theories and amendments had been made as it was ongoing. Evidence showed that teams and services were best placed to</p>	

understand their own needs and the approaches to take the stepping stones needed. All levels of staff needed to be fully involved in utilising physical space, etc.

Gareth explained that the first step was to promote further work around clear desk guidance to make the best of the space we have. Then move onto managed ways for staff to return to the office.

National guidance is awaited from Scottish Terms and Conditions Committee (STAC) and NHS Grampian were working on a holding position until this is received.

A lot of work had taken place on the development of toolkits, further information and guidance which would be released over the next few weeks to the organisation. Gareth explained the group would like to work with early adopters to test before releasing throughout the organisation.

The group discussed the information from Gareth and the following points were made:

- Communication to staff from the Smarter Working Programme Board was a priority. This message would be that no immediate change would happen on 1 April 2022, with opportunities for discussion within teams on the way forward.
- Hybrid working was a big opportunity to help recruitment and retention
- Having to work from home during the pandemic had removed some of the prejudices around home working but it had brought other challenges.
- Clear desk policy may depersonalise and dehumanise a staff group especially when needing to work as teams.
- Guidance to assist people working at home e.g. no meetings between 12.30pm and 1.30pm didn't work and there was a need to ensure staff were looked after when working at home regarding long working hours.
- Equipment was required to work from home and there was a need to ensure a budget was agreed for replacement of equipment when needed. This needed to be scoped and costed. Some IT equipment had been borrowed to work at home and may need to be returned and if no replacement then working at home would cease. The Smarter Working Programme Board was looking at the financial and procurement issues.
- Some staff who had traditional clinical patient facing roles had been able to do some hybrid working. These type of innovations needed to be captured and all staff to be considered by the Smarter Working Programme Board.
- Smarter working was an aim the Board wished to achieve and make accessible and a benefit for everyone whatever their role type. Encourage the benefits of co-location for team working and also for working away from the workplace and address some of the less beneficial aspects of different working.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vulnerable members of staff recognised.</li> <li>• Staff wellbeing was vital. More difficult to pick up if someone was struggling when working virtually rather than face to face, given a high percentage of all communication is non-verbal. This would need to be monitored carefully and the Smarter Working Programme Board to discuss how to do this going forward.</li> <li>• The overarching Smarter Working Programme Board linked with the We Care Programme and the Safer Workplaces Group. Staff health was a top priority for the group.</li> <li>• A request for an update on the future use of Woodhill House was made. This would be included in the communication and circulated to staff.</li> </ul> <p>Gareth Evans concluded by stating that it was not a physical property strategy that was being created. A person centred approach would be created working with the evidence obtained through the pandemic on working styles.</p>	
8	<b>Treated Fairly and Consistently, with Dignity and Respect, in an environment where Diversity is Valued</b> – no items	
9	<b>Any Other Competent Business</b> - none	
10	<b>Communications messages to the Organisation</b>  a. Board Report - noted	
11	<b>Date of next meeting</b>  The next meeting of the group to be held at 10am to 12noon on <b>Thursday 17 March 2022</b> via Microsoft Teams.  Agenda items to be sent to <a href="mailto:gram.partnership@nhs.scot">gram.partnership@nhs.scot</a> by 9 March 2022	

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