

**INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD
HYBRID MEETING, 29 MARCH, 2023**

Board Meeting
01.06.23
Open Session
Item 9.10

Integration Joint Board Members:

Councillor A Stirling (Chair); Dr J Tomlinson (NHS Grampian) (Vice Chair); Ms A Anderson (NHS Grampian); Mr S Lindsay (NHS Grampian); Councillor M Grant; Councillor D Keating; Councillor G Lang; Councillor G Reynolds; and Ms S Webb (NHS Grampian).

Integration Joint Board Non-Voting Members:

Mr K Grant, NHS UNISON; Mr D Hekelaar, 3rd Sector Representative; Ms S Kinsey, Third Sector Representative; Ms A Mutch, Public Representative; Ms I Kirk, UNISON; Mr C Smith, Chief Finance and Business Officer, Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership; and Ms P Milliken, Chief Officer, Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership.

Officers: P Jensen, A MacLeod, A Pirrie and J Shaw, Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership, L Flockhart, A McLeod, J Raine-Mitchell and N Stephenson, Aberdeenshire Council.

Apologies: Ms J Duncan (NHS Grampian); Mr P Bachoo (NHS Grampian); Ms J Barnard (Nursing Lead Advisor).

The Chair advised the Integration Joint Board that she had agreed to accept a late paper, circulated as item 3a, to be considered on the grounds of urgency, for the reason that that the IJB was being cited on some significant areas of concern and to seek assurance that everything was being done to address the matters identified. The said report would be considered within the public section of the meeting, after item 3.

The Chair, on behalf of the Integration Joint Board thanked Ms Jenny McNicol for her contributions to the Board in the role of Nursing Lead Advisor and noted that Ms June Barnard had been appointed to the role, on Ms McNicol's retirement from the role, and looked forward to welcoming Ms Barnard to future meetings of the Board.

1. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

The Chair asked for Declarations of Interests. Councillor Keating confirmed that he had a connection to Item 4 by virtue of being a volunteer for one of the organisations mentioned in the report. However, having applied the objective test he had concluded that he had no interest to declare.

2. RESOLUTIONS

2A. PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

In making decisions on the following items of business, the Joint Board **agreed**, in terms of Section 149 of the Equality Act, 2010:-

- (1) to have due regard to the need to:-
 - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
 - (c) foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it: and
- (2) where an equality impact assessment has been provided, to take its contents into consideration when reaching a decision.

2B. EXEMPT INFORMATION

The Joint Board **agreed** that under paragraph 6 of the Categories of Exempt Information, found at Appendix 2 of the Standing Orders of the Integration Joint Board, the public and media representatives be excluded from the meeting for Item 4 of the business below, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information of the classes described in the relevant paragraphs.

3. REVENUE BUDGET 2023/24

There had been circulated a report dated 20 March, 2023 by the Chief Officer, proposing a revenue budget for 2023/24 for consideration, and providing information on the funding context, the medium-term financial strategy and potential risks and mitigations as determined by the Management Team.

The Joint Board heard from the Chief Finance and Business Officer of the forecast financial position for the current financial year (2022/23) and the factors that had impacted upon the financial performance, and which had been reported regularly to the Joint Board. He advised that confirmation had been received of the funding contributions for 2023/24 from NHS Grampian and Aberdeenshire Council and highlighted the projected level of new resources available from the two partners. He advised that an overspend of approximately £1.99 million was being forecast in the current financial year, with a number of underlying financial pressures in areas including Community Mental Health Services, GP Prescribing and Adult and Older People care management. He highlighted that despite the increase in funding contributions from the Partners, there remained a funding pressure on the budget of approximately £7.8 million and highlighted the table in section 5.5 of the report which summarised the proposed options to be implemented to produce a balanced budget for 2023/24. He concluded by advising that given the gap between new resources and new pressures faced by the IJB for 2023/24, it was essential not only that financial pressures which arise during the financial year were managed, but also that financial savings required were delivered and the IJB Strategic Plan outlined its ambition over the medium term and the reshaping of services which would support delivery.

There was discussion of the proposed transformation of services to make them fit for the 2020s, which would involve ensuring that services reflect changing demographics, changes in technology and changes in the workforce, noting that service transformation would be a priority, with an increased focus on prevention, self-care, and treatment in the community with a shift away from hospital and residential based care. This would include taking learning from redesigned services during Covid, to ensure the delivery of redesigned services in a more efficient way. There was recognition of the continuing challenges in some areas of recruitment and the need to be more innovative. It was noted that difficult decisions would have to be made in terms of the whole system being under a great deal of pressure. There was discussion of the process around workstream transformation, and the need to ensure that key stakeholders were identified and engaged with during the process in order to ensure that the best possible use was made of the budget. Members noted the need for appropriate and timely engagement with staff and Unions during the further development of the Strategic Delivery Plan and the Union representatives reaffirmed their commitment to engaging with the process and highlighted the importance of effective communications with staff during the process.

Noting that there had been a lot of discussion around demand for services and responding to demand, there was a recognition of the importance of early intervention and prevention, and this should form part of the discussions on the medium term financial strategy going forward.

Thereafter, having considered the financial position set out in the report, and the comments from officers and Members of the Joint Board in the discussion, the Joint Board **agreed:**

- (1) to acknowledge that the revenue budget facilitates the delivery of the Integration Joint Board's priorities;
- (2) to note the financial allocations proposed to be made from Aberdeenshire Council and NHS Grampian for 2023/24;
- (3) to agree the proposed revenue budget for 2023/24 outlined in Appendix 1, including the proposed savings and planned use of reserves per Section 5.5;
- (4) to instruct the Chief Officer to negotiate uplifts for those Social Care providers not covered by the National Care Homes Contract and to instruct the Chief Officer to advise the Chair and Vice-Chair of progress prior to final sign off;
- (5) to note the financial risks set out in Appendix 2;
- (6) to direct Aberdeenshire Council and NHS Grampian to deliver all delegated functions in terms of the legislation and the Integration Scheme as currently delivered by them in terms of the budget outlined in this report, as set out in the Direction at Appendix 3;
- (7) to instruct the Chief Officer as per section 5.2 to present an updated IJB Reserves Strategy and Medium Term Financial Strategy to the IJB for comment and approval in June 2023; and

- (8) that the budget discussions going forward should continue to have a focus on health improvement.

3A. GRAMPIAN OPERATIONAL PRESSURE ESCALATION SYSTEM (G-OPES) UPDATE

The Chair advised that in terms of the local framework of the G-OPES framework for evaluating levels of system pressure, adopted by the Health & Social Care Partnership (HSCP) in January 2022, the Clinical and Adult Social Work Governance Committee (CASWG) had formally advised the Chair and Vice-Chair on 17 March 2023 that the Aberdeenshire H&SCP had been operating at level 4 since 23 February, 2023 due to sustained pressure on the system, and the Chair had asked for a report to be taken to the IJB, as a matter of urgency, to inform the IJB of the situation to allow for the challenges to be highlighted and appropriate responses to be discussed with members.

There had been circulated a report dated 23 March, 2023 by the Partnership Manager North, informing the IJB of ongoing significant pressure on the system as a whole and additional coinciding challenges which had created unprecedented circumstances and resulted in the Aberdeenshire G-OPES level remaining at level 4 for more than 4 weeks. The report advised the IJB that at the time of writing the Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership had six individual service areas reporting at level 4: Care Homes and Very Sheltered Housing, Community Hospitals, Older People/Physical Disability Care Management, Mental Health Services, Mental Health Officers, and Community Treatment and Care Services.

The Chief Officer introduced the report, explained that it was a complex and challenging situation with a variety of factors contributing to the services being at level 4, and she outlined the actions that were being taken by the Senior Management Team in the Health and Social Care Partnership to address the pressures being experienced. She advised that the Senior Management Team was immensely grateful to teams who continued to be flexible and resilient in providing support to areas of the system most in need to ensure critical services were delivered, and would continue to focus on support for staff wellbeing through the various measures and resources already in place, whilst ensuring effective communications to staff on issues as they present. She noted that recruitment options continued to be explored in an effort to recruit to vacant posts across a range of professions and services and to be creative in the approach to addressing some of the current gaps in staffing. IJB members had been advised of the redesign work which was commencing under the AH&SCP's new strategic delivery plan with the aim of addressing the systematic challenges facing the system particularly in relation to Social Care Sustainability.

The Chief Officer confirmed that the Senior Management Team would continue to closely monitor the arrangements and operate within the G-OPES framework, working closely with the CASWG to continue to provide them with assurance reports on an ongoing basis.

The Joint Board heard from Mr Lindsay in his capacity as Chair of the Clinical and Adult Social Work Governance Committee who echoed the comments of the Chief Officer and referred to the incredible amount of additional work and pressure on the Senior Management Team and colleagues. The Vice Chair of CASWG commented

on the importance of recognising the very hard work of front line staff and officers and their commitment and dedication, adaptability and flexibility, and on a daily basis.

There were concerns expressed by the IJB Union representatives regarding the potential burnout of staff, due to the unprecedented demands being put on them and assurances were given that staff were being supported as much as possible through a very challenging time, and there was a recognition of the pressures that staff were operating under. It was noted that the Chair had met with staff at the Fraserburgh Community Hospital and its Minor Injuries Unit recently to talk with them and a series of visits by the Chair and Vice Chair was being scheduled in order to facilitate staff engagement and to pass on the thanks of the IJB for their dedication and service and a recognition of the pressure that staff were working under. The need to seek alternative ways of engagement with staff was highlighted, given that some did not have access to Council or NHS networks.

After discussion, the Integration Joint Board **agreed**:

- (1) to acknowledge the actions taken by the Senior Management Team of the Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership (AHSCP) to alleviate the pressures across health and social care services in Aberdeenshire;
- (2) to support the further actions that the AHSCP senior management team will take to further alleviate pressures;
- (3) to send a formal letter of thanks to staff;
- (4) agree to receive ongoing assurance via the weekly G-OPES Overview Report submitted to the Clinical and Adult Social Work Governance Committee where the system remains at G-OPES level 4; and
- (5) that the Chief Officer should discuss with Union Representatives issues around staff wellbeing and support.

4. AMENDMENT TO HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE PARTNERSHIP GRANT FUNDING APPLICATIONS 2022-2025.

There had been circulated a report dated 24 February, 2023 by the Chief Finance and Business Officer which asked the Integration Joint Board to approve an amendment to the allocation of grant funding to a number of applicants in line with outputs and recommendations from the evaluation process which were approved by the IJB on 1 June 2022 (Item 13).

The Interim Strategy and Transformation Manager and Strategic Procurement Manager provided some further background to the report, clarified the recommendations before the IJB, and advised of measures that were ongoing to formalise the grant application scoring process in line with the recommendations of the Internal Audit service and to ensure compliance with Following the Public Pound (FPP) checks and the Councils FPP Code. They also advised that work had commenced around the development of a governance process for the review and approval of spend to any external organisation, and this work was being undertaken under the oversight of the AH&SCP's Commissioning and Procurement Group.

After consideration, the Integration Joint Board **agreed**:

- (1) to approve the amendment to allocation of grant funding to applicants in line with outputs and recommendations from the evaluation process which was approved by the IJB on 1 June 2022;
- (2) to approve the amendments to payments to two applicants;
- (3) to approve the allocation of grant funding to one applicant; and
- (4) to acknowledge the work undertaken by officers to enhance the grants governance process.