

**Minutes of Meeting of Grampian NHS Board on
Thursday 5 October 2023 following the Closed Board Meeting
virtually by Microsoft Teams**

Present:**Board Members**

Mrs Alison Evison	Chair/Non-Executive Board Member
Mrs Amy Anderson	Non-Executive Board Member
Cllr Ann Bell	Non-Executive Board Member
Professor Siladitya Bhattacharya	Non-Executive Board Member
Dr June Brown	Executive Nurse Director
Mr Mark Burrell	Chair of Area Clinical Forum/Non-Executive Board Member
Cllr Tracy Colyer	Non-Executive Board Member
Mr Albert Donald	Non-Executive Board Member/Whistleblowing Champion
Ms Joyce Duncan	Non-Executive Board Member
Professor Nick Fluck	Medical Director
Mrs Luan Grugeon	Non-Executive Board Member
Mr Steven Lindsay	Employee Director/Non-Executive Board Member
Mr Derick Murray	Non-Executive Board Member
Mr Dennis Robertson	Vice-Chair/Non-Executive Board Member (Joined at Item 8 11:30)
Mr Sandy Riddell	Non-Executive Board Member
Mr Alex Stephen	Director of Finance
Mrs Susan Webb	Director of Public Health/Portfolio Lead Population Health
Dr John Tomlinson	Non-Executive Board Member
Cllr Ian Yuill	Non-Executive Board Member

Attendees

Mr Paul Allen	Director of Infrastructure and Sustainability (Hybrid)
Mr Paul Bachoo	Portfolio Lead Integrated Specialist Care
Dr Adam Coldwells	Director of Strategy/Deputy Chief Executive
Ms Sarah Duncan	Board Secretary
Mrs Jillian Evans	Head of Health Intelligence (Item 6)
Miss Lesley Hall	Assistant Board Secretary
Mr Robert Hobkirk	Head of Sustainability, Compliance & Risk, Facilities (Item 6)
Mr Stuart Humphreys	Director of Marketing and Communication
Mr Garry Kidd	Project Director, Baird and Anchor (Item)
Dr Phil Mackie	Consultant in Public Health Medicine (Item 6)
Mrs Jennifer Matthews	Corporate Risk Advisor (Item 11)
Mr Gavin Payne	Acting Director of Infrastructure and Sustainability/General Manager, Facilities and Estates
Mr Tom Power	Director of People and Culture
Mr Alan Sharp	Assistant Director of Finance (Item 7)
Ms Carrie Stephen	Programme Manager (Item 8)
Mrs Alison Wood	PA/Minute Taker

Apologies

Professor Caroline Hiscox	Chief Executive
Mr Hussein Patwa	Non-Executive Board Member

Mrs Evison, Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting. It was noted that the meeting was being recorded for publication on the NHS Grampian website.

1 Apologies

Apologies were noted as above. The meeting was quorate.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Chair's Welcome

Mrs Evison reflected on quality and safety following recent committee meetings including the joint Clinical Governance Committee and Staff Governance Committee held in September 2023. There had been robust discussion and diligent reporting. Specific actions were agreed and work was currently underway that would be reported to the relevant committee meetings over the next two months. The Chair had been assured that NHS Grampian was working diligently to provide safe, high quality care, whilst prioritising the wellbeing of its workforce.

She encouraged colleagues to watch the BBC TV series 'Junior doctors: Life on the wards' which was filmed at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary (ARI) earlier in the year. It showcased some of the exceptional medical staff and supporting teams working for NHS Grampian.

She highlighted the NHS Grampian Diversity Festival which had taken place on 4 October 2023 and included the launch of NHS Grampian's Anti-Racism Plan. The festival brought together staff, partner organisations and local community groups to celebrate diversity under the themes of race, culture and breaking barriers.

Mrs Evison highlighted items on the agenda including the Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy and the Finance Report and Value and Sustainability Plan which set out the challenges faced by NHS Grampian. There would also be scrutiny of the Baird and ANCHOR project.

The Chair paid tribute to Mrs Grugeon and Mrs Anderson who were both stepping down as Non-Executive Board members. Both had made significant contributions to NHS Grampian, including as committee chairs.

4 Minute of Meeting on 3 August 2023

The minute of the meeting held on 3 August 2023 was approved.

4.1 Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

5 Chief Executive's Report

The purpose of the Chief Executive's report was to update on priority issues since the previous Board meeting that were not covered in the main agenda. In Professor Hiscox's absence, Dr Coldwells highlighted key issues from the report including that the Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) issue was being addressed with more detailed survey reports awaited for some areas. There was a dedicated RAAC page on the NHS Grampian public website. He praised the teams involved in transferring Newburn Medical

Group from the Denburn Medical Centre. He also highlighted ministerial visits to NHS Grampian, the Grampian Maternity Charter and Foresterhill staff car parking.

The How Are We Doing performance report was not presented at this Board meeting due to the reporting timescales to Scottish Government.

There was recognition of the challenges and pressures experience across the system.

Board members discussed the following points:

Guidance on the Blueprint for Good Governance Self-Assessment was expected imminently from Scottish Government and a Board Seminar would take place in January 2024.

There had been communication with staff, particularly with teams in the buildings and areas affected by RAAC to ensure they were aware of what was happening. This would continue as further details became known. A frequently asked questions (FAQ) document and recordings of the two drop-in sessions held for all staff were also available on the public website.

The Board noted the Chief Executive report.

6 Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy

The Director of Public Health Annual Report had set out that climate change was a key risk for the wellbeing of the Grampian population. Mr Payne highlighted that this was the first formal NHS Grampian strategy for climate change although a range of work had been ongoing for a number of years. It was intended to be realistic as well as an ambitious approach which framed NHS Grampian's corporate commitments and moral duty for action, as both a healthcare provider and an anchor organisation in the North East of Scotland. The strategy would support the overall ambition of net-zero carbon emissions by 2040 and complement other plans and the Climate Change Risk Adaption Plan.

The preface to the strategy written by Mr Murray, Non-Executive Board member, highlighted that the strategy covered the statutory obligations. However, it went beyond the ambition of net-zero. Mrs Evans emphasised that the strategy built on work already ongoing with partners and in the communities and was a whole system approach. It would be used when considering pathways of care for the future to make a difference. The strategy required the organisation to be sustainable both environmentally and financially. Work on prevention and reducing inequalities would be key to this work. The importance of partnership working was emphasised, including work with Community Planning Partnerships, Integration Joint Boards (IJBs) as well as research, academic and national partners involved in the consultation of the strategy.

Board members discussed the following points:

Changes in winter weather patterns resulted in a significant increase in slips, trips and falls which impacted on the Emergency Department (ED) and admissions. Preventive work with partners and working with local community councils was important. An example was provided of local communities gritting local areas as councils prioritised major roads. Dr Mackie highlighted the longer term development planning to help, advise and support community planning.

The Board and Committees would receive regular updates on the strategy's delivery plan, which was at an early stage. Impact assessments would be carried out on decisions made to ensure there was a robust process in place for equalities. An integrated impact assessment was being developed to consider the Fairer Scotland duties, as well as environmental sustainability.

There were dedicated funding streams available. Finance was also available through bidding processes. Regular reports would be provided to the Performance Assurance, Finance and Infrastructure Committee (PAFIC) and the Population Health Committee at the appropriate stages.

It was important for NHS Grampian to show leadership in the local area as an anchor organisation, to influence progress on climate change through its procurement processes. It would support a shift in behaviours through effective and targeted communication.

The Board welcomed the Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy with its emphasis on partnership work and prevention.

The Board:

- **endorsed the papers contained in the paper, specifically approval of the NHS Grampian Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy 2023-2028.**
- **approved the arrangements for monitoring and delivery of this Strategy through NHS Grampian's Annual Delivery Plan; the submission of a bi-annual Sustainability Report to the Performance Assurance Finance and Infrastructure Committee and an annual report to the NHS Grampian Board.**

7. Finance Report 2023/24 and Value and Sustainability Plan Update

The Finance Report and Value and Sustainability Plan update set out the challenging landscape NHS Health Boards faced along with NHS Grampian's current financial position. The level of spend had continued to rise above the previously forecast levels due to higher levels of inflation and supplementary staffing expenditure. The Chief Executive Team had discussed the implementation of measures which would be used to reduce the level of overspend over the remainder of the current financial year. The impact on staff and patient care had been at the centre of measures to recover the financial position. These would be communicated to the whole system with a report to be presented at PAFIC. Progress continued in relation to the Value and Sustainability Programme. There had been some slippage in relation to the delivery of the efficiency savings as a result of system pressures. It was necessary to ensure recurring savings to support the financial position for 2024/2025.

The following points were discussed:

Detailed progress reports were provided to PAFIC and Board members were welcome to attend committee meetings to scrutinise and receive assurance.

The importance of continued work on transformation, both in terms of the workforce and emerging technologies, was emphasised. Reasons for the overspend on staffing were given. Dialogue continued with NHS Education for Scotland (NES), particularly for programmes where it was a challenge to recruit staff.

Challenges with the timings and amount of notification from Scottish Government of significant earmarked funding streams were highlighted. It was noted that most allocations had now been advised. The commitment of earmarked funding prior to the allocation from Scottish Government presented an element of risk for non-recurring funding. The plan would require to be changed or adapted if the funding was lower than anticipated.

Communication of the measures to reduce the overspend would be discussed across the whole system by a variety of methods, including by video. A financial recovery panel was being set up to consider financial requests that did not fit into the processes or required an exception.

The need for efficiency saving targets was emphasised. New vacancy control systems had been established to help support the delivery of the saving targets. Work was ongoing with the internal auditors on vacancy controls. However, these required to be balanced against safe care for patients and staff wellbeing. Well-established processes were in place to protect patients and staff. Data was used to consider the balance of costs of posts across grades. This was aligned to organisation's strategic purpose. It was noted that the 3% efficiency savings was an extremely challenging target. A balance was required between financial balance and transformational work.

The Board:

- **reviewed and scrutinised the information provided in the paper and confirmed that it provided assurance that the Board's financial position was being adequately managed for 2023/24.**
- **noted that a range of recovery actions had now been agreed with the Chief Executive Team to reduce the level of overspending in the second half of the financial year and enabled the revenue forecast to be maintained.**
- **noted a report would be brought back in December 2023 providing initial information on the 2024/25 budget.**
- **noted the progress with the Value & Sustainability Plan and the achievement of savings of £4.99 million for the year to date.**

8. Bed Base Review

Mr Bachoo provided the background to the requirement for the Aberdeen Royal Infirmary (ARI) bed base review, including the increased pressures on the system and the recognised risk for patient care. The review complemented a range of actions across pathways and projects, both locally and at a population level. It was noted that the timeline was ambitious. He explained the extensive work around the Bed Base Review which had commenced in spring 2023, including the work led by Ms Carrie Stephen and Mr Gary Mortimer, and Health Intelligence, to develop a model for data analysis with specific variables. The introduction of additional beds would be done by a staged approach with the first part classified as Stage 1A. There were break points from one stage to another in the review process.

Board members discussed the following points:

It was difficult to benchmark the additional 40 beds against other NHS Boards in Scotland as their bed base capacity was also changing. NHS Grampian had a historically low bed base in comparison to Scotland.

Decisions had been taken mindful of the impact on other areas across the system. There had been widespread engagement and connection across the system which would

continue during the process including different models of care across the community and pathways in the system. The Board was assured that work would continue with partners to identify resource across communities.

It was anticipated that Emergency Department (ED) performance would improve and ambulance stacking at the front door and corridor care would reduce. The expectation would be that the additional beds would see an improvement. However, this would be dependent on other areas of work across the system including the flow and movement of patients, redesign work and urgent care work.

Reflections and data from previous winter periods had provided much of the background for the review, including experiences of staff and patients. Monitoring included staff sickness and absence rates. A report on the review was submitted to the Chief Executive Team weekly business meeting which focused on workforce planning, recruitment and infrastructure. With permanent job opportunities, this should attract new entrants and encourage retention of staff in NHS Grampian. External recruitment activity was underway as it was important to ensure the organisation had a robust, safe and competent workforce.

The Area Clinical Forum had provided broad support to the review as this would improve the quality of patient care in relation to corridor care and boarding of patients.

The Board

- **endorsed the decision of the Chief Executive Team to provide an additional 120 beds in Aberdeen Royal Infirmary in a staged approach, incorporating formal gateway review points to review the impact of the beds and inform the next implementation stage.**
- **noted that the creation of any additional beds, beyond phase 1A, would only be able to be commissioned once an appropriate funding source had been identified and approved.**

9. System-wide approach to Winter

Mrs MacLeod explained that winter planning was a key function and well-established annual process for NHS Grampian and its partners across the Local Resilience Partnership. Scottish Government was looking for a different approach to winter this year. Local and Grampian-wide discussion, with partners, had been ongoing to determine a system-wide approach to winter. There were robust processes in place including the Grampian Operational Escalation System (G-OPES) and interim surge beds.

She highlighted the proposal to undertake a programme of work at a system level, in addition to the winter planning activity routinely carried out by individual partners, to explore the creation of further linkages between the plans of partner organisations and share areas of good practice with a view to implementing changes ahead of winter 2023/24. The intention was to establish a Winter Task and Finish Group to bring together all partners to co-create a Grampian Winter Contingency Framework to complement the ongoing Bed Base Review by the end of November 2023. There had been an in-person networking event on 28 September 2023 attended by over 60 people. This had resulted in significant learning. It was proposed that the output would be brought to the Board's December 2023 meeting. A Grampian-wide winter checklist would be submitted to Scottish Government stating that the usual actions were in place. A second submission was on delayed discharges and movement through the system. The system-wide Unscheduled Programme Board would meet the following week to consider the winter event and look at business continuity plans and escalation processes. The Board would also consider sharing of information.

Board members discussed the following points:

The importance of whole system working, including with third sector colleagues. An example of this was the daily system connect meetings which took place with colleagues across the system to discuss sharing resources when required in a particular area. It was noted that the system was adaptable and agile. There were occasions, when compromise was required to find ways to move forward. The operational teams were key to this function. In October 2023, there would be an exercise for the five category one responders - the three Health & Social Care Partnerships, NHS Grampian and Scottish Ambulance Service at an operational level. It was noted this would be the third winter that the G-OPES would be used. The Ethics Advice and Support Group was available to help support good ethical decision-making.

There was a requirement to consider urban, rural and remote approaches as requirements varied for different and unique communities. Winter planning was important for sharing information and provided opportunities for involvement. The first step was to work as partners to recognise the volume of winter planning that was required.

The Board:

- **endorsed the approach outlined in the paper.**
- **requested that the outcome of this work be brought back to the Board at its meeting on 7 December 2023.**

10. Baird Family Hospital and ANCHOR Centre Project Update

Dr Brown presented the paper. Regular updates on the progress of both the Baird and ANCHOR buildings were provided to the Board, on the key areas in relation to the redesign work.

Board members discussed the following points:

Learning taken from the project would benefit future projects both in Grampian and at a national level. NHS Assure had been around all decisions for assurance and regular updates were provided to Scottish Government. It was noted that NHS Assure had not existed in its current state at the project inception.

The design issues had resulted from the lack of guidance at the start and during the project rather than any failure of NHS Grampian to follow guidance already in place. This had appeared to have caused some misunderstanding.

The project team continued to work through and understand the design implications. It was expected that the requirements for design change would be known by the end of October. As a result, a definitive timeline could not be provided at this stage. A progress update would be provided to the Board by the December 2023 meeting.

The Board thanked the teams involved for working with NHS Assure and others to ensure the projects were at the forefront of current thinking and emerging evidence.

The Board noted progress with The Baird Family Hospital and ANCHOR Centre project and the challenges were recognised.

11. Risk Management Update

Professor Fluck explained the context of the work carried out over the last three years to develop a new approach to organisational risk management, building on previous work. The specific areas to be covered were the strategic risk register and management, risk appetite, risk appetite statement and Board committee risk processes. Much of the work had been carried out on a collaborative basis with the Board in seminar sessions and in committees, together with the Chief Executive Team.

Mrs Matthews explained the key points in the paper highlighting:

The strategic risk and the risk register, including agreed processes for which the Chief Executive Team was accountable.

The new process of management review would commence in October 2023 with two strategic risks (financial resource and infrastructure) being presented by the Chief Executive Team at its performance meeting on 17 October 2023. Some Chief Executive critical thinking sessions would be used as part of the new strategic risk process. An Audit and Risk Committee development session would take place on 28 November 2023 on responsibilities for strategic risk.

The Board committee risk process was outlined in the paper. These committees would require to take responsibility and accountability for the management of high level strategic risks aligned to individual committees which included those risks outlined in the risk appetite and within the committee terms of reference. A meeting would take place with committee chairs and executive leads to formalise the scope and purpose of risk reporting and to formalise the frequency of reporting.

The risk appetite draft statement would be a benchmark for the organisation on the level of risk that it was prepared to accept.

Board members discussed the following points:

It was suggested that an annual session on strategic risks would be helpful for those Non-Executive Board members, who were not members of the Audit & Risk Committee.

The Board recognised the appropriate improvements being made to the Board Committees' risk processes. A Board session would be held on 19 October 2023 to discuss good governance across the organisation.

The Board:

- **reviewed and scrutinised the information provided in the paper and confirmed it provided assurance that:**
 - **The processes regarding the management and maintenance of the Strategic Risk Register were either in place and robust, or improvements were being made and appropriate evidence of these improvements had been provided to the Board's satisfaction.**
 - **Improvements to the Board Committee Risk Processes were being made and appropriate evidence of these improvements had been provided to the Board's satisfaction.**
 - **endorsed the proposals contained within the Draft Risk Appetite Statement.**

12 Forum and Integration Joint Board (IJB) Reports

The following reports were noted:

12.1 Area Clinical Forum (ACF)

Mr Burrell highlighted the vaccination programme, whistleblowing reporting presentation by Mr Donald in his role as Whistleblowing Champion), recruitment and retention and the Blueprint for Good Governance. He advised that regular meetings were held with the Chief Executive Team. Concerns had been expressed on staffing in the Emergency Department and about radiology reporting.

Mrs Webb updated that the uptake for the winter programme vaccinations was above the Scottish average.

12.2 Grampian Area Partnership Forum (GAPF)

A Development Event – Being Healthy & Safe At Work had been held in September 2023. This had been well attended by a wide range of colleagues, with significant comment and feedback from attendees.

12.3 Integration Joint Boards

It was anticipated that the three annual reports from the Boards would be presented at the December 2023 Board meeting, including a presentation of the collective opportunity of delivering across NHS Grampian.

13. Approved Committee, Forum and IJB Minutes

The following approved minutes were noted:

Committees

13.1 Audit and Risk Committee – 27 June 2023

13.2 Performance Assurance, Finance & Infrastructure Committee – 28 June 2023

13.3 Staff Governance Committee – 22 June 2023

13.4 Clinical Governance Committee – 23 May 2023

Forums

13.5 Area Clinical Forum – 28 June 2023

13.6 Grampian Area Partnership Forum – 20 June 2023

Integration Joint Boards (IJBs)

13.8 Aberdeen City IJB – 6 June 2023

13.9 Aberdeenshire IJB – 5 July 2023

14 Any Other Business

There was no other business.

15 Date of next meeting

- Thursday 7 December 2023