

## **INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD**

**COUNCIL CHAMBER - WOODHILL HOUSE, WESTBURN ROAD, ABERDEEN, AB16  
5GB, WEDNESDAY, 3RD SEPTEMBER, 2025**

### **Integration Joint Board Members:**

Dr J Tomlinson (Chair), Councillor A Stirling (Vice-Chair), Dr C Backwell, Councillor R Cassie, Councillor D Keating and Councillor G Lang, Mr S Lindsay and Prof. S Paranjothy.

### **Integration Joint Board Non-Voting Members:**

S Kinsey (Third Sector Representative), F Alderson (Third Sector Representative), V Brown (Third Sector Representative), R Taylor (Primary Care Advisor), P Bachoo (Secondary Care Advisor), I Kirk (UNISON Trade Union), K Grant (NHS Trade Union) and L Jolly (Interim Chief Officer).

**Officers:** Stevenson (Principal Solicitor), J Raine-Mitchell (Communications and Marketing Team Leader), Beattie (Head of Service), G Milne, J Howie (Partnership Manager South), L Gravener (Interim Programme Manager, Health and Social Care Partnership), Campbell and A MacLeod

**Apologies:** J Barnard (Nursing Lead Advisor) and C Wood (Carer Representative).

### **1 Sederunt and Declaration of Members' Interests**

The Chair asked for Declarations of Interest. No interests were declared.

### **2 Public Sector Equality Duty**

In taking decisions on the undernoted 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 and 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) to consider, where an Integrated Impact Assessment has been provided, its contents and to take those into consideration when reaching a decision.

### **3 Minute of the Meeting of the Integration Joint Board of 2 July 2025**

There had been circulated and was **approved** as a correct record the Minute of the Meeting of the Integration Joint Board of 2 July 2025.

#### **4 Integration Joint Board Action Log**

There had been circulated and was **noted** a report by the Chief Officer providing updates on progress with actions which had still to be completed and advising when these were scheduled to be reported to the Joint Board. The Interim Chief Officer noted that the report on the ADHD assessment pathway would be brought to the December 2025 meeting in order to allow for consideration by the Clinical and Adult Social Work Governance Committee (CASWG) and any feedback from that Committee to be incorporated into the report.

#### **5 Chief Officer's Report**

There had been circulated a report by the Chief Officer, providing an update of the ongoing work of the Health and Social Care Partnership, including (a) the outcome of a Leadership Review which had been undertaken which was seeking to reshape the structure, culture and governance of the Partnership; (b) the outcome of an iMatter staff experience survey which had been undertaken across the Partnership; (c) information on the reduction in the working week for NHS Agenda for Change staff, to take effect from April 2026; and (d) the notification of a number of retirements of valued staff with links to the Partnership.

The Interim Chief Officer gave an update on the ongoing leadership review within the Health & Social Care Partnership, outlining the operational focus, HR processes, staff communication plans and the achievement of targeted savings through vacancy management. She advised that a communications strategy was in place to ensure staff feel involved and heard.

In response to questions about the reduced working week, the Interim Chief Officer clarified that the changes would take effect from April 2026, that risk assessments were ongoing and the financial impacts were being closely monitored.

After discussion, the Integration Joint Board **noted** the updates provided.

#### **6 Integration Joint Board - Membership Updates and Appointments to Committees**

There had been circulated a report dated 22 August 2025 by the Interim Chief Officer which provided a number of updates on membership of the IJB and its committees and sought a number of appointments to committees.

The Principal Solicitor, Governance, introduced the report and advised that the report addressed a number of vacancies on committees that required to be filled. She noted that following a change in the political proportionality within Aberdeenshire Council, which affected the allocation of committee places, one group did not take up their allocated place, so governance required the process to go back through Full Council for approval. A report would be submitted to Full Council on 26 September 2025, after which the place would be filled. In view of this, it was suggested that the IJB may wish to defer some of the Council related appointments until the next meeting of the IJB on 8 October 2025.

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

- (1) to note the recent appointments of a number of substantive and substitute members of the IJB by Aberdeenshire Council and NHS Grampian;
- (2) to note that the Chair and Vice-Chair for IJB and IJB Audit Committee will rotate with effect from 1 October 2025, in line with Standing Order 3.1 of the IJB Governance Handbook;
- (3) to appoint Professor Shantini Paranjothy and Councillor Ross Cassie to the Clinical and Adult Social Work Governance (CASWG) Committee; and
- (4) to defer the appointment of an Aberdeenshire Council voting member to the IJB Audit Committee, the appointment of a Chair/Vice-Chair to that Committee from the Aberdeenshire Council voting membership, the appointment of a non-voting member to the IJB Audit Committee, and the appointment of a Vice-Chair to the CASWG Committee, until the next meeting of the IJB, when an update report on appointments would be provided by officers.

## **7 Initiation of Review of Governance Handbook**

There had been circulated a report dated 18 August 2025 by the Interim Chief Officer advising of a proposed review of the Governance Handbook of the Integration Joint Board which was last reviewed in March 2024. The Principal Solicitor, Governance, introduced the report and outlined some areas for consideration of review, including requests to speak, public petitions and minor technical updates. She advised that officers proposed to review the handbook, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair and would then report back to the Board with a further report for consideration.

Thereafter, the Integration Joint Board **agreed**:

- (1) to approve the commencement of a review of the Governance Handbook; and
- (2) that the areas identified within the report should be a focus for the review.

## **8 2025-2026 Financial Update And Recovery Plan Update**

There had been circulated a report dated 21 August 2025 by the Interim Chief Officer which provided the year-to-date financial position for 2025/26 and the financial forecast to 31 March 2026 in respect of the IJB Revenue Budget. In addition, the report provided an update on the Recovery Plan

The Interim Chief Finance Officer introduced the report and highlighted a Quarter 1 underspend of £3.462 million but a projected year-end overspend of £1.867 million, noting risks from increased demand, cost pressures and operational changes. She confirmed that high-cost care packages remained a focus with fewer packages overall but higher average costs. In addition, savings plans were delayed, with only £2.8 million of the planned £7.1 million expected to be delivered this year. In respect of the Recovery Plan, she confirmed that its focus was on efficiencies, income generation, demand management and workforce cost management. The Medium Term Financial Strategy and regular reporting were priorities.

During discussion, members questioned whether the high-cost packages were due to demographics or unintended consequences and officers confirmed that the shift was

mainly due to rigorous reviews removing lower cost packages, with increasing complexity for those remaining packages. In addition, there was some concern expressed that savings proposals that had been agreed, were now unlikely to be achieved this financial year due to a range of factors including redundancy and voluntary severance costs. However, savings would be made in years two and three.

Members also discussed the financial position, forecast and Recovery Plan.

Thereafter, the Integration Joint Board **agreed**:

- (1) to note the financial position based on the year-to-date budget and year-to-date actuals as at 30 June 2025;
- (2) to note the financial forecast to 31 March 2026;
- (3) to note the update position on the Recovery Plan; and
- (4) to note the importance for learning to be taken from agreed savings projects, which had subsequently been varied, and that the IJB should be provided with detailed data when savings proposals were brought forward as part of future budget considerations.

## **9 Strategic Delivery Plan 2022-2025 - Final evaluation report**

There had been circulated a report dated 22 August 2025 by the Interim Chief Officer which provided a summary of outputs from the evaluation process conducted on the performance of the H&SCP Strategic Delivery Plan for 2022-2025.

The Interim Strategy and Transformation Manager introduced the report and presented the final evaluation of the 2022-2025 Strategic Delivery Plan, noting it had been approved in December 2022, with regular progress reporting. The evaluation summarised all projects, highlighted successful outcomes and identified learning points such as the need for clear alignment with strategic priorities, financial implications and measurable outcomes before project approval. She noted that Integrated Impact Assessments would be required for all future projects and the report aimed to assure the Board of progress and was seeking approval to share the evaluation with the Communities Committee and Area Committees, in line with the agreed performance reporting arrangements.

During discussion, Members commented on the focus on prioritisation, resource implications and integration with workforce planning. Officers noted that the new Strategic Delivery Plan was in development, with further workshops planned to refine priorities and ensure alignment of workforce, financial and estate planning. It was also noted that some projects may become 'business as usual' and that the Autism Strategy would be jointly reviewed with the Education and Children's Service.

Thereafter, the Integration Joint Board **agreed**:

- (1) to note the evaluation performance report on the H&SCP Strategic Delivery Plan 2022-2025;

- (2) that this would be the final report on the current Strategic Delivery Plan, with key learning and improvements to be taken forward to the new Strategic Delivery Plan 2026-2028, to be presented to the IJB at its meeting in December 2025;
- (3) that the report should be shared with the Communities Committee and Area Committees as part of the AH&SCP's agreed performance reporting arrangements.

## **10      Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership Draft Strategic Plan 2025-2035**

There had been circulated a report dated 7 August 2025 by the Interim Chief Officer which introduced the draft Strategic Plan 2025-2035 for the Partnership which had been developed in line with legislative requirements. The report informed the Board that the new Strategic Plan would take a longer-term view, setting out a ten-year vision to guide the work of the Partnership, and the Plan would be reviewed every three years, in line with the reviews of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and the Workforce Plan, supporting continued alignment and focus on delivering the agreed priorities.

The Interim Strategy and Transformation Manager introduced the report and outlined the legislative context, the review of the previous plan (2022-2025), and the process for developing the new plan, which was informed by a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and stakeholder engagement. Three key themes had been identified: Prevention and Early Intervention, Access to Services and Community Focus. The Plan's vision was to empower and support people to live long, healthy lives, with proprieties refined through board analysis. Implementation would be supported by a Strategic Delivery Plan, Medium-Term Financial Strategy, Workforce Plan and Strategic Commissioning Plan, all due in December. The Plan would be reviewed every three years.

During discussion, Members commented on the alignment with the Scottish Government's population health and service renewal frameworks, and how evaluation of the Strategic Plan would be approached. There was a request for clearer language, more explicit expectations for the public, realism about outcomes and a clearer 10 year ambition in the final Plan.

Thereafter, the Integration Joint Board **agreed**:

- (1) to acknowledge the draft Aberdeenshire Health & Social Care Partnership (AHSCP) Strategic Plan 2025-2035;
- (2) to approve the draft Strategic Plan 2025-2035 for public consultation and agree that the draft plan should be brought to Aberdeenshire Council Area Committees as part of the formal consultation process;
- (3) that the IJB would provide comments on the draft Strategic Plan as part of the formal consultation process;
- (4) to approve the Communication and Consultation Plan for the draft Strategic Plan 2025-2035; and

- (5) to acknowledge the initial work to identify priority workstreams for implementation under the new Strategic Delivery Plan 2026-2028, to be further developed and submitted for approval to the IJB in December 2025.

## **11 Aberdeenshire Integration Joint Board Equality Outcomes 2024-2028**

There had been circulated a report dated 20 August 2025 by the Interim Chief Officer providing feedback from the engagement activity that had been carried out on the IJB draft Equality Outcomes, which had included a survey for public and staff and a series of facilitated conversations with community groups.

The Acting Health and Wellbeing Lead introduced the report and confirmed that a new set of outcomes for 2024-2028 had been developed following engagement with public and staff surveys and community groups. Key feedback had included the need for clear communication, awareness of digital exclusion and better promotion of services. An action plan had been created to address these points. There was some discussion of the compliance process and the statutory need for consecutive four-year outcomes, and the importance of learning from experience to avoid any future non-compliance was highlighted.

Thereafter, the Integration Joint Board **agreed** to:

- (1) note the feedback from the engagement work with the Aberdeenshire public and the AH&SCP staff regarding the development of a new set of Equality Outcomes for Aberdeenshire IJB;
- (2) approve the revised set of 3 Equality Outcomes; and
- (3) approve the actions intended to support the delivery of the Equality Outcomes.

The Chair thanked Mr Howie for his contributions to the work of the Partnership over a number of years and wished him well on his impending retirement.

## **12 Move to a New Service Arrangement for Information & Systems Team and Digital Project Delivery Update**

With reference to the Minute of Meeting of the IJB of 2 July 2025 (Item 14), there had been circulated a report dated 20 August 2025 by the Interim Chief Officer addressing the ask at the meeting on 2 July 2025 that a formal direction be drafted and brought to the next meeting for approval, to ensure future control and governance over the transferred budget and services. The report advised that following further legal research, it had been established that the work of the team in question, the Information and Systems Team would not necessitate a Direction and would not be appropriate. It also confirmed that the IJB would receive a report setting out the business support provided by each of the parties to the IJB on an annual basis with sufficient time to ensure that arrangements for future provision was built into the annual budget setting and review process of the IJB.

Having heard from the Principal Solicitor, Governance, who confirmed that the annual report would be a general review of all support services, and would be provided before budget setting, the Integration Joint Board **agreed** to receive an annual report setting

out the business support provided by each of Aberdeenshire Council and NHS Grampian enabling oversight of the sufficiency of business support provided.

### **13 Aberdeenshire Community Justice Annual Report 2024-2025**

There had been circulated a report by the Interim Chief Officer which presented the eight annual report on Community Justice in Aberdeenshire for 2024-2025 and highlighted the progress that had been made collectively by the Aberdeenshire Community Justice Partnership during the period.

The Project Manager, Community Justice introduced the report, highlighted key elements and achievements, and clarified that the Board's role was to note and scrutinise the report, as governance for the Community Justice Partnership sat with the Community Planning Board.

During discussion, Members commented on the format of the report and the possibility of receiving a summary of key points for each section for easier reading, for future reports. The potential use of tools such as Co-pilot was discussed. It was noted that some aspects of data inclusion was limited by timing mismatches between the Annual report and a local annual report with trend data, and the need to align the timescales was discussed.

In addition, more regular engagement between the Community Justice Partnership and the IJB was discussed in order to improve ongoing engagement.

Thereafter, the Integration Joint Board **agreed**:

- (1) to note the Annual Report on Community Justice in Aberdeenshire for 2024-2025, highlighting the progress that has been made collectively by the Aberdeenshire Community Justice Partnership;
- (2) that aligning the timescales of the two required Community Justice reports would be helpful to the IJB, for its awareness and scrutiny and officers be requested to make representations in this regard; and
- (3) that Officers be requested to consider how the IJB and Community Justice Partnership could work constructively together going forward.