

Meeting:	NHS Grampian Board
Meeting date:	13 August 2026
Item Number:	20
Title:	North-East System Transformation Group Terms of Reference
Responsible Executive:	Laura Skaife-Knight, Chief Executive
Report Author:	Gail Woodcock, Director of Strategy, Transformation and Performance

1 Purpose and recommendations

This is presented to the Board for:

- **Assurance**
- **Endorsement**

Recommendation(s)

The Board is asked to:

- **Endorsement** - Endorse the Final Terms of Reference for the North-East System Transformation Group
- **Assurance** – Review and scrutinise the information provided in this paper and take assurance that the Final Terms of Reference provide a relevant and robust basis to support the work of the North-East System Transformation Group

This report relates to:

- NHS Grampian Strategy: Plan for the Future
- Board Annual Delivery Plan

This aligns to the following NHS Scotland quality ambition(s):

- Safe
- Effective
- Person Centred

The subject matter of this report is relevant to the mitigation of the following strategic risks (further information provided in the Risk section below):

- Insufficient change and innovation to create a system which can meet demand and deliver on our strategic intent
- Inability to achieve the aspirations set out in Plan for the Future due to financial resource constraints and inefficiencies

2 Report summary

2.1 Situation

This paper provides the Board with the Final Terms of Reference for the North-East System Transformation Group for transparency, following approval by the Group on 3 July 2026 at its second meeting. These Terms of Reference are attached at Appendix 1.

The Terms of Reference set out the Group's purpose, authority, remit, membership and reporting arrangements, and clarify that statutory, financial and service decisions remain the responsibility of individual partner organisations and that existing governance arrangements for each organisation where decisions are required that arise from the Group remain unchanged.

2.2 Background

In response to increasing pressures across health and social care services due to increasing complexity of need, an ageing population, workforce and financial challenges, the three councils, three Integration Joint Boards within Grampian, and NHS Grampian re-established and refreshed the North-East System Transformation Group. The purpose of the group is to identify, analyse and recommend whole system opportunities to redesign services, improve outcomes, reduce duplication and make the best use of collective resources across the Grampian health and social care system.

The refreshed group has now met on two occasions and at their most recent meeting of 3 July 2026 approved the Final Terms of Reference.

2.3 Assessment

In May 2026, the Scottish Government approved funding for a 12-week diagnostic to develop a clearer, shared understanding of system (pan-Grampian) opportunities and propose priorities to focus on initially in 2026/27. The diagnostic, being led by KPMG, commenced in early June 2026 and draws on local knowledge, models of care across Scotland and comparable international health and social care systems to ensure innovative practice and best practice learning are considered. The opportunities identified and subsequently prioritised, will also have a clear strategic fit with the national policy context and landscape and emerging Sub National structures, and local priorities.

Engagement with local teams, frontline staff, service managers, clinicians and social care professionals, alongside regular reporting to the System Group, will help shape opportunities and test whether they are realistic, practical and deliverable across the Grampian system. This engagement with staff, including clinical engagement, will be key to the next steps and the success of the North-East System Transformation Group. A workshop is being planned for 14 September 2026, which will be attended by system clinical leaders.

The final diagnostic report is expected by the end of August 2026 and will be shared with the NHS Grampian Board and all partner organisations via normal governance routes in due course.

A Programme Management Office is being established to provide programme management expertise, analytical support and transformation capacity to partner organisations. The PMO will work alongside local services and existing teams to support the development and implementation of agreed transformation activity. The PMO is being

hosted by Aberdeenshire HSCP on behalf of all partners. A Senior Responsible Officer has been appointed and takes up post mid-August 2026.

2.3.1 Quality / Patient Care

The programme seeks to recommend whole system opportunities to redesign services, improve outcomes, reduce duplication and make best use of collective resources across the Grampian health and social care system. Any recommendations will be considered through the governance processes of NHS Grampian, the three IJBs and partner local authorities as appropriate. Where proposals may affect patients, the usual quality impact assessment process will be undertaken to support decision-making, with review by a clinically led panel to ensure that quality and patient care remain central to consideration.

2.3.2 Workforce

A Programme Management Office is being established including the temporary recruitment of programme managers. Any emerging proposals with workforce implications will be supported through the usual processes.

2.3.3 Financial

The Group seeks to support the financial sustainability of health and social care services across Grampian by identifying opportunities to improve productivity, reduce duplication and make best use of collective resources.

2.3.4 Risk Assessment / Management

Risks will be identified, managed and escalated through the PMO and governance arrangements.

2.3.5 Equality and Diversity, including health inequalities

Integrated impact assessments will be undertaken as required and in line with usual process.

2.3.6 Other impacts

N/A

2.3.7 Communication, involvement, engagement and consultation

Regular communication and engagement will continue to take place with key stakeholders as the programme of work progresses.

2.3.8 Route to the Meeting

The Terms of Reference were approved by the North-East System Transformation Group at its meeting on 3 July 2026.

2.4 Recommendation(s)

The Board is asked to:

- **Endorsement** – Endorse the Final Terms of Reference for the North-East System Transformation Group
- **Assurance** – Review and scrutinise the information provided in this paper and take assurance that the Final Terms of Reference provide a relevant and robust basis to support the work of the North-East System Transformation Group

3 Appendix/List of appendices

The following appendix/appendices are included with this report:

Appendix 1 – North-East System Transformation Group Final Terms of Reference