

**Highland Council/NHS Highland
Joint Monitoring Committee**

Minutes of the Meeting of the Highland Council/NHS Highland Joint Monitoring Committee held in the Council Chamber, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness, on Friday, 15 December 2023 at 10.30am.

Present:

Highland Council

Mr David Fraser (Chair)
Mr Raymond Bremner
Mr Derek Brown
Mr Ron Gunn
Ms Fiona Duncan
Mr Ian Kyle
Mr Derek Louden
Ms Fiona Malcolm
Mr Brian Porter

NHS Highland

Ms Sarah Compton-Bishop (Vice Chair) (remote)
Mr Alex Anderson (remote)
Ms Jo McBain (sub for Louise Bussell) (remote)
Ms Ann Clark (remote)
Ms Heledd Cooper (remote)
Ms Pamela Cremin
Ms Pamela Dudek (remote)
Mr Gerry O'Brien (remote)

Staff Representatives

Ms Elspeth Caithness (NHS Highland) (remote)

Third Sector, Carer and Service User Representatives

Mr Christopher Allan (Scottish Care Highland Branch Chair – Care Homes) (remote)
Ms Roisin Connolly, (Connecting Carers) (remote)
Mr Campbell Mair (Scottish Care - Care at Home) (remote)
Mr Ian McNamara (Highland Senior Citizen's Network) (remote)
Ms Gaener Rodger (Inspiring Young Voices) (remote, Items 1 and 2 only)
Ms Mhairi Wylie (Highland Third Sector Interface) (remote)

Officers Present

Mr D Park, Deputy Chief Executive, NHS Highland
Mr S Steer, Director of Adult Social Care, NHS Highland
Ms R Boydell, Head of Integration, Strategy and Transformation, NHS Highland
Ms E Ward, Deputy Director of Finance, NHS Highland (remote)
Mrs L Dunn, Joint Democratic Services Manager, Highland Council
Ms F MacBain, Senior Committee Officer, Highland Council

Mr D Fraser in the Chair

**1. Calling of the Roll and Apologies for Absence
Gairm a' Chlàir agus Leisgeulan**

Apologies were intimated on behalf of Dr T Allison, Mr A Christie (substituted by Mr R Gunn), Mr John Gibson (Unison), and Ms L Bussell.

**2. Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statement
Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt/Aithris Fhollaiseachd**

Ms G Rodger declared an interest as a Non-Executive Director of NHS Highland and left the meeting.

3. Minutes Geàrr-chunntas

There had been circulated and **APPROVED** Minutes of the Meeting of the Joint Monitoring Committee held on 27 September 2023.

4. Integrated Children's Services Update Report Aithisg Ùrachaidh Sheirbheisean Chloinne Amalaichte

There had been circulated Report No JMC/22/23 by the Chair of the Integrated Children's Services Planning Board.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- while there was a legal requirement to report annually on the performance framework, it was suggested reporting be undertaken more frequently, with suggestions including every second meeting or quarterly. The importance of monitoring outcomes was highlighted;
- information was sought on a timeline for the Neurodevelopmental Specification review, and this was to be considered at a workshop for key stakeholders the following week;
- with regard to the Scottish Child Interview Model, and a query on whether the children or staff were required to travel to the interviews, these details were still being finalised and would be reported back;
- in relation to the Whole Family Wellbeing Programme, the recruitment of a programme manager and six locality co-ordinators was welcomed;
- with reference to the Council's inability to continue funding some Carer programmes, it was queried whether this funding might be available directly from the Scottish Government for local third sector groups. Attention was drawn to the report on carers that was presented to the most recent Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Committee and to ongoing work with NHS Highland on funding issues;
- information was sought and provided on benchmarking for the performance management framework;
- the purpose and format of the report for this and for item 5 were queried, with particular reference to the overall strategic performance and the need to investigate challenges and barriers. It was important that substantive, data-based information was presented timeously to the Committee to provide proper assurance. A workshop on the assurance reports was planned and the matter would be further considered outwith the meeting; and
- it was further suggested the reports should contain more of a focus on understanding the impact the population was having on adult and children's services, as reflected in the integration process.

Thereafter, the Committee:

- i. **NOTED** the work undertaken by the Children's Services Planning Partnership in delivering the Highland Integrated Children's Services Plan 2023 – 2026;
- ii. **NOTED** the work of the delivery groups; and
- iii. **AGREED** to report regularly to the Committee on the performance management framework.

5. Adult Social Care Assurance Report **Aithisg Barantais Cùram Sòisealta Inbheach**

There had been circulated Report No JMC/23/23 by the Chief Officer, Highland Health and Social Care Partnership.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- the report lacked reference to unpaid carers, and the level of unmet caring needs was putting pressure on services and staff, with Connecting Carers having received around 300 referrals over the previous three months. The challenges facing unpaid carers, an estimated 55% of whom suffered from their own long-term health conditions, were highlighted and their statutory right to refuse to provide care was summarised. It was vital that due regard was paid to the physical and mental wellbeing of unpaid carers, and attention was specifically drawn to the need to support young carers. These issues would be addressed in the Joint Strategic Plan. Resources were required to support unpaid carers, particularly in relation to prevention, rather than reacting;
- consideration was given to the relationship between delayed discharges and care provision in the community, both at home and in care homes. It was clarified that hospital discharges were not automatically prioritised. The issue of risk was highlighted and, while risk could not be eliminated, it could be moved around the system. Risks and mitigating actions in this area would be covered in the report in future;
- the Highland Health and Social Care Committee (HHSCC) was due to consider an annual report on the carers strategy, which would provide the opportunity to consider in more detail the issues raised, particularly in relation to unpaid carers. The performance framework would also be considered by the HHSCC;
- information was sought on how the impact of the Self-Directed Support strategy would be evaluated, and whether payments rates for Adult and Children's services were being considered strategically;
- there was a need to reflect lived experience data, including locality issues, in reports to the Committee, as well as to consider what to do with data gathered, how to use it to prioritise services, and to monitor the outcomes from actions. It would be helpful if reported data on, for example, recruitment or funding pressures, was backed up with appropriate narrative;
- with reference to the increase in uptake of option 1 for self-directed support, it was queried how this could be monitored to know if outcomes were positive, given the, at times, less formal regulation of activities;
- the reporting of cost versus outturn when broken down into hourly rates was queried, and suggested that financial activity should be co-related with the out-turn figures to facilitate scrutiny. It was clarified that this issue was also relevant to Item 6 on the agenda and, due to the complexity of the issues, it would be further considered outwith the meeting with the NHS Highland Director of Finance;
- attention was drawn to the different formats of the two performance reports (Items 4 and 5), and it was proposed a house style be adopted, to include change programme actions; and
- a workshop would be scheduled in early 2024 to consider many of the issues raised.

Thereafter, the Committee:

- i. **NOTED** the agreed performance framework; and
- ii. in terms of assurance, **NOTED** the contents of the report and the attached Appendix, taking into account the continued and sustained stressors facing both NHS Highland and commissioned care services.

6. Highland Health & Social Care Partnership Finance Reports Aithisgean Ionmhais Com-pàirteachas Slàinte & Cùraim Shòisealta na Gàidhealtachd

a. Highland Health & Social Care Partnership Finance Report Aithisg Ionmhais Com-pàirteachas Slàinte & Cùraim Shòisealta na Gàidhealtachd

There had been circulated Report No JMC/24/23 by the Director of Finance, NHS Highland.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- in response to the financial query raised during discussion of Item 5, it was explained that the care at home budget was historically based, was not based on a cost per activity, and required to be rebased. Further detail was provided on the expected position for 2024-25, and could be considered further outwith the meeting, including the forecast budget gap. It would be preferable to move in the direction of commissioning on inputs rather than outputs;
- the honesty, rigor and transparency in the report were welcomed, as was the discussion about the need to amend the spend profile with a change programme approach;
- attention was drawn to the challenges facing all public sector organisations, and it was queried whether resources were being appropriately directed to achieve the required outcomes. Attention was also drawn to issues around the national care service, the Highland lead agency model, and the particular challenges facing Highland due to the remote and rural issues;
- in addition to years of funding challenges, NHS Highland now faced considerable recruitment challenges; and
- attention was drawn to the forecast outturn for the support services management budget, and it was suggested that this be reported on a monthly rather than annual basis in 2024-25.

The Committee **NOTED** the financial position at the end of Month 6 2023/2024.

b. Highland Council Finance Report Aithisg Ionmhais Chomhairle na Gàidhealtachd

There had been circulated Report No JMC/25/23 by the Head of Corporate Finance, Highland Council.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- it was clarified that the Council's ability to provide funding depended on Scottish Government funding decisions that were not yet known. The good working relationship with NHS Highland would be maintained, and assurance was provided that it was intended the vast majority of amber ragged savings would be delivered; and
- there was an aim to bring an end to unallocated savings measures.

The Committee **NOTED** the:

- i. report and financial forecast for Quarter 2 of 2023/24;
- ii. update provided regarding savings delivery for Integrated Children's Services; and
- iii. update provided regarding the outlook for 2024/25 and beyond.

7. Whole Family Wellbeing Approach Update Cunntas às Ùr mu Shoirbheis an Teaghlaich Iomlain

There had been circulated Report No JMC/26/23 by the Executive Chief Officer, Health and Social Care.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- while the approach was appropriate, and the team were doing well, it was felt progress had been slow, it being towards the end of the second of two years of the programme. It was queried what could be done to ensure services were delivered for maximum impact;
- the importance of underpinning, but not duplicating, other work was emphasised, and it was queried how lessons learned could be taken forward, especially if further funding was not forthcoming;
- the challenges faced at the start of the programme were highlighted, including recruitment issues, though in time this had turned around, with 27 applicants for six posts. A future challenge was to ensure the approach was sustainable; and
- information was sought and provided on the inclusion of respite care, and discussion with families, as part of the programme.

The Committee **NOTED** the:

- i. content of the report and the decision taken by the Community Planning Partnership Board to agree that the additional resource provided through the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund be utilised to drive forward the proposed programme as previously agreed by the Community Planning Partnership Board;
- ii. decision taken by the Community Planning Partnership Board to identify and fund a Programme Manager post to plan and implement the Whole Family Wellbeing Programme across Highland; and
- iii. decision taken by the Community Planning Partnership Board to establish a Programme delivery team and plan, to develop this partnership approach, using the [Scottish Government's Route-map and National Principles of Holistic Whole Family Support](#), that would report on progress to the Integrated Children's Service Board and ultimately to the Community Planning Partnership Board.

8. Strategic Plan – Update Post Consultation and Future Steps Implementation Plan

Plana Ro-innleachdail – Cunntas Às Dèidh Co-chomhairleachaidh agus Na h-Ath Cheumannan

There had been circulated Report No JMC/27/23 by the Highland Council Executive Chief Officer – Health and Social Care and NHS Highland Chief Officer.

During discussion, the following issues were raised;

- the Strategic Planning Group were thanked for their work;
- information was sought and provided on the implementation strategy;
- with reference to the changes required to keep people in their communities and living well, some investment might be required. Noting the significant pressures, difficult choices and focused resources would be essential, and a workshop to discuss these was suggested. Cultural change and realistic dialogue with communities to manage expectations were vital, and the capacity to support the required locality discussions was queried;
- a ‘you said, we did’ type of document might be useful to publish alongside the Plan to demonstrate the effectiveness of engagement with communities;
- attention was drawn to the possible role of the community planning partnerships in engaging with communities on implementing the Plan, with partners able to take the lead on certain aspects and avoid duplication of effort; and
- the engagement undertaken with campaign groups as well as with the general public was welcomed.

The Committee:

- i. **NOTED** and **APPROVED** the Strategic Plan for the Partnership in the terms appended to the report at Appendix 1; and
- ii. **AGREED** that the Adult Strategic Plan be published as representing the Strategic Plan for Health and Social Care Services for Adults for 2024 – 2027.

9. Risk Register Update

Cunntas às Ùr mun Chlàr Chunnairt

There had been circulated Report No JMC/28/23 by the Highland Council Executive Chief Officer – Health and Social Care and NHS Highland Chief Officer.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- attention was drawn to various amendments, including reference to ‘all’ rather than ‘both’ partners, reference SVQ2, rather than SVQ3 under workforce competency, and the inclusion of care at home under care home viability. An updated Risk Register would be circulated after the meeting;
- updated information on the achievement of workforce SVQ requirements was sought and would be circulated after the meeting. Plans were in place to ensure the requirement was met, however the risk of older, more experienced staff leaving the workforce as a result of the requirement to gain an SVQ

qualification was significant. It was vital to encourage younger people into the sector; and

- the joint Risk Register was welcomed and could help with long term horizon scanning to input into planning for financial stability and working towards net zero. Further discussion on this outwith the meeting was suggested;

The Committee:

- i. **NOTED** the report; and
- ii. **APPROVED** the draft Risk Register as appended to the report as Appendix 1.

The meeting ended at 1pm.