

**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, Headquarters, Inverness on 4 December 2025 at 10.30am.

Present:

Highland Council

Mr D Fraser (Chair)
Mr R Bremner
Mr D Brown
Mr A Christie
Mr I Kyle
Ms K Lackie
Ms F Malcolm
Mr P Oldham
Mr B Porter

NHS Highland

Ms S Compton-Bishop (Vice Chair)
Ms F Davies
Ms J Davies
Ms A Johnstone
Mr G O'Brien
Dr P Treon
Ms E Ward (sub for Ms H Cooper)
Dr N Wright

Staff Representatives

Ms S Purdie (Highland Council)

Third Sector, Carer and Service User Representatives

Mr C Allan (Scottish Care Highland Branch Chair – Care Homes)
Mr I McNamara (Highland Senior Citizen's Network)
Dr G Rodger (Inspiring Young Voices)
Mr H Burrows (sub for Ms Mhairi Wylie) (Highland Third Sector Interface)

Officers Present

Mr D Park, Depute Chief Executive, NHS Highland
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 for absence were intimated on behalf of Ms F Duncan, Mr A Anderson, Ms L Bussell, Ms H Cooper, Ms R Connolly, and Ms Wylie.

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

There were no declarations of interest.

**3. Minutes
Geàrr-chunntas**

There was circulated and **APPROVED** minutes of the meeting of the Joint Monitoring Committee held on 25 September 2025.

4. Highland Partnership Risk Register Update – Joint report Cunntas às Ùr mu Chlàr Cunnairt Com-pàirteachas na Gàidhealtachd

There was circulated Joint Report No JMC/17/25 by the Chief Officer, HSCP, and the Chief Social Work Officer.

During discussion, it was suggested that in terms of formatting, it would be helpful if the review dates for risks were included on the register, not only the date a risk had been identified, with particular reference to recent progress with NHS Highland information technology.

Thereafter, the Committee:

- i. **NOTED** the update and proposal following the Joint Monitoring Committee workshop held on Friday 14 November 2025; and
- ii. **AGREED** review dates be included on the Active Risk Register and to review the information technology risk in particular.

5. Chief Officer's Report Adult Services Aithisg Àrd-Oifigeir mu Sheirbheisean Inbheach

There was circulated Report No JMC/18/25 by the Chief Officer, Highland Health and Social Care Partnership.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- the Mid-Ross reablement team was congratulated on receiving a Grade 6 following an inspection by the Care Inspectorate;
- in reviewing the performance around Delayed Discharges, an explanation was sought and provided for the total number being 211, with care at home being 58 and care homes being 34. The numerical discrepancy related to people being in various stages of the discharge process, and it was suggested more detail on this be included in future reports;
- with reference to the commissioning strategy and implementation of the Strategic Plan, it was important to ensure sequencing of actions took the wider system into consideration; and
- assurance was sought and provided that, in terms of connecting strategies to frontline work, people were receptive to the changes and improvement measures, noting, however, that transformation would be a long term process.

Thereafter, the Committee:

- i. **NOTED** the work undertaken in implementing the HHSCP Joint Strategic Plan and assurance performance information as supplied;
- ii. **AGREED** further detail be included on the total number of people awaiting discharge from hospital in future reports; and
- iii. **AGREED** to give consideration outwith the meeting to the sequencing of implementation of the Strategic Plans with other key events taking place within the wider national context.

6. Integrated Children's Service Update Aithisg Bhliadhna Plana nan Seirbheisean Cloinne Amalaichte

There was circulated Report No JMC/19/25 by the Chair of the Integrated Children's Services Planning Board.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- although good progress was being made with the Home in Highland programme, targets were not being met and more detail was requested on this for a future meeting. Of key concern was the wellbeing of the children, and the Council and NHS Highland's responsibilities as corporate parents. Early intervention and prevention could have financial benefits in addition to improving lives, and information on the budget recovery plan, which had been considered at the recent JMC workshop, would be included in the requested report. The importance of synergy with Adult Services was highlighted;
- the implementation of GIRFEC (Getting it Right for Every Child) to ensure children and families were at the centre of all processes was vital, and attention was drawn to recent issues raised at national level to support neurodiversity in young people. An update on progress with these issues might be beneficial to the Committee in due course;
- the Chair reiterated the key aim to improve the lives of children and young people and pointed out that a standalone report on particular items could be brought to the Committee if required;
- attention was drawn to a new NHS Highland committee for population and health planning, which would benefit from information on the health outcome improvement work being undertaken for care-experienced young people;
- information was sought and provided on progress with metrics for the reported system issues, what proxy measures had been put in place, and whether these issues would be resolved before the next reporting cycle;
- further information was sought on the new health team, including timescales, and assurance was provided that resources had been identified and progress made;
- Inspiring Young Voices was one of a number of small third sector organisations focusing on young people's rights and participation. Work was underway to implement the Children and Young People's Participation Strategy and attention was drawn to the successful Vision 26 which had taken place in Wick recently, with another planned in Fort William at the end of January 2026;
- with the Integrated Children's Services Plan being due for renewal after 2026, the inclusion of children and young people's voices in the plan was urged. Attention was drawn to the strategic needs assessment that was being undertaken ahead of the next iteration of the Plan;
- reference was made to the importance of the third sector and statutory organisations understanding how they could work together most effectively, and attention was drawn to a service evaluation tool, 'How good is our third sector organisation?' which had been created to support the third sector to evaluate their performance and to identify priorities for action;
- attention was drawn to the links with the Highland Outcome Improvement Plan, and the dashboard that was being developed to track population health outcomes, which was being presented to the Community Planning Partnership the following day; and
- the value of engagement events when looking at population health was emphasised, with particular reference to the opportunities they provided to promote health and wellbeing;

The Committee **NOTED**:

- 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** a report be presented to a future meeting on the number of care experienced children or young people placed out with Highland, and progress with the Home to Highland programme.

**7. Highland Health & Social Care Partnership Finance Report
Aithisg 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 was circulated Report No JMC/20/25 by the Director of Finance, NHS Highland.

The Chair referred to the usefulness of the recent workshop and thanked officers for their work.

The Committee **NOTED** the financial position at Month 6 2025/2026 (September 2025).

**b. Highland Council Finance Report
Aithisg Ionmhais Chomhairle na Gàidhealtachd**

There was circulated Report No JMC/21/25 by the Chief Officer – Corporate Finance.

During discussion, the increased control over the management of systems and alignment of approach were welcomed, as was the local and national commitment to improving the lives of children. Activities should reflect the strategic plans, keep children in Highland wherever possible, and honour corporate parenting responsibilities in line with The Promise. Many of the issues raised in connection with Children’s Services applied to Adults too, and to working as a team across the partnership to address the needs of all. It was noted that many Integration Joint Boards across Scotland were struggling with similar challenges, but plans were in place to tackle the key issues and to promote partnership working between the Council, NHS Highland and third sector organisations.

A brief summary of progress with changing the model of integration between the Council and NHS Highland was sought and provided, with recommendations from the Steering Group due to be presented to the Council and to the NHS Highland Board in 2026. Strengthening leadership and working relationships were key to future success.

The Committee **NOTED** the:

- i. forecast financial position for the year as set out in this report and appendices to the report; and
- ii. explanations provided for any material variances and actions being taken or proposed.

The meeting ended at 11.30am.