CÙRAM IS SLÀINTE NAN EILEAN SIAR
INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD

MINUTE OF MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNCIL OFFICES, SANDWICK ROAD, STORNOWAY AND THROUGH MICROSOFT TEAMS ON THURSDAY 19 JUNE 2025 AT 2.00PM.

Voting Members Present:

Annetta Smith	Non-Executive Director, NHSWI (Chair)
Naomi MacDonald	Non-Executive Director/ IJB Voting Member
Karen France Macleod	Non-Executive Director/ IJB Voting Member
Calum Maclean	CnES Councillor/ IJB Voting Member
Iain Archie MacNeil	CnES Councillor/ IJB Voting Member
Susan Thomson	CnES Councillor/ IJB Voting Member

Non-Voting Members Present:

Nick Fayers	Chief Officer, IJB
Debbie Bozkurt	Chief Finance Officer, IJB
Morag Munro	WI Community Care Forum
Emma MacSween	Chief Officer Partnership Services and Community Care
Christina Morrison	NHS Lead Nurse Community
Clare Carolan	NHS Assistant Medical Director
Mike Hutchison	NHS Associate Director of Mental Health and Learning Disabilities

In Attendance:

Malcolm Burr	Chief Executive, CnES
Gordon Jamieson	Chief Executive, NHSWI
Claire Gardiner	Audit Scotland
Christopher Lewis	Audit Scotland
Donald E Macleod	CnES Senior Accountant
Derek Mackay	CnES Governance and Elections Manager
Shona Hadwen	CnES Principal Administrator, Governance and Elections
Yvonne Maciver	CnES Administrator, Governance and Elections

1. WELCOME

The Chair welcomed all members to the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

Norman Misty Macdonald	CnES Councillor/ Voting Member

3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. MINUTES

4.1 IJB Minute of 14 May 2025

The Board considered the Minute of the meeting of 14 May 2025.

Decision: **The Minute of the Meeting of 14 May 2025 was approved**

Action: **No further action.**

4.2 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

Decision: **There were no matters arising.**

Action: **No action required.**

4.3 Action Points as at 20 March 2025

The Chief Officer provided updates on the following items of the Action Plan:

7.4 – Draft Scheme of Integration is currently out for consultation and closes on 24 June 2025. Thereafter, this will go back through both partner bodies then back to the Board in September, prior to submission to the Scottish Government.

A question was raised about membership of the Harris Locality Planning Group. It was highlighted that this should be a voting member of the Board. It was suggested that Cllr. Kenny Macleod (Harris) be invited to join the Harris Locality Planning Group as the representative from the IJB.

The Chief Officer informed members of his intention to update the Action Tracker into a more usable and understandable document. It was noted in discussion that the current Action Tracker was not fit for purpose and did not clearly indicate when actions were completed. The Chair suggested the following actions in relation to modifying the Action Tracker:

- All actions currently on the tracker are reviewed and a clear description of the actions taken to complete the outstanding action are clearly documented for all Board members to note.
- The revised tracker will be reviewed at the next meeting of the Board, and once satisfied that the action has been completed, it will be removed from the tracker.
- An up to date Action Tracker would then be presented to each Board meeting and follow the same process.

Decision: **It was agreed to note the update provided.**

Action:

1. **Chief Officer to invite Cllr. Kenny Macleod (Harris) to become the Board representative on the Harris Locality Planning Group.**
2. **Chief Officer to work with the Clerk and update the format of the Action Tracker into a working document, to be presented to each Board meeting.**

5. CHIEF OFFICER REPORT

5.1 Chief Officer Update
5.1.1 Appendix 1 – HSCS IJB Financial Pressures
5.1.2 Appendix 2 – HSCS IJC Financial Pressures Prescribing
5.1.3 Appendix 3 – Letter to Cabinet Secretary
5.1.4 Appendix 4 – NCS Advisory Board
5.1.5 Draft Health and Social Care Integration Scheme

The Chief Officer submitted a Report which provided information on key national and local developments that had a material interest for the IJB as a Public Body. The context for the update focused on:

- Update to national financial forecast (including prescribing) – following early projections of the national financial forecast, further work had been undertaken nationally by IJB Chief Finance Officers which has given rise to a revised projection of an overall deficit of £497m set against a backdrop of diminishing reserves. The update went on to note that given the challenging nature of the local IJB, particularly the depletion of reserves, the IJB will be required to develop a sustainable financial strategy that is reflected in decisions on commissioned services going forward.

- Interim National Advisory Board – the Report noted that Scottish Government had recently established an interim NCS Advisory Board, plans are to be developed for a full Board through a fair appointment process. The Report went on to note the remit of the Board and that early work of the Board will focus on the production of National Care Service (NCS) Charter of Rights by February 2026.

- Programme for Government - the Programme for Government (PfG) was published on 6 May 2025. One of the main focus areas is around delivering high quality and sustainable public services. Locally this would focus on the potential of the Single Authority Model and the Report also noted the commitment from Scottish Government for the development of the Barra & Vatersay Community Campus.

- Notice of Integration Scheme – currently out for consultation as detailed earlier in the meeting.

The Chief Officer informed members of two further documents which had been released that week – The Health & Care Service Renewal Framework which has been jointly developed with CoSLA and the Population Health Framework. Both documents were to be considered together and the Chief Officer would forward these on to members.

The Chair informed members that she and other IJB Chairs had been invited to a meeting with the Cabinet Secretary for Health earlier that morning where both documents had been discussed at length together with discussions on the importance of having a commissioning plan. The draft Integration Scheme, currently out for consultation, clearly stated the commitment of the IJB to have an annual commissioning plan. The Chair further stated that in terms of governance, it was important that the commissioning plan, in relation to delegated services, was visible to the Board.

In discussion, the Chief Officer sought agreement from the Board to work with senior officers of the IJB to produce an updated version of the current commissioning plan for submission to the September board meeting.

Further discussion was held in relation to the Strategic Planning Group, and that it should be involved in the review of the commissioning plan. It was also noted that the minutes of meetings of the Strategic Planning Group should be brought to the IJB for information. It was noted that the next meeting of the Strategic Planning Group was scheduled for 15 July 2025.

Decision: **It was agreed to note the update.**

Action:

1. **Minutes of the Strategic Planning Group to come to the IJB for information in September 2025.**
2. **The Chief Officer to develop the Strategic Commissioning Plan in consultation with key stakeholders including the Strategic Planning Group. The Plan will contain key outcomes for delivery and will be presented to the IJB in September 2025.**

6. AUDIT AND RISK GOVERNANCE

6.1 Finance Bulletin 2023-24 – Audit Scotland

Claire Gardiner and Christopher Lewis from Audit Scotland delivered a presentation which gave an overview of the IJB Finance Bulletin from March 2025. The presentation noted:

- The majority of IJBs in Scotland reported a deficit on the cost of providing services requiring additional contributions from partner bodies and the unplanned use of reserves
- A 4% real terms increase in IJB funding between 22/23 – 23/24
- 24 IJBs reported a deficit on the cost of providing services
- 16 made an unplanned drawdown from reserves
- 5 made an operational surplus
- Recruitment challenges from previous years persist but related savings are being outstripped by inflationary cost increases
- The majority of the total planned savings were achieved, but a substantial proportion was achieved only on a one-off basis
- Total reserves held by IJBs have reduced by 40 per cent in 2023/24
- Almost all audits reported financial sustainability risks
- Instability in IJB leadership teams presented an ongoing challenge

- It is anticipated that the national funding gap will increase by 28%
- Projected funding gap was set to increase by £100m approximately from £357 in 2023/24 to £457 in 2024/25

Decision: **It was agreed to note the Report and the Presentation.**

Action: **No action from this meeting.**

6.2 Executive Summary – IJB Risk Management Strategy

6.3 Executive Summary – IJB Strategic Risk Register

6.4 Internal Audit – Risk Management Review

6.5 Internal Audit – Cyber Security (PRIVATE)

6.6 Internal Audit – 24/25 Annual Report

The Chair explained that items 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5 and 6.6 which had originally been included as items on the Agenda should have been considered at the Audit & Risk Committee meeting which was scheduled to take place on 4 June 2025. This meeting was cancelled due to the inability of either partner body to establish a quorum on that date. It is important that these documents are given due consideration at the Audit & Risk Committee, prior to an update being presented to the Board. For that reason, these items would be included on the Agenda for the next Audit & Risk Committee meeting, scheduled to take place on Wednesday 3 September 2025.

Decision: **Items 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5 and 6.6 were removed from the Agenda and would be considered at the next meeting of the IJB Audit and Risk Committee which was scheduled for Wednesday 3 September 2025.**

Action: **No action from this meeting.**

7. FINANCIAL GOVERNANCE

7.1 Executive Summary – Annual Accounts 2024-2025
7.1.1 Annual Accounts 2024-2025

The Chief Financial Officer, IJB, Ms Debbie Bozkurt, submitted the draft Annual Accounts 2024-2025 for approval. The introduction provided a summary of the IJB's financial performance for the year and how this has supported the delivery of its core duties. It also summarised the challenges and risks faced by the IJB in future years in the delivery of its objectives.

The Financial Statements for 2024-2025 were set out on pages 19- 27 of the Report and incorporate financial and other information required by the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the UK. The statement of Accounting Policies was detailed on pages 23 - 24 and explained the basis for the recognition, measurement and disclosure of transactions and other events in the Annual Accounts, to ensure that they present a "true and fair view" of the IJB's financial performance.

The Report noted that the annual accounts for 2023-2024 have yet to be audited and may have an effect on the 2024-2025 figures, although it was believed that the risk is low.

The Report stated that the IJB had an in-year underspend of £583k which was to be offset by transfer to general, specific and earmarked reserves. Full details of the reasons for the underspend were detailed in the Report.

The IJB, as at 31 March 2025 held reserves of £9,305m, an increase of £583k from 2023-2024. Details of specific reserves were outlined in the Report. Much of the earmarked and general reserves for the next three years would be used to ensure the Goathill Campus is funded within a break-even envelope and help offset underlying IJB deficits.

Following approval of the draft accounts, subject to administrative amendments, they will be made available for public scrutiny for a two-week period from 30 July 2025. They will then be forwarded to Audit Scotland for inspection.

Decision:	**It was agreed to approve the draft annual accounts subject to the relevant administrative amendments being made.**
Action:	**The Chief Financial Officer to follow relevant procedures for onward submission to Audit Scotland.**

7.2 Executive Summary - Budget 2025-2026
7.2.1 Budget 2025-2026

The Chief Financial Officer IJB, Ms Debbie Bozkurt, submitted a Report which sought approval of the draft budget for 2025/26. The Report stated that the IJB Budget for 2025/26 was presented to the Board on 20 March 2025 with a £1.453m gap and agreement that the Chief Financial Officer would report back to the Board in June when the draft annual accounts were completed to ascertain whether general reserves or any other carry forward reserves held at year end 2024/25 would be enough to bridge the financial gap for 2025/26.

The Report stated that at year end 24/25 the reserve position was higher than expected when the original budget was presented on 28th March 2025. This was due to; a £0.75m recurring budget adjustment for client income and a recurring £0.4m revision of provider budgets (both Social Care), and underspends within Social Care due to the inability to recruit to specific posts and a decrease in expenditure for Blar Buidhe due to the transfer of clients. The underspends due to vacancies and decrease in expenditure had been treated as non-recurring, other than the vacancy target set.

The Report indicated that this allowed for a small underspend in Social Care to be transferred to reserves and a reduction in need for transfer of monies from reserves. This was together with an increased sustainability payment to the NHS, which the relevant share for the IJB services being passed through. The Report noted that the IJB budget was now in a break-even position for 2025/26. The updated position was shown at section 2.3 of the Report, and it was noted there was an improvement in 2026/27 figures with some reserves remaining for 2026/27, however there were no other major improvement in the projected out-turn for 2027/28.

The Report further noted that cost pressures around prescribing, delayed discharges and locum consultants would remain a high risk.

In conclusion, the Report stated that a detailed review of all budgets and how to recurringly bridge the budget gap needed to happen within months, as agreed by the Chief Executives on NHS Western Isles and the Comhairle. The underlying deficits were on the whole bridged by not being able to recruit, which has resulted in higher delayed discharges, with associated costs. Difficult decisions needed to be made, remaining at the status quo was not an option.

Decision: **It was agreed to:**

- **approve the 25/26 Budget and 3-year plan;**
- **note the break-even position for 2025/26; and**
- **note that a break-even position, improving position for 2026/27 and the £5.5 projected gap for 2027/28.**

Action: **Follow up review of all budgets and how to bridge the budget gap to happen within months – Chief Financial Officer.**

8. PERFORMANCE

8.1 Executive Summary – IJB Performance Report
8.1.1 IJB Performance Report

The Chief Officer, IJB, submitted a Report for noting which stated that the IJB was required to report on the National Integration Indicators to Scottish Government via the Ministerial Strategic Group for Health and Community Care (MSG). The Report noted that these were intended to provide a view of how the Partnerships were progressing against a range of whole system level measures.

The Report highlighted that there were currently six MSG indicators:

- Emergency admissions
- Unscheduled hospital bed days
- A&E performance
- Delayed discharges
- End of life care
- The balance of care across institutional and community services

The Report gave more in depth information on each of the indicators. In addition, there was a secondary chart which benchmarked local performance alongside that of Highland Partnership. The rationale for this was that it represented a remote and rural population. Overall, the indicators provided a broad if somewhat limited indicator of the overall health of the population of the Western Isles.

The Chair raised a query on the relevance of the comparison between the local IJB and that of Highland Partnership given that there were significant differences between the two, although classed as remote and rural, Highland were faced with very different challenges to the islands.

It was agreed that the Chief Officer would ascertain if the local IJB could be compared to other island authorities as this was deemed more relevant.

The Report noted that early notice had been given that Scottish Government were reviewing the indicators and that they were likely to change.

The Report provided both a status report for Month of December 2024 and additional trend analysis for each of the indicators over the period January 2023 - April 2025. Trend analysis graphics provided an indication of performance trends in each of the domains.

Decision: It was agreed to note the Report.

Action: Chief Officer to investigate the possibility of performance statistics of the MSG indicators be compared to other island partnerships as opposed to Highland Partnership.

8.2 Delayed Discharge and Unmet Needs

The Chief Officer, Partnership Services and Community Care submitted a Report for awareness on the current position with regard to delayed discharge and unmet needs.

The Report stated that the Partnership's Delayed Discharge performance had deteriorated further in recent months. Full details were contained within Appendix 1. The capacity of social work and social care services had been impacted by the closure of the externally commissioned HC-One Nursing Home and the loss of 38 nursing beds. The level of unmet need for social work assessments was at the highest recorded at 193. The prioritisation of urgent and statutory work continued and the triaging of referrals for assessments and reviews. Recruitment to vacant posts had been variable with persistent vacancies in social worker and lead officer functions.

The Report further stated that in terms of service developments, in the short to medium term, the priority was the expansion of the capacity within the Goathill Campus. Across the 3 regulated services within the Campus, 83 of the total 102 placements were operational with an additional 3 used to support workforce requirements. Expansion of this service would be undertaken following the stabilization of the services transferred from HC-One and the completion of the workforce learning and development associated with the staffing transfer.

The Report went on to highlight further developments within the service, including:

- new moving and handling techniques that could see the utilization of only one carer in the transfer of service users;
- attendance management procedures to ensure all efforts are being made to address the well-being of staff;
- new approaches to attracting and retaining employees;
- distance learning undergraduate degree pathways into Allied Health Professions;
- potential recruitment opportunities to come from the proposed renewable energy developments

In conclusion, the Report noted that the Partnership had consistent challenges with maintaining system flow across the local health and social care services. In line with the current and projected demographics, the dynamics of workforce supply against demand for service is an acute and increasing challenge. Frontline social work and social care service capacity is consistently under significant pressure to sustain the care and support for individuals and families living with increasing frailty.

Considerable discussion took place regarding the impact of delayed discharges on patients, families and on planned hospital care. The Board discussed the varying system constraints and challenges that occur and the potential mitigations that were presented.

Decision: It was agreed to note the Report?

Action:

1. **It was agreed that a visit to the Goathill Campus be organized for all IJB Members.**

8.3 Correspondence received from NHSWI Chief Executive (PRIVATE)

The Chair presented a letter received from the NHSWI Chief Executive in relation to Outer Hebrides Delayed Discharges and the impact these are having on the Western Isles Hospital.

The content of the letter was considered and the Board also noted the significant discussion that had occurred earlier with item 2 around concerns raised. It was agreed that the Chair would issue a collective response on behalf of the Board in due course. It was also agreed that further in-depth exploration of factors impacting on service delivery would be considered at the August Development session.

Decision: **It was agreed to note the letter received from the Chief Executive, NHS Western Isles.**

Action:

1. **The Chair to issue a collective response on behalf of the Board, in due course.**
2. **Delayed Discharge to be included as an item of discussion at the next Development Session on 21 August 2025.**

9. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

9.1 Insurance Cover

The Chief Financial Officer presented a letter to the Board which confirmed CNORIS Insurance is in place. CNORIS (Clinical Negligence and Other Risks Indemnity Scheme) covers against such claims. The insurance is effective from 1 April 2025 until 31 March 2026 inclusive.

Decision: **It was agreed to note the update.**

Action: **No further action from this meeting.**

10. EVALUATION

	YES	NO	COMMENTS
Were you satisfied with the content of the agenda?	X		The Chair wanted to note that we were unable to cover the Audit items at today's meeting as the previous Audit & Risk Committee meeting, scheduled for 4 June 2025, had to be cancelled.
Was there sufficient time to review the papers between receipt and the meeting date?	X		With the exception of the Annual Accounts Report.
Were the agenda items placed in the correct order/ prioritization?	X		

Was there sufficient time allocated to all agenda items?	X		

Were the Executive Summaries an accurate reflection of the detailed paper?	X		
Was there sufficient refreshment breaks?	X		
Are there and significant issues which should be escalated to the parent bodies?		X	It was agreed to remove reference to the Scottish Government from this evaluation.
Did you consider that the Board/ Committee discharged its duty in respect of: • Proper Scrutiny • Relevant questioning • Constructive challenging	X		
Do you have any suggestions for improvement or additional comments about this meeting?			Comments should be made to Nick Fayers

11. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled meeting of the IJB will be held on Thursday 18 September 2025 at 10:00 am.