



Fife Health & Social Care Partnership

Supporting the people of Fife together

UNCONFIRMED MINUTE OF THE FIFE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD (IJB)

WEDNESDAY 25 MARCH 2026 AT 10:00am

Present:	David Ross (DR) Chair Colin Grieve (CG) Vice-Chair Fife Council – David Alexander (DA), Dave Dempsey (DD), Eugene Clarke (EC), Lynn Mowatt (LM), Rosemary Liewald (RLie), Sam Steele (SS), Patrick Browne (PB) NHS Fife Board Members (Non-Executive), John Kemp (JK), Sinead Braiden (SB), Jo Bennett (JB) Prof Chris McKenna (CMcK), Medical Director, NHS Fife Debbie Fyfe (DF), Joint Trade Union Secretary Kenny McCallum (KMCC), Staff Representative, Fife Council Kenny Murphy (KM), Third Sector Lead Paul Dundas (PD), Independent Sector Lead Ken Fraser (KF), Public Representative Morna Fleming (MF), Carer Representative Vicki Bennett (VB), Staff Representative, NHS Fife
Professional Advisers:	Lynne Garvey (LG), Director of Health & Social Care/Chief Officer Tracy Hogg (TH), Chief Finance Officer Lynn Barker (LB), Director of Nursing
Attending:	Ashleigh Allan (AA), Finance Business Partner, Fife Council Chris Conroy (CC), Head of Community Care Services Clare Buchanan (CB), Local Democracy Reporter Hazel Williamson (HW), HSCP Communications Team Joy Tomlinson (JT), Director of Public Health Karen Marwick (KM), Head of Complex & Critical Care Services Mary-Grace Burinski (MGB), Senior Health Promotion Officer Maxine Michie (MM), Deputy Director of Finance, NHS Fife Roy Lawrence (RLaw), Head of Culture, Engagement & Communities Ruth Bennett (RB), Health Promotion Service Manager Vanessa Salmond (VS), Head of Corporate Services, IJB Secretary & Head of Strategic Planning & Performance Vicki Birrell (VB), Team Manager, Strategic Planning Gemma Reid (GR), H&SC Co-ordinator (Minute)
Apologies:	Alistair Morris, Non-Executive Member, NHS Fife Caroline Cherry (CCh), Principal Social Work Officer Fiona Forrest (FF), Director of Pharmacy & Medicines Gillian McAuley (GMcA), Executive Nurse Director James Ross, (JR), Lead of Service, Children and Families and Justice

	Social Work Services & Chief Social Work Officer Jacqueline Drummond, Associate Medical Director Lisa Cooper (LC), Head of Primary & Preventative Care Services Lynne Parsons (LP), Employee Director, NHS Fife	
No.	AGENDA ITEM	ACTION
1	<p>CHAIRPERSON'S WELCOME / OPENING REMARKS / APOLOGIES</p> <p>David Ross, Chair of the Integration Joint Board (IJB), opened the meeting by welcoming all attendees to the Chambers and noted apologies as above.</p> <p>Those present were reminded that they should mute their mobile phones for the duration of the meeting and mute their microphone when not talking and in an effort to keep to our timings for this meeting, all questions and responses should be as succinct as possible.</p> <p>David advised members that a recording device was in use at the meeting to assist with Minute taking and the media have been invited to listen in to proceedings.</p>	
2	<p>DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS</p> <p>David Ross confirmed that there were no declarations of interest highlighted.</p>	
3	<p>MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING AND ACTION NOTE 28 JANUARY 2026</p> <p>The Minute and Action Note from the meeting held on 28 January 2026 were both approved as an accurate record.</p>	
4	<p>CHIEF OFFICER UPDATE</p> <p>The Chair handed over to Lynne Garvey for this item.</p> <p>Lynne Garvey began her update by warmly welcoming all attendees of the Integration Joint Board (IJB) and acknowledging just how busy the past few weeks have been across the Health & Social Care Partnership. Services continue to operate under sustained pressure, and yet she noted that the commitment, compassion and professionalism shown by colleagues right across the system has been remarkable. Lynne gave sincere thanks to every member of staff for everything they continue to do.</p> <p>Lynne highlighted work underway to support the Reduced Working Week for NHS Fife Agenda for Change colleagues, acknowledging the detailed planning being carried out across services to ensure smooth transition whilst sustaining essential care and gave thanks to Staffside colleagues and all involved in this work.</p> <p>Lynne noted good progression in the Community Hospitals Transformation Programme, and successful outcomes from national work on reducing drug-related harm in Fife, with a year-on-year reduction in deaths.</p> <p>Lynne highlighted some key activity taking place across the Partnership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation on the Fife Carers Strategy 2026-29 has taken place with feedback now being analysed. • Strengthened commitment to Prevention and Early Intervention with a new P&EI baseline self-assessment underway across services. • Locality Planning groups continue to ensure services reflect the needs and strengths of each area across Fife. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fife have been selected for Phase 2 of the National Primary Care Walk-In Service Pilot. • Podiatry Service contributing to early detection of atrial fibrillation. • Hollyview Ward at Stratheden Hospital recently celebrated its 10-year anniversary. • Haven Garden at Queen Margaret Hospital is now open. • Work on the Creating Hope Together national suicide prevention plan is helping to shape our local plan for 2026-29. • Small Steps to Connect Loneliness campaign has inspired meaningful pledges from Fife staff and residents. • Successful careers events at Queen Margaret Hospital and the Nursing Recruitment Fair which attracted more than 400 students. • Fantastic engagement at drop-in sessions with the Senior Leadership Team. <p>Lynne concluded the Chief Officer's Update by sharing that William Edwards would be joining NHS Fife as the new Chief Executive next month. Lynne acknowledged the support of Carol Potter and wished her all the best in her retirement. David echoed these sentiments.</p> <p>Rosemary commended the success of the career events at Queen Margaret Hospital.</p> <p>Jo Bennett asked about the timescale for the GP Walk-In pilot. Lynne advised that meetings are planned with the Scottish Government to progress this work, but there is no confirmed timescale at present.</p>	
<p>5</p>	<p>COMMITTEE CHAIR ASSURANCE REPORTS</p> <p>David Ross welcomed Vanessa Salmond who introduced the reports and confirmed that all statements had been signed off by current Chairs.</p> <p>Vanessa advised that as per standard practice these reports were being presented to provide the Board with a consolidated view of assurance across audit, risk, strategic planning, quality, and community-focused delivery. Each committee confirms it is operating in line with its Terms of Reference.</p> <p>Vanessa highlighted that the Quality and Communities Committee meeting held on 4 March was not quorate. As Standards Officer, she approved the continuation of the meeting, and full committee endorsement of both the Strategic Plan and the Year 3 Annual Report was subsequently secured via email to ensure appropriate representation.</p> <p>Agreement on the principles of these reports was discussed at the Quality and Communities Committee on 4th March 2026, the Strategic Planning Group on 4th March 2026, the Finance, Performance and Scrutiny Committee on 11th March 2026, the Audit and Assurance Committee on 13th March 2026.</p> <p>David Ross then invited Committee Chairs to comment in turn before opening to questions from Board members.</p> <p>Rosemary Liewald, Interim Chair of the Qualities and Communities Committee confirmed there were no areas of concern to escalate. Rosemary noted a successful meeting with all reports scrutinised in detail. Although not quorate, assurance was taken on the day, and no issues were identified regarding the documents circulated.</p> <p>Colin Grieve, Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee noted nothing to escalate from the group.</p>	

	<p>David Alexander, Interim Chair of the Finance, Performance and Scrutiny Committee, confirmed there were no matters requiring escalation and noted that the meeting had been positive.</p> <p>Dave Dempsey, Chair of the Audit and Assurance Committee, highlighted the Strategic Risk Register and noted that the Committee is monitoring progress against the target dates, many of which are set for 31 March 2026. He observed that there has been little recent movement on several risks and emphasised the need to review the target levels.</p> <p>Tracy Hogg advised this was noted at the meeting and the Strategic Risk Register would be reviewed alongside the new Strategic Plan timescales.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>The Board was assured that the Governance Committees are discharging their functions and remit and escalating any issues appropriately.</p>	
<p>6</p>	<p>LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS & ANNUAL REPORTS</p> <p>6.1 Creating Hope for Fife – Suicide Prevention Action Plan 2022-2025 Impact Report</p> <p>David advised that this report was discussed at the Quality and Communities Committee on 4th March 2026 and invited Ruth Bennett, Health Promotion Service Manager and Chair of Fife Suicide Prevention Multiagency Core Group and Mary-Grace Burinski, Operational Lead for Suicide Prevention, to present the report.</p> <p>Ruth advised that the report provides assurance on delivery and impact of Creating Hope for Fife suicide prevention action plan which was developed to meet the national requirement for local board areas to have a suicide prevention action plan to support the implementation of Creating Hope Together, which is the 10-year national suicide prevention action plan 2022-32.</p> <p>Ruth shared that the latest 2024 data reported 44 probable suicide deaths in Fife, a reduction of 14 from the previous year. The five-year rolling average indicates that Fife continues to follow national trends and remains close to the Scottish average.</p> <p>Ruth noted that the papers provide a comprehensive overview of the outcomes framework and outcomes map, outlining the processes followed and the supporting evidence gathered. She highlighted several key areas of work, including: clarifying partnership expectations; delivering suicide risk training to Fife Justice Service Social Work staff; embedding the Time, Space, Compassion approach across Fife; implementing the suicide prevention campaign; refreshing the guidance on understanding and responding to children and young people at risk of suicide; and progressing work on locations of concern through “The Bridge Project.”</p> <p>Ruth advised that findings, conclusions and recommendations are set out within the impact report, and this indicates significant progress towards the outcomes outlined within Creating Hope for Fife. Work is ongoing as the Partnership moves into the next three-year action plan, with consultation events currently underway.</p> <p>Areas for improvement which have been identified through the impact assessment include: increasing the involvement of people with lived and living experience to better inform the work; strengthening bereavement support; enhancing activity with at-risk groups; making greater use of local data and</p>	

<p>intelligence to improve understanding of probable suicides and identify emerging trends; and maximising the use of the local landscape by linking with locality planning groups and programmes of work such as Ask and Act and No Wrong Door.</p> <p>Finally, Ruth shared that moving forward, there is a plan to refresh the membership of both the core group and delivery groups.</p> <p>Due to the sensitivity of the subject, supporting documents were made available in the Chambers for members, and a link to the online resource was shared by email and posted in the meeting chat.</p> <p>David then invited Rosemary Liewald, Interim Chair of Quality & Communities to comment on discussions at Committee before opening to questions from Board members.</p> <p>Rosemary thanked Ruth for the report, noting that Committee had commended the work. She highlighted the clear evidence demonstrating that every possible measure is being taken to prevent suicide in Fife.</p> <p>Dave Dempsey raised concerns about the diagrams on page 72 being unclear and noted the challenge of absorbing such a detailed report. He also queried the progress against the “Where do we want to be in 2025” section at the bottom of page 46.</p> <p>Ruth confirmed that progress has been made across all areas. Some actions have been carried forward into the next action plan, while others have now been embedded into routine service delivery.</p> <p>Jo Bennett asked how Strategic Programmes link with the Drugs Partnership.</p> <p>Ruth advised that there is strong representation at the multi-agency core group, ensuring all partners are brought together. She added that the right people sit on the delivery groups, to ensure the work remains well-coordinated and aligned.</p> <p>Eugene Clarke asked for an update on the mobile mental health car, noting its positive evaluation and the agreement to expand the service to other areas.</p> <p>Lynne Garvey advised that a paper was presented to SLT on 23 March outlining the success of the initiative. The service has since been extended to the Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath areas. She added that herself along with SAS and Police colleagues are keen for it to become a substantive service, and that papers are currently being developed to take this forward with partners.</p> <p>David Alexander asked whether there are established links with the education sector and with social media.</p> <p>Mary-Grace confirmed that this is a multi-agency approach, with workshops in place to support teachers, including a planned session during the May in-service day. She added that work is ongoing to enhance support for parents and carers, with a dedicated working group already established.</p> <p>Professor Chris McKenna noted that it was not entirely clear from the report how the work connects with acute services. He highlighted that many distressed individuals who have attempted suicide present at Victoria Hospital and asked how feedback from the liaison psychiatry service and learning from adverse events are being incorporated.</p> <p>Ruth Bennett noted progress made over the past 3 years within A&E and invited Mary-Grace to share further information.</p>	
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	<p>Mary-Grace explained that Scottish Action for Mental Health colleagues are present within A&E. She added that she is involved in a national working group, which includes an A&E consultant from the Victoria Hospital, to further strengthen approaches and links with A&E services.</p> <p>Professor Chris McKenna noted that distressed individuals are not only seen in A&E but are also inpatients across ward areas. He questioned whether learning from significant adverse event reviews is fully incorporated into the review process as this is critical learning.</p> <p>Ruth confirmed that suicide prevention representation is actively involved in the suicide review process, having participated in three review panels.</p> <p>Joy Tomlinson commended Ruth and Mary-Grace for their work, particularly in supporting those experiencing bereavement.</p> <p>Lynne Garvey concluded by acknowledging the strong work within the Prevention and Early Intervention space and the substantial effort put into cluster reviews, while recognising the need to strengthen connections with the adverse review team.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>The Board was assured on the delivery and impact of “Creating Hope for Fife: Fife’s Suicide Prevention Action Plan”.</p>	
7	<p>LIVED EXPERIENCE & WELLBEING</p> <p>7.1 Lived Experience – Fife HSCP Reverse Mentoring Programme</p> <p>David Ross invited Roy Lawrence to introduce the Lived Experience video highlighting the success of the Fife HSCP Reverse Mentoring Programme.</p> <p>Roy noted that the IJB has consistently supported EDI work since the action plan was endorsed in 2024. He highlighted a video featuring colleagues who have served as mentors on the programme and acknowledged the contribution of the Ray Fernie Foundation, established by Ray’s wife, a former Fife Council employee. Following Ray’s passing in 2019, the Foundation funded both the reverse mentoring video and the apprenticeship video. Roy expressed his thanks to the Foundation and to Colin for their support.</p> <p>He further noted that 20 mentors from across the Partnership have already come forward, and mentee recruitment is underway this month. Vanessa and Tracy have volunteered to participate as mentees.</p> <p>Lynn Barker expressed that she was pleased to be part of the programme and had greatly valued the learning journey to date. She also thanked SLT colleagues for their involvement and emphasised the importance of advocacy for this programme.</p>	
8	<p>STRATEGIC PLANNING & DELIVERY</p> <p>8.1 Strategic Plan 2026-29</p> <p>David Ross advised that this report was discussed at the Quality and Communities Committee on 4th March 2026, the Strategic Planning Group on 4th March 2026, the Finance and the Performance and Scrutiny Committee on 11th March 2026 and invited Vanessa Salmond, Head of Strategic Planning and Performance, to present the report.</p> <p>Vanessa presented the final Strategic Plan for 2026–2029 for approval by IJB members, noting that the Plan was developed through robust evidence,</p>	

<p>extensive engagement, and collective input from colleagues across the system. It reflects three years of analysis and collaboration, incorporating feedback from communities, the workforce, partners, and Board Members.</p> <p>Vanessa shared that the Plan sets a clear direction focused on Prevention, Communities and Digital, and is informed by contributions from almost 3,700 participants. It has undergone multiple stages of scrutiny, with significant input from the Senior Leadership Team, Board Members, and the Strategic Planning Group, whose expertise ensured the Plan is both ambitious and deliverable.</p> <p>Vanessa highlighted that Board Development Sessions played an important role in shaping the strategic direction, and strong engagement has strengthened the Plan's clarity. Acknowledgement was given to the workforce and partners across Fife for their contributions during a period of operational pressure.</p> <p>The Plan has been shaped through wide-ranging engagement, including locality events, workshops, targeted sessions with seldom-heard groups, unpaid carers, third-sector partners, independent providers, and frontline staff. Public feedback endorsed the priorities and influenced key areas such as digital inclusion, community-led support, improved access, and the importance of seamless, person-centred care.</p> <p>The evidence base includes the 2025 Strategic and Locality Needs Assessments and the Health and Social Care Evidence Review, highlighting demographic and financial pressures and supporting the shift toward early intervention, community-based models, and digital approaches.</p> <p>Vanessa highlighted a suite of supporting documents which include the Strategic Delivery Plan, Equality Impact Assessment, Market Facilitation Plan, Directions, and an updated risk register. She shared that delivery arrangements are being refined, with clear portfolio-level accountability and SMART, outcome-focused action plans. Vanessa provided assurance that progress will be monitored through IJB Annual Delivery Plans, ensuring phased and proportionate implementation aligned with financial and workforce capacity, with regular reporting to the IJB.</p> <p>In summary, the Plan represents a shared commitment to supporting independence, strengthening communities, and delivering sustainable, compassionate, joined-up care. Vanessa commended the Strategic Plan 2026–2029 to the Board for approval.</p> <p>David Ross commended the quality of the engagement and consultation, noting that the Plan feels well integrated into day-to-day work. He expressed his thanks to Vanessa, Lynne, Colin and all those involved in its development.</p> <p>David Ross then invited Rosemary Liewald, Interim Chair of Quality & Communities, Colin Grieve, Chair of Strategic Planning Group and David Alexander, Interim Chair of Finance, Performance & Scrutiny to comment on discussions at Committees before opening to questions from Board members.</p> <p>Rosemary advised that the Quality and Communities Committee had taken assurance that the Strategic Plan represents the appropriate way forward and commended the work undertaken.</p> <p>Colin noted the significant improvement from the first draft and acknowledged the work undertaken behind the scenes by William and his team. He confirmed that the Strategic Planning Group was pleased to present the revised Plan to the Board.</p> <p>David Alexander commended the progress made, particularly within</p>	
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	<p>communities, and thanked Vanessa and the team for the quality of the Plan.</p> <p>Morna Fleming welcomed the repeated emphasis on supporting unpaid carers and was pleased to see strong references to localities and alignment with the Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Dave Dempsey highlighted the importance of ensuring the Directions and the budget align, noting that the Partnership is moving in the right direction.</p> <p>Lynne Garvey thanked all involved, and expressed her pride and excitement with the progress made, and acknowledged the contribution of partners and stakeholders.</p> <p>Jo Bennett sought clarification on how the commissioning strategy may impact delivery of the Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Vanessa advised that the commissioning strategy has been delayed, with a meeting scheduled next week to ensure alignment.</p> <p>Jo Bennett asked whether there is flexibility within the approach to ensure local needs can be met.</p> <p>Lynne Garvey explained that this is the purpose of the Strategic Needs Assessment, noting that commissioning on a Fife-wide basis is not effective and must instead be shaped by the needs of individual communities.</p> <p>Lynn Mowatt commended the level of consultation undertaken and the inclusion of locality-specific priorities.</p> <p>David Ross noted that the Community Plan for Fife is due to be refreshed and that this strategy will form an important building block within that work.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>The Board approved the Strategic Plan 2026-29 and the suite of supporting documentation.</p>	
	<p>8.2 Strategic Plan Annual Report</p> <p>David Ross advised that this report was discussed at the Quality and Communities Committee on 4th March 2026, the Strategic Planning Group on 4th March 2026 and the Finance, Performance and Scrutiny Committee on 11th March 2026, and invited Vanessa Salmond, Head of Strategic Planning and Performance to present the report.</p> <p>Vanessa presented the Year Three Annual Report for the Strategic Plan 2023-2026 and noted that the report summarises progress across the five strategic themes: Local, Sustainable, Wellbeing, Outcomes and Integration.</p> <p>During 2025, the Partnership continued to deliver improvements despite ongoing pressures in demand, workforce and finance. The focus remained on improving care quality, tackling inequalities, strengthening prevention and early intervention, and working collaboratively with partners.</p> <p>Vanessa shared that the 2025 Delivery Plan comprised 61 actions, of which 43 (70%) were fully completed, 16 (26%) were partially completed, 2 (3%) were delayed or closed</p> <p>Across the full strategic cycle (2023–2026), 188 actions were set, of which 166 (88%) have been delivered, 17 (9%) will be completed in 2026-27, 5 (3%) have been formally closed</p> <p>Vanessa noted the significant contribution of colleagues across health, social work, social care, the third and independent sectors, and locality partners,</p>	

	<p>whose work supported continued progress.</p> <p>The report highlighted areas where actions were delayed or revised. Vanessa advised that the Commissioning Strategy consultation was paused to focus on the Strategic Plan refresh and this work has now resumed.</p> <p>Analysis of the full cycle identified key shifts in future planning, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased focus on prevention • Embedding sustainability across planning • Greater use of digital innovation to support access, personalisation and efficiency <p>Vanessa noted that these insights have informed the development of the Strategic Plan 2026-2029, which was endorsed by the Board today.</p> <p>Vanessa noted strong governance throughout the year, with scrutiny provided by the Strategic Planning Group, Quality & Communities Committee, and Finance, Performance & Scrutiny Committee, all of which endorsed the report without amendment.</p> <p>The report provides assurance of sustained delivery, continued performance oversight, transparent management of change, and effective learning shaping the refreshed Plan.</p> <p>Vanessa commended the Year Three Annual Report (2025) to the Board and asked members to approve it for publication.</p> <p>David Ross then invited Rosemary Liewald, Interim Chair of Quality & Communities, Colin Grieve, Chair of Strategic Planning Group and David Alexander, Interim Chair of Finance, Performance & Scrutiny to comment on discussions at Committees before opening to questions from Board members.</p> <p>Rosemary noted good discussion at Committee and no particular concerns.</p> <p>Colin noted positive discussion at the Strategic Planning Group who supported progression of the report to IJB.</p> <p>David noted Committee were fully supportive of the annual report.</p> <p>Jo Bennett welcomed the clarity of the three-year plan and the learning reflected within it, noting the relevance to the children's services redesign. She queried whether the plan provides sufficient flexibility to support piloting and tests of change.</p> <p>Vanessa confirmed that the plan has been developed with built-in flexibility and appropriate corporate oversight to enable this.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>The Board was assured that Fife HSCP has successfully progressed the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2023-26 and is effectively monitoring the performance of the actions in the Year Three Delivery Plan 2025 and provided final approval for publication of the Strategic Plan 2023-26 Year Three Annual Report.</p>	
	<p>8.3 2025/26 Winter Vaccination Uptake</p> <p>David Ross advised that this report was discussed at the Quality and Communities Committee on 4th March 2026 and invited Chris Conroy to present the report.</p> <p>Chris advised that the paper was presented for assurance and noting,</p>	

<p>highlighting key learning to inform next year’s programme. The programme was delivered in line with national guidance, with the early rollout of the childhood flu vaccination proving highly successful and contributing to delaying and reducing the flu peak. Chris highlighted that uptake among older adults and care home residents was well coordinated and aligned with national averages.</p> <p>Lower uptake was, however, seen in working-age adults, pre-school and secondary school children, and health and social care staff. Earlier planning and more sustainable staffing models will be required for next year’s programme. Chris explained that the report therefore provides limited assurance, recognising that while delivery was strong in several areas, significant improvement and more targeted engagement will be needed to strengthen next year’s approach.</p> <p>The IJB was asked to note that both the Public Health and Wellbeing Committee and the Quality and Communities Committee supported the position outlined in the paper, and acknowledged the required improvements and lessons learned.</p> <p>Chris invited Joy Tomlinson, Director of Public Health, who confirmed that Fife achieved performance close to Scottish targets for the most vulnerable groups. Joy assured members that a structured lessons-learned approach will be taken forward to strengthen next year’s planning. Joy highlighted that early immunisation of school-age children resulted in Fife achieving a 60% uptake far earlier than the rest of Scotland, contributing to a lower flu peak in comparison. Despite the limited assurance overall, many risk-cohort targets were successfully met.</p> <p>David Ross then invited Rosemary Liewald, Interim Chair of Quality & Communities to comment on discussions at Committee before opening to questions from Board members.</p> <p>Rosemary noted that the report was discussed in detail at QCC, with particular attention drawn to the dip in pre-school uptake. She asked whether engagement with mother-and-toddler groups could be strengthened. Rosemary was assured that work will be taken forward to improve uptake in specific cohorts.</p> <p>Jo Bennett commented that describing the position as “limited assurance” felt harsh, suggesting that performance in vulnerable groups and school-age children might merit a “moderate assurance” rating.</p> <p>Chris acknowledged this, noting that Fife’s traditionally high standards may have influenced the assessment.</p> <p>Morna highlighted an issue within the table on page 157, noting two figures were shown for the 65–74 cohort and only one for 75+, and confirmed this would require correction. Chris advised that the table would be updated to make the cohorts clearer.</p> <p>David Ross raised concerns regarding uptake among pre-school children and those aged 6 months to 2 years, observing that Fife continues to lag behind the Scottish position. Chris advised that delivery approaches had not changed this year and that the variation may be linked to a spike in the population.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>The Board was assured that the Winter Vaccination Programme supports the Partnership’s strategic priorities for prevention, protection of vulnerable groups, and reduction of winter pressures across health and social care.</p>	<p>CC</p>
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INTEGRATED PERFORMANCE & QUALITY

9.1 Finance Update – Month 10

David Ross advised that this report was discussed at the Finance Performance and Scrutiny Committee on 11th March 2026 and the Extraordinary Local Partnership Forum on 17th March 2026 and invited Tracy Hogg, Chief Finance Officer, to present the report.

Tracy began her update by confirming that the report sets out the position as at January 2026, showing a £10.6m overspend, equivalent to 1.3% of the total budget. She noted this represents an adverse movement of £1.9m from the November position.

She highlighted that section 3 of the report provides detailed analysis of the financial position, including the key areas of overspend, underspend, and movements.

Primary & Preventative Care services are projecting an underspend of £2.29m, driven by proactive expenditure management and reduced growth in prescribing. The movement from November is favourable by £1m, reflecting overachievement of Medicines Efficiencies savings and reduced prescribing activity.

Complex & Critical Care is projecting an overspend of £7.8m, and Mental Health & Psychology an overspend of £4.3m, which includes £600k of undelivered savings. Tracy advised that these pressures arise from out-of-area specialist inpatients, higher-than-budgeted bed numbers, supplementary staffing, and high-cost locums. She noted that this is partly offset by a £1m Learning Disability underspend due to vacancies, which is a national issue.

Adult Social Care is projecting a £4.5m overspend, driven by package costs, transport, and delays in delivering £3.3m of planned savings, though assurance has been provided that these savings will be delivered in 2026–27. Community Care Services forecast a £2.6m overspend, directly linked to demand for Care at Home, Older People’s Residential care, and Nursing and Residential placements.

Tracy reported that the movement from November is favourable by £0.472m, largely due to increased income recovery. She noted that overspends across several areas are mainly linked to Service Level Agreements and Out-of-Area placements, with £4.4m of overspend in total, including £1.9m from non-achievement of savings.

She highlighted that the savings tracker shows delivery of 84% of planned savings. Included within the overall overspend are £6m of recovery actions, covering one-off funding, use of small reserve balances, reductions in non-essential spend, temporary non-filling of management posts, and staff mobilisation.

Tracy also advised that a £1.5m reserve remains in place to support the transition of community alarms from analogue to digital and anti-ligature works within mental health inpatient settings. Tracy confirmed that any unspent balance at the end of March will be carried forward to meet these commitments early in 2026–27.

David Ross invited David Alexander, Interim Chair of the Finance, Performance and Scrutiny Committee and Vicki Bennett, Kenny McCallum and Lynne Garvey, Co-Chairs of the Local Partnership Forum and to comment on

	<p>discussions at Committees before opening to questions from Board members.</p> <p>David acknowledged consistency in financial pressures over the years.</p> <p>Kenny noted positive discussion at the last LPF meeting with assurances made that SLT will work closely with Trade Unions this year.</p> <p>Rosemary thanked Tracy for the report, noting that the extraordinary meeting had provided the necessary assurance that the objectives will be met, while acknowledging that the proposed savings will be challenging but essential to achieve a balanced budget.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>The Board: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted the projected outturn position for delegated services for 2025-26 financial year as at January 2026 as outlined in Appendices 1-4 of the report. • Was assured that robust financial monitoring is in place. • Approved the Directions to NHS Fife and Fife Council for additional allocations in year. 	
	<p>9.2 Revenue Budget 2026-27 & Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2026-29</p> <p>David Ross advised that this report was discussed at the Strategic Planning Group on 4th March 2026, the Extraordinary Joint Committee on 17th March 2026 and the Extraordinary Local Partnership Forum on 17th March 2026 and invited Tracy Hogg, Chief Finance Officer, to present the report.</p> <p>Tracy opened her update by advising that the report sets out the proposed Revenue Budget for 2026-27 and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for 2026-29, providing the financial framework that will support delivery of the IJB's Strategic Plan and statutory duties over the next three years. She outlined the overall financial outlook, the scale of the challenge, and the actions required to ensure the Partnership can continue to deliver safe and sustainable services.</p> <p>She noted that while the Partnership maintains a three-year strategic focus, both the MTFS and annual budget are refreshed each year. The Draft Budget overview at Appendix 1 highlights the key funding changes and financial pressures shaping the budget, and Tracy advised that the budget gap for 2026–27 is £34.5m.</p> <p>Tracy informed members that current levels of demand have been fully reflected in the development of this budget, with Directions to partners set out at Appendix 2.</p> <p>She also highlighted that the Medium-Term Financial Strategy at Appendix 3 outlines a clear, proactive and realistic response to the pressures faced by the Partnership, structured around three core principles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prevention and early intervention to reduce long-term demand and improve outcomes 2. Transformation of models of care and pathways across the system, shifting activity and supporting people with earlier support, community-based pathways. technology-enabled models and digital tools 3. Financial sustainability through transformation, redesigned services, and strengthened integration with partners 	

Appendix 4 sets out the Savings Opportunities for 2026–27, totalling £23m. Tracy confirmed that these proposals were endorsed at the Extraordinary Combined Committee and at the Extraordinary LPF held earlier this month, and were being presented to today's IJB for approval.

She noted that, with a budget gap of £34.5m, the £23m of savings alone do not close the gap. Following further discussions with partners, an additional £11.2m of funding has been incorporated into the budget.

Both partners have proposed passporting matched additional contributions of £5.6m. For Fife Council, £2.6m has been agreed on a recurring basis at the Council Budget meeting of 26 February, with the remaining £3m of non-recurring funding dependent on a joint funding solution being agreed with NHS Fife. A further £5.6m of non-recurring funding has been proposed by NHS Fife, however, Tracy noted that the NHS budget will not be presented for approval until 31 March 2026 and therefore the proposed funding remains indicative at this stage.

Tracy highlighted that the paper emphasises the need for continued whole-system working with NHS Fife, Fife Council, and third and independent-sector partners to ensure that capacity, workforce planning and commissioning arrangements remain aligned to the financial position. She also noted that a financial risk register is included at Appendix 5.

Looking ahead, Tracy advised that an Investment Framework will be developed and co-designed with the Strategic Planning Group, with oversight and accountability from the IJB. This will support efforts to close the remaining budget gap in future years within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy. In parallel, work will be undertaken to refresh commissioning approaches and develop a commissioning and market-shaping framework with enhanced locality focus, underpinned by ethical and collaborative working.

In closing, Tracy advised that the report is intended to provide moderate assurance. While it reflects the challenging operating environment, it is supported by strengthened controls, including an established escalation process and a credible savings programme. She highlighted that £20m of recurring savings were delivered in 2024-25, with a further £25m delivered to date this year, representing over 80% of the savings target and a significant improvement from around 60% delivery in previous years. This track record provides evidence of the Partnership's ability to deliver the required savings for 2026-27 while maintaining services. Tracy also noted that the paper outlines clear system-wide governance arrangements.

David Ross invited David Alexander, Interim Chair of the Finance, Performance and Scrutiny Committee and Vicki Bennett, Kenny McCallum and Lynne Garvey, Co-Chairs of the Local Partnership Forum and to comment on discussions at Committees before opening to questions from Board members.

Colin Grieve acknowledged that, whilst supportive, the Strategic Planning Group do not underestimate the scale of the challenge.

David was assured that the savings brought forward are deliverable.

No comments were noted from the Local Partnership Forum.

Kenny Murphy noted that the report was helpful. Referring to Appendix 1, he highlighted that the Partnership is receiving £38.9m in additional inflation and uplift funding from NHS Fife, along with a further £14.6m from Fife Council. He observed that the Executive Summary indicates that some of this funding may be passported; however, the proposal suggests that none of the £53m will be

<p>passed on to the voluntary sector, despite their role in delivering services on behalf of the Partnership.</p> <p>Kenny commented that providing a 3.5% inflationary uplift to the voluntary sector would represent around 1% of the Partnership's additional funding. Given the considerable pressures faced by voluntary-sector partners, he suggested that the Partnership should strive for fairer treatment and consider allocating a small portion of the uplift to support them.</p> <p>Tracy Hogg advised that she would pick up the discussion with Kenny offline, noting that there was some uncertainty around the figures. She clarified that £24m had been received from partners in year one, with a further £12m provided for the Real Living Wage uplift. Partner contributions total £11m, giving an overall figure of £35m to support closing the gap. Tracy also noted that while Real Living Wage uplifts had been passed to the voluntary sector in previous years, a review this year showed that many voluntary-sector organisations were holding high reserve levels.</p> <p>Rosemary Liewald noted that committee were assured that whilst we have work to do, we are on track and decisions were well discussed at the Extraordinary meeting.</p> <p>Dave Dempsey complimented the investment framework and noted the importance of timely issue of Directions to Partners.</p> <p>John Kemp noted that while he supports the budget, as there are no viable alternatives, he does not share the same level of optimism. He remarked that although the Partnership is developing a strong track record, it is not flawless and emphasised the importance of early implementation to ensure delivery remains on track.</p> <p>Morna Fleming expressed her support for Kenny's comments regarding the voluntary sector, noting that unpaid carers rely heavily on voluntary organisations for essential support.</p> <p>Chris McKenna agreed with John Kemp's comments, noting that this is an extremely challenging budget. He acknowledged the significant work undertaken by Lynne and her team and recognised their strong track record of delivery but expressed concern about the potential impact on quality and safety, particularly given the additional savings required.</p> <p>He highlighted the well-recognised unmet need within communities, especially among older people, and referenced pressures across adult social care, nursing home placements and care-at-home services. Chris stressed the importance of closely monitoring any potential harms that may arise if the focus shifts too heavily towards savings at the expense of keeping people safe and ensuring needs are met.</p> <p>He concluded by noting that the budget pushes the Partnership further than in previous years, and that the IJB must be assured and comfortable with this direction while maintaining careful oversight of the impacts.</p> <p>Paul Dundas noted that while 2026-27 will be particularly challenging, the pace and escalation of the work underway to drive efficiencies should position the Partnership to benefit in future years.</p> <p>Jo Bennett acknowledged the challenges involved in setting the budget and echoed John's concerns, highlighting the fragility of partner funding. She emphasised that the issue is not solely about delivering savings but about effectively managing demand.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">TH</p>
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	<p>Lynne Garvey acknowledged the significant challenges involved but noted the requirement to set a balanced budget. She highlighted that partner contributions are based on delegated services covering both staffing and commissioning. Lynne explained that management actions and recovery measures can be taken further, and the Partnership's track record is recognised, including £6m of in-year recovery actions.</p> <p>She emphasised the importance of identifying early in the financial year when the position is moving off track, enabling timely decisions, made collaboratively with partners, about what activity should cease and what should not be commissioned. Lynne noted that demand and growth cannot be predicted with certainty and are currently higher than ever experienced.</p> <p>Tracy Hogg confirmed that funding has been allocated appropriately and is directed where it needs to be. She provided assurance that current levels of demand are fully reflected within the budget model, with some growth assumptions also built in.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>The Board examined and considered the budget for 2026-29 and associated savings and approved the issue of Directions to NHS Fife and Fife Council.</p>	
	<p>9.3 Annual Review of Best Value</p> <p>David Ross advised that this report was discussed at the Audit & Assurance Committee on 13th March 2026, and invited Tracy Hogg, Chief Finance Officer, to present the report.</p> <p>Tracy advised that the report was being presented to IJB members for assurance and approval, highlighting that Fife IJB has a statutory duty to ensure Best Value under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003 and adopted a Best Value Framework in 2019.</p> <p>She explained that the Framework sets out the key areas through which the IJB demonstrates compliance with this duty. The report provides the annual update for 2024/25, outlining the core elements of the Framework, the evidence supporting Best Value, and the improvement actions currently underway.</p> <p>Tracy also noted that the work previously reported through the Ministerial Steering Group self-evaluation on integration improvement has now been aligned with, and incorporated into, the Best Value Framework to reduce duplication. The review is further supported by the external audit report on the annual accounts, considered by the IJB in September 2025, with auditors confirming they were satisfied that the IJB has appropriate organisational arrangements in place to secure Best Value.</p> <p>David Ross then invited Dave Dempsey, Chair of Audit and Assurance Committee to comment on discussions at Committees before opening to questions from Board members.</p> <p>Dave noted committee were assured by content of the report.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>The Board was assured that Fife IJB is fulfilling its statutory duty to secure best value and approved the Partnerships Annual Review of Best Value for 2024-2025.</p>	

	<p>9.4 Performance Report – February 2026</p> <p>David Ross advised that this report was discussed at the Finance Performance & Scrutiny Committee on 11th March 2026, and invited Vanessa Salmond, Head of Strategic Planning and Performance to present the report.</p> <p>Vanessa advised that the February 2026 report was streamlined in response to feedback from the development sessions, providing an overview of all high-level indicators with a focus on areas subject to additional scrutiny through the escalation process. Six indicators have been escalated to SLT for deeper-dive analysis, with further development still required.</p> <p>Key themes include ongoing pressures within care-at-home waiting lists, positive improvements in psychological services, and a decline in complaints resolved within agreed timescales. Overall, the report provides moderate assurance, reflecting both progress made and areas where improvement is still needed.</p> <p>David Ross then invited David Alexander, Interim Chair of Finance, Performance & Scrutiny to comment on discussions at Committee before opening to questions from Board members.</p> <p>David noted that the deep-dive was useful and that the committee felt assured by the report.</p> <p>Dave Dempsey highlighted that on page 246 the columns are misaligned and do not match the following page, and that the entries within the table do not correspond to the explanation provided above.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>The Board was assured of the progress of key HSCP performance metrics and agreed to the 6 current escalations and change to key performance indicators.</p>	VS
10	<p>GOVERNANCE & OUTCOMES</p> <p>10.1 Membership Update</p> <p>David Ross introduced Vanessa Salmond who provided a verbal update on changes to IJB Membership.</p> <p>Vanessa shared that Mary Lockhart had stepped down from her role as a voting member of the IJB and expressed sincere thanks to her for her thoughtful and valued contributions. She was pleased to confirm that Patrick Browne has been appointed as Mary’s successor and extended a warm welcome to Patrick as he joins the Board.</p> <p>David Ross also warmly welcomed Cllr Patrick Browne to the Integration Joint Board.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>The Board approved the member transitions as highlighted in Vanessa’s verbal update.</p>	
	<p>10.2 IJB Workplan 2025-26</p> <p>10.3 IJB Workplan 2026-27</p> <p>David Ross advised that the IJB Workplans were available within the meeting pack for member information.</p>	

11	<p>MINUTES OF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEES / LOCAL PARTNERSHIP FORUM / ITEMS TO BE HIGHLIGHTED</p> <p>The minutes of the following Governance Committees were provided for information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality & Communities Committee - Confirmed Minute of 7 January 2026 • Local Partnership Forum - Confirmed Minute of 13 January 2026 • Finance, Performance & Scrutiny Committee - Confirmed Minute of 14 January 2026 • Audit & Assurance Committee – Confirmed Minute of 14 November 2025 • Strategic Planning Group – Confirmed Minute of 14 November 2025 <p>David Ross requested that any queries on the above were directed to the Committee Chair due to timescales.</p>	
12	<p>AOCB</p> <p>As no items of other business had been notified to the Chair in advance, the meeting was brought to a close, with the Chair confirming the dates of the next meeting.</p>	
<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS</p> <p>IJB DEVELOPMENT SESSION – Wednesday 29 April 2026 (Town House, Kirkcaldy)</p> <p>INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD – Wednesday 27 May 2026 (Fife House / MS Teams)</p>		