



INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD

Date of Meeting	2 December 2025
Report Title	Chief Officer's Report
Report Number	HSCP.25.080
Lead Officer	Fiona Mitchelhill, Chief Officer
Report Author Details	Graham Lawther Communications Business Partner glawther@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Consultation Checklist Completed	Yes
Directions Required	No
Exempt	No
Appendices	None
Terms of Reference	1(c) Any other matter that the Chief Officer determines appropriate to report to the IJB

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1. The purpose of the report is to provide the Integration Joint Board with an update from the Chief Officer on recent and upcoming activities.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Integration Joint Board (IJB):

- a) Notes the detail contained within the report.

3. Strategic Plan Context

- 3.1. The Chief Officer's report highlights areas of Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership (ACHSCP) activity which are relevant to the delivery of the Strategic Plan.



INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD

4. Summary of Key Information

4.1 Local updates

4.1.1 Week-long open event celebrates learning disability services

Aberdeen held special open days this autumn for Scottish Learning Disability Awareness Week. The Bon Accord Centre's Wellbeing and Vaccination Centre welcomed the public to learn about local learning disability services and activities.

The 2025 "I am here" awareness week featured display tables and presentations, and performances from Aberdeen's Makaton Choir and a dance group with disabled members. Attendees included service providers such as Affinity Trust, Community Integrated Care, Advocacy Service Aberdeen, ACHSCP's Care Management Team, SRS Care Solutions, learning disability nurses, AMZ Activities Group, and Create Aberdeen. The event was organised by ACHSCP's adult learning disabilities service.

4.2 Regional updates

4.2.1 Audit Scotland concerns for two health boards

NHS Grampian and NHS Ayrshire and Arran both needed large loans from the Scottish Government to break even in the last financial year, Audit Scotland says in new reports.

NHS Grampian received a £65.2 million loan in 2024/25 and is projecting a £68 million overspend in 2025/26. In May 2025, Grampian was escalated to Stage 4 of NHS Scotland's support and intervention framework due to concerns about financial sustainability, leadership and governance, and service performance.

NHS Ayrshire and Arran needed a £51.4 million loan in 2024/25 to break even and now has outstanding loans of £129.9 million, the highest amount across the NHS in Scotland. The board is forecasting a deficit of £33.1 million in 2025/26 and Audit Scotland has warned it does not have a clear plan for achieving financial sustainability.

Stephen Boyle, Auditor General for Scotland, said it would not be possible for NHS Grampian to achieve financial balance without a significant redesign of its health and social care system.



INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD

The full reports are at <https://audit.scot/news/health-boards-reliant-on-loans-and-financially-unsustainable>.

NHS Grampian Chief Executive Laura Skaife-Knight and board chair Alison Evison gave a presentation in October on NHSG's current position to IJB members. IJB members, meantime, participated in a special Insights session on the ACHSCP 2026/27 budget proposals on 31 October 2025. Public consultation on the savings options opened on 17 November 2025 and will close on 15 December 2025.

4.2.2 HOPE Conference

The recent HOPE Conference at Cults Academy brought together leaders, practitioners, and partners from across Grampian to share insights on collaborative approaches to health and social care. The event highlighted the importance of person-centred practice and showcased initiatives such as GIRFE, Putting People First, and Realistic Medicine, reinforcing our commitment to improving outcomes for local communities. With contributions from Scottish Government representatives and local leaders, the day fostered meaningful dialogue, practical learning, and a renewed sense of shared purpose. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, recognising the value of partnership working and the dedication of all involved in shaping a more integrated future for care delivery.

4.3 National Updates

4.3.1 Scottish Government outlines measures to address rising prison population

MSPs in the Scottish Parliament voted on 6 November 2025 to support the emergency early release of some prisoners under section 3C of the Prisoners and Criminal Proceedings (Scotland) Act 1993.

Due to increasing prisoner numbers, the Scottish Government sought Parliamentary approval for emergency release powers under section 3C of the Prisoners and Criminal Proceedings (Scotland) Act 1993.

Scotland's Justice Directorate has notified stakeholders of the measures being taken to address the rising prison population and manage the early releases.

The regulations allow the early release of short-term prisoners serving less than four years, provided they are due for release within 180 days. Certain groups,



INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD

including long-term, life, remand, terrorist prisoners, and those convicted under specific abuse or sexual harm acts, are excluded. Releases will occur in seven phases to support planning and maintain order.

Aberdeen Justice Social Work has been liaising with the Scottish Prison Service to support Governors with the veto process to identify any public protection issues in relation to the proposed emergency release of nominated prisoners.

We are also working alongside multi-agency partners such as the Upside (Voluntary Throughcare Service), Substance Misuse Services, the NHS and Housing to identify the support needs of each individual. The first tranche for Aberdeen under the measures saw five prisoners granted early release in mid-November.

4.3.2 Victims, Witnesses, and Justice Reform (Scotland) Act

The Victims, Witnesses, and Justice Reform (Scotland) Act received Royal Assent on 30 October 2025.

The Act, which received two years of scrutiny at the Bill stage, aims to improve the experiences of victims and witnesses in Scotland's justice system, especially victims of sexual crime and seeks to ensure that victims are treated with compassion and their voices are heard, ensure justice meets the needs of survivors of sexual offences, and ensure public confidence in the justice system.

Amongst several measures, the Act will establish a Victims and Witnesses Commissioner for Scotland and ensures justice is delivered in a trauma-informed way. It makes provision for victims to receive information, give views, and be referred to victim support services. It also makes provision for special measures for vulnerable witnesses and vulnerable parties in civil proceedings, and abolishes the not-proven verdict.

4.3.3 Criminal Justice Modernisation and Abusive Domestic Behaviour Reviews (Scotland) Bill

The Bill has passed Stage 3 in the Scottish Parliament and is now awaiting royal assent.

This is a dual purpose Bill and covers provisions that relate to criminal justice modernisation and domestic homicide and suicide reviews.:

The first part of the Bill is intended to improve the experiences of people who come into contact with the justice system through the modernisation of criminal procedures.



INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD

The second part of the Bill creates a statutory framework for Scotland's national multi-agency domestic homicide and suicide review model. The model aims to learn lessons where a person has died due to abuse. The learning gained will facilitate change and improvements so that individuals and communities are better supported by public services and deaths can be prevented.

The Bill creates a robust system for learning from domestic abuse-related deaths, aiming to improve safeguarding and support for victims. It also emphasises multi-agency cooperation and transparency in reviews and reporting.

The Bill will allow for the creation of a panel to review selected homicide or suicide cases linked to domestic abuse. Reviews are expected to begin in spring next year. They will be held in cases where public authorities or voluntary organisations were, or could have been, involved in the circumstances leading up to the death of a partner, ex-partner, or child where abuse was known of or suspected.

4.3.4 The Scottish Learning and Improvement Framework

The Scottish Learning and Improvement Framework (SLIF) provides a shared vision and priorities for improving adult social care support and community health services in Scotland. Developed collaboratively by the Scottish Government, COSLA and SOLACE, it aims to embed quality, learning and continuous improvement into the system. The framework focuses on enhancing experiences and outcomes for people who use services, ensuring their voices shape decisions, and establishing measurable outcomes to track progress. While SLIF represents a significant step forward, its high-level nature poses challenges for consistent implementation, requiring clear guidance, resources and staff training. Overall, SLIF seeks to create a more responsive and effective care system that meets the needs of individuals and communities.

4.4.5 National sub-planning for NHS Scotland

National sub-planning for NHS Scotland introduces a new collaborative approach to service planning and delivery at a scale larger than individual boards but below national level. Under the Co-operation and Planning Directions 2025, health boards are required to organise into two sub-national structures – Scotland East and Scotland West – supported by Sub-National Planning and Delivery Committees chaired by NHS Lothian and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde. This model aims to move from organisation-level planning to population-based planning, ensuring consistency, safety and value across services while addressing pressures such as rising demand, workforce challenges and financial constraints. It aligns with the Health and Social Care Service Renewal Framework (2025–



INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD

2035) and the Population Health Framework, promoting equity of access, efficient resource use and integrated planning across finance, workforce and infrastructure. Existing regional structures will transition into these new arrangements, with all boards expected to participate fully to maximise benefits for patients and strengthen resilience across Scotland's health system

5. Implications for IJB

5.1 Equalities, Fairer Scotland and Health Inequality

There are no direct equalities implications arising from the recommendations of this report as it is a noting report.

5.2 Financial

There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report as it is a noting report.

5.3 Workforce

There are no direct workforce implications arising from the recommendations of this report, as it is a noting report

5.4 Legal

There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report as it is a noting report.

5.5 Unpaid Carers

There are no direct implications relating to unpaid carers arising from the recommendations of this report as it is for noting.

5.6 Information Governance

There are no direct information governance implications arising from the recommendations of this report as it is for noting only.

5.7 Environmental Impacts

There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report as it is a noting report.

5.8 Sustainability



INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD

There are no direct sustainability implications arising from the recommendations of this report as it is a noting report.

5.9 Other Implications

There are no other direct implications arising from the recommendations of this report as it is for noting only.

6. Management of Risk

There are no risk management implications arising from the recommendations of this report as it is a noting report.