

Joint Isles Health and Care Meeting

Minute | 3 June 2025 | 19:00 | Teams

Present: Stephen Brown (Chair), Cllr Graham Bevan, Shirely Whiteman, John Daniels, Moria Byres, Cllr Janette Park, Ros Rendall, Cllr Melissa Thomson, Peter Donnelly, Ian Cursiter, Lynda Bradford, Cllr Rachael King, David Miller, Jackie Montgomery, Zoe Flaws, Fiona MacNab, Helga Scott, Gary Nickels, Rose Biddle, Leanne Bews, Ian Cursiter, Cllr Heather Woodbridge and Stephanie Johnston (notes).

Stephen welcomed everyone to the meeting, apologising for the lack of formal agenda. It was request that a discussion on care at a future meeting would be helpful. **Action:** Stephanie.

Ferry Accessibility and Challenges

Concerns were raised about the accessibility of ferries, particularly the limited seating available for individuals with disabilities or mobility issues. An incident was shared where there were more passengers requiring accessible seating than available which led to a distressing situation. Cllr Woodbridge updated on the progress towards securing funding for new ferries, which would include accessible features such as quiet spaces and improved seating arrangements. However, it was noted that even with positive funding news, the new ferries would take a number of years to be operational.

Strategic Documents

Stephen gave an update on the new Strategic Plan 2025 – 2028 and the Strategic Plan Delivery Plan 2025/26, which were both approved by the Integration Joint Board in April. The Strategic Plan Delivery Plan details the actions for the upcoming years. If Members believed that they could assist in delivering the actions they were encouraged to get in touch.

It was shared that work is progressing on developing the new Children's Services Plan. The Plan aims to address the unique issues faced by children and young people on the Isles compared to those on the Mainland. It covers a wide range of services, from universal health and education services to child protection and support for young people with disabilities and neurodiversity. Members were asked to consider the needs of children and young people on their isles and provide input.

Financial Challenges

The significant financial challenges faced by the Health and Social Care Partnership, with a overspend of £3.5 million at the end of the financial year 2024/25 was advised. A £5.8 million of the spend was utilised on agency staffing, including nearly

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£1 million on accommodation and travel for these staff. The reliance on agency staff, while crucial for ensuring services are delivered safely, is not sustainable long term. Work is progressing to fill permanent positions with initiatives such as the 'Golden Hello', 'Refer A Friend' and the 'Grow Our Own Social Work', but progress is slow.

Resilience Planning and Emergency Services

David provided an update on the upcoming exercises to test the Balfour's major emergency plan and preparations for the Island Games. An update on the implications for health and social care premises following the introduction of Martin's Law was provided. The challenges currently being faced with the transition to digital communications was discussed, noting the impacts to emergency services and community resilience. The need for robust communication systems, especially during power cuts, was emphasised. It was updated that multi-agency efforts are ongoing to address these challenges, including exploring solutions like satellite communications.

Recruitment

Following a query on the Advanced Nurse Practitioners situation across the isles it was updated that there are currently a number of vacancies due to retirements and other staffing changes. It was advised that the recruitment process had been slightly more challenging than usual due to the need to offer fixed term contracts. These are less appealing to potential candidates however are necessary as work is progressing to ensure the rota complies with working time directives. John provided assurance that efforts are ongoing to fill these positions and shared there had been some success in recruiting GPs. There was a discussion on the importance of community involvement within the recruitment process, and an apology was provided that on the latest occasion following interviews having to be rescheduled that the community representative was missed. The importance of candidates visiting the island before accepting positions was reiterated.

Neurodevelopmental Provision

There was a discussion on the long waiting times for neurodevelopmental assessments, particularly for autism and ADHD, with some children waiting several years for assessments. The process for assessment involves a range of agencies including Education, Psychology, GPs and Allied Health Professionals which has led to fragmented waiting lists. Work is progressing to streamline the process by merging these waiting lists and establishing a single point of access for referrals. It was also advised that there are plans to increase capacity by securing additional Consultant Paediatrician time. The increasing demand of adults waiting for neurodevelopmental assessments was noted. It was advised that work is ongoing to address this and improve waiting times and efficiency of assessments.



Working together to make a real difference

Future Meetings

It was agreed that Members would consider future agenda items and get in touch to add these for discussion. **Action:** All.

Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday, 30 September 2025.



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