

Joint Isles Health and Care Meetings

Minute | 30 September 2025 | 19:00 | Teams

Present: Stephen Brown (Chair), Cllr Graham Bevan, Cllr Heather Woodbridge, Helen Sieviewright, John Daniels, Lindsay Crowson, Melanie Slater, Cllr Mellissa Thomson, Moira Byres, Leanne Bews, Cllr Rachael King, Shaun Hourston-Wells, Shirley Whiteman, Zoe Flaws, Ian Cursiter, Colin Leslie, Lynda Bradford, Gary Nickells, Helga Scott and Stephanie Johnston (notes).

1. Welcome

Stephen welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Minutes from the Previous Meeting

The minutes were agreed as an accurate reflection of the meeting and would be uploaded on the Integration Joint Board's webpages. **Action:** Stephanie.

3. Unpaid Carers

An overview of the Carers Strategy Group was provided including the priorities for unpaid Carers. The second Carers Conference is on 27 November 2025 and will be looking at what the priorities of carers are and supports available. This could be livestreamed, and pending approvals from those in attendance, could be recorded and shared thereafter for those unable to attend.

Previous issues include that unpaid carers do not recognise themselves as a carer and they have been unaware of what supports are available to them. A lot of work has been done locally to promote this, however the most recent data shows that only 43% of carers feel supported. Crossroads Care Orkney, who are commissioned to provide support for unpaid carers, have advised that there are 12 individuals on the isles who they are supporting. They also advised struggles to recruit unpaid carers on the isles. It was agreed that more detailed information on isles would be shared. **Action:** Shaun. Another issue is providing unpaid carers with access to breaks. This will become a right for individuals following the Care Reform (Scotland) Bill being implemented. It was also suggested that links are made with the Wellbeing Coordinators as they work with vulnerable people on the isles and updated support leaflets are shared. **Action:** Shaun.

Development of the Young Carer Strategy is almost finalised and it is hoped that schools will allow some young carers to speak at school about being a carer. It was advised that the Council has been asked to look at a step up policy approach to enable people to stay in their job while also undertaking caring responsibilities. It is hoped that once the Council has implemented such a policy that other organisations will also consider adopting this.



It was updated that to make a referral for support the less formal approach would be to approach Crossroads Care Orkney's Carer Support Service, but there are other options available such as Social Work.

Concerns were raised in relation to respite whereby individuals taking up respite do not appear to return to their community which makes others nervous about requesting respite. It was advised that this whilst there are sometimes occasions where someone goes for respite and ends up becoming a permanent resident, there are always valid reasons for this and service users and their families have full control of decisions.

4. Carer Update

Helen shared that currently Care at Home have 165 service users, of those 24 are on the outer isles. Of those currently waiting for packages of care 13% are on the isles and the remaining 87% on the Mainland. It was also advised that there are more individuals with complex care needs and requiring larger packages of care.

To address vacancy issues a recruitment drive to encourage people into a career in care or return to a career in care which have included development of Golden Hellos and Refer a Friends. Since introducing these incentives interest in post has significantly increased and vacant posts have reduced. An update on the three vacant posts on the Isles was provided. In terms of advertising roles, it was advised that the recent Westray advert, which had been more focused specifically to the isle, had been much more successful and a more personalised approach to isles posts will now be done. An offer was made to promote roles on community group to assist advertising.

It was advised that there were 78 individuals on the isles who had a Telecare/Community Care Alarm. There are no contracted Community Responders on the isles and these are all covered by private arrangements. So far 41 individuals have transition from analogue to digital services, and the remaining 37 are progressing. It was acknowledged that there have been connection issue challenges across the UK, the local team are working with Scottish Government Office who provides supports and it was advised that robust plans are in place.

5. Residential Model

It was advised that at a recent Integration Joint Board Development Session, there had been a discussion on potential options to deliver services which would be more sustainable and also meet the Working Time Directive. Following this a meeting was held with Councillors Thomson and Woodbridge to discuss if these were achievable or not. The discussion was very valuable and following the meeting it was suggested that a return to the previous model may be worth considering. To enable this there is a need to address the housing issue and to develop a package which is attractive,

not only to the clinician but also to their immediate family. This would require joint working with a number of key stakeholders such as Housing and Development Trusts.

It was queried how this model would avoid 'burn out' and potential lack of variety to ensure skills and experience is maintained and some suggested options were shared on how this could be done. As plans develop these would be further enhanced. Some concerns were raised on the practicality of this model.

6. Service User Representative on the Integration Joint Board

Stephen advised that the Integration Joint Board was looking for a new Service User Representative following the previous person stepping down. To be applicable to undertake this role a person has to be in receipt of a health and/or care service such as registered with a GP or Dentist. Stephen provided an overview of the commitment and should anyone wish to know more about the role and/or be interested to get in touch.

7. AOCB

7.1. Suicide Prevention Conference

It was advised that the Conference went well and was a good space and opportunity to highlight supports available. It highlighted the importance of having conversations and the more it is spoken about the easier it is to talk. It was agreed to find out if the Conference was recorded and could be shared. **Action:** Stephen.

7.2. Resilience

It was updated that the Psychiatric Emergency Plan has been approved and could be shared if anyone wished to see it. It was advised that currently Eday has no Scottish Fire and Rescue Safety

7.3. Primary Care Services Recruitment

It was queried what had happened to the recent Nurse Practitioner recruitment on Shapinsay. John apologised that there seems to have been an administration error and when the interviews were rescheduled the Community Council representative had been missed. John provided an overview of the other recent recruitment efforts to ensure all vacancies are filled.