



Stephen Brown (Chief Officer)

Orkney Health and Care

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Agenda Item:

Orkney Integration Joint Board

Wednesday, 21 February 2024, 09:30.

Council Chamber, Council Offices, Kirkwall.

Minute

Present

Voting Members:

Orkney Islands Council:

Councillors Rachael A King, Jean E Stevenson and Ivan A Taylor.

NHS Orkney (via Microsoft Teams):

Issy Grieve, Rona Gold (proxy) and Joanna Kenny.

Non-Voting Members:

Professional Advisers:

- Stephen Brown, Chief Officer of the Integration Joint Board.
- Dr Kirsty Cole, General Practitioner representative, appointed by NHS Orkney.
- Dr Louise Wilson, Secondary Medical Care Practitioner representative, employed by NHS Orkney (via Microsoft Teams).

Stakeholder Members:

- Janice Annal, Service User Representative (via Microsoft Teams).
- Jim Love, Carer Representative.
- Danny Oliver, Staff-side Representative, Orkney Islands Council.

Clerk

- Hazel Flett, Service Manager (Governance), Orkney Islands Council.

In Attendance

Orkney Health and Social Care Partnership:

- Lynda Bradford, Head of Health and Community Care.
- Maureen Firth, Head of Primary Care Services.
- Maureen Swannie, Head of Strategic Planning and Performance/Interim Head of Children, Families and Justice Services.
- Shaun Hourston-Wells, Acting Strategic Planning Lead.

Orkney Islands Council:

- Veer Bansal, Solicitor.
- Paul Kesterton, Information Governance Officer (for Items 1 to 16).

Not Present

Non-Voting Members:

Professional Advisers:

- Sharon-Ann Paget, Interim Chief Social Work Officer of the constituent local authority, Orkney Islands Council.
- Sam Thomas, Nurse representative, employed by NHS Orkney.

Chair

- Councillor Rachael A King, Orkney Islands Orkney.

1. Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded members that the meeting was being broadcast live over the Internet on Orkney Islands Council's website. The meeting was also being recorded, with the recording publicly available for listening to after the meeting for 12 months.

Apologies for absence had been intimated on behalf of the following:

- Meghan McEwen, NHS Orkney.
- Morven Brooks, Third Sector Representative.
- Ryan McLaughlin, Staff-side Representative, NHS Orkney.
- Frances Troup, Head of Community Learning, Leisure and Housing, Orkney Islands Council.
- Morven Gemmill, Associate Director – Allied Health Professions, NHS Orkney.

2. Appointments and Re-appointments

There had been previously circulated a report considering various appointments and re-appointments to the Integration Joint Board, together with associated appointments to its committees and sub-committees, for consideration and approval.

The Service Manager (Governance) advised that the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Integration Joint Boards) (Scotland) Order 2014, read in conjunction with the Orkney Integration Scheme, regulated membership of Board, together with the term of appointment of the various members. Section 4 of the report detailed the various appointments and dates for re-appointments, together with the relevant appointing body.

Following a review of committee membership by NHS Orkney, appointments had been made to the Integration Joint Board for the period to December 2025. As a result of the appointments made by NHS Orkney, consideration required to be given to the Chair of the Board's Performance and Audit Committee, which must be chaired by a member from the opposite party which chaired the Board.

The Board noted:

2.1. That the Orkney Integration Scheme stated that the Chair and Vice Chair of the Integration Joint Board rotated every two years in May, to enable the appointments of Chair and Vice Chair to rotate equally between the Local Authority and the Health Board.

2.2. That all other appointments, with the exception of the Chief Officer, the Chief Finance Officer and the Chief Social Work Officer, who were members of the Board by virtue of the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Integration Joint Boards) (Scotland) Order 2014 and the post they held, were for a period of two years.

2.3. That, in addition, individual Board appointments were made as required when a position became vacant for any reason, and that any member of the Board could be appointed for a further term.

2.4. The undernoted appointments made by NHS Orkney, in December 2023, in respect of its voting membership of the Integration Joint Board:

- Issy Grieve.
- Joanna Kenny.
- Meghan McEwen.
- Davie Campbell (proxy).
- Rona Gold (proxy).

The Board **resolved**:

2.5. That Joanna Kenny be appointed Chair of the Performance and Audit Committee.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest intimated in respect of items of business to be discussed at this meeting.

4. Minute of Previous Meeting

There had been previously circulated the draft Minute of the Meeting of the Integration Joint Board held on 13 December 2023.

The minute was **approved** as a true record.

5. Matters Arising

There had been previously circulated a log providing details on matters arising from previous meetings, for consideration and to enable the Board to seek assurance on progress, actions due and to consider corrective action, where required.

In respect of matters arising from the previous meeting on 13 December 2023, Stephen Brown provided the following updates:

- Action 1 – full update on recovery process – a report was on the agenda for discussion.
- Action 2 – delivery tracker on Strategic Plan – this would be submitted to the Performance and Audit Committee in the first instance.

Regarding outstanding actions from previous Board meetings, Stephen Brown provided the following updates:

- Action 2 – Risk Appetite – a date had now been set for a development session in March 2024, facilitated by colleagues from the Scottish Government.
- Action 4 – Climate Change Duties – although the target date was November 2023, the Climate Change Duties Reports from both partner organisations were included in the report to be considered later in the meeting.
- Action 7 – the minute of the meeting with the Area Clinical Forum held in December 2020 had now been shared with the Chief Executives of both parties, with discussions ongoing. The Strategic Planning Group continued to discuss current and ongoing pressures within residential care, which would also be shared with the Area Clinical Forum.
- Action 10 – Additional investment – although a total of 11 posts had been approved, challenges remained around the funding in respect of four posts. An update would be submitted to the next meeting of the Board.

In response to a query from the Chair regarding submission of the Winter Plan to the Board, Stephen Brown confirmed that this should be submitted earlier than November or December and undertook to submit the Winter Plan to the Board by August/September each year at the latest.

6. Joint Clinical and Care Governance Committee

There had been circulated the approved Minute of the Meeting of the Joint Clinical and Care Governance Committee held on 27 November 2023, together with the Chair's Assurance Report, to enable the Board to seek assurance.

Due to the Chair of that meeting not being available, Stephen Brown highlighted the following matters of concern or key areas of risk which required to be escalated to the Board:

- Challenges with monitoring child health visiting and escalating to the Joint Clinical and Care Governance Committee were caused by staffing issues. Vacancies had now been filled, an improvement plan implemented and regular reporting to the Committee would commence shortly.
- Mental health transfer bed – revised model of care approved by the Integration Joint Board was still proving challenging to progress, given current financial constraints.

- Pressure on bed capacity within The Balfour, with numbers fluctuating from nine delays in November to one over the Christmas period. The Committee recognised the pressure on unpaid carers, and a proposed carers' strategy was on the agenda for this meeting for discussion.

Issy Grieve welcomed the establishment of and regular reporting by the Social Work and Social Care Governance Board to the Joint Clinical and Care Governance Committee. Regarding delayed discharges, she queried whether January and February had remained as challenging. Stephen Brown responded that challenges continued with delayed discharges, which had fluctuated between six and nine in the last four to six week period.

Councillor Rachael King noted the lack of written papers to the meeting of the Joint Clinical and Care Governance Committee.

The Board scrutinised the approved Minute and took assurance.

7. Performance and Audit Committee

There had been previously circulated the unapproved Minute of the Meeting of the Performance and Audit Committee held on 6 December 2023, to enable the Board to seek assurance.

As the Chair, Meghan McEwen, was not present, Stephen Brown, in the absence of a Chief Finance Officer, highlighted the main areas considered by the Performance and Audit Committee on 6 December 2023, namely:

- External Audit Annual Report.
- Annual Accounts for year ended 31 March 2023.
- Inspection Assurance Report in relation to Registered Services within Orkney Health and Care.
- Social Work and Social Care Services' Experience Report – complaints and compliments.

The Board scrutinised the unapproved Minute and took assurance.

8. Strategic Planning Group

There had been previously circulated the approved Minute of the Meeting of the Strategic Planning Group held on 12 December 2023, together with the unapproved Minute of the Meeting of the Strategic Planning Group held on 15 January 2024, to enable the Board to seek assurance.

Issy Grieve, Chair of the Strategic Planning Group, highlighted that the Group had focused on a specific priority of the Strategic Plan, as follows:

- 12 December 2023 – Early intervention and prevention.
- 15 January 2024 – Delivery milestones for 2023/24 and 2024/25 review.

A further meeting was scheduled for the following week, which would focus on the terms of reference of the Group.

The Board scrutinised the approved and unapproved Minutes and took assurance.

9. Joint Staff Forum

There had been previously circulated the unapproved Minute of the Meeting of the Joint Staff Forum held on 30 November 2023, to enable the Board to seek assurance.

In the absence of the Chair, Ryan McLaughlin, Stephen Brown, as co-Chair, highlighted the following matters:

- Workforce/service pressures across all services.
- Updates on vacancies, particularly the successful recruitment to five of the six Advance Nurse Practitioner posts, with a sixth practitioner since recruited.
- Recruitment initiatives.
- Staff induction programme.

Danny Oliver, co-Chair, highlighted the discussion on the All Age Learning Disability service, whereby further consultation on the delivery model would be undertaken. He also asked the Board to bear in mind the challenging staffing situation and how difficult it was for existing staff teams working with reduced resources and/or people not in post.

In response to a query from Councillor Ivan Taylor regarding agency workers able to work more hours than permanent staff, Lynda Bradford advised that most agency workers preferred to work longer hours, given they did not have the same social circle as permanent staff, although there were provisions governing maximum working time set out in legislation.

(NB: clarification of the legal position was sought after the meeting. The position is that an employer is required to take all reasonable steps to ensure that each adult worker works no more than 48 hours on average in each working week, but that a worker can, if they wish to do so, agree in writing to opt out of the 48-hour weekly maximum, thus enabling them to work more than 48 hours a week on average).

Jim Love sought further detail on the creative approaches to recruitment. Stephen Brown advised that work was ongoing with the Council's Improvement and Performance and Human Resources teams on innovative ways to attract and retain social care staff, including golden hellos and refer a friend bonus, which had been introduced successfully elsewhere. Further, with a limited working age population, the service needed to make the profession as attractive as possible. Whilst Stephen Brown was very grateful for agency staff putting their lives on hold to travel to Orkney to plug the gap, it should be recognised that continuity and consistency of care was not the same as with a permanent workforce.

Councillor Rachael King also expressed her thanks to agency staff. However, regarding recruitment initiatives, she suggested the Board remain conscious that this was not just an Orkney issue, but a national concern, and she did not want Orkney to be in a competitive situation; a collaborate approach should be taken to encouraging people into the care sector. Orkney, however, had an added complication with the pressure of staffing on the outer islands.

The Board scrutinised the unapproved Minute and took assurance.

10. New Kirkwall Care Facility

There had been previously circulated a report presenting an update on progress with the new Kirkwall care facility, for information.

Lynda Bradford advised that work continued on the new build, with a revised completion date of December 2024 when the building would be handed over to the service for testing and commissioning, as well as staff familiarisation, following which an operational date would be confirmed. A site visit for Integration Joint Board members and Elected Members of Orkney Islands Council took place on 1 February 2024 and pictures of the build shared with residents at St Rognvald House. Following a consultation undertaken by Kirkwall and St Ola Community Council, suggested names were passed to the residents, family and staff of St Rognvald House, with Kirkjuvagr House the preferred name.

Councillor Jean Stevenson thanked the service for organising the site visit. Regarding interior design, she queried whether the current staff or dementia specialists would have input. Lynda Bradford confirmed this would be the case. When Hamnavoe House was constructed, that part of the build was sub-contracted, with a wide range of stakeholders included and mood boards created.

Issy Grieve also appreciated the walk through of the new facility, which was full of light and space, including space for expansion, and noted that the deplorable weather was one of the main causes of the delay.

Janice Annal advised that, personally, she did not like the name or spelling of the new facility. Councillor Rachael King referred to the process undertaken, which was detailed in the report, including that 62% had voted for that name.

Councillor Ivan Taylor referred to the ongoing revenue costs of both facilities and queried whether any thought had been given to the future use of St Rognvald House. Lynda Bradford confirmed that, once a Council service no longer required a building for operational purposes, it was passed to the Estates team, however, the service was required to meet the cost of building security until an alternative use was identified. She would speak to the team about what progress was being made regarding alternative use of the St Rognvald House site.

The Board noted progress made since the last full report to the Integration Joint Board in June 2023, as follows:

- Works were considered to be proceeding at a steady pace, although some minor alterations to bedroom layouts, as well as delays to service connections, had resulted in a revised completion date of December 2024.
- Suggestions for the name of the new facility had been received from Kirkwall and St Ola Community Council, following their consultation with pupils of local primary schools.
- Residents, families and staff members were invited to vote on the suggestions.
- The new facility would be called Kirkjuvagr House.

11. Climate Change Reporting Duties

There had been previously circulated a report presenting the Climate Change Reporting Duties report for 2023, submitted to the Scottish Government, for scrutiny and awareness, together with similar reports for Orkney Islands Council and NHS Orkney, for information.

Shaun Hourston-Wells reminded the Board of its duties regarding climate change reporting, which mainly related to policies and emissions associated with the employment of staff, ownership and occupation of buildings, plant and vehicles, and the delivery of services. Consequently, the content of the Board's report was very limited.

Further guidance for completion of the report template, specific to Integration Joint Boards (IJBs), was issued in July 2023 by Sustainable Scotland Network. This included a request for information around governance, as well as the local authority and NHS Board areas responsible for service delivery, and details of any work undertaken between IJBs and their local authority / NHS board partners.

Whilst governance information was included in previous iterations of the climate change duties report, this year's report stated that the interests of the IJB would be represented on the nascent Orkney Islands Council Officers Group, forthwith.

On 30 November 2022, the Board asked that the respective Climate Change Duties Reports of both Orkney Islands Council and NHS Orkney be included along with the IJB's report, from 2023. Copies of both reports had been circulated, with some of the highlights included in sections 5 and 6 of the covering report.

Members again expressed their frustration with what appeared to be a pointless exercise, wasting officers' time in completing the standard template. Whilst not undermining the reporting requirement, if it was not clear why the report was required, or the effectiveness of the reporting, it became a tick box exercise.

Shaun Hourston-Wells referred to previous requests from the Board to write to the Scottish Government expressing those frustrations and his understanding that the guidance issued in July 2023 could have been in response to representations made, not just by Orkney. Saying that, the guidance was very limited and related mainly to governance. If the Board so wished, he offered to write again to the Scottish Government, although anecdotal feedback was consistent, in that the reporting duties related to all public bodies and the IJB fell into that category.

Maureen Swannie offered to raise the matter at the national Strategic Planning and Performance Officers Group and report back to the Board in due course.

The Board noted:

11.1. The Orkney IJB Public Sector Report, attached as Appendix 1 to the report circulated, on compliance with climate change reporting duties for 2023.

11.2. Analysis of the Climate Change Duties reports for both Orkney Islands Council and NHS Orkney.

11.3. That an Orkney Health and Social Care Partnership staff member had been invited to join the Council's Climate Change Officer Group, to represent the interests of the Partnership.

12. Records Management Plan

There had been previously circulated a report presenting an update on progress in implementing the Records Management Plan, for consideration and approval.

Shaun Hourston-Wells advised that the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 obliged the Integration Joint Board (IJB), and other public authorities, to prepare and implement a Records Management Plan, which set out proper arrangements for the management of records.

The IJB's current Plan was approved by the Keeper of the Records of Scotland on 5 February 2021. However, three elements of the Plan were approved on the 'Improvement Model' terms and the Keeper required further work to be undertaken, which was described in section 4 of the report circulated, and related to three distinct elements, namely:

- Business Classification – as IJB records were held on the Council's systems, this was being addressed by the Council's Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS) project.
- Destruction arrangements – significant progress had been made, including the availability of an industrial shredder, procedures for transferring paper records due for destruction and the backlog of back-up tapes, which had now been destroyed. The one outstanding matter was the destruction of digital records and again, this would be addressed through the EDRMS project.
- Audit trail – again, this would be addressed through the EDRMS project.

The Board noted:

12.1. That the current Records Management Plan, approved by the Board on 9 December 2020, was approved by the Keeper of the Records of Scotland on 5 February 2021.

12.2. That, following review by the Council's Information Governance Officer, an additional sentence regarding utilisation of the Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS) project had been added to section 4 of the Records Management Plan, to indicate that deployment was ongoing.

12.3. That progress on implementation of the Records Management Plan would continue to be brought to the Board every two years unless there were any proposed changes requiring approval in the interim.

The Board **resolved**:

12.4. That the changes highlighted in the Records Management Plan, attached as Appendix 1 to the report circulated, be approved for submission to the Keeper of the Records.

13. Children's Services Plan

There had been previously circulated a report presenting Orkney's Children's Services Plan, for consideration and approval, in so far as it related to the remit of the Board, together with an Equality Impact Assessment.

Maureen Swannie advised that members may well have seen the draft Plan at other forums, including the Joint Clinical and Care Governance Committee and the Council's Policy and Resources Committee, noting that it would be considered by the Board of NHS Orkney on 24 February 2024. Feedback from the Care Inspectorate on the draft Plan was positive.

The Plan had been drafted by the Children's Services Strategic Partnership, which was chaired by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, Orkney Islands Council, and contained four strategic priorities. One of the strengths of the draft Plan was that the voice of children and young people was highlighted, although much more could be done and this would be reflected in the annual updates.

Danny Oliver advised that he had not seen the document in any other setting and raised a number of points, including:

- Seeking assurance that the young people involved in developing the plan were representative of young people as a whole.
- The timescale for development of a neurodevelopmental strategy, given that the target date in the action plan had already passed.
- Seeking assurance that training on neglect was embedded and not a tick box exercise, particularly considering the number of agency workers currently employed.

In response to the points raised, Maureen Swannie advised as follows:

- Colleagues in Community Learning and Development had utilised existing forums, including the Youth Forum, as well as speaking to members of the Care Experienced Young Persons Group. She concurred that wider consultation was required for future iterations.
- A workshop was due to be held shortly to consider the neurodevelopmental strategy, development of which had been delayed due to capacity issues which had since been addressed.
- She had recently met with colleagues from Action for Children and a rolling cycle of training would be arranged, including training the trainers, given that the majority of the previous cohort of trainers had since left.

Issy Grieve referred to children's mental health and wellbeing and noted that there was no mention of alcohol or drugs. In a similar vein, Dr Kirsty Cole advised that gender identity was referenced within the plan, but there was no mention of sexual health and contraception.

Both Stephen Brown and Maureen Swannie advised that neither had featured in conversations with young people, although both matters would be noted and discussed for the next annual update and may well feature in future iterations of the Plan. Notwithstanding, work was ongoing in the background, including through the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership.

Councillor Rachael King remarked that, despite the Plan being submitted to a variety of forums, new issues continued to be raised and scrutinised.

The Board noted:

13.1. That responsibility for children's services planning rested with a Local Authority and its relevant Health Board, working collaboratively with other members of their Community Planning Partnership as well as with children, young people and their families.

13.2. That the Children's Services Plan 2023-26 had been prepared by the Orkney Children's Services Strategic Partnership.

13.3. The need to review and update the plan annually, and, in particular, to better represent the outcomes of involvement and engagement with those involved in delivering children services, as well as Orkney's children, young people and families.

The Board **resolved**:

13.4. That Orkney's Children's Services Plan 2023-26, attached as Appendix 1 to the report circulated, be approved, in so far as it related to the remit of the Integration Joint Board.

14. Unpaid Carers Strategy

There had been previously circulated a report presenting the draft Orkney Unpaid Carers Strategy, for consideration and approval, together with an Equality Impact Assessment and an Island Communities Impact Assessment.

Shaun Hourston-Wells advised that the previous iteration of the Orkney Unpaid Carers Strategy included an action plan, with each group of actions associated with one of four Statements. The Statements were a declaration of how unpaid carers in Orkney should perceive the support they receive, at the end of term of the Strategy. A review of progress against each of the actions had been carried out and was detailed in section 4 of the covering report.

Significant work had been undertaken to raise the profile of unpaid carers in Orkney, culminating in the conference held in May 2023 which was well attended and received, by both statutory and third sector organisations, as well as unpaid carers.

Assessments and support plans were now routinely delivered, although planned short breaks were currently suspended, with only emergency respite available due to challenging resource and other circumstances, although a small test of change was due to be trialled shortly.

Following the conference, officers undertook a survey and it became clear that many carers were not aware of or were unfamiliar with the full scope of services available to them. This had subsequently led to development of the next Unpaid Carers Strategy, with section 6 of the covering report setting out the significant challenges which would be faced in implementing the proposed actions that had been identified as most likely to deliver significant improvements to the lives of unpaid carers.

Potential solutions included the anticipated recruitment by the Council to posts of Carer Support Worker, who would assist in undertaking formal assessments of carers, and a Carer Lead, who would provide much needed capacity to the strategic planning and oversight of carer support services.

Officers were also currently working with Third Sector SDS (Self-Directed Support) specialists to investigate opportunities for small-scale pilot projects, where the use of personal budgets, including pooling, could deliver better outcomes for carers, whilst invariably delivering significant savings over traditional, residential, short breaks solutions.

Councillor Rachael King thanked officers for arranging the conference which had been an incredibly valuable experience. Reading the individual comments submitted in response to the survey gave an insight into carers' priorities, particularly the need for a break. Although innovative solutions were required, given the complexity of care in the community, sometimes it was a step too far asking a carer to step in and try to figure it all out for themselves.

Rona Gold remarked that the strategy was well written and flowed well, but maintained a serious tone. She also welcomed the clear and measurable targets in the action plan. However, she asked whether the two posts were guaranteed or whether they were still pending. Shaun Hourston-Wells confirmed that the roles had been approved, funding had been identified and the HR processes were nearing completion which would result in the recruitment process going live shortly.

Dr Louise Wilson noted the practical issues with regard to respite care which had been highlighted and queried whether a pilot programme, as outlined in the action plan, was sufficient to address the issue. She also queried the number of unmet requests, the waiting time for assessments and how that was monitored.

Shaun Hourston-Wells referred to the innovative use of money for short breaks, given that there were many different circumstances for carers. Many did not want the person they cared for going into residential care – they just wanted a break, such as a few hours to go to a social club or meet up with friends. In the isles, the situation was further compounded as it was very difficult to find anyone to provide that care, hence the proposal to pool budgets.

Lynda Bradford advised that respite budgets were approved through the Resource Management Meeting, however once approved, it was often difficult to find staff to provide the respite care. All requests for respite care were recorded and prioritised by need, and not just by the date entered on the waiting list.

Stephen Brown referred to the paper discussed at the last Board meeting regarding the demands for respite care and the availability in residential care settings, which remained challenging.

Jim Love appreciated the review of the previous strategy and the work undertaken in bringing forward the next iteration, however he noted that day centre respite was not mentioned. Further, he queried how the strategy would be launched and whether that might include a members' seminar, with unpaid carers invited to share their story. Shaun Hourston-Wells advised that he was working with the Council's communications team regarding a launch plan. He apologised for the lack of reference to day care and undertook to include that in the final plan prior to publication.

Danny Oliver concurred with previous speakers on the quality of the draft strategy and suggested that the Council should support unpaid carers by concrete measures, namely the provision of paid leave for carers. Further, this should be considered by all employers, not just the Council.

Councillor Jean Stevenson also gave her thanks to the organisers of the conference, but queried the term “unpaid carer” – people looked after family members because of their love for that person and not for any financial or non-financial reason. Shaun Hourston-Wells confirmed that “unpaid carer” was the nationally recognised term for anyone providing care for no remuneration. Many people did not consider themselves as carers and the single biggest challenge was to help people realise they were carers.

Jim Love referred to his role on the Board, namely the carers’ representative, and his narrow experience, being limited to frail, older people. He suggested that the Board consider appointing more than one carer representative so as to bring more experience. Councillor Rachael King took on board his comments but suggested that structures below Board level should ensure that all voices were heard, and the carer representative fed those back to the Board and likewise for other representatives on the Board.

Councillor Rachael King referred to the Island Communities Impact Assessment which clearly identified the impacts for ferry linked islands, but she was left with the “so what” question – the assessment did not follow through with options to mitigate, lessen or remove the impact. Shaun Hourston-Wells had reflected on this matter and concurred that, if a weakness was identified, the assessment should set out what would be done about it. It was suggested that this could feed into the second conference, noting that each ferry linked island also had its own unique set of circumstances, which the local development trusts had a very good understanding of.

The Board **resolved** that the Orkney Unpaid Carers Strategy, attached as Appendix 3 to the report circulated, be approved for publication, subject to inclusion of reference to day centre services.

15. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The Chair advised this was Maureen Firth’s last meeting, having joined NHS Orkney in 1993, and Orkney Health and Care in 2012. She extended her thanks, as well as that of the Board, for Maureen’s time, commitment and contribution to local health services over her career, and wished her a long and happy retirement.

It was agreed that the next meeting be held on Wednesday, 24 April 2024 in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Kirkwall.

16. Exclusion of Public

On the motion of Councillor Rachael King, seconded by Councillor Ivan Taylor, the Board agreed that the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting as the business to be considered involved the disclosure of exempt information of the classes described in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as amended.

17. Financial Recovery Plan

Under section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the public had been excluded from the meeting for this item on the grounds that it involved the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3, 6 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

There had been previously circulated a report presenting a draft Financial Recovery Plan, for consideration and approval.

Stephen Brown advised that most people present were keenly aware of the financial position of both Orkney Islands Council and NHS Orkney, with the challenge that then presented to the Integration Joint Board. Orkney Islands Council was projecting a significant year end overspend, of approximately £3.2 million, the majority of which related to spend on agency staff. The total spend on agency staff by Orkney Islands Council included not only salary costs, but also accommodation, travel and subsistence, costs which most other authorities did not incur when contracting agency staff.

While NHS Orkney was projecting an overspend of £1.9 million by year end, operationally the budget was projected to be underspent. The reason for the overspend was that the £2.4 million savings target agreed pre-pandemic had now been removed from the budget. The Set Aside budget was also projecting an overspend.

Section 3 of the report set out the background towards the budget overspends, as follows:

- Orkney Islands Council – ongoing use of agency staff, Direct Payments and out of Orkney placements.
- NHS Orkney – as indicated above, the overspend related to the £2.4 million savings target having been applied.
- Set Aside – agency and locum costs, as well as some unfunded posts identified within NHS Orkney’s Establishment Review.

The draft Recovery Plan, including anticipated savings realisation, outlined in Appendix 1 to the report, was initially discussed at the development session held on 31 January 2024.

After discussion, it was agreed to amend the recommendations to emphasise that the savings outlined in the draft Recovery Plan were not being approved, but more detail would be provided. Although a request was made for the next iteration of the Recovery Plan to be submitted to the next meeting of the Board, this would be entirely dependent on capacity, including discussions with individuals, although the commitment was made that, if possible, this would be actioned.

The Board noted:

17.1. The projected year end overspend for 2023/24 as follows:

- Orkney Islands Council – £1.836 million.
- NHS Orkney – £1.991 million.
- NHS Orkney – Set Aside – £2.251 million.

17.2. That, although the Board’s budget was integrated, the projected overspend had been broken down to provide visibility on the implications for Orkney Islands Council and NHS Orkney.

17.3. The background to and underlying reasons for the overspend position, as detailed in section 3.4 of the report circulated.

The Board **resolved**:

17.4. That the proposals outlined in the draft Financial Recovery Plan, attached as Appendix 1 to the report circulated, be approved for further exploration, with a view to financial recovery.

17.5. That a more detailed Recovery Plan, including risks and mitigating actions, be submitted to the next meeting of the Board, noting the caveats outlined by the Chief Officer, including capacity.

The Board noted:

17.6. That future revenue expenditure monitoring reports would routinely include progress updates on development of the Recovery Plan.

The above constitutes the summary of the Minute in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 section 50C(2) as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985.

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18. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting concluded at 12:40.