

NHS 24

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
NHS 24 Board
held on Thursday 27 February 2025 at 10:30am
The Board Room, NHS 24, Lumina Building,
40 Ainslie Road, Hillington, G52 4RU**

PRESENT

Dr Martin Cheyne (in the Chair)

Mr Alan Webb
Mr Martin Togneri
Ms Carol Gillie
Ms Anne Gibson
Ms Liz Mallinson
Mr David Howe
Ms Amina Khan
Ms Abeer Macintyre (Until Item 8.1)
Mr John Gebbie
Mr Jim Miller
Mr Andrew Moore
Dr Ron Cook

IN ATTENDANCE

Dr Jacqui Hepburn
Ms Steph Phillips
Ms Joanne Edwards
Ms Ann-Marie Gallacher
Mrs Geraldine Mathew
Mrs Paula Matchett (Minute)

01. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS and APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the February Board Meeting.

Apologies were intimated on behalf of Mr Woods.

Officer apologies were noted from Ms Aspley, and Ms Dransfield was in attendance on behalf of Ms Aspley.

The Chair welcomed two members of the public who attended via Teams to observe the meeting.

NOTED

02. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chair invited members to declare any interests in any of the items being discussed. There were no declarations of interest made.

The Chair reminded all Board members to ensure that any changes to their Register of Interest be notified to the Board Secretary within one month of the change occurring.

NOTED

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03. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 19 DECEMBER 2024

The Committee considered the minute of the previous meeting held on Thursday 19 December 2024 [Paper No. Item 03] and were content to approve the minute as a complete and accurate record.

APPROVED

04. MATTERS ARISING

a) Rolling Actions Log

The Board considered the Rolling Actions Log [Paper No. Item 04a]. Members were invited to consider and approve the recommended closure of 2 actions on the Rolling Actions Log.

Ms Gallacher provided an update on Action 862. This action would be updated as closed on the action log for the April meeting.

Ms Phillips provided an update on Action 865 and advised the completion date could be updated to November 2025.

The Chair thanked the Executive Team for their efforts to progress all actions.

The Board was content to approve the recommendation that 2 actions were closed and noted that 4 actions remained ongoing.

APPROVED

05. NOTES ON ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Members had been invited to raise any other matters not otherwise included on the agenda by the Board Secretary, prior to the meeting. There were no other matters raised.

APPROVED

06. CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair had provided an overview of the activities since the last meeting of 19 December 2024, and these were included as an appendix for information. The Chair welcomed questions on the items included.

The Chair noted his attendance at the Public Service Reform Summit on 17 February, where approximately 150 attendees from the public sector participated in an all-day session that featured various workshops and a guest speaker from COSLA.

A discussion took place regarding the Audit Scotland NHS in Scotland 2024 Report at the recent Board Chairs meeting. Members were advised that, while there was limited information relevant to NHS 24, a full update would be provided once the Scottish Government paper was published in the Spring.

The Board were content to note the Chair's Report, and the activities undertaken since the last meeting.

NOTED

07. EXECUTIVE REPORT TO BOARD

The Board considered the paper 'Executive Report to the Board' [Paper No. Item 07] presented by Mr Miller, Chief Executive.

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Mr Miller gave an overview of the Executive Report and highlighted various key points, including the significant progress made in the ongoing collaboration with SAS regarding emergency 999 requests from NHS 24 and the reduction in the number of 999 referrals over the festive period.

Mr Miller informed members that formal confirmation had been received regarding the reduction of the working week. The remaining time reduction would be implemented as a full hour in 2026 with no change in 2025.

He also informed members that the first meeting of the Strategic Partnership with Strathclyde University took place in January 2025 and was deemed a success. Another meeting has been planned for June 2025, and all Board members would be invited to attend.

The Chair thanked Mr Miller for the report and excellent work carried out by all, and invited comments and questions from members.

In response to a question about the involvement of other partners, such as Public Health Scotland (PHS), in the partnership with Strathclyde University, Mr Miller noted that there was no formal arrangement, however, he highlighted that PHS continued to be a key partner and NHS 24 continued to progress collaboration activities with PHS.

A question was raised about the career framework for Band 5 nurses to facilitate career progression and if there were any examples of similar frameworks in other areas of the organisation. Ms Gallacher highlighted the recent work undertaken to bring the ICT Service Desk in-house which adopted a similar approach.

In response to a question regarding the M365 Copilot evaluation and its potential impact on patient safety, Dr Hepburn clarified that M365 Copilot was solely used in administration roles during the evaluation, and therefore, had no impact on patient safety. Ms Gallacher added that initial feedback on Copilot had been excellent, and the M365 Delivery Group would consider the full evaluation and benefits, however there would likely be financial implications of adopting this.

A question was raised about any potential impact on clinical safety following the introduction of dashboards for staff. Ms Edwards assured the Board that dashboards had always been in place. The introduction of individual dashboards would allow the organisation to identify confidence levels amongst staff and ensure staff have appropriate support, therefore, this would enhance clinical safety.

The Board was content to note the Executive Report and progress on the high-level activity associated with the delivery of the NHS 24 2024/25 Strategic Priorities and the NHS 24 2023-2028 Corporate Strategy.

NOTED

08.1 PATIENT STORIES

Mr Moore, Director of Nursing & Care, provided an overview of a recent compliment received from a patient who had utilised the Living Life service. The patient shared that her phone call was an assessment with a staff member, Sophie, and expressed that Sophie had made her feel at ease. The patient praised Sophie's lovely manner, humour, and professional attitude. Although the outcome of the call was that the patient required support from a different service, she wished to thank Sophie for providing a positive and memorable service through Living Life and would share her experience with others who require support with their mental health.

The Chair commended Sophie on her professionalism, highlighting how she went above and beyond to ensure the patient was directed to the appropriate place.

Mr Moore went on to provide an overview of a recent 3rd party complaint received in relation to NHS 24 processes. A video featuring Nicola Clark, Senior Charge Nurse, who provided an overview of the incident and the outcome of the phone call, was shown to the Board.

Nicola explained that she had received a call concerning a clinical issue from a vulnerable patient who was using the interpreter system and had expressed concerns for their own safety. Liaison with Police Scotland took place to ensure the patient got to a place of safety and a visit from GP Out of Hours Service was arranged for a health check.

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The Chair praised Nicola for ensuring that the patient's journey was carefully managed from start to finish, prioritising the patient's safety. The Chair remarked that Nicola was a credit to NHS 24.

Board members noted that the patient story shared via video, was insightful and helped emphasise the complexity of the call received.

A discussion took place regarding NHS 24's ability to call back international telephone numbers. It was agreed that this would be reviewed. Members were advised that, on occasion, mobile providers impose restrictions on international calls, meaning this was not always feasible.

ACTION: Mr Andrew Moore

Members thanked all staff involved for ensuring a positive experience for both individuals.

The Chair thanked Mr Moore for the update and on behalf of the Board, extended thanks to the individuals and their families for sharing their stories and experiences, as well as to the staff involved.

NOTED

09.1 CORPORATE DELIVERY PLAN 2024/25 UPDATE

The Board considered the paper 'Corporate Delivery Plan Update' [Paper No. Item 09.1] presented by Ms Phillips, Director of Transformation Strategy, Planning & Performance. The Board was asked to note the status of the current 2024/25 Corporate Delivery Plan as part of the extant 2024-27 Three Year Corporate Delivery Plan. Ms Phillips noted that the paper had been presented to the Planning & Performance Committee at its meeting on 10 February.

Ms Phillips outlined the key points and reported on the progress made with respect to the actions for the current year. She emphasised that there remained a critical focus and ongoing discussion about capacity, tolerance, and contingency.

The Chair thanked Ms Phillips for the update and invited comments and questions from members. There were no questions raised.

The Board was content to note the status and overview of the Corporate Delivery Plan Update.

NOTED

09.2 RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE

The Board considered the paper 'Risk Management Update' [Paper No. Item 09.2] presented by Mr Gebbie, Director of Finance. The Board was asked to review the attached risks and take assurance from the processes in place to manage risk in NHS 24.

Mr Gebbie highlighted the key points, noting that there were currently 28 corporate risks in total; 11 risks had been closed, and 4 new risks had been identified. The corporate risks were presented to the respective Committees, and to the Audit & Risk Committee, prior to presentation to the Board.

Members were informed that emerging risks from the Finance Plan and Corporate Delivery Plan were currently being reviewed for addition to the corporate risk register. Mr Gebbie also confirmed that all internal actions had been closed.

He reminded members that the full risk register would be presented in August, which would include more detailed information on the risk appetite.

The Chair thanked Mr Gebbie for the update and invited comments and questions from members. There were no questions raised.

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The Board was content to note the Risk Management Update and was assured by the information provided.

NOTED

09.3 STRATEGIC RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE

The Board considered the paper 'Strategic Risk Update' [Paper No. Item 09.3] presented by Mr Gebbie, Director of Finance. The Board was asked to review the attached risks and take assurance from the strategic risk management update and processes in place to manage risk in NHS 24.

Mr Gebbie highlighted the key points and noted that there were currently 7 strategic risks in total. Of these, 5 risk scores remained the same, 1 had reduced in score and 1 had increased. The strategic risks were presented to the respective Committees, and to the Audit and Risk Committee, prior to presentation to the Board.

The Chair thanked Mr Gebbie for the update and invited comments and questions from members. There were no questions raised.

The Board was content to note the Strategic Risk Management Update and were assured by the information provided.

NOTED

09.4 CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY ANNUAL REPORT

The Board considered the paper 'Climate Emergency and Sustainability Annual Report' [Paper No. Item 09.4] presented by Dr Cook, Medical Director. The Board was asked to review and take assurance from the update.

Dr Cook highlighted the key points, including the new format of the report, the ongoing improvement in data collection and monitoring, and progress made against the target for reduced travel mileage which reported a year-to-date performance of 45%.

The Chair thanked Dr Cook for the update and invited comments and questions from members.

Discussion took place about the reduction in travel mileage, specifically the likelihood of an increase in travel mileage due to training for staff for the implementation of the new system. However, it was noted that online learning would also be available.

In response to a question regarding domestic and food waste, Dr Cook explained that the increase in domestic waste was likely due to clearing out of space with the closure of floors 1 & 2 in Lumina and the subsequent move to Cardonald. The increase in food waste was due to the installation of better waste segregation units, which had resulted in more accurate reporting.

A discussion followed regarding the Climate Emergency and Sustainability eLearning module completion rates. Dr Cook clarified that the figures reported were not aligned with predictions due to the transfer of the module from the LearnMore24 platform to TURAS.

In summary, the Board was content to note the report and were assured by the information provided.

NOTED

09.5 STAKEHOLDER ROLE IN GOVERNANCE AND ASSURANCE

The Board considered the paper 'Stakeholder Role in Governance and Assurance' [Paper No. Item 09.5] presented by Ms Phillips, Director of Transformation, Strategy, Planning & Performance. The Board was asked to note the content of the paper which captured the output of a 'deep dive' exercise on the role of stakeholders in governance and assurance undertaken at the NHS 24 Board Workshop in September 2024.

Ms Phillips highlighted stakeholder engagement was one of the five primary functions of governance as outlined in the Blueprint for Good Governance. She noted that the NHS 24 Board had an agreed Governance Improvement

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Plan in place with the intention of advancing actions identified through the self-assessment undertaken against the Blueprint. This paper focused on Action 6, which related to the integrated governance system and operating system.

The Chair thanked Ms Phillips for the update and invited comments and questions from members.

In response to a question raised, the Chair advised that discussions remained ongoing regarding the external audit of governance to be conducted in all NHS Boards by the Scottish Government.

Members thanked Ms Phillips for the update and noted that the Head of Stakeholder Engagement and Insights would continue to work with and support NHS 24 Board in progressing the improvement actions aligned with action 6 of the Board Governance Improvement Plan.

NOTED

10

10.1 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Board considered the paper 'Corporate Performance Report' [Paper No. Item 10.1] presented by Ms Phillips, Director of Transformation Strategy, Planning & Performance. The Board was asked to take assurance on the quality and performance of services provided for the period ended 31 January 2025. Ms Phillips noted that the report had been presented to the Planning and Performance Committee at its meeting on 10 February 2025.

The Chair thanked Ms Phillips for the update and invited comments and questions from members.

A discussion took place about sickness absence rates, and members noted that sickness absence remained higher than the general sickness absence rate in the UK. Dr Hepburn advised the Board that the Staff Governance Committee had undertaken a deep dive session on absence rates and continued to review these on a quarterly basis. She noted that the absence rate was largely due to the shape of the organisation's workforce, given over 70% of the workforce was part time. This was not comparable with other Boards where the workforce was 85-90% full time. The Staff Governance Committee Chair assured members that significant assurance was provided to the Committee in respect of the ongoing focus on management and mitigation actions to improve absence rates.

The Board was content to note the report and was assured by the information provided.

NOTED

10.2 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Board considered the paper 'Finance Performance Report M10' [Paper No. Item 10.2] presented by Mr Gebbie, Director of Finance. The Board was asked to take assurance from the Month 10 Finance Report which showed the financial position of NHS 24 as at January 2025. Mr Gebbie noted that financial performance continued to be monitored through the Planning and Performance Committee, with the Audit and Risk Committee monitoring financial governance.

Mr Gebbie highlighted key points from the report, including a year-to-date underspend of £120k at month 10, based on the assumption that anticipated allocations totalling £5.1m were received. While savings plans remained on track, they were reporting a pressure which was offset by current underspends and expected to reduce once the savings were actioned following an appropriate review.

Mr Gebbie advised that Scottish Government were content with the Q3 allocations. He also noted that reduced travel costs and the implementation of the virtual queue would contribute to achieving the future years savings plan target.

Mr Togneri queried why capital spend was so low approaching year end. Mr Gebbie assured members that capital funds had been planned for Q4 in line with the decision earlier in the year to close floors 1 and 2 at Lumina. Expenditure was focussed at Cardonald, covering the costs of creating new areas such as kitchen and toilet facilities, break-out rooms, and the removal of offices to open up more space prior to Lumina staff moving over.

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The Chair thanked Mr Gebbie for the update and invited comments and questions from members. There were no questions raised.

Board members thanked Mr Gebbie for the report and noted that it was excellent to see that NHS 24 remained on track during this challenging period.

In summary, the Board was content to note the financial position as of January 2025.

NOTED

10.3 WORKFORCE PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Board considered the paper 'Workforce Quarterly Report Q3' [Paper No. Item 10.3] presented by Dr Hepburn, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Workforce. The Board was asked to note the workforce report in terms of progress made in quarter 3 (October – December 2024) and the significant progress made which was demonstrated with the majority of key performance indicators (KPIs) meeting or exceeding target. Dr Hepburn noted that performance continued to be monitored through the Staff Governance Committee.

Dr Hepburn provided an overview of the key points within the report, including the improvement in the vacancy factor and that NHS 24 was now an accredited Real Living Wage Employer.

The Chair thanked Dr Hepburn for the update and invited comments and questions from members.

In response to a question regarding the absence dashboard, Dr Hepburn explained that managers now had easier access to absence information, including specific details on both absence and job details. Ms Edwards added that the dashboards had been positively received by managers, enabling them to capture information more efficiently.

A discussion then took place regarding the flexible working process. Members were informed that a newly developed process included an oversight group that reviewed all applications for consideration. The group comprised of Staffside representatives, the Planning and Resourcing Team and the Senior Management Team. A separate process was in place for reasonable adjustments.

In response to a question regarding trauma informed practice, Mr Moore advised that there was a module on trauma informed practice available, and this was completed by the relevant staff at induction.

A question was raised regarding clinical supervision recruitment. Dr Hepburn assured the Board that this was on track and the target would be exceeded by summer.

The Chair reminded members of the essential learning modules on TURAS and requested that they complete these to ensure all mandatory training was up to date.

In summary, the Board was content to note the Workforce Report for Q3, and the progress made against the key performance indicators.

NOTED

11.

11.1 EQUALITY MAINSTREAMING REPORT 2025

The Board considered the paper 'NHS 24 Equality Mainstreaming and Workforce Equality Monitoring Report 2025' [Paper No. Item 11.1] presented by Ms Phillips, Director of Transformation, Strategy, Planning & Performance. The Board was asked to approve the publication of the Equality Mainstreaming Report and associated Workforce Equality Monitoring Report.

Ms Phillips advised Board members that the report had been presented to Staff Governance Committee at its meeting of 4 February, and Clinical Governance Committee at its meeting of 6 February, prior to being presented to the Board.

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The Chair thanked Ms Phillips for the report and invited comments and questions from members reminding members that this item has been presented to Committee during the February cycle.

A discussion took place regarding the format of the report and the standardisation of publications across all Health Boards. Board members were advised this would be taken into consideration.

Board members were assured this report was available in accessible formats if required.

In response to a question regarding the recording of data for the equal pay statement and whether or not more granularity could be provided, Dr Hepburn advised that the data reported was drawn from national systems and no further information was available. Board members were assured that the relevant data required for equal pay reporting was provided appropriately and sent to Scottish Government as part of the report.

In summary, the Board was content to approve the report for publication.

APPROVED

11.2 ANTI-RACISM ACTION PLAN

The Board considered the paper 'Anti-Racism Action Plan' [Paper No. Item 11.2] presented by Ms Phillips, Director of Transformation, Strategy, Planning & Performance. The Board was asked to review and approve the NHS 24 Anti-Racism Action Plan 2025 to 2028. The Plan had been presented to the Staff Governance Committee at its meeting on 4 February, and the Clinical Governance Committee at its meeting on 6 February.

Ms Phillips advised that this plan was a new addition to the existing cohort of plans within NHS 24. Board members were informed that the Plan was reviewed and discussed at Staff Governance Committee and the Committee was content that the Plan included measurable outcomes and would lead to improvements in services for both staff and patients.

The Chair thanked Ms Phillips for the Plan and invited comments and questions from members.

A discussion followed regarding the collection of ethnicity data for patients in the same way that data was collected for staff, and whether the SMS patient survey could be utilised for this. Ms Phillips clarified that qualitative feedback was gathered from the surveys, with only a percentage of service users invited to complete the survey, so consideration would need to be given to how this approach could be applied.

Ms Phillips highlighted that as this plan was new it would continue to evolve, with Ms Khan expressing an interest in that evolution. It was agreed that the Action Plan would be regularly evaluated and reviewed to ensure that ownership of actions remained clear and visible.

The Plan would be submitted to Scottish Government for feedback and published by April 2025.

In summary, the Board was content to approve the Anti-Racism Action Plan.

ACTION: Stephanie Phillips

APPROVED

11.3 NHS IN SCOTLAND 2024: FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE

The Board considered the paper 'NHS in Scotland 2024: Finance and Performance' [Paper No. Item 11.3] presented by Mr Gebbie, Director of Finance. The Board was asked to note the key messages and recommendations within Audit Scotland's report.

Mr Gebbie highlighted that the paper was a sector wide report by Audit Scotland. He advised the paper was presented to the Audit & Risk Committee at its meeting on 13 February, prior to presentation to the Board.

The Chair thanked Mr Gebbie for the update and invited comments and questions from members reminding members that this item has been presented to Committee during the February cycle.

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In response to a question regarding section 4 of the report and system-wide accountability, the Chair confirmed that this would sit at Director General level.

In summary, the Board was content to note the report.

NOTED

12.

12.1 CINICAL GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

The Board considered the approved minute of the Clinical Governance Committee meeting of 07 November 2024 [Paper No. Item 11.1a] and the Highlight Report of the meeting of 06 February 2025 [Paper No. Item 11.1b] and were content to note these. Mr Martin Togneri, Chair of Clinical Governance Committee, provided an overview of the key points of discussion from the last meeting, including the Quarterly Healthcare Quality Report, the patient satisfaction survey, and the Health and Care Staffing Quarterly Report.

The Chair thanked Mr Togneri for the update.

NOTED

12.2 STAFF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

The Board considered the approved minute of the Staff Governance Committee meeting of 04 November 2024 [Paper No. Item 11.2a] and the Highlight Report of the meeting of 04 February 2025 [Paper No. Item 11.2b] and were content to note these. Mr Alan Webb, Chair of Staff Governance Committee, provided an overview of the key points of discussion from the last meeting, including Essential Learning Benchmarking Review, DTP Training & Learning Update and DTP Staff Engagement & Communications Plan Update.

The Chair thanked Mr Webb for the update.

NOTED

12.3 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE

The Board considered the approved minute of the Audit & Risk Committee meeting of 21 November 2024 [Paper No. Item 11.3a] and the Highlight Report of the meeting of 13 February 2025 [Paper No. Item 11.3b] and were content to note these. Ms Carol Gillie, Chair of Audit & Risk Committee, provided an overview of the key points of discussion from the last meeting, including the External Audit Plan for 2025/26. She noted that the Internal Audit Plan would be presented to Board in June.

The Chair thanked Ms Gillie for the update.

NOTED

12.4 PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

The Board considered the approved minute of the Planning & Performance Committee meeting of 11 November 2024 [Paper No. Item 11.4a] and the Highlight Report of the meeting of 10 February 2025 [Paper No. Item 11.4b] and were content to note these. Mr David Howe, Chair of Planning & Performance Committee, provided an overview of the key points of discussion from the last meeting, including the Corporate Delivery Plan 2025/26 for submission to Scottish Government by 17 March 2025, an update from Ms Edwards on Easter Preparedness, and a deep dive session on Risk and Resilience. It was suggested it would be useful for all Board members to receive a session on this in the future.

The Chair thanked Mr Howe for the update.

NOTED

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13.

13.1 ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

The Chair invited members to raise any other competent business. There was no other business raised.

NOTED

DATE OF NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

Thursday 24 April 2025, 10.00am

The meeting concluded at 12:20pm