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HIGHLAND NHS BOARD
MEETING OF BOARD

Tuesday 29th September 2026 at 9.30am
Virtual Meeting Format (Microsoft Teams)

- **All Board Member cameras should be turned on**
- **Use raise hand facility to discuss items – do not use MS Teams chat**

AGENDA

Time	1.	Standing Items	
09:30	1.1	**Welcome and Apologies**	
	1.2	**Declarations of Interest** Members are asked to consider whether they have an interest to declare in relation to any item on the agenda for this meeting. Any Member making a declaration of interest should indicate whether it is financial or non-financial and include some information on its nature. Advice may be sought from the Corporate Governance office prior to the meeting taking place.	
09:35	1.3	**Minute of Previous meeting of 28 July 2026 and Action Plan** The Board is asked to **Approve** the minutes of meeting of 28 July 2026 and **Note** the action plan.	
09:40	1.4	**Matters Arising**	
09:45	**2.**	**Chief Executive's Report**	
		Report by Fiona Davies, Chief Executive The Board is asked to **note** the update.	
10:00	**3.**	**Spotlight Session – SDEC Raigmore**	
		Update by Katherine Sutton, Chief Officer for Acute The Board is asked to **Note** the update	
10:30	**4.**	**Governance and other Committee Assurance Reports** **Escalation of issues by Chairs of Governance Committees**	
	a)	**Finance, Resources and Performance Committee** • Agreed minutes of 10 July 2026 and 7 August 2026 • Summary of meeting of 11 September 2026	
	b)	**Staff Governance Committee** • Agreed minutes of 7 July 2026 • Summary of meeting of 1 September 2026	
	c)	**Highland Health and Social Care Committee** • Agreed minutes of 1 July 2026 • Summary of meeting of 2 September 2026	
	d)	**Clinical Governance Committee** • Agreed minutes of 2 July 2026 • Summary of meeting of 3 September 2026	
	e)	**Area Clinical Forum**	

		• Agreed minutes of 2 July 2026 • Summary of meeting of 3 September 2026	
	f)	**Audit Committee** • Agreed minutes of 17 June 2026 and 23 June 2026 • Summary of meeting of 8 September 2026	
	g)	**Population Health & Planning Committee** • Agreed minutes of 13 May 2026 • Summary of meeting of 8 September 2026	
	h)	**Argyll & Bute IJB** • Minutes of meeting of 26 August 2026. • 16 September 2026.	
		The Board is asked to: (a) **Confirm** adequate assurance has been provided from Board Governance Committees and Area Clinical Forum. (b) **Note** the minutes and agreed actions from the Argyll and Bute Integration Joint Board.	
10:50		**COMFORT BREAK**	

PERFORMANCE AND ASSURANCE

11:05	**5.**	**Programme for Government Update**	
		Update by Gareth Adkins, Director of People and Culture on behalf of Fiona Davies, Chief Executive **Assurance Level Proposed – Moderate** The Board is asked to: • **Note** the potential implications of the Programme for Government for NHS Highland, including NHS reform, social care, local governance, workforce, finance, service delivery and partnership working. • **Support** a proportionate review of Board governance, focused on strategic priorities, key risks, performance, statutory duties and assurance. • **Approve** in principle moving the Finance, Resources and Performance Committee to a bi-monthly cycle, with clear escalation routes and provision for extraordinary meetings. • **Support** use of appropriately briefed and authorised deputies where terms of reference permit. • **Agree** that the 2027/28 Internal Audit Plan is reviewed to reflect emerging risks, organisational change and PfG delivery requirements. • **Agree** in principle to developing a consent agenda for routine Board business, while allowing members to request discussion. • **Endorse** continued development of the 10-year organisational strategy, responsive to the PfG and grounded in local priorities, communities and partnership working. • **Support** continued engagement with councils, Integration Authorities, Community Planning Partners, staff-side, providers, the third sector and communities. • **Endorse** sustained staff engagement to support morale, wellbeing, employee voice, partnership working and confidence during reform. • **Note** the current uncertainty around the Programme for Government while recognising the importance of maintaining organisational readiness and	

		the ability to respond quickly and effectively to any future changes or requirements that emerge. • **Endorse** continued application of the Blueprint for Good Governance principles.	
11:35	**6.**	**Integrated Performance & Quality Report**	
		Report by David Park, Deputy Chief Executive **Assurance Level Proposed – Moderate** The Board is asked to: • To take **Moderate Assurance** on performance reporting and **Note** the continued and sustained pressures facing both NHS and commissioned care services. • **Consider** the level of performance across the system.	
11:50	**7.**	**Operational Improvement Plan 2026/27 Update**	
		Report by David Park, Deputy Chief Executive **Assurance Level Proposed – Substantial** The Board is asked to take **Note** the content of the report and take **Substantial Assurance** on NHS Highland's delivery against the Scottish Government Operational Improvement Plan (OIP) deliverables.	
12:00	**8.**	**Finance Assurance Report – Month 4**	
		Report by Heledd Cooper, Director of Finance **Assurance Level Proposed – Limited** The Board is asked to **Examine** and **Consider** the content of the report and take **Limited Assurance**.	
12:30	**9.**	**Standing Financial Instructions (SFI's) Amendment – Non-Pay Spend**	
		Report by Heledd Cooper, Director of Finance **Assurance Level Proposed – Substantial** The Board is asked to: • **Approve** the revised Section 9 (Non-Pay Procurement – Tendering, Contracting and Purchasing Procedures) of the Standing Financial Instructions and authorises implementation with immediate effect. • **Approve** the revised Section 9 of the NHS Highland Standing Financial Instructions. • **Approve** the revised governance approach distinguishing compliant Procurement-led negotiated procedures from Tender Waiver activity. • **Delegate** authority to the Director of Finance and Head of Procurement to implement supporting procedures, guidance and documentation. • **Confirm** that the revised Section 9 takes effect immediately following approval.	
13:00		**LUNCH**	

13:30	**10.**	**National Flow Improvement Plan**	
		Report by Louise Bussell, Nurse Director **Assurance Level Proposed – Moderate** The Board is asked to take **Moderate Assurance** and **Note** the publication of the Scottish Government Health and Care Improving Flow Plan 2026-2031 and take assurance that NHS Highland has established a substantial programme of work aligned to the national direction, whilst recognising further improvement is required to achieve sustained improvements in flow, discharge performance and community-based care delivery	
13:50	**11.**	**Winter Preparedness Report**	***To Follow***
		Report by Katherine Sutton, Chief Officer for Acute and Arlene Johnstone, Chief Officer for Highland Health and Social Care Partnership	
14:05	**12.**	**Model of Integration Update**	
		Report by Gareth Adkins, Director of People and Culture The Board is asked to: • **Approve** the proposal for the model of integration review to be paused including directly associated staff engagement activities through online and face to face staff engagement. • **Note** that NHSH will support the engagement events in relation to the Highland Outcomes Improvement Plan (HOIP) as partners within the Community Planning Partnership • **Approve** proposal for NHSH Staff Communications to be issued confirming a pause of the review and associated staff engagement whilst highlighting that we will communicate further the opportunities for staff to be consulted as outlined in the NHS Staff FAQs as further details emerge.	
14:20	**13.**	**Integration Scheme Update**	
		Report by Gareth Adkins, Director of People and Culture **Assurance Level Proposed – Substantial** The Board is asked to: • **Note** that the Integration Scheme has been approved by the SG and that arrangements will now be put in place by the two partner bodies to publish the document. • **Note** that a similar report will also be tabled at the Argyll & Bute Council and the Integration Joint Board (IJB) to advise of the position. • Take **Substantial Assurance.**	
14:35	**14.**	**Annual Feedback and Complaints Report**	
		Report by Boyd Peters, Medical Director **Assurance Level Proposed – Moderate** The Board is asked to take **Moderate Assurance** and **Approve** the Annual Complaints and Feedback Report for 2025/2026, for submission to the Scottish Government and publication on the NHS Highland website.	
14.50	**15.**	**Corporate Risk Register**	***To Follow***
		Report by David Park, Deputy Chief Executive	

15:10	**16.**	**Quarter 1 Health & Care Staffing Act Report** Report by Gareth Adkins, Director of People and Culture **Assurance Level Proposed – Moderate** The Board is asked to: • **Note** the content of the report • Take **Moderate Assurance** in relation to the delivery of the statutory duties set out in the Health & Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019 • **Approve** the report for publication	
15:25	**17.**	**Quarter 1 Whistleblowing Report** Report by Gareth Adkins, Director of People and Culture **Assurance Level Proposed – Moderate** The Board is asked to take **Moderate Assurance** the content of the report provides confidence of compliance with legislation, policy and Board objectives, noting challenges with timescales due to the complexity of cases and investigations.	
15:40	**18.**	**Any Other Competent Business** **NHS Highland Ministerial Annual Review 2026**	
		Date & Time of Next Meeting	
		24th November 2026	
		Close of meeting	