

SUMMARY REPORT OF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

Name of Committee	Highland Health and Social Care
Date of Meeting	03 September
Committee Chair	Gerry O'Brien

KEY POINTS FROM DISCUSSION AND ESCALATION

ALERT

Actions are underway to manage service pressures, including repatriating a high-cost out-of-area placement and exploring a local low secure unit. The adult social care plan was approved, a consultant vacancy filled, and several locum posts converted to permanent roles to strengthen workforce stability.

ASSURE

Assurances taken on:

- Finance Report – Month 3 2025/206 (Limited)
- Integrated Performance and Quality Report (Limited)
- Highland Health and Social Care Partnership Annual Report (Substantial)
- Vaccination Improvement Plan Update (Moderate)
- Highland Drug & Alcohol Recovery Service (DARS) Summary Report (Moderate)
- Police Custody Healthcare (PCH) / Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARCS) Forensic Medical Examiner (FME) Service Summary Report (Moderate)

ADVISE

Adult Social Care Financial Plan: There will be the development of a two-track financial plan for adult social care: one focused on immediate grip and control to stabilise the budget, and another on longer-term transformation supported by the Highland Council Transformation Fund. The plan is being reviewed by senior leadership and will be socialised with stakeholders.

There will be a revised version of the IPQR and HSCP KPIs was expected for the next committee meeting, incorporating relevant indicators and forming a three-tier performance framework for strategic, mid-management, and frontline levels.

RISKS

1. **Financial Position and Budgetary Pressures:** There is a forecasted £40 million overspend by March 2026, highlighting risks in adult social care.
2. **Supplementary Staffing and Cost Drivers:** Ongoing reliance on agency and bank staff, particularly in in-house care homes, leads to high supplementary staffing costs due to recruitment challenges and patient acuity.
3. **Financial Impact and Recruitment:** The new model for police custody healthcare and forensic medical examiner services is projected to deliver a

positive budget variance and reduce overspend, but recruitment for permanent FME staff is still underway.

ACTIONS

The Committee Chair and Chief Officer for the Highland HSCP would meet to discuss topics and dates for the Committee to hold development sessions.

The Chief Officer for the Highland HSCP would create a briefing paper to be circulated to Committee members summarising recent activity linked to the Carer Strategy intended outcomes.

LEARNING

Updates were provided to the Committee on the Drug and Alcohol Recovery Service and the Police Custody Healthcare and Forensic Medical Examiner Service Transformation.