

East Lothian
Integration Joint Board



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
EAST LoTHIAN INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD**

**THURSDAY 8 DECEMBER 2022
VIA DIGITAL MEETINGS SYSTEM**

Voting Members Present:

Councillor S Akhtar
Councillor L Bruce
Ms E Gordon
Ms F Ireland
Councillor C McFarlane
Mr P Murray (Chair)
Ms V de Souza

Non-voting Members Present:

Ms M Allan	Mr D Binnie
Mr I Gorman	Ms M McNeill
Ms J Tait	Ms F Wilson
Dr J Hardman (s)	Mr C King (s)

Officers Present from NHS Lothian/East Lothian Council:

Ms L Berry	Mr P Currie
Mr G King	Mr M Kennedy
Ms L Kerr	

Clerk:

Ms F Currie

Apologies:

Councillor L Jardine
Ms L Cowan
Ms C Flanagan (s)
Dr J Turvill (s)

Declarations of Interest:

None

The Chair advised members that requests had been received from members of the public to attend online meetings of the IJB. This was not possible under the current arrangements but it was hoped that there might be a return to in person meetings in the spring of 2023. In the meantime, recordings of all online meetings would continue to be made available on the website.

1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EAST LoTHIAN IJB ON 27 OCTOBER 2022 (FOR APPROVAL) AND MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the meeting on 27th October 2022 were approved.

The following matters arising were discussed:

Item 4 (2022/23 Financial Update) – Councillor Akhtar asked for an update on the potential impact of sustainability payments ending in March 2023. Laura Kerr confirmed that providers were aware of the ending of payments and applications had tailed off in recent months. While providers be able to apply to the Social Care Fund for assistance with costs associated with staff absence, no additional funding had been announced. Ms Kerr was aware of two providers who were experiencing difficulties and her team were working with them to help manage the situation.

2. CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair began his report by encouraging members to attend a forthcoming event called 'Trauma is Everyone's Business' taking place on 17th January.

He also reported on a recent meeting of the IJB Chairs & Vice Chair's Network at which Iain McFarlane had encouraged all IJBs to ensure that they had representation within their membership from those with lived-experience. The Chair said that while the IJB already had some lived experience from among its members, it would be an important point to bear in mind going forward. The meeting had also requested feedback from IJBs on their current financial challenges and these comments would be relayed to the Scottish Government. He noted that all IJBs were experiencing similar pressures in this area.

Judith Tait commented on the importance of having representation from those with 'lived experience' and how this fed into the design of trauma informed services. Maureen Allan concurred but noted that for many 'lived experience' could be seen as a derogatory term. John Hardman observed that, in relation to GP training, it was important to hear from those with current experience and not just past experience, as GPs needed to be aware of current needs and not just needs people perceive when recovered.

Val de Souza asked if it would be possible to share the feedback sent to Government regarding IJB financial challenges. The Chair agreed to look into this.

Marilyn McNeill raised the issue of the cost of living crisis which had affected many families in East Lothian. She outlined some of the resources and actions being promoted by the Area Partnerships and asked whether the IJB might have a role to play in assisting or promoting these. She suggested inviting the Area Partnership Chairs to a meeting to find out more.

The Chair agreed to discuss a potential meeting invitation with Councillor Akhtar, as IJB Vice Chair, and Fiona Wilson.

In the meantime, Ms Allan pointed to assistance provided to Foodshare and local food pantries and to the wider work of the Poverty Group. Councillor Akhtar added that all councillors received regular updates on the implementation of the Council's poverty action plan and she would be happy to circulate this information.

Ms McNeill said it was reassuring to hear of the wider actions taking place and that it would be worthwhile to have further information circulated and to invite someone to attend a further meeting to provide an update.

The Chair agreed to discuss appropriate actions with Councillor Akhtar and Ms Wilson and respond to Ms McNeill before the next IJB meeting. He thanked Ms McNeill for raising this issue and said it was right to link the cost of living crisis with potential impacts on people's wider health and wellbeing, and how this related to the work of the IJB.

3. 2022/23 Q2 FINANCIAL UPDATE

The Chief Finance Officer had submitted a report laying out the results of the Partner's (East Lothian Council and NHS Lothian) quarter two financial reviews and considering how these impacted on the projected financial position of the IJB for 2022/23

Chris King presented the report. He summarised the main points advising members that the year-end forecast for Q2 had improved to close to a break even position. He drew attention to areas of continuing pressure within Set Aside and social care budgets, additional risks around the NHS pay settlement and learning disability transport costs, as well as the Council's finance team remaining in business continuity measures. He also reminded members that the Scottish Government was looking to reclaim surplus COVID reserves and further advice was expected on recovery of these funds. In the meantime, the IJB continued to submit its regular financial returns and expected to record total costs of £5.2M.

The Chair asked for further details on the transport cost pressures and the risk from business continuity measures continuing within the Council's finance team.

Fiona Ireland advised that the Audit & Risk Committee had recently discussed the new risk to be added to the IJB's register around the impact of the business continuity measures, the need for further detail on this and consideration of potential mitigations. Referring to other matters highlighted within the report, specifically the overspend within the Set Aside budget, commenting that this arose partly because the IJB was allocated a percentage of the overspend rather than its costs being calculated on actual usage. This placed the IJB in a worse position than it otherwise might be and she encouraged members and officers to push for this calculation to move from a percentage to actual usage in future years. Regarding the reclaiming of COVID reserves she said it was important to understand the impact of this policy on budgets in the current year and going into 23/24.

The Chair concurred with Ms Ireland's point about the Set Aside budget and noted that work on this had begun pre-COVID but had stalled. However, it was now restarting and he would be happy to ask the NHS Lothian Board for an update on progress.

Mr King said that on the issue of COVID reserves, all IJBs shared the same concerns but that his colleagues had done a fair amount of exit planning to minimise any impacts. The main risk related to the additional wards at the community hospital and work was ongoing to address this.

Ms Wilson added that staff had worked hard to reduce the need for beds but that the home first, person-centred approach favoured within East Lothian had to be balanced with the need to support the wider system.

Mr King and Ms Wilson confirmed that discussions were ongoing with the Council's finance team around the issue of learning disability transport. The Council's Executive Director for Council Resources had assured them that although the team remained in business continuity measures, the IJB would continue to be a priority for service.

Responding to a further question from Councillor Akhtar regarding reclamation of COVID reserves, Mr King said that the Scottish Government had indicated that during the final quarter of the financial year IJBs would submit final projections for the year and the Government would calculate the amount left unused and for retrieval.

Ms de Souza reflected that there may be need for capacity in the system beyond COVID and that the IJB should be making the point about the impact of removing funding on the flow within the wider system around Lothian.

Iain Gorman confirmed that work was underway to consider the impact of reducing bed numbers and assessing this against the reserves position. In addition, work continued on the budget position for 2023/24 and this would be informed by the Scottish Government budget announcement on 15th December.

Decision

The IJB agreed to note the Quarter 2 financial review undertaken by Partners.

4. EAST Lothian IJB MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2022/23 TO 2026/27

The Chief Finance Officer submitted a report presenting the Board with a medium term rolling 5 year financial plan (2022/23 to 2026/27) for noting which had been prepared utilising the in-year financial information and the financial plans and assumptions of Partners for future years.

Mr King presented the report. He outlined the key aspects of the plan providing further detail on the figures and assumptions used to prepare the plan, highlighting areas of pressure and uncertainty, and proposed mitigation measures. He advised that this was the first iteration of the plan which would be refined and updated in early 2023. He concluded that while the IJB could have moderate assurance of a break even position for 2022/23, significant financial challenges remained thereafter.

The Chair recommended that inflation be included if it had not already been factored into the calculations and he also felt that the pay assumptions were too low. He queried whether delivery of the IJB's Strategic Plan in 2023/24 could be realised given the financial constraints.

Ms Wilson emphasised that recovery plans were in place and that staff were aware of the difficult decisions that would have to be made.

Ms de Souza agreed that the position was challenging but said it was good to have this plan in place. She raised the issue of transitions for services in light of the proposed National Care Service (NCS) and the potential for additional funding from Scottish Government to mitigate the impact of changes. She asked whether, if no new money was being proposed, it would be possible for the IJB to request this.

Mr Gorman agreed that work on transitions would be important, especially within children services. However, he thought the advent of additional funding unlikely.

Ms Tait agreed with Mr Gorman about the duties around child services to future-proof plans for children. She added that a refresh of the approach to autism was also required as this was not currently as robust as it needed to be. She advised that transition work was ongoing with NHS Lothian but that this was a very big piece of work. In response to a question from the Chair, she agreed that it would be useful to provide the IJB with a more detailed update on progress and intentions in this area.

Councillor Akhtar acknowledged that the position was very difficult and that the IJB needed to consider all opportunities to work efficiently and differently to mitigate financial pressures where possible. However, she pointed to the significant level of population growth within the Lothians and which was likely to continue. She urged the importance of factoring this into calculations within the plan and the implications for services. She also highlighted the need to raise this issue with national policy and decision makers.

The Chair agreed noting discussions which were already taking place at the Chairs & Vice Chairs Network and the need to keep the pressure on at national level to demand increases in funding.

Mr King responded to the Chair's earlier points outlining modelling undertaken around the pay uplift and confirming that inflation had been included in the calculations within the plan.

Ms Kerr stated that the IJB had clear objectives to which it remained committed and a lot of work was taking place on remodelling and refining of services.

Paul Currie informed members of the intention to more closely monitor progress on priorities and report back to the IJB.

Mr Gorman acknowledged that the IJB was about to enter a difficult place financially and there would be significant change to infrastructure, services and delivery. The IJB's ambition was to provide more services closer to home but this would be more challenging in future years, with some aspects of the strategy at risk from continuing financial pressures.

Decision

The IJB agreed to:

- i. Note the medium term rolling 5 year financial plan (2022/23 to 2026/27); and
- ii. Note the future work required to refine this financial plan and the requirement for significant recovery actions to bring the plan back into balance.

5. CIPFA - FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT CODE 2021/22

The Chief Finance Officer had submitted a report asking the IJB to agree to the adoption of the CIPFA – Financial Management Code guidance in so far as it applied to the operations of the IJB.

Mr King presented the report. He outlined the background and key principles of the Code and advised members that it was designed to support good practice in financial management. He confirmed that the Audit & Risk Committee had considered the Code and recommended its adoption by the IJB.

The Chair thanked Mr King for the report and said it made sense to follow good practice guidance provided by CIPFA.

Ms de Souza welcomed the report and endorsed the recommendation that the IJB adopt the Code. She said the IJB could benefit from the principles contained within it.

Recommendation i was approved by general agreement of members and recommendation ii was approved unanimously by roll call vote.

Decision

The IJB:

- i. Agreed to note the consideration and recommendation to the IJB of this Code from its Audit & Risk Committee; and
- ii. Agreed to the adoption of the Code.

6. ELHSCP BRANDING

A report was submitted by the Senior Communications Adviser presenting a new brand identity for East Lothian's Health and Social Care Partnership, along with new brand guidelines for the organisation.

Jennifer Jarvis presented the report. She outlined the background to the refresh of the HSCP branding reminding members that it was not just a logo or identity but must also communicate messages to an audience and be reflective of both partners' values. She provided further detail on how the new branding had been developed and the proposals for a phased roll out of the new logo over the next 6 to 12 months.

The Chair thanked Ms Jarvis for a very thorough piece of work.

Elizabeth Gordon welcomed the new branding and the gradual approach to its roll out. She said tying in the colour scheme with the old logo was a good idea and she noted that the new branding would be easily adaptable for different uses.

Recommendation i was approved by the general agreement of members and recommendation ii was approved unanimously by roll call vote.

Decision

The IJB:

- i) Reviewed the proposal for the new brand identity and guidelines; and
- ii) Approved and formally signed off the new brand identity and guidelines for implementation from January 2023.

7. CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22

A report was submitted by the Chief Social Work Officer presenting her annual report for 2021-22

Ms Tait presented her annual report. She outlined the background, purpose and format, including particular achievements and key challenges during 2021/22. The Chair welcomed the report and said it was important to acknowledge all of the work taking place on a daily basis to support vulnerable individuals.

Ms Tait, Ms Kerr and Mr Gorman responded to questions from members. They provided further detail on changes to commissioning structures as a result of the proposed NCS, gave examples of work undertaken to support different approaches to meet client needs and how working in partnership with organisations such as VCEL and using a risk-based approach was helping to provide greater consistency in service delivery across the county.

Ms de Souza said that this was an excellent report and she noted the range of issues covered and the services involved in underpinning the wider work of the HSCP. She also noted the workforce challenges and that, in some respects, social work was not always a very valued profession and that the public were not always aware of the complex and varying risks involved in this work, especially around protection issues. She added that she would be happy to hear what the IJB could do to better value and support the work of social work services.

Ms Tait acknowledged that staff recruitment and retention within children and family services was currently in crisis and part of that was down to the visibility of the role and how it was valued. She said it was important within the HSCP to discuss how to raise the profile of the social work role and how to demonstrate how social work adds value to partnership working. This annual report was a good way to showcase examples and achievements. She suggested that the IJB might consider what performance measures could bring greater visibility to the role.

Ms Tait responded to a question from Ms Gordon on permanent fostering and its impact in terms of the Promise. She explained that the Promise challenged social workers to ensure that, where safe and right to do so, the connection with the birth family was maintained. Also looking at whole-family wellbeing and providing support that would meet their needs. She added that this type of a partnership approach was not without its challenges.

Councillor Akhtar said it was really important to go through the report and to acknowledge the significant contribution of social work staff to the work of the HSCP. It was also important for the IJB to consider how it valued and articulated the role of social work and how best to get this message across to the public.

The Chair endorsed these comments and acknowledged that greater awareness of the work of social work services would be beneficial for the IJB. He suggested that Ms Tait might consider arranging a development session for IJB members.

Ms Tait welcomed the opportunity for a development session on both the general social work role and specific areas such as public protection or children's services.

Ms de Souza asked if it would be possible for the IJB to write to the Ms Tait to formally acknowledge the report and the work taking place. This letter could also be copied to social work staff.

The Chair agreed to discuss this further after the meeting. In the meantime, he thanked Ms Tait for an excellent annual report and acknowledged the contributions of all staff within the social work service.

Decision

The IJB considered the content of the 2021-22 Annual Report of the Chief Social Work Officer and its implications for the provision of social work services in East Lothian and their role in assuring the safety and welfare of vulnerable children and adults across the county.

Signed

Mr Peter Murray
Chair of the East Lothian Integration Joint Board