

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EAST LOTHIAN INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD

THURSDAY 20 FEBRUARY 2025 VIA DIGITAL MEETINGS SYSTEM

Voting Members Present:

Councillor S Akhtar (Chair)

Mr J Blazeby

Dr P Cantley Mr A Cogan

Councillor J Findlay

Ms E Gordon

Councillor L Jardine

Councillor C McFarlane

Non-voting Members Present:

Mr D Binnie Mr D Bradley
Ms L Byrne Ms S Gossner
Mr D Hood Ms C MacDonald
Dr C Mackintosh Ms M McNeill
Mr T Miller/Mr L Kerr Mr M Porteous

Ms F Wilson Dr K Burke (*substitute)

Officers Present from NHS Lothian/East Lothian Council:

Ms L BerryMr P CurrieMs C GoodwinMs J JarvisMs L KerrMr A MainMr N MunroMs C Rodgers

Mr G Whitehead

Clerk:

Ms F Currie

Apologies:

Ms M Allan Dr J Hardman Dr K Kasengele*

Declarations of Interest:

None

The Chair welcomed everyone and advised that the meeting was being recorded and would be made available as a webcast in order to allow the public access to the democratic process in East Lothian. East Lothian Council and NHS Lothian were the data controllers under the Data Protection Act 2018. Data collected as part of the recording would be retained in accordance with the Council and Health Board's policies on record retention. The webcast of this meeting would be publicly available for up to six months.

The Clerk confirmed members' attendance by roll call.

1. MINUTES OF THE EAST LOTHIAN IJB MEETING ON 19 DECEMBER 2024 (FOR APPROVAL)

The minutes of the IJB meeting on 19 December 2024 were approved.

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 19 DECEMBER 2024

The following matters arising from the minutes on 19 December 2024 were discussed:

Item 2 - The Chair asked is there had been any change to the national guidance on vaccinations for carers. David Hood reported that there had been no change to the position but that conversations were ongoing around the vaccination programme for the next financial year, and he would ask for this to be flagged up as part of the negotiations. The Chair said it was important to keep raising this matter with the national body.

Item 4 – The Chair asked for an update on progress with the Housing Partners Board. Laura Kerr confirmed that the Board was up and running with numerous meetings having taken place with housing colleagues. The joint meetings between housing and health colleagues would continue to help support partnership working and managing challenges going forward.

Item 8 – Jonathan Blazeby asked for an update on the unscheduled care actions approved by the IJB in December. He also asked whether it would be possible to include an action note as part of the IJB meeting minutes to keep track of progress on agreed actions. Fiona Wilson advised that it was still early in the process given the level of investment and recruitment that was being put in place but there were signs of progress in terms of front door performance. The key to improvements was sustainability and she intended to bring a further update to the IJB in due course.

The Chair said that it would be useful to see the impact that this work was having on people waiting for packages in the local community. Ms Wilson pointed out that the goal of the money was to improve front door performance and the access standard, and that each IJB had adopted a different approach. While it might be possible to provide details of the number of people helped the focus was on front door performance. The Chair suggested monitoring of any unintended consequences as a result of this work, so these might also be addressed.

Item 9 – Councillor Lyn Jardine asked if there had been any response to the action agreed to formally escalate concerns to partners. The Chair advised that she had received some feedback from the Council on budget development proposals following her letter to the partners. Ms Wilson said that she had not seen any response to the Chair's letter nor any information from the partners from a budget perspective.

3. CHAIR'S REPORT

A report was presented on the activities undertaken by the Chair of East Lothian IJB and any relevant updates.

The Chair reported that much of her time lately had been taken up in supporting Council colleagues in the budget process. She advised that the Council's budget offer to the IJB for 2025/26 was now in the public domain.

Councillor Jardine referred to paragraphs 3.2 to 3.5 in the report and asked if the Chair's engagement in the budget process had been as Depute Leader of the Council or as Chair of the IJB. The Chair said that she had been mindful of both roles and of the impact on the IJB as the Council worked through its budget process.

Councillor Jardine had concerns about this and said that she would discuss this further with the Chair. She emphasised the importance of members being clear that their role in IJB meetings was as members of the IJB, and that this should also be reflected in the Chair's report.

Mike Porteous said that the Council's budget offer was positive as it would enable the IJB to stand still and to address some longstanding pressures, while planning for the financial challenges ahead. He added that the IJB did not have any responsibility for capital funding so any investments that were made were based on Council decisions and not the IJB.

The Chair highlighted some aspects of the budget offer. Ms Wilson cautioned that the offer needed to be worked through by the IJB. While she recognised that this was an excellent offer, given pressures facing the Council, it would not necessarily give the IJB room for any additional investment. Mr Porteous agreed that while it would address some pressures and gaps in funding over the years, there would be no opportunity for wholesale investment.

Mr Blazeby asked for clarification of the IJB's budget-setting process. Mr Porteous explained that while the Council's was a confirmed offer, the figures from health colleagues were currently indicative and would not be confirmed until April. He would bring forward a report to the next meeting of the IJB on 20 March outlining both offers with a view to agreeing the IJB's budget for 2025/26. Ms Kerr added that, previously, the IJB's May meeting had been dedicated to finance and saw the finalisation of its budget following confirmed offers from both partners.

The Chair referred to a statement from the First Minister on 27 January regarding additional funding for 3 priority areas for action and said she had raised with health colleagues the question of what this money would mean for the IJB.

Councillor Jardine asked if this money was part of the Scottish Government's proposed budget and whether further detail was available. The Chair said it was her understanding that this was additional funding, and she had asked health colleagues to establish what this might mean for the IJB.

The Chair highlighted a number of other points from her report.

Decision

The IJB agreed to:

- i. Note the activities and updates that had taken place since the last meeting.
- ii. Note that the report was to help raise awareness of the wide range of work carried out across East Lothian that contributed to the strategic directions of the IJB.

4. APPOINTMENT TO THE IJB CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER POST

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer informing the Integration Joint Board (IJB) of the appointment to the Chief Finance Officer post on a substantive basis.

Paul Currie presented the report referring to the previous paper brought to the IJB outlining the process for appointment to the substantive post and the decision to increase it from part-time to full-time. He invited members to note the appointment of Mr Porteous on a substantive basis.

Councillor Jardine said that, as Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee, she looked forward to an early meeting with Mr Porteous.

The Chair congratulated Mr Porteous on his appointment and welcomed the increase in hours to raise the post from part-time to full-time.

Decision

The IJB agreed to:

- i. Note that following a competitive recruitment process, Mike Porteous had been appointed to the post of Chief Finance Officer, with effect from January 2025.
- ii. Note that in December 2024, it was agreed to increase the hours of the Chief Finance Officer from 0.5 WTE to 1.0 WTE, reflecting the importance of the post in securing a balanced budget for year end and in supporting the delivery of efficiencies across work programmes.

5. 2024/25 QUARTER 3 FINANCE REPORT

A report was submitted by the Chief Finance Officer updating the IJB on the outcome of the partner's Quarter 3 Financial Reviews and providing a revised forecast position on spend and an update on the delivery of efficiencies.

Mike Porteous presented the report which included the position for the IJB's budget as of 31 December, a comprehensive review of the efficiencies programme and the forecast year-end position. He outlined the detail of the forecast overspend, as set out in his report, and the key drivers and noted that the social care overspend had reduced slightly with the use of earmarked reserves. He said he was not expecting any material changes to the forecast positions. He confirmed that both partners had been advised of this and they understood the requirement which may fall to them at year end to fund gaps in their respective positions.

Mr Porteous provided an overview of the efficiencies programme noting that there had been some slippage in delivery timescales for 2024/25 but that these schemes were expected to deliver in full in 2025/26. Any schemes that did not deliver in full this year would be reviewed to maximise delivery in the coming year, and he would include updates on this work as part of future finance reporting to the IJB.

Councillor Jeremy Findlay asked about the use of earmarked reserves given their limited impact on the forecast overspend. Mr Porteous explained that earmarked reserves were for a specific purpose and could only be spent for that purpose. If the Council had qualifying expenditure, it could draw down on these funds and the reserves would be released against that spend. If the funds were not spent, they would be carried forward. He was not sure whether these funds were received annually or had built up over time, but he could provide further details to members.

Replying to a question from Andrew Cogan, Mr Porteous advised that the final overspend position would not be known until the year end. At that point, the partners would be notified and, under the terms of the Integration Scheme, the IJB would seek additional funding from them to achieve a breakeven position for this financial year.

Mr Blazeby said it was important to learn lessons in setting the budget for next year and to build in cost savings plans at an early stage. He added that continuing discussions around mitigation and efficiencies throughout the year could be viewed as a distraction from the IJB's main strategic function.

Mr Porteous acknowledged the point saying that the process undertaken was to identify gaps and plan how best to address them. However, it was not always possible to start efficiency schemes on day one. He said that planning for next year had already begun with the intention to use efficiencies that had not been delivered in this year as basis for next year, along with the delivery of other savings plans.

Ms Wilson confirmed that discussions were taking place and, despite a positive offer from the Council and hopefully a similar offer from the health board, the IJB needed to continue to create efficiencies and be agile in delivering its Strategic Plan.

Mr Hood pointed out that there would be a report later in the agenda on the review of the Strategic Plan. The new Plan would link into the 5-year financial plan, future funding gaps and how these might be addressed. He hoped that the budget offers for 2025/26 would provide the IJB with some headroom to do the required financial planning.

Mr Blazeby acknowledged the point but noted that the review of the Strategic Plan was not due to conclude until December 2025.

Responding to a question from Councillor Jardine, Mr Porteous said that the IJB did have some influence over set aside budgets and was working with other IJBs and acute service colleagues to address key challenges, for example, through the improvements to unscheduled care. Ms Wilson agreed saying that there was more scrutiny than ever around how IJBs influenced this area and while progress had been made there was more work to do.

David Binnie asked for clarification of exactly what was meant by 'statutory responsibilities' when talking about efficiencies. He referred to a previous agreement to provide information and asked if this could be done in the form of a paper to the IJB. Ms Wilson said that this had been addressed previously within development sessions. She confirmed that a huge amount of the IJB's work sat within statutory responsibilities.

Ms Kerr said that the position was complex but if the IJB decided only to deliver its statutory responsibilities, for example in respect of social work services, it would not be able to function or meet its obligations in assessing care needs and providing support.

Lindsey Byrne said that the role of services was to protect and support people. She acknowledged that there was a need to consider what the statutory responsibilities were and what services were additional to that and could be stopped. However, she cautioned

that, as an IJB, they had reached the point where if they continued to cut services, they would not be able to deliver in line with the requirements of code of practices and legislation. She agreed it was a difficult balance and needed to be informed by the views of professional leads.

Mr Binnie asked if this included the third sector and whether there would be a degree of protection for those delivering statutory responsibilities. Ms Kerr said this should be a point for future discussion noting that third sector were not often viewed this way, although in many instances they were providing a statutory function.

Mr Blazeby agreed with Mr Binnie that this was an important area, and it would be useful if professional leads could be more specific when talking about statutory responsibilities.

Ms Byrne and Sarah Gossner both agreed that they needed to be clearer, and it was a challenge for them to translate this in a way that everyone understood. As professional leads, they would have to think about how information was presented, perhaps using examples to explain things more clearly.

The Chair mentioned the Chief Social Work Officer annual report's use of case studies as an example of what could be done. On wider financial matters, she emphasised the importance of monitoring the set aside budget and how this might impact community services and transformation work.

Decision

The IJB agreed to:

- i. Note the outcome of partners' Quarter 3 Financial Reviews for 2024/25
- ii. Note the planned release of Earmarked Reserves to offset relevant costs for 2024/25.
- iii. Note the updated level of efficiency delivery for partners for 2024/25, and the requirement to review schemes that did not deliver as planned.

6. PLANNING OLDER PEOPLE'S SERVICES FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer presenting members with the Planning Older People's Services final report and recommendations for their approval.

Andrew Main presented the report setting out the context and background to the project. He said that there had been a real emphasis on providing care at the right time and place and getting people to remain as independent as possible within their own homes and communities. Throughout the project there had also been clear emphasis on coproduction and engagement with stakeholders. He advised that from the initial work in 2021 they now had a clear set of priorities fully co-produced with stakeholders and partners across East Lothian. The extensive engagement work had provided the HSCP with a wealth of information and views which should be used to refresh its strategic priorities, and this feedback should be kept at the forefront of future planning work. He highlighted the formation of the Independent Community Panel and the level of support and involvement from all stakeholders. He concluded that the report and recommendations were fully supported by the Panel and the Strategic Planning Group.

Ms Gordon commended the report, and everyone involved in this work. She said that the report and level of feedback were impressive, and she fully supported the recommendations. She asked how the Panel would be expected to work going forward.

Mr Main said that the Panel would meet within the next couple of months to discuss where its future priorities and attention should be. The IJB and strategic planners would also have to consider where the Panel should sit within the Change Board structure. He advised that the new Equalities & Engagement Officer would work with the Panel on these issues and a progress report would be brought back to the IJB. He felt that there were numerous opportunities and areas of interest, and he hoped that the IJB would maintain regular contact with the Panel going forward as it determined how to make the best use of this resource.

Patricia Cantley also commended the report but said she was concerned about the disconnect between ongoing budget discussions and some of the issues highlighted in the recommendations. She said that there was a real risk that the IJB could miss out on a lot of good work by focussing solely on statutory responsibilities. It was important to keep some of these wider services in mind when having discussions around saving money in the longer term.

Mr Main acknowledged that by focussing too closely on front door and acute services there was a risk of losing track of interventions which could help to avoid the need for people to access statutory services.

Councillor Carol McFarlane asked about the potential benefits for older people as a result of retaining the Panel. Mr Main hoped that having appropriate representation across key stakeholders would ensure there was a voice around the table that could provide feedback at an earlier stage of key planning processes.

Councillor Jardine said that this was a truly remarkable piece of work which had included a phenomenal level of engagement. She asked about the opportunities within the coproduction model to balance the challenges facing services.

Mr Main said he believed that the IJB had a duty to ensure staff and residents in East Lothian were involved, aware and contributing to discussions. At the forefront of any work there needed to be consideration of who should be around the table and who should be providing input to those discussions. He said that the IJB should be moving away from a culture of telling people what was happening rather than engaging with them, and the Panel was part of that change.

Councillor Jardine said this was a reassuring approach and added that the information gathered as part of this process had helped inform her own engagement with stakeholders.

Mr Blazeby asked about implementation and who would take ownership of this. He noted that this project had taken several years to reach this point, and he felt that people should not have to wait several more years to see the benefits.

Mr Main commented that the IJB Strategic Plan priorities had evolved throughout this process to weave this work it into the Plan. Going forward, he said that the focus would be on ensuring that people could remain in their own homes and enjoy life as independently as possible through investment in intermediate care. Referring to the challenges of eroding finances and a growing population, he said the key would be whether decisions were taken to inject funding into one service potentially at the expense of another service, knowing that this would make a real difference in the mid to longer term. He said he found it extremely encouraging knowing that many stakeholders and members of the public held the same priorities as the IJB.

Mr Blazeby asked if the IJB had contributed to the national consultations and strategies referred to in the report. He noted that some of the well-intentioned priorities were perhaps Lothian-wide or nationwide and he asked whether the IJB was of a sufficient size to drive some of this work.

Mr Main advised that palliative and intermediate care, and tech-based care featured heavily in the wider priorities of the programme board. The IJB's Strategic Plan was also currently being refreshed and there would be opportunities over the coming months to look at these questions. He agreed that intermediate care featured heavily at national and Lothian-wide level and there was a need to keep this under close review, as some decisions taken on a wider geographical basis could have potentially significant implications for services within East Lothian.

Claire Mackintosh said that she was interested in the concept of intermediate care. Although it could be difficult to define, particularly with overlaps into community-based or hospital-based care, it had huge potential.

Ms Gossner advised that palliative care was a priority, but they needed to consider how to link the work taking place locally into Lothian-wide and national perspectives and strategies.

The Chair thanked everyone who had contributed to the project. Referring to recommendation 6, she highlighted the need to consider how best to get data from voluntary and community sector partners and how to share and use this information when seeking support from other partners.

The Chair moved to a roll call vote and the recommendations were approved unanimously.

Decision

The IJB:

- i. Agreed to note the content and approve the final report.
- ii. Agreed each of the report's recommendations (section 7.1):
 - The East Lothian IJB should adopt the four suggested priorities (palliative and end of life care; polypharmacy; intermediate care; and technology) and embed them within the refreshed strategic plan and updated Programme Board structure. The findings and specific suggestions contained within this report should be progressed further by relevant Senior Managers and Officers as part of the revised Programme Board structure.
 - The East Lothian IJB should retain and develop the Independent Community Panel as a key engagement and participation function. The Panel should form part of a strategic planning and decision-making feedback loop that ensures key stakeholders, particularly those with lived experience, are informed and consulted on key discussions and developments on an ongoing basis.
 - ELHSCP Officers should update and refresh our existing engagement and communications strategies to reflect the role of the Independent Community Panel and take consideration of other key project findings such as: raising awareness of services; accessibility of information; use of technical language; and accessible information standards.

- 4) When considering further financial recovery actions for 2024/25 and working towards a balanced budget position for 2025/26 and beyond as part of the East Lothian IJB 5-year financial plan, officers should remain mindful of the findings of this report, with particular reference to building community capacity and exploring innovative and sustainable intermediate care services.
- 5) ELHSCP Officers to continue to collaborate with NHS Lothian Public Health, East Lothian Council Area Partnership Health and Wellbeing sub-groups, 3rd sector partners / interfaces and community groups to explore and develop early intervention and prevention approaches that support IJB strategic priorities and deliver intermediate care and support.
- 6) ELHSCP Officers to continue to work with NHS Lothian Public Health and East Lothian Council data analysts to improve our Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and use of data and analytics when it comes to informing strategic decision making and service development.

7. EAST LOTHIAN IJB EQUALITIES MAINSTREAMING REPORT 2023-24 AND EAST LOTHIAN IJB EQUALITIES OUTCOMES 2025-2029

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer offering the IJB an opportunity to consider and comment on the content included in the first draft of East Lothian IJB Equality Outcomes 2025-2029; and contribute examples of directions and decisions that contributed to the IJB fulfilling its requirements under the Public Sector Equality Duty in 2023 and 2024.

Mr Main presented the report outlining the recommendations which asked IJB members to read the first draft of the Equalities Outcomes and to read the Equalities Mainstreaming Report and provide appropriate comments or suggested additions. He said that the reports would be revised to incorporate any feedback and would be brought back to the IJB for approval in due course. He asked IJB members to e-mail any comments or suggestions to Kate Thornback by 28 February, however, he would also welcome feedback from members at this meeting.

Ms Gordon noted references within the reports to 'our premises' and 'our staff' and suggested that it might be more accurate to refer to 'our partners' premises or staff.

Mr Main acknowledged the point and he would pass on to Ms Thornback the need to carefully consider wording when talking about premises or staff in the context of the IJB and HSCP.

The Chair moved to a roll call vote and the recommendations were approved unanimously.

Decision

The IJB agreed to:

- i. Read the first draft of the Equality Outcomes 2025-2029 and:
 - Comment on the suitability of the outcomes in relation to core IJB documents or functions.
 - Suggest any other equality themes and outcomes for consideration for inclusion in the Equality Outcomes 2025-2029.

- ii. Read 'IJB Directions and Equality Mainstreaming' and:
 - Highlight any work related to member areas of responsibility that they think
 has contributed positively to advancing equality or that has reduced
 discrimination/disadvantage in 2023 and 2024.
 - Suggest other staff members the Equalities and Engagement Officer could contact to collect these examples.
- iii. Refer an updated version of this paper to SPG and IJB meetings in March/April.

Sederunt: Councillor Findlay left the meeting.

8. REVIEW OF THE EAST LOTHIAN IJB STRATEGIC PLAN

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer informing the IJB of the planned approach to reviewing the current East Lothian IJB Strategic Plan and developing a new Strategic Plan to cover the period of 2025-2030.

Claire Goodwin presented the report which set out the planned approach for reviewing the current Strategic Plan with a view to producing a revised Plan for 2025-2030. This approach reflected the statutory guidance on developing strategic plans and had been presented to Strategic Planning Group who had a key role in this work. She drew attention to the outline of the IJB's involvement and to the planned approach to consultation and engagement as set out in the report. She said it was important to highlight that when planning the engagement approach there was already a wealth of information available from other engagement work which would provide a good starting point. She also pointed out that once the Strategic Plan was in place ongoing engagement, co-production and co-development would be an important part of the implementation of the Plan. She explained that the new Plan would be for 5 years and would be reviewed at the 3-year point. The 5-year term would be useful for a longer-term view and would link with the IJB's 5-year financial plan.

Councillor Jardine asked about the various consultation and engagement activities and if there was any indication of timescales for this work.

Ms Goodwin said that this was a complex landscape, and one example was the Community Planning Partnership's review of the local outcome improvement plan which would be happening alongside the Strategic Plan review. Meetings had already taken place with community planning colleagues to discuss cross referencing feedback from engagement work on both of these plans. There were similar timescales for both of these pieces of work and officers were keen to focus the engagement work to make it as effective as possible. She advised that there would also be the opportunity to feed in priorities from the work of the Area Partnership Health & Wellbeing groups.

Councillor Jardine said that this was reassuring and really helpful and reinforced in her mind the need for a longer-term strategic plan.

Mr Blazeby asked whether the new Plan should be 2026-30, rather than 2025-30 as it would not be finalised until December 2025. He also asked about the timing of the review and whether such an iterative process needed to take 12 months to complete.

Ms Goodwin said that 2025-30 was felt appropriate as the new Plan would be published within the 2025/26 financial year. However, she accepted that this could be looked at. She agreed that it was an iterative process and that the annual delivery plan evolved

year on year. She said that the annual delivery plan for 2025/26 would be reviewed at the same time as the Strategic Plan and that the timescale for development of the new Plan was quite tight when considered against those of neighbouring IJBs.

Ms Kerr added that to do this work any quicker would do it a disservice and would not allow for the completion of the necessary engagement and governance processes. She also felt that 2025/30 was more appropriate as it would directly follow the current Plan and was in line with the approach taken by other IJBs.

Mr Blazeby suggested that, from the public's point of view, it would make more sense for the Plan to be 2026/30 as it was unlikely to be published much before January 2026. He also disagreed with the timescale for reviewing the Strategic Plan.

The Chair thought it important to go through the due process for consultation and engagement so that the IJB could genuinely claim that the Plan was co-produced. She also said that she would be keen to ensure that the organisation, Equally Safe, was included in the engagement process. She encouraged IJB members to support the review and asked Ms Goodwin to advise members on how this could best be achieved.

The Chair moved to a roll call vote and the recommendations were approved unanimously.

Decision

The IJB:

- i. Agreed the planned approach and timescales for carrying out a review of the current IJB Strategic Plan as outlined in the body of the report, noting the key points at which the IJB would be directly involved in the process.
- ii. Agreed the planned approach to consultation and engagement as described in the appended draft Consultation and Engagement Plan.
- iii. Approved the proposal that the Strategic Plan cover an extended period of five years from 2025 to 2030, with a review taking place in year three as required by the statutory guidance.

9. EAST LOTHIAN IJB AND AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE MEETING DATES FOR 2025/26

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer setting the dates of East Lothian IJB business meetings and development sessions, and meeting dates for the Audit & Risk Committee during session 2025/26.

The Clerk presented the report and invited members to approve the meeting dates as set out in the appendices. She also requested that members of the Audit & Risk Committee indicate a preference for one of the two proposed dates for the meeting in December 2025.

Ms Gordon indicated that due to a potential clash with other meetings on the 16th, she would prefer the Audit & Risk Committee meeting to take place on 2nd December. Councillor Jardine also expressed a preference for 2nd December.

The Chair moved to a roll call vote and the recommendations were approved unanimously, noting 2nd December as the preferred choice for the Audit & Risk Committee meeting.

Decision

T	he	I. I	B:

- i. approve the dates for IJB business meetings during session 2025/26;
- ii. approve the dates for IJB development sessions during session 2025/26; and
- iii. approve the dates for the Audit & Risk Committee meetings during session 2025/26.

Signed	

Councillor Shamin Akhtar Chair of the East Lothian Integration Joint Board