

Shetland NHS Board

Minutes of the Area Partnership Forum – Thursday 07 November 2024 via MS Teams

Present

Bruce McCulloch	Employee Director (Unison Representative)/APF co-chair (In the Chair)
Brian Chittick	Chief Executive (APF co-chair)
Lorraine Hall	Director of HR and Support Services
Prof Kathleen Carolan	Director of Nursing and Acute Services
Dr Susan Laidlaw	Director of Public Health
Colin Marsland	Director of Finance
Tom McIntosh	Unison Representative
Jenny Irvine	SOR Representative

In Attendance

Joe Higgins	Non-Executive Whistleblowing Champion
Edna Mary Watson	Chief Nurse (Corporate)
Lorraine Allinson	HR Services Manager
Kirsty Clark	Learning and Development Manager
Keji Oni	HR Manager- Workforce Planning and Employee Relations
Marianne Williamson	PA to HR Director (APF Administrator)

APF2425-27 Welcome and Apologies

Bruce McCulloch welcomed everyone to the meeting, apologies were received from the RCN and CSP representatives, Dr Kirsty Brightwell and Jo Robinson.

APF2425-28 Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 03 September 2024

The minutes were approved as an accurate record.

APF2425-29 Matters Arising

APF2425-18- Travel and Subsistence Claims Guidance-Kirsty Clark explained that Colin Campbell, Contracts Manager and Claire Thuis from the Staff Development Team would be meeting with CTM, a travel agent, to investigate the possibility of booking accommodation through them. Hopefully this would have a positive financial benefit and reduce staff time spent sourcing affordable accommodation.

Brian Chittick suggested as a compromise in the short-term, wording could be added to state £75-100 per night depending on locality/time of booking. Staff should always endeavour for best value acknowledging that it is not always possible to find accommodation at the current rate. Colin Marsland reminded members what is written in the AfC Terms and Conditions, Union colleagues are not raising this. Kirsty Clark

explained that she had been in discussion with Learning Leads in other boards and there is a large amount of variation.

ACTION: Staff Side members to bring up regionally/ with Scottish Terms and Conditions Committee to consider raising national rates in AfC Terms and Conditions.

APF2425-30 Managing Adverse Weather – A Proposal to Develop ‘Sleeping In’ Escalation Arrangements to Enable 24/7 and OOHs Care Contingencies

Kathleen Carolan introduced this item, explaining that the proposals had been developed following last year's adverse winter weather. She took members through the proposal explaining that it would allow a mechanism for remunerating staff who made themselves available for sleeping away from their home during periods of adverse weather. This would reduce the reliance on staff who live within walking distance and main safe staffing for services.

Conversations with staff have been positive and the purpose of bringing to APF is to seek approval to develop an operational framework. It could also be applicable to other teams.

Members felt that it was a very good paper and a sensible proactive approach. The Regional RCN representative had noted her support prior to the meeting. It would be for Gold Command to escalate and give approval to enact the arrangements thus helping to ensure that it is applied consistently across the system.

Prof Carolan noted that it will be difficult to guarantee the quality of the accommodation at this stage, but the Lerwick Hotel is being discussed a possibility. Area Partnership Forum will be kept abreast as to implementation and impact of the proposals on staff.

OUTCOME: Area Partnership Forum supported the introduction of ‘Sleeping In’ Escalation Arrangements.

APF2425-31 Speak Up Week- Review 2024

Edna Mary Watson and Joe Higgins joined the meeting to provide members with a summary of Speak Up Week and the activities undertaken. It was an opportunity to engage with staff and assess how well the standards have been embedded across the organisation.

Alongside a summary of activities undertaken across the week they highlighted the following:

- Importance of feedback loop where concerns have been raised
- Actions from the week will be raised with relevant Directors
- Pleased with how awareness of the standards has been embedded in the organisation
- Managers need support in undertaking investigations
- Small numbers of Whistleblowing concerns are raised but they are resource intensive, this includes Executive time and involvement.

Lorraine Hall thanked Ms Watson and Mr Higgins for their presentation. Speak Up week acts as a temperature check for the organisation, and it is great to see the progress. She is chairing a Short Life Working Group on Raising Concerns which will consider what we need to do differently.

OUTCOME: Area Partnership noted the update.

APF2425-32 Staff Wellbeing- what could this look like going forward?

Brian Chittick explained that he had added this to the agenda as he feels that there is a gap in this important area and what it looks like for the organisation moving forward. He noted the following:

- Living well- how do we link with other big employers and agencies in Shetland
- Women's Health/Menopause
- Mental Health/Emotional Health
- Peer Support Networks
- What we offer as an employer- e.g. flexible working, career development, reward and recognition
- How do we engage with staff about what they want- acknowledgement that current wellbeing group not working/capacity issues
- Future of Spiritual Care post and possibility of adding Wellbeing Lead to this role

Lorraine Hall said that there was a need to put more energy into the Wellbeing Group. It has been difficult to move forward when everyone is very busy. One size does not fit all, and she spoke about some of the things that other Boards are doing and early discussions about a Once for Scotland approach to Long Service Awards. It is about our staff feeling safe and celebrating the small wins.

ACTION: Bruce McCulloch agreed that this was an opportunity to stocktake and look at how we communicate with staff the way forward. Wellbeing to be added as a standing item to the APF agenda to monitor progress in this area.

APF2425-33 Workforce Highlight Report

Lorraine Allinson introduced the Workforce Highlight Report which provides a snapshot on sickness absence, recruitment activity, core and mandatory training, appraisals and an update on the development of the workforce plan.

Stress, anxiety and depression remains the most common reason for absence, Dr Laidlaw queried whether it was possible to identify whether it was related to work or not. Ms Allinson explained that this is difficult to measure, quite often it is a combination of both.

Regarding the development of the Workforce Plan, progress is being made ahead of the January deadline. Currently there remain challenges around data. The Attract plan is a major element of the plan and 'Developing the Young Workforce' will be crucial to this.

Lorraine Hall encouraged all managers to participate fully in this important piece of work and engage fully with Keji Oni. Brian Chittick reiterated this, a detailed Workforce Plan will put us in a better position in the longer term and help make us a more sustainable organisation.

Core and mandatory training figures have seen an increase. Subject matter experts have been sent completion figures for their modules and the Staff Development Team is working with them to identify hotspots.

OUTCOME: Area Partnership Forum noted the Workforce Highlight Report.

APF2425-34 TURAS Learn- Update

Kirsty Clark provided an update on an issue that has emerged regarding reporting on Turas Learn. Real time information can be provided but there is an issue if information is required for a certain time period. We would be unable to provide information for FOIs/Government returns etc in a timely manner which comes at a reputational and financial risk for the organisation. There is a colleague in NES who can provide the information in a manual workaround, but it is dependent on that person being available.

It is hoped that this issue will be resolved by the end of the Quarter 4.

ACTION: Bruce McCulloch felt that consideration should be made as to whether this would be recorded as an organisational risk due to its implications on other governance strands.

There was then a general discussion about the Board's poor appraisal rates and what we can do to improve them. This reporting issue demonstrates a bigger malaise with the limitations of Turas and its applications. Lorraine Hall told members that EMT had discussed the issues around appraisals at length and had agreed actions to try and improve rates- focusing in the first instance with support services and senior leaders.

ACTION: Both Management and Staff Side members to encourage staff to fully engage in appraisal process.

OUTCOME: Area Partnership noted the report and that an update will be provided as to progress.

APF2425-35 Agenda for Change- Non-Pay Reform Updates

Lorraine Hall, as co-chair of the Implementation Group, gave an update to members. Three sub-groups have been established for the three different workstreams. She noted the following:

- Implementation of the three non-pay elements is an action under the 2024/25 Staff Governance Action Plan.
- Evaluation/feedback form completed and submitted to Scottish Government
- No update nationally on whether move on 01 April will be to 36.5 or 36 hours, the RWW group will be asking managers to beginning thinking about how either 30 or 60minute reduction will impact services.
- NHS Shetland- no submissions to national Band5/6 portal as yet. Lorraine Allinson to discuss with Chief Nurses about potential numbers.
- Protected Learning Time- Kirsty Clark attended national meeting in October. Discussions ongoing and hoped that local group will meet soon.

ACTION: Additional narrative and feedback is required regarding current status of no applications received for Band 5-6 for nursing staff.

OUTCOME: Area Partnership Forum noted the update.

APF2425-36 2024-25 Financial Performance Management Report Update – Month 5

Colin Marsland presented the standing finance update to members. He highlighted the following:

- NHS Shetland currently sitting at £2.8million overspend
- There are underlying work force pressures in our local service models causing significant overspend
- Agenda for Change pay award fully funded
- Savings ideas from staff are always welcome

Mr McCulloch noted that we need to look at how we communicate with staff around savings targets e.g. would a Blue Peter style 'Totaliser work? Perhaps this is something that could be discussed at the Finance and Sustainability Group.

OUTCOME: Area Partnership Forum noted the update.

APF2425-37 Terms and Conditions Group

Bruce McCulloch provided a verbal update from the last meeting of the Terms and Conditions Group. Most points had been covered in earlier agenda items, but he highlighted the following:

- Distant Islands Allowance has been increased in line with the pay award.
- A representative from the NHS Grampian Payroll team has offered to join our Reduced Working Week sub-group.
- New staff side member of the Committee which is very much welcomed.

OUTCOME: Area Partnership Forum noted the update.

APF2425-38 Public Holidays 2025/26

Bruce McCulloch introduced the proposed public holidays 2025/26. The Board is required to name four public holidays in addition to the four festive dates. Three of the proposed public dates are in line with NHS Grampian, the fourth is the day after Lerwick Up Helly Aa.

Mr McCulloch reminded members that there is a mechanism in place (via T&Cs and APF) for teams to request to add four dates to annual leave allowance e.g. as Dental and Physiotherapy have done in recent years.

Mr Marsland said he believed that for some GP practices we were required to set two additional days *{Clarified with Primary Care manager that these two additional days have been added into GP annual leave allocation}*.

OUTCOME: Area Partnership Forum approved the 8 proposed public holiday dates for 2025/26.

ACTION: APF Administrator to inform NHS Grampian Payroll team and NHS Shetland Allocate team for input into systems. Dates will also be added to intranet, internet and weekly staff bulletin.

APF2425-39 Area Partnership Forum- Terms of Reference Review

The Area Partnership Forum undertook the bi-annual review of its terms of reference. There were small changes in how membership was listed and the section relating to the Joint Staff Forum.

OUTCOME: Area Partnership Forum approved the Terms of Reference to move forward to Staff Governance Committee for final approval.

APF2425-40 Job Evaluation Annual Report

Item noted.

APF2425-41 Once For Scotland Workforce Policies Newsletter- September 2024/Soft Launch

Item noted.

APF2425-42 Staff Governance Monitoring Return

Item noted. The Staff Governance Monitoring exercise has been changed this year while the process is reviewed by the Scottish Government.

APF2425-43 List of relevant circulars/letters published since last meeting.

The following were noted:

SPPA 2024/08 Annual Benefit Statement Exercise	PCS (AFC) 2024/5 PAY AND CONDITIONS FOR NHS STAFF COVERED BY THE AGENDA FOR CHANGE AGREEMENT
SPPA 2024/09 Employee contribution rates from 1 October 2024	UPDATED - PCS (AFC) 2024/02 Reduction in the working week for Agenda for Change staff in NHS Scotland
DL23 (2024) Anti-racism plans- guidance	SPPA 2024/10 NHS Employee Contribution Tiers 2024-25
PCS (SDIA) 2024/1 SCOTTISH DISTANT ISLANDS ALLOWANCE	PCS (AFC) 2024-6 Changes to AfC Handbook- Annex 21

[MFW Nov24]

Following approval at Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee the following policies were distributed to members as part of the meeting pack for comment ahead of being presented to Staff Governance Committee for final approval.

- *Lone Working and Working in Isolation Guidance*
- *Lone Working and Working in Isolation Policy*
- *Management of Violence & Aggression Policy*

Members were requested to send any comments to the Health and Safety Lead.