

Shetland NHS Board

Minutes of the Staff Governance Committee – Thursday 04 September 2025, MS Teams

Present

Mr Colin Campbell	Non-Executive Director (Chair- Staff Governance Committee)
Mr Gary Robinson	Non-Executive Director (Board Chair)
Mr Bruce McCulloch	Non-Executive Director (Employee Director)
Mr Joe Higgins	Non-Executive Director (Whistleblowing Champion)
Prof Kathleen Carolan	Management Representative (Director of Nursing and Acute Services)
Mr Brian Chittick	Chief Executive
Mrs Marianne Williamson	Committee Secretary

In Attendance

Mr Paul Buchanan	Non-Executive Director (NHS National Services Scotland)
Ms Lorraine Allinson	HR Services Manager
Mrs Kirsty Clark	Learning and Organisational Development Manager
Mr Lawrence Green	Health and Safety Lead
Ms Edna Mary Watson	Chief Nurse (Corporate)
Mrs Laura Pottinger	HR Manager (Recruitment, Planning and Systems)
Ms Keji Oni	HR Manager (Workforce Planning and Employee Relations)
Mr David Wagstaff	Head of Estates

SGC2526-17 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were noted from Lorraine Hall and Lianne Jamieson.

SGC2526-18 Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made. The Chair invited members to declare interests as appropriate during the meeting.

SGC2526-19 Draft minutes of Staff Governance Committee-29 May 2025

The draft minutes were approved as an accurate record.

SGC2526-20 Matters Arising

Workforce Report- It was noted that for the larger Workforce Report due in November that RAG ratings will be applied to the data. **[Action]**

SGC2526-21 Staff Governance Action Plan 2025/26- Update

In Mrs Hall's absence, Ms Allinson took members through the Action Plan, noting that 7 actions are red (not started), 17 amber (in progress) and 9 (green) completed. Actions are aligned to the five workforce pillars.

Members discussed a number of the actions in more detail including:

- National workstreams on the implementation of new Workforce Business Systems
- Challenges in attracting candidates to the Armed Forces placement in Pharmacy.
- Consider rewording Action A2 (recruitment training) to be more explicit in what is required.
- Resource constraints were acknowledged as having an impact on progression of some actions.
- Mr Chittick noted the importance of capturing organisational learning from exit interviews
- Following a query, Mrs Clark gave an update on revised Health Care Support Worker standards
- Mr Higgins raised concerns about the number of acts assigned to the same individuals. During the next meeting cycle consideration should be given to the prioritisation of actions and managing expectations.

OUTCOME: Staff Governance Committee noted the update and the comprehensive nature of the action plan.

SGC2526-22 Workforce Highlight Report

This item was presented by Laura Pottinger and Kirsty Clark. Mrs Pottinger noted that staff turnover rates have remained stable since December 2024. Regarding sickness absence figures, NHS Shetland continues to report the lowest absence rate of any Scottish territorial board.

Members discussed ongoing challenges that high number of applications were posing to HR and recruiting managers. Following a query, Mrs Pottinger confirmed that the team is continuing to try discourage unsuitable applications by the use of 'killer questions and unlike most other NHS Scotland Boards the HR team in Shetland is longlisting for managers who are receiving high levels of applications. HR members of staff continue to raise nationally at Operational, Deputy Director and Director groups. Members discussed the impact of these challenges on service capacity, especially in the context of the reduced working week. It was suggested that for some departments consideration should be made as to whether this should be escalated to a departmental level risk.

Members discussed the calculation and reporting of appraisal rates, including the distinction between 'active' and 'completed' appraisals, the inclusion (or not) of bank staff, and the challenges of ensuring consistency and clarity in reporting. Mrs Clark provided a detailed explanation of how appraisals are recorded in NHS Scotland, how the system differs from previous approaches and how the figures are benchmarked against other boards.

ACTION: For the next iteration of the report a fuller narrative should be provided to the appraisal section as to how figures are calculated.

OUTCOME: Staff Governance Committee noted the report

SGC2526-23 iMatter 2025

Mrs Clark presented this report which provided the summary of the iMatter 2025 cycle.

- The overall response rate had decreased from 60% to 56% (noting that the figure for exclusively NHS staff was 69%).
- The organisation recorded its highest ever action planning rate of 50%

She explained to members that the iMatter team had changed focus in the Action Planning period in their communication to managers with a focus on celebrating success and asking teams to focus on 'one everyday action that will make a difference'. They also increased updates to managers and Executive Management Team on completion levels.

Mrs Clark also confirmed that support measures were in place for teams with lower participation, and the Committee acknowledged the importance of maintaining momentum and continuing to build on the positive trends observed.

The national report is due to be published in November and an update will be provided at the December meeting of the Board. This will allow us to benchmark our performance against the rest of Scotland.

OUTCOME: Staff Governance Committee noted the update.

SGC2526-24 Workforce Plan

Ms Keji Oni provided an update on the development of the Workforce Plan. She outlined strategic priorities identified through the exercise, aligned with the national workforce pillars. The workforce numbers and headcount projections are currently under review in collaboration with the Finance Team, with a full update anticipated in October. The Committee engaged in detailed discussion regarding the importance of stakeholder engagement with agreement that workshops should be scheduled to ensure broad input and ownership across the organisation. Prof Carolan emphasised the need to prioritise actions within the plan to ensure deliverability and alignment with service needs. Mr Higgins highlighted the importance of establishing clear accountability and governance structures to support implementation and monitor progress. Members also discussed the need for clarity around roles and responsibilities and the importance of aligning workforce planning with financial sustainability and operational capacity. The Committee welcomed the strategic direction of the plan but more work and engagement was required before the plan was in a position where it could be approved by members.

OUTCOME: Staff Governance Committee noted the work carried out on this process to date.

SGC2526-25 Agenda for Change- Non-Pay Implementation Update

The Committee received an update on each of three workstreams:

Reduced Working Week- Bruce McCulloch provided an update. Managers in all directorates were asked to submit detailed returns outlining workforce and service implications. EMT reviewed these submissions and requested further information. Additional information is being sought to fully understand the impact. The process includes ensuring safe staffing legislation is considered and more financial modelling is

underway to assess cost implications for areas which have highlighted that backfill maybe required. An extraordinary APF meeting has been scheduled to review the final Implementation Plan before submission to the Scottish Government on 01 October. Members discussed the importance of monitoring the effect on staff wellbeing and productivity.

Band 5 to 6 Review- Lorraine Allinson provided an update. Progress on the Band 5 to 6 review was reported to be slower nationally than anticipated. We have a small number of applications in the portal which have been started but are yet to be submitted for review. RCN have recently visited Shetland and have offered to provide additional training to managers to help them support staff.

Protected Learning Time- Kirsty Clark informed members that national learning modules had been identified and that work is ongoing to determine how these will be rolled out. Reporting is a key discussion point and it will be essential that this is done consistently across Boards to allow for benchmarking.

OUTCOME: Staff Governance Committee noted the update.

SGC2526-26 Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee Update

Lawrence Green provided an update noting improvements in compliance rates for violence and aggression training with continued efforts to address non-attendance and ensure staff engagement. Mr Green had provided additional information for the committee into reasons for non-attendance. The rollout of the lone worker system through the distribution of Peoplesafe fobs had experienced delays due to summer leave period. Mr Chittick confirmed that he will be raising the slow rollout of the Peoplesafe fobs at the Risk Management Group meeting on 17 September.

Members welcomed the re-establishment of the Staff Wellbeing Group and acknowledged its role in supporting the wider health and wellbeing agenda across the organisation. Members agreed on the importance of maintaining momentum across these initiative. Updates from the work of the Staff Wellbeing Group will continue to be provided upwards from Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee to Staff Governance Committee.

OUTCOME: Staff Governance Committee noted the updated.

SGC2526-27 Health and Safety Policies

Lawrence Green presented the Respiratory Protective Equipment Policy for final approval. He confirmed that the policy had been reviewed through the appropriate governance groups.

OUTCOME: Staff Governance Committee approved the Respiratory Protective Equipment Policy

ACTION: Lawrence Green will ensure that Information Governance Team and IT department update the Board website.

SGC2526-28 Estates Policies

David Wagstaff presented the Management of Asbestos Policy, Electrical Safety Policy and Portable Electrical Safety Policy for final approval. Each policy had been reviewed to

ensure alignment with current legislation, regulatory standards and operational requirements within NHS Shetland. Members were satisfied with the clarity and comprehensiveness of the documents and noted that implementation would be supported through appropriate training and communication across relevant departments.

OUTCOME: Staff Governance Committee approved the Management of Asbestos Policy, Electrical Safety Policy and Portable Electrical Safety Policy.

ACTION: David Wagstaff will ensure that Information Governance Team and IT department update the Board website.

SGC2526-29 Whistleblowing Standards Q1 2025/26

Ms Edna Mary Watson presented the standing quarterly Whistleblowing Standards update. She reported that one whistleblowing case was reported during the quarter, which was progressed and concluded in line with national standards. Confidential contact support continues to be provided and that feedback from staff has been positive.

Actions arising from a recent external review are being incorporated into local policy and procedures to strengthen governance and responsiveness. The Committee welcomed the planned Speak Up Week, scheduled for 29 September to 3 October, as an opportunity to further promote awareness and engagement with whistleblowing processes.

Members also discussed the low levels of completion of the Whistleblowing Turas modules and the positive impact that this could have on organisational culture. It was felt that one area of focus for the Staff Wellbeing Group will be contributing to the development of a positive organisational culture.

OUTCOME: Staff Governance Committee noted the update.

SGC2526-30 Strategic Risk Register Report

Ms Edna Mary Watson presented this standing update. She reported that four risks remain aligned to Staff Governance Committee. She noted that the two IG Training Risks are currently under review. Members discussed the importance of maintaining oversight of workforce-related risks and ensuring that mitigation actions are effectively monitored. Ms Watson advised that a risk appetite development session is planned before Christmas, which will support the organisation in refining its approach to risk tolerance and strategic decision-making.

OUTCOME: Staff Governance Committee noted the update.

SGC2526-31 Healthcare Staffing Act- Update

Ms Edna Mary Watson presented this standing update. She noted that Health Roster implementation across NHS Shetland was going well alongside ongoing progress in the deployment of the SafeCare functionality. The Committee was advised that quarterly and annual reporting will continue in line with statutory requirements and that changes to national reporting templates are anticipated. Members discussed the importance of ensuring that staffing data is accurately captured and used to inform workforce planning and service delivery.

OUTCOME: Staff Governance Committee noted the update.

SGC2526-32 Circulars and Letters for Noting

The following items were noted by the committee:

PCS (AFC) 2025/6 NHS Scotland Annual Leave Policy for Agenda for Change Staff	PCS (ESM) 2025/2 Additional Responsibility Allowance for Executive Nurse Directors
STAC (TCs02) 2025 NHS Scotland Annual Leave Policy for Agenda for Change Staff	SPPA 2025/08 Changes to the NHS Pension Scheme (Scotland) (NHSPS[S])
PCS (DD) 2025/01 Pay and Conditions of Service: Remuneration of Hospital Medical and Dental Staff, Doctors and Dentists in Public Health Medicine and the Community Health Service	SPPA 2025/09 Increase to the normal minimum pension age from 6 April 2028
PCS (SDIA) 2025/1 Scottish Distant Islands Allowance	DL (2025) 18 Implementation of Chief Pharmacist Standards – Compliance and Governance Requirements
DL (2025) 20 High Consequence Infectious Disease (HCID) Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Addendum	

No items were raised under AOCB and the meeting was closed.

The next meeting of Staff Governance Committee will take place on Thursday 20 November 2025.

[MFGW Sept 25]