

NHS 24

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
NHS 24 Staff Governance Committee
held on Thursday 3 November 2025
at 10:00 am
Via Teams**

PRESENT

Dr Martin Cheyne – Chair
Mr John Gebbie – Director of Finance
Mrs Anne Gibson – Committee Chair
Ms Louise Gordon – Head of People Services
Dr Jacqui Hepburn - Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Workforce
Ms Amina Khan – Non-Executive Director
Ms Fiona Macaulay – Head of ODLL
Ms Liz Mallinson – Non-Executive Director
Mr Fred McCosh – Union Representative
Ms Helen Meldrum – Head of Learning Transformation
Ms Lisa Morton – Associate Head of Communications
Ms Dawn Orr – Associate Director of Nursing and Care
Ms Steph Phillips – Director of Transformation, Strategy and Planning and Performance
Ms Linda Robertson – Risk, Resilience and Planning Manager
Ms Marnie Westwood – Head of Resourcing and Planning
Mr Kenny Woods – Employee Director

APOLOGIES

Mr Jim Miller – Chief Executive
Mr Patrick Rafferty – Director of Nursing & Care

IN ATTENDANCE

Ms Chantal Robinson – Secretariat
Ms Gemma O'Brien – Head of Resourcing & Planning

01. WELCOME, APOLOGIES AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed members present to the 3 November 2025 meeting of the Staff Governance Committee. Apologies noted as above. The Chair thanked Mr Webb for his Chairmanship, leadership and commitment to the Committee during the past 6 years and wished Mr Webb all the best for the future.

NOTED

02. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chair invited members to declare any interests in any of the items being discussed. There were no declarations made.

NOTED

03. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 31 JULY 2025

The Staff Governance Committee considered the minute of the previous meeting held on Thursday 31 July 2025 [Paper No. Item 3]. The Committee were content to approve this as a complete and accurate record.

APPROVED

04. ROLLING ACTIONS LOG

The Staff Governance Committee considered the paper 'Rolling Actions Log' [Paper No. 4] and were content to accept the recommendation that 8 actions were complete. Accordingly, actions 398, 399, 400 were approved for closure. Action 393 to remain on Action Log until 1 July 2026 meeting.

There were no other matters arising raised.

APPROVED

05. ITEMS FOR ENDORSEMENT

05.1 STAFF GOVERNANCE MONITORING EXERCISE 2024-25

The Committee considered the paper 'Staff Governance Monitoring Exercise 2024-25' [Paper No 5.1] presented by Dr Hepburn. The Committee noted the paper in relation to the Annual Update provided to Scottish Government, which highlighted the successes achieved during 2024-25. The NHS 24 Chair highlighted the progress made during the reporting period and the significant improvement to recruitment, attrition and attendance that had taken place.

The Committee approved the updated Workplan.

APPROVED

06. ITEMS FOR ASSURANCE

6.1 STAFF GOVERNANCE RISK REGISTER

Ms Robertson presented the Risk Register and asked the Committee to review the risks, provide feedback prior to recommending onward submission to the NHS 24 Board meeting on 28 November 2025.

Ms Robertson provided the following update:

- There are currently 14 staff governance risks in total (3 scoring 10 and above), compared with 15 reported at the previous meeting on 31 July 2025.
- 2 new risks have been identified and outlined in section 5.7.
- 3 risks have been closed, rationale for closure provided in section 5.8.
- 1 risk has reduced in score as outlined in section 5.9.
- No risks have increased in score.

Action: A member of the Committee requested further detail in relation to the risk type infographic and stressed the importance of SGC having oversight of risks where the Committee was either the primary or secondary committee. Ms Robertson to provide information. **LR**

The Committee thanked Ms Robertson for the update provided.

NOTED

6.2 WORKFORCE QUARTERLY REPORT

The Committee considered the paper 'Workforce Quarterly Report' [paper no 6.3] presented by Dr Hepburn. Dr Hepburn advised the Committee members to note the workforce report in terms of progress made during quarter 2 (July – September 2025).

Ms Westwood highlighted that the KPIs for each of the key strategic workforce objectives demonstrated the successes of the various workforce initiatives developed and embedded.

Of note for this quarter:

- Clinical Supervisor establishment target was met in August 2025; focus now is on maintaining the 185 WTE target with ongoing recruitment.
- Q2 turnover was 1.29% (85 heads), with voluntary turnover making up 1.10% (72 heads) of that total.
- The ODLL team delivered a series of road shows across main centres to raise awareness of our services and connect directly with frontline staff. It gave colleagues an opportunity to meet the team, explore learning and development opportunities and complete our digital skills survey.
- NHS 24 participated in a national exercise to identify and review statutory e-learning modules, with a view to creating an initial nine national modules, to create a Once for Scotland standard for e-learning. These modules are set for launch in 2026.
- Work was completed to identify the NHS 24 roles that would be defined as 'business critical', for the first time. The findings have been embedded into our annual talent and succession planning cycle, to help contingency planning and adapt to evolving service demands.
- Attendance Task Force and Action Plan launched in September 2025, the action plan is structured across three horizons with the focus currently on horizon one, with a target completion date of end of October 2025.
- The CC/CRM Training Plan has been delivered by the Training and Practice Education Team whilst they have concurrently delivered Core Training Programme.

NOTED

6.3 WORKFORCE STRATEGY 2026 – 2029

The Committee considered the paper 'Workforce Strategy 2026-2029' [paper no 6.3] presented by Dr Hepburn and Ms Westwood.

Ms Westwood advised the following:

NHS 24 have proposed three high level objectives followed by "our commitment – what Staff should expect to see statements" which are as follows:

Workforce optimisation - making the best use of staff skills and resources to meet service needs.

Our commitment:

- We will strengthen NHS 24's identity and brand to continue to provide a sustainable workforce.
- We will redesign our roles to support service delivery models and technological advances.

- We will continuously redesign the Training & Practice Education (T&PE) function/role for improved value and delivery.
- We will leverage technology for workforce processes.
- We will strengthen our workforce planning approach.

Sustainable inclusion – creating a workplace that supports diversity and long-term wellness for all staff.

Our commitment:

- We will build a diverse and inclusive workplace where all staff feel respected and valued.
- We will create early careers and clinical development frameworks in partnership with others to expand opportunities and fulfil our role as an Anchor Institution.
- We will foster psychological safety and belonging in the workplace.
- We will prioritise employee wellness through programmes of physical, mental, and emotional health to support attendance.
- We will embed sustainability into everyday practice and making it everyone's responsibility.

Skills Evolution – developing new skills to keep up with changes in technology and healthcare.

Our commitment:

- We will identify and develop future leaders by planning for key roles and ensuring we have the right talent.
- We will focus on cultivating leadership skills to enhance innovation, productivity, and efficiency.
- We will develop the digital capabilities of our leaders and managers to maximise the benefits of our digital transformation.
- We will create a continuous learning culture where upskilling and reskilling will be essential due to rapid technological advancements and become the norm for employees.
- We will support collaborative workforce development with other health boards, primary care, and third-sector partners.

NOTED

6.4 HEALTH & SAFETY QUARTERLY REPORT

The Committee considered the paper 'Health & Safety Quarterly Report [paper no 6.4] presented by Dr Hepburn and Ms Westwood. Ms Westwood highlighted the following:

The focus for Q2 included the following:

- Concluding a review of the end-to-end DSE process and the content of the eLearning module via a short life working group, this project is making good progress and due for completion and circulation in Q3
- Launch of a H&S quarterly newsletter.
- Launch of H&S intranet pages for each centre.
- Development of Ventilation Systems policy and Asbestos policy

Ms Westwood advised that an action plan and key actions had been identified for progress during 2025/2026 which included:

- Further digitalise H&S process and forms
- Roll out Evacuation Chair training including train the trainer sessions

- Review of the First Aid Policy
- Streamlining of Risk Assessments to reduce number.
- Finalisation and approval of the Management of Contractors policy
- Completion of Annual audits in November 2025

6.5 INCLUSIVE RECRUITMENT UPDATE

The Committee considered the paper 'Inclusive Recruitment Update' [paper no 6.5] noting the progress made in advancing NHS 24's efforts to become an Inclusive Employer, along with the positive outcomes that emerged from doing this work. Ms O'Brien advised the Committee of the following:

- The achievement of Living Wage, SCQF Inclusive recruiter and Disability Confident Leader accreditations has contributed to improved attrition and a more diverse workforce.
- Engagement with external partners, advertising and events has increased awareness and reputation of the NHS 24 employer brand.

This remains an area of focus, with future actions in the space including:

- Implementing the Disability Working Group action plan, including an annual review of the organisations' Disability Confident Leader commitments.
- Exploring the opportunity to achieve the Armed Forces Employer Recognition Silver Award.
- Renewing the Living Wage Scotland accreditation to maintain our commitment to fair pay.
- Continuing engagement with external events that support and promote opportunities for underrepresented groups.
- Ongoing review of recruitment practices to ensure they remain inclusive and accessible.
- Rolling out the SCQF framework across all advertised vacancies to support transparency and accessibility in role requirements.
- Expanding external engagement with third-party organisations to help ensure our vacancies reach underrepresented communities.
- Aligning this work with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion action plan and the Anti racism action plan so that workforce have a more holistic approach to sustainable inclusion which is a key strategic objective in our new workforce strategy for 2026 – 2029.

Action: Committee asked the Group to consider changing the name of the disability working group to a disability "network". **FM**

NOTED

6.6 REDUCED WORKING WEEK IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE

The Committee considered the paper 'Reduced Working Week Implementation Update' [Paper 6.6] presented by Dr Hepburn and Ms. Gordon. Ms. Gordon highlighted the following:

- On the 18 February 2025, circular PCS(AFC)2025/1 was issued outlining that the final 1-hour (Phase 2) of the total 1.5-hour reduction (pro-rata for part-time staff) of the Reduced Working Week (RWW) should be implemented on 1 April 2026. This will take all full-time staff from 37.5 hours per week to 36 hours per week and pro rata for part time staff.
- Through the Area Partnership Forum sub-group, NHS 24 had agreed implementation plans for both Frontline and Non-Frontline staff.
- All Boards had to submit their final implementation plans to the Scottish Government by 1 October 2025 and NHS 24 had submitted their plan.

- The next phase of the reduction will reduce NHS 24's headcount by 44WTE with currently no definite funding to backfill the loss this creates. NHS 24 have prepared and submitted a funding request to the Scottish Government for monies to backfill the loss.
- A Risk had been raised in relation to the impact of RWW to ensure all forums had been kept appropriately informed.

Action – RWW Update to be added to Clinical Governance Committee Agenda for information.
(LG)

NOTED

6.7 EARLY RESOLUTION APPROACH

The Committee considered the paper 'Early Resolution Approach' [Paper 6.7] presented by Dr Hepburn and Ms. Gordon. Ms. Gordon advised the Committee:

- Following the lessons-learned exercise regarding formal investigations into Bullying & Harassment cases it identified that cases are often lengthy, distressing, and frequently result in "no formal case to answer."
- The process can negatively impact the psychological wellbeing of all parties and is commonly associated with increased sickness absence.
- Evidence shows that B&H investigations often correlate with increased sickness absence and deteriorating wellbeing.
- It has been shown that when mediation takes place first it is more effective at resolving concerns than the formal investigation route.
- Once a formal investigation has taken place, it is often more difficult to repair working relationships fully.
- NHS 24 to prioritise early intervention, informal resolution, and skilled mediation, aiming to address issues before escalation and reduce reliance on formal investigations. This approach is being developed in partnership with Trade Union and Professional Body colleagues, who are supportive and engaged in the process.

The Committee noted the commitment to develop a bank of trained mediators to provide support and to review training needs for staff. The Trade Union and Professional Body colleagues highlighted that this initiative had their full support.

NOTED

6.8 STRATEGIC ATTENDANCE TASKFORCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Committee considered the paper 'Strategic Attendance Taskforce Improvement Plan' [Paper 6.8] presented by Dr Hepburn and Ms. Gordon. Ms. Gordon highlighted the following:

- NHS 24 experienced a sustained rise in absence rates over recent months, exceeding seasonal expectations and presenting a growing concern particularly in the Service Delivery Directorate.
- A deep dive workshop took place on 25 August 2025 to review themes and challenges. In response, an Attendance Improvement Taskforce and Plan has been developed collaboratively by colleagues across Service Delivery, Trade Union and Professional Bodies, and the Workforce Directorate.
- Nursing and Care and Practice Education will also be represented on the Taskforce going forward.
- The plan outlines targeted actions to enhance attendance levels and will be implemented through cross-directorate collaboration. The dedicated task force that has been established

will oversee delivery, with each action assigned a named lead and timescale with the lead responsible for providing monthly progress updates.

- This structured approach will enable strategic oversight of the plan and improvement efforts. The Executive Management Team (EMT) support is essential to ensure successful implementation and consistent engagement.

Action – Attendance Deep Dive Session to be scheduled prior to Festive Break. DH (Chair PPC) to be invited. **JH**

NOTED

6.9 ANTI-RACISM ACTION PLAN UPDATE

The Committee considered the paper 'Anti-Racism Action Plan Update' [Paper 6.9] presented by Dr Hepburn and Ms. Macaulay. Ms. Macaulay updated the Committee in relation to the work underway within the NHS 24 Anti-Racism Action Plan which had been launched during October 2025. Ms. Macaulay also confirmed a feedback session with Scottish Government had taken place.

The Committee congratulated the team on a successful launch of the Anti-Racism Action Plan.

NOTED

6.10 CC/CRM TRAINING EVALUATION PHASE 2: MENTAL HEALTH HUB

The Committee considered the paper 'CC/CRM Training Evaluation Phase 2: Mental Health Hub' [Paper 6.10] presented by Dr Hepburn and Ms. Meldrum. Dr Hepburn expressed her appreciation to the Practice Education team for their outstanding work in this space and thanked the Service Delivery Team for their collaboration.

Dr Cheyne recognised the outstanding achievement and on behalf of the NHS 24 Board thanked every member of staff within NHS 24. Dr Cheyne highlighted this had been one of the biggest digital achievements within NHSScotland.

Ms Meldrum highlighted the following:

- CC/CRM systems training to support DTP Phase 2b: Scottish Emergency Dental Service, Pharmacy, Forensic Medical Examination, Telephony Services and all remaining 111 staff ahead of Phase 2 go live now considered complete (96% of all available staff).
- DTP Training model built in a Train the Trainer mechanism within Service Delivery Directorate. This approach would allow all remaining staff to be trained as required.
- Phase 2b's findings showed that 100% of designated staff had been signed off as competent to use the new CC/CRM and 98.3% rated themselves as confident in using it.
- Core Initial Training has been delivered concurrently, with target staff establishment maintained during DTP training. Collaboration with Service Delivery had ensured that staff abstractions for training did not affect organisational performance and service to the patients of Scotland.
- An overview of the training for Phase 3 has been provided, ensuring full alignment with the DTP Programme timelines.

The Committee thanked all NHS 24 staff involved in the successful delivery of the DTP Programme.

NOTED

6.11 STAFF EXPERIENCE GROUP SURVEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee considered the paper 'Staff Experience Group Survey Findings and Recommendations' [Paper No. 6.11] presented by Ms Morton. The Committee noted the range of internal activity delivered during the last quarter to support staff experience.

Internal communications team continue to be proactively involved across all Digital Transformation Programme projects and provide fortnightly updates via Team Talk, Intranet and Wallboards, as well as a monthly update in to Staff Experience Groups. Key points to note:

- Following dissemination of our Staff Experience Group survey initially with Cardonald and Lumina to ascertain baseline information, the survey was rolled out across all other centres. Evaluation with centre-specific recommendations nearing completion.
- Key messaging to support staff understanding of their corporate responsibilities regarding the use of AI tools developed and disseminated to all staff in advance of the NHS roll-out of Co-Pilot Chat.
- Staff feedback on patient and partner knowledge and understanding of our services supported the development of the Connecting Health Programme. Activity focuses on educating primary care professionals on our services, and how and when to signpost their patients on to them.
- iMatter: close collaboration with Workforce to promote organisational change and improvements through *Feedback Into Action (You Said, We Did)* articles to re-enforce and promote importance of staff voice.
- Two Patient Safety Leadership sessions were held in Aberdeen and Cardonald. Members of staff were able to meet with our EMT and non-executive directors, to ask questions on potential patient safety issues and to discuss topics meaningful to them. These sessions are followed up with an all-centre email ensuring all staff have the opportunity to hear about topics discussed and to submit any additional questions.

The Committee thanked Ms Morton for the comprehensive update.

NOTED

6.12 APF FORUM UPDATE

The Committee considered the paper 'APF Forum and Workplan Update' [Paper No. 6.12] presented by Mr Woods, who highlighted the following:

The Committee is asked to note the highlights of discussion and development taking place within the forum namely:

- Workforce Strategy Update for 2026-2029
- Strategic Attendance Plan
- Reduced Working Week Implementation plan

The Committee noted the update.

NOTED

6.13 AREA PARTNERSHIP FORUM SELF-ASSESSMENT

The Committee considered the paper 'Area Partnership Forum Self-Assessment [Paper No. 6.13] presented by Mr Woods.

The Committee noted the following highlights:

- Engagement with the self-assessment survey was again high, with strong participation across the Forum.
- Most responses were positive, with the majority selecting "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" across all questions.
- Three questions saw a slight increase in "Disagree" or "Slightly Disagree" responses compared to last year, highlighting areas for further attention.
- Commentary provided valuable insights into policy engagement gaps, and the need for more structured forums for discussion.
- Feedback also pointed to a desire for greater accountability in action plan delivery and more open dialogue around lessons learned.
- These insights have been updated into the overall APF workplan.

Committee members noted the initial results of the Self-Assessment that they had completed during July 2025 and thanked Mr Woods for the update.

NOTED

ITEMS FOR AWARENESS

7.1 SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT KEY PUBLICATIONS

The Committee considered the paper 'Scottish Government Key Publications [Paper no 7.1] presented by Dr Hepburn.

The Committee noted the recent correspondence received from Scottish Government in relation to relevant PCS/DL Circulars.

NOTED

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

08.

8.1 STAFF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE SELF-ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTIVENESS SURVEY: RESULTS

The Committee considered the paper 'Staff Governance Committee Self-Assessment of Effectiveness Survey: Results' [Paper no 8.1] presented by Ms Matthew.

In October 2025, the Staff Governance Committee undertook a self-assessment exercise by completing a questionnaire to evaluate its effectiveness. Members reviewed and provided feedback.

The Committee considered the results of the review and confirmed an action plan would be presented at the meeting on 3 February 2026.

Action: Action Plan to be developed and presented at next Committee meeting. **JH**

8.2 STAFF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE WORKPLAN 2026/27

The Committee considered the paper 'Staff Governance Committee Workplan 2026-27' [Paper no 8.2] presented by Ms Gibson.

The Committee approved the updated Workplan.

8.3 STAFF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE DRAFT SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

The Committee considered the paper 'Staff Governance Committee Draft Schedule of Meetings 2026/27' [Paper no 8.3] presented by Ms Gibson.

The Committee approved the proposed schedule of meetings and noted the May 2026 meeting would be in person.

8.4 COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS TO THE BOARD

The Committee highlights would be produced at the end of the meeting, sent to the Chair for approval prior to the Board Meeting due to be held on 18 December 2025.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

9. 12:30pm

9.1 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair advised the Committee of a recent meeting held between the Workforce Senior Team and the Scottish Government Sponsorship Team. The Sponsorship Team had been extremely impressed with the work taking place in the Workforce directorate and looked forward to learning more with the publication of the 2026-2029 Strategy.

Action: Staff Governance Committee Chair to meet with SG Sponsorship Team. **JH**

There being no further business the meeting closed.

DATE OF NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

10:00am, Thursday 7 May 2026, In Person.

The meeting concluded at 12:37.