

<b>Meeting of South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership</b>	<b>Integration Joint Board</b>
<b>Held on:</b>	<b>11<sup>th</sup> February 2026</b>
<b>Agenda Item:</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Chief Officer's Update</b>
<p><b>Summary:</b></p> <p>This report provides an update to the South Ayrshire Integration Joint Board on behalf of the Chief Officer on items that do not merit a full report, but the Board may wish to note. Topics covered in this report include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>i. Joint Inspection – Children's Services</b></li> <li><b>ii. Voting Rights – IJB – COSLA Response</b></li> <li><b>iii. Freedom of Information Extension – Scottish Government consultation</b></li> <li><b>iv. Recruitment and staffing updates</b></li> </ul>	
<b>Author:</b>	<b>Mark Inglis, Director of Health &amp; Social Care - HSCP</b>
<p><b>It is recommended that the Integration Joint Board:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>i. Consider the content of this report and offer any reflections.</b></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Route to meeting:</b></p> <p>This is a report for IJB only.</p>	
<p><b>Directions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No Directions Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></li> <li>2. Directions to NHS Ayrshire &amp; Arran <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>3. Directions to South Ayrshire Council <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>4. Directions to both SAC &amp; NHS <input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul>	<p><b>Implications:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>HR <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>Legal <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>Equalities <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>Sustainability <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>Policy <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>ICT <input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul>

## CHIEF OFFICER'S UPDATE REPORT

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 This report provides an update to the South Ayrshire Integration Joint Board on behalf of the Chief Officer on items that do not merit a full report, but the Board may wish to note.

### **2. RECOMMENDATION**

#### **2.1 It is recommended that the Integration Joint Board:**

- i. **Considers the content of this report and offers any reflections.**

### **3. REPORT**

#### **3.1 Joint Inspection – Children's Services**

- 3.1.1 On 24 November 2025, the Care Inspectorate began a joint inspection of services in South Ayrshire that have a statutory duty to support children looked after at home and subject to compulsory supervision orders.

The inspection focuses on three areas:

- how well children are supported to remain safely with their families?
- how compassionately and inclusively services are delivered?
- and how effectively leaders work together to provide a coherent system of support?

- 3.1.2 The inspection involves multiple partners, including Education, Health, Police Scotland, SCRA (Children's Reporter), Children's Services and the voluntary sector.

An oversight group was established and meets weekly with the Care Inspectorate to progress required milestones. So far, the pre-inspection return has been completed, communication briefings issued, and a case file sample identified. Surveys for children, parents and staff have been distributed, focus groups arranged, and systems put in place to support engagement and records access. Case files have been reviewed, uploaded, and five local file readers trained, resulting in a total of 2,331 documents submitted. Upcoming milestones include case file reading in early February, engagement week in March, further practice discussions, and publication of the final report in May 2026.

#### **3.2 Voting Rights – IJB – COSLA Response**

- 3.2.1 Scottish Ministers have introduced a Scottish Statutory Instrument to extend voting rights on IJB's to those with lived experience, unpaid carers and third sector representatives which is due to come into effect from September 2026. This decision follows a recent consultation which closed late 2025.

- 3.2.2 CoSLA have provided a response to the Scottish Government on the proposals, raising concerns to the impact of the existing voting responsibility, but recognising that lived experience offers insight to services that must not be overlooked.
- 3.2.3 South Ayrshire HSCP and the IJB take confidence and pride in the engagement, consultation and inclusion of people with lived experience across our services, including the Champion's Board for Learning Disability, Frailty and Ageing, Young people, Carers and Mental Health users. We have a service agreement for our third sector provision, which has been adopted by the Council also. Our engagement strategy is in the process of being refreshed, with the recent growth in 'user' "champions" forums/groups there has been a real appreciation of the voice of those with lived experience which has supported and shaped the developing of services and strategic plans.
- 3.2.4 Nationally, there are a number of IJBs who are in a similar position as South Ayrshire, which aligns with the CoSLA position, and the concerns raised. While South Ayrshire HSCP/IJB remain fully committed to the involvement of those with lived experience, unpaid carers and third sector representatives and to hearing their views shaping service design, developments and practice and policy. We firmly believe that their contribution adds significant value to the effectiveness of services meeting people's needs in South Ayrshire.
- 3.2.5 However, in alignment with CoSLA's position there are concerns that the extension of voting rights to non-elected members or NHS Board member on the IJB could dilute democratic accountability. It is also argued that there are governance and legal risks, such as the compliance with the PVG scheme, the marginalisation of professional expertise, the additional need to train and support other board members and that additional voting rights to non-partner members could create a divide between the two parent bodies, being the Council and the NHS weakening the concept of integrated partnership working.
- 3.2.6 Once known, a furthermore formal update will be provided to IJB members.

### **3.3 Freedom of Information Extension – Scottish Government consultation**

- 3.3.1 The Scottish Government have a live consultation open whereby they are inviting views on the extension of Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA) to include externally commissioned providers in Care at Home and Care Home service areas. The link to the consultation is noted here.  
[Extension of Freedom of Information in \(Scotland\) Acts 2002 \(FOISA\) to private and third sector providers of care home and 'care at home' services - Scottish Government consultations - Citizen Space](#)
- 3.3.2 This will be discussed by the Directorate management Team prior to a formal submission going back to the SG. In preparation to this, we are consulting with internal partners on the potential impact especially that from and Information Governance space. Scottish Care have provided a summary of

their concerns and viewpoint on this and are engaged with the SG directly as a sector representation body.

- 3.3.3 Whilst we support transparency and access to information, there is argument to be considered that this proposal would not deliver on the expected outcomes as set out by the Scottish Government on the analysis of public spend and service provision. As a sector also, the Care at Home and Care Home is largely utilised by older people and thus would create a segregation and disparity for providers across other service areas. The administrative, governance and validation process that is required to deliver on Freedom of Information Requests is costly and time consuming, requiring a significant number of resources to deliver, this would ultimately be costs which would need to be met by public funds.
- 3.3.4 If FOI was agreed for externally commissioned providers, there is a concern that this would place further burdens on providers who are already under significant pressure to report or place Councils and NHS organisations and often can feel under significant public scrutiny as a result.
- 3.3.5 Maintaining public faith and protecting the reputation of public spend is critical as we face further pressures and demands within reducing budgets. There is also an awareness/perception that FOI requests would become personal and that the process may be abused in order to seek information which would not normally be available or in the public's best interests and could be commercially motivated. Meeting the statutory obligation to respond to FOI's with factual, balanced responses can and will place unrealistic pressure on some organisations which may not be able to manage, placing their sustainability at further risk impacting on the care they provide to South Ayrshire residents.
- 3.3.6 Similar to the earlier point, an update will be provided when available.

### **3.4 Recruitment and staffing updates**

- 3.4.1 I am delighted to advise that following a recent recruitment/interview process that Jackie Hamilton has been appointed as Chief Social Work Officer on an interim basis. Jackie has worked with South Ayrshire for a number of years within the Children's Health Care and Justice service and brings a wealth of experience with her. This follows Gary Hoey's appointment as Head of Service for Children's Health, Care and Justice.

## **REPORT AUTHOR AND PERSON TO CONTACT**

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**2<sup>nd</sup> February 2026**

