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Agenda Item: 9

Integration Joint Board

Date of Meeting: 2 July 2025.

Subject: Third Sector Commissioned Services.

1. Purpose

1.1. To provide Members with key issues and opportunities from the Third Sector.

2. Recommendations

The Integration Joint Board is invited to note:

2.1. The first consolidated report from the Third Sector Working Group which reflects a shared commitment to improving outcomes through collaborative delivery, with the Third Sector offering both innovation and embeddedness in Orkney's communities.

2.2. Key issues and opportunities as detailed in sections 4 to 11 of this report.

3. Background

3.1. This is the first joint submission from the Third Sector Working Group to the Integration Joint Board, representing insights and activities from across Orkney's Third Sector organisations.

3.2. This reflects updates from April and May 2025 and is intended to:

- Provide a consolidated view of community-based health and care activity.
- Share learning and concerns arising from the front line.
- Support joined-up planning and commissioning approaches in line with the IJB's Strategic Priorities.

3.3. It is hoped this report will help inform IJB deliberations and strengthen links between the statutory and Third Sector partners.

4. Advocacy, Access and System Navigation

4.1. Organisations: Advocacy Orkney and Relationship Scotland Orkney.

4.2. Key issues:

- Referrals to independent advocacy are still not consistently embedded in Adult Social Work and Housing processes.
- Third sector staff (e.g., advocacy and relationship services) are increasingly stepping in during mental health crises, often without a formal escalation protocol.
- Relationship Scotland Orkney highlights complexity in navigating therapeutic pathways for Looked After Children, particularly where there is overlap between Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Education, and Social Work.

4.3. Key Opportunities:

- Strengthen operational protocols for advocacy referrals and safeguarding during crisis presentations.
- Explore ways to support third sector contributions to therapeutic and relational care, especially for young people.

5. Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

5.1. Organisations: Relationship Scotland Orkney, Right There, Orkney Rape and Sexual Assault Services and Home Start Orkney.

5.2. Key issues:

- Right There has seen a significant reduction in counselling provision due to changes in available funding streams, impacting support for young people.
- Orkney Rape and Sexual Assault Services continues to face waiting lists for adult survivors of sexual violence.
- Relationship Scotland Orkney has recruited a new Psychological Support Worker and is exploring trauma-informed play therapy services.
- Home Start Orkney continues to deliver early-years mental health support, including perinatal wellbeing and neurodiversity-informed parenting sessions.

5.3. Key Opportunities:

- Consider how shortfalls in youth and trauma counselling could be addressed through shared planning or commissioning.
- Explore potential for Third Sector roles within any Early Help or Whole Family Wellbeing Fund framework.

6. Violence Against Women and Girls and Crisis Support

6.1. Organisation: Women's Aid Orkney.

6.2. Key issues:

- Women's Aid Orkney's refuge remains full.
- Group work and counselling capacity have grown due to grant flexibility, but core funding and Service Level Agreements from Orkney Health and Care and Orkney Islands Council remain pending.
- Public awareness campaigns and 25th anniversary celebrations have strengthened Women's Aid Orkney's profile and engagement.

6.3. Key Opportunities:

- Support timely Service Level Agreements processes to ensure continuity and planning.
- Encourage integrated approaches across mental health, housing, and Violence Against Women and Girls pathways.
- Explore potential for co-designed move-on accommodation solutions with partners.

7. Youth and Family Support

7.1. Organisations: Right There, Home Start Orkney and Relationship Scotland Orkney.

7.2. Key issues:

- The Routes service supports 41 young people (with capacity for 75). Further work is required to generate additional referrals.
- Home Start continues to provide wraparound emotional and practical support for families, with two new staff recruited and a new Baby and Pregnancy Group launched.
- Relationship Scotland Orkney is identifying potential models for early intervention where parental substance misuse is a factor.

7.3. Key Opportunities:

- Facilitate dialogue across Education, Health, and Third Sector to ensure that services like Routes are effectively integrated into referral networks.
- Consider joint resourcing approaches for family-centred models of care, such as through the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund.

8. Harmful Sexual Behaviour and Gaps in Provision

8.1. Organisation: Orkney Rape and Sexual Assault Services.

8.2. Key Issues:

- Orkney Rape and Sexual Assault Services reports a rise in referrals for under-18s displaying Harmful Sexual Behaviour. These fall outside their remit, but alternatives are limited.
- The organisation continues to serve as a Hate Crime Reporting Centre and offers prevention work in schools.

8.3. Key opportunities:

- Explore development of a local pathway for Harmful Sexual Behaviour support in young people, potentially in collaboration with national expertise (e.g. Lucy Faithfull Foundation).
- Consider how this need aligns with safeguarding and child protection priorities.

9. Financial Insecurity and Fuel Poverty

9.1. Organisations: Orkney Money Matters and THAW.

9.2. Key issues:

- Orkney Money Matter's pathway continues to deliver strong outcomes, but current "cash-first" funding ends in September 2025.
- THAW highlights difficulty recruiting skilled retrofit workers and increasing pressure in the isles.

9.3. Key opportunities:

- Consider alignment between the IJB's strategic aims and continued winter support funding for crisis services.
- Strengthen collaborative planning to address fuel poverty as a public health issue.

10. Systemic Challenges and Sector Resilience

10.1. Key issues:

- Service Level Agreements and Budget Delays: Several organisations are awaiting budget confirmation or signed agreements, which hinders financial planning.
- Staffing Pressures: Many organisations are operating at full stretch or with reduced hours due to funding changes.
- Training Needs: Sector-wide appetite exists for cross-cutting training in trauma-informed practice, neurodiversity, and collaborative safeguarding.

- Whole Family Wellbeing Fund Planning: Voluntary Action Orkney has advocated consistently for this fund to be commissioned through third sector channels; positive indications are emerging.

10.2. Key opportunities:

- Support sector-wide workforce development plans and interagency training.
- Consider commissioning frameworks that build third sector stability, including via the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund.
- Maintain close communication to improve commissioning lead times and clarity.

11. Summary of Suggested Engagement Areas

11.1. The below table details a summary of suggested potential Integration Joint Board support by theme:

Theme.	Potential Support.
Advocacy and Crisis Navigation.	Strengthen protocols and cross-sector safeguards.
Mental Health and Youth Services.	Stabilise community counselling and early intervention models.
Violence Against Women and Girls and Housing Pressures.	Progress Service Level Agreements processes; support cross-sector housing planning.
Children and Family Engagement.	Enhance Education referrals and Whole Family Wellbeing Fund alignment.
Harmful Sexual Behaviour and Safeguarding.	Scope safe intervention routes for under-18s.
Fuel and Financial Insecurity.	Collaborate on sustaining essential winter services.
Workforce and Commissioning.	Promote long-term planning, upskilling, and collaborative funding.

12. Contribution to quality

Please indicate which of the Orkney Community Plan 2025 to 2030 values are supported in this report adding Yes or No to the relevant area(s):

Resilience: To support and promote our strong communities.	Yes.
Enterprise: To tackle crosscutting issues such as digital connectivity, transport, housing and fuel poverty.	Yes.
Equality: To encourage services to provide equal opportunities for everyone.	Yes
Fairness: To make sure socio-economic and social factors are balanced.	Yes

Innovation: To overcome issues more effectively through partnership working.	Yes.
Leadership: To involve partners such as community councils, community groups, voluntary groups and individuals in the process.	Yes.
Sustainability: To make sure economic and environmental factors are balanced.	Yes.

13. Resource and financial implications

13.1. The IJB is committed to providing £725k in funding to the Third Sector for commissioned services in 2025/26.

13.2. There is no additional funding available and therefore any actions from this report that require financing will have to be met from within existing approved resources.

14. Risk, equality and climate change implications

14.1. There are no risk, equality or climate change implications directly arising from report.

15. Direction required

Please indicate if this report requires a direction to be passed to:

NHS Orkney.	No.
Orkney Islands Council.	No.

16. Escalation required

Please indicate if this report requires escalated to:

NHS Orkney.	No.
Orkney Islands Council.	No.

17. Authors and contact information

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