



Working together to make a real difference

Strategic Planning Group

Minutes | 11 March 2026 | 1000 | Teams

Present: Cllr Rachael King (Chair), Stephen Brown, Willie Neish, Lou Willis, Davie Hall, Ruth Lea, Danny Oliver, Mohammed Sohail, Carrie Somerville, Katie Spence, Diane Young, Lynda Bradford, Darren Morrow, Pippa Easener, Daniel Aubrey, Helen Sievwright, Shaun Hourston-Wells, Louise Wilson, Cathy Martin and Stephanie Johnston (notes).

Apologies: John Daniels, Morven Gemmill, Morven Brooks, Michelle Mackie, Ryan McLaughlin, Sam Thomas, Frances Troup, Callan Hunter-Curtis, Wendy Lycett, Scott Robertson, Donald MacCaulay and Drew Mayhew.

1. Welcome and Apologies

Rachael welcomed everyone to the meeting and the apologies were noted.

2. Minute from the Previous Meeting

The minutes were agreed as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

3. Strategic Plan Delivery Plan 2026/27

Shaun presented the Strategic Plan Delivery Plan 2025/26 Tracker and updates were provided on each of the actions. In respect of Tackling Inequalities and Disadvantage, it was advised that the Breakfast Club initiative was progressing well, with logistical challenges being addressed by Education. The Learning Disability annual health checks action is expected to be met by the end of March.

An update was provided on the efforts to amalgamate waiting lists, reassess the needs of children currently on the neurodevelopmental lists and explore capacity for a single point of entry pathway. It was also advised that a project team had been established and updates would be provided at the next meeting. **Action:** Darren/Lou W.

It was advised that there were challenges in capturing carer assessments data due to limitations in the current system. Work is underway to see if it is possible to integrate prompts into PARIS to improve this. The Young Carer Strategy had been drafted, but further input from young people was required before finalisation. It was advised that the Council's Carer Friendly Policy is awaiting submission to the HR Sub-committee in May 2026 and that training for frontline workers on carer awareness will be aligned with the release of the Unpaid Carer Friendly Policy for greater impact. There has been the successful recruitment of the Carer Lead post, which is expected to improve support for unpaid carers.

It was advised that progress on the digital switchover for telecare services is on track with 60% completion expected by the end of March. It was shared that a paper was presented to the Integration Joint Board on the fourth wing at Hamnavoe House. Work will now commence on identifying additional funding and workforce to support this. There has been an increase in adult and learning disability social work referrals with a current wait time of nearly eight weeks. An update was also provided on the recent Care Inspectorate inspections findings for adult services.

Shaun updated that he had a positive meeting in Shapinsay in respect of their Place Plan where community members expressed interest in developing a befriending service.

It was advised that MORSE has now gone live for Mental Health Services. Work is continuing in respect of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. Feedback has been positive and work is ongoing to streamline data collection and reporting. It was advised that there has been challenges for the recruitment of the nursing posts in the All Age Nurse Led Psychiatric Liaison Team, with recent candidates withdrawing and the post going back out for advert. It was advised that the establishment of mental health practitioners remains stalled due to funding constraints.

Members were asked to send any proposed Milestones and Actions for the Strategic Plan Delivery Plan 2026/27 to Shaun as soon as possible. **Action:** All.

4. Data Discussion

Following a presentation on a range of data and performance across a variety of delegated service areas it was noted that the data provided was not exhaustive. Gaps in areas were highlighted such as telecare, Post Diagnostic Support for dementia and addiction services.

Data was also shared in respect of:

- Delayed Transfers of Care, which is showing a significant increase in Orkney since July 2025.
- Bed availability, which shows Orkney facing tight capacity.
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and Psychological Therapies national metrics consistently being met in Orkney.
- Musculoskeletal services data showed improvements in waiting times, particularly in Podiatry, where long waits have been reduced.
- Care at Home data highlighted fluctuations in the number of individuals awaiting new or increased packages of care, with unmet need hours equivalent to 10 full-time staff members.
- Adult and Learning Disability Social work data showed an increase in referrals and outstanding assessments, with peaks linked to large scale investigations.

- Dependency levels in care homes, with most residents categorised as medium dependency.
- Mental health, which showed a doubling of referrals since 2011 but a reduction in the use of the Emergency Mental Health Transfer Bed in recent years.
- Neurodevelopmental waiting lists for adults including medication/Psychiatry reviews.
- Learning disability health checks, numbers offered, completed and declined.
- Public dental services information on missed appointments.
- Vaccination uptake.

Children's services data included school nursing referrals, child protection registrations, and trends in looked-after children. Justice services data highlighted high completion rates for community payback orders.

It was agreed that the presentation would be shared following the meeting. **Action:** Stephanie.

There was a discussion on the importance of integrating data across services to provide a whole system view to inform strategic planning. Challenges in data collection due to limited resources and manual processes was acknowledged, with ongoing efforts to improve systems and streamline reporting.

It was suggested including impact assessments for actions in the Strategic Plan Delivery Plan Tracker to better understand their effectiveness. Carrie offered to explore NHS datasets that could provide additional assurance and alignment with this work. **Action:** Carrie.

Concerns were raised about the lack of local flexibility in addressing mental health challenges, noting the reliance on national funding and guidance. This was acknowledged and advised that while additional resources like the DBI programme have been introduced, further prioritisation would require decommissioning other services.

5. AOCB

Regional Planning

Louise W provided an update on the remote and rural sub-group of the East and West NHS regions which aims to ensure the unique needs of remote and rural communities are considered in planning. Rachael emphasised the importance of integrating this work with local public sector reform initiatives.

6. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday, 6 May 2026: 1400-1600.

Stephen Brown (Chief Officer)

Orkney Health and Social Care Partnership

01856873535 extension: 2601

OHACfeedback@orkney.gov.uk



Chair's Assurance Report to the Integration Joint Board

Title of Report:	Strategic Planning Group.	Date of Meeting:	11 March 2026.
Prepared By:	Cllr Rachael King.	Presented By:	Cllr Rachael King.
Purpose:	To present the unapproved minutes of the Strategic Planning Group meeting held on 11 March 2026.		

Positive Assurances:	Decisions Made:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategic Plan Delivery Plan: Progress continues, with a number of actions completed, on track or nearing completion including<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Learning disability annual health checks expected to be met by the end of March.○ Governance and planning for neurodevelopmental pathways have strengthened for children and young people, with a dedicated project team established to review waiting lists and explore a single point of entry approach.○ Successful recruitment to the Carer Lead post.• Performance: Service performance including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ National waiting time targets for CAMHS and Psychological Therapies consistently being met.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategic Plan Delivery Plan 2026/27: Further proposed milestones and actions for this should be sent to the Policy and Performance Manager.• Performance/Sata Slides: To be shared with members following the meeting.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Reduced waiting times in Musculoskeletal services, particularly Podiatry.○ Reduced use of the Emergency Mental Health Transfer Bed despite increased referrals.	
Areas of Concern or Key Risks to Escalate:	Major Actions:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Service Pressures: Rising demand pressures were highlighted across a number of services, including Adult and Learning Disability Social Work, with current wait times approaching eight weeks.● Delayed Transfers of Care: have increased significantly since July 2025, alongside tight bed capacity, representing a continued system pressure.● All Age Nurse Led Psychiatric Liaison Team: Ongoing recruitment challenges for the nursing posts.● Adult Neurodevelopmental Services: Waiting lists, including medication and psychiatry reviews for adults, continue to present a risk requiring sustained focus.	None.
Comments on Effectiveness of the Meeting:	
Members were well engaged with the agenda items, with new members finding the meeting informative.	