

Meeting:	NHS Grampian Board
Meeting date:	2 June 2022
Item Number:	6
Title:	Board Assurance Framework
Responsible Executive/Non-Executive:	Caroline Hiscox, Chief Executive
Report Author:	Sarah Duncan, Board Secretary

1 Purpose

This paper is presented to the Board for

- Decision
- Endorsement

This report relates to a:

- legal requirement to have effective systems for obtaining assurance that NHS Grampian is conducting its business in accordance with statutory and regulatory requirements, is managing risk effectively and is achieving the strategic aims set out in its strategic plan.

This aligns to the following NHS Scotland quality ambitions:

- Effective
- Person Centred

2 Report summary

2.1 Situation

Standing Order 6.2(b) of the Board's Standing Orders reserve the right to the Board to establish Board committees and determine their terms of reference. Standing Orders 9.1 and 9.2 permit the Board to establish such committees and sub-committees as it sees fit and for the Board to approve terms of reference for its committees and appoint chairs.

A review of the committees' terms of reference has been carried out by the Board Secretary, in consultation with members of the Board and officers supporting committees, in order to ensure that the Board committees are able to obtain assurance on behalf of the Board that the organisation is achieving the strategic objectives set out in Plan for the Future. Revised Terms of Reference are attached for approval for four of the five Board assurance committees.

2.2 Background

2.2.1 Current assurance framework

NHS Grampian Board has 5 assurance committees:

- Audit Committee
- Clinical Governance Committee
- Engagement and Participation Committee
- Performance Governance Committee
- Staff Governance Committee (Remuneration Committee is a sub-committee of Staff Governance)

In addition to the assurance committees the assurance framework includes advisory groups and forums:

- Spiritual Care Committee
- Area Clinical Forum,
- Grampian Area Partnership Forum
- Ethics Advice & Support Group.
- Clinical Board
- Clinical Interface Group

The advisory bodies are not part of the review that is discussed in this paper. Further proposals for these advisory committees will be brought to a future Board meeting.

The relationship between the Board, its assurance committees and the advisory bodies to the operational management system of portfolios, and the wider Grampian health and care system, is shown in Diagram 1, attached at the end of this paper.

Grampian Health Board Endowment Funds (NHS Grampian) has a separate committee.

There is also a statutory Pharmacy Practice Committee (PPC) with delegated responsibility for considering applications received to join the Board's Pharmaceutical List. The Committee is constituted under Schedule 4 of the General Pharmaceutical Services (Scotland) Regulations 2009 as amended and meets as required.

2.2.2 Reviewing the assurance framework

During the Covid-19 pandemic, Board committees met regularly to obtain assurance on the operational response to the pandemic under agile governance arrangements in operation since March 2020. With the proposed adoption of Plan for the Future at the June 2022 Board meeting, the Interim Chair and Chief Executive felt it was appropriate to review the structures supporting the Board to enable a shift back to focussing on strategic priorities and assurance on performance and risk management rather than the operational response to the pandemic.

The current terms of reference of the five Board committees state that they will give assurance to the Board on matters falling within their remit. Each committee provides a report to the Board after each meeting summarising the items discussed, in addition to a copy of their approved minutes. This leads to duplication of information at both Board and committees, and potential for a lack of clarity on where accountability to obtain assurance sits.

In addition, in autumn 2021 the Board undertook development work, facilitated by the King's Fund, to explore Board culture and governance frameworks, in order to reach a

common understanding on Board purpose and culture. Follow up development work on culture and diversity is taking place, with the ambition to be a high performing Board which has adaptive, agile and collaborative approaches to governance, consistent with the principles of good governance set out in NHS Scotland's Blueprint for Good Governance (the Blueprint).

Plan for the Future sets out new objectives and priorities for NHS Grampian over the next 6 – 10 years, as detailed in agenda item 5 Plan for the Future - Board Strategy 2022-2028 at the June 2022 NHS Grampian Board meeting. As the organisation's strategic objectives are refreshed, the Board assurance committees must adapt their approach to ensure that the Board satisfies the definition of active governance in the Blueprint:

'The appropriate issues are considered by the right people, the relevant information is reviewed in the best format at the right time and the level of scrutiny produces rigorous challenge and an effective response.'

2.3 Revised Terms of Reference

Revised terms of reference for each committee are attached as Appendices 1-5. Each Terms of Reference is now in a standard format and includes an assurance map for the committee.

Particular items of note in relation to each committee:

- (a) Audit and Risk Committee – alteration of committee name and minor revisions to confirm that this committee has responsibility for agreeing and obtaining assurance on the Board's risk management framework
- (b) Clinical Governance Committee – minor revisions to confirm the scope of committee's remit for clinical governance matters and update the committee assurance map to reflect portfolios and system leadership
- (c) Engagement and Participation Committee – see 2.3.1 below
- (d) Performance Assurance, Finance and Infrastructure Committee – inclusion of finance and infrastructure within this committee's remit, joint Executive Leads to include Director of Facilities and eHealth, and Director of Finance

- (e) Staff Governance Committee – minor amendments to formatting only, as this committee reviewed its terms of reference in September 2021

It is proposed that each committee now obtains assurance **on behalf of the Board** for matters falling within its terms of reference, rather than providing assurance to the Board. This is permitted under Standing Order 6.2(b) and will clarify the role, responsibility and authority of each committee, and is consistent with the principles of agile, collaborative governance in the Blueprint.

It is recognised that there will need to be an agreed mechanism for escalating matters to the Board or referring matters to other committees. Subject to agreement of recommendation 3.2, it is proposed that consultation and engagement be carried out over summer 2022 to draft an escalation framework and bring that to the August 2022 Board for approval.

2.3.1 Engagement and Participation Committee (EPC)

Recognising the renewed focus on population health in Plan for the Future and the need to put engagement and co-production with communities at the heart of all NHS Grampian's service design and provision, consideration has been given to establishing a Population Health Committee, incorporating the assurance functions on engagement and participation included in the EPC under the current arrangements. There has been extensive engagement on the establishment of a Population Health Committee and a draft terms of reference for such a committee is attached as appendix 4; more time is required to finalise the exact wording regarding the People Powered Health section of the terms of reference. This is in order ensure the EPC chair and committee have sufficient opportunity to guide the final content. Therefore, the Board is not being asked to adopt these terms of reference for a Population Health Committee at this meeting, but agree that final terms of reference will be brought to the August 2022 Board meeting for approval.

Plans will be developed to ensure a smooth transition of EPC business and that the significant progress made around engagement and participation to date is celebrated and further developed within this new structure.

Given that this is a new and innovative committee, the business of the committee will have regular scrutiny to ensure there is an appropriate balance of focus across the 3 areas of core business. The Director of Public Health will also consider mechanisms to provide independent evaluation support to help this committee develop.

2.4 Administrative arrangements to support and monitor committee business

Administrative support for each committee will not change from the current arrangements but each Committee will implement:

- (a) a forward planner for its business, to ensure that all elements of its terms of reference are covered adequately over the course of a full cycle of the Board's Delivery Plan, to be brought to the Board at its August 2022 meeting.
- (b) a matrix showing how many matters relevant to each term of reference for the committee are considered over the course of a full cycle of the Board's Delivery Plan, to ensure balance in the committee's workplan and that its full remit is being covered. This will be reported to the Board annually, at the June Board meeting.

The Assistant Board Secretary will have a more active liaison role with committee leads and administrators to provide advice and guidance on committee business to ensure co-ordination across committees and appropriate escalation to the Board where necessary.

A regular meeting between Committee Chairs, Board Chair and Vice Chair, supported by the Assistant Board Secretary and Board Secretary, will be introduced from August 2022 to assist cross-committee working and escalation of matters, and provide information on items which should be considered for escalation to the Board.

2.5 Transition period and committee membership

To give time for Committee Chairs and Executive Leads to review their workplans in light of the new strategic priorities set out in Plan for the Future, it is proposed that the

revised Terms of Reference for each committee be implemented from the committee meeting following the August 2022 Board meeting. This also gives more time to consider an escalation policy, finalise the terms of reference for the Population Health Committee and allow the proper transfer of EPC business.

Committees will be asked to review their terms of reference and update their assurance maps in early 2023, and any amendments required will be brought to the June 2023 Board meeting. This meets the Blueprint requirement to regularly review governance arrangements and ensure they remain appropriate to obtain assurance on the organisation's business.

Pursuant to Standing Order 9.2, the Interim Chair will consult on committee membership and chairs over the summer and a proposal for any revisions to these will be brought to the August 2022 Board meeting.

2.6 Assessment

2.6.1 Quality/ Patient Care

There are no direct impacts on quality/patient care from the proposals in this paper.

2.6.2 Workforce

There are no direct impacts on workforce from the proposals in this paper.

2.6.3 Financial

There are no financial impacts from the proposals in this paper.

2.6.4 Risk Assessment/Management

There is a risk of disruption to committee business with amended terms of reference. This will be mitigated by a transition period to August 2022, to allow for proper planning of revised committee business planners to align committee business to the new strategic priorities of the Board.

There is a risk of disengagement from members of EPC while a new Population Health Committee is established. This will be mitigated by a further period of consultation with EPC chair and members on the terms of reference for a Population Health Committee.

2.6.5 Equality and Diversity, including health inequalities

An impact assessment has not been completed because there are no service changes envisaged as a result of the proposals in this paper.

2.6.6 Communication, involvement, engagement and consultation

The Audit, Performance Governance and Clinical Governance Committees have each discussed the proposed revisions to their terms of reference at recent committee meetings. The Staff Governance Committee reviewed its terms of reference in September 2021 and no substantive changes are proposed. Further consultation on EPC/Population Health Committee is proposed over summer 2022, with agreed terms of reference to be brought back to the August 2022 Board meeting.

2.6.7 Route to the Meeting

The proposals have been discussed informally at Non-Executive Board Members' informal monthly meetings and committee meetings as detailed in 2.6.6 above.

3 Recommendations

The Board is asked to agree that

- 3.1 from the date of adoption of new terms of reference, committees will obtain assurance on behalf of the Board
- 3.2 in principle, an escalation policy for matters to be escalated from committee to the Board be developed and a draft policy be brought to the Board for approval in August 2022
- 3.3 the revised terms of reference for Audit Committee, Clinical Governance Committee, Performance Assurance, Finance and Infrastructure Committee, and Staff Governance Committee be adopted with effect from the next timetabled committee meeting after August 2022

- 3.4 further consultation be carried out about the 'people powered health' terms of reference for a new Population Health Committee, with draft terms of reference for that Committee to be brought before the Board for approval in August 2022
- 3.5 each committee will revise and produce a forward planner of committee business taking account of its new terms of reference and the strategic priorities of the Plan for the Future, to be agreed at the first committee meeting under the new terms of reference adopted with effect from August 2022
- 3.6 each committee will keep its terms of reference and assurance map under review from August 2022 and propose any amendments, to be brought to the Board in June 2023
- 3.7 each committee will maintain a matrix indicating spread of committee business across its terms of reference and that an annual report on those matrices and the effectiveness of committees will be brought to the Board in June 2023
- 3.8 the Chair will consult Board members on committee membership and chair roles and provide recommendations to the Board at a future meeting to be determined by the Chair and Board Secretary.

4 List of appendices

The following appendices are included with this report:

- Appendix 1 – Audit Committee terms of reference and assurance map
- Appendix 2 – Clinical Governance terms of reference and assurance map
- Appendix 3 – Performance Governance terms of reference and assurance map
- Appendix 4 – Population Health draft terms of reference and assurance map
- Appendix 5 – Staff Governance terms of reference and assurance map

DIAGRAM describing assurance mapping of organisational groups – as at 26 May 2022

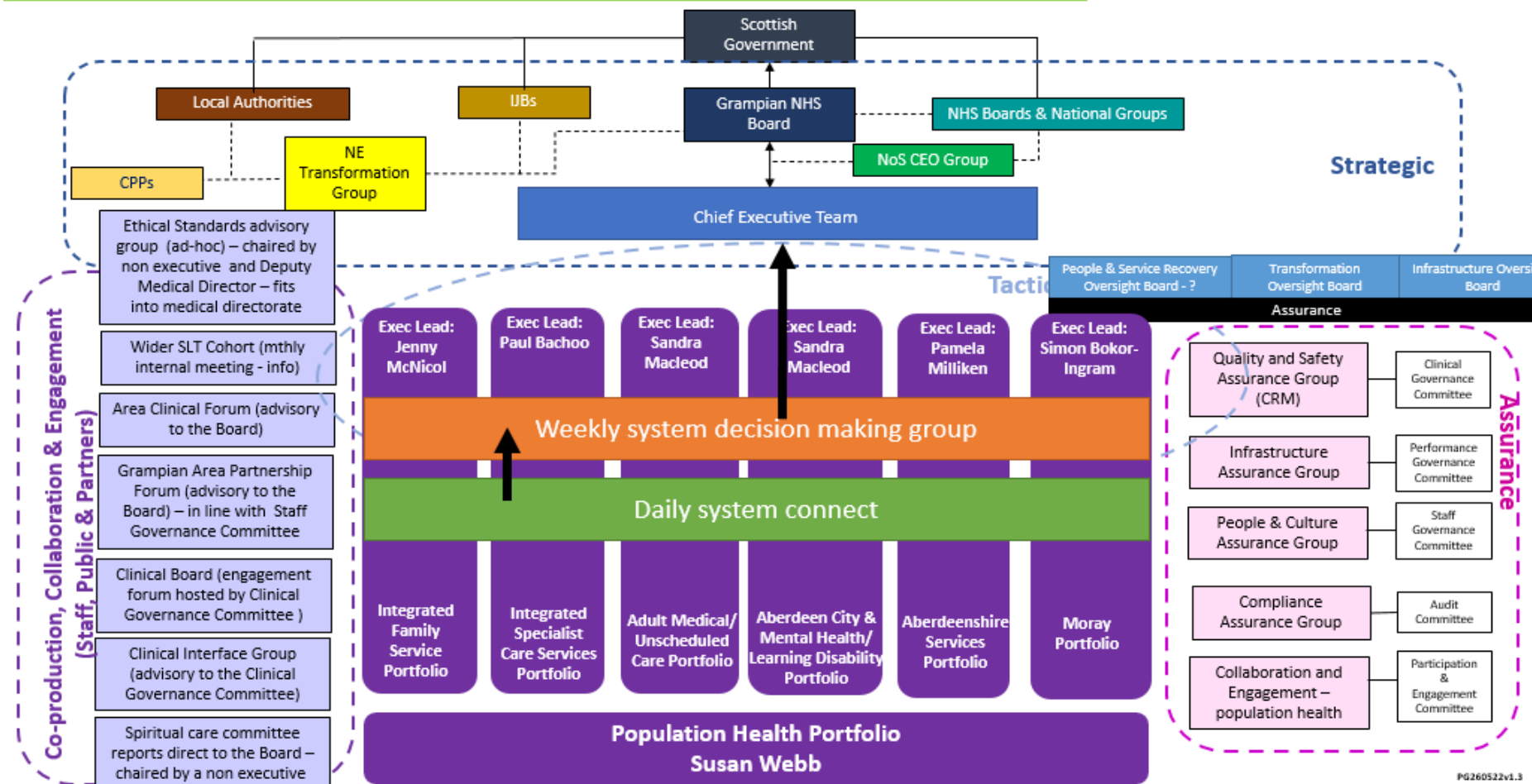


Diagram 1 – assurance mapping of organisational groups

With thanks to Preston Gan, SystemTransformation Manager, NHS Grampian for the diagram