

Meeting:	NHS Grampian Board
Meeting date:	3 August 2023
Item Number:	10
Title:	Blueprint for Good Governance & Developing the Culture of the Board
Responsible Executive/Non-Executive:	Tom Power – Director of People & Culture
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1 Purpose

This is presented to the Board for:

- **Assurance** – review and scrutinise the information provided in this paper and confirm that it provides assurance that a proportionate approach is being taken to in light of the expectation that the Blueprint for Good Governance self-assessment is expected in autumn 2023.
- **Endorsement** – endorse the three priorities for further work on developing the culture of the board arising from the April seminar, and the proposals of the SLWG that work on developing the culture of the Board should be mainstreamed in different forms of Board business.

This report relates to a:

- Government policy/directive
- Other – Agreed Board Development work

This aligns to the following NHS Scotland quality ambition(s):

- Effective
- Person centred

2 Report summary

2.1 Situation

It is expected that Health Boards will be required to undertake self-assessment against the Scottish Government's *Blueprint for Good Governance 2nd Edition* ("The Blueprint") in autumn 2023. The Board is asked to note the content of the Blueprint, and the alignment with it of the work that has been progressed during 2022/23 on

developing the culture of the NHS Grampian Board. It is planned to present at the meeting a summary of the recent survey of Board members one year in to this work, and seek endorsement of proposals from the Culture of the Board Short-Life Working Group (SLWG) to mainstream further culture development work in to regular Board business. This agenda item is an initial step in that respect.

2.2 Background

The Blueprint for Good Governance (“The Blueprint”) (Appendix 1) was first published in January 2019. It describes the functions, enablers, assurance framework, integrated system and operating guidance that need to be in place to support good corporate governance by boards in the provision of services linked to the Scottish Government’s Care and Wellbeing Portfolio. A self-assessment using the Blueprint, supported by NHS Education for Scotland, has recently been tested with NHS Highland, and is expected to be rolled out across NHS Scotland in autumn 2023.

Within the first and second editions of The Blueprint, specific reference is made to the function of the Board as regards influencing culture, and the role played by values, relationships and behaviours as enablers of board effectiveness. In effect, these are the culture of a board, and their inclusion in The Blueprint was both a driver for work on developing the culture of the NHS Grampian Board, and an influence on it. Following an initial, and bespoke, baseline survey in May 2022, culture workshops were held at Board seminars during 2022 and early 2023. A SLWG of Executives and Non-Executives has been maintaining an overview of this work over the past year.

2.3 Assessment

Rather than departing radically from it, the second edition of The Blueprint builds on the original. This encouraged a focus on ‘active governance’ - appropriate issues are considered by the right people, the relevant information is reviewed at the right time, and scrutiny produces rigorous challenge and an effective response - with the second edition adding ‘collaborative governance’ - when all parties who have influence the delivery of outcomes recognise, understand and respect the needs of each other and work together to integrate or align their arrangements for governance.

This is consistent with a system leadership ethos. Significantly, given the governance themes for which partner organisations also have a responsibility, such as dealing with system financial pressures and understanding the balance of resources devoted to prevention, the collaborative governance elements may have wider relevance than the Health Board’s to which The Blueprint applies. Board members representing partner organisations may wish to take a view on whether there is merit in using any of The Blueprint and self-assessment materials in Integration Joint Board settings also.

The Blueprint also aims to improve the effectiveness of governance in the NHS by now indicating that a continuous improvement approach should be taken, with arrangements subject to regular review and development. This is with the caveat that governance alone is insufficient to meet the expectations of stakeholders, and that effective operational and change management are also required.

The Blueprint presents principles rather than instructions, and acknowledges a requirement for governance arrangements to reflect the needs of the organisation and the prevailing conditions in the environment in which it operates. It is recommended that NHS Boards adopt a flexible approach, noting that there may be a need for temporary changes to governance arrangements to provide a suitable response to emergency situations, such as the Coronavirus pandemic.

Pending the progression of national resources to support the adoption of The Blueprint, Boards have progressed development work with reference to it, but in ways that suit their local context. In NHS Grampian, this began in 2021 with work facilitated by the King's Fund on the relational ways of working that would reflect the Board's aims of supporting an effective contribution to whole system working in responding to and recovering from the pandemic.

The themes emerging from this informed the commission for and early stages of work agreed in March 2022 focused on developing the Culture of the board. The first year's work culminated with an in-person Board seminar in April 2023, which built on previous discussions in November 2022 and explored:

- What high performance looks like and how members can contribute
- How we reflect the values and behaviours we want in the ways we operate
- Our top 3 priorities for further development work focused on culture

The outputs were reviewed by the Culture of the Board SLWG in June 2023, which endorsed the prioritisation by those attending the April workshop of the following areas for further development work

- a. Enhancing Board visibility in the organisation
- b. More in-person Board interactions post pandemic
- c. Roles and responsibilities based on the kind of board we want to be

These were felt by the SLWG to represent an opportunity to take a more "mainstreaming" approach to culture development work: building it in to the way that Board meetings and other interactions are designed, rather than as a separate activity, which reflects the inclusion of influencing culture as a function within the Blueprint for Good Governance from the outset.

The SLWG also felt that there is an opportunity to understand the current experience of Board members and the impact of the work done so far by repeating the baselining survey undertaken in May 2022, with some minor modifications. This also provides an opportunity to take stock before the introduction of The Blueprint self-assessment, which is understood from testing in NHS Highland to be extensive and require significant Board discussions when implemented.

At the time of writing the local survey had still to be analysed. An initial analysis of results will be provided to the Board in due course.

2.3.1 Quality/ Patient Care

The King's Fund note that *'what distinguishes The Blueprint from other governance models is its clear acknowledgement of the importance of how the Board approaches the achievement of its strategic aims and objectives as well as its focus on performance and outcomes. Although the model is presented as four distinct sections: functions, enablers, delivery and evaluation, they are in reality inter-dependent'*.

NHS Grampian has made an explicit commitment to developing our culture as part of a commitment to engaging colleagues and citizens in improving health. The Blueprint indicates that paying deliberate attention to Board culture, and the Board's role in the influencing the culture of the organisation is consistent with this commitment.

2.3.2 Workforce

The values, attitudes and behaviours that individuals demonstrate through their work as Board members play a major part in influencing the organisation's culture and ethos. It follows that positive values, relationships and behaviours will underpin the Board's success both as an entity, and in the way it influences culture, and thus the experience of staff, in the wider organisation.

2.3.3 Financial

This work has been undertaken using internal expertise during 2022/23. There are currently no plans that require financial input.

2.3.4 Risk Assessment/Management

There is a risk that the volume of work associated with implementing The Blueprint self-assessment could impact on other Board business. This is being mitigated by drawing on insights shared by colleagues in NHS Highland and the regular review of Board seminar schedules, which will enable time to consider the results.

There is a risk that only positioning culture development work as a seminar topic undermines its visibility and impact. Taking an intentional approach to mainstream it via ways of working in Board meetings and other interactions can mitigate this.

2.3.5 Equality and Diversity, including health inequalities

Diversity is noted in the Blueprint for Good Governance as an enabler of Board effectiveness. The influencing culture enabler specifically references doing so in accordance with the Staff Governance Standard, which includes a 'treated fairly and consistently' domain.

An impact assessment has not been completed because the Blueprint is a national publication.

Accessibility has been taken in to account in planning our work on developing the culture of the Board, including making necessary adjustments to the design and format of the in person Board seminars.

2.3.6 Other impacts

It is expected that being able to demonstrate effective governance, both agile and collaborative, and a deliberate focus on Board culture will impact positively on public and staff perception. It will also provide assurance to Scottish Government Ministers.

2.3.7 Communication, involvement, engagement and consultation

Not applicable at this stage

2.3.8 Route to the Meeting

The issues in this paper have been previously considered by the following groups as part of its development. The groups have either supported the content, or their feedback has informed the development of the content presented in this report.

- Chief Executive Team Critical Thinking – May 2023
- Culture of the Board Short-Life Working Group – June 2023

2.4 Recommendation

The Board is asked to:

- **Assurance** – review and scrutinise the information provided in this paper and confirm that it provides assurance that a proportionate approach is being taken to developing the Culture of the Board in light of the expectation that the Blueprint for Good Governance self-assessment will be required in autumn 2023.
- **Endorsement** – endorse the three priorities for further work on developing the culture of the board arising from the April seminar, and the proposals of the SLWG that work on developing the culture of the Board should be mainstreamed in different forms of Board business.
- **Future reporting** – to request that another report on this subject be brought back to the Board at the October Board meeting to allow for consideration of the analysis of Board members' views on Board culture from the recent survey results.

3 Appendix/List of appendices

The following appendix is included with this report:

- Appendix 1 – Blueprint for Good Governance 2nd Edition
[Supporting documents - NHS Scotland - blueprint for good governance: second edition - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/resources/documents/2022/04/Supporting_documents_-_NHS_Scotland_-_blueprint_for_good_governance:_second_edition_-_gov.scot)