

REVIEW OF ARGYLL AND BUTE INTEGRATION SCHEME

Consultation and Engagement Strategy

1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to set out the strategy for engagement and consultation with key/prescribed stakeholders in respect of reviewing the current Health and Social Care Integration Scheme (the Scheme) between Argyll and Bute Council and NHS Highland.

The legal requirement to complete a review of an Integration Scheme is set out in Section 44 of the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 (the Act). The Scheme must be reviewed each subsequent period of 5 years beginning with the day on which the Scheme was approved.

The current Scheme was approved by Scottish Ministers on 23rd March 2021, therefore there is a statutory responsibility for Argyll and Bute Council and the Board of NHS Highland (the partner bodies) to carry out a review and submit a revised Scheme to Scottish Ministers no later than 23rd March 2026, or a decision taken by the partner bodies that no changes are necessary by that date.

A review of the current Integration Scheme has been undertaken and a number of proposed amendments have been recommended. These changes have been considered and approved by both the Council and NHS Highland Health Board at their respective meetings held in June/July 2025. On the basis that both parent bodies are agreeable to the proposed amendments, there is now a requirement to undertake a joint formal consultation exercise in accordance with Section 46(4) of the Act. Further detail on the consultation is provided in the section 3 below.

2. Background and Contextual Information

The Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act was passed by the Scottish Parliament in February 2014 and came into force on 1st April 2016, which changed the law to bring together health and social care into a single, integrated system. The legislation created 31 integration authorities, of which Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) are one, who are now responsible for local services. These services were previously managed separately by NHS Boards and local authorities.

The HSCP is governed by the [Integrated Joint Board](#) (IJB) – a separate legal entity in its own right - which is responsible for the planning, resourcing and overseeing of the operational delivery of integrated services. The IJB is responsible for allocating the integrated revenue budget for health and social care in accordance with the objectives set out in its [Strategic Plan](#). The IJB includes members from NHS Highland, Argyll & Bute Council, representatives of the Third Sector, Independent Sector, staff representatives and others representing the interests of patients, service users and carers.

In line with the provisions of the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act, the local authority and the Health Board must jointly prepare an Integration scheme, which sets out the model of integration and the functions that are to be delegated in accordance with that model. Argyll and Bute Council and NHS Highland have agreed to delegate the following functions to the IJB:-

- NHS Services
 - Community hospitals
 - Acute Care
 - Primary Care (including GPs)

- Allied Health Professionals
 - Community Health Services
 - Maternity Services
- Public Health Services including the Prevention agenda
- Adult social care services including:-
 - Services for older adults
 - People with learning disabilities
 - People with mental health problems
- Children and Families social care services
- Alcohol and Drug Services
- Child and Adult Protection
- Criminal and Community Justice Services

3. Consultation Approach

As previously mentioned at section 1 above, in accordance with Section 46(4) of the Act, the Council and NHS Highland Health Board must jointly consult with the prescribed stakeholders (set out below) and any others deemed appropriate to obtain views on the proposed amendments to the current Integration Scheme. A copy of the Scheme with the proposed changes highlighted, together with a summary document detailing the revisions, can be accessed on the [Argyll and Bute Council](#) or [NHS Highland](#) websites.

As well as adhering to the relevant legislative requirements, the consultation will be carried out in line with the approved [Argyll and Bute HSCP Engagement Framework](#), which draws on national guidance and best practice including the National Standards for Community Engagement, and the relevant frameworks/toolkits adhered to by the partner bodies.

Consultation Period

An 8 week consultation will be undertaken between 25th August to 19th October 2025.

As part of the consultation process the partner bodies will:

- Provide accurate information in respect of the scope of the consultation subject
- Attempt to answer all relevant questions and requests for additional information, as far as is reasonably practicable, before the end of the consultation period;
- Take account of any views expressed as part of the consultation exercise when finalising the revised Integration Scheme.

Stakeholders/Audiences

For the purposes of this consultation the prescribed stakeholders, as set out in the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Prescribed Consultees) (Scotland) Regulations 2014, are:-

- Health professionals (GPs, management teams, clinical groups including nursing staff and allied health professionals)
- Users of health care
- Carers of users of health care
- Commercial providers of health care
- Non-commercial providers of health care
- Social care professionals

- Users of social care
- Carers of users of social care
- Commercial providers of social care
- Non-commercial providers of social care
- Staff of the Health Board and local authority who are not health professionals or social care professionals
- Non-commercial providers of social housing
- Third sector bodies carrying out activities related to health or social care
- Highland Council
- NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde

Other relevant stakeholders include:-

- Argyll and Bute Council elected members
- Community Councils
- Staff side/Trade Unions
- Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership
- Community Planning Groups
- Locality Planning Groups
- NHS 24
- Scottish Health Council
- MPs/MSPs
- Dentists
- Pharmacists
- Citizens Advice Bureau / Patient Advice and Support Service

Further detail on how each stakeholder group will be engaged as part of the process is included within the Operational Plan starting on page 6 below.

Question Set

The purpose/scope of the consultation is to obtain views on the proposed amendments detailed within the Integration Scheme. On this basis, the survey questions for this engagement and consultation exercise are:-

1. Please provide any views you have on the proposed changes to the Integration Scheme by commenting on the relevant sections detailed below.
 - a. 1.1 - Vision and Values (page 3)
 - b. 1.4 - Finance arrangements (page 5)
 - c. 3.2 - Local Governance Arrangements (page 8)
 - d. 5.3.1 - Corporate Support Services (page 11)
 - e. Section 9 - Finance (page 20 - 30)
 - f. Section 10 - Participation and Engagement (page 30-32)
 - g. Section 11 - Information Sharing and Data Handling (page 32)
 - h. Section 14 - Risk Management / Internal Audit (page 35 - 36)
 - i. Annex 1 (page 39)
 - j. Annex 4 - Clinical and Care Governance Structure (page 60)

2. About you – please note that personal details will not be shared or used as part of any reporting on the consultation.
- a) What is your primary interest in the Integration Scheme?
 - I am a health professional
 - I am a social care professional
 - I am a user of health services
 - I am a user of social care services
 - I am a carer
 - I am a commercial provider of health care
 - I am a non commercial provider of health care
 - I am an employee of the local authority and/or health board
 - Other – please specify
 - b) Please provide a contact email address if you would like us to communicate with you post consultation.
 - c) Please provide the first part of your postcode to enable us to establish the area you reside in.

Responding to the Consultation

- Details of the [online survey](#) will be issued to all stakeholders
- Details of the consultation, with links to the relevant background information and the survey, will be available on the relevant pages of Argyll and Bute Council and NHS Highland websites.
- A dedicated email inbox has been set up to allow stakeholders to contact us about the consultation (integrationschemereview@argyll-bute.gov.uk).
- Hard copies/different formats of the consultation documentation can be provided upon request.

Operational Plan

The table below sets out the proposed engagement activity / timescales in respect of each stakeholder group:-

Utilising the dedicated inbox (integrationschemereview@argyll-bute.gov.uk) to allow stakeholders to contact us, ongoing engagement will be undertaken to answer any questions / provide further information as requested.

Stakeholders	Engagement Method(s)	Dates
Prescribed		
Argyll and Bute Council / IJB / NHS Highland Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endorsement of (a) proposed changes to the Scheme and (b) the consultation and engagement strategy / timeline • Details of the consultation will be promoted via respective websites, social media and relevant internal channels 	June./July 2025 w/c 18 th August
Health Professionals (GPs/Health centres, management teams, clinical groups including nursing staff and allied health professionals)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email / post copies of engagement materials 	w/c 18 th August
Social Care Professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email engagement materials to all Social Work/Social Care employees 	w/c 18 th August
Users of health care / social care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of consultation via press release/social media/partner body websites 	w/c 18 th August
Carers of users of health care / social care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email engagement materials to all known carers groups / wider promotion to carers in general as part of engagement method to users of health/social care (above). 	w/c 18 th August
Commercial / non commercial providers of health care / social care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email engagement materials to all known social/healthcare providers 	w/c 18 th August

Non commercial providers of social housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email engagement materials to all housing providers 	w/c 18 th August
Staff of the Health Board and local authority who are not health professionals or social care professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email engagement materials to wider staff groups / promote via respective websites, social media and relevant internal channels 	w/c 18 th August
Third sector bodies carrying out activities related to health or social care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email engagement materials 	w/c 18 th August
Highland Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email engagement materials 	w/c 18 th August
NHS Greater Glasgow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email engagement materials 	w/c 18 th August
Other relevant stakeholders		
Elected members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email engagement materials 	w/c 18 th August
Community Councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email engagement materials 	w/c 18 th August
Constituency/List MSPs and MPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email engagement materials 	w/c 18 th August
Staff side / Trade Unions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email engagement materials 	w/c 18 th August
Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email engagement materials 	w/c 18 th August
Community Planning Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email engagement materials 	w/c 18 th August
Locality Planning Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email engagement materials 	w/c 18 th August
Scottish Health Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email engagement materials 	w/c 18 th August
NHS 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email engagement materials 	w/c 18 th August

Dentists	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Email/post engagement materials	w/c 18 th August
Pharmacists/GPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Email/post engagement materials	w/c 18 th August
Citizens Advice Bureau / Patient Advice and Support Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Email engagement materials	w/c 18 th August