Scottish Health Council Minutes - Approved

Meeting of the Scottish Health Council (SHC)

10.00am -12.30pm 14th May 2026

Attendance

Present

Suzanne Dawson, Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS) Non-Executive Director, Chair (SD)
Gina Alexander, Member (GA)
Craig Allan, Member (CA)
Dave Bertin, Member (DB)
Emma Cooper-Stobart, Member (ECH)
Nicola Hanssen, HIS Non-Executive Director, Vice Chair (NH)
Annika Joy, Member (AJ)
Jamie Mallan, Member (JM)

In Attendance

Clare Morrison, Director of Engagement & Change (CM)
Derek Blues, Head of Engagement Practice - Assurance (DBL)
Diane Graham, Head of Engagement Practice - Improvement (DG)
David McArthur, Interim Associate Director - Item 2.5
Rosie Tyler Greig, Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion Manager (RTG)
Richard Kennedy McCrea, Operations Manager (RKM)
Tony McGowan, Associate Director Community Engagement (TMG)
Robbie Pearson, Chief Executive (RP)
Carole Wilkinson, HIS Chair (CW)

Apologies

Christine Johnstone, Head of Engagement Practice -Evidence (CJ)
Michelle Rogers, HIS Non-Executive Director (MR)

Meeting Support

Susan Ferguson, Committee Support

1.Opening Business

1.1 Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and formally welcomed new SHC members, Annika Joy and Craig Allan.

Apologies were noted as above.

1.2 Declaration of Interests

The Chair invited the SHC to note the Register of Interests and declare any conflicts.
Updates to the Register of Interests were noted from SHC members.

No conflicts of interest were declared.

Decision: The SHC noted the Declaration of Interests.
Action: SF to update the Register of Interests with changes noted.

1.3 Minutes of previous Meeting

The draft minutes from previous meeting of 12 February 2026 were approved as an accurate record.

Decision: The SHC approved the minutes of the SHC meeting of 12 February 2026.
Action:

1.4 Review of Action Register

The SHC reviewed the Action Register and noted most actions were recommended for closure with Lone Working policy for Public Partners remaining open.

Decision: The SHC noted the Action Register and agreed with the actions recommended for closure.
Action: RTG -Update Lone working action point with alignment to Once for Scotland Policy for Lone Working.

2. HIS Strategic Business

2.1 Statutory duties of Engagement

The SHC received an update on two key areas within the paper, sub national structures and service change activity, noting the assurance review would be covered in a separate agenda item (2.2). The SHC noted progress on interim guidance for sub-national structures, with workshops scheduled to test and refine the approach. Discussion took place covering potential consultation fatigue, resource and workforce implications and inclusion of non-service users.

The SHC noted that the Service Change subcommittee had reviewed the Insch War Memorial Hospital service change and agreed that this did not constitute major service change. Thanks were noted for all who were involved in this work.

Decision: The SHC agreed that Insch War Memorial Hospital does not constitute a major service change. The SHC accepted a **Moderate** level of assurance.
Action: None

2.2 Governance for Engagement

The SHC received an update on Governance for Engagement and noted progress made to the revised Cycle 4, Self-assessment tool, including the improved clarity, consistency and alignment with clinical and care governance. The SHC also noted ongoing work to reduce duplication and support the more consistent approach across directorates.

Decision: The SHC accepted a **Moderate** level of assurance.
Action: None

2.3 Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion

An update was provided to the SHC highlighting that 100% of Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS) programmes either have a completed screening or have full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) in place and noted the completion of the Equalities internal audit report is still to be finalised. The SHC noted the audit report will be considered at the Audit & Risk Committee and will be shared with both the SHC and Staff Governance Committee when complete.

Decision: The SHC accepted a **Moderate** level of assurance.
Action: None

2.4 Role of Public Partners across HIS

The SHC received an update on Public Partner activity, and the recent annual Public Partner event in March 2026. The SHC noted positive feedback from Public Partners and recognised improvement in their integration across governance arrangements. The SHC highlighted the importance of maintaining visibility of Public Partner contributions and to explore possible opportunities for SHC members and more senior HIS staff attendance at future public partner events.

Decision: The SHC accepted a **Moderate** level of assurance.
Action: None

2.5 Assurance Review

The SHC received a verbal update on the HIS assurance review. This work aims to improve alignment, share information more effectively, and reduce duplication between the various assurance functions across HIS. This includes assurance of engagement on service change. Members requested clearer written information to support oversight.

Decision: The SHC noted the update.
Action: DMcA to share slides with SF for circulation to SHC.

3. Community Engagement Business

3.1 Evidence Programme

The SHC received an update on the performance of the Engagement Practice – Evidence Unit, noting that delivery was significantly below planned expectations, with two outputs delivered against a planned eight.
The SHC agreed that this level of performance is not acceptable. While recognising the complexity and importance of the work, concerns were raised regarding planning, prioritisation, and oversight. There was agreement that improvement must be demonstrated within a clear timeframe. Greater transparency in reporting and clearer performance measures were requested.

Decision: The SHC accepted a **Limited** level of assurance.
Actions:

1. TMG/CM- to present a recovery and improvement plan at the next meeting (17 September 2026)
2. TMG/CM- to provide a progress update at three months and a further review at six months.

3.2 Operational Plan Progress Report

The SHC received an update on the operational delivery of the directorate and noted continued progress across engagement networks, volunteering, and practitioner communities. Ongoing work to engage marginalised and underrepresented groups was also noted.

Decision: The SHC noted the paper and accepted a **Moderate** level of assurance.
Action: None

4. SHC Governance

4.1 Key Performance Indicators

The SHC received an update on the Q4 Key Performance Indicator (KPI) outcomes noting progress continues with the governance for engagement KPI and a positive year end position for completion of EQIAs across HIS programmes.

For the benefit of new SHC members an explanation was provided on the Corporate KPIs and noted that this information has been consistently reported to both the Board and previous Scottish Health Council meetings.

Decision: The SHC noted the paper and accepted a **Moderate** level of assurance.
Action: None

4.2 Risk Register

The SHC reviewed the Risk Register and noted updated wording for engagement risks. Members discussed whether the current risks fully reflect concerns about Engagement Practice – Evidence Programme performance and wider system pressures.

Decision: The SHC noted the Risk Register and accepted a **Moderate** level of assurance.
Action: CM to review and update wording of risks relating to evidence delivery.

4.2 Business Planning Schedule

The SHC were asked to note the 2026/27 Business Planning Schedule

Decision: The SHC noted the 2026/27 Business Planning Schedule.
Action: None

5. Reserved Business

5.1 Service Change Sub-Committee Draft Minutes of Meeting

The draft minutes from the previous meeting of the Service Change sub-committee, held on 26 March 2026, were shared with the SHC for information.

Decision: The SHC noted the draft minutes from the Service Change sub-committee held on 26 March 2026.
Action: None

6. Additional Items of Governance

6.1 Key Points for HIS Board

The SHC agreed on the following 3 Key points for the HIS Board;
1. Evidence Unit performance and recovery actions
2. Progress and value of Public Partner role
3. Ongoing work and risks relating to statutory engagement and sub-national planning

7. Closing Business

7.1 Any Other Business
The Chair invited reflections on the meeting.

No other business was discussed

8. Close/Date of next meeting

Next meeting will be held on 17 September 2026
Delta House
50 West Nile Street
Glasgow
G1 2NP