

The Integration Scheme – what does this mean?

The Integration scheme is the document which each local authority area must produce and which sets out the technical detail of the scheme it is implementing. The Scottish Government gave each local authority area the choice between either having one lead agency for specific services which would involve each delegating to the other **or** setting up a 'body corporate; which would bring all services under one body or agency. This body would be referred to as the **Integration Joint Board**.

In Argyll, we have a body corporate arrangement which is now taking shape. A Chief Officer has been appointed, Christina West and she took up post formally on 1st December 2014.

The **Integration Scheme** is laid out to a set template and most of the content, or the level of content and detail, is prescribed by Scottish Government. This means it is far from easy reading. It also means that it cannot really be changed. What is important is that it sets out the infrastructure which will support the 'real' work – the integration of health and social care services.

This paper is a simple and superficial read through the headline sections of the Integration Scheme document – it does not go into any detail, and is necessarily extremely brief. What it does is to demonstrate main aspects which the Shadow Integration Board, the Integration Project Team and the Programme Board have needed to put in place ready to have an Integration Joint Board in place for April 2015.



The most relevant part for all of us, and where we can comment, is section 2 – the Aims and Outcomes. The Scottish Government has a nation set of **Health and Wellbeing Outcomes** which are on a separate paper- whilst it is possible Scottish Government may have some slight amendments, these form the true north of integration and will be central to the **Three Year Strategic Plan**. The Strategic Plan will be co-produced during 2015 and will involve as many individuals, communities and groups as possible – it is the crucial document.

The **Vision** for Argyll and Bute, is that 'People in Argyll & Bute will live longer, healthier, happier, independent lives.

The **Purpose** is to plan for and deliver high quality health and social care services to and in partnership with the communities of Argyll and Bute.

We would love to know what you think of our Vision and Purpose and welcome feedback.

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What the Sections of the Scheme cover

The next sections are those legal sections which set out who (NHS and Argyll & Bute Council) are the two parties, gives the definitions, sets out the governance and performance management across departments and defines understanding under the various groups who will be in receipt of services.



It also sets out the arrangements for staffing, although not in great detail, and arrangements for clinical and care governance; this means things like quality, managing risk, health and safety and care standards.

There is high level information about what key officers such as the Chief Officer need to do and about arrangements for the wider workforce. It is impossible to overstate the scale of the task, and although services will continue and actually improve over time, a lot of planning and support is needed to bring together two very large agencies with many different staff involved in care and health services.



The next section deals with finance and the two Finance Directors will be working hard to align all financial arrangements, reporting and to ensuring best value. We all know that finances are limited and must work together to get different systems talking to each other and making best use of what is available. This section covers everything from audit to reporting and management of budgets.



There is a substantial section on participation and engagement – the central core to Integartion is a person centred approach and we need and want to involve our people and our communities throughout this journey. We have already made a start with Conversation Cafes, and a website which is being developed, and 2015 will see a lot more engagement with you all. This section sets out out the foundations for this, and we can be sure of the commitment to keep people involved every step of the way.



Information sharing and data is included within the scheme. Staff will need to share data, and we must also ensure that individual information is safeguarded and looked after appropriately and safely. Both agencies already do this, but now they have to put in place a joint approach which is fit for purpose and, ultimately, enables staff to care for people with the right information.

The final sections cover legal aspects such as liability and indemnity, risk management and also how complaints are handled. Again both Health and Argyll and Bute Council do this and have all their own policies in place – this is about bringing things together and creating a joined up approach. The final section covers what to do is the parties cannot agree and how any differences might be resolved.

Both Health and Argyll and Bute Council have committed to making progress and it seems unlikely too many problems will arise.

Please let us know if you have any comments, and please let us know what you think of our Vision and Purpose. These are your services and we want to work together to offer the best we can for people in Argyll and Bute.

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