Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board

# Integrated Care Board

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| **Date of meeting** | 27 November 2025 |
| **Title of paper** | Audit Committee Escalation and Assurance Report |
| **Presented by** | Jim Birrell, Audit Committee Chair |
| **Author** | Board Secretary and Committee Officers |
| **Agenda item** | 17 |
| **Confidential** | No |

**Executive summary**

This report highlights key matters, issues, and risks discussed at the Audit Committee meeting held since the last report to the Board on 25 September 2025 to alert, advise and assure the Board. The AAA from the Audit Committee held on 24 September 2025 was verbally reported to the Board at the meeting on 25 September 2025 and this is shared for completeness within this report.

The summary report also highlights any issues, items referred or escalated to other committees or to the Board.

Minutes approved by the committee to date are presented to the Board to provide assurance that they have met in accordance with their terms of reference and to advise the Board of business transacted at their meetings.

**Public and Stakeholder Engagement**

N/A

**Recommendations**

The Board is asked to:

- Note the Alert, Advise and Assure and approve any recommendations as listed.
- Note any summary of items or issues referred to other committees of the Board over the reporting period.
- Note the ratified minutes of the committee meetings.

| **Which Strategic Objective/s does the report relate to:** | | **Tick** |
|---|---|---|
| SO1 | Improve quality, including safety, clinical outcomes, and patient experience | ✓ |
| SO2 | To equalise opportunities and clinical outcomes across the area | ✓ |
| SO3 | Make working in Lancashire and South Cumbria an attractive and desirable option for existing and potential employees | ✓ |
| SO4 | Meet financial targets and deliver improved productivity | ✓ |
| SO5 | Meet national and locally determined performance standards and targets | ✓ |
| SO6 | To develop and implement ambitious, deliverable strategies | ✓ |

**Implications**

| | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** | **Comments** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Associated risks | | ✓ | | |
| Are associated risks detailed on the ICB Risk Register? | | | ✓ | |
| Financial Implications | | | ✓ | |

**Where paper has been discussed** (list other committees/forums that have discussed this paper)

| Meeting | Date | Outcomes |
|---|---|---|
| Audit Committee | 24 September 2025 | To provide the Board of committee business during this period. |

| Conflicts of interest associated with this report |
|---|
| Not applicable. |

| Impact assessments | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** | **Comments** |
| Quality impact assessment completed | | | ✓ | |
| Equality impact assessment completed | | | ✓ | |
| Data privacy impact assessment completed | | | ✓ | |

| Report authorised by: | ICB Committee Chair |
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# Integrated Care Board – 27 November 2025

## Audit Committee Escalation and Assurance Report

### 1. Introduction

1.1 This report highlights key matters, issues, and risks discussed at ICB Audit committee held since the last report to the Board on 25 September 2025 to alert, advise and assure the Board.

1.2 The summary report also highlights any issues, items referred or escalated to other committees or to the Board.

1.3 Minutes approved by the committee to date are presented to the Board to provide assurance that they have met in accordance with their terms of reference and to advise the Board of business transacted at their meetings.

### 2. Audit Committee Report and Approved Minutes

| **Date: 24 September 2025** | | **Chair: Jim Birrell** |
|---|---|---|
| **Key Items Discussed** | | |
| **Item** | **Issue** | **Action** |
| **Alert** | | |
| **New ICB financial system** | The new national financial system for ICBs will go live next week, (September 29th). Contingency and business continuity plans are in place but there are concerns that initial teething problems may create some issues around both financial reporting and the timely payment of invoices. | Executive Team to monitor the implementation process and address any issues that may arise |
| **All Age Continuing Care, (AACC), Turnaround Plan** | The Turnaround Team was congratulated for the work being undertaken but the Committee felt it lacked sufficient information to fully assess progress on the controls and assurance for overall delivery of the Integrated Action Plan | Clarification to be sought on processes and responsibility for oversight of the AACC Plan. |
| **Advise** | | |
| **Completed internal audit reviews** | Four completed audit reports were considered by the Committee –<br><br>• **Continuing Healthcare Q2 Follow-up report** - assurance rating not applicable<br><br>• **Data Security & Protection Toolkit, (DSPT), Phase 2** – overall assurance – high risk; veracity of the organisation's | Board to note that<br><br>• **DSPT Phase 2** - the overall assurance of high risk is determined by a formulaic approach and the Committee was assured that the issues contributing to the assessment have either been or are being addressed. |

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| | self-assessment – high confidence,<br><br>• **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, (SEND)** - moderate assurance<br><br>**Delegated Primary Care Functions Annual Self-**assessment - substantial assurance | **SEND** – the Committee sought clarity on the report's reference to the ICB's compliance with statutory responsibilities. It was agreed that this aspect be referred to the Quality & Outcomes Committee. |
| **Business Continuity Deep Dive** | The Committee agreed to commission a deep dive into the effectiveness of the ICB's business continuity arrangements given the known and anticipated operational challenges over coming months. | Committee Chair and Chief Digital Officer to agree the specification and scope for the exercise with a view to completing the assessment before the December Audit Committee meeting. |
| **CHC Adam System** | Whilst amendments are ongoing, it is felt that the Adam System is now 'fit for purpose'. | Board to note progress. |
| **Assure** | | |
| **Information Governance 2024/25 Annual Report** | The Committee received and commended the extensive work of the IG Team in 2024/25. | Board to note the substantial amount of work undertaken to provide assurance against risks on Information governance and Cyber Security. |
| **Artificial Intelligence, (AI), Governance** | The increasing presence and importance of AI was discussed and the Committee felt assured by the processes in place to oversee its use.<br><br>The AI report made reference to consideration of the ethical implications of AI applications. It suggested that this could be achieved by forming an ICB Ethics Group, albeit with a broader remit than just AI. | The Committee supported a wider dissemination of the AI report across the ICB. It also agreed with the suggestion that foundational AI literacy be provided for all staff.<br><br>The Board may want to reflect on the possibility of establishing an Ethics Committee. |
| **Anti-fraud, Bribery & Corruption Policy** | The ICB's Anti-fraud, Bribery & Corruption Policy has been updated to include the new corporate fraud offence re failure to prevent fraud. The Committee ratified the changes to the Policy. | Board to note the policy was approved. |
| **Managing Conflicts of Interest** | The ICB has successfully transitioned to a new system for staff submitting declarations of interest. | Note action. |

- **Appendix A –** Approved minutes of the Audit Committee held on 23 July 2025. **Item 17 - Appx A - Approved - ICB Audit Committee Minutes - 23 July 2025 v2.0.pdf**

**3. Summary of items or issues referred to other committees or the Board over the reporting period.**

| Committee | Item or Issue | Referred to |
|---|---|---|
| Audit Committee 24 September 2025. | **Completed internal audit reviews: Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, (SEND) -** the Committee sought clarity on the report's reference to the ICB's compliance with statutory responsibilities. It was agreed that this aspect be referred to the Quality & Outcomes Committee. | Quality and Outcomes Committee 5 November 2025. |

**4. Conclusion**

4.1 The committee has conducted their business in line with their terms of reference and associated business plans.

**5. Recommendations**

5.1 The Board is requested to:

- Note the Alert, Advise and Assure within the committee report and approve any recommendations as listed.
- Note the summary of items or issues referred to other committees of the Board over the reporting period
- Note the ratified minutes of the committee meetings.

**Committee Chair**
**November 2025**