

Integrated Care Board

Date of meeting	22 January 2026			
Title of paper	Audit Committee Escalation and Assurance Report – 10 December 2025			
Presented by	Steve Spill, Audit Committee Chair			
Author	Board Secretary and Committee Officers			
Agenda item	16			
Confidential	No			
Executive summary				
<p>This report highlights key matters, issues, and risks discussed at the ICB Audit Committee meeting held since the last report to the Board on 27 November 2025 to alert, advise and assure the Board.</p> <p>The summary report also highlights any issues, items referred or escalated to other committees or to the Board.</p> <p>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.</p>				
Public and Stakeholder Engagement				
N/A				
Recommendations				
<p>The Board is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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

ICB Audit Committee	10 December 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 – 22 January 2026

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 27 November 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: 10 December 2025		Chair: Jim Birrell
Key Items Discussed		
Item	Issue	Action
Alert		
New ICB financial system	There are ongoing service delivery and control risks associated with the move to the ICB's new financial system. This may impact on upcoming internal and external audits.	Finance Team to continue implementing the new system, whilst liaising closely with internal and external auditors to minimise potential audit concerns.
All Age Continuing Care, (AACC), Turnaround Plan	Progress continues to be made in respect of the AACC Turnaround Plan. It was reported that of the 204 actions in the Plan, 169 have been completed so 35 remain outstanding. The Committee expressed the view that further turnaround measures may be required next year to address both financial and quality challenges.	Board to note both progress on delivery of the Plan and the Committee's comment regarding the likely need for further turnaround measures
Advise		
Completed internal audit reviews	Six completed audit reports were considered by the Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT Business Continuity – limited assurance, 5 recommendations • Risk Management – Substantial Assurance, 1 recommendation 	Board to note completed audits.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assurance Framework Phase 1 – assurance rating not applicable, 2 recommendations • Quality Impact Assessments & Equality Impact Assessments – moderate assurance, 7 recommendations • Continuing Healthcare Q3 Follow-up report - assurance rating not applicable, no new recommendations but 8 of original 19 remain outstanding • All Age Continuing Care – Prior Year Invoices - assurance rating not applicable, 	
Outstanding MIAA recommendations	The total number of open actions at the date of the Committee meeting totalled 18, which compares to 31 at the September meeting	Note improved position but continue to push for closure of outstanding recommendations
Business Continuity Deep Dive	The Committee was encouraged to learn that all departments have completed a Business Impact Assessment and that the Emergency Preparedness, Resilience and Response Team, (EPRR), is engaging with each area to understand their current level of preparedness. However, further information and assurance was requested at the next meeting.	Given the immediacy of this item, consideration will be given on how best to oversee progress.
Board Assurance Framework	The Committee noted the significant work being undertaken to enhance the ICB's risk management arrangements. However, all Corporate Risks have an assessed score of 16 or more, which is generally well in excess of the organisation's agreed risk appetite.	Ensure that all possible action is taken to address corporate risks
CHC ADAM System	<p>Whilst work continues to improve the functionality of the ADAM System, the priority areas to address include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implementing the process that will log/record data quality issues; and • resolving the complexities that hamper the accurate accrual of sums owing at the end of an accounting period. 	Audit Committee to monitor overall programme, which will include a greater focus on the assessment of year-end accruals

Assure		
Audit Committee Mid-Year Report	The Committee received a position statement on outstanding tasks as at the beginning of December 2025.	Audit Committee to use the report as a checklist when reviewing its ongoing work programmes; Board to note.
ICS-wide sharing of issues arising during internal audits	Agreement has now been reached on local NHS organisations sharing the findings/points of note from completed internal audits. The initial feedback covered topics such as Conflict of Interest, Absence Management and Clinical Coding.	Finance Director to disseminate information as and when appropriate.
Audit Contract Management	The Committee agreed the basis for internal and external audit provision in 2026/27 and beyond. It also agreed that the effectiveness of the current audit arrangements be reviewed before the end of this financial year.	Board to note proposed arrangements

- **Appendix A** – Approved minutes of the Audit Committee held on 24 September 2025. [Item 16 Appx A - Approved ICB Audit Committee Minutes - 24 September 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
N/A		

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
January 2026**