



**MINUTES OF THE STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE & FINANCE
COMMITTEE HELD AT 9.30AM ON
THURSDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2025 IN THE BOARDROOM, NIAS HQ**

PRESENT: Mr P Corrigan Committee Chair
Mr J Dennison Non-Executive Director
Mr P Quinn Non-Executive Director

IN

ATTENDANCE: Ms L Donnelly Interim Director of Finance
Mr N Sinclair Interim Director of Operations
Mr S Mullen Interim Director of Planning,
Performance and Corporate
Services
Ms S Beggs Manager of Chair and Chief
Executive Office
Mr A Arandia Assistant Director of Planning
Performance and Corporate
Services
Mr N Walker Head of Performance, Planning
and Corporate Services.
Mr R Coulter Assistant Director of Fleet
Mr G Harrison Head of Estates

APOLOGIES:

1 Apologies & Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and noted there were no apologies.

2 Procedure

2.1 Declaration of Potential Conflicts of Interest

The Chair asked those present to declare any potential conflicts of interest now or as the meeting progressed.

No declarations of conflict of interest were made.

2.2 Quorum

The Chair confirmed the Committee as quorate.

2.3 Confidentiality of Information

The Chair emphasised the confidentiality of information.

3 Previous Minutes – 18/9/25

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 18 September 2025 were **APPROVED** on a proposal from Mr Quinn and seconded by Mr Dennison.

4 Matters Arising

The Committee **NOTED** the updates to the matters arising contained in the papers.

ACTION	UPDATE
Item 3 Check reference to Mr Mullen at the last meeting	Complete – minutes refer to actions for Mr Mullen but not his attendance
Item 4 Check if Mr Sinclair should attend NED Workshop	Complete – Mr Sinclair attended the NED workshop
Item 5 Update on Performance Cell Group/H&T/S&T to be provided to the next C'ttee	Complete – on agenda
Item 5 Mr Henry to organise building in a metric to the performance report of breaches to two hours without seeking regional approval	Complete
Item 8 Presentation of information in more meaningful way i.e. graphs	The report has been amended slightly. We will take feedback on the current version.
Item 8 Detail percentages into the graph for Independent expenditure	
Item 8 Deep dive into Estates at the next meeting	Complete – on agenda
Item 9	Complete

Change proposal for BC Approval Limit for final approval at TB	
Item 9 Revise ToR and standing orders to reflect the changes in relation to BC approval limits	Will be included as part of annual TORs in February 2026 ACTION: Mr Mullen/Mr Henry/Ms Beggs
Item 10 Business Case Register to become a standing item	Complete
Item 10 Business case SOP / flowchart created to assist business case owners	Underway and will be complete for next meeting ACTION: Ms Donnelly/Mr Henry
Item 10 Check if any other business cases were missed from the register	Finance continues to meet with Directorates via the Accountability meetings. These meetings are ongoing over the next week. During these meetings assurance is sought regarding the completeness and accuracy of the business case register. In addition, Finance will be adding the business case register information to the monthly finance report discussed at the monthly directorate meetings.
Item 10.2 Provide an update at the next meeting regarding GRS Business Case	A verbal update will be provided at the next meeting. ACTION: Ms Donnelly
Item 12 Provide costs for NIAS to run fleet	This is included in the Fleet and Estates presentation on the agenda for the next meeting and will be presented by the Head of each area.
Item 12 More detail re: Cat 2 responses	On agenda

5 Overview of Fleet and Estates inc. Fleet expenditure

The Chair welcomed Gary Harrison and Rory Coulter to the meeting.

The Committee **NOTED** the Estates Report presented by Mr Harrison.

The team are currently redeveloping the Estates Plan for the Strategy and Operational Model for the future and have started the process in earnest over the last couple of months. There have been

some significant senior staff changes, and there was the first Cross Directorate Workshop in September to consider what the Estates Plan and Strategy will look like in the next 10 years, and the same with Fleet. Hopefully there will be extra funding from SPPG for ORH, which may take about 12 weeks to complete.

Mr Corrigan advised that the Board has been concerned that they didn't have any sight of Fleet and Estates, and with the current HSC constraints they welcome this opportunity to start the journey of getting an overview and understanding of where NIAS are and the future work along with the 10-year Strategy.

On Slide seven, it demonstrates that RLB have determined that 0.3% of NIAS estate is functionally suitable and £20 Million is required to elevate the NIAS estate to suitable standards. There are a lot of old sites but it wouldn't be economically viable to start adapting them. Mr Harrison pointed out the RLB scoring includes the Strabane old station which has since been updated and is a significantly improved building. Mr Harrison also pointed out that NIAS own less than a quarter of the sites they operate from and therefore have less control over the development of them.

Mr Corrigan alluded to costs being up and down and queried if NIAS are pushing enough in terms of having a continual stream of capital projects to progress with every year but are restricted with what capital budget there is. Mr Mullen responded that NIAS are given £5.17 million and Estates had to work with what is left over but acknowledged NIAS need to review the Capital and improve collaboration with the DoH and identify if it is optimum use of capital in terms of fleet.

It was confirmed that in relation to the bid submitted for £500k, £526K has been approved, and the remaining balance is for IT.

The £526K is for a number of things, and around £250K is allocated to Estates.

NIAS own just under a quarter of Estates and NIFRS own a higher proportion and therefore get much higher capital funding. One of the big issues is Broadway as it requires significant capital investment, which is owned by BHSCT and any capital investment goes to them. Broadway will cost around £2 Million to update and in essence NIAS can't control same. Ms Donnelly confirmed that

leases are now capital and NIAS have to engage and return separately to the DoH about releases. Mr Mullen added that only one member of the team is substantive and there is a current proposal to look at the consolidation and sustainability of the team.

Mr Corrigan asked if there is a Capital Profile with a list of priorities for refurb if the money is available. The team confirmed that there is a list of priorities i.e. shopping list, along with a 10-year capital plan, that include large plans and smaller projects. They already have smaller projects priced and ready when there is funding and Mr Mullen confirmed that as the Strategy for next 10 years develops, the priority list will change accordingly.

Mr Quinn commended the team on the excellent presentation which outlines the challenges and forward planning and said that in terms of strategy development NIAS need to ensure there is a clear articulation of narrative within the Strategy to be used as an external driver for development and to make a direct approach to the DoH. He added that the Strategy needs to be ambitious due to the scale of ambitions required.

Mr Corrigan suggested sharing upgrades and refurbishments as a good news story via Comms and Mr Mullen confirmed they currently do this, for example, the Strabane refurb. Mr Corrigan asked the team to bear it in mind as some other work may have been unnoticed.

Mr Dennison referred to the figure of 0.3% of sites being functionally suitable, which is really worrying and a huge risk and he queried if this is on the risk register. Mr Quinn agreed and said this needs to be one of key drivers in terms of strategy and that the significant risk posed is articulated into something remedial. Mr Dennison referred to the landlord / tenant relationship and if there are joint management plans in place for any challenges. It was confirmed that Broadway is the most significant risk and is on the Risk Register and there is a MoU in place for each site. Mr Corrigan added that the Risk Register would sit within the remit of GARAC and that it should include all elements of risks associated e.g. conditions survey, backlog maintenance and other risks associated for floods and business continuity, to ensure the entire estates issues are reflected in the Risk Register. Ms Donnelly confirmed that it is on the Directorate Risk Register, and not the Corporate Risk Register.

Mr Dennison referred to his concerns and queried what the backstop is when sites become inoperable as they can't keep using sites that are not safe. Mr Mullen confirmed that it is part of the ongoing plan to triangulate and carry out an analysis.

The Committee **NOTED** the Fleet Report presented by Mr Coulter.

The first bullet on slide 6 refers fleet expanding over recent years but the planning budget is fixed, and Ms Donnelly advised the spend is exceeding the budget allocation which was based on an average for the last three years, which is creating a pressure. It is an area of concern and Ms Donnelly met with Mr Coulter regarding this matter. The Committee were advised that the five-year business case for fleet will take account of the new delivery model and a revenue consequence including capital and revenue to reflect the new delivery model of fleet.

Mr Quinn said that in relation to the in-year costs there has been a reported overspend for the last two months and the DoH need to understand the consequences i.e. which elements need to be removed or turned off to ensure NIAS are in line with the allocation.

Mr Corrigan referred to his experience within Royal Mail and a lot of their vehicles were on lease. He acknowledged NIAS vehicles are specialised but queried if there has been any consideration of the cost benefit analysis for buying vs lease, particularly for RRV.

Mr Coulter explained the insurance implications if vehicles were leased, however, the team have built in buying vs lease into the 10-year Strategy.

Mr Corrigan referred to the operator's licence which all three blue light services are exempt from, however, they will be judged on relevant laws and regulations for the operator's licence as it's the only law. Mr Coulter advised that the NIAS CPC and Fleet Manager has a licence, which isn't regulated for NIAS but are still expected to meet those regulations. Mr Corrigan pointed out that staff are personally liable if something goes wrong with a vehicle and NIAS need to educate staff and management of the responsibility and duty of care. Mr Coulter explained other challenges with contractors in terms of geographical coverage and out of hours.

Mr Corrigan referred to local managers managing and how do NIAS know if this is being monitored and Mr Coulter advised that NIAS are not carrying out safety inspections which is concerning.

Mr Coulter referred to slide 11 which explains (from telemetry) the amount of excess idle hours. He confirmed that the heaters within vehicles still work if on idle and that they have discussed EV vehicles, and are considering staggering shift changes to accommodate charging at stations and EDs and deployment sites to sustain vehicles.

Ms Donnelly said the information provided is very helpful and they need to do more analysis to understand the decline in fuel costs.

Mr Corrigan referred to the high number of accidents within the service and suggested an analysis of why accidents are increasing. Mr Coulter advised that the accidents are due to the end user and agreed that reported accidents are increasing because there is more line of sight. Mr Corrigan said there should be consequences and Mr Coulter confirmed that significant accidents are reported to the Head of Ops and are detailed on Datix. Mr Corrigan pointed out that if there is a serious accident, the authorities will seek NIAS records and audit trail, and Mr Coulter confirmed that NIAS don't have access to the system (IRS) for accurate information of drivers i.e. licence and points etc, however the local station officers carry out manual checks but these should be checked for accuracy.

Mr Corrigan suggested NIAS carry out a cost benefit analysis of in-house vs external for maintenance and Mr Coulter advised they are considering a new fleet management system as the current one is not fit for purpose. Mr Mullen added that they have considered bringing maintenance in house and looked at what Translink are doing which would be hugely significant in terms of putting in place and would require substantial investment.

Mr Corrigan asked Mr Sinclair to ensure that local Ops teams and managers are carrying out the various checks as they have a responsibility for their fleet and drivers

ACTION: Mr Sinclair

Mr Corrigan referred to the Committee gaining a better line of site for scrutiny in terms of finance of fleet to help NIAS understand what

they need to invest in and asked for a timetable to come back to this committee with an update.

ACTION: Mr Mullen/Ms Donnelly

6 Performance Report

The Committee **NOTED** the Report and the need to revise the operational update. Mr Corrigan referred to slide 26 and requested to see the number of failures by Trust by week in terms of who is improving and who the outliers are.

ACTION: Mr Mullen

Mr Quinn agreed and pointed out that ORH have modelled what it would look like at two hours and it would be good to have something graphically showing the actual times against the target. NIAS are not demonstrating the benefit or the impact lost as a result of it not being achieved, to describe in the context of poor performance due to delayed handover. Mr Arandia advised that information is readily available and Mr Mullen is reviewing what information goes to SLT every week which may be worth giving Committees visibility of. The Committee agreed to present these the same as they are presented in the Operational report. Mr Corrigan also requested that NIAS use the term 'breaches' to highlight these.

Mr Corrigan sought Mr Sinclair's opinion on whether there is a sense that the system are pushing hard on handovers and Mr Sinclair advised that the BHSCT are trying hard, however, the more effective they get, the more patients they receive via smoothing. It has been recognised that some clinicians at meetings are questioning through CEX's about what they have signed up to, and Mr Corrigan referred to the London Model and that one of the biggest drivers was leadership.

Mr Mullen reported there is some level of positivity of what has been presented as 47% of sites are within 45 minutes, which is a good base line to start from but acknowledged there needs to be more encouragement to achieve more.

Mr Quinn referred to dip in the Cardiac Arrest stats and queried if this was due to the presentation of the stats (slide 20) as this was previously moving in a positive direction, and Mr Sinclair agreed to check this.

ACTION: Mr Sinclair

The Committee noted a gradual increase in absence on slide 38 and Mr Corrigan agreed to address at PCOD.

ACTION: Mr Corrigan

7 Finance Report – Month 6

The Committee **NOTED** the report presented by Ms Donnelly.

Ms Donnelly advised that SPPG no longer request to see the Workforce Plan business case.

The Committee noted the expenditure overspend of £413k, which Trust Board were alerted of when it became known. The figure for Month seven is approximately £675k cumulative, and the key drivers are independents, overtime and fleet costs.

The Committee asked Ms Donnelly if NIAS are content to break even with the current overspend at Month seven and Ms Donnelly advised that NIAS have a statutory obligation to deliver break even. She is meeting with SPPG this afternoon to help discuss the actions required to break even as these could impact on the wider system.

Ms Donnelly referred to Slide 26 which demonstrates the Operations delivery of service, which is exceeding budget and that trajectory isn't sustainable. Slide 5 confirms that Operations is £1.151 million over budget, and in half of the year NIAS have spent £2 million over budget for IAS.

Mr Corrigan advised that he will liaise with the Chair regarding the financial concerns and that they require assurance in terms of a plan to turn the position around to break even, and Mr Quinn suggested an update at the upcoming Trust Board Meeting on 11 December.

Ms Donnelly is attending a meeting to discuss the outlook for 26/27, and that a flat cash position is expected with no money for growth. The Minister has committed to progressing the pay award, however, there is no money to provide it. Therefore, if NIAS are instructed to pay, it will result in a deficit position.

Mr Corrigan referred to slide 8 (frontline expenditure) and requested to receive this information as a month-on-month basis as well as cumulative.

ACTION: Ms Donnelly

8 Strategy Development Update

The Committee **NOTED** the report

Mr Mullen had circulated the updated NIAS Corporate Strategy 2020-2035 to members in advance of the meeting and Mr Corrigan has come back with comments. The Steering Group met last week and are putting plans in place to consult with staff and stakeholders and Mr Mullen advised the Committee that the version provided within the papers doesn't include any updates. Mr Mullen agreed to provide an update to Trust Board on 11 December.

ACTION: Mr Mullen

9 Cat 2 response / H&T S&T / Output of Perf. Cell

The Committee **NOTED** the Performance cell update which provides an update of initial activity and impact of the performance cell. This outlines the approach, key impact to date and future recommendations. Mr Sinclair advised Mr Neil Walker and other colleagues have provided a significant amount of effort to provide focus and scrutiny on performance and are meeting twice per week which will identify the gaps in cover and understand what actions are required to mitigate. The Performance Cell Group was established in October and have already seen some improvements; however the next 8-12 weeks will be significantly pressured.

Whilst reviewing the process measures, they identified that there is no singular cause for the decrease in performance and has been a system wide focus from the management team down to staff.

Mr Corrigan sought clarification on whether there has been any tangible improvement from the two-hour backstop and Mr Walker confirmed that the Group are focusing on what NIAS can do internally.

Mr Quinn referred to compensatory rest issues are as a result of delayed handovers and Mr Walker agreed that handover times are

the main contributor but there is a lot NIAS can do internally to help improvements.

Mr Sinclair advised they have had AACE advisors join the group as oversight and subject matter experts to assist and advise and as yet they have not highlighted any red flags.

Mr Quinn acknowledges the reason for setting up the group but is concerned about what is being done externally to improve.

The Committee noted there has been a lot of investment in terms of time and discussions, and the scale of underperformance in cat 2's within the last 12 month period is significantly poor.

Mr Sinclair agreed that the biggest leverages are outside of NIAS but NIAS need to do all they can internally to ensure maximum performance within their control. Mr Quinn reiterated that he is concerned that although NIAS will strive to make improvements internally, external matters will still remain.

Mr Corrigan agreed that NIAS should be reporting on what the Cat 2 performance times are against the two-hour backstop, and he commended the team on the efforts to improve matters internally.

Mr Sinclair advised the next plan is to have a '100% day', which is management driven and focused to ensure NIAS are efficient as possible for 24 hours to use as a benchmark. The group will continue to provide regular updates to the Committee.

Mr Sinclair referred to slide six within the UCOG (Urgent Care Oversight Group) Presentation and explained in terms of prevention, the Complex Team are meeting with patients who are high frequent users to assist in getting them the care they need. The team has doubled and according to the initial data the hypothesis is a downward trend. He continued that there have been less calls from care homes as a result of work that Mr Chris Clark and PHA are carrying out to manage with acute care homes and put triage plans in place. These two areas have demonstrated tangible improvements.

Mr Corrigan queried the other Trusts contribution to this as they have Community Teams who can provide access to community pathways. Mr Sinclair advised that the challenge regarding care homes is that they are a private business and therefore Mr Chris Clarke is attending multi-disciplinary groups to collaborate with

them, which is the first time NIAS have seen this work come to fruition.

Mr Sinclair referred to Slide 8-19 regarding Hear and Treat / See and Treat, and that NIAS haven't seen the growth expected. There is an increased volume in calls but the team are trying to understand the balance of welfare calls and patients who need care over the phone. They are taking a system pause to understand the patients and capture patients with a higher rate of H&T/S&T. Mr Sinclair added that they now have CSM's in place 24 hours per day which should enhance improvements.

Mr Corrigan alluded to certain Trusts and Pathways not accepting referrals from Hear and Treat and Mr Sinclair said they are meeting with Trusts and RCC to try and mitigate this.

Mr Quinn referred to the linkage between welfare calls and Hear and Treat and asked if the fact NIAS have so many Cat 2 calls means they have to put in more welfare calls which is distracting. Mr Sinclair advised that Mr Karl Bloomer is liaising with the UK regarding welfare calls not completed by clinicians which is the route NIAS hope to implement however it is potentially around 12 months until this can be put in place.

In terms of See and Treat, on slide 47, it demonstrates a very positive interaction with Trusts and the development of new pathways.

Mr Sinclair advised that Mr Bloomer has good contact with the London Ambulance Service to ensure NIAS have a comparable model with the rest of the UK and has also visited the Welsh Ambulance Service on same.

Mr Quinn suggested that it would be useful at some point for this abridged information to be presented to the CiC.

10 Business Case Register

The Committee **NOTED** the Business Case Register.

Ms Donnelly advised that some business cases are retrospective but they hope to see improvements with the implementation of more accountability.

10.1 HART Lease Business Case

Mr Mullen referred to the business case which was circulated to Committee members via email on 6 November and that the DoH have come back with comments and NIAS are still waiting on approval from the DoH, however the comments received were not significant. Mr Mullen confirmed for the Committee that there has been no timeline given and BSO are negotiating an extension on a fortnightly basis, however the service due to move into the existing HART premises has been delayed which has given a bit of flexibility. Mr Mullen acknowledges that there may be consequences of delays as the new premises is a private sector landlord but maintains pressure with the DoH and will keep the Committee informed.

11 RTTCWG 2024-25

The Committee **NOTED** the information provided in relation to a change in the Terms of Reference for Mr Simon Christie providing support to NIAS via ACE. This information demonstrates assurance when NIAS engage with external organisations such as ACE, the Terms of Reference (TOR) be reviewed and approved by the relevant NIAS committee, clearly defining the scope of services, authority limitations, and reporting lines, and including provisions for revising the TOR should operational needs evolve.

Ms Donnelly queried if this matter should be tabled at a GARAC meeting and Mr Corrigan advised that he receives the annual report with those charged with governance, and acknowledged NIAS are responding to the recommendation to make the Committee aware and provide assurance.

Mr Quinn referred to the operational nature of the matter and what the Committee need to have sight of in future in this respect. The Committee queried why this agreement was made via ACE as it is usually managed via the Leadership Centre and Mr Mullen and Ms Donnelly advised they were not in post at the time this arrangement was made and are therefore unsure.

12 Committee Forward Workplan

The Committee **NOTED** the Forward Work Plan and suggested two sections, one for standing items and one for additional items at each Meeting. They suggested future information regarding sustainability and environment, and fleet and estates. Mr Mullen and Ms Donnelly agreed to draft and review items to include in the forward workplan.

ACTION: Ms Donnelly/Mr Mullen

13 Any Other Business

14 Next meeting:

5 February 2026 at 09.30am

Ms Donnelly and Mr Mullen agreed to schedule a pre meeting via MS Teams before 5 February.

ACTION: Mr Mullen/Ms Donnelly

THIS BEING ALL THE BUSINESS, THE CHAIR DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 12.50

SIGNED:



DATE:

5/5/26