

Integration Joint Boards

Finance and performance 2024

IJB members questions supplement



IJB members questions

This tool is designed to provide IJB members with examples of questions they may wish to use to consider the IJB's financial and performance position. The questions relate to points raised in our report [Integration Joint Boards: Finance and performance 2024](#).

Please note, this is not an exhaustive list of questions and considerations should be made of your individual IJB's particular circumstances and level of applicability in relation to the findings.

Findings	Questions	Notes
General		
- IJBs face a complex landscape of considerable challenges and uncertainties. - IJBs are facing significant financial sustainability challenges and cost pressures are only increasing. - The demand and need for services continue to increase and become more complex. - The workforce is under immense pressure. - The cost-of-living crisis is affecting the demand for services as well as the ability to provide them. - Instability of leadership continues to be a challenge for IJBs. - Plans for a National Care Service have brought uncertainty for IJBs.	- Do we, the IJB, have a comprehensive understanding of the present and longer-term needs of the population we serve? - Do we have a clear plan on how to address the significant challenges facing community health and social care? - How are we seeking to address recruitment and retention challenges? - Is there sufficient leadership capacity within the IJB to effectively plan service provision and transformation? - Are you clear about what your roles and responsibilities are as an IJB Board member?	
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Findings	Questions	Notes
Finance		
• The financial health of IJBs continues to weaken and there are indications of more challenging times ahead. • IJB funding has decreased in real terms compared to 2021/22. • Non-recurring savings, arising from unfilled vacancies, led to the majority of IJBs reporting a surplus on the cost of providing services. • The majority of the total planned savings were achieved, but over a third were only achieved on a one-off basis. • Total reserves held by IJBs have almost halved in 2022/23 largely due to the use or return of Covid-19 related reserves. • The projected financial position is set to worsen. • The increasing reliance on non-recurring sources of income is not sustainable. • Financial sustainability risks have been identified by auditors in the vast majority of IJBs. • Medium-term financial plans need to be updated to reflect all costs pressures currently known.	• Has the Medium-term financial plan been updated to reflect all costs pressures currently known? • What proportion of the IJB budget is proposed to be funded from non-recurring sources of income? • Are reserve levels in line with the IJBs reserve policy? How long can current levels of use be maintained? • Are the savings targets achievable on a recurring basis?	
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Findings	Questions	Notes
Data		
• Data quality is insufficient to fully assess the performance of IJBs but national indicators show a general decline in performance and outcomes. • Data quality is insufficient to fully assess the performance of IJBs and inform improvement of outcomes for service users with a lack of joined-up data across the system. • Work to improve the data sets is at an early stage but is progressing. • Available national indicators show a general decline in performance and outcomes for people using social care and community health services.	• Is the current available data sufficient to assess how well the IJB is performing? • How well does performance data support decision making? • What actions are the IJB undertaking to improve data collection, quality and sharing?	
Prevention and early intervention		
• Collaborative, preventative and person-centred working is shrinking at a time when it is most needed. Instead of a focus on care at the right place at the right time, there is a shift to reactive services with little capacity to invest in early intervention and prevention.	• How are the IJB prioritising and targeting resources on prevention and early intervention? • How are the IJB working with partner bodies to promote and signpost to preventative services?	
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Findings	Questions	Notes
Shifting the balance of care		
- The percentage of expenditure on institutional and community-based Adult Social Care services has largely remained static with a small increase in the proportion spent on accommodation-based services. - Increase in the number of individuals receiving care at home or in the community. However, these changes are marginal when viewed over the time since the inception of health and social care integration in 2015. - Lack of social care capacity remains an obstacle to improving patient flow and reducing the number of delayed discharges from hospital.	- Are the IJB successfully shifting service provision from an institutional setting to a community setting? - How are the IJB increasing the capacity of services provided in the community?	
Person centred care – choice and control		
The amount of choice and control service users feel they have is variable across the country.	- How are the IJB ensuring that the views of service users are considered as part of decision-making? How clearly can you see the impact of this? - What actions are the IJB undertaking to increase the choice and control for service users over their support and care?	
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Findings	Questions	Notes
Reducing inequalities		
• The Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing inequalities. • The premature mortality rate is increasing with rates higher in more urban and more deprived areas. • Emergency bed day rates are greater in areas with higher levels of deprivation.	• What steps are the IJB taking to identify and address inequality? • Is consideration of inequalities embedded in IJB decision-making?	
Unpaid carers		
• The reliance on unpaid carers is increasing as the social care workforce is under added pressure.	• Does the IJB know the number of unpaid carers in their area? • What proportion of these unpaid carers have carer support plans in place? • How is the IJB improving support for unpaid carers?	
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Findings	Questions	Notes
Commissioning and procurement		
- Commissioning and procurement practices for social care services continues to be largely driven by budgets, competition, and cost rather than outcomes for people. Improvements to commissioning and procurement arrangements have been slow to progress but are developing. - Improvements to commissioning and procurement arrangements have been slow, with cost rather than outcomes driving decision-making. - Current commissioning and procurement practices are a risk for the sustainability of service providers and the workforce. - Current commissioning and procurement practices are not always delivering improved outcomes for people. - There is an increasing desire to move towards more ethical and collaborative commissioning models but it has not yet been universally adopted. - National approaches to improve commissioning have been slow to progress but are developing.	- What steps have the IJB made to move towards commissioning in a more collaborative way? - What steps have the IJB taken to move the focus of commissioning to a basis of quality or outcomes rather than on cost?	