Scottish Ambulance Service

Working in Partnership with Universities

NHS SCOTLAND

PUBLIC BOARD MEETING	**25 November 2026** **Item No 18**
THIS PAPER IS FOR NOTING	
BOARD DEVELOPMENT SESSION REPORT	

Lead Director **Author**	Tom Steele, Chair Pippa Hamilton, Board Secretary
Action required	The Board is asked to **note** the report.
Key points	This paper provides information on the most recent Board Development session held on 28 October 2026.
Timing	Board Development sessions are held bi-monthly and a report is provided to the next public Board meeting on the main items discussed.

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SCOTTISH AMBULANCE SERVICE BOARD

REPORT FROM BOARD DEVELOPMENT SESSION

TOM STEELE, CHAIR

SECTION 1: PURPOSE

Board Development sessions are held bi-monthly and provide opportunity for Board members to consider issues in detail and improve members' understanding and knowledge of what are often complex subjects. The format of the sessions usually consists of a presentation or briefing from Executive Directors and managers leading the area of work, or staff involved in the work, followed by discussion and questions from members or a workshop focused on areas for board development.

SECTION 2: BACKGROUND

Board Development sessions are not decision-making meetings. The Board's Code of Corporate Governance sets out the decision-making process which is observed. The sessions do however assist the decision-making process through in-depth exploration and analysis of an issue which may be the subject of a formal board decision. They also provide an opportunity for updates on ongoing strategic matters.

SECTION 3: DISCUSSION

The Board Development Session held on 28 October 2026 took place in person.

SAS Support to Maternity Services

The Board received a presentation which provided a strategic overview of the role of the Scottish Ambulance Service across the maternity and neonatal care pathway and the implications of changes arising from *Best Start*. Discussion included the importance of effective coordination and clinical oversight, the resilience of specialist neonatal transport arrangements, and the particular challenges associated with remote and rural transfers and community maternity and neonatal emergencies. The Board also considered the work underway to develop the future neonatal transport model and strengthen transfer pathways, clinical support, training and equipment arrangements. The Board noted that a Business Case on Best Start was being developed for submission to the Scottish Government and that this would be presented to a future Board meeting prior to submission.

Winter Planning

The Board received a presentation and assurance on preparations for winter 2026/27. This included the learning incorporated from the previous winter and recent testing exercises, the ongoing review of the REAP and Strategic Winter Plans, and the development and testing of regional capacity management arrangements. Discussion also focused on interoperability and joint working, including arrangements with NHS 24 and Territorial Health Boards, with an emphasis on coordinated escalation, decision making and resilience during periods of increased system pressure.

The development session concluded with the Board undertaking a discussion on the continued work of the **Scottish Ambulance Service/NHS 24 Collaboration Programme.**
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