



Although a formal committee of Brighton & Hove City Council, the Health & Wellbeing Board has a remit which includes matters relating to the Integrated Care Board (NHS Surrey & Sussex,) the Local Safeguarding Boards for Children and Adults and Healthwatch.

Title:

Brighton & Hove Board Development Report

Date of Meeting:

28 July 2026

Report of: Chas Walker, Brighton & Hove Health & Care Partnership Programme Director & Giles Rossington BHCC, Scrutiny Manager

Contact: Chas Walker

Email:

Chas.walker@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

Executive Summary

The Health & Wellbeing Board (HWB) has agreed the importance of a Board development programme and has set up a series of additional Board development sessions. The aims of the Board development are to improve Board effectiveness, refresh the HWBs population health and wellbeing strategy and support the Board to meet its formal responsibilities as set out in the new national Neighbourhood Health framework

This report reviews progress on Board Development to date, sets out proposed changes to the way the Board wants to work for endorsement at the Board meeting, and sets out next steps.

Decisions, recommendations and any options



Brighton & Hove Health and Wellbeing Board is recommended to:

- 1.1. Note work to date on Board development
- 1.2. Endorse the Board development recommendations detailed in point 2.5 below

2.1 Context- Health & Wellbeing Board Responsibilities

The primary role of a Health & Wellbeing Board is to bring together local partners to understand population health needs, set shared health priorities, reduce inequalities, and drive integrated health and care services for local communities. This includes:

- Assess local health and care needs through the production of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)
- Set strategic priorities through the development and oversight of the Joint Local Health & Wellbeing Strategy (JLHWS)
- Promote integration across services and provide system leadership at a Place level. This includes formal responsibility for the Brighton & Hove Better Care Fund.
- Influence commissioning and resource planning ensuring that local NHS and council plans reflect the needs and priorities identified through the JSNA and JLHWS and through the Better Care Fund
- Support Integrated Care Systems working with Integrated Care Boards and Integrated Care Partnerships to ensure local priorities are reflected within wider system planning and delivery.

2.2 Board self-assessment of maturity

At the Board development Session in November 2025 the Board carried out a self-assessment of its maturity/effectiveness. The results are detailed in the table below

Criteria	1	2	3	4	5	Capture key insights and one actionable recommendation per area.
Statutory function delivery			✓	✓	✓	Average score 4 • We meet all our legal requirements and have reasonably strong partner representation, but meaningful engagement could be improved • JSNAs, population health data very strong • HWB strategy outdated and not focused enough, lack of clear success indicators makes assurance role difficult • Improve BCF reporting, ownership and transparency
Sense of Place, Neighbourhood, or hyperlocal delivery				✓ ✓	✓	Average score 4.5 • ICTs maturing and should have stronger link back to HWB, other governance groups like PDG and Partnership Exec create a hierarchy • HWB partners have a strong understanding of Place, ideal governance structure to advocate for Place. Needs to be more intentional in its advocacy and leadership of Place • As a city we have a good track record of partnership working and lots of local assets to draw on

Joint working processes /mechanism in place to improve health and wellbeing of our local population.		✓	✓ ✓			Average score 2.5 - We have significant local data, we have a maturing ICT infrastructure and we have good indicators for better integration through the emerging local ICT programmes of work. - There are still blockers to joint working- current commissioning models, shared understanding of the health & care land scape and continuing to build trust between partners - Not always clear to everybody how things link together especially for frontline practitioners, we need to assess their readiness and training needs for joint working - Need to see leadership of integrated working more evident in the Health & Wellbeing Board - Stronger approach to joint commissioning to enable joint working
Strategic direction with measurable plans to improve health and wellbeing.		✓	✓ ✓			Average score 2.5 - We have a strategic direction but not always measurable plans that create stronger joint accountability - Need population health targets that are meaningful and can be measured easily and frequently. - Shared Delivery Plan (SDP) is a good starting point, but how bought in are all partners in setting and delivering the SDP objectives. Are we confident that the objectives are delivering our high-level priorities - Public Health Team do excellent job of capturing the health and wellbeing needs and data for the city. - But the HWB doesn't focus in enough detail on the agreed priorities and proactive monitoring of the Health & Wellbeing Strategy.

2.3 There was an overall agreement that the Board feels perfunctory, delivering its statutory responsibilities but with considerable room for development in terms of being a strategic Board that drives population health improvement.

2.4 On the back of this work the Board agreed to utilise external support through a specific Local Government Association programme of support for local HWBs

2.5 Recommendations for improving the functioning of the Board

Through the LGA, the Board engaged a local Board Development Consultant, Steve Bedser. Steve has engaged one to one with Board members and then led a Board development session in March 2026 to help us consider how we wanted to strengthen the work of the Board. This work delivered a strong consensus across Board members of how we wanted to improve the functioning of the Board. These are set out below as formal recommendations for the Board to endorse. As the Board is formally constituted as a committee of Brighton & Hove City Council, alterations to the HWB membership or ways of working must be made by the Council. Should Board members agree to endorse the following changes, the Council will be asked to consider them.

- The Board to continue to meet formally as often as necessary in order to meet statutory responsibilities but also to hold more informal sessions for members to support strategic development. This is likely to lead to fewer formal meetings of the Board.
- A Deputy Chair to be appointed to support the Chair in the leadership of the Board and to reflect the partnership nature of the Board. The recommendation is that one of our Integrated Community Team (ICT) Chairs is selected as Deputy Chair to build capacity of the Board around its new Neighbourhood Health responsibilities.
- Board membership- invite ICT Chairs to join the Board to create a strong link with our local Integrated Community Teams as the key delivery vehicles for neighbourhood health. Revise Board Terms of Reference so that for future years, the council's Cabinet Member for Communities, Equalities, Public Health & Adult Social Care and the Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Youth Services should occupy 2 of the council's 3 Board seats. Remove Sussex Police and East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service as members of the Board, but invite both organisations to attend Board meetings where there are issues they wish to contribute to.
- Refresh our Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy, delivering focused and intentional strategy to improve local population health, that has a strong focus on the wider determinants of good health, is measurable and realistic. Incorporate any changes required by the forthcoming Health Act.

2.5 Next Steps

The Board will hold its next development session in September/ October 2026. This will be facilitated by Steve Bedser with the aim of the Board agreeing a focused set of population health priorities that will form part of the refresh of the Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy.

The HWB Chair to meet with local ICT Chairs to discuss Deputy HWB Chair role.

Reset Board meetings to reflect the new public and private/ strategic meeting approach. At a future strategic meeting, to agenda Neighbourhood Health for the Board to start its work in developing a Place-based Neighbourhood Health Plan. This plan will form part of wider refresh of our Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy.

3 Important considerations and implications

Legal:

Local Government Association (LGA) offers a comprehensive, grant-funded programme of bespoke support for Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWBs) across England. It aims to strengthen strategic partnerships, navigate statutory changes, and address the broader determinants of health. As described in the body of this report specific LGA guidance and advice has been used to inform the development recommendations at paragraph 2.5.

If the Board endorses those recommendations, in accordance with the Constitution of the Council, the Council will need to consider and undertake necessary changes to the Constitution.

Lawyer consulted: Alice Macnair

Date: 16 July 2026

Finance:

The Neighbourhood Health Reform and Neighbourhood Health Plan will ensure strong alignment across the NHS, social care, public health and community services. It's aims include delivering care that is more timely, more personal, and closer to home.

This will inform priorities, budget development and the Medium-Term Financial strategy of the partner organisations, including the Better Care Fund. This requires a joined-up process for budget setting in relation to all local public services where appropriate, and will ensure that there is an open, transparent and integrated approach to planning and provision of services. Any changes in service delivery for the council will be subject to recommissioning processes and will need to be delivered within the available budget.

Finance Officer consulted: Brian Smith Date: 16 July 2026



Equalities:

The development of the Board, its latest health intelligence through the Health Counts Survey and its approach to refreshing the Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy, with its focus on wider determinants of health, provides a strong basis for tackling local health inequalities.

Sustainability:

N/A

Health, social care, children's services and public health:

Board development work looks to strengthen Children's services representation on the Board. The development of the Board and refresh of the Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy will strengthen the partnership work of the core partners.

4 Supporting documents and information

None

