

Agenda Item

2.1

NWJCC – Joint Commissioning Committee
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Annual Plan 2026-27

Dyddiad y Cyfarfod / Date of Meeting	23/03/2026
Statws Cyhoeddi / Publication Status	Open/ Public
	Choose an item.
Awdur yr Adroddiad / Report Author	Emma King, Assistant Director of Planning and Programmes (Interim) Alexander Crawford, Deputy Director of Planning and PMO
Cyflwynydd yr Adroddiad / Report Presenter	Georgina Galletly, Director of Corporate, Strategy and Planning Stacey Taylor, Director of Finance and Value/Deputy Chief Commissioner
Noddwr yr Adroddiad / Report Sponsor	Huw George, Chief Commissioner

Pwrpas yr Adroddiad / Report Purpose	For Approval
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Engagement (internal/external) undertaken to date (including receipt /consideration at Committee/Group)		
Committee / Group / Individuals	Date	Outcome
Joint Commissioning Committee Strategy Workshop	17/02/2026	Choose an item. Direction supported
Collaborative Commissioning Leadership Group	24/02/2026	Endorsed
Joint Commissioning Committee (via Chief Commissioner report)	17/03/2026	Noted

1.0 SITUATION

The purpose of this paper is to present our Annual Plan 2026-27 for approval. The following papers are included:

- Annual Plan 2026-27
 - Appendix 1: Commissioned Services List
 - Appendix 2: Detailed commissioning intentions
 - Appendix 5: High Level Delivery Plan
 - Appendix 6: Quality Impact Assessment
 - Appendix 7: Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix 3: Full Financial Plan: Minimum Dataset (MDS), Appendix 4: Ministerial Templates, and Appendix 8: Compliance with Planning Framework will be submitted to Welsh Government alongside the approved Annual Plan. These are detailed technical documents which reflect the plan submitted for approval.

1.1 Background

This plan is presented as an Annual Plan which sets out how the NHS Wales Joint Commissioning Committee (NWJCC) will discharge its strategic commissioning responsibilities in 2026/27, in the context of a three-year planning cycle. The plan is aligned to the NHS Wales Planning Framework, national priorities set by Welsh Government (WG), and the duties placed on the NWJCC to secure safe, effective, equitable and sustainable services for the population of Wales. This is set against the backdrop of system wide challenges and uncertainty around future government priorities that will result from the forthcoming Senedd election in May 2026.

The financial allocation from WG to Health Boards provided a pass-through inflationary increase of 1.11% for providers. However, this did not fully account for additional funding to cover NWJCC's unavoidable cost pressures. Services, many of which are at the end of complex pathways, are affected by rising and inescapable demand. Workforce fragility persists across several highly specialised services and service sustainability risks are increasing both within Wales and across the border into pathways in England.

Whilst finance is a key driver, it is not the only driver. The Joint Commissioning Committee (JC) has set clear direction that the plan should be clinically led, evidence based and balanced, with a continued and enhanced focus on quality, safety and value. The plan for 2026/27 is therefore focused on efficiency and sustainability, to ensure that there is balance between quality and safety, and affordability, aiming to achieve sustainability over the medium-term to enable informed choices in the longer-term.

The plan is a strategic commissioning plan which is provider informed. The plan has also been shaped by engagement with Health Boards, providers, service users (through available engagement methods) and clinicians, and supported throughout by Quality and Equality Impact Assessments to ensure that difficult commissioning decisions are transparent, justified and aligned with the Duty of Quality and Equality Act. The JC recognises that difficult choices are required, and the plan explicitly sets out what is included, whilst recognising the key areas that are not included, and why.

2.0 SPECIFIC MATTERS FOR CONSIDRATION

2.1 Contents of the Annual Plan 2026-27

The plan is structured around the NWJCC's **Strategic Objectives**, to:

- Maximise Value
- Ensure Quality
- Reduce Duplication
- Improve Equity and Population Health
- Facilitate Integration

Together, these provide a clear framework for future decision-making, prioritisation and delivery, ensuring that commissioning intentions and activity for the services delegated by Health Boards to be commissioned by the NWJCC are aligned where possible to population need, clinical evidence and value-based principles.

Underpinning the NWJCC's strategic objectives are a number of strategic priorities that the NWJCC will focus on, lead, and work collaboratively, at pace, to achieve efficiency and sustainability in 2026/27 but in the context of the next three years. Whilst this plan aligns programmes of work for the agreed strategic priorities over to specific strategic objectives, these are deliberately interdependent, and programmes of work set out in this plan will support the delivery across a number of strategic objectives to achieve the statutory function, mission and vision of the NWJCC.

Whilst the plan will continue delivery of many of the strategic priorities set out in the NWJCC Foundation Plan in 2025/26, the JC has agreed that immediate focus is needed on a number of areas through a collaborative approach, delivering changes and improvements at pace to mitigate the financial challenges in the plan whilst maintaining safe, equitable and high-quality services. There will be eight programmes of work across three immediate priorities for 2026/27 which align most closely to the NWJCC's strategic objectives to Maximise Value and Ensure Quality.

Deep Dives (specific issues relating to NWJCC commissioning challenges)

- Renal and kidney services
- Individual patient funding requests
- Thrombectomy

Strategic Reviews (issues extending to pathways broader than within the specific /current remit of the NWJCC)

- Neonatal services (including NICU)
- Cardiac services
- Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Vulnerable Groups
- Ambulance Service Commissioning

Enabling projects (issues that cut across all areas of the NWJCC and Health Board activity/management)

- Pathways and referral management transformation project

2.2 Approach to developing the plan

Draft commissioning intentions were developed in summer 2025 and reviewed using a MoSCoW (Must Do, Should Do, Could Do, Won't Do) programme management methodology. This approach reflected a requirement for no-investment in 2026/27. Focus was placed on reassessing commissioner and provider risks, service fragility, growth assumptions, inflationary pressures and affordability.

Further refinement included deeper dives into "MUST DO" priorities, financial modelling, and short justification cases to support informed decision making. "SHOULD DO's" and "COULD DO's" were discounted unless there was clear evidence that commissioning intentions contribute towards efficiency in 2026/27. Further refinement then included deeper dives into "MUST DO" priorities, financial modelling, and short justification cases to support informed decision making.

Consensus was reached on pressures to retain in the plan due to inescapable demand, statutory requirements or patient safety risk, with limited areas identified for further detailed review as the plan is finalised. Quality Impact Assessments (QIAs) were undertaken at a workshop in February 2026, strengthened and scrutinised through the Quality, Safety and Outcomes Sub-Committee and reported to the Joint Committee. An overarching QIA has been undertaken against the final plan.

The plan has also been equality impact assessed to highlight inequality or inequity of access for protected groups, as well as future focus on population need driven by a better understanding of both health inequalities and diversity across Welsh communities.

Throughout the process there has been engagement through commissioning groups, Collaborative Commissioning Leadership Group, Finance Working Group and JC (both formal and strategy meetings). The NWJCC team has also engaged directly with Health Board planning and finance directorates to ensure plan alignment.

2.3 The financial plan

The Annual Plan contains the Financial Plan and Budgetary Control Framework for 2026/27. It has been informed by our NWJCC and the NHS Planning Framework financial allocation. It sets out our core income requirements from individual Health Boards that, combined, provides our collective baseline and Long-Term Agreement (LTA) framework for 2026/27 alongside our planning assumptions and anticipated income from non-core or policy funded areas. In addition, information is provided on cost pressures, efficiency savings and broader risks.

2.4 Managing risk

This plan is not without significant risk, both in terms of financial requirements set out in the plan and required of commissioners and providers, but also in terms of the consequence of decisions that have had to be made to achieve this position.

The principal risks are that constrained resources, workforce fragility, rising demand and high-cost therapies may limit delivery, widen inequalities, or threaten service sustainability despite strengthened governance, prioritisation and assurance arrangements.

3.0 ASSESSMENT

Objectives / Strategy	
Dolen i Amcan (au) Strategol CBC / Link to JCC Strategic Objectives(s)	Maximise Value
	If more than one applies please list below: Ensure Quality Reduce Duplication Improve Equity & Population Health Facilitate integration
Dolen i Ddeddf Llesiant Cenedlaethau'r Dyfodol – Nodau Llesiant / Link to Wellbeing of Future Generations Act – Wellbeing Goals 150623-guide-to-the-fg-act-en.pdf (futuregenerations.wales)	A Healthier Wales
	If more than one applies please list below: A prosperous Wales A Resilient Wales A Healthier Wales A More Equal Wales
Dolen i Hwyluswyr Ansawdd <i>(Canllawiau Statudol Dyletswydd Ansawdd (llyw.cymru)) / Link to Enablers of Quality</i>	Leadership
	If more than one applies please list below: All enablers apply

(Duty of Quality Statutory Guidance (gov.wales))	
Dolen i Feysydd Ansawdd <i>(Canllawiau Statudol Dyletswydd Ansawdd (llyw.cymru)) /</i> Link to Domains of Quality (Duty of Quality Statutory Guidance (gov.wales))	Efficient
	If more than one applies please list below: All domains apply – see QIA
Effaith Amgylcheddol/ Cynaliadwyedd (5R) / Environmental /Sustainability Impact (5Rs)	No - Not Applicable
	If more than one applies please list below:

Impact Assessment		
Ansawdd <i>Ydych chi wedi ymgymryd â Sgrinio Asesiad o'r Effaith ar Ansawdd? /</i> Quality <i>Have you undertaken a Quality Impact Assessment Screening?</i>	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
	Outcome: See Appendix 6	If no, please include rationale below:
Cydraddoldeb <i>Ydych chi wedi ymgymryd â Sgrinio Asesiad o'r Effaith ar Gydraddoldeb? /</i> Equality <i>Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment Screening?</i>	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
	Outcome: See Appendix 7	If no, please include rationale below:
Cyfreithiol / Legal	Yes (Include further detail below)	
	There may be legal implications inherent in the programmes of work set out in this plan, considered on a case by case basis.	
Enw da / Reputational	Yes (Include further detail below)	
	This is the plan of the NWJCC and non-delivery would present a reputational risk	
Effaith Adnoddau	Yes (Include further detail below)	

(Pobl / Ariannol) /
Resource Impact
(People / Financial)

People: NWJCC and Health Board workforce required to deliver the plan
Finance: £1.265bn total funding requirement

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The members of the Joint Commissioning Committee are asked to:

- **Approve** the NWJCC Annual Plan 2026-27 for submission to Welsh Government.

5.0 NEXT STEPS

If approved, the Annual Plan 2026-27 along with all appendices will be submitted to Welsh Government for consideration by 31st March 2026.