



## Facilities Arrangements for Trade Unions and Professional Organisations Policy

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**The provisions of this policy, which was developed by a Partnership Group on behalf of Grampian Area Partnership Forum, apply equally to all employees of NHS Grampian except where specific exclusions have been identified.**

NHS Grampian  
Facilities Arrangements for Trade Unions and Professional Organisations  
Policy

**This document is also available in large print and other formats and languages on request. Please call NHS Grampian Corporate Communications on Aberdeen (01224) 551116 or (01224) 552245.**

**This Policy has undergone Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment.**

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For further information contact the Employee Director on ext 58599

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# NHS Grampians Facilities Arrangements for Trade Unions and Professional Organisations Policy

## 1. Introduction and Purpose

Working in partnership has become increasingly important for organisations in the public, private, community and voluntary sectors. The Staff Governance Standard, enshrined in legislation, raises the people management agenda within NHS Scotland to a level equal to that of clinical and financial governance. All NHS Grampian employees must adhere to the Staff Governance Standards. It is therefore imperative that NHS Boards and Special Health Boards commit the resources required to implement this Standard.

Trade unions/professional organisations need to provide a supportive network. There is a need to equip representatives with skills that enable them to make a meaningful contribution to decision-making within Partnership Working. Enabling individual representatives to balance their substantive role with their trade union/professional organisation role and their home life should increase the quality of their working life. This in turn could lead to increased motivation, greater job satisfaction and improved job performance.

- a. This Facilities Policy identifies the framework for facilities and time off for all accredited representatives of trade unions/professional organisations recognised by NHS Grampian (Appendix 1).
- b. Accredited Representatives include: Stewards, Health and Safety Representatives; Learning Representatives; Equality Representatives, etc. In the policy all these are collectively known as Staff Side Representatives.
- c. Partnership Representatives are also Staff Side Representatives who may act in an advisory capacity for all staff collectively; not just their own union or professional organisation but for a defined area or all of NHS Grampian staff depending on the situation.

1.1 The Policy takes cognisance of the relevant statutory framework, including the following:

- 1.1.1 Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992
- 1.1.2 Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and related legislation
- 1.1.3 Employment Rights Act 1996
- 1.1.4 Employment Relations Act 1999
- 1.1.5 National Health Service Reform (Scotland) Act 2004
- 1.1.6 ACAS Code of Practice – Time Off for Trade Union Duties and Activities
- 1.1.7 Facilities Arrangements for Trade Union & Professional Organisations PIN Policy
- 1.1.8 Agenda for Change NHS Terms and Conditions Handbook Section 25
- 1.1.9 Staff Governance Standard
- 1.1.10 Trade Union Act 2016
- 1.1.11 Equality Act 2010

1.2 NHS Grampian recognises that time off for trade union/professional organisation duties and activities as well as the practical support (or ‘facilities’) needed to carry out trade union/professional organisation work will be to the mutual benefit of the employer and trade unions/professional organisations.

1.3 NHS Grampian recognises that it is vital to good employee relations that its workforce should be represented by accredited officials of recognised trade unions/professional organisations.

1.4 NHS Grampian is committed to working in Partnership and recognises that investment in good facilities is key to the overall effective management of the people who deliver health services to meet patient needs.

1.5 NHS Grampian recognises the significant demands made on trade unions/professional organisations within the Staff Governance Standard and is committed to supporting the roles required as detailed in the National Health Service Reform (Scotland) Act 2004.

1.6 NHS Grampian has a Partnership Agreement with agreed Partnership Structures; this is described in “NHS Grampian Working in Partnership with Staff- Formal Relations Protocol (Appendix 2).

## 2. NHS Grampian Responsibilities

### 2.1 NHS Grampian will:

- a. Have a mechanism, agreed by the Grampian Area Partnership Forum, to enable facilities time to be quantified, funded and monitored and to demonstrate adherence to the principles of ensuring that facilities time funding is fair and equitable across the organisation, where possible.
- b. Ensure that management at all levels are familiar and comply with agreements and arrangements relating to facilities agreements.
- c. New employees or those employees changing jobs will be provided with contact details of recognised trade unions/professional organisations as part of the recruitment/induction process.
- d. Ensure that there is no victimisation or detrimental treatment of employees in respect of their trade union/professional organisation involvement.
- e. Ensure that there is no discrimination, harassment, victimization of persons who have a protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010

## **2.2 NHS Grampian will provide facilities to recognised trade unions/professional organisations (Appendix 2).**

Recognised Staff Side Representatives have an entitlement under legislation to reasonable paid time off and facilities to undertake their recognised duties and responsibilities, as follows:

- a. Appropriate accommodation for meetings and trade union/professional organisation education.
- b. Access to internal and external telephones for use in trade union/professional organisation activity with due regard to the need for privacy and confidentiality.
- c. Access to reasonable office accommodation (including the provision of reasonable secure storage facilities for documentation) for use by representatives to ensure that confidentiality can be maintained in the carrying out of trade union/professional organisation activity.
- d. Access to the internal mail system. Where it is considered necessary to distribute to particular workplaces by post, the organisation will bear the cost where mailings are agreed in advance.
- e. Access to the employer's intranet and e-mail systems and other communication tools.
- f. Ready access to PCs is essential.
- g. The Grampian Area Partnership Forum, Joint Negotiating Committee (Medical and Dental) and their sub-groups will be given access to admin support to fulfil the role for the membership of the groups with due regard to confidentiality.
- h. Access to the organisation's notice boards at all major locations for display of official trade union/professional organisation literature and information. Access for representatives to all documents relating to agreements which affect represented members.
- i. Access to information for collective bargaining as specified by the ACAS Code of Practice – Disclosure of Information to Trade Unions for Collective Bargaining Purposes.
- j. Access for representatives to all relevant information, such as minutes and agendas, datix, pertinent to the partnership process, including the local delivery plan, workforce plans, financial plans, service development and review plans.
- k. Facilities to enable recognised trade unions/professional organisations to conduct a ballot where required by law.

### **3. Trade Union/Professional Organisation Responsibilities**

#### **3.1 Recognised trade union/professional organisations will:**

- a. Elect and accredit representatives in accordance with trade union/professional organisation constitutions.
- b. Notify the Director of People and Culture of accredited representatives and areas of responsibility, by emailing [gram.workforce@nhs.scot](mailto:gram.workforce@nhs.scot) and copying in [gram.partnership@nhs.scot](mailto:gram.partnership@nhs.scot)
- c. Provide appropriate training for their representatives.
- d. Ensure representatives are familiar with the Facilities Agreement provisions.
- e. Ensure that the time and resources provided in this context will be used appropriately and cost effectively.
- f. Ensure representatives give reasonable notice of time off requirements and comply with monitoring arrangements.

#### **3.2 Staff Side Representatives will:**

- a. Inform their line manager of their election/appointment.
- b. Abide by the rules of their trade union/professional organisation and the policies and procedures of NHS Grampian.
- c. Represent their members on matters that are of mutual concern to NHS Grampian and its employees.
- d. Give reasonable notice of time off requirement. Where possible, pre-planned commitments should be notified over the prior four week period. Notification of time off for training courses should be given as early as possible, and no later than four weeks prior to the training course except in exceptional circumstances.

### **4 Facilities Time and its Purpose**

4.1 It is not possible to be prescriptive about all the roles that require to be undertaken within NHS Grampian or to be exact about the time required to carry them out. It is agreed that requests for paid time off will not be unreasonably refused.

Due to the nature of representation it is difficult to predict when a representative will be required.

The method of notification should be discussed with the individual line manager and agreed.

Staff Side Representatives recognise and accept that time and facilities provided in this context should be used appropriately, with due regard to minimising any potential disruption to the provision of services.

4.2 Subject to reasonable notification, Staff Side Representatives will be permitted paid time off during working hours to carry out duties that are concerned with negotiation and consultation with NHS Grampian and for duties connected with meeting the requirements of the Staff Governance Standard including:

- a. Support and encourage staff participation e.g. completion of self-assessment audit tools
- b. Negotiation of terms and conditions of employment, attendance at Grampian Area Partnership Forum, Joint Negotiating Committee (Medical and Dental) or Sub-Groups, and relevant national bodies.
- c. Matters arising from NHS Grampian Staff Management Policies including time to prepare for meetings called under the relevant procedures.
- d. The physical conditions in which staff are required to work, including participation in risk assessment programmes and local Health and Safety Committees.
- e. Recruitment of employees to trade union/professional organisation membership, in particular attendance at employee induction courses.
- f. Allocation of work or the duties of employment between workers or groups of workers.
- g. Consultation, including participation in the Grampian Area Partnership Forum (GAPF) or its sub-groups, Sector Partnership Forums, time to prepare for such meetings and disseminate information and outcomes to members and the time involved for travel for meetings away from the workplace. This also includes participation in relevant area wide, inter-agency or Scottish Forums.
- h. To contribute to the development of and participation in Partnership arrangements within NHS Grampian.
- i. To undertake employee relations duties within the policies/rules of their Trade Union/Professional Organisations, on a range of issues on behalf of their members. These issues can include member's problems at work, grievances, conduct issues, health and safety, learning, equal opportunities, pay and conditions of service and any other matter relating to their employment within NHS Grampian, this includes but is not limited to:
  - to represent and communicate with members, and to communicate with Partnership Forums on behalf of their members;
  - to be responsible to and for a particular group of members within NHS Grampian;
  - to attend relevant Staff Side Organisation meetings in which the person is a representative or of which they are an official;
  - to organise meetings of members during working hours, where required, in agreement with the relevant managers;
  - to participate in the induction of new staff to encourage membership of a Trade Union and Professional Organisation.

4.3 In addition, paid time off will normally be granted to notified delegates for attendance at trade union/professional organisation group meetings or conferences



except in exceptional circumstances. It is expected that the trade unions/professional organisations will meet the costs of delegates' attendance (travel, subsistence etc).

4.4 Reasonable time off with pay will be granted to attend training courses approved by the TUC, the STUC or recognised Trade Unions/Professional Organisations. Details of the course should be provided to the line manager. Trade Union/Professional Organisation branches should seek to undertake annual training needs assessment of representatives and officers and notify NHS Grampian of requirements through the People and Culture Directorate. Programmes of training may include joint courses with the employer. Some examples of time off include:

- a. Participation in meetings of official policy making and consultation, e.g. Conferences or Regional Meetings.
- b. Training in basic representation and negotiation skills training events on partnership working updates.
- c. Further training, where the official has additional responsibilities.
- d. Training on legislative changes relating to employment law and any Scottish Government initiatives.
- e. Participation in training relating to organisation issues within NHS Grampian.

4.5 Where time off with pay has been approved, the payment due will equate to the earnings the employee would otherwise have received had they been at work.

4.6 Where meetings called by management are held on matters covered by 4.2 above and where trade union/professional organisation representatives have to attend outwith their normal working hours, appropriate payment will be made or equivalent time off granted. This also applies to approved training courses which extend beyond contracted hours.

4.7 It is recognised that some Staff Side Representatives, branch secretaries and officers bear a greater responsibility in terms of trade union/professional organisation duties. NHS Grampian will, therefore, conclude agreements with trade union/professional organisations on appropriate secured paid time off for such representatives and arrangements for replacement staffing.

#### 4.8 Industrial Action

Both NHS Grampian and Trade Union and Professional Organisations have a responsibility to use agreed procedures in an attempt to settle problems and avoid industrial action. Time off may therefore, be permitted for this purpose particularly where there is a dispute.

However, where a Staff Side Representative is not participating in industrial action but is representing members involved, normal arrangements for time off with pay for the representatives will apply. Time off for involvement in Industrial Action is not paid.

## **5 Procedure for Agreeing Time Off**

During each month, the requests to the manager for time off can be verbal or in writing, as agreed locally. Trade union/professional organisation representatives must submit requests for planned facilities time within agreed timescales for authorisation by their line manager. The manager must respond to requests within an agreed timescale.

The Monthly Facilities Time Sheet (Appendix 3) remains the responsibility of the Staff Side Representative and at the end of each month the signed form must be sent to the Partnership Support Officer for monitoring, and application for backfill funding where appropriate, see Section 8. A copy should be retained by the Staff Side Representative for their own records.

If immediate requirement for time off is needed, it may not be possible to request time off formally, but the time off should be noted and recorded at the end of the month either individual or in the case of a number of periods e.g. telephone calls and urgent conversations, these can be collated together.

## **6 Recording and Monitoring Facilities Time**

It is the responsibility of the Staff Side Representatives to ensure that they maintain an accurate record of the facilities time required to undertake their Partnership and trade union/professional organisation duties and activities. This is achieved through the use of the Monthly Facilities Time Sheet (Appendix 3).

This form serves four functions:

- to comply with reporting requirement by the Trade Union Act 2016;
- act as a means of recording formal authorisation given by the line manager;
- requires the line manager to record the reason when authorisation has been withheld;
- help to support Staff Side Representatives.

It is not intended as a minute by minute time sheet.

By the end of each month the trade union/professional organisation representative must complete the form, listing ad hoc or unplanned facilities time engagements.

Completed forms will be submitted to the Partnership Support Officer for the compilation of a statistical report which will be presented to the Grampian Area Partnership Forum annually.

## **7 Release Arrangements**

NHS Grampian funds centrally the release of five whole time equivalent Partnership Representatives. In addition, one whole time equivalent Partnership Representative is released to undertake health and safety. This is regularly reviewed. The release agreement is attached as Appendix 4.

Areas may, in addition, agree to fund release time for Area Representatives either following individual or Organisation requests from Staff Side Representatives or based on local or service needs. Requests should not be unreasonably denied.

## **8 Funding Arrangements**

A mechanism is in place, agreed by the Grampian Area Partnership Forum, to enable facilities time to be quantified, funded, monitored and to demonstrate adherence to the principles of ensuring that facilities time funding is fair and equitable across the organisation. This mechanism is used to fund replacement staffing where, for example, agreements are made for planned release or where ad hoc release occurs.

A sub-group of the Grampian Area Partnership Forum will agree the time/backfilling funds/physical resources required to support the role of Staff Side Representatives in the employee relations agenda. The group will use the Facilities Time Sheet as part of the scoping exercise and will take account of good practice as described in the Facilities Arrangements for Trade Union & Professional Organisations PIN Policy.

Backfill funding will be provided by the central Partnership budget as follows:

- a. Grampian Area Partnership Forum full member – 15 hours a month.
- b. Grampian Area Partnership Forum deputy – 4 hours a month.
- c. Sector Partnership Forum member – 4 hours a month.
- d. Sector Partnership Forum Chair – 5 hours a month.
- e. Grampian Area Partnership Forum Sub-Group member – 4 hours per month.
- f. Grampian Area Partnership Forum Sub-Group Chair – 5 hours a month.

Travelling time will be included.

Sectors will be expected to agree local backfill arrangements individually with Staff Side Representatives.

## **9 Settling Differences of Opinion**

9.1 Where a request for time off is refused, the manager should convey the reasons for doing so to the representative either in writing or as mutually agreed, as soon as possible.

9.2 In the event of disagreement over the granting of time off, the best practice would be to seek advice from the HR Operational Team regarding an informal resolution. This may also involve another Trade Union/Professional Organisation representative, Employee Director or full-time official, as appropriate, and this will be determined by the trade union/professional organisation.

9.3 In the event of the matter remaining in dispute, the issue may be dealt with through NHS Grampian's Grievance Procedure.

## **10. Deduction of Subscriptions from Pay**

NHS Grampian will provide the facility for the collection of Staff Side Organisations members' subscriptions through direct deduction from salary or wages. This system will take due regard to current statutory requirements. Information will be provided to trade union/professional organisation in the format requested in relation to their own Organisation.

## **Recognised Trade Unions and Professional Organisations for Facilities Arrangements**

Association of Clinical Biochemists (ACB)

British Association of Occupational Therapists (BAOT)

British Dental Association (BDA)

British Dietetic Association (BDA)

British Medical Association (BMA)

British and Irish Orthoptic Society (BIOS)

Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP)

General Municipal Boilermakers (GMB) (GMB look after the CDNA Community District Nursing Association)

Guild of Healthcare Pharmacists (GHP)

Hospital Physicists Association (HPA)

Royal College of Midwives (RCM)

Royal College of Nursing (RCN)

College of Podiatrists (COP)

Society of Radiographers (SOR)

UNISON

Unite

NHS Grampian  
Working in Partnership  
Formal Employee Relations Protocol

1. Effective Employee Relations

1.1 NHS Grampian aims to provide healthcare of the highest standards for the people of Grampian. Its staff play a major part in achieving this aim. Effective employee relations are essential to underpin the quality of care provided to service users. NHS Grampian and its staff are committed to working in Partnership to maintain and develop effective employee relations. This will also include developing a joint working relationship with Integration Joint Boards (IJB), local authorities and other public and third sector agencies where employee relation issues may arise from cross public sector working.

Effective employee relations requires joint working on a wide range of principles as follows:

- a. creating a workplace culture of openness, trust and integrity which continually encourages and supports staff to achieve high standards of excellence in service provision;
- b. continually developing and promoting a system of Partnership working into the culture of NHS Grampian which ensures staff involvement, ensuring collaborative working as the norm in teams and between individual managers and staff at all levels consistent with Staff Governance Standard;
- c. recognising staff and their representatives as key partners in the development of services and involving them in all major strategic developments and in all issues that affect their working lives;
- d. establishing a style of working and an approach to decision-making which is based on early involvement of staff and their representatives and solving problems/ resolving disputes by consensus wherever possible;
- e. fulfilling statutory obligations in relation to the employment of staff enshrined in employment law and in the Staff Governance provisions in the NHS Reform (Scotland) Act;
- f. providing conditions of employment, including opportunities for learning and development, which earn NHS Grampian the reputation of being an 'exemplar' employer;

- g. provision of a continuously improving and safe working environment, promoting the health and wellbeing of staff, patients and the wider community;
- h. provision of a dignified workplace culture;
- i. sharing of appropriate information.

1.2 Achieving effective employee relations also requires the establishment of structures throughout NHS Grampian to provide forums for joint working on the issues outlined above. The main structures are set out in the flow chart at the end of this appendix and are summarised as follows:

- The Grampian Area Partnership Forum;
- Sector Partnership Forums (SPF) in each of the sectors of NHS Grampian;
- Local Partnership Groups (LPG) in service areas.

1.3 Given these structures, the following organisational principles will apply:

- Since NHS Grampian believes in the empowerment of staff and devolution of responsibilities, agreed Sector/ Local Partnership arrangements and ways of working may be flexible/ integrated into core business provide the principles in 1.1 are followed.
- Corporate accountability is important to ensure consistency and fairness across the organisation. Local decisions that may create a precedent or impact upon the other Sectors/ Services will require careful consideration and the involvement of those other Sectors/ Services.

## 2. Grampian Area Partnership Forum (GAPF)

### 2.1 General Introduction

The Grampian Area Partnership Forum (GAPF) originates from “Towards a new Way of Working” 1998 and “Our National Health a plan for action, a plan for change”, which enshrined the principles of partnership working and laid the foundations for a new and more proactive, approach to industrial relations and staff involvement. In recognition of NHS Grampian’s move to single system the GAPF has become the forum at which all recognised trade unions and staff associations interface with NHS Grampian.

### 2.2 Its purpose is:

- To promote the development of partnership working and maintain staff governance within NHS Grampian.
- To advise and support the Board in the development and implementation of strategies which deliver high standards of health and care to the people of Grampian.
- To monitor and verify the progress NHS Grampian makes in implementing partnership working as a way of managing staff and developing service.

- To provide a vehicle and systems for conducting the formal business of employee relations.
- To overview the Partnership working within Integration Joint Boards.

### 2.3 Scope and Functions

The GAPF is the main Grampian forum for the conduct of employee relations. It has delegated authority from the System Leadership Team (SLT) and the NHS Grampian Board to develop and reach agreements on Grampian-wide employee relations matters subject to approval by the relevant senior management and individual Trade Unions and Professional Organisations involved. Its members are committed to working in Partnership to achieve outcomes, which benefit both staff and the services provided to patients within NHS Grampian. Where costs are involved there must be agreement from the Director of Finance.

### 2.4 Its main functions are:

- Providing leadership and support for the continued development of Partnership working throughout NHS Grampian.
- Providing leadership and support for the achievement of NHS Grampian employee relations priorities.
- Facilitating the achievement of the Staff Governance Standard requirements.
- Undertaking formal consultation, negotiation and agreement on Grampian-wide employer/ employee relations matters across all staff groups, in accordance with employment law and NHS Agreements and guidance. This does not prevent in any way the requirement for NHS Grampian and individual trade unions (or a number of individual trade unions depending on the categories of staff involved) from undertaking formal consultation, negotiation and agreement on specific matters relating directly to those categories of staff. In such instances the outcome will be reported back to the GAPF.
- Contributing to the wider health and healthcare agenda by being involved in all major strategic initiatives in NHS Grampian e.g. planning of services, financial priorities, capital projects). Involvement may take a variety of forms from responding to requests for views to active participation in particular projects in order to promote staff interests.
- Establishing sub-groups to focus on aspects of its agenda.
- Establishing connections with and promoting support and guidance to the IJB/SPFs; maintain an overview; delegating issues to them for comment/ attention where appropriate accepting that the IJB/SPFs have whole system responsibility for matters within that area.
- Developing networks and effective working relationships with other bodies e.g. NHS Grampian Board, Staff Governance Committee, System Leadership Team (SLT), Local Authorities Integrated Workforce Forums, Occupational Health and Safety Committee and other groups established to take forward major initiatives.
- Establishing effective communication mechanisms to ensure its decisions and work are known by all staff throughout NHS Grampian.



- j. Providing assurance to the Staff Governance Committee and the NHS Grampian Board that arrangements are in place and working to ensure Partnership working and compliance with the Staff Governance Standard.

## 2.5 Membership

The GAPF will consist of the following members of NHS Grampian:

- The Deputy Chief Executive or another Executive Director nominated by the Chief Executive and the Employee Director ('stand-alone' Staff-side member and not taking a place from any of the Trade Union/ Professional Organisations), who will be joint chairs of the GAPF and each will chair alternate meetings.
- One representative from each recognised Trade Union/ Professional Organisation nominated by their own organisation. (appendix 1 lists the recognised Trade Unions/ Professional Organisations in NHS Grampian)
- The Director of People and Culture, who will co-chair in the absence of the Deputy Chief Executive.
- Three senior staff from the People and Culture Directorate.
- Two other executive directors nominated by the Chief Executive.
- Seven other senior managers, one per sector (drawn from NHS Grampian as a whole including the Integration Joint Boards).
- Each member will have authority to reach agreement on issues having consulted with their Trade Union/ Professional Organisation and NHS Grampian management forums as appropriate.
- Each member has also a collective responsibility to honour agreements, particularly in the context of partnership working.

2.6 Full-time officers of Trade Union/ Professional Organisations will not be members of the GAPF but may attend meetings by invitation or by request following agreement of the Joint Chairs.

2.7 The Chair of the Staff Governance Committee will be invited to attend meetings of the GAPF on an ex-officio basis.

2.8 The Chief Executive shall attend at least 3 GAPF meetings per calendar year, dates to be agreed with the Joint Chairs, and may attend any meeting by invitation of GAPF or upon request.

2.9 The GAPF may invite other members of NHS Grampian to its meetings to assist with its work.

## Meetings and Attendance

2.10 The GAPF will normally meet monthly and there will be a minimum of eight meetings per annum. The calendar of meetings for the following year will be agreed 3 months before the end of the year and synchronised with meetings of 17

the NHS Board and SLT as far as possible. Special meetings of GAPF may be called by agreement with either of the Joint Chairs.

2.11 Where a member is unable to attend, a nominated deputy (who must be either an employee of NHS Grampian or in the case of management representative must directly manage NHS Grampian employed staff and in the case of the Staff-side the member must be an accredited Staff-side representative of the same Trade Union/ Professional Organisation) will attend in their place. The Joint Chairs will compile a list of nominated deputies, which will be retained by the Partnership Support Officer. Nominated deputies should be used infrequently. Repeated failure by a member to attend will be followed-up by the Employee Director and/ or Chief Executive as appropriate and arrangements made to appoint an alternative member if necessary.

2.12 The Partnership Support Officer will provide all the administrative support to meetings of the GAPF and will liaise with the Management Secretaries to arrange meetings, agendas, papers etc.

2.13 All members are able to contribute items for the agendas for meetings of the Forum. Items for agendas should be submitted in writing to the Partnership Support Officer at least fourteen days in advance of a planned meeting. The agenda will be set by a small working group comprising the joint chairs, Director of People and Culture or their nominated deputies, and the Partnership Support Officer. Agendas and papers will be circulated no later than five working days before each meeting.

2.14 Staff-side and Management members have the facility to organise separate regular meetings of their teams to prepare for meetings of the GAPF and ensure effective liaison with sub-groups and IJB/ SPFs.

2.15 A quorum at each meeting of the GAPF will be of four each of Staff Side and Management Members, this will not include Joint Chairs In such an event that a quorum is not present the meeting can proceed with joint agreement allowing matters to be discussed but no decisions can be made.

2.16 Members shall declare any possible conflict of interest to the Joint Chairs either before a meeting or as soon as possible after the commencement of a meeting.

2.17 Papers will not be tabled at an ordinary meeting of the GAPF unless deemed both urgent and relevant by the Joint Chairs by prior arrangement and in order to ensure consistency should also be advised of contact details of those attending via video conferencing so that these papers can be sent electronically immediately prior to the meeting.

2.18 Approved minutes will be kept of all meetings and made available on the NHS Grampian intranet. Approved versions will be circulated to IJB/ SPFs and LPGs, and provided for noting to NHS Grampian Board and the NHS Grampian Staff Governance Committee. All minutes will be publicly available under the

terms of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. The Employee Director will present a formal report to every NHS Grampian Board on behalf of the GAPF.

2.19 The provisions of the NHS Grampian Standing Orders for Board meetings shall apply to this forum as far as is practicable and appropriate.

2.20 In exceptional circumstances, the Joint Chairs will rule where necessary on the confidentiality of information and its availability.

2.21 Every effort will be made to reach decisions by agreement with all members abiding by such decisions. The outcome on any issue under consideration will not be determined by vote. Where a failure to reach agreement is determined by the GAPF as a dispute then it will be remitted as appropriate to the relevant sub-group of the GAPF.

2.22 Staff-side Representatives will be entitled to paid time-off and reimbursement of travelling expenses for preparing for and attending all relevant meetings connected with the GAPF and associated sub-groups in accordance with the Facilities Arrangements for Trade Unions and Professional Organisations Policy.

## 2.23 Sub-Groups

The GAPF will establish a number of sub-groups to focus on particular aspects of its agenda. They may be changed from time-to time by agreement. These include but are not limited to:

- Learning & Development and Workforce and Organisational Development Group;
- Communications;
- Terms and Conditions;
- Policies.

2.24 Each subgroup will comprise a minimum of two members of the GAPF (one Staff Side, one Management), one of whom will be responsible for ensuring that the GAPF is kept informed of progress on subgroup issues and vice versa. Other members will be drawn from the SPFs, the LPGs or from staff who have particular expertise, which would be of value to the subgroup.

2.25 Each subgroup will appoint its own Joint Chairs from among their members. Staff Side election is a matter for Staff Side.

2.26 Each subgroup, with guidance from the GAPF, will prepare general remit/terms of reference for approval by the GAPF.

2.27 Each subgroup will submit their recommendations on issues to the GAPF for approval.

2.28 Meetings of the subgroups and quorums will be determined by each group having regard to any deadlines specified by the GAPF. Minutes of all subgroup meetings will be available on the Partnership website or circulated directly to GAPF.

2.29 Sub groups will present an annual update to GAPF on their activity and prepare an update for the staff newspaper.

2.30 Persistent non-attendance by members of subgroups will be considered by each group and arrangements made for replacements if necessary.

### 2.31 Informal Discussions and Urgent Consultation

The formal arrangements set out above do not preclude informal discussions between managers and staff representatives on items of mutual interest. It is also recognised that in exceptional circumstances the urgent and immediate views of the GAPF may be required by NHS Grampian. The GAPF will designate a number of staff side and management representatives who will be available to meet and provide an urgent and preliminary joint response.

These members will report the matter to GAPF at its next meeting or seek the agreement of either of the Joint Chairs to call a special meeting of GAPF.

### 3. Sector Partnership Forums (SPF)

#### Scope and Functions

3.1 SPFs are the main vehicle for addressing local employee relations issues. They are accountable to the GAPF and have delegated authority to develop and reach agreements on local issues, which should be notified to the GAPF. Such agreements will also be subject to approval by individual trade unions involved. Their members are committed to working in Partnership to achieve outcomes, which benefit staff and NHS Grampian. Each IJB/Sector has the flexibility to jointly decide, in accordance with local needs and capacity, how best to establish their IJB/SPF, taking into account existing networks/practices. The principles detailed in 1.1 will apply.

3.2 The functions of the SPFs are a mirror image of those of the GAPF (see section 2 above), the difference being that the emphasis will be on local issues pertaining to each Sector. Some of the issues SPFs will address will relate to service developments or staff groups unique to their area. Some issues may be common to one or more SPFs and it is necessary that they work together to achieve consistent outcomes. Any issue, which may have Grampian-wide significance, must be notified to the GAPF for consideration on how best to address it. This does not prevent in any way the requirement for an SPF and an individual trade union or professional organisation (or a number of individual trade unions or professional organisations depending on the categories of staff involved) from undertaking formal consultation, negotiation and agreement on specific matters relating to those categories of staff.

3.3 The membership of each SPF will be drawn from members of the IJB/Sector and consist of:

- Management members determined by the Sector including the General Manager/Director or deputy;
- As far as possible and subject to agreement a minimum of one Staff Side representative per Staff Side Organisation represented in the Sector.

3.4 Each SPF will establish jointly arrangements for the conduct of meetings and general modus operandi in keeping with the spirit of those developed for the GAPF. It is expected however that the lead Staff-Side representative, elected by the staff-side organisations on the SPF and the Chief Officer/General Manager/Director will be the Joint Chairs of the SPF.

3.5 Other staff who are not members of Staff Side organisations may also be invited to attend with the agreement of both sides, who have particular expertise which would be of value to the issue being discussed. They will be able to participate fully in the work of the SPF apart from formal negotiations on employee relations matters which are confined to members of accredited Staff Side Organisations.

3.6 The Chief Officer/General Manager/Director will arrange all the administrative support.

Frequency of these meetings should mirror the arrangements for GAPF in that there should be a minimum number of 8 meetings per year and that the outcomes of these meetings which affect or impact across IJB/sectors should be included as a matter of course in that IJB/sectors update to GAPF or earlier if necessary.

3.7 Every effort will be made to reach decisions by agreement with all members abiding by such decisions. The outcome on any issue under consideration will not be determined by vote. Where there is failure to reach agreement the matter will be referred to the GAPF for consideration.

3.8 Staff representatives will be entitled to paid time-off and reimbursement of travelling expenses for preparing for and attending all relevant meetings connected with the SPF.

#### 4. Integration Joint Boards (IJBs)

4.1 NHS member of staff and management in collaboration with their local authority counterparts will formally constitute an IJB Workforce Group. These groups may discuss items relevant to workforce and employee relations issues but do not have the authority to formally agree any employee relations issues.

#### 5. Local Partnership Groups (LPG)

##### Scope and Functions

5.1 Local Partnership Groups are based in service areas. They have a major role in promoting Partnership working in their areas and are concerned with involving staff in issues that affect their working lives including service plans and proposed changes in service provision. They consist of management representatives and representatives of recognised Staff Side organisations in the service areas. Other staff who are not members of Staff Side organisations may also be invited to attend who have particular expertise which would be of value to the issue being discussed.

5.2 Whilst they do not have a formal role in negotiating and reaching agreement on employee relations matters, they may be consulted by IJBs/SPFs or GAPF on such matters as well as on Staff Governance and Partnership issues. They also have a decision making role on matters that fall within their area of responsibility. LPGs may refer issues to either of these forums for consideration and work with other LPGs to share information/address issues of common concern.

Whilst it is not a requirement to have formal LPGs in all service areas, the staff in each service area must have access to Partnership arrangements which fulfil a function similar to that of an LPG.

### 5.3 Membership and Meetings

5.3.1 LPGs will normally follow the approach in keeping with the spirit of that developed for the GAPF and SPF and must comprise management and accredited staff representation on any discussion relating to policy and terms & conditions.

5.3.2 Staff representatives will be entitled to paid time-off and reimbursement of travelling expenses incurred for preparing and for attending meetings of LPGs in accordance with 6.2 of the policy.

## 6. Partnership Support Officer

6.1 He/she will ensure that meetings of the GAPF are well organised, that minutes are distributed in a timely fashion, with follow-up action clearly specified. He/she will facilitate links between the GAPF and the IJBs/SPFs to ensure effective communication on major issues.

## 7. Development of Members

7.1 At least once per year, the GAPF and each IJB/SPF and LPG will consider the development needs of its members and arrange at least one joint event in Grampian. Members will also be supported to attend associated development events organised by the Scottish Government.

7.2 Sectors are encouraged to hold their own Partnership days which focus on locally identified issues and these may be attended by GAPF members.

## 8. Review of Arrangements

8.1 The GAPF will be the guardian of these arrangements and will review them every 3 years alongside the Facilities Arrangements for Trade Unions and Professional Organisations Policy seeking wider views through organisation wide consultation.

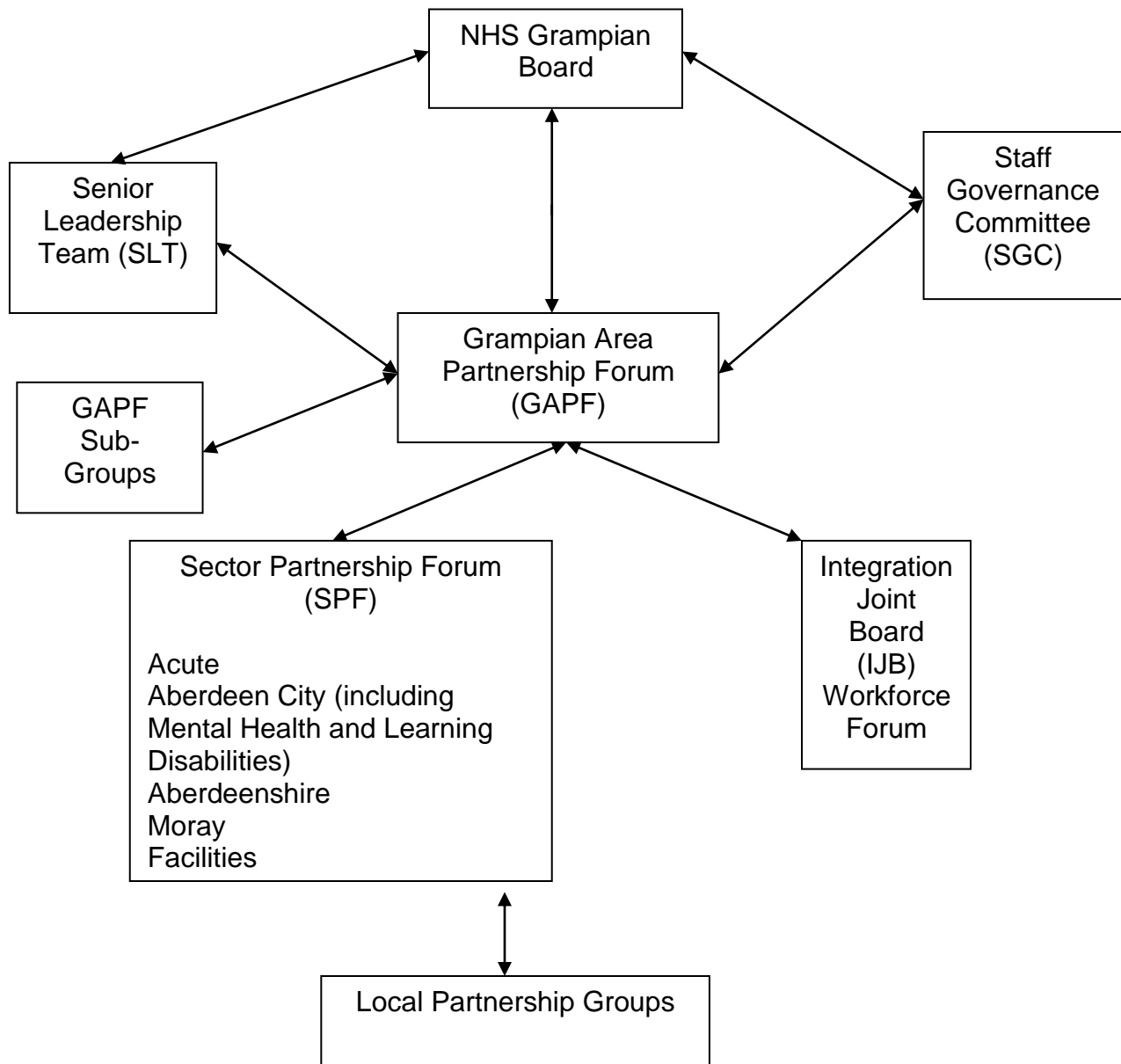
8.2 Suggestions for amendments can be proposed at any time by members of the GAPF, the IJB/SPFs or LPGs. The GAPF will decide whether to accept or reject a proposal. If it approves an amendment, these arrangements can be modified immediately or alternatively at the time of the 3 yearly review referred to in 7.1 above.

8.3 Arrangements will be developed to allow the effectiveness of the GAPF to be considered by the SLT, Staff Governance Committee and through them the NHS Board.



Working in Partnership  
Formal Relations Protocol

Flowchart



**MONTHLY FACILITY TIME SHEET**

Name					Organisation								
Signed					Band								
Location and Sector					Month and Year								
Date of Event	No. of hours required	Reason Code	Name of Meeting and venue				Authorised/ Rejected by Managers Signature			reason for rejection/ non-attendance			
Authorised By: (Managers signature)													
Partnership Time					Trade Union/Professional Organisation Time								
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	TOTAL
TOTALS													

This form should be sent to Joan Anderson, Partnership Support Officer, G23, Summerfield House, Eday Road, Aberdeen or email [joan.anderson@nhs.scot](mailto:joan.anderson@nhs.scot) By the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month. Please keep a copy for your own record.

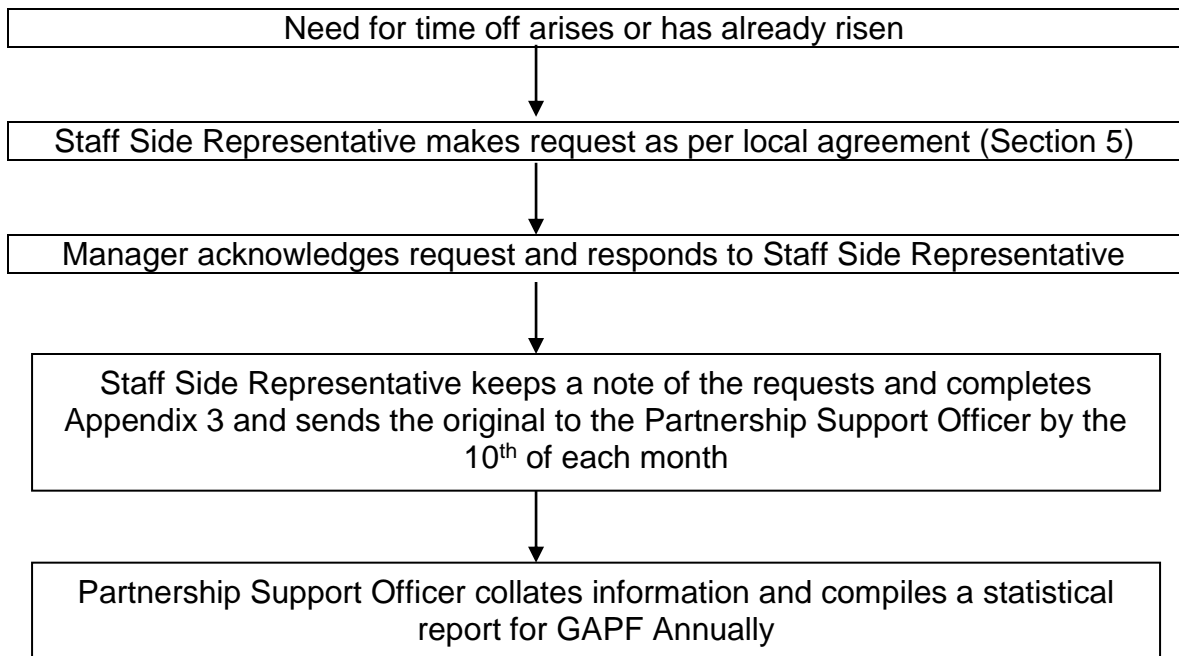
## Guidance notes for completing Trade Union and Partnership Monthly Facility Time sheet

Trade Union/Professional Organisation Representatives are reminded of the need to provide reasonable notice of planned facility time as agreed within the facilities Policy.

Name: your name  
 Band: To enable accurate costing of time off (where agreed)  
 Organisation: Name of your trade union / professional body  
 Location and Sector: Location of where you work and which Sector you work for  
 Month and Year: The month and year relating to the time off noted on the form

Please sign and date Monthly Facility Timesheet before submission by the 10 <sup>th</sup> of each month to: Joan Anderson, G23, Summerfield House, Eday Road, Aberdeen, AB15 6RE <a href="mailto:joan.anderson@nhs.scot">joan.anderson@nhs.scot</a> ext 58459	
Date	insert date on which facility time is requested
Number of hours	total amount of facility time requested in hours
Name of Meeting	Insert a generic name to ensure confidentiality
Venue	insert where meeting is taking place (eg ARI, Summerfield, Chalmers Hosp, DGH – generic venues to indicate travel time)
Reason for request	<p>Select from the following categories:</p> <p><b>Partnership:</b></p> <p>A. GAPF/Sector Partnership Forum/GAPF Sub-Groups (inc IJB/HSCP). This includes Staff Side Meetings and deputies attending GAPF</p> <p>B. Specific Working Groups</p> <p>C. Training/Conferences/Seminars – (presenting and attending)</p> <p>D. Job Evaluation</p> <p>E. Health and Safety</p> <p>F. Preparation Time</p> <p>G. Other</p> <p><b>Trade Union/Professional Organisation:</b></p> <p>H. General Advice to members/Communications and consultation with members</p> <p>I. Conferences/Seminars/Training (presenting and attending)</p> <p>J. Preparation Time</p> <p>K. Individual Representation/Grievance/Disciplinary /Collective Representation/Nursing Homes</p> <p>L. Other</p>
Authorised by	Signature of authorising line manager

Process:



NHS Grampian's full-time Partnership Representatives  
Facilities Release Agreement

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

### **Release to NHS Grampian Partnership Process**

I am writing to confirm the arrangements that have been agreed between us in connection with your release (the "Release") to NHS Grampian Partnership Process.

#### **1. Continuity of Employment**

You shall remain employed by NHS Grampian during the Release and your current terms of employment shall apply as though you had not been on the Release, save as set out in this letter. In particular, your period of continuous employment will remain unbroken. At the end of the Release period you may either seek re-election or choose to return to your current substantive post on the terms applying prior to the release.

#### **2. Period of Release**

The Release shall commence on \_\_\_\_\_ and shall continue until \_\_\_\_\_ unless earlier terminated in the circumstances summarised below.

The Release may be terminated:

- a) with immediate effect by the Board in the event of certain adverse financial positions being experienced; or
- b) with immediate effect by the Board upon termination of your Employment Contract

#### **3. Your Obligations**

During the release you shall:

- a) continue to abide by the terms of your Employment Contract;
- b) act a Full time Partnership Representative and carry out duties as required by Employee Director;
- c) report to, and be managed by, the Employee Director at the Board;
- d) report on day-to-day matters to the Employee Director;
- e) work based in \_\_\_\_\_ but will cover NHS Grampian ;
- f) comply with the NHS Grampian Policies and Procedures copies of which are available on the Intranet;
- g) obtain the prior approval of the Employee Director in the usual way before taking any holiday and, at the same time as seeking OR on receiving approval, notify the Partnership Support Officer of the proposed dates of your holiday; and
- h) notify both the Employee Director and the Partnership Support Officer if you are absent from work at any time, as soon as possible on the first day of absence.

#### **4. Variations to Your Employment Contract**

This will be \_\_\_\_ hours per week, Monday to Friday as agreed, for \_\_\_\_ years commencing on \_\_\_\_\_ until the end of the release period.

#### **5. Keeping in Touch**

During the Release:

In order to maintain registration \_\_\_\_\_

You should talk to the Employee Director if you have any issues or concerns about the Release or the work that you are doing.

#### **6. Monitoring, Review and Appraisals**

Regular reports for areas you have responsibility for, completion of the duties and operation of the release general will be report via the GAPF on a regular ongoing basis. These reports and the information you provide in terms of Clause 5 above, will allow the GAPF to monitor the Release and feed into the Staff Governance Committee. A meeting to review the release will be scheduled between you and the Employee Director annually. Release period would normally be for a period of four years.

As part of the annual performance appraisal process you will meet with the Employee Director to complete eKSF (or other appraisal process as appropriate to your substantive role) and the NHS Grampian Board, via the Staff Governance Committee, will receive regular reports on performance of the full time cohort.

The Employee Director will also deal with any grievances or any concerns about your conduct or performance.

#### **7. Salary, Overtime and Expenses**

The Board shall continue to pay your substantive salary in the normal way. Any expenses claims arising during the Release must be submitted to the Employee Director in accordance with the NHS Grampian normal procedures, details of which are on Intranet.

#### **8. Training Requirements**

As part of the annual appraisal process, you will meet with the Employee Director in order to discuss any training or retraining requirements you have in order to maintain your requirements for maintaining registration with your professional body for returning to your substantive role full time. You should also maintain training and work related to your role to achieve your continuing professional development needs and to maintain your registration with the (state registration body).

**9. Your Personal Information**

You consent to the Board providing relevant information about you to the Employee Director in connection with the Release.

**10. Confidentiality**

Your Employment Contract currently requires you to adhere to the NHS Grampian Confidentiality and Data Protection Responsibilities. This is particularly important while you are on release.

Please sign the enclosed copy of this letter and return it to the Employee Director by \_\_\_\_\_ to indicate your agreement to the terms in this letter.

Yours sincerely  
For and on behalf of NHS Grampian  
Employee Director

.....

I hereby agree to the above changes to the terms of my employment.

Signed by [Partnership Representative]: .....

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed copy to -**  
Manager  
HR