

NHS
Kent and Medway

Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board

Director of Strategic Finance

Candidate briefing pack

November 2026

Hunter Healthcare

Welcome from our CFO

Thank you for your interest in the role of Director of Strategic Finance at NHS Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board.

As Chief Finance Officer, I am pleased to introduce this opportunity at an important point in our organisation's financial and organisational improvement journey.

Having made progress towards stabilisation, our focus is now on building a stronger, more sustainable organisation, improving financial performance and embedding the leadership, processes and culture needed to deliver lasting change. This appointment will play a central role in that journey, helping to strengthen our financial leadership and ensure we are making the best use of our resources to improve health outcomes for the people of Kent and Medway.

We are seeking an experienced, credible and forward-thinking finance leader who can combine strong technical expertise with strategic insight, sound judgement and the ability to influence at the most senior levels. The successful candidate will bring a strong understanding of NHS commissioning and system finance, alongside the ability to navigate complex financial challenges, balance competing priorities and translate financial information into clear, informed decisions.

This is much more than a technical finance role. Working closely with me and the wider Executive Team, you will have the opportunity to shape our financial strategy, drive improvement and support the development of a more effective and sustainable organisation.

We are looking for someone who is comfortable operating with a high degree of autonomy, can provide constructive challenge and has the confidence and credibility to represent the finance function across the organisation and wider health and care system.

Kent and Medway faces many of the challenges experienced across the NHS, including rising demand, significant financial pressures and the need to transform services while improving outcomes and reducing health inequalities. Addressing these challenges will require strong partnership working, resilience, adaptability and a genuine commitment to delivering meaningful and sustainable improvement.

We recognise that the scale of the challenge is significant, but so too is the opportunity. With an experienced executive leadership team committed to improvement, this is a chance to make a tangible difference, influence the future direction of the organisation and contribute to the development of a high-performing strategic commissioning organisation.

Thank you for considering this appointment. I hope the information within this pack provides a helpful insight into the role, the challenges ahead and the contribution you could make to the future of health and care across Kent and Medway.

Jonathan Wlson
Chief Finance Officer
NHS Kent and Medway
Integrated Care Board



About us

Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board (ICB) is responsible for planning and commissioning healthcare services for around two million people, with an annual budget of approximately £5.4 billion in 2026/27.

6
provider trusts, plus one CIC

45
primary care networks

175
general practices

300+
pharmacies

90,000
staff working in health and care

9
multi-neighbourhood areas

12
districts, one upper tier council, one unitary



Our vision and values

Our vision

Kent and Medway ICB commissions the right services at the right time for the people who need them, helping to improve health outcomes and reduce health inequalities while living within our budget.

Our values

We have five key values that underpin our work:

CARING FOR ALL
We look after each other and our communities.

INCLUDING EVERYONE
We celebrate who we are and our diversity.

BUILDING TRUST
We are empowered to do our roles and respect each other.

DOING WHAT'S RIGHT
We are open, honest and welcome challenge.

BEING COURAGEOUS
We are bold and always want to improve.



Our work as an ICB

ICBs in England have four core objectives. These are to:

- Improve health outcomes and reduce inequalities in health.
- Ensure consistently high-quality care.
- Drive improved productivity.
- Improve social and economic impact.

In support of these four objectives, the government set out three strategic shifts for the NHS:

- **Treatment to prevention:** Through proactive community and public health initiatives, working closely with local authorities, communities and individuals.
- **Hospital to community:** Moving care closer to home by building more joined-up, person-centred care in local neighbourhoods, reducing reliance on acute care.
- **Analogue to digital:** Harnessing technology and data to transform care delivery and improve quality of care.

The draft Model ICB Blueprint – and the 10-year plan – sets out the crucial role ICBs will play in delivering the three shifts and the wider 10-year plan.

OUR ROLE AS A STRATEGIC COMMISSIONER

We are building a fundamentally different kind of organisation. Our role is to design and shape the healthcare of our system so that it consistently delivers better outcomes, reduces inequalities, improves quality and operates within its means while being clearly and consistently clinically led. This means we:

- Define the model of care the system will deliver.
- Align resource to that model, using planning, contracting and investment decisions.
- Set clear expectations on quality, access, outcomes and productivity.
- Use data and insight to understand variation, target intervention and track impact.
- Hold partners to account for delivery, intervening where performance falls short.

We work through partnership, but we are unambiguous in our role; we set the direction, we create the conditions for delivery, and we assure that the system delivers for our population.

OUR SYSTEM MODEL: FOUR LAYERS OF CARE

Everything we do is anchored in a single system model, known as our four layers of care. These are not conceptual. They are the framework through which we design services, commission pathways and measure performance.

- **Primary care** – the foundation of the system, providing consistent, accessible, relationship-based care, with a strong focus on prevention, continuity and long-term condition management.
- **Neighbourhood care** – multidisciplinary teams working at scale around defined populations, bringing together primary care, community services, mental health, social care and the voluntary sector to proactively manage need and reduce inequalities.
- **Intermediate care** – services delivered at scale in the community to improve flow, maximise recovery and independence, prevent admission and support timely discharge.
- **Acute care** – a coordinated system of hospital care, operating with shared accountability for safety, quality, access, productivity and outcomes.

Our role as commissioner is to ensure these layers operate as a coherent system rather than a set of disconnected services.

OUR CONTEXT AND CHALLENGES

Kent and Medway faces a set of long-standing and structural challenges:

- Significant population growth and ageing, with the 85+ population projected to grow rapidly.
- Increasing prevalence of multiple long-term conditions, strongly linked to deprivation and wider determinants of health.
- Persistent health inequalities, with substantial variation in life expectancy.
- Rising demand across all parts of the system
- Fragile performance across key services

These challenges require a different response: not incremental change, but a system that is designed and led differently, with a clear model of care and a strong, disciplined approach to commissioning.

HOW WE WORK

To deliver this, we are deliberately shaping a different kind of organisation. We expect:

- Clarity and accountability – individuals take ownership and operate with pace and discipline.
- Rigorous use of data and insight – decisions are evidence-based and outcomes-focused.
- Constructive challenge – high standards, open debate and continuous improvement.
- Multidisciplinary working – clinical, operational, analytical and commissioning expertise working as one.
- Strong relationships – working in partnership with providers, local government and communities.

We will invest in digital capability, automation and modern ways of working to reduce administrative burden and enable our teams to focus on leadership, influence and delivery.

- **Presence matters:** We expect all teams to be office-based at least twice a week, with executives on site more often, to build trust, cohesion, and collective ownership echoing the team-based innovation practices of leading design, technology, and consulting organisations. We would expect there to be changes in where we work over time, but we will explore that in the first year of the new organisation.
- **Self-sufficiency is expected:** We will support colleagues to operate with autonomy, clarity, and accountability mirroring successful professional services cultures where personal ownership is the norm. This also encompasses minimising the time and administrative burden created by leaders and communicating that to teams. Senior leaders are expected to effectively employ modern IT techniques to model the digital revolution within the NHS.
- **Time is precious:** We will invest significantly in automation and artificial intelligence to reduce administrative burden freeing our people to lead, influence, and deliver.
- **Challenge is welcome:** We will embed a culture where feedback is candid and constructive, where challenge is expected and taken in the spirit of improvement, and where psychological safety and high standards go hand in hand.
- **Behaviours are key:** We will ensure that our most senior leadership consistently exemplifies inclusive behaviours, setting the standard for integrity in language, tone, and conduct always. This includes addressing challenging behaviours as they arise to ensure that the credibility of the leadership is always maintained.
- **Multi-disciplinary working:** We will embed a culture of collaboration across professional boundaries, ensuring that teams operate as integrated units rather than isolated functions. This approach will enable us to draw on diverse subject matter expertise, improve decision-making, and deliver more innovative and patient-focused outcomes. In practice, this means prioritising shared accountability, open communication, and collective problem-solving. As executive leaders will play a key role in modelling this behaviour, fostering trust and psychological safety so that challenge and constructive feedback are welcomed. Over time, MDT working will become a cornerstone of how we operate, supporting agility and resilience as we transition to the new organisational model.

Our leaders are expected to model this consistently, creating a culture that is both high-support and high-accountability.

About Kent & Medway

Taking the next step in your career could also mean discovering a whole new quality of life. Kent and Medway offer an exceptional combination of professional opportunity, beautiful countryside, vibrant towns and coastal communities, all within easy reach of London and continental Europe.

Whether you are relocating with family, seeking a better work-life balance or simply looking for somewhere new to call home, the region offers the space, choice and opportunities to make the most of life beyond work.

Known as the Garden of England, Kent is celebrated for its rolling countryside, picturesque villages, orchards, vineyards and more than 200 miles of coastline. From the North Downs and the White Cliffs of Dover to the beaches of Broadstairs, the creative seaside communities of Margate and the charming coastal towns of Whitstable and Deal, the region offers exceptional opportunities for walking, cycling, sailing and outdoor pursuits.

Its protected landscapes, nature reserves and country parks provide welcome escapes from busy working lives.

Kent and Medway also boast a remarkable cultural and architectural heritage. Canterbury's magnificent cathedral, Rochester's historic castle and Chatham's Historic Dockyard reflect centuries of history, while elegant Royal Tunbridge Wells and the attractive market towns of Sevenoaks, Faversham and Tenterden offer independent shops, cafés and restaurants.

Alongside this heritage is a flourishing contemporary cultural scene. Margate's Turner Contemporary has helped establish the town as a creative destination, while Canterbury's Marlowe Theatre, Rochester's festivals and an abundance of galleries, music venues and performance spaces provide entertainment throughout the year.



Kent's growing reputation for exceptional food and drink is reflected in its award-winning vineyards, farmers' markets, seafood restaurants and welcoming country pubs. Sporting opportunities are equally varied, from golf and cricket to watersports, horse riding and countryside pursuits.

For those considering relocation, the choice of places to live is particularly appealing. From period townhouses and characterful rural cottages to contemporary waterfront apartments and spacious family homes, Kent and Medway offer housing options to suit different lifestyles and budgets.

The bustling centres of Maidstone, Canterbury and Medway provide convenient urban living, while coastal communities and tranquil villages offer a more relaxed pace of life. New residential developments are also helping to expand housing choice across the region.

Families are well served by an extensive choice of education, including highly regarded state and independent schools, Kent's established grammar school system and a broad network of further education colleges.

The Universities of Kent, Greenwich and Canterbury Christ Church contribute to a vibrant higher education environment, supporting research, innovation and professional development. Excellent childcare provision, recreational facilities and community amenities further strengthen the region's family appeal.

Transport connections are another major advantage. High-speed rail services link parts of Kent and Medway with London St Pancras in around 35–40 minutes, while extensive rail networks support commuting throughout the region. The M2, M20 and M25 provide convenient road access to London and the wider South East, while the Channel Tunnel and Dover ferry services make continental Europe readily accessible. Major London airports offer connections further afield.

For professionals and families alike, Kent and Medway offer an enviable balance of career opportunities, cultural richness, natural beauty and everyday convenience. Whether drawn by the energy of its towns, the tranquillity of its countryside or the freedom of coastal living, the region offers an outstanding place to live, work and put down roots.



Role profile

Job Title:	Director of Strategic Finance
Team or Department:	Senior Finance Team
Band:	9
Accountable to:	Chief Finance Officer
Responsible to:	Chief Finance Officer

Role Summary

Priorities

The Director of Strategic Finance is the deputy to the ICB Chief Finance Officer and provides senior professional leadership across the finance senior leadership team. The postholder leads the development of the medium- and long-term financial strategy for the ICB and the wider Integrated Care System (ICS), ensuring the organisation is positioned to deliver a financially and environmentally sustainable future.

The role provides strategic financial leadership across the ICB, supporting statutory operational reporting, system-wide financial planning, financial recovery, and the development of strategic business cases. The postholder leads the annual and multi-year financial planning process, oversees system improvement plans, and works collaboratively with system partners to ensure financial sustainability across the ICS. As a senior leader, the postholder deputises for the CFO and plays a critical role in shaping the financial direction of the organisation.

Accountabilities

FINANCIAL AND PHYSICAL RESOURCES

Manage: Please see Standing Financial Instructions. Senior oversight of the ICB's contract portfolio, procurement strategy and contract finance governance.

Impacts: Decisions influence statutory accounts, audit outcomes, financial governance and organisational compliance. Impacts risk management, financial control and system-wide reporting accuracy.

WORKFORCE

Manages: 1 x 8c, 2 x 8a

Impacts: Provides leadership, coaching and development across the financial accounting team. Supports capability building and technical expertise across the wider finance function

Responsibilities and duties

This profile is intended to provide a broad outline of the role. The post holder may be required to carry out other duties commensurate with their banding and competence.

Key responsibilities

- Provide senior leadership for the Strategic Finance function and co-lead the finance senior leadership team with the Director of Operational Finance.
- Lead the development of future financial modelling and planning at ICB and ICS level.
- Oversee and coordinate the ICS financial planning process, ensuring alignment with national requirements.
- Support the CFO in delivering system-based revenue and capital processes, ensuring financial sustainability across the ICB and ICS.
- Act as the senior financial link with NHS England for planning, reporting and system oversight.
- Provide financial leadership for transitional and transformational QIPP/CIP programmes, working closely with the Turnaround Director.
- Lead the development of the annual and medium-term financial plan and the multi-year financial recovery plan.
- Provide senior oversight of strategic business cases and system improvement plans.
- Line manage the Strategic Finance team, ensuring high-quality outputs and professional development.
- Lead the organisational and professional development of the finance directorate with the CFO and Director of Contracting.
- Deputise for the ICB CFO as required.
- Carry out other duties commensurate with banding and competence.

Communication responsibilities

- Communicate highly complex, sensitive and contentious financial information to senior leaders, system partners and external bodies.
- Present complex modelling, planning outputs and strategic financial analysis clearly and persuasively.
- Build strong relationships with NHS England, system partners, auditors and senior stakeholders.
- Provide expert advice to the Board, Executive Team and ICS partners.

Analytical/judgement responsibilities

- Analyse highly complex financial, system and planning data from multiple sources.
- Identify risks, opportunities and trends to inform long-term strategy and system planning.
- Make judgements where information is incomplete or conflicting, using professional expertise.
- Evaluate financial implications of strategic options and recommend evidence-based solutions.
- Apply critical thinking to assess system-wide financial risks and opportunities.

Planning and organisational responsibilities

- Lead planning cycles for annual budgets, multi-year plans, financial recovery and system improvement.
- Manage multiple workstreams with competing deadlines and high levels of uncertainty.
- Oversee system-wide planning processes, ensuring alignment with national policy and ICS priorities.
- Support strategic and operational planning across the ICB and ICS.

Policy and service development

- Lead the development of financial planning, recovery and strategic finance policies.
- Ensure compliance with national policy, statutory requirements and internal governance.
- Drive continuous improvement in financial processes, modelling and strategic planning.
- Support implementation of system-wide financial governance frameworks.

Information resources

- Maintain and oversee complex financial models, planning tools and reporting systems.
- Ensure accuracy, integrity and security of financial data.
- Produce reports for the Board, NHS England, ICS partners and regulatory bodies.
- Support others in effective use of financial systems and planning tools.

Research and development

- Undertake benchmarking, modelling and analysis to inform long-term financial strategy.
- Contribute to evaluation of system financial performance and improvement initiatives.
- Use research findings to support decision-making and strategic planning.

Freedom to act

- Works autonomously within broad professional guidelines and organisational policies.
- Provides expert advice and makes recommendations to the CFO, Board and ICS leaders.
- Escalates only the most complex or high-risk issues.
- Exercises significant discretion in managing system-wide financial strategy and planning.



Person specification

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The following information should be evidenced in the candidate's application for the role. Applications are shortlisted against the essential criteria for the role only. If you have a disability or have any special requirements that impact on your ability to meet any of the essential criteria, or you require reasonable adjustments for interview please contact the recruiting manager for the vacancy.

PERSONAL VALUES

- Demonstrates NHS values and ICB values.
- Acts with integrity, professionalism and openness.
- Champions inclusion, fairness and continuous improvement.
- Builds trust and positive relationships across teams and system partners.
- Personally committed to developing self and others

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- Fully qualified CCAB or CIMA accountant.
- Educated to degree level or equivalent experience.
- Significant evidence of continued professional development.
- Demonstrated expertise in a healthcare environment.
- Proven Board-level experience leading complex change and strategy development in a politically sensitive environment.
- Significant leadership experience in large, complex organisations.
- Proven record of transferring processes or roles between locations.
- Commissioning expertise in a healthcare environment.
- Experience working in partnership environments and delivering shared priorities.
- Experience creating new teams and motivating staff to achieve shared objectives.
- Extensive experience delivering presentations to large groups in pressured or politically sensitive settings.
- Experience in ICS-level financial leadership (Desirable).
- Experience leading system-wide financial recovery (Desirable).

ATTRIBUTES

- Strong understanding of current healthcare policy and system architecture.
- Appreciation of the relationship between NHS England, providers and commissioners.
- Determination, perseverance and resilience.
- Flexible and able to work in a rapidly changing, ambiguous environment.
- Calm, professional and confident under pressure.

COMPETENCIES

- Highly developed communication skills for complex, sensitive and contentious issues.
- Ability to present highly complex information clearly to large groups.
- Ability to influence clinical, operational and senior stakeholders.
- High-level analytical skills with ability to interpret qualitative and quantitative data.
- Strong critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Ability to develop and maintain information systems to support innovation.
- Sound judgement in the absence of clear guidelines.
- Leadership, vision, strategic thinking and political awareness.
- Ability to work autonomously and manage competing priorities.
- Ability to make difficult decisions independently when required.
- Experience of budget setting and financial processes.
- Competent IT user, including Microsoft Office



How to apply

The closing date for applications is **22 November 2026**.

Applications should include:

- A **covering letter** explaining why the appointment interests you, how you meet the appointment criteria and what you specifically would bring to the post **(no more than two pages)**.
- A **CV** with education and professional qualifications and full employment history. Please include daytime and evening telephone contact numbers and email addresses. The CV should include names and contact details of three referees. References will not be taken without your permission **(no more than three pages)**.
- You will need the following ID number for this role: **K&M-DSF-1126**

All applications will be acknowledged.

For an informal conversation about the post, please contact James McLeod on 07842 424530 or Sam Cresswell at our recruitment partners, Hunter Healthcare by email: **scresswell@hunter-healthcare.com** or phone: 07562 650935

CLICK HERE TO APPLY ONLINE

KEY DATES

Application closing date	22 November 2026
Shortlisting	26 November 2026
Interviews	8 December 2026



NHS

Kent and Medway



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