

Cabinet

13 July 2023

Better Care Fund (BCF) Plan 2023-25

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

1. Approves the proposed pooled contribution of £17.254m by the Council to the Better Care Fund Plan (known as the Better Together programme plan) for 2023/24 and the provisional pooled contribution of £18.669m for 2024/25 and the plan for resources as set out in paragraph 2.2;
2. Delegates authority to the Executive Director for People to enter into the proposed section 75 NHS Act 2006 agreement, with Coventry and Warwickshire Integrated Care Board (ICB) for delivery of the Better Care Fund Plan for 2023-25, on terms and conditions acceptable to him and the Strategic Director for Resources; and
3. Approves the County Council continuing as the pooled budget holder for the fund.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Better Care Fund (BCF) is a programme spanning both local government and the NHS which seeks to join-up health and care services, so that people can manage their own health and wellbeing and live independently in their communities for as long as possible.
- 1.2 The Better Care Fund 2023/25 Planning Requirements published on 4th April 2023, set out the template for Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWBs) to submit their plans for the next two years for approval. The deadline for submission of the BCF plan to NHS England is 28th June 2023. Due to the tight timescales required for preparation and approval of the plan, permission has been obtained from NHS England for Cabinet (13th July) and HWBB (19th July) approval to follow submission. Any subsequent changes required as a result of consideration by the Cabinet and/or Health and Wellbeing Board would result in the BCF plan being re-submitted.
- 1.3 The Better Care Fund Policy Statement for 2023-25 provides continuity to previous years of the programme, with four national conditions:

1. A jointly developed and agreed plan between local health and social care commissioners and signed off by the Health and Wellbeing Board.
2. Implementing BCF Policy Objective 1: enabling people to stay well, safe and independent at home for longer.
3. Implementing BCF Policy Objective 2: providing the right care in the right place at the right time
4. Maintaining the NHS:
 - a. contribution to adult social care in line with the uplift to the NHS minimum contribution - The contribution to social care from the Coventry and Warwickshire Integrated Care Board via the BCF is agreed and meets or exceeds the minimum expectation. For Warwickshire the minimum contribution is:
 - £16.138m in 2023/24
 - £17.051m in 2024/25.
 - b. investment in NHS commissioned out-of-hospital services - That a specific proportion of the area's allocation is invested in NHS commissioned out-of-hospital services, while supporting integration plans. For Warwickshire the minimum expenditure is:
 - £12.897m in 2023/24
 - £13.627m in 2024/25

1.4 Prior to approval by the Health and Wellbeing Board on 19th July 2023, the BCF Plan for 2022/23 will be reviewed and approved by:

Review and Approval	Date
Partnership - Joint Commissioning Board	06/06/23
Partnership - Warwickshire Care Collaborative	08/06/23
ICB – Executive	13/06/23
WCC – People DLT	21/06/23
WCC - Corporate Board	20/06/23
NHS Submission Deadline	28/06/23
WCC – Cabinet	13/07/23
Partnership – Health and Wellbeing Board	19/07/23

1.5 NHS England will approve BCF plans in consultation with the Department for Health and Social Care and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. Assurance processes will confirm that national conditions are met, ambitions are agreed for all national metrics and that all funding is pooled, with relevant spend agreed. Assurance of plans will be led by Better Care Managers (BCMs) with input from NHS England and local government representatives and will be a single stage exercise based on a set of key lines of enquiry. A cross-regional calibration meeting will be held after regions have submitted their recommendations, bringing together representatives from each region.

- 1.6 Once approved - NHS England, as the accountable body for the NHS minimum contribution to the fund, will write to areas to confirm that the NHS minimum funding can be released.
- 1.7 These approval letters give formal permission to spend the NHS minimum contribution. This means that the NHS minimum funding can then be released by the Integrated Care Board.
- 1.8 Cabinet approval is required to enable the minimum contributions (specified in the BCF allocations and grant determinations set out in section 2.2 below) to be pooled into a section 75 agreement. The BCF Policy Framework requires section 75 agreements to be signed and in place by 31st October 2023.
- 1.9 At this point all conditions for the funding will then be met.

2. Financial Implications

2.1 Funding sources and expenditure plans:

	2023/24			2024/25		
	Pooled Contribution	Aligned Allocation	Total Budget	Pooled Contribution	Aligned Allocation	Total Budget
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Minimum NHS ring-fenced from ICB allocation	45,204	110,543	155,747	47,762	116,799	164,562
Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)	5,124	-	5,124	5,124	-	5,124
Warwickshire County Council Improved Better Care Fund (iBCF)	15,133	-	15,133	15,133	-	15,133
ICB Discharge Fund	3,518	-	3,518	4,666	-	4,666
WCC Discharge Fund	2,121	-	2,121	3,536	-	3,536
Warwickshire County Council	-	175,938	175,938	-	180,988	180,988
Total Pooled Contribution	71,101			76,223		
Total Additional Aligned Allocation		286,482			297,788	
Total Budget			357,584			374,011

Notes:

- 1) The above table is rounded to £000's for summary purposes.
- 2) Cabinet approved the list of schemes to be delivered and funded through the Improved Better Care Fund (iBCF) allocation for 2023/24 at the Cabinet meeting on the 16th March 2023.
- 3) The local authority pooled contribution of £17.245m for 2023/24 comprises of the iBCF allocation (£15.133m) and WCC Discharge Fund (£2.121m)
- 4) The iBCF allocation for 2024/25 will be published in the Local Authority Settlement in December 2023.
- 5) More detail is provided in the Appendix - Financial Schedule 3.

- 2.2 The following minimum funding must be pooled into the Better Care Fund in 2023-25:

Funding Sources	2023/24	2024/25
Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)	£5,124,786	£5,124,786
Minimum NHS Contribution	£45,204,245	£47,762,805
Discharge Fund - ICB Contribution	£3,518,000	£4,666,667
Discharge Fund – Local Authority Contribution (WCC)	£2,121,662	£3,536,103
iBCF (WCC)	£15,133,281	£15,133,281
Total	£71,101,974	£76,223,642

- 2.3 Additional discharge funds provided through the Hospital Discharge Grant in previous years, have now been included in the BCF for 2023-25 and are being used to deliver the new Community Recovery Service and residential short-term placements.

3. Environmental Implications

None.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 National Condition 1 (as detailed in section 1.3 above) requires a BCF Plan, covering all mandatory funding contributions to have been agreed by Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) areas and minimum contributions (specified in the BCF allocations and grant determinations) to be pooled in a section 75 agreement (an agreement made under section 75 of the NHS Act 2006) by the constituent local authorities (LAs) and Integrated Care Boards (ICBs).
- 4.2 For 2023-25, BCF plans will consist of:
- A narrative plan
 - A completed BCF planning template, including:
 - Planned expenditure from BCF sources.
 - Confirmation that national conditions of the fund are met, as well as specific conditions attached to individual funding streams.
 - Ambitions and plans for performance against BCF national metrics.
 - Any additional contributions to BCF section 75 agreements.
 - An intermediate care capacity and demand plan.
- 4.3 Section 75 of the National Health Service Act 2006 gives powers to local authorities and Integrated Care Boards to establish and maintain pooled funds out of which payment may be made towards expenditure incurred in the exercise of prescribed local authority functions and prescribed NHS functions.
- 4.4 The purpose of the section 75 agreement is to set out the terms on which the local authority and ICB have agreed to collaborate and to establish a

framework through which the Partners can secure the future provision of health and social care services through lead or joint commissioning arrangements. It is also the means through which the local authority and ICB will pool funds and align budgets

5. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

5.1 Regional and national assurance activity:

Assurance activity	Date
BCF planning requirements received	4 th April 2023
Optional draft BCF planning submission submitted to BCM	30 th May 2023
BCF planning submission from local HWB areas (agreed by ICB and WCC) sent to national BCF Team at NHS England	28 th June 2023
Scrutiny of BCF plans by regional assurers, assurance panel meetings and regional moderation	28 th June – 28 th July 2023
Cross regional collaboration	3 rd August 2023
Approval letters issued giving formal permission to spend (NHS minimum)	8 th September 2023
All section 75 agreements to be signed and in place	31 st October 2023

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – BCF Plan 2023-25 Schedule 3

Background Papers

- None.

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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): None

Other members: Councillors John Holland, Jerry Roodhouse and Jonathan Chilvers.