

# Health and Wellbeing Board Sub-Committee

19 July 2023

## Better Care Fund (BCF) Plan 2023-2025

### Recommendations

That the Health and Wellbeing Board Sub-Committee:

- 1) Notes the Better Care Fund Policy Framework and Planning Requirements for 2023/25;
- 2) Notes that the Better Care Fund Narrative Plan and Planning Template for 2023-25 contributes to the wider Health and Wellbeing Board's prevention priorities as well meeting the BCF national conditions; and
- 3) Approves the final version of the Better Care Fund Plan for 2023-25, *in line with the recommendation and delegation of the HWBB on 23 September 2015*, submitted to NHS England on the 28<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

### 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.

#### Better Care Fund Policy Framework 2023-25

- 1.2 Earlier in the year, Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWBs) were advised that BCF policy and planning requirements would be published and that similar to the previous year, HWBs would be required to submit their BCF Plans to NHS England for approval.
- 1.2 The Better Care Fund 2023-25 Planning Requirements published on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2023, set out the template for Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWBs) to submit a plan for two years for approval.
- 1.3 For 2023-25, BCF plans 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.

– Intermediate Care and short-term capacity and demand plan.

- 1.4 The deadline for submission of the BCF plan to NHS England was 28<sup>th</sup> June 2023. Following approval by the ICB and the Council, the plan was submitted by the deadline. Due to the tight timescales required for preparation and approval of the plan, permission has been obtained from NHS England for Cabinet (13<sup>th</sup> July) and HWBB (19<sup>th</sup> July) approval to follow submission. The HWBB is now requested to approve the final version of the plan submitted to NHS England. Any subsequent changes required as a result of consideration by the Cabinet and/or HWBB would result in the BCF plan being re-submitted.

#### National Conditions

- 1.5 The Better Care Fund Policy Statement for 2023-25 provides continuity to previous years of the programme. The policy framework outlines the four national conditions:
1. A jointly agreed plan between local health and social care commissioners and signed off by the Health and Wellbeing Board - That a BCF Plan, covering all mandatory funding contributions has been agreed by Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) areas and minimum contributions (specified in the BCF allocations and grant determinations) are 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).
  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
- 1.6 The Coventry and Warwickshire Integrated Care Board and the local authority are required to confirm compliance with the above conditions to the Health and Wellbeing Board. Compliance with the national conditions will be confirmed

through the planning template and narrative plan. Spend applicable to these national conditions is be calculated in the planning template based on scheme-level expenditure data.

- 1.8 The ICB and local authority are also required to ensure that local providers of NHS and social care services have been involved in planning the use of BCF funding for 2023 to 2025. In particular, activity to support discharge funded by the BCF should be agreed as part of the whole system approach to managing demand and capacity in health and social care. This continues to be achieved through the Better Together Programme, Joint Commissioning Board and Warwickshire Care Collaborative.
- 1.9 During 2023 – 2025 governance of implementation of the BCF will move to the developing Warwickshire Care Collaborative with a plan of action to support the transition. The care collaborative currently shapes decisions as a consultative forum but there are plans to move it to a formal sub-committee of the ICB, with decision making responsibilities, by January 2024.
- 1.10 Similar to last year, local areas are required to submit a plan showing capacity and demand, which is incorporated in the BCF Planning Template. This includes:
  - expected demand for intermediate care services (and other short-term care) to help people remain independent at home (including support aimed at avoiding unnecessary hospital admissions and support following discharge from hospital);
  - Services to support this recovery including rehabilitation and reablement; and
  - expected capacity to meet this demand.

## 2. Financial Implications

### Grant Funding to Local Government

- 2.1 **Improved Better Care Fund (iBCF)** – In advance of the 2023/24 financial year and publication of the BCF Policy Framework, the Health and Wellbeing Board at its meeting on 11th January 2023 received an update on the approach to reviewing schemes funded by the iBCF and supported the list of schemes to be funded from the iBCF for 2023/24.
- 2.2 These schemes have now been assured against the Policy Framework and it has been confirmed that they continue to meet the required conditions of the grant.
- 2.3 The grant conditions remain broadly the same as in previous years. The funding may only be used for the purposes of:
  - Meeting adult social care needs.
  - Reducing pressures on the NHS, including seasonal winter pressures.
  - Supporting more people to be discharged from hospital when they are ready.

- Ensuring that the social care provider market is supported.
- 2.4 **Disabled Facilities Grant** - Ringfenced DFG funding continues to be allocated through the BCF and will continue to be paid to upper-tier local authorities. The statutory duty to provide DFGs to those who qualify for them is placed on local housing authorities.
- 2.4 Similar to previous years, the Disabled Facilities Grant continues to be allocated through the Better Care Fund through top tier authorities due to its importance to the health and care system and is pooled into the BCF to promote joined-up approaches to meeting people's needs to help support more people of all ages to live in suitable housing so they can stay independent for longer. Creating a home environment that supports people to live safely and independently can make a significant contribution to health and wellbeing, and is an integral part of our integration plans, and strategic use of the DFG can support this. The amounts allocated to the District and Borough Councils are pass-ported straight to them and monitoring of expenditure takes place at the HEART Board, with assurance through the Housing Partnership Board, a sub-group of the Better Together programme, as decisions around the use of the DFG funding need to be made with the direct involvement of both tiers working jointly to support integration.
- 2.5 **Discharge Fund** - Additional funds provided through the Hospital Discharge Grant in previous years, have now been included in the BCF for 2023-25 and a proportion of this is now allocated as a grant to the local authority.

### Financial contributions

- 2.6 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
<b>Total Pooled Contribution</b>	<b>71,101</b>			<b>76,223</b>		
<b>Total Additional Aligned Allocation</b>		<b>286,482</b>			<b>297,788</b>	
<b>Total Budget</b>			<b>357,584</b>			<b>374,011</b>

\* Notes:

- 1) The above table is rounded to £000's for summary purposes.
- 2) Areas can agree to pool additional funds into their BCF plan and associated section 75 agreement(s). These additional contributions are not subject to the conditions of the BCF but should be recorded in the planning template.
- 3) The iBCF allocation for 2024/25 will be published in the Local Authority Settlement in December 2023.
- 4) Please refer to the attached Appendix for more detail on funding contributions and spending plans.
- 5) All finances in the BCF Plan 2023-25 have been prepared by the Finance Sub-Group in which Finance Leads from both the Local Authority and ICB are represented.

2.7 Local Areas are also expected to keep records of spending against schemes funded through the BCF. This activity is led by Finance Leads at WCC and the ICB on the Finance Sub-Group which supports the Better Together Programme and assurance is through the Joint Commissioning Board. iBCF funding can be allocated across any or all of the four purposes of the grant in a way that local authorities, working with the ICB, determine best meets local needs and pressures. No fixed proportion needs to be allocated across each of the purposes. The grant conditions for the iBCF also require that the local authority pool the grant funding into the local BCF and report as required through BCF reporting.

Mandatory funding sources

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

<b>Funding Sources</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>
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
<b>Total</b>	<b>£71,101,974</b>	<b>£76,223,642</b>

Financial Implications

2.9 The programme and initiatives for its success are in part funded through national grants: Better Care Fund, additional Discharge Fund, Improved Better Care Fund and Disabled Facilities Grant (2023/24: £70m). The first two come from the Department of Health and Social Care through the ICB, while the latter two are received by the local authority from Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. All are dependent on meeting conditions that contribute towards the programme and the targets, and that plans to this effect are jointly agreed between the Integrated Care Board and the Local Authority under a pooled budget arrangement.

- 2.10 Similar to previous years the County Council continues as the pooled budget holder for the fund.
- 2.11 The County Council also continues to align Out of Hospital service provision and funding with Coventry and Warwickshire Integrated Care Board to support closer integration as part of plans for moving to an Integrated Care System.
- 2.12 The iBCF allocation for 2024/25 has not been published and will be confirmed as part of the wider Local Authority Funding settlement later in 2023. Areas have therefore been advised to plan on the basis that allocations will be consistent with the approach taken in 2023 to 2024 and so no inflationary uplift has been added.
- 2.13 The iBCF is temporary. In order to counter the risk inherent in temporary funding, all new initiatives are temporary or commissioned with exit clauses. There are, however, a number of areas where the funding is being used to maintain statutory social care spending and this would require replacement funding if the Better Care Fund was removed without replacement. This risk is noted in Warwickshire County Council's annual and medium-term financial planning.
- 2.14 As in previous years, a Section 75 Legal Agreement will underpin the financial pooling arrangements. This cannot be signed until our Plan is nationally approved. In order to avoid under delivery and underspends, schemes and initiatives have to be entered into prior to the legal agreement being signed, but this is no different to previous years. The intention is that the Section 75 agreement will be drafted so that it can be signed by the partner organisations as soon as approval is granted.

### **3. Environmental Implications**

None.

### **4. Supporting Information**

#### Metrics

- 4.1 The BCF Policy Framework sets national metrics that must be included in BCF plans in 2023-25. Ambitions should be agreed between the local authority and the ICB and signed off by the HWB.
- 4.2 The framework retains two existing metrics which impact the local authority from previous years:
- effectiveness of reablement (proportion of older people still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement or rehabilitation)
  - older adults whose long-term care needs are met by admission to residential or nursing care per 100,000 population.

- 4.3 The measure of avoidable admissions (unplanned hospitalisation for chronic ambulatory care sensitive conditions per 100,000 population) year has also been retained. Areas need to agree expected levels of avoidable admissions and how services commissioned through the BCF will minimise these.
- 4.4 The measure relating to discharges to usual place of residence (proportion of patients) has also been retained.
- 4.5 A new measure relating to emergency hospital admissions due to falls for adults aged 65 or over has also been introduced. Areas need to agree expected levels of admissions due to falls and how services commissioned through the BCF will minimise these.
- 4.6 Whilst the BCF Plan is for 2023-25, local areas are currently only required to agree ambitions and plans for metrics for 2023/24. In addition to this, a new discharge metric will also need to be set ahead of winter 2023. Ambitions for 2024/25 will need to be completed by areas in quarter 4 of 2023/24 and will include new additional metrics including relating to outcomes following short-term support to maximise independence.
- 4.7 The proposed ambitions for 2023/24 and rationale are set out in the Planning Template and Narrative Plan.
- 4.8 Locally we will continue to monitor progress quarterly against the BCF metrics set out above through the Joint Commissioning Board and Coventry and Warwickshire Urgent and Emergency Care Board.

## 5. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 5.1 Prior to review by the Health and Wellbeing Board, the BCF Plan for 2023-25 has been reviewed and approved by:

<b>Review and Approval</b>	<b>Date</b>
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
<b>NHS Submission Deadline</b>	<b>28/06/23</b>
WCC - Cabinet	13/07/23
Partnership - Health and Wellbeing Board	19/07/23

### Regional and National Assurance

- 5.3 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. 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.

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

## Appendices

1. Appendix 1 – BCF Narrative Plan
2. Appendix 2 – BCF Planning Template.

## Background Papers

1. None.

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

Local Member(s): None

Other members: