

North Tyneside Health & Wellbeing Board Report Date: 11th March 2021

Title: Better Care Fund

Report from : North Tyneside Council & North Tyneside CCG

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Integrated Care for Older People

1. Purpose:

This report confirms the continued activity of the Better Care Fund (BCF) in 2020/21, in line with national conditions.

2. Recommendation(s):

The Board is recommended to note the continued operation of the Better Care Fund in line with the national conditions.

3. Policy Framework

This item relates to the following objectives of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013-23:

- To continually seek and develop new ways to improve the health and wellbeing of the population
- To shift investment to focus on evidence based prevention and early intervention where possible
- To reduce the difference in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy between the most affluent and most deprived areas of the borough;
- To shift investment to focus on evidence based prevention and early intervention;
- To build resilience in local communities through focussed interventions and ownership of local initiatives to improve health and wellbeing; and
- To integrate services where there is an opportunity for better outcomes for the public and better use of public money

4. Information:

The Better Care Fund is a programme spanning both the NHS and local government 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. It has been in operation since 2015/16.

In previous years, a Better Care Fund plan has been approved by the Health and Wellbeing Board. The most recent plan was approved by the Board on 12th September 2019, and covered the period April 2019-March 2020.

In the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, Government advised that BCF policy and planning requirements would not be published and that they should prioritise continuity of provision, social care capacity and system resilience and spend from ringfenced BCF pots based on local agreement in 2020 to 2021, pending further guidance.

This approach was confirmed on 3rd December 2020 with the publication of the “Better Care Fund: policy statement 2020 to 2021” by the Department of Health and Social Care and the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government.

The policy statement set out the following national conditions for the BCF in 2020-21

1. Plans covering all mandatory funding contributions have been agreed by HWB areas and minimum contributions are pooled in a section 75 agreement (an agreement made under section 75 of the NHS Act 2006).
2. The contribution to social care from the CCG via the BCF is agreed and meets or exceeds the minimum expectation (see paragraph 9).
3. Spend on CCG commissioned out of hospital services meets or exceeds the minimum ringfence (see paragraph 10).
4. CCGs and local authorities confirm compliance with the above conditions to their Health and Wellbeing Boards.

Compliance with the National Conditions

1. “Plans covering all mandatory funding contributions have been agreed by HWB areas and minimum contributions are pooled in a section 75 agreement (an agreement made under section 75 of the NHS Act 2006).”

The Better Care Fund Partnership Board, including senior representatives from the Authority and the CCG, have continued to oversee the implementation of the BCF plan and have updated the Section 75 Agreement to cover 2020-21.

2. “The contribution to social care from the CCG via the BCF is agreed and meets or exceeds the minimum expectation (see paragraph 9).”

The minimum expectation requires the CCG to contribute £11,096,836 to social care. This requirement has been met.

3. “Spend on CCG commissioned out of hospital services meets or exceeds the minimum ringfence (see paragraph 10).”

The minimum expectation requires the CCG to contribute £4,950,544 on NHS-commissioned Out of Hospital services. The actual contribution is £5,575,182, hence this requirement has been met.

4. “CCGs and local authorities confirm compliance with the above conditions to their Health and Wellbeing Boards “

This report is intended to serve the purpose of confirming compliance with the above conditions to the Board.

The BCF in 2021/22

The policy statement confirmed that the BCF will continue in 2021/22:

- The iBCF grant will continue in 2021 to 2022 and be maintained at its current level (£2.077 billion). The Disabled Facilities Grant will also continue and will be worth £573 million in 2021 to 2022.
- The CCG contribution will again increase by 5.3% in line with the NHS Long Term Plan settlement.
- The Policy Framework and Planning Requirements will be published in early 2021.”
- The BCF Partnership Board continues to review the content of the BCF Plan. Once BCF planning guidance is published relating to 2021/22, the Health and Wellbeing Board will be asked to consider and approve a revised BCF Plan covering that period.

5. Decision options:

The Board may either:-

- a) Note the continued operation of the Better Care Fund in line with the national conditions, or
- b) request relevant officers, in consultation with the Chair and Deputy of the Board, to undertake further work to make changes to BCF Plan.

6. Reasons for recommended option:

The Board are recommended to agree option a). The continuation of the Better Care Fund presents an opportunity to take forward the principles of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The BCF funds support a wide range of services which are already in operation and which are important to the health and wellbeing of the people of North Tyneside.

COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

7 Financial Implications

The financial implications of the BCF Plan are already embedded in the financial plans of the Authority and the CCG.

8. Legal Implications

The NHS Act 2006, as amended, gives NHS England the powers to attach conditions to the payment of the Better Care Fund Plan. In 2016/17 NHS England have set a requirement that Health and Wellbeing Boards jointly agree plans on how the money will be spent and plans must be signed off by the relevant local authority and clinical commissioning group.

9. Equalities and diversity

There are no equality and diversity implications arising directly from this report.

10. Risk management

The Better Care Fund Partnership Board regularly reviews risks to the delivery of the BCF Plan.

11. Crime and disorder

There are no crime and disorder implications directly arising from this report.