

**JOINT STRATEGIC COMMISSIONING BOARD
22 JUNE 2023**

REPORT TITLE:	BETTER CARE FUND – 2023-2025
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF CARE AND HEALTH

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides a summary of the proposed content of the Wirral Place-based Better Care Fund (BCF) Plan for 2023/25.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Joint Strategic Commissioning Board is recommended to approve the BCF 2023/25 plan.

Note: at the time of writing, the content of the plan does not include any recommendations or adjustments following oversight from the regional BCF team.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 Submission of a Better Care Fund Plan to NHS England is mandatory. It must set out the detail of pooled budget areas in 2023/25 as part of the Section 75 arrangements.
- 1.2 A narrative plan (Appendix 1) must also be submitted describing how the pooled fund will be used to meet the BCF core priorities and the National Conditions which will support people to live healthy, independent, and dignified lives, through joining up health, social care, and housing services seamlessly around the person.
- 1.3 To note that the BCF plan reflects and helps to achieve the outcomes of the Healthy Wirral Plan:
 - Create a place that supports the Health and Wellbeing of everyone living in Wirral in the places that they live.
 - Through understanding our populations' health, we enable more people to remain healthier and independent for longer and live well
 - Families and communities are empowered and supported to raise healthy and resilient children and young people and give them the best start in life.
 - Wirral people and their families feel informed and involved in managing their health and in accessing their care seamlessly from organisations that talk to each other
- 1.4 This will be achieved by building on our well-established joint commissioning arrangements and focusing our BCF spending priorities on services which:
 - Ensure people are discharged from hospital to the right place, this will be supported by our hospital-based discharge hub.
 - Support people to go home, be assessed at home and stay at home, this will be supported by our Home First and reablement services.
 - Continue to develop our intermediate care offer.
 - Enable people to stay at home for as long as possible, this will be supported by our ongoing commitment to developing a high-quality, flexible, and responsive care market, the expansion of enabling technology and home adaptations.
 - Improve our offer to carers.
 - Avoid admissions to hospital through the expansion of our crisis response services, falls prevention and virtual wards which support people who are frail and have respiratory problems.
 - Assessments and reviews which focus on the persons strengths and assets in their communities enabling more of our citizens to feel in control of their care and support. This will be supported by the expansion of our new approach to assessments and easier access to direct payments and personal health budgets.
 - Enhancing our offer to people with a learning disability and/or autism including step down services.
 - Working in tandem with children and families' services to ensure an holistic approach to care and support is maintained.

- Optimise the role of the community voluntary and faith sector in the achievement of our priorities.
- Ensure our system is equipped with services that support business continuity and resilience during periods of high pressure.
- Reduce inequalities and health inequalities by implementing the neighbourhood model.
- Maintain a multi-disciplinary approach with ongoing support for our integrated teams.

1.5 A systemic programme of service reviews will provide us with assurance that all funded schemes are contributing to meeting the National conditions, place-based priorities and value for money outcomes against cost assessments are demonstrated.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

2.1 Submission of a plan is mandatory.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 The Better Care Fund (BCF) represents a collaboration between:

- Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)
- NHS England
- Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)
- The Local Government Association (LGA)

3.2 The BCF plan articulates, at a place-based level, how the BCF is used to successfully deliver the integration of health and social care in a way that supports person-centred care, sustainability and better outcomes for people and carers.

3.3 The Better Care Fund (BCF) Policy Framework sets out the Government's priorities for 2023-25, including improving discharge, reducing the pressure on Urgent and Emergency Care and social care, supporting intermediate care, unpaid carers and housing adaptations. The vision for the BCF over 2023-25 is to support people to live healthy, independent, and dignified lives, through joining up health, social care and housing services seamlessly around the person. This vision is underpinned by the two core BCF objectives:

- Enable people to stay well, safe, and independent at home for longer.
- The provision of care and support at the right time and in the right place.

3.4 Areas are required to develop a two-year plan, (previously annual), in line with the vision and objectives set out in the Policy Framework. These requirements focus the use of BCF funding on the achievement of the objectives of the fund and improving performance against the planning requirements 2023-25. This will include:

- Metrics for working age and older adults.
- Intermediate Care Capacity and Demand plans used to estimate the existing or upcoming capacity deficits and inform the use of BCF pooled funding for delivery of the objectives.
- Expected outputs from scheme types related to discharge, intermediate care unpaid carers and housing.
- Estimates of BCF spend on different services and activities as a proportion of all health and care spend on these services in the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) area. This information will be collected to help better identify and articulate the contribution of BCF funding to delivering capacity, but, as estimates, these figures will not be subject to assurance.
- Mental health, learning disability and autism continue to be an integral area of the BCF and in the plan should be considered on an equal footing to physical health. The objectives apply to all settings and contexts including preventative support or where a person may be discharged from adult or older adult mental health (including dementia), learning disability and autism inpatient settings as well as acute hospitals. People discharged from mental health, learning disability and autism inpatient services who need to access intermediate care services should be included in the BCF intermediate care capacity and demand plans.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The BCF 2023/25 template setting out income and expenditure has been completed (Appendix 1). Risk share agreements are in place. £1bn has been added to the BCF for 2024-25 to provide ongoing support for discharge. The intention is to update the 2024-25 discharge funding conditions according to the evaluation findings of the 2023-24 ASC Discharge Fund. This may impact priority areas for spending and reporting requirements.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There have been delays in finalising the Section 75 agreement, but it is now at the point of completion.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 N/A.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 Risk share arrangements are in place. However, if the BCF budget does not maintain a balanced financial position it may create pressure across the Health and Wellbeing Board area. £1bn has been added to the BCF for 2024-25 to provide ongoing support for discharge. The intention is to update the 2024-25 discharge funding conditions according to the evaluation findings of the 2023-24 ASC Discharge Fund. This may impact priority areas for spending and reporting requirements.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 The following bodies whose services are partially or fully funded by the BCF have been involved in preparing this plan:

- Wirral Council
- The Cheshire and Merseyside ICB, Wirral Place
- Wirral University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (WUTH)
- Wirral Community Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust (CT)
- The Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (CWP)
- A range of social care providers including the voluntary sector
- A range of people with lived experience have been involved, as examples, in the development of a PA register and the reablement strategy
- Attendance from Trust colleagues at residential and care at home forums to build relationships, support discharge and inform and advise on the emerging Transfer of Care Hub.
- Primary Care
- Extra care housing developers and providers
- Liaison with the Place Based Partnership Board will be reinforced enabling partners, including providers, to contribute to in year BCF investment and reviews for all appropriate schemes.
- The executive led discharge hub has given a system focus on escalations and removing obstacles between organisations and has influenced the design of a number of schemes.
- Involvement of housing colleagues in the development of an escalation policy (further engagement with PCNs planned).
- Extra care housing developers and providers

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Wirral Council and the Integrated Care Board has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment will be completed for all new schemes and any schemes that are subject to review.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 All services contracted with the Council are required to demonstrate how they contribute to a reduction in the carbon footprint.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Most services funded by the BCF employ local people improving the local economy. Many of the BCF funded schemes and the reablement strategy improve access to work, education, and volunteering.

REPORT AUTHOR: **Bridget Hollingsworth**
Head of Integrated Services
telephone: 0151 666 3609
email: bridgethollingsworth@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Narrative plan

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Better Care Fund guidance 2023/25.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date