

CABINET

2 MARCH 2021

BETTER CARE FUND

Portfolio Holder: Councillor David Brake, Portfolio Holder for Adults' Services

Report from: Ian Sutherland, Director of People - Children and Adults' Services

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Summary

This report presents an update on Medway's Better Care Fund plan for 2021-2022.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

- 1.1 The Better Care Fund (BCF) is an ambitious programme spanning both the NHS and local government. It is the only mandatory policy to facilitate integration between health and care to deliver person centered and coordinated services.
- 1.2 The BCF was established in 2015 to improve outcomes for patients. Its primary aim was to facilitate better care and support through integrating services provided by Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and Local Authorities (LA's). CCGs and LA's are required to enter into pooled budget arrangements and agree an integrated spending plan.
- 1.3 The Better Care Fund (BCF) in Medway is a joint plan between NHS Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group (the CCG) and Medway Council. Medway NHS Foundation Trust (MFT) and Medway Community Healthcare are also key stakeholders.
- 1.4 A pooled budget for the Better Care Fund is administered in accordance with a Section 75 agreement between the CCG and the Council.
- 1.5 The new BCF planning phase covers the period 2021-2022. At the time of reporting, a new National BCF policy framework updated planning template or financial guidance has not been issued for the financial year. Officers attend

regional and national BCF events and it is broadly anticipated that the guidance and confirmation of funding will be issued at the end of February 2021.

2. Background

2.1 Medway's Joint Commissioning Management Group (JCMG) was established to lead on all elements of joint commissioning between the Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group, including BCF. This has enabled the sharing of information to inform local plans across the system and provided the flexibility to adapt to changes in need, performance or circumstance. This joint approach also ensures that the Kent and Medway CCG and Council governance processes are fully informed e.g. the Health and Wellbeing Board, Kent and Medway CCG's Governing Body and Medway Council's Cabinet.

2.2 A number of innovative programmes have been initiated through the Medway BCF to reduce the pressure across the health and social care system. These include:

- The introduction of a new Care Navigation Service in May 2015, with recommissioning in 2018 to create our Wellbeing Navigation service.
- The reconfiguration of Medway's equipment service into one cohesive offer: Medway Integrated Community Equipment Service – MICES. This was recommissioned in 2020.
- The introduction of Home First, Medway's 'discharge to assess' initiative in April 2016 which enabled the focus to move from a bed-based health and care economy towards one which is needs-based.
- The commissioning of a new Intermediate Care and Reablement service in October 2016.
- Establishment of new discharge pathways, including a new pathway for non-weight bearing patients and establishment of an Integrated Discharge Service.
- Commissioning of additional home care capacity to support winter hospital discharges.
- Pilot of home from hospital, discharge support service.

2.3 BCF initiatives also aim to improve the experience of those Medway residents in receipt of support from the health and social care system. Much effort has been made to ensure that respective parts of the health and social care system do not work in silos. These programmes have been extremely effective in supporting the management of bed demand and patient flows within Medway during the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. BCF Plan for 2021-2022

3.1 Local areas were required to keep their existing BCF Plans (2017-2019) in place to cover the 2020/21 financial year, due to the response to the Covid-19 Pandemic. It is anticipated that we will be required to extend our current BCF arrangements and S75 again, to allow the services which sit within the BCF to continue to operate seamlessly until Government issue new planning

guidance for 2021/22. After guidance is released, areas will need to produce a new BCF plan for assurance locally and nationally.

- 3.2 The Cabinet is asked to agree to delegate authority to the Director of People - Children and Adults' Services, to oversee production of any new BCF plans and for the development and delivery of Medway's Better Care Fund programme, in consultation with the Director of Medway and Swale Integrated Care Partnership (ICP), on behalf of the Kent and Medway CCG, Medway Council's Chief Legal Officer and the Portfolio Holder for Adults' Services.

4. Advice and analysis

- 4.1 The Cabinet is also asked to agree extension of the existing BCF Plan and S75 arrangements to cover the period from 1 April 2021, in order that the arrangements and services that sit within the BCF may be dealt with as seamlessly as possible.
- 4.2 If the national policy guidance is released and requires significant revisions to the existing BCF plan, officers will establish a reporting timetable to return to Cabinet and Health and Wellbeing Board and present this.
- 4.3 Any new plan will also be prepared taking into account governance arrangements emerging within the Integrated Care System as appropriate.

5. Risk management

- 5.1 Risk management is an integral part of the BCF plan and there is an embedded risk management plan within the Section 75 pooled budget agreement.
- 5.2 The majority of services within the BCF Plan are currently operational and risks already assessed and owned. In the case of new services or major variations to existing services, business cases will be developed to ensure that they are fully costed, outcomes clearly stated, and risks fully assessed. Business plans and Project Initiation Documents (PIDs) will be agreed by the Joint Commissioning Management Group. These plans will include robust mobilisation plans for each project, including key milestones, impacts and risks.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 The framework and guidance are not yet available to enable planning for the BCF 2021-22. The current BCF plan for Medway 2017-2020 was drafted based on consultation and needs analysis already undertaken.

7. Financial implications

- 7.1 The finances of the BCF are contained within a Section 75 agreement and this will be updated based on the revised National Policy Framework for BCF when published.

7.2 The Council Capital and Revenue Budget report to Cabinet on 17 November 2020 assumed that the level of funding received through the Better Care Fund for 2021- 22 would be the same as that received in 2020 - 21.

8. Legal implications

8.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from the contents of this report.

8.2 The S75 agreement will be updated based on the national policy framework for the BCF in 2021-22.

9. Recommendations

9.1 The Cabinet is asked to agree an extension of the existing Better Care Fund Plan and S75 arrangements to cover the financial year 2021/22, until a new arrangement can be established following receipt of government guidance.

9.2 The Cabinet is asked to agree to delegate authority to the Director of People - Children and Adults Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Adults' Services, the Chief Legal Officer and the Director of Medway and Swale ICP (on behalf of the Kent and Medway CCG) to oversee production of any new BCF plans in line with government guidance and the for the development and delivery of Medway's Better Care Fund programme.

10. Suggested reasons for decision

10.1 This will enable the services which sit within the BCF to continue to operate seamlessly until Government issue new planning guidance for 2021/22.

10.1 Following receipt of national policy guidance requiring significant revisions to the existing BCF plan, a reporting timetable to return to Cabinet and Health and Wellbeing Board will be established. The Health and Wellbeing Board will be asked to support any new BCF plan. The delivery of the Plan's programme of works will be considered and monitored by the Joint Commissioning Management Group and highlight papers will go to the Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group's Governing Body.

Lead officer contact

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Appendices

Appendix A – BCF narrative plan 2017-2020

Background papers

None.