

# **HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**9 MARCH 2023**

## **BETTER CARE FUND PLAN 2022/23**

Report from: James Williams, Director of Public Health  
Author: Su Irving, Head of Adult Partnership Commissioning, and the lead for the Better Care Fund.

### Summary

This report provides the Committee with an overview of the current Better Care Fund Plan (BCF Plan). It enables the committee to review the potential content of the draft 2023 – 2025 BCF Plan for Medway and the context, helping to inform the development of this plan.

1. Budget and Policy Framework
  - 1.1 The Better Care Fund (BCF) is an ambitious programme spanning both the NHS and local government. It provides a mandatory framework to facilitate integration between health and care services to deliver person centered and coordinated services to meet an individual's needs.
  - 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 Local Authorities (LA's) and the NHS. In Kent and Medway, the legal entity and NHS body is now the NHS Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board (K&M ICB). The NHS and LA's are required to enter into pooled budget arrangements and agree an integrated spending plan for the BCF funding allocation.
  - 1.3 The Better Care Fund (BCF) in Medway is a joint plan between the Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board (K&M ICB) and Medway Council. Medway NHS Foundation Trust (MFT) and Medway and Swale Health and Care Partnership partners have also been involved in discussions related to the content and delivery of the Plan.
  - 1.4 The pooled budget for the Better Care Fund is administered in accordance with a Section 75 agreement between the ICB and the Council.

## 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 ICB, 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 K&M ICB and Council governance processes are fully informed e.g., the Health and Wellbeing Board, K&M ICB's Governing Body and Medway Council's Cabinet.

2.2 Several 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 Care Navigation Service in May 2015. This was recommissioned in 2018 and in 2023 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 commissioning of an Intermediate Care and Reablement service
- Commissioning of additional home care capacity to support winter hospital discharges.
- The Carers First Service. This has been heralded as national best practice, with an example of support for young carers being added to the Better Care Exchange. This is the website portal that shares best practice and guidance pertaining to the BCF. This case study is to be found in Appendix B.

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 work collaboratively. These programmes have been extremely effective in supporting the management of bed demand and patient flows within Medway during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.4 The Winter Surge funding (additional resources provided by central government to support discharge from acute hospitals) was delivered through the BCF Plan 2022/23. An addendum was added to the Plan which is set out in Appendix A

## 3. BCF Plan 2022 - 2023

3.1 The BCF Plan for 2022/23 can be found in Appendix A for the Committee to review. This plan has been reviewed by the Health and Wellbeing Board and approved by Cabinet on 18 October 2022.

#### 4. BCF Plan for 2023-2025

4.1 BCF guidance was due to be released in October 2022 to formulate a two-year plan from 2023 to 2025. At the time of reporting, a new National BCF policy framework updated planning template or financial guidance has not been issued for the 2-year plan period. Officers attend regional and national BCF events, and it is broadly anticipated that the guidance and confirmation of funding will be issued in March 2023.

4.2 Any new BCF plans will be drawn up in consultation with the Director of Medway and Swale Health and Care Partnership, on behalf of the NHS Kent and Medway ICB. Any additional commentary offered by the Committee on the existing BCF plan for 2022/23, will be considered by officers and used to inform the development of the BCF Plan for 2023 – 2025.

#### 5. Advice and analysis

5.1 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, if time permits, to this Committee for pre-decision scrutiny.

#### 6. Risk management

6.1 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.

6.2 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.

#### 7. Consultation

7.1 The framework and guidance are not yet available to enable planning for BCF 2023-25. The current BCF plan for Medway 2022 - 2023 was created based on consultation and needs analysis already undertaken.

#### 8. Financial implications

8.1 The financial allocations of the BCF are contained within a Section 75 agreement and this will be updated based on the annual allocations and revised National Policy Framework for BCF when published.

## 9. Legal implications

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

9.2 The S75 agreement has been updated based on the national policy framework for BCF in 2022-23. The S75 Agreement will be updated for the BCF plan for 23-25

## 10. Recommendation

10.1 The Committee are asked to review the BCF Plan for 2022 – 2023 and agree any comments to be included in the development of the BCF Plan for 2023 - 25.

## Lead Officer Contact

Su Irving, Head of Adults' (25+) Partnership Commissioning and Better Care Fund, Gun Wharf, 01634 332018

## Appendices

Appendix A - BCF Plan 2022-2023, including Addendum

Appendix B - Young Carers case study

## Background papers

None.