

CABINET

11 JULY 2023

BETTER CARE FUND 2023 – 2025 ADDENDUM REPORT

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Teresa Murray, Deputy Leader of the Council

Report from: Lee-Ann Farach, Director of People, Children and Adults Services
James Williams, Director of Public Health

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Summary

This addendum report provides a draft minute of the discussion at Health and Wellbeing Board on 7 July 2023, in relation to this report.

1. Health and Wellbeing Board

- 1.1. The Board considered the report at its meeting on 7 July 2023 and its comments are set out in the draft minute as follows.
- 1.2. The Better Care Fund (BCF) was a joint fund between NHS Medway CCG and Medway Council, with Medway NHS Foundation Trust (MFT) as a key stakeholder.
- 1.3. In March 2023, new policy and planning guidance was released, requiring a two year plan to be developed by local areas and submitted for national approval by 28 June 2023. The BCF 2023/25 Plan was presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board following submission for regional and national approval on 28 June 2023. Owing to the deadline for submission, the Cabinet would be asked to agree to delegate authority to the Director of People and Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Deputy Leader of the Council, to approve the submission of monitoring reports as required in order to meet national reporting deadlines.
- 1.4. The Board was assured that this was an overall interagency plan that sets the priorities and areas for collaboration.
- 1.5. Board Members asked how it could be ensured that the use of assistive technology remained a focus of the plan and was inclusive, as the importance

of it was clear due to the ability to ensure that people remained independent and maintained responsibility for their own health and care. Officers said that assistive technology was vital and formed the basis of strength based work that continued to take place within health and social care. It was a tool used to reaffirm independence and maintain prevention strategies. There was a digital strategy in place alongside the NHS initiative scheme to enable the people of Medway to access equipment and internet provision. There was more to be done to promote the availability of the scheme and to ensure that people who needed it were able to access the support available. As part of the falls prevention workstream there was a greater focus on technology, which would be backed up with use of funding from the Integrated Care Board.

- 1.6. A Member commented that more training was needed for social care staff on use of new assistive technology, and it was encouraging that Medway University had advised that they would allow for one of their rooms to be set up and used as a demonstration room for social care staff on how equipment can and should be used.
- 1.7. Board Members expressed that improvements needed to be made to elderly respite care services and officers agreed that there was a distinct challenge in recruitment of workforce needed to make improvements. This was an area of priority and work was being undertaken on exploration of different ways to provide the increased capacity needed. Collaborative work was being undertaken with all care providers to ensure that the workforce received the training they needed to carry out their duties at the highest standard. It was vital to note that there was a high level of staff shortage nationally in social care due to a disparity in pay and working conditions and the presenting issues and improvements to pathways needed to be addressed in partnership with the NHS.
- 1.8. In response to questions regarding limited data on waiting lists and why reconfiguration of dementia beds at Platters Farm Lodge would not be completed till 2024, the Board was assured that the information was not included in the report as at the time of submission of the plan there was still reconfiguration taking place, which had now been completed. In terms of data on waiting lists, when the plan was developed, submission had to be on the basis of assured data. A quarterly report was required by DHSC to demonstrate progress on the BCF Plan metrics.
- 1.9. It was suggested and agreed that a visit be arranged to Platters Farm Lodge and that the Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee as well as other Councillors be invited to the visit where possible.
- 1.10. The Health and Wellbeing Board noted the report.

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Appendices

None

Background papers

None