

## The Better Care Fund & Improved Better Care Fund

Lead Officer: Stephen Chandler, Director of Adult Social Care

Author: Tim Baverstock

Contact Details: [tdbaverstock@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:tdbaverstock@somerset.gov.uk)

Cabinet Member: David Huxtable

Division and Local Member: All

### 1. Summary

- 1.1. The Better Care Fund (BCF) 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.

The BCF has been created to improve the lives of some of the most vulnerable people in our society, placing them at the centre of their care and support, and providing them integrated health and social care services, resulting in an improved experience and better quality of life

**The following has been added to the health and wellbeing board constitution as a statutory responsibility:**

“discharging all functions relating to the Better Care Fund that are required or permitted by law to be exercised by the Board including: Agreeing the Better Care Fund; and overseeing the delivery of the Better Care Fund and Improved Better Care Fund. This includes providing a regular written progress report on each of the schemes under the fund to the Board meeting.”

- 1.2. The Better Care Fund has been in place since 2015/2016 and is a joint budget held by the CCG and Adult Social Care. It includes the previous Disabled Facilities Grant funding which was held by the District Councils and this funding is currently passported to them annually. In 2018/19 the fund totalled c.£57m. A financial agreement (Section 75) underpins the use of the fund and the allocations are fully explained in *5. Background Papers - Appendix A*.
- 1.3. The planning guidance for 2019/20 and the revised Better Care Fund is yet to be issued at the time of writing this report. The National Framework for the scheme can be accessed via the link in *5. Background Papers*.
- 1.4. Whilst much of the original Better Care Fund was a continuation of existing spend to meet the objectives, Adult Social care has increasingly been able to use additional funding from the Improved BCF to innovate and facilitate person centred support spanning health and social care.

### 2. Issues for consideration / Recommendations

- 2.1. To discuss the appropriate governance and management of reports pertaining to the Better Care Fund and the Improved Care Fund. This needs to include potential delegation of authority for completion and sign off of the 2019/20 plan, give the timescales for submission are not expected to coincide with future HWBB's.

- 2.2.** An overview of the current commitments for the Better Care Fund and Improved Better Care Funds.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1.** The current national measures monitored for the BCF and iBCF are:

- Total non-elective admissions
- Delayed Transfers of Care
- Permanent admissions of older people to residential and nursing care homes
- Proportion of people still at home 91 days after discharge into reablement/rehabilitation services

Currently a dashboard is produced for these measures which was previously monitored by the Joint Commissioning Board. This Board has not met for 6 months due to changes in staffing at the CCG and the Sustainability & Transformation Plan workstreams. An overview has continued to come to the HWBB and performance continues to be tracked by officers.

- 3.2.** The fund is currently divided as per the table in Appendix A. The CCG funding of £23.5m is funding person centred care within Somerset Partnership, Taunton and Somerset and Yeovil District trusts and is managed solely by the CCG. The remainder of the fund is held by SCC and some of the investments are detailed in 3.3.

- 3.3.** The BCF and Improved and Additional Improved BCF monies that are held by SCC contribute to numerous schemes and support. A list of a few are detailed here:

- Reablement staffing
- Integrated Equipment services
- Nursing Home Support team
- Maintaining service delivery including interim health provision
- Learning Disability day opportunities
- Home First
- Supporting the social care market
- Housing adaptations and support (in partnership with district councils)

- 3.4.** Using the BCF we have been able to work on joint schemes with our district colleagues. These include Housing Occupational Therapists and funding has been top sliced to have a stock of modular ramping, simple stairlifts and bathing equipment that therefore do not need to go through a DFG or adaptation application process to facilitate a discharge.

- 3.5.** In addition to the BCF and iBCF's, the Department for Health and Social Care passported extra funding for social care in October 2018, badged as winter funding. This £2.5m has been reissued for 2019/20 but is currently not part of the Better Care Fund or the iBCF. It has explicit conditions around supporting the health system, in particular delayed discharges. For last winter and 2019/20, SCC have utilised this funding to expand Home First, in particular to purchase additional care and night care to support more people at home. It has also helped Home First support the Rapid Response team to keep people out of hospital by tapping into the instantly available homecare resource.

- 3.6.** SCC continues to utilise all the available funding to meet identified gaps and

needs linked to supporting health and care. Recent examples include a hybrid dementia pathway with a unique combination of homecare and residential care and we will shortly be putting in place a trusted assessor scheme in partnership with providers and the Residential Care Providers Association.

#### **4. Implications**

- 4.1.** There is likely to be a very short period of time to agree the 2019-20 refresh of the plans. HWBB may wish to delegate responsibility for sign off should a Board meeting not be possible due to these timescales.
- 4.2.** Delegation is likely to be required as national timescales for submission of the BCF have historically been within 8 weeks of the forms and guidance being issued. This is unlikely to allow time for a scheduled HWB Board to consider in the normal way and will either need an extraordinary HWB meeting or delegation to the Director of Adult Social Care and CCG lead Director.
- 4.3.** The HWBB should play a more active role in monitoring and supporting the BCF. It is an area that transcends CCG, District councils and LA's and as such is an important investment to benefit the people of Somerset.

#### **5. Background papers**

- 5.1** [BCF National Policy Framework 2019-20](#)