

Item No. 13.	Classification: Open	Date: 2 May 2017	Meeting Name: Health and Wellbeing Board
Report title:		Better Care Fund (BCF) – update and proposal for 2017/18 planning	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Caroline Gilmartin, Director of Integrated Commissioning, NHS Southwark CCG Genette Laws, Director of Commissioning, Southwark Council	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Health and Wellbeing Board note the latest position on planning for the 2017-2019 BCF and agree the process for final sign off, as set out in paragraphs 17 and 18 of the report.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. The Better Care Fund (BCF) is a nationally mandated joint fund to promote integration and transformation of community based health and care related services. The total fund value in 2016/17 was £21.83m, formed by a CCG contribution of £20.68m and a Local Authority contribution of £1.15m. This was the minimum required value of the BCF for Southwark under national rules. The fund was applied to social care services (75%) and CCG commissioned community health services (25%) in line with requirements. 2017/18 will be the third full year of operation of the BCF.
3. In 2017/18 this core amount is expected to increase by 1.8% inflation. In addition to the BCF there is a new Improved Better Care Fund (IBCF) grant of £9.2m which will be paid directly to the local authority for protection of social care. This was announced in the Spring Budget and is in addition to the original local government settlement which incorporated £1.7m IBCF for Southwark. Plans for the use of the fund are to be agreed with health as part of the BCF.
4. The BCF pooled budget is governed by a Section 75 agreement that sets out the governance arrangements and detail of the 21 schemes that are funded. The services are intended to effectively support people in the community, reduce hospital and care home admissions and help people to be discharged smoothly and safely from hospital. The plan needs to be agreed by the Health and Wellbeing Board and be subject to monitoring reports during the year.
5. The guidance for the Better Care Fund for 2017/18 has yet to be issued. It was reported in January to this Board, that this has been expected since November 2016, and has been considerably delayed.

6. Some anticipated changes to previous guidance have been shared by National Health Service England (NHSE). Planning for the 2017/18 programme has continued on that basis. This report sets out some of the anticipated changes to the guidance and to the funding.
7. The steps for agreeing the Better Care Fund programme for 2017/18 taking into account the delays in guidance are outlined at the end of the report.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Changes to the Better Care Fund

BCF Funding for 2017/18 and the Improved Better Care Fund (IBCF)

8. The funding allocation for 2017/18 is expected to be around £22.2m plus £9.2m Improved Better Care Fund, which is to be pooled in the local BCF. There is also expected to be significant growth in Disabled Facilities Grant which is part of the Better Care Fund. This would bring the BCF to over £30m in Southwark.
9. Department of Health policy guidance has been issued on the introduction of the Improved Better Care Fund (IBCF). The funding will be paid directly to local authorities via a Section 31 grant from the Department for Communities and Local Government. It is expected that the Government will attach a set of conditions to the Section 31 grant, to ensure it is included in the BCF at local level and will be spent on adult social care, including supporting the social care provider market and improving delayed transfers of care. Plans for the use of the IBCF are to be agreed between health and social care. The grant conditions are expected to be published alongside the BCF planning guidance.
10. Proposals will be submitted as part of the overall plan for the BCF for 2017/19 which will be agreed subject to the NHSE BCF assurance process. However the IBCF element is a council grant and as such it is expected that this element of the BCF will be exempt from the NHSE process and can be agreed in advance of BCF approval.

Section 75 arrangements

11. To ensure compliance with Section 75 arrangements, it is proposed to roll the existing Section 75 agreement forward until the 2017/18 BCF is agreed. Given the delay in issuing the guidance this approach is common to other joint arrangements across the country.

Graduation

12. NHSE have recently invited bids for a small number of areas to “graduate” from the BCF to a more integrated system in line with the national aim of full integration by 2020. If areas are successful they will take on a national peer improvement role. Criteria include the following features for interested areas:
 - Have in place a sufficiently mature system of health and social care with evidence of:
 - Strong shared local political, professional, commissioner and community leadership;

- An agreed system-wide strategy for improving health and wellbeing through health and social care integration to 2020.
 - A robust approach to managing risk,
- Can demonstrate the application is approved by all signatories required by BCF planning.
 - Provide evidence of improvement and/or approach to improving performance on BCF national performance metrics and how graduation will enable the area to accelerate improvement on these metrics.
 - Set out plans to pool an agreed amount greater than the minimum levels of the BCF or align the commissioning of an equivalent or greater scope of services.
 - Are committed to a 'sector-led improvement' approach in which they are willing to act as peer leaders, working with national partners to support other areas looking to graduate.
13. Southwark are committed to developing a deeper level of integration as set out in the joint Forward View, enabling optimal use of total resources across health and local authority services. However, whilst some of the above conditions for graduation may be met in Southwark, it is considered that an application would best be deferred to the second wave of BCF graduation expected in 2017/18, when local plans are further developed and the benefits of graduation for the pilot sites are clearer.

Developing the plan

14. The existing Southwark BCF is considered to be relatively strong, consistently receiving a strong evaluation in the NHSE assurance process. This is something to build upon in the 2017/18 process rather than radically change the approach. However, following a multi-agency workshop on the BCF a number of longer term changes have been identified that would be developed over 2017/18 to ensure alignment with strategic priorities.
15. The proposed key changes in 2017/18 are:
- Proposals for investment of the Improved Better Care Fund Grant (IBCF)
 - Existing and new schemes will be rationalised and grouped into specific themes which more closely reflect the aims of the BCF programme.
 - Schemes will be further reviewed and evaluated over the course of 2017/18 and any required changes reflected in the 2018/19 plan.
16. An evaluation of this year's programme will feed into the plans for 17/18 and updates will be reflected to align to the Five Year Forward View, the Sustainability and Transformation Plan and integration of reablement and rehabilitation services.
17. It is proposed to hold a special meeting of the Health and Well Being Board near to the submission date to enable a full discussion on the plans and the proposals for the IBCF.

18. The Partnership Commissioning Team will take the lead in shaping detailed BCF plans for further discussion and agreement. A draft will be agreed through the Health and Social Care Partnership Board prior to being signed off by the council and the CCG, and agreed by the Health and Wellbeing Board. The joint Council and CCG Adults Commissioning Development Group will provide strategic oversight on the development of BCF plans.

Policy implications

19. There are no direct policy implications arising from this report. Any changes to the BCF for 2017/19 arising from the planning process described in this report may have policy implications. These will be agreed by the Health and Wellbeing Board before the BCF is finalised in line with the national timetable.

Resource implications

20. There are no direct resource implications arising from this report. Any changes to the BCF for 2017/19 arising from the planning process described in this report may have resource implications. These will be agreed by the Health and Wellbeing Board before the BCF is finalised in line with the national timetable.

Consultation

21. The BCF funds a range of health and social care services that are developed in line with existing policies on consultation in the commissioning process.
22. The approach to developing the BCF for 2017/19 has been discussed by the joint Adults Commissioning Development Group which includes senior CCG and Council and Healthwatch representation. The draft plan will be subject to consultation.

REASONS FOR LATENESS AND URGENCY

23. The lateness and urgency of this report arises from the delay in national BCF planning guidance. It is likely that the guidance will introduce significant changes in the form of substantial additional funding. The BCF plan needs to be agreed by the Health and Wellbeing Board as well as the council and the CCG prior to submission. It is possible that the plan will need to be developed quickly after the release of guidance, and submitted before the next Health and Wellbeing Board meeting. The report suggests an option for ensuring appropriate input from the board into agreeing the final plan.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Better Care Fund documentation	160 Tooley Street SE1 2QH	Adrian Ward Programme Manager 020 7525 3345

APPENDICES

No.	Title
None	

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Caroline Gilmartin, Director of Integrated Commissioning, NHS Southwark CCG Genette Laws, Director of Commissioning, Southwark Council	
Report Author	Adrian Ward, Programme Manager, CCG	
Version	Final	
Dated	28 April 2017	
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CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Law and Democracy	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	No	No
Cabinet Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	28 April 2017	