

Health and Wellbeing Board

Special meeting 15 December 2021

Walsall Better Care Fund 2021-2022 Planning template and Narrative plan.

1. Purpose

This report will provide an update regarding completion of the 2021-2022 Better Care Fund Planning Template and Narrative Plan, completed as per national Better Care Fund reporting requirements.

Agreement and sign off from Walsall Health and Wellbeing Board is required to support national conditions, and approval from national leads.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Health and Wellbeing Board receives and agrees the 2021-2022 Walsall Better Care Fund Planning Template for approval to be sought at national level.
- 2.2. That the Health and Wellbeing Board receives and agrees the Better Care Fund 2021-2022 Narrative Plan for approval to be sought at national level.

3. Report detail

3.1 Background

Following an announcement from Central Government in 2013, The Better Care Fund (BCF) was introduced across the Country in 2014. The announcement meant the BCF would provide Local Authorities, specifically Adult Social Care and Clinical Commissioning Groups with the opportunity to enter into 'pooled budget' arrangements to support social care and community services for older people.

- 3.2 The BCF is one of the first vehicles to promote the move towards integration between social care and health to:
 - Remove pressure from NHS services
 - Reduce hospital discharge delays
 - Support timely hospital discharges
 - Reduce hospital admissions for older people where possible
 - Improve and maintain independence
 - Promote wellbeing

- 3.3 Management of the fund is through a structured programme. The programme outlines services and schemes agreed by partners to meet national aims and outcomes. Each Local Authority and Commissioning Group, known as local

areas must provide assurance to national leads regarding programme spend and performance in accordance with policy requirements and s.75 agreements.

- 3.4 Locally, Walsall Better Care Fund is subject to agreed local governance to ensure overview, assurance and approval of spend and performance across the programme. For national compliance, all local BCF programmes are subject to national reporting requirements, which includes agreement from local Health and Wellbeing Boards as a mandatory requirement.
- 3.5 Local areas were required to complete 2021-2022 BCF plans for submission. These plans included a planning excel template and a Narrative Plan. To meet the submission deadline of 16 November 2021, Walsall's BCF Planning Template and Narrative plan were subject to agreed governance mechanisms to secure approval. It is now a requirement to seek agreement of both documents to ensure the national team will review and consider the local plan for national approval. National approval will remain outstanding until Board members agree the plan.
- 3.6 Headlines from the local plan

Walsall BCF is approx. 42 million. This is broken down as follows:

- Main programme of services commissioned by Adult Social Care and Black Country and West Birmingham CCG, Walsall totals 23 million
- Disabled Facilities Grant, a requirement of the programme totals 4 million for aids and adaptations and minor adaptations to support hospital discharges where the patient is returning home.
- Adult Social Care allocation, namely the Improved Better Care Fund is part of the programme but managed by Adult Social Care to provide support to the provider market, support NHS pressures and meet social care needs. This totals 14 million.

Recorded income and expenditure are in line with 2021-2022 spend. This is a rollover from last financial year for consistency and detailed in the planning template (excel sheet tab 5).

The Planning Template also features five key metrics for this financial year, each with agreed planned targets as required (excel sheet tab 6). Local Authority, Walsall Healthcare Trust and CCG data teams have provided planned and actual metrics from analysis. Our agreed 'stretch' metrics reflect necessary caveats because of an extraordinary year last year due to the pandemic. Metrics 8.4 (residential placements) and 8.5 (re-ablement) are agreed stretch metrics in line with the Council's Corporate plan and analysis of previous targets from financial year 2019-2020. Metrics 8.1 (avoidable admissions) 8.2 (Length of stay) and 8.3 (Place of residence) have been agreed with Trust partners following analysis and has taken into account both weekly and monthly data. Avoidable admissions is a new target for the programme and replaces Delayed Transfer of Care targets.

The Narrative Plan which sits alongside the Planning Template, details Walsall's approach to meeting BCF aims and outcomes, as well as detailing future alignment with the alliance agreement, Walsall Together.

The plan focusses on the following areas:

- Joint governance arrangements

- Plans for integration and joint commissioning arrangements
- Approaches to support hospital discharges
- An update regarding Disabled Facilities Grant
- Approaches to equality and health inequalities

4. Implications for Joint Working arrangements:

Financial implications

As a programme, BCF is a key enabler to integration. Despite this, local areas have been required to complete one-year plans, which has restricted long term planning. The additional Improved BCF paid directly to Local Authorities also remains as a temporary fund, with year on year agreement. This presents a risk for local areas, as programmes utilise funding to invest in services to meet needs and staffing to increase capacity. At national level, discussions have taken place in relation to 3-year plans; however, to date this is yet to be agreed.

5. Health and Wellbeing Priorities:

- 5.1 The introduction of the BCF has enabled joint working and decision making between Adult Social Care and Black Country and West Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Group; services and schemes funded by the programme support Walsall's approach to integration, ensuring support to reduce delays with hospital discharges, supporting older people on discharge from hospital and supporting independence. The programme also supports the local approach to a healthy population as per the Health and Wellbeing Board strategy, by aligning the outcome of independence to older people needing less help from health and social care services.
- 5.2 Work across the programme continues however as BCF budgets are set year on year, there is a risk councils will struggle to fund specific services from budgets if BCF funding is no longer available in the future.

Background papers

1. 2021-22 BCF Planning Template
2. 2021-22 BCF Narrative Plan
3. Version control and sign off sheet

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