
Better Care Fund 2017/19

Committee considering report: Executive on 4 May 2017

Portfolio Member: Councillor Graham Jones

Date Portfolio Member agreed report: 3 March 2017

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Forward Plan Ref: EX3218

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The Better Care Fund (BCF) is a government initiative established to fast track integration with Health and Social Care. The West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board's Locality Integration Board has developed a draft plan based on the Department of Health's 2017-19 Integration and BCF policy framework, however the national guidance has not yet been published. Advice from the Better Care Team is that all localities will need to submit plans to NHS England by 16th May 2017.
- 1.2 In order to avoid any delay in the submission of the plan this report seeks the Executive's approval for the draft BCF plan for 2017/19, subject to the Head of Adult Social Care, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board, ensuring the plan aligns with the BCF National Guidance once it is published.

2. Recommendation:

- 2.1 That the Executive approves the draft plan and delegates authority to the Head of Adult Social Care, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board, to approve the final plans for the Better Care Fund 2017/19.

3. Implications

- 3.1 **Financial:** Funding allocations are still to be determined but are likely to be minimal; estimates are 1.79% in 2017/18 and 1.9% 2018/19 however, we are negotiating a 2.3% increase in 2017/18 and 2% in 2018/19 in line with inflation. Whilst plans will be agreed for two years there will still be some flexibility to make adjustments should the need arise. The additional funding announced in the Spring Budget 2017 will be ring fenced for Adult Social Care, we are awaiting detailed guidance but understand there will be conditions in relation to how it can be used.
- 3.2 **Policy:** None
- 3.3 **Personnel:** None
- 3.4 **Legal:** None

3.5 **Risk Management:** None

3.6 **Property:** None

3.7 **Other:** None

4. Other options considered

4.1 N/A

5. Executive Summary

- 5.1 The Better Care Fund (BCF) is a government initiative established to fast track integration with Health and Social Care. 2015/16 was the first year of implementation, all Councils and CCGs had to agree a plan and then obtain approval from their Health and Wellbeing Boards
- 5.2 There has been a delay in issuing the national guidance; we understand this is now likely to be towards the end of week commencing 24th April 2017. However, The Department of Health has issued the 2017-19 Integration and BCF policy framework, which confirms there are four national conditions, rather than the previous eight and four national performance metrics. Advice from the Better Care Team is that all localities will need to submit plans to NHS England by 16th May 2017.
- 5.3 Going forward it is still the intention that where systems are able to demonstrate real progress in their plans for integration it will be possible to 'graduate' from the BCF process. Neither the process nor criteria for this has been agreed but it is believed that from 6 – 10 systems will graduate in 2017/18.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The 2015/16 BCF has provided significant learning that should allow us to build on plans for the coming year. Delays in publishing the national guidance have created a degree of uncertainty but we have continued to develop local plans. This is reflective of the approach in both Reading and Wokingham Localities.

7. Appendices

- 7.1 Appendix A - Supporting Information
- 7.2 Appendix B – Equalities Impact Assessment
- 7.3 Appendix C – Better Care Fund Plan 2017 - 2019