

Health and Wellbeing Board

15 March 2023

Better Care Fund: Discharge Fund 22/23 & Planning for 2024/25 onwards

For Decision

Portfolio Holder: Cllr P Wharf, Adult Social Care and Health

Local Councillor(s): All

Executive Director: V Broadhurst, Executive Director of People - Adults

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Report Status: Public

Recommendation:

1. To retrospectively approve the Adult Social Care Discharge Fund Plan, which is pooled into the Better Care Fund 2022/23
2. To note the progress to date of the working group that has formed to identify opportunities to re-align Better Care Fund investment from 2023/24, and to receive a further item at a future Health and Wellbeing Board meeting.

Reason for Recommendation:

1. The details of the Adult Social Care Discharge Fund were announced in December 2022 by Department of Health and Social Care¹. A condition of which was that the funding be pooled into the Better Care Fund (BCF) 2022/23 budget and plans approved in line with BCF governance.
2. The short timescales between announcement of funding and deadlines to submit planning templates, and subsequent fortnightly returns, did not allow for Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) approval, hence retrospective approval is sought. The Plans were approved for submission by Integrated Care Board (ICB) and

¹ [Letter to the health and social care sector from the Minister for Care - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Council Chief Executives, Section 151 Officer, Executive Director for Adults and Housing in consultation with the HWB Chair.

3. At the HWB meeting on 30 March 2022, the HWB approved the BCF 2022/23 Plan. This included a narrative document that reflected Dorset's ambition to utilise the BCF differently in the future. From 2023/24 it is anticipated that current annual funding allocations will be extended to two years. This provides opportunity for the Council and NHS Dorset to develop longer term plans for BCF investment, including re-allocation of funds to schemes and initiatives that might better support achievement of our shared goals.
4. A working group has formed to develop the programme of work required to deploy a new, and different approach to BCF investment.

1. Report - Adult Social Care Discharge Fund (ASCDF) Plan

- 1.1 The ASCDF Plan for 2022/23 (Appendix A) was submitted to the national BCF Team on 16 December 2022.
- 1.2 The fund provided Dorset Council and ICB with additional funding of £4,599,113 to invest into services and initiatives that would achieve the maximum reduction in delayed discharge from hospital. Funds were released in two tranches, December 2022 and January 2023, but only if areas had met the planning and reporting requirements, which Dorset did. Funds must be spent by March 2024.
- 1.3 Developing the spending plan (Appendix A) was challenging due to the short timescale between announcement and plan submission, however, the Council and Dorset NHS worked effectively together to meet the required timescales.
- 1.4 From 10th January 2023, the Council have submitted fortnightly activity and spend reports, as is a condition of the fund, to evidence the use of the funds, and provide additional narrative such as progress made in the reporting period and any challenges and barriers.
- 1.5 Council officers expect the fortnightly reporting to continue until expiry of the fund on 31st March 2023.

2. Report - Planning for re-alignment of the BCF

- 2.1 Since the last meeting of the HWB, system pressures have created an exceptionally busy period for Health and Social Care officers, therefore progress in future planning has not progressed as quickly as we may have envisaged when we reported in November 2022. However, Officers from Dorset NHS, Public Health, Dorset Council Adult and Children's Social Care Commissioners along with Council Adult Social Care Portfolio Holders have met to discuss development of the BCF Plan for 2023-2025. The Children's Services Portfolio Holder has been subsequently briefed on the plans outlined below.

- 2.2 It is Dorset's ambition to extend the BCF to All Age Commissioning, which as reported in the BCF Narrative Plan for 2022/23 could be grouped in the following local priority areas; Demand Management, Digital and Technology, Care Optimisation and Care Provider Development.
- 2.3 We want to develop an exemplar model in Dorset that demonstrates how the ICS can change previous approaches via trust and good working relationships; learning from each other as we develop new initiatives.
- 2.4 A working group of the officers mentioned at 2.1 has been formed and are focusing on the following elements to assess and develop the programme to deploy a new, and different approach to BCF investment. This group will work with the recently agreed Integrated Care Partnership Strategy and will include;
 - 2.4.1 Developing proposals to strengthen the governance of the BCF
 - 2.4.2 Identifying the opportunities to use BCF funding differently, extending to an All-Age Approach, including Dorset Council's Birth to Settled Adulthood Programme where possible
 - 2.4.3 Linking the BCF more closely to Population Health, and Health Inequalities work, and a stronger focus on outcomes
 - 2.4.4 Planning BCF investment on two-year basis, rather than current annual cycles – including opportunities for further pooled budgets
 - 2.4.5 Identification and mitigation of any risks, including financial, for any proposed BCF alterations
 - 2.4.6 The evaluation approach to measure effectiveness and impact beyond the mandatory BCF reporting metrics
 - 2.4.7 Developing a realistic timetable for the activity to be progressed with phased implementation.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 As referenced the Council is required to submit fortnightly spend and activity reports to BCF national team on behalf of the Dorset ICB for the ASCDF. There are established arrangements between the Council and Dorset NHS to ensure we remain within the financial envelope of the overall BCF and to Plan.
- 3.2 There is work underway to re-set joint commissioning governance across Health and Social Care as part of the ICB set up. Until this is confirmed Commissioners and Finance leads continue to meet regularly via the Joint Commissioning Board and this is the forum for continual monitoring of budget and activity.

4. Environmental Implications

- 4.1 All partner agencies are mindful in their strategic and operational planning of the commitments, which they have taken on to address the impact of climate change.

5. Well-being and Health Implications

- 5.1 BCF investment supports individuals with health and social care needs, as well as enabling preventative measures and promoting independence.
- 5.2 Dorset, like many other areas across the Southwest and nationally, is continuing to experience many challenges in providing and supporting the delivery of health and social care. For Dorset, one of the highest risks continues to be the challenge brought about by lack of available home care and therapy. We have continued to highlight this within the ASCD Fund reporting.
- 5.3 Dorset, again like other areas, continues to be challenged by workforce shortages, which are brought about for a variety of reasons. Joint work continues to plan mitigating measures and development of workforce strategies to address this.

6. Other Implications

- 6.1 None to report at present

7. Risk Assessment

- 7.1 Dorset Council and Dorset NHS officers are confident the ASCD Fund plans, along with spend and activity reporting provide appropriate assurance and confirm spending is compliant with conditions.
- 7.2 The funds provide mitigation of risks by securing additional capacity to the existing out of hospital pathways.
- 7.3 There is currently a high demand for health and social care, with some individuals waiting for services. However, cases are managed on a risk basis to protect individuals deemed to be in high-risk situations from being without care.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment

- 8.1 It is important that all partners ensure that the individual needs and rights of every person accessing health and social care services are respected, including people with protected characteristics so the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010 are met by all partners.

9. Appendices

A: Dorset Adult Social Care Discharge Fund Plan 2022/23

10. Background Papers

Adult Social Care Discharge Fund Publication:

[Letter to the health and social care sector from the Minister for Care - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/421212/letter_to_the_health_and_social_care_sector_from_the_minister_for_care.pdf)
(www.gov.uk)