

BETTER CARE FUND

To: Health and Wellbeing Board

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1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to update the Board on arrangements for the Better Care Fund (BCF) in Cambridgeshire following submission of the next iteration of the BCF plan, and invite comments on the arrangements for creation of a section 75 for the BCF.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Better Care Fund (BCF) was announced by the Government in the June 2013 spending round, with the aim of supporting transformation in integrated health and social care services. The BCF was announced as a single pooled budget to support health and social care services to work more closely together in local areas. The pooled budget is expected to be in place from April 2015. In Cambridgeshire, the amount allocated to the fund is £37.7m. However, this is not new funding granted by Government, but rather a re-organisation of existing funding that is currently used to provide health and social care services in the county.

2.2 The Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Board previously approved BCF plans for submission to central Government in February, April and September 2014. In October 2014, following the 'Nationally Consistent Assurance Review' (NCAR) of BCF plans, Cambridgeshire's HWB plan was assessed as 'approved with conditions'. As a result, the plan was developed further for submission on January 9 2015. The Health and Wellbeing Board held a special meeting in December 2014 to discuss the submission, and delegated authority was granted to the Director for Public Health in discussion with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

3.0 CAMBRIDGESHIRE'S BCF SUBMISSION

3.1 Cambridgeshire's latest BCF plan was submitted on 9 January following consultation with members of the Health and Wellbeing Board; Cambridgeshire Executive Partnership Board; and work by officers of the County Council and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). Following a steer from the Health and Wellbeing Board in December 2014, work was also carried out in conjunction with Peterborough City Council, to ensure that projects were aligned between the two areas.

- 3.2 The final submission is set out in four documents, available on the Council's website at <http://tinyurl.com/ccc-hwb-150115>:
- Appendix A: Part 1 of the BCF Submission (narrative)
 - Appendix B: Part 2 of the BCF Submission (finance and performance data)
 - Appendix C: Annex 3 to the submission (Governance chart)
 - Appendix D: NCAR Action Plan (which outlines how the conditions placed on Cambridgeshire's plan have been addressed).
- 3.3 Following the submission officers, and the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board, will be invited to participate in a telephone conference with auditors conducting a review of the plan. This meeting will take place on January 19, and will offer an opportunity to discuss any queries that the reviewers may have about the plan. Following this meeting, formal announcement of whether Cambridgeshire's plan has been approved is expected by 3rd February 2015. If it is found that Cambridgeshire has not sufficiently demonstrated how it will meet its conditions, further conditions would be imposed which would reduce flexibility and require additional reporting. However, the Government's intention is that as many areas as possible will proceed to being approved 'with support'; and initial feedback from Cambridgeshire's 'Better Care Adviser' appointed by NHS England has been positive.

4.0 NEXT STEPS

- 4.1 Discussions have begun between the Council and CCG relating to the establishment of the formal partnership mechanisms required for a pooled budget. Whilst the intention is that all local areas will proceed with the BCF, NHS England has given a strong steer that local areas should not enter into any contractual obligations or section 75 partnership agreements until any conditions on their plan have been addressed. Therefore, it has not been possible to proceed too far with Section 75 arrangements before submission.
- 4.2 As budgets and performance targets were required to be agreed before submission of the BCF plan, most of the work for creation of a section 75 has already been completed; however the document will require input from legal, financial and health and social care officers in the CCG and County Council. It will also require agreement on how the 'performance fund' is used if the local system is able to meet its stretching target for a reduction in non-elective admissions.
- 4.3 The Section 75 will require formal sign off by the governing bodies of the County Council and CCG. However, because the pool will contain money that is passed on directly to District Councils; and other funds that will have an impact across the local health, social care and housing system, it is proposed that a draft of the Section 75 agreement be shared with the Cambridgeshire Executive Partnership Board for discussion and agreement.

4.4 Following guidance from the Health and Wellbeing Board in December, officers will also explore the scope for joint governance arrangements with Peterborough as part of the development of the section 75 arrangement. It is suggested that any proposals which require changes to governance arrangements (such as a formal change to the role of the Cambridgeshire Executive Partnership Board) be brought before the Health and Wellbeing Board for discussion and agreement.

5.0 RECOMMENDATION / DECISION REQUIRED

5.1 It is recommended that the Health and Wellbeing Board:

- notes the report and the BCF submission contained within the appendix;
- comments on the arrangements for creation of a section 75 arrangement between the County Council and CCG; and
- agrees the proposal that changes to BCF governance mechanisms be brought back to the Health and Wellbeing Board for discussion.

Source Documents	Location
Better Care Fund update – HWB Special meeting, 10 December 2014. Available from: http://www2.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/CommitteeMinutes/Committees/Meeting.aspx?meetingID=963	Available online