

Health and Wellbeing Board

22 June 2017

Improved Better Care Fund



Report of Jane Robinson, Corporate Director of Adult and Health Services, Durham County Council

Purpose of the report

- 1 The purpose of this report is to provide background information to the Health and Wellbeing Board on the additional £2 billion funding for adult social care announced in the spring budget 2017.

Background

- 2 The additional £2 billion funding for adult social care was announced in order to address the national key issues of enhancing the integration of health and social care and alleviating pressures faced by the adult social care sector and NHS in England. Since then, it has been confirmed by the Department of Health (DH) and the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) that the funding will be pooled into the Better Care Fund (BCF) as the Improved Better Care Fund (iBCF).
- 3 Of the total £2 billion funding over 2017/18 – 2019/20 period, Durham has been allocated £25 million. £13 million has been allocated for 2017/18, a further £8 million for 2018/19 and a final £4 million for 2019/20. It should be noted that this cash injection is only short term pending an awaited green paper on adult social care funding.
- 4 The Government has stated clearly that this money will be additional to current budgeted spend and should be used for the purposes of meeting adult social care needs; reducing pressures on the NHS and stabilising the social care provider market.
- 5 Local authorities will be able to spend the grant as soon as plans have been agreed locally with the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs). The additional iBCF funding will be pooled into the local BCF for reporting purposes only. This entails a quarterly narrative report to the Department of Communities and Local Government outlining how the additional funding is being used.
- 6 Work is being currently undertaken to consider potential themes as areas for spend:
 - Meeting Social Care Needs;
 - Supporting the local provider market
 - Reducing pressure on the NHS (Delayed Transfers of Care (DToC) / admission avoidance)
 - System Development

- 7 Detailed business cases for each area and co-related projects will be jointly agreed, prioritised and developed with the CCGs in order to address the key issues across the local adult health and social care sector.
- 8 The iBCF funding arrangements will be subject to appreciative reviews carried out by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) in twenty local authority areas starting from July 2017. Reviews will be focused on behaviours, underlying issues and new national metrics and will not cover wider council social care commissioning. The associated metrics are currently in the process of development nationally. It has been indicated that cabinet office will identify the local authority areas to be reviewed and notification will be via the chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- 9 A presentation on the challenges, developments and actions related to the iBCF will be delivered to Health and Wellbeing Board on 22nd June 2017.

Recommendations

- 10 Health and Wellbeing Board is recommended to:
 - Note that the Local Authority and CCG's will progress plans to spend this funding as per the guidance set out in the grant conditions.
 - Agree that oversight will be provided by the Integration Board and reported back to the Health and Wellbeing Board as part of the BCF monitoring process.

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Appendix 1 - Implications

Finance – The additional £25.173 iBCF funding will be pooled into the local BCF. Business cases for related spending on relevant schemes and projects will be developed.

Staffing – Considered as the projects are developed.

Risk – Changes need to be carefully managed to ensure that the spending arrangements are made within the grant conditions.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty – Considered as the projects are developed.

Accommodation – None, at this stage.

Crime and Disorder – None.

Human Rights – None.

Consultation – None, at this stage.

Procurement – Considered as the projects are developed.

Disability Issues – None, at this stage.

Legal Implications – The Care Act 2014 established the need for local areas to develop a Better Care Fund. The BCF Policy Framework 2017-19 was released on 31st March 2017, which outlined further details of the Improved Better Care Fund (iBCF). Grant conditions will be in place for the spending of the iBCF.