



READING HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

DATE OF MEETING:	21 st JANUARY 2022		
REPORT TITLE:	Better Care Fund 2021/22 Plan and Narrative		
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ORGANISATION:	READING BOROUGH COUNCIL / BERKSHIRE WEST CCG		

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report outlines the Better Care Fund (BCF) 2021/22 Plan. The planning guidance¹ was released late, in October, for this financial year, and whilst this was awaited the BCF funded schemes have continued and are planned to continue for the remainder of this financial year.
- 1.2 The report sets out the National Conditions, as set in the BCF Planning Guidance, against which we are required to provide assurance. Our BCF Plan and Narrative has been submitted for sign off on behalf of the Reading Health and Wellbeing Board, by the Director of Adult Social Care, Seona Douglas, and Lead Councillor, Graeme Hoskin (Chair of the Reading Health and Wellbeing Board).
- 1.3 The Reading - BCF 2021-22 Plan and the BCF Narrative is attached at Appendices 1 and 2.
- 1.4 The Section 75 Framework Partnership Agreement, to pool funds from CCG and the Council has been drafted and has been submitted to the Legal team and the CCG for scrutiny. This document is required to meet the National Conditions as set out in the Better Care Fund Policy and Guidance for 2021/22.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 To note the contents of the Better Care Fund (BCF) Plan and Narrative for 2021/22, including the National Conditions and Metrics against which the BCF performance will be measured.
- 2.2 To note the return has been formally submitted by the deadline of 16th November 2021, and has received South East regional assurance on 9th December 2021, and formal delegated sign-off on behalf of the Health and Wellbeing board, by 16th December 2021, in order to comply with national deadlines outside of the Board meeting cycle.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

¹ [B0898-300921-Better-Care-Fund-Planning-Requirements.pdf \(england.nhs.uk\)](#)

- 3.1 The Better Care Fund (BCF) acts as a vehicle to facilitate system integration of health and social care by providing targeted funding to promote joint working to achieving shared outcomes. It requires Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG's) and Local Authorities (LA's) to pool budgets, under a Section 75 Framework Partnership Agreement, and to agree an integrated spending plan for how they will use their Better Care Fund allocation to promote/deliver on integration ambitions.

4. THE PROPOSAL

The timeline for the submission of BCF Plans and assurance are set out below and approval was received from NHS England on 11th January 2022, following receipt of regional assurance on 7th December 2021.

BCF planning requirements published	30 September 2021
Optional draft BCF planning submission submitted to BCM	By 19 October 2021
Review and feedback to areas from BCMs	By 2 November 2021
BCF planning submission from local HWB areas (agreed by CCGs and local government). All submissions will need to be sent to the local BCM, and copied to england.bettercarefundteam@nhs.net	16 November 2021
Scrutiny of BCF plans by regional assurers, assurance panel meetings and regional moderation	16 November to 7 December 2021
Regionally moderated assurance outcomes sent to BCF team	7 December 2021
Cross-regional calibration	9 December 2021
Approval letters issued giving formal permission to spend (CCG minimum)	From 11 January 2022
All section 75 agreements to be signed and in place	31 January 2022

The Better Care Fund (BCF) National Conditions for 2021-22 are as follows:

4.1 National Conditions

a) Jointly agreed plan

A jointly agreed plan between local health and social care commissioners and signed off by the Health and Wellbeing Board.

b) NHS contribution to adult social care

This has been maintained in line with the uplift to CCG minimum contribution. This refers to the "CCG Minimum Contribution" and will be referenced in the Section 75 Framework Partnership Agreement that has been drafted and undergoing scrutiny before being signed off by the end of January 2022, in line with the BCF timeline.

c) Invest in NHS commissioned out-of-hospital services.

These services are commissioned by Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group to support people in the community and avoid hospital admissions.

d) Plan for improving outcomes for people being discharged from hospital.

BCF funding supports settling in services via the Voluntary Care Sector, as well as the hospital discharge team, to enable timely discharge, and, where required, community reablement to support people using a strengths-based approach.

The BCF Plan and Narrative provide confirmation of how these conditions are being met and will continue to be met for the period covered by the fund (April 2021 to March 2022).

4.2 Better Care Fund Metrics

The BCF Metrics for 2021/22 are as follows:

4.2.1 The framework retains two existing metrics from previous years:

- effectiveness of reablement (proportion of older people still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement or rehabilitation)
- older adults whose long-term care needs are met by admission to residential or nursing care per 100,000 population.

4.2.3 The previous measure on non-elective admissions has been replaced with:

- a measure of avoidable admissions (unplanned hospitalisation for chronic ambulatory care sensitive conditions). Agreement of targets has been reached in collaboration with our system partners

Note: The Local Government Association (LGA) recently published a high impact change model for reducing preventable admissions to hospital² and long-term care which may support local systems in considering these issues. Members of the Reading Integration Board, and our neighbouring Local Authorities, will be engaging in a self-assessment workshop against the 5 changes set out in the High Impact Change Model, and identify opportunities to improve outcomes.

4.2.4 The previous measure on Delayed Transfers of Care (DToC) had been replaced in-year with hospital discharge metrics, in line with the updated hospital discharge service policy³, which sets out revised processes for hospital discharges in all areas, including implementing a 'home first' approach. The BCF hospital discharge metrics for 2021/22 are:

- reducing length of stay in hospital, measured through the percentage of hospital inpatients who have been in hospital for longer than 14 or 21 days
- improving the proportion of people discharged home using data on discharge to their usual place of residence.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

5.1 The Better Care Fund is utilised by Reading Borough Council and the Berkshire West CCG to support a variety of Health and Social Care schemes that are aligned with both the Reading Health and Wellbeing Board strategic priorities and those of the Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) for Berkshire West.

5.2 The Better Care Fund schemes contribute to the Corporate Plan Priorities as follows:

² [Reducing preventable admissions to hospital and long-term care – A High Impact Change Model | Local Government Association](#)

³ [Hospital discharge and community support: policy and operating model - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Healthy environment - supporting people on hospital discharge pathways, ensuring that they have the appropriate equipment (where necessary) and that they are able to return to their normal place of residence as quickly as possible.

Thriving Communities - BCF funded schemes such as Carers Funding - Grants, Voluntary Sector, Information and Advice, Community Reablement services and many more, aimed at supporting members of our community to remain healthy and active, and avoid unplanned hospital admissions.

Inclusive economy - The integration programme of work for Reading has a focus on reducing health inequalities in the borough through a range of projects. Some of the schemes supported by the BCF such as Street Triage and the Narrowing the Gap Carer's schemes aim to address issues that impact on people who may be vulnerable or disadvantaged.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 *The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).*
- 6.2 This report summarises the Better Care Fund plan for 2021/22. No new services are being proposed or implemented that would impact on the climate or environment.

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 7.1 The Better Care Fund Plan for 2021/22 has been considered at the Reading Integration Board (RIB). Voluntary Care Sector services are represented at RIB, along with representatives from a range of health service providers, who have had opportunity to view, comment and contribute to the plan. Healthwatch Reading are also system partners, represented at RIB, and they bring the service users' voice when considering projects and initiatives.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 There are no new proposals or decisions recommended / requested that will or could have a differential impact on: racial groups, gender, age, sexual orientation, religious belief or people with disabilities and therefore an Equality Impact Assessment is not required for this report.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 **Compliance with BCF 2021/22 National Conditions:** The report sets out in section 4.1 how the Better Care Fund plans to meet the National Conditions.
- 9.2 **Section 75 Framework Partnership Agreement:** An agreement has been drawn up between the Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Reading Borough Council for the pooled funds, as required under Better Care Fund Policy and Guidance for 2021/22 and is subject to scrutiny and formal sign-off.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Table 1 below provides a summary of Better Care Fund budget for 2021/22:



Running Balances	Income
DFG	£1,197,341
Minimum CCG Contribution	£11,150,631
iBCF	£2,613,472
Additional LA Contribution	£771,000
Total	£15,732,444

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 Appendices:

Appendix 1a - Reading - BCF 2021-22 Plan (Updated Final)

Appendix 1b - Expanded text for the BCF Metrics

Appendix 2 - Reading BCF Narrative (2021-22) (Updated Final)