

	<b>Brent Health and Wellbeing Board</b> 2 April 2025
	<b>Report from Rachel Crossley</b> <b>Corporate Director of Community Health and Wellbeing</b>
	<b>Lead Cabinet Member Councillor Nerva</b>
<b>Better Care Fund Planning Process 2025/2026</b>	

<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>	N/A
<b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b> <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
<b>List of Appendices:</b>	N/A
<b>Background Papers:</b>	N/A
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b> <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	Steve Vo Assistant Director – Integration & Delivery (Brent Borough), Brent ICP Email: <a href="mailto:stevetruong.vo@nhs.net">stevetruong.vo@nhs.net</a> Telephone: 07584 387505  Eleanor Maxwell Senior Programme Officer, Better Care Fund Lead for Brent Borough Email: <a href="mailto:eleanor.maxwell@brent.gov.uk">eleanor.maxwell@brent.gov.uk</a> Telephone: 020 8937 2195

## 1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide a short update regarding the Better Care Fund planning process for 2025-26.
- 1.2. The national deadline for the plan to be completed and agreed with all key partners including NWL ICB and Brent HWBB (via delegated authority) and submitted to NHS England (NHSE) is Friday 31<sup>st</sup> March. However, due to factors outside of the Borough teams' control there is insufficient time between the deadline and the formal Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB) meeting intended for its review. As a result, the full plan will instead be formally presented at the next meeting in July 2025. This will allow time for the Board to have fully reviewed the plan.
- 1.3. This is due to ongoing discussion between Borough and NW London Integrated Care Board (ICB) regarding a change in value of the Additional Contribution, as well as the unconfirmed allocation of £18.5 million for schemes commissioned by the ICB under NHS Minimum funding.

## **2.0 Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 The Board is requested to note the current status of the BCF plan, and confirm the Boroughs teams approach to securing final agreement on the 2025/26 plan.

## **3.0 Detail**

### **Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities & Strategic Context**

- 3.1. The BCF plan contributes to a number of strategic priorities within Brent Council's Borough Plan 2023 – 2027 and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022 - 2027. The central priority it relates to is strategic priority 5 'A Healthier Brent' and looks to tackle health inequalities and provide localised services for local needs around health and wellbeing. The BCF plan provides details on various schemes that meet the outcomes of strategic priority 5, as well as outcomes within the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

### **Background**

- 3.2. The BCF plan for 2023/25 spanned 2 years, with a minor update for year 2. The plan for 2025/26 is a new plan for one financial year.
- 3.3. The signing off for the proposed plan requires joint agreement and formal approval by key stakeholders to ensure alignment with national conditions and local priorities -specifically a joint agreement between NWL ICB and Brent LA.
- 3.4. For the reasons noted in executive summary that is not yet possible.

### **3.5. Context for planning**

- **Funding Pressures:**  
Rising costs result in a real-term reduction in funding, resulting in schemes remaining largely unchanged from the prior year. Resources have been reallocated among existing schemes based on their demonstrated impact.
- **NHS Minimum Contribution:**  
Increased by 3.9%, a more modest growth than the historical 5.66% uplift.
- **Funding Status:**  
Most of the funding remains static, with the exception of the Additional ICB Funding, which has been reduced.
- **Tighter Timescales:**  
The 2025/26 plan deadline has been set for 31<sup>st</sup> March, allowing a significantly shorter planning period than in previous years.

- **Ongoing Evaluation:**

Comprehensive evaluations of reablement services, led by the ICB, will persist. These efforts will be complemented by ongoing monitoring of the impact arising from operational changes.

- **Strengthened Governance:**

The Brent BCF Board has enhanced its oversight mechanisms, providing greater clarity around stakeholder roles and bolstering accountability for key performance indicators (KPIs) and delivery tracking.

- **Improved Budget Management:**

In 2024/25, the local authority undertook significant measures to strengthen budget allocation and tracking processes, thereby fostering greater confidence in financial oversight for the upcoming year.

### **Funding Reduction of Additional ICB Contribution**

- 3.6. On 19th March 2025, the Integrated Care Board (ICB) approved a proposal to reduce the Additional ICB Funding allocated to the Brent Local Authority. This reduction corresponds to 50% of the funding for the 2024/25 financial year, incorporating a 2.16% uplift.
- 3.7. This adjustment results in a decrease of £864,925 compared to the 2024/25 funding allocation between BCF and Section 75 agreement.
- 3.8. The Borough-based team, in collaboration with the Director of Adult Social Care and the Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) Managing Director, are undertaking a detailed analysis to assess the risks posed by this reduction. Additionally, officers are identifying potential measures to achieve a balanced budget while mitigating the associated risks.
- 3.9. The revised financial plan remains scheduled for submission to NHS England (NHSE) by the original deadline of Monday, 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

### **4.0 Stakeholder and Ward Member Consultation and Engagement**

- 4.1 All BCF Planned Schemes contained in the original draft plan related to the LA commissioned schemes have been worked through and agreed upon by all stakeholders except the NWL ICB. Consultation continues with those stakeholders impacted by the funding change from the reduction in ICB Additional.
- 4.2 There are no further stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement comments specific to this paper.

### **5.0 Financial Considerations**

- 5.1 Proposed funding scheme. Noting that it is not all confirmed.

BCF - Top Line Income - 2025/26			Confirmed , accurate		
			Confirmed, approx		
			Proposed 19/3/25	Difference 24-25 to 25-26	
Category	2023/2024 (A)	2024/2025 (B)	2025/26 (C.)	(C.) - (B)	Notes
Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)	£5,780,850	£6,597,406	£6,597,406	£0	
NHS Minimum Contribution to LA	£9,572,333	£10,114,127	£10,511,117	£396,990	
NHS Minimum Contribution to Health Spend	£17,726,564	£18,729,888	£18,782,861	£52,973	
Additional North West London (NWL) ICB Contribution	£1,486,000	£1,486,000	£621,072	-£864,928	24/25 figure includes £270,000 removed from BCF and transferred under S256.
NWL ICB Discharge Funding will now be categorised under NHS minimum split between ICB (8%) and LA (92%). Shown here for visibility.	£1,670,080	£3,124,905	£3,124,905	£0	
LA Discharge Funding	£1,870,905	£3,118,175	£0		
iBCF Contribution	£13,344,692	£13,344,692	£0		
Local Authority Better Care Grant (new name for iBCF and LA Discharge funds combined)	N/A	N/A	£16,462,867	£0	
Total	£51,451,424	£56,515,193	£56,100,228	-£414,965	
Total Discharge Funding	£3,540,985	£6,243,080	N/A		

## 6.0 Legal Considerations

- 6.1 There are no legal implications/comments relating to the BCF to be made at this time, noting that the potential for a notice to be served under the terms of the S75 will be monitored. A new S75 is expected to be put in place to cover the new financial year and can only be completed once a plan is agreed and been through all governance stages.

## 7.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

- 7.1 None, as all the existing and new programmes will be delivered to all qualifying patients across Brent.

## 8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

- 8.1 There are no specific climate and environmental considerations relating to this paper.

## 9.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)

- 9.1 There are no specific Human Resources / Property considerations relating to this paper.

## 10.0 Communication Considerations

- 10.1 There are no specific communication considerations relating to this paper.

### **Report sign off:**

**Corporate Director Rachel Crossley**

Corporate Director of Community Health and Wellbeing