

 Brent  West and North London	Brent Health and Wellbeing Board 30 July 2026
	Report from Corporate Director of Service Reform and Strategy
	Councillor Butt – Leader and Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care
Better Care Fund Plan Approval 2026/2027	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	N/A
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	N/A
List of Appendices:	N/A
Background Papers:	N/A
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Eleanor Maxwell Senior Programme Officer Better Care Fund Lead for Brent Borough Email: eleanor.maxwell@brent.gov.uk Telephone: 020 8937 2195

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to seek formal approval of the Brent Better Care Fund (BCF) Plan for 2026/27 and provide an update on the planning process.
- 1.2. The final Brent Better Care Fund Plan, developed jointly with West and North London Integrated Care Board (W&NL ICB), was submitted to NHS England (NHSE) by the required deadline on 14 May 2026. The Plan was approved prior to submission by the ICB and by the Corporate Director of Service Reform and Strategy, under delegated authority from the Health and Wellbeing Board. Whilst all boroughs are awaiting formal approval from NHSE, Brent's Plan has successfully completed the assurance process and was recognised by NHS England as one of the strongest submissions across the region. Work is now underway to finalise the Section 75 Agreement between Brent Council and W&NL ICB ahead of the 30 September 2026 deadline.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 HWBB members are asked to review and formally approve the BCF Plan for 2026/27.

3.0 Detail

Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities & Strategic Context

- 3.1. The BCF Plan aligns with Brent Council's Borough Plan 2023–2027 and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022–2027, contributing particularly to Strategic Priority 5: "*A Healthier Brent*." The plan seeks to reduce health inequalities and deliver place-based health and care services tailored to local needs. It includes schemes designed to meet the outcomes of both the Borough Plan and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Background

- 3.2. The 2026/27 Better Care Fund Plan has been developed within a national planning framework that prioritises stability and continuity ahead of anticipated changes to the health and care system. Whilst the Plan largely maintains existing investment and service arrangements, it reflects the longer-term strategic direction towards integrated neighbourhood working, prevention, and delivering more care within community settings, providing a strong foundation for future transformation.
- 3.3. Whilst the national approach emphasises stability, Brent has used this planning cycle to undertake a detailed review of Better Care Fund investment, particularly across Local Authority-led schemes. Funding has been realigned where appropriate to reflect changing demand, service cost pressures, value for money and demonstrable outcomes. This has ensured that investment continues to support effective service delivery, while creating capacity for a small number of targeted initiatives that address local priorities, including reducing avoidable hospital admission following attendance at A&E and supporting the longer-term strategic direction of the programme.
- 3.4. The Plan was developed jointly by Brent Council and W&NL ICB and required formal approval from both organisations to ensure compliance with national planning requirements and local priorities.

3.5. **Factors considered in the planning process**

- **NHS Minimum Contribution:**
Increased by 4.4%, compared with 3.9% in 2025/26. Whilst this represents an increase on the previous year, it remains below the historic average annual uplift of 5.66%, limiting the ability to fully absorb inflationary and demand-led cost pressures.
- **Overall Funding Status:**
The majority of Better Care Fund funding streams remain unchanged from the previous year.
- **Funding Pressures:**

Rising operational costs continue to reduce the real-terms value of available funding. As a result, the priority has been to protect existing service provision, with only limited capacity to invest in new or transformational initiatives.

- **Strengthened Governance:**

The Brent Better Care Fund Board has continued to strengthen governance arrangements through clearer accountability, enhanced oversight and improved performance monitoring across the programme.

- 3.6 Overall, the 2026/27 Better Care Fund Plan maintains investment in the core integrated services that support residents to remain independent, reduce avoidable hospital admissions and facilitate timely discharge from hospital. Through targeted reprioritisation of resources, the Plan also provides limited investment in new initiatives that address emerging local priorities while preparing the programme for future system reform.

4.0 Stakeholder and Ward Member Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1 All BCF schemes commissioned by the local authority have been reviewed and agreed by the relevant stakeholders.
- 4.2 There are no further stakeholder and ward member consultation or engagement comments specific to this paper.

5.0 Financial Considerations

- 5.1 The table below summarises Better Care Fund income over the last four financial years, providing context for changes in funding levels.

BCF - Income - 2026/27

Category	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/26	2026/27	Change £	2027/28	2028/29	26-27 notes
Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)	£5,780,850	£6,597,406	£6,597,406	£6,597,406	£0			
NHS Minimum Contribution to LA	£9,572,333	£10,114,127	£10,511,117	£10,978,509	£467,392	£11,510,860	£12,057,210	Minimum contribution to LA increase 26/27 - 4.4% 27/28 - 4.8%
NHS Minimum Contribution to Health Spend	£17,726,564	£18,729,888	£18,782,861	£19,175,090	£392,229	£19,570,010	£20,000,750	
Additional North West London (NWL) ICB Contribution	£1,486,000	£1,216,000	£621,072	£621,072	£0			
NWL ICB Discharge Funding	£1,670,080	£3,124,905	£3,124,905	£3,190,160	£65,255	£3,255,860	£3,327,520	Noted separately as it funds discharge focused schemes, but included in the NHS Minimum in formal templates.
LA Discharge Funding	£1,870,905	£3,118,175	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	Combined to create the Better Care Grant from 25/26
iBCF Contribution	£13,344,692	£13,344,692	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Local Authority Better Care Grant	N/A	N/A	£16,462,867	£16,462,867	£0			
Total	£51,451,424	£56,245,193	£56,100,228	£57,025,104	£924,876	£34,336,730	£35,385,480	

Not all funding yet confirmed

	2023/24 to 2024/25	2024/25 to 2025/26	2025/26 to 2026/27	2023/24 to 2026/27 (3 years)
Total Change £	£4,793,769	-£144,965	£924,876	£5,573,680
Total Change %	8.5	-0.3	1.6	9.8

+ve = growth

-ve = reduction

6.0 Legal Considerations

6.1 There are no legal implications at this time. A new Section 75 agreement will be required to cover the 2026/27 period and is currently being developed.

7.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

7.1 There are no additional Equality, Diversity and Inclusion considerations arising directly from this report. Individual Better Care Fund schemes continue to be delivered in accordance with the Council's equality duties and aim to reduce health inequalities 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:

Rachel Crossley

Corporate Director of Service Reform and Strategy