

North Somerset Council

REPORT TO THE NORTH SOMERSET HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

DATE OF MEETING: 28 OCTOBER 2019

SUBJECT OF REPORT: BETTER CARE FUND UPDATE

TOWN OR PARISH: ALL

**OFFICER/MEMBER PRESENTING: GERALD HUNT, HEAD OF
COMMISIONING, NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL**

KEY DECISION: YES

RECOMMENDATIONS

To approve the 2019/20 Better Care Fund (BCF) plan enclosed as Appendix one, subject to clarification of the issue of outstanding disagreement regarding the clarification of usage of inflation on the Adult Protection element of the Better Care Fund. Finalisation of this outstanding item is delegated to Chair of Health and Wellbeing with advice from the Director of People and Communities.

1. SUMMARY OF REPORT

The report outlines the planned activity and performance relating to use of the Better Care Fund in North Somerset. Due To the very delayed issue of guidance for the BCF the usual quarterly performance requirements for quarters one and two have been postponed, there is a separate requirement to report quarter two performance on the IBCF only. There are currently no concerns with performance and spend.

2. POLICY

The Improved Better Care Fund must comply with national conditions outlined in this report.

3. DETAILS

The Better Care Fund (BCF) is the national programme through which local areas agree how to spend a local pooled budget in accordance with National requirements. The Improved Better Care Fund (ICBF) is a national grant first announced in 2015 but has been subsequently increased in recent Budgets as a response to the national funding pressures on adult social care. The IBCF is paid direct to the local authority but it is a requirement that the funds are incorporated into the Better Care Fund Section 75 agreement between the local authority and the local Clinical Commissioning Group. A recipient local authority must:

- a) pool the grant funding into the local Better Care Fund, unless an area has written Ministerial exemption;

- b) work with the relevant Clinical Commissioning Group and providers to meet national condition four (Managing Transfers of Care) in the Integration and Better Care Fund Policy Framework and Planning Requirements 2019/20;
- c) provide quarterly reports as required by the Secretary of State.

The refreshed Plan for 2019/20 reflects largely a historic allocation of the Better Care Fund but incorporates recent short-term funding priorities. An exercise has been completed in partnership with BNSSG CCG to refresh the performance outputs of individual schemes and reflect joint priorities within the plan, for example capacity support to the care sector and investment in Technology Enabled Care and Extra Care.

On advice from NHS England, the CCG has submitted the three BCF plans for North Somerset, Bristol and South Gloucestershire Councils with a cover letter indicating one area where the three local authorities are in dispute with the CCG. This area covers the 5.9% inflation on the Adult Care Protection element. Whilst inflation on individual schemes has been applied at 1.4% the remaining £265k has been included as an unallocated new scheme. The three Councils consider that the inflation has been applied in full as part of their budgetary processes, which for North Somerset involved additional super inflation provision for the Care Home sector and Domiciliary care providers. It is hoped this dispute will be resolved at the forthcoming Better Care Fund Governance Board on the 2nd of December where all Councils are represented. Without the formal agreement on the Plan, this action has avoided formal escalation of the BCF plan with NHS England, but there remains a risk this may happen without an agreement by this point.

Delayed Transfers of Care (DToC) performance

A key deliverable in the BCF plan requires NSC and BNSSG to cooperate to ensure prompt discharge from hospital either for further social care assessments or into a sustainable ongoing care setting (community, residential or nursing) when patients are medically optimised.

A delayed transfer of care from acute or non-acute (including mental health and community patients) care occurs when a patient is ready to depart from such care and is still occupying a bed. A patient is ready for transfer when a clinical decision has been made that patient is ready for transfer, a multi-disciplinary team decision has been made that patient is ready for transfer and the patient is safe to discharge/transfer. Data on delayed transfers of care is collected from providers of NHS funded care.

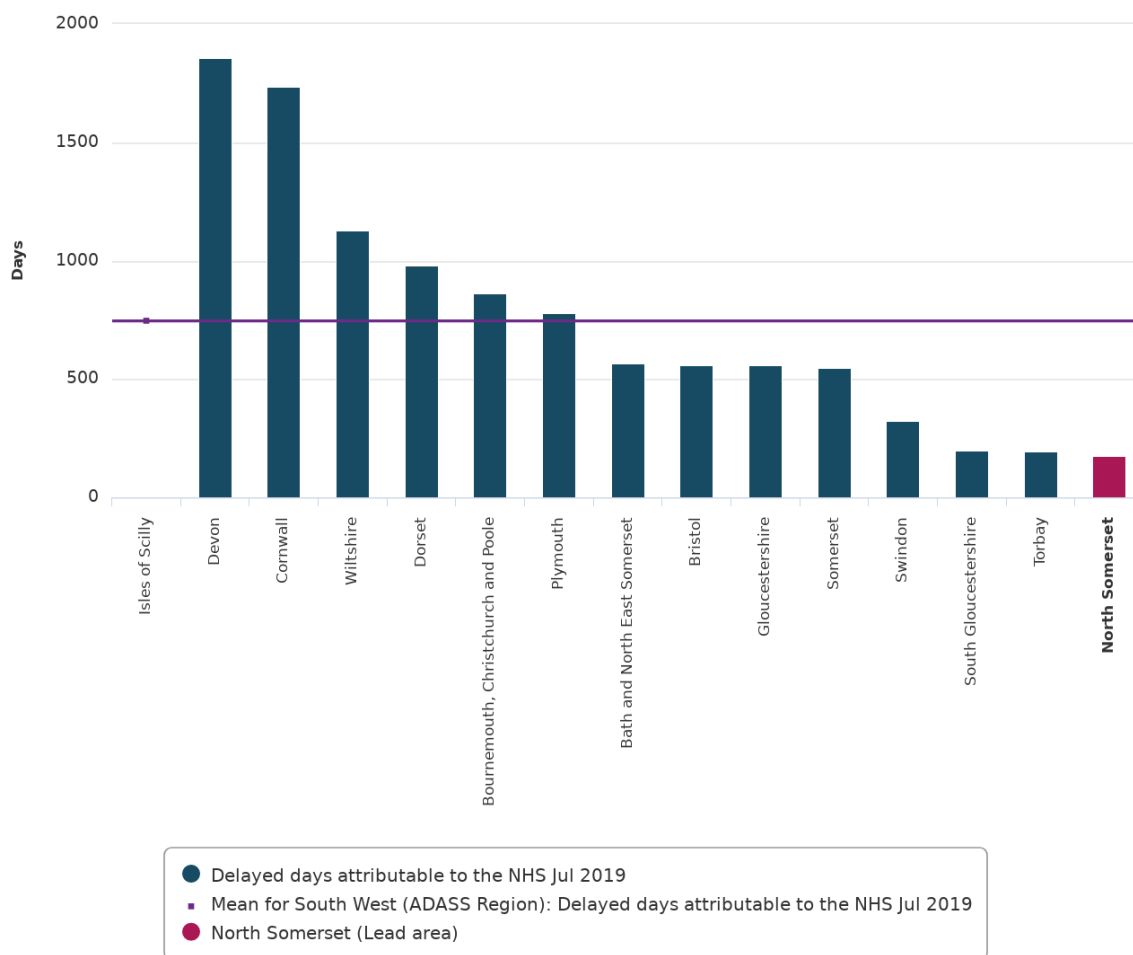
Appendix 2 details current overall performance against regional partners, and the attribution of delays to either adult social care or the NHS.

Reasons for delay in Adult Social Care

Data collected allows further analysis of the reason for DToC within adult care. The table supports continued strong performance in North Somerset, based on continued effective market management and brokerage activity.

The table below indicates that current DToC attributable to social care at the of July, the latest NHS England validated data, is approximately half the English. Appendix 2 further breaks down the causes of delays, and in the areas of domiciliary care delays and delays awaiting a residential or nursing package, North Somerset's performance is one of the best in England. Delays in social work assessments are higher, whilst NHS delays are also very low in comparison

Delayed days attributable to the NHS during the month (Jul 2019) for South West (ADASS Region)



Source:
NHS England

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4. CONSULTATION

Development of the original BCF Plan involved local stakeholders, including the Care Home Providers, the corporate management team, Executive members and BNSSG CCG and was finalised via the Joint Commissioning Group. The Plan is subject to regular quarterly monitoring by NHS England and the LGA.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

As referenced earlier, the existing plans set out in Appendix One reflect the proposed use of the subject to further guidance or engagement with stakeholders.

6. LEGAL POWERS AND IMPLICATIONS

A Section 75 agreement is required to detail the joint commissioning arrangements. This document follows nationally prescribed formats and requires sign off by both the CCG and NSC. Given the delayed guidance and the need to resolve the outstanding issue, this can only follow formal sign off by NHS England of the plan.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

Current BCF targets are challenging but are likely to be achieved therefore an element of risk and uncertainty about possible escalation.

8. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

An Equality Impact Assessment will be completed where appropriate on individual schemes within the IBCF.

9. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

The IBCF is a significant grant based on nationally mandated conditions. Continued compliance with these conditions will have financial, strategic and operational implications for delivery of adult social care. The use of a pooled budget under a Section 75 agreement also requires corporate cooperation with BNSSG CCG in order to assure compliance with conditions.

10. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

As contained within the report.

AUTHOR

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1: BCF Plan 2019/20

Appendix 2: South West ADASS Area DToC Benchmarking