

2ND APRIL 2015**REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR COMMUNITIES AND PUBLIC HEALTH****BETTER CARE FUND****EXEMPT INFORMATION****PURPOSE**

To update Cabinet on the Better Care Fund and associated plan. To endorse the continued engagement of the Council in the continued development of the associated plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **That the Council continue to engage in the development of the BCF delivery plan**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Better Care Fund (BCF) was announced in June 2013 and aims to provide people with better integrated care and support. The principal aim is to better join up strategy, strategic commissioning and service delivery between Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG's), Local Authorities and other partners.

Within Staffordshire a Better Care Fund Plan has been developed with oversight from the Staffordshire Health and Wellbeing Board. The most recent iteration of the plan is attached at Appendix A to this report. Tamworth Borough Council is a signatory to the plan.

The Better Care Fund represents a pooling of resources primarily from Staffordshire County Council (SCC) and CCG's. Discussions are now underway for the implementation of a legal agreement, known as a Section 75 agreement, which will establish arrangements for the pooling of funding between SCC and Staffordshire CCG's.

From April 2015, government funding for Disabled facilities Grants (currently provided direct to District and Borough Councils in the form of a grant) will be allocated to the Better Care Fund. However, the statutory duty to deliver DFGs remains with District and Borough Councils. This funding has been ring fenced within the BCF for the 2015/2016 financial year and the importance of adaptations in achieving positive outcomes across a range of priorities is recognised within the plan. However the future funding of Disabled Facilities Grants remains a significant risk to this Council and other Districts. Local demand for DFG's is still significantly greater than available funding.

There are currently no proposals for Staffordshire District Council's to pool any other budgets or to be subject to a Section 75 legal agreement in support of the plan. However, the principals of joint commissioning and the delivery of positive health and wellbeing outcomes are consistent with the Council's own corporate objectives.

It is beneficial for the Council to continue to support the development of the plan and to continue to engage with the development of proposals. In particular the Council will endeavour to maintain a focus on the vital positive role played by the delivery of adaptations of a arrange of vulnerable residents.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Option	Benefits	Risks
Disengage with the process of development of the BCF plan	None material	The Council loses its ability to influence and be informed regarding the development of the Plan.
Continue to engage with the development of the Plan	The Council is able to influence and be informed regarding the development of the plan but can manage the extent of its commitment (ie pooling of budgets)	None material

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no implications arising directly from this report.

As stated above the BCF includes the element of grant previously paid to Local Authorities in support of their statutory duty to provide mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants.

The Council will continue to receive its grant funding during 2015/2016 valued at £224k. From April 2016 no decisions have been made regarding the allocation of funding or the likely hosting of these funds. If in future funds are not available it will be necessary for Tamworth Borough Council to make up the shortfall of £224k per annum as the statutory duty to deliver DFG will remain. A county wide review of Disabled Facilities Grants is to be undertaken and this will involve TBC officers.

LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND

There are no material risks arising directly from the recommendations of this report.

Should the Council wish to enter into a legal agreement to pool budgets with another organisation this will be subject to the relevant governance arrangements.

As identified above the uncertainty over the continued funding of DFG's remains a significant issue for this and other District Council's.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The BCF reflects the priorities of the County Wide Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Improving the Health and Wellbeing of residents is vital in the achievement of the Council's corporate aims and priorities. The development of preventative, joined up and targeted approaches is consistent with the principals of demand management.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Better Care Fund Plan

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