



## Better Care Fund 2023-25 Quarter 3 Report

**21 March 2024**

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Better Care Fund 2023-25 - Quarter 3 Report</b>
<b>Cabinet Portfolio</b>	Integrated Health and Care
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cllr M Quinn
<b>Exempt Report</b>	No
<b>Reason for Exemption</b>	N/A
<b>Key Decision</b>	No
<b>Public Notice issued</b>	N/A
<b>Wards Affected</b>	All
<b>Report of</b>	Jamaila Hussain, Director of Adult Social Services <a href="mailto:jamailahussain@sthelens.gov.uk">jamailahussain@sthelens.gov.uk</a>
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Darren Persand Head of Adult Social Care Commissioning <a href="mailto:darrenpersand@sthelens.gov.uk">darrenpersand@sthelens.gov.uk</a>

<b>Borough Priorities</b>	Ensure children and young people have a positive start in life.	
	Promote good health, independence, and care across our communities.	x
	Create safe and strong communities and neighbourhoods for all.	x
	Support a strong, thriving, inclusive and well-connected local economy.	
	Create green and vibrant places that reflect our heritage and culture.	
	Be a responsible Council.	x

## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 The Better Care Fund (BCF) is one of the Government's vehicles for supporting health and social care integration. It requires Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) and local government to agree a joint spending plan, owned by the Health and Well-Being Board, which in St Helens is the People's Board.
- 1.2 St Helens Borough Council and NHS Cheshire and Merseyside ICB worked together to produce a BCF plan for 2023-25 which was approved by the People's Board on 28 June 2023. The plan reflected how the BCF would be spent in line with partner priorities and BCF guidance. Confirmation of approval of the plans by NHS England, following their assurance work, was provided on 29 September 2023.
- 1.3 The BCF reporting requirements are set out in the BCF planning requirements document 2023-25, which supports the aims of the BCF policy framework and the BCF programme; jointly led and developed by the national partners Department of Health & Social Care (DHSC), Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), NHS England (NHSE), Local Government Association (LGA) working with the Association of Directors of Adult Social Care (ADASS).
- 1.4 Quarterly reporting against the BCF was reintroduced from quarter 2 2023/24 and included reporting against a set of metrics and capacity and demand data. The quarter 2 report was presented to the People's Board and approved on the 9 January 2024.
- 1.5 Quarter 3 reporting includes an update on the progress against the five metrics within the BCF and includes an update on the planned spend and activity as of the end of quarter 3 FY 2023-24.

## **2. Recommendation for Decision**

**People's Board is recommended to:**

- 1) Note the contents of the Better Care Fund Quarter 3 Monitoring submission.**

## **3. Purpose of this report**

- 3.1 The purpose of this report is to confirm that, for financial year 2023-24, the national conditions of the BCF reporting requirements have been met as set out below.
  - A section 75 agreement for your BCF plan had been finalised and signed off
  - Confirmation of the following national conditions have been met:
    - A jointly agreed BCF plan is in place

- Implementing BCF Policy Objective 1: Enabling People to stay well, safe and independent at home for longer
- Implementing BCF Policy Objective 2: Providing the right care in the right place at the right time
- Maintaining NHS's contribution to adult social care and investment in NHS commissioned out of hospital services

3.2 The report outlines the BCF Quarter 3 performance against the planned metrics, spend and activity as detailed in the BCF plan 2023-2025

#### **4. Background / Reason for the recommendations**

4.1 The BCF supports local systems to deliver the integration of health and social care by requiring Integrated Care Boards and local authorities to enter into a pooled budget arrangement and agree an integrated spending plan.

4.2 In line with planning requirements for 2023-2025 the BCF plan was submitted and approved by the People's Board.

4.3 The Better Care Fund Quarter 3 reporting template for 2023/24 was submitted by the 9 February 2024 deadline in lieu of People's Board approval, as delegated to the Executive Director of People (Children's, Adults & Public Health) & NHS Place Director St Helens.

4.4 For quarter 3, only schemes that require a plan to include estimated outputs were required to be reported on. A full copy of the Better Care Fund Quarter 3 reporting template for 2023-24 can be provided upon request. A summary of the main points to note is provided below.

4.5 Four of the five metrics are on track to meet target. However, data is not currently available to assess progress against avoidable admissions. Performance data reported at Q1 & Q2 for this metric indicates that progress against the anticipated planned activity for 2023/24 is on track. During quarter 4 performance management processes will be reviewed to ensure robust reporting is in place to monitor progress at year end.

4.6 At the end of quarter 3 spending was broadly in line with the plan with the majority of the funding having been committed. As of quarter 3, performance across the majority of the BCF schemes remains on track to meet the anticipated planned activity reported for the financial year 2023-24. There are four schemes where planned activity or spend was less than estimated in the BCF Planning submission 2023-25. In order to mitigate this, spend and/or activity data has been re-profiled to better reflect the data available as of February 2024, and the current anticipated performance has been included in the quarter 3 reporting template.

- 4.7 There have been some challenges in gathering service level data to accurately forecast activity against spend, COVID 19 has continued to impact some of the care homes across the borough, resulting in closures whilst infection prevention and control measures take place.
- 4.8 Increased costs of materials and labour have impacted the overall grant expenditure per disabled facility grant and recruitment of staff remains a challenge across health and social care. This has delayed progress across workforce related schemes supporting hospital discharge.
- 4.9 Although the falls metric is on track to meet the proposed activity target, there remains room for improvement. To address this a working group will be formed to look at ways this area of activity can be improved to address increasing incidents of falls amongst older people in the community.
- 4.10 As reported at quarter 2 a BCF Delivery Board has now been set up and the first meeting took place on 13 February 2024. The BCF delivery board is a joint meeting between key senior members of the Council and Cheshire & Merseyside Integrated Care Board at St Helens place (ICB), and Mersey and West Lancashire Teaching Hospital NHS Trust. Membership also includes representatives from the voluntary sector (VCS) and carers services. It has been established to oversee development and delivery of the BCF plan and accompanying funding streams, and to support achievement of nationally defined outcomes. Delivery Group members will provide assurance to the People's Board that all aspects of the BCF plan and accompanying funding streams are being monitored, adhered to and delivered within appropriate timescales.

## **5. Consideration of Alternatives**

- 5.1 The alternative was not to submit a BCF Quarter 3 reporting template for 2023/24, but local partners would be in breach of the BCF national conditions and funding would be at risk.

## **6. Conclusions**

- 6.1 The BCF Quarter 3 reporting template for 2023/24 meets the national conditions and reporting requirements.
- 6.2 The introduction of the BCF Delivery Board and associated governance will ensure that the current and any future BCF plans are being monitored and adhered to. This will provide the People's Board with a greater level of assurance that all the national conditions are being met and maintaining the best possible health and wellbeing outcomes for the residents of St Helens.

## **7. Legal Implications**

7.1 There are no direct legal implications as a result of this report.

## **8. Financial Implications**

8.1 There are no direct financial implications from Quarter 3 reporting. However, it should be noted that the financial reporting requirement specified by the Better Care Fund Team does not include all the elements of the BCF plan at Quarter 3. It is expected that Quarter 4 reporting will require full reporting against all schemes.

## **9. Equality Impact Assessment**

9.1 None identified arising from this report.

## **10. Social Value**

10.1 The BCF provides an opportunity to create social value throughout the borough and help to meet the needs of residents. This is delivered through a mixed economy of contracts seeking to support social value.

## **11. Net Zero and Environment**

11.1 None identified arising from this report.

## **12. Health and Wellbeing**

12.1 The services invested in the BCF support positive outcomes for the residents of St Helens.

## **13. Customer and Resident**

13.1 The services in which the BCF is invested benefit health and social care outcomes of residents.

## **14. Asset and Property**

14.1 No impact arising from this report.

## **15. Staffing and People Management**

15.1 No impact arising from this report.

## **16. Risks**

16.1 If a BCF Quarter 3 Reporting template was not submitted, the local partners would be in breach of the BCF national conditions and funding may be at risk.

## **17. Policy Framework Implications**

17.1 The BCF Quarter 3 reporting template and use of the funding is in line with the Council priority of promoting good health, independence and care across communities.

## **18. Impact and Opportunities on Localities**

18.1 No direct impact arising from this report.

## **19. Background Documents**

19.1 The following are relevant background papers and available on request.

- BCF Policy Framework 2023-2035
- BCF planning requirements 2023-2025
- Full BCF Submission 2023-2025
- St Helens People's Plan 2021-26
- Better Care Fund Quarter 3 reporting template for 2023/24

## **20. Appendices**

20.1 None