

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD



Report subject	Better Care Fund 2025-2026 Quarter 1 Report:
Meeting date	6th October 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>This report provides an overview of the Quarter 1 Report of the Better Care Fund (BCF) for 2025-26.</p> <p>The BCF is a key delivery vehicle in providing person-centred integrated care with health, social care, housing, and other public services, which is fundamental to maintaining a strong and sustainable health and care system.</p> <p>The report is a part of the requirements set by the Better Care Fund 2025-26 Policy Framework. The report must be jointly agreed and signed off by the Health and Wellbeing Board as one of the planning requirements.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <p>The Health and Wellbeing Board retrospectively approve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Better Care Fund 2025-2026 Quarter 1 Report
Reason for recommendations	<p>NHS England (NHSE) require the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) to approve all BCF plans, this is one of the national conditions within the Policy Framework. This includes planning documents at the beginning of a funding period, and template returns reporting progress against the plans quarterly.</p>

Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr David Brown, Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing
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Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Decision

Background

1. This report is a covering document for the content of the Better Care Fund Quarter 1 Report. The report is made up of a single document template. The template was provided by NHS England and completed collaboratively by officers from BCP Council and NHS Dorset.
2. The document details the following:
 - Confirmation of National Conditions agreed by partners
 - Q1 Performance of Better Care Fund metrics
 - Expenditure update
3. The BCF is a Programme spanning both the NHS and Local Government which seeks to join-up health and care services, to promote people's ability to manage their own health and wellbeing and live independently in their communities for as long as possible.
4. The BCF pooled resource is derived from existing funding within the health and social care system such as the Disabled Facilities Grant and additional contributions from Local Authority or NHS budgets. In addition, short-term grants from Government have been paid directly to Local Authorities i.e. Local Authority Better Care Grant, which is used for meeting adult social care needs, reducing pressures on the NHS, and ensuring that the social care provider market is supported. The Adult Social Care Discharge Fund is also now wrapped up as part of the BCF and is subject to quarterly reporting against spend and activity.
5. In Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole - the Better Care Fund totals £79,272,349 for the year 2025/26.

6. A mid-year update on all schemes and metrics of the Better Care Fund will be provided at the next Health & Wellbeing Board meeting, when the Better Care Fund Quarter 2 report will be presented, which is currently a work in progress for submission on 7th November.

Better Care Fund 2025-26 Quarter 1 Report

1. The planning requirements sheet dictate that this document is presented to the Health & Wellbeing Board on Monday, October 6th, for approval.
2. The health and social care landscape continues to present performance challenges; however, BCP Council are currently on track to meet 2025/26 targets for:
 - Emergency admissions to hospital for people aged 65+ per 100,000 population
 - Average length of discharge delay for all acute adult patients
 - Long-term support needs for people aged 65+ met by admission to residential and nursing care homes, per 100,000
3. All schemes are being implemented as outlined in the BCF Planning Template 25/26 that was approved at the 24th March 2025 Health & Wellbeing Board meeting.

Summary of Financial Implications

4. The Better Care Fund Group comprising of members from BCP Council and NHS Dorset continue to monitor BCF budgets and activity for 2025-26 Plan.
5. The previously approved plan provides a very granular breakdown of the spending by scheme type, source of funding and expenditure (See Appendix 2). A high-level view of this is detailed in the table below:

Source of Funding	Planned Income
DFG	£4,365,654
Minimum NHS Contribution	£40,466,631
Local Authority Better Care Grant	£16,578,901
Additional LA Contribution	£2,182,000
Additional NHS Contribution	£15,679,163
Total	£79,272,349

Summary of Legal Implications

6. New Section 75 agreements, (in accordance with the 2006 National Health Service Act), will be put in place as prescribed in the planning guidance for each of the pooled budget components in the fund.

Summary of human resources implications

7. The services funded under the BCF are delivered by a wide range of partners some of whom are employed by BCP Council and many who are commissioned by BCP to deliver these services. There are no further human resources implications to note.

Summary of sustainability impact

8. Services are only sustainable as long as funding is available.

Summary of public health implications

9. The BCF is a key delivery vehicle in providing person-centred integrated care with health, social care, housing, and other public services, which is fundamental to maintaining a strong and sustainable health and care system.

Summary of equality implications

10. An Equalities Impact Assessment was undertaken when the Better Care Fund schemes were implemented and there have been no changes. Additional EIAs will be undertaken if there are any proposed future changes to policy of service delivery.

Background papers:

[Better Care Fund policy framework 2025 to 2026 - GOV.UK](#)

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - [BCP Council BCF 2025-26 Q1 Report v2](#)

Appendix 2 - [BCP Council BCF 2025-26 Planning Template v1.5](#)