



CABINET – 16 SEPTEMBER 2016

BETTER CARE FUND PLAN / DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

PART A

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Cabinet with respect to the progress made since the June 2016 Cabinet meeting in addressing the objections raised by Charnwood Borough Council to the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) allocations as part of the Better Care Fund (BCF) Plan and pooled budget for 2016/17 and the development of the Lightbulb Integrated Housing Services Business Case, which is due to be completed by 28th September 2016.

Recommendation

2. The Cabinet is recommended to:
 - (a) Note the actions recommended by the Integration Executive at its meeting on 2nd August 2016 set out in paragraph 28 of this report;
 - (b) Note that, to date, the matter remains unresolved and lies with Charnwood Borough Council;
 - (c) Note the exchange of correspondence between the Chief Executive of Charnwood Borough Council and the Chair of the Integration Executive and Chief Executive of Leicestershire County Council, following the meeting of the Integration Executive on 2nd August;
 - (d) Place on record its ongoing disappointment that a local resolution of this matter has not yet been achieved, within the spirit of Government guidance to take a joined-up approach to improving outcomes for people across health, social care and housing;
 - (e) Note that the Health and Wellbeing Board will be updated on the current position at its meeting on 15th September;
 - (f) Note the mitigating actions that have been undertaken, and the positive impact these have had, in preparing the Lightbulb Business Case with partners since June 2016, set out in paragraphs 31 to 34 of this report.

Reason for Recommendation

3. To report the ongoing risks and implications for Leicestershire County Council and partners given that this matter has not yet been concluded.

Timetable for Decisions (including Scrutiny)

4. The Cabinet was advised at its meeting on 9th May 2016 that the BCF Plan had been approved by the Health and Wellbeing Board and submitted to Government by the 3rd May deadline.
5. The Cabinet received a detailed report on DFG allocations at the meeting held on 17th June, setting out the position of Charnwood Borough Council (as reported at their Cabinet meeting on 9th June) and the actions being taken across the partnership to seek a resolution to the matter.

The Cabinet will receive a report detailing the Lightbulb Business Case at its meeting on 23 November 2016. A report on the matter will also be considered by the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 2 November 2016.

6. District Councils will receive the Lightbulb Business case at their respective governance meetings between October 2016 and January 2017.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

7. The Cabinet in February 2014 authorised the Health and Wellbeing Board to approve the BCF Plan 2014/15-2015/16 and implementation plans arising from its use and noted that the Board would in the future have authority to agree BCF Plans and approve plans arising from the use of the BCF.

Resources Implications

8. The decision taken by Charnwood Borough Council to request the passporting of its full DFG allocation could have financial implications for the BCF, Leicestershire County Council, and the wider health economy in the county, as the increase in DFG allocation is currently committed to other schemes in the BCF Plan.
9. The provision of the full DFG allocation to Charnwood might result in similar requests from other District Councils. This would mean that in-year cuts of £0.4m to £1.3m would need to be made to the previously approved BCF programme that relates to local authority services, i.e. funding for assistive technology, local area co-ordinators and housing support. As well as clear practical difficulties of making in-year savings, it would also have negative implications for the targeted reductions in hospital admissions and associated extra costs for the whole health economy. Given these issues the County Council and other partners could be required to provide some one-off extra resources to meet the funding shortfall.

10. The medium term implications could be even more significant. The BCF for 2017/18 and future years will need to be reviewed to assess the implications of increased allocations for DFGs. Reductions in other programmes are likely to be required to ensure the BCF is within budget. The position could be exacerbated by an expectation that the DFG allocation could increase in 2017/18. At the moment the funding position for such an increase is unclear.
11. The Director of Corporate Resources has been consulted on this report.

Circulation under Local Issues Alert Procedure

12. None.

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PART B

Background

Strategic Context

13. In Leicestershire the Health and Wellbeing Board leads and advises on work to improve the health and wellbeing outcomes of the local population. Representatives on the Board include the Clinical Commissioning Groups, the County Council, District Councils, Leicestershire Police, and NHS England. Its Terms of Reference include approving the BCF Plan and the pooled budget for transforming local services to provide more integrated care and support for people.
14. Delivery of the BCF Plan is overseen by the Integration Executive, a subgroup of the Health and Wellbeing Board responsible for ensuring the vision for integrated health and care in Leicestershire is delivered, in line with national policy and local priorities. Membership of the Integration Executive is drawn from the same partner organisations as the Health and Wellbeing Board.
15. DFGs (funded through the Better Care Fund and administered by District Councils in Leicestershire) are means tested grants which support the installation of major adaptations in the home, such as level access showers and stair lifts.
16. The benefits of these adaptations are associated with maintaining independence in a person's own home. They can prevent/delay the need for other forms of care and support to be provided in the home, and reduce the risk of injury/admission to hospital, for example from a fall. They can also prevent or delay the need for admission to care home settings, by supporting the person in their own home for as long as possible.
17. DFGs are an important component of housing support; however a much broader and better integrated housing offer is being designed in Leicestershire via the Lightbulb project, which was formally established, via the introduction of the (multi-agency) Lightbulb Programme Board, in March 2015. The Department of Communities and Local Government has provided a £1 million transformation grant to support the project.
18. Not only will this project realise benefits within existing DFG processes, but it will also integrate a range of other support including hospital discharge housing support, affordable warmth, minor adaptations and home maintenance.
19. The proposed Lightbulb Housing Service is subject to approval of a business case in the autumn of 2016, with a view to implementation in 2017.
20. The ongoing success and development of the Lightbulb Project is predicated on joint investment by partners in a wider housing offer to incorporate delivery of DFG requirements. The proposed Lightbulb budget would also include the

County Council's budget for minor adaptations. If District partners are not willing to include revenue funding associated with the delivery of DFGs in this overall budget, there is a major risk that the ambition to offer improved housing support benefits to people across Leicestershire cannot be delivered.

Position of Charnwood Borough Council

21. The approved BCF plan provides for £425,000 DFG to be passported to Charnwood. It is noted that the report to Charnwood's Cabinet of 9th June sought passporting of a DFG allocation of £770,000 to the Borough Council so as £340,000 "could be returned to reserves to be reallocated to other Council priorities".
22. Charnwood Borough Council's Cabinet resolved:
 - a) That the Council ensures that its 2016/17 Disabled Facilities Grant Allocation is processed in accordance with the requirements of the Minister of State for Housing and Local Government as set out in the grant determination letter of 18th April 2016 (published as a background paper to the report of the Chief Executive, filed with these minutes);
 - b) That the Chief Executive continues dialogue with Leicestershire County Council and other partners as may be required to develop proposals through which the Council can support the Better Care Fund in Leicestershire;
 - c) That the Chief Executive be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to agree any support for the Better Care Fund that is to be provided by the Council;
 - d) That the report of the Overview Scrutiny Group be noted.
23. In respect of part b) of the above, Charnwood Borough Council was asked to table a proposal(s) for consideration at the Integration Executive on 28th June and to consult beforehand with the West Leicestershire Clinical Commissioning Group (WLCCG). There was some uncertainty as to whether Charnwood had consulted with local NHS partners before its Cabinet report.
24. Charnwood Borough Council did consult with the WLCCG but did not provide a report/proposal for the Integration Executive on 28th June. They were invited again to do so for the next meeting of the Integration Executive on the 2 August.
25. In the meantime additional briefings were held with Charnwood Officers and Members about the BCF Plan and pooled budget so that the wider context of the Plan and how funding had already been prioritised by partners for 2016/17 could be reiterated.

26. Although no formal report or proposal was submitted to the Integration Executive on 2 August, the Chief Executive of Charnwood Borough Council attended the meeting and referred to a tabled e-mail exchange with West Leicestershire CCG as a way forward.
27. The Integration Executive understood that Charnwood Borough Council wanted to receive an additional DFG allocation and it would then transfer an equivalent sum to the BCF pooled budget. However, the CBC Cabinet report had indicated that the additional DFG resources could be transferred to their reserves. The Integration Executive's recommendation sought to clarify a way forward from what had been said and that was communicated to the Chief Executive of Charnwood Borough Council on the 3 August.
28. The recommendation was as follows:-
- (a) That, in order to resolve the objection raised by Charnwood Borough Council to the decision of the Health and Wellbeing Board, with respect to 2016/17 DFG allocations, the Board be recommended to approve the transfer of the additional DFG allocation requested by Charnwood Borough Council from the approved BCF pooled budget to Charnwood Borough Council;
 - (b) That (a) above is recommended on the basis that the Cabinet of Charnwood Borough Council approves the transfer of a corresponding amount from the Borough Council into the BCF pooled budget for 2016/17 by 13 September 2016;
 - (c) The amount referred to in (b) above, to be transferred into the BCF pooled budget, is to be spent in accordance with:-
 - the BCF plan for Leicestershire for 2016/17 approved by the Health and Wellbeing Board on 5 May 2016;
 - the BCF section 75 pooled budget for 2016/17 as approved by the CCGs and Leicestershire County Council; and
 - the Government guidance which permits and encourages local areas to think strategically about the use of home adaptations, use of technologies to support people in their own homes, and to take a joined-up approach to improving outcomes across health, social care and housing;
 - (d) That, subject to a decision of Charnwood Borough Council's Cabinet, the Health and Wellbeing Board be recommended at its meeting on 15 September to conclude this matter as set out above but also to record a concern at the potential harm which has been done to the future of the Lightbulb project.
29. The Integration Executive anticipated this would result in an immediate report to Charnwood's Cabinet on the 11 August to enact the recommendation. However no such report was made.

30. Subsequently the Chief Executive of Charnwood Borough Council wrote to the Chair of the Integration Executive which is included as Appendix A. The Chair and the Chief Executive of Leicestershire County Council (as Secretary to the Health and Wellbeing Board) replied on 24 August, attached as Appendix B.

Preparations for the Lightbulb Business Case

31. During the period June – September 2016 intensive work has been undertaken to prepare the Lightbulb Integrated Housing Service Business Case.
32. This has included briefing meetings held with officers and members in each District, preparatory work with Adult Social Care in relation to the County Council's Equipment and Adaptations strategy and occupational therapy services, work with the Lightbulb Steering Group and Lightbulb Programme Board on operational and strategic matters, engagement with the Housing and Health Members Advisory Group, discussions with policy advisors at Foundations, a national body representing home improvement agencies, and the Department for Communities and Local Government.
33. The engagement with District Councils and Adult Social Care on the future model for the Lightbulb service has been very positive and evidence from the pilot period of working has proved very compelling, including evidence on improvements to DFG procedures, hospital discharge support and supporting vulnerable people in the community where a new housing "MOT" with integrated housing support has been implemented working with GP practices.
34. The business case also contains financial modelling for the proposed service which is the subject of considerable pre work and engagement with section 151 officer groups across the county.
35. It should be noted that the financial model will include how revenue resources associated with the delivery of DFGs across the county will be used to support delivery of the new Lightbulb Service from 2017/18.

Appendices

Appendix A – Letter from the Chief Executive of Charnwood Borough Council to the Chair of the Integration Executive – 12 August 2016.

Appendix B – Letter from the Chair and the Chief Executive of Leicestershire County Council (as Secretary to the Health and Wellbeing Board) to the Chief Executive of Charnwood Borough Council - 24 August 2016

Background Papers

Report to the Cabinet on 4th February 2014 - 'Better Care Fund'

<http://ow.ly/Dolu301hajH>

Report to the Cabinet on 9th May 2016 - 'Better Care Fund Update'

<http://ow.ly/5VUK301hamw>

Report to the Cabinet on 17 June 2016 – Better Care Fund Plan/ Disabled Facilities Grant

<http://ow.ly/9UmN303KC7E>

Report to the Health and Wellbeing Board on 5th May 2016 - 'Better Care Fund Refresh 2016/17'

<http://ow.ly/R3cF301haqb>

Report to Charnwood Borough Council Cabinet on 9 June - Disabled Facilities Grants Funding Arrangements

<http://ow.ly/h39a303KTUA>

Equality and Human Rights Implications

36. There are no equality and human rights implications arising from the recommendations in this report.