

# Mid and South Essex

## Better Care Fund – Annual Governance Statement 2021-2022

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council has responsibility for commissioning and/or providing social care services on behalf of the population of the borough of Thurrock pursuant to the Care Act 2014.
- 1.2 NHS Mid and South Essex Integrated Care Board has the responsibility for commissioning health services pursuant to the 2006 Act in the borough of Thurrock.
- 1.3 The Better Care Fund has been established by the Government to provide funds to local areas to support the integration of health and social care and to seek to achieve the national conditions and local objectives as set out within the Better Care Fund Plan. It is a requirement of the Better Care Fund that the NHS MSE ICB and the Council establish a pooled fund for this purpose.
- 1.4 Section 75 of the 2006 Act gives powers to local authorities and clinical commissioning groups to establish and maintain pooled funds out of which payment may be made towards expenditure incurred in the exercise of prescribed local authority functions (as set out within the Council's Constitution) and prescribed NHS functions.
- 1.5 This Statement sets out how the Council and NHS MSE ICB are, through effective governance arrangements, complying with the responsibilities set out within the Better Care Fund Section 75 Agreement for Thurrock, and the applicable Better Care Fund Guidance<sup>1</sup>.

### 2. Governance Arrangements

- 2.1 Governance of the Better Care Fund is through the Thurrock Integrated Care Alliance (TICA). Membership of the TICA includes:

#### NHS MSE ICB

- Interim Alliance Director
- Chief Finance Officer
- Director of Commissioning

#### Thurrock Council

- Corporate Director of Adults, Housing and Health
- Director of Finance and Information Technology
- Strategic Lead for Commissioning and Procurement
- Director of Adult Social Care and Community Development

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/B0898-300921-Better-Care-Fund-Planning-Requirements.pdf>

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- 2.2 The TICA and the BCF Delivery Group, meets monthly to:
- Provide strategic direction on the schemes contained within the BCF;
  - Receive financial and activity information;
  - Review the operation of the section 75 Agreement;
  - Review risks monthly and agreed annually a risk assessment;
  - Review and agree annually revised schedules as necessary; and
  - Request such protocols and guidance as it may consider necessary in order to enable the Pooled Fund Manager to approve expenditure from the Pooled Fund.
- 2.3 The TICA is a sub-group of the Health and Wellbeing Board, and as such, minutes of its meeting are considered by the Board at each of its meetings.
- 2.4 Governance arrangements are reviewed on an annual basis as part of the development of, and approval arrangements for, the Better Care Fund Plan and Section 75 Agreement. This includes a review of the TICA Terms of Reference.

### 3. Performance Arrangements

- 3.1 The TICA, assisted by the BCF Delivery Group, is accountable for a performance scorecard and report. The scorecard is the main performance monitoring tool for the Better Care Fund.
- 3.2 The scorecard is reported to the TICA, assisted by the BCF Delivery Group, on a monthly basis with a more detailed report considered on a quarterly basis. An expanded report is be considered at the end of the year and also mid-year.
- 3.3 Performance arrangements and the scorecard supporting the delivery of the Better Care Fund are reviewed on an annual basis.

### 4. Financial Arrangements

- 4.1 Financial monitoring takes place on a monthly basis with a report jointly prepared by the NHS MSE ICB and Thurrock Council's BCF finance lead.
- 4.2 Monthly monitoring arrangements allow for any underspends to be identified and for decisions to be made about how any underspends should be allocated.
- 4.3 Whilst the pooled fund is set at a defined amount, any risk of overspend in any area will require a remedial action plan to be produced and presented.

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### 5. Risk Management Arrangements

- 5.1 The Better Care Fund Plan contains a risk register that identifies the top ten risks.
- 5.2 Risks are reviewed by the TICA, assisted by the BCF Delivery Group, on a monthly basis.

### 6. Review of Effectiveness

- 6.1 The robustness of the governance arrangements for the Better Care Fund, as set out within this document and as contained within the section 75 Agreement, are considered on an annual basis – with any necessary changes being made as they arise. The review of effectiveness was undertaken with specific reference to the 2021/22 Better Care Fund: Policy Framework and the associated Planning Guidance.
- 6.2 The review of the governance arrangements for the Better Care Fund 2022/23 will be considered and agreed by the TICA, assisted by the BCF Delivery Group, as part of the process for formulating the Better Care Fund Plan 2022/23, and reported to the Health and Wellbeing Board for approval.

### 7 Annual Review

- 7.1 The Section 75 Agreement contains a requirement for an annual review of the operation of the agreement, the Pooled Fund and the provision of Services, within 3 Months of the end of each financial year. The TICA can agree alternative arrangements, including alternative frequencies.
- 7.2 The planning process will encompass the review of operation of the agreement, the Pooled Fund and the provision of services. In addition, in 2022/23, the review will take account of the newly approved strategy Better Care Together Thurrock – The Case for Further Change as the delivery mechanism for delivery of Goals 1 and 3 of Thurrock's new Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- 7.3 A Task and Finish Group has been constituted to undertake the review of performance of services and has developed a set of funding criteria for the Better Care Fund Plan which includes:
  - Funding available for one-off investments;
  - Deciding whether the funding of investments made in previous year(s) should continue;
  - Helping to identify whether any further spend can be freed up for investing or using differently.The outcome of the review of the provision of services, and the funding recommendations for the 2023/24 Better Care Fund Plan, and subsequent years, will be presented to the Health and Well-Being Board.

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### 8. Approved

Les Billingham  
Interim Director of Adults, Social Care  
Thurrock Council

Stephen Porter  
Interim Alliance Director  
NHS Mid and South Essex Integrated Care Board

Date:

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