

Report to:	Health & Wellbeing Board (HWB)
Report of:	Assistant Director for Finance (Interim S151 Officer) (SMBC) and Stockport Place Finance Lead (NHS GM)
Date:	27 November 2024
Subject:	Better Care Fund Monitoring Report Q2 2024-25

1. Purpose

To present the Better Care Fund (BCF) Q2 template, which was submitted to the national BCF Team within the submission deadline of the 31th October 2024 and provide an update on the overall financial performance of the BCF as at 30th September 2024 (Quarter 2).

2. Introduction

The Better Care Fund (BCF) is one of the government's national vehicles for driving health and social care integration. The Better Care Fund (BCF) Policy Framework sets out the Government's priorities for 2023-25, including improving discharge, reducing the pressure on urgent and emergency care, social care, supporting intermediate care, unpaid carers and housing adaptations.

The vision for the BCF over 2023-25 is to support people to live healthy, independent and dignified lives, through joining up health, social care and housing services seamlessly around the person. This vision is underpinned by the two core BCF objectives:

1. Enable people to stay well, safe and independent at home for longer
2. Provide the right care in the right place at the right time.

3. Better Care Fund 2024-25 Q2 Reporting Template.

The BCF 2024-25 Q2 Reporting Template submission (Appendix 1) includes data collection on the following areas

- National conditions
- Metrics assessment
- Capacity & Demand - actual activity for year to date
- Financial Performance

3.2 National Conditions

The national conditions for the BCF in 2023 to 2025 which are all being met are:

1. There is a jointly agreed plan between health and social care commissioners, signed off by the Health and Wellbeing Board.
2. Implementation of BCF Policy objective 1: enabling people to stay well, safe and independent at home for longer.
3. Implementation of BCF Policy objective 2: providing the right care, at the right place, at the right time.

4. Maintaining the NHS's contribution to adult social care (in line with the uplift to the NHS minimum contribution to the BCF), and investment in NHS commissioned out of hospital services.

3.3 Metrics assessment

Stockport continues to be on track to meet the targets that we have set in relation to the metrics measured nationally through the BCF. The performance in relation to hospital admissions is positive with concerted work across the system partners continuing to impact on avoidable admissions and admissions due to falls. There is an ongoing focus in this area and Stockport is seeking to drive improvements through further alignment and focused initiatives.

The ongoing home first focus for people being discharged from hospital is significant in the system meeting the target for discharges to people's normal place of residence. There is a link from this work into the downward trend in the rate of permanent residential care admission which is again positive.

3.4 Capacity and Demand

The system has continued to move greater numbers of individuals from pathway 2 discharges to return home directly on pathway 1. We are continuing to iteratively assess our capacity and demand modelling but are confident in the ability to continue to flex upwards around pathway 1 discharges and ensure that we are maximising pathway 2 placements in light of developing complexity in need.

In preparation for winter readiness, the local authority along with system partners have hosted a provider winter planning resilience forum focussed on Resilience and review of Business Continuity Plans. As a system we have worked together on a number of focussed pathway 1, 2 and 3 pilot projects to support safe and timely discharge from hospital, the performance of the pilots will continue to be reviewed regularly and will run over the winter period supporting proactive management of winter surges.

The system remains confident in the available capacity of providers to further support both numbers and complexity for those who require support in their own home to avoid hospital or facilitate a discharge. The Stockport system continues to monitor flow into and out of bed-based provision and to work with the local care home market to ensure that where additional capacity is required in a period of surging demand. The care home bed capacity is part of this ongoing analysis and work with the market to ensure that people are not attending hospital except where this is required and that there is readiness for additional capacity where this is required.

3.5 **Financial Performance as at 30th September 2024 (Quarter 2)**

Actual spend for the period was £22.750m, an overspend of £0.100m against the planned expenditure of £22.650m.

Forecast outturn expenditure is £45.073m against an annual plan of £45.288m, a forecast underspend of £0.215m as detailed in Table 1.

Table 1: Variances to Plan

Service	YTD Variance Over / (Under) Spend (£000s)	Forecast Variance Over / (Under) Spend (£000s)	Lead Commissioner
Neighbourhood Services	(9)	0	LA
Enhanced Support Services	(14)	0	LA
Carers Services	27	0	LA
LD Tenancy (Stockport Road)	101	33	LA
Discharge to Assess Beds (Spot Purchase)	260	0	NHS
Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) (Capital)	(265)	(248)	LA
Total	100	(215)	

Council

Neighbourhood Services

There was a minor reduction in run rate at Q2 of £0.009m due to non-pay costs, however a balanced position is forecasted at outturn.

Enhanced Support Services

It is forecasted that the reduced spend at Q2 of £0.014m will be offset by an increased run rate for the rest of the financial year due to staffing and non-pay costs, a balanced position is forecasted at outturn.

Carers Services

There is a minor increased run rate in carers personal budgets at Q2 of £0.027m, however it is forecasted that at outturn there will be an overall balanced position for Carers Services.

Learning Disability Tenancy – Stockport Road Apartments

There continues to be additional staffing required above the staffing establishment funded by BCF and other external contributions, to support individuals with complex needs within the provision. This has resulted in spend at Q2 being £0.101m over budget. Staffing levels within the apartments is continually reviewed aligned to the

needs of individuals who transition through the provision, at outturn an overspend of £0.033m is forecasted.

Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) – capital allocation

There is a reduced run rate up to Q2 of £0.265m when compared to the proportionate DFG allocation.

Alongside capital investment into more significant adaptations to support clients living independently at home, there continues to be DFG investment into Adult Social Care services to provide the necessary equipment to support clients living more independently at home.

An underspend at outturn is currently forecast of £0.248m, however DFG mandatory activity has increased in 2024/25 and the Council is also developing other innovative capital programmes within Adult Social Care which can align to this capital investment.

Any residual balances are currently aligned to the DFG balances considered against the investment for the Academy of Living Well at the former St Thomas' hospital site.

NHS Greater Manchester (Stockport)

Discharge to Assess Beds (unmet need)

There is a £0.260m overspend against the budget to fund short-term nursing bed placements when there is no commissioned community beds available or the commissioned community beds cannot meet the need of a patient due to the patient's acuity. The overspend reflects an increase in the cost of placements due to the acuity of patients and an increase in the length of stay.

Additional resource has been employed to ensure that patients placed in this short-term bed provision have their long-term care needs assessed in a timely manner. There has been an immediate impact of the deployment of this additional resource, and it is forecast that the expenditure will be within budget by the end of the financial year.

4. Recommendations

The Board are recommended to:

- (i) **Approve** the BCF 2024-25 Q2 Reporting Template submitted to the National BCF Team by 31 October 2024.
- (ii) **Note** the finance performance of the BCF as at 30th September 2024 (Quarter 2).

Appendices attached:

Appendix 1 – BCF 2024-25 Q2 Reporting Template Submission
Appendix 2 – BCF Financial Monitoring Q2 2024-25