**CABINET**

<table>
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<th>Meeting date:</th>
<th>24 March 2016</th>
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<td>From:</td>
<td>Interim Corporate Director – Health and Care Services</td>
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**BETTER CARE FUND (BCF)**

1.0 **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1.1 This report asks for the Cabinet to agree delegations for the sign-off of the 2016/17 Better Care Fund (BCF).

2.0 **STRATEGIC PLANNING AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

2.1 This report primarily relates to four of the Council Plan priorities:

- To enable communities to live safely and shape services locally
- To promote health and wellbeing, and tackle poverty
- To support older and vulnerable people to live independent and healthy lives
- To be a modern, efficient Council

The report also relates to the Cumbria County Council Commissioning Strategy for Care and Support delivered by Adult Social Care 2016-20 and the Cumbria Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016-19 and is fundamental to the delivery of both.

3.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

3.1 Cabinet agrees to delegate to the Interim Corporate Director – Health and Care Services, in consultation with the Leader, the Deputy Leader and the cabinet members for Health and Care Services, and Public Health and Community Services, authority to approve on behalf of Cumbria County Council the submission of the 2016-17 Better Care Fund.
ADVICE OF INTERIM CORPORATE DIRECTOR – HEALTH AND CARE SERVICES

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 The Better Care Fund is a financial incentive for the integration of health and social care. It requires Clinical Commissioning Groups and local authorities in every single area to pool budgets and to agree an integrated spending plan for how they will use their Better Care Fund allocation.

4.2 Current health and care approaches have evolved to respond reactively to changes in an individual’s health or ability to look after themselves, and they often do not meet people’s expectations for person-centred co-ordinated care. Greater integration is seen as a potential way to use resources more efficiently, in particular by reducing avoidable hospital admissions and facilitating early discharge.

4.3 In 2016-17, the Better Care Fund will be increased to a mandated minimum of £3.9 billion to be deployed locally on health and social care through pooled budget arrangements between local authorities and Clinical Commissioning Groups. In Cumbria this amounts to £40,770,381. The local flexibility to pool more than the mandatory amount will remain.

4.4 From 2017-18, the government will make funding available to local authorities, worth £1.5 billion by 2019-20, to be included in the Better Care Fund. For 2016-17, it is important that Better Care Fund plans are aligned to other programmes of work including the new models of care as set out in the NHS Five Year Forward View and delivery of 7-day services.

4.5 The Spending Review set out an ambitious plan so that by 2020 health and social care are integrated across the country. Every part of the country must have a plan for this in 2017, implemented by 2020. Areas will be able to graduate from the existing Better Care Fund programme management once they can demonstrate that they have moved beyond its requirements.

4.6 It was anticipated that allocations, planning guidance and technical advice would be issued by NHS England by Christmas, and Clinical Commissioning Group, Local Authorities and Health and Wellbeing Boards would be briefed as to process and expectations by the BCF national team in a similar timeframe.

4.7 However, NHS England did not release this information until the 24th February resulting in very tight planning timescales.

4.8 Health and Wellbeing Boards have to submit the 2016-17 proposals by the 25th April. These also have to be agreed by the Clinical Commissioning Group and the County Council.

4.9 Given the lateness of the announcement from NHS England, the submission will be in the process of being prepared and going through assurance mechanisms up until the Health and Wellbeing Board on the 19th April where final approval will be sought. It will therefore not be possible to bring the sign-off to the March cabinet meeting and the April cabinet meeting falls after the submission deadline.
4.10 Delegation is therefore being sought to allow the County Council to sign-off the BCF proposal before it is submitted by the Health and Wellbeing Board.

4.11 Once approved on behalf of Cumbria County Council the submission will be executed by the Corporate Director – Health and Care Services.

5.0 OPTIONS

5.1 Cabinet could decide to agree the recommendation and the delegation of decision making.

5.2 Cabinet could decide to not agree the recommendation. However, this would either require additional Cabinet meeting or could result in a failure to complete the 2016-17 BCF submission.

5.3 Cabinet could decide to amend the recommendation and agree different delegations.

6.0 RESOURCE AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 This report concerns the Council’s governance arrangements in relation to final approval of the Better Care Fund (BCF) plan and therefore has no direct financial implications.

6.2 The Council’s revenue Budget 2016/17 assumes £20.5m of the Better Care Fund will support Council services.

6.3 With specific regards to financial governance the Council’s Section 151 Officer is a member of the Joint Commissioning Board which is leading the production of the BCF plan. The Section 151 Officer will therefore approve the financial components of the BCF plan prior to final Council approval regardless of the method used to secure final approval.

7.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Paragraph 2.1(j) of Part 2B of the Constitution authorises Cabinet to agree strategies and plans which do not form part of the Policy Framework and are not delegated to the Corporate Directors. The Better Care Fund plan is such a plan.

7.2 Cabinet may delegate responsibility for its functions in accordance with paragraph 1.4 of Part 5B of the Constitution.

8.0 CONCLUSION

8.1 The Better Care Fund provides funding for integrated services between social care and the NHS. It also underpins the council’s revenue budget.
Approving the proposed delegations will allow the County Council to sign-off the 2016-17 within the timescales as set out by NHS England.

Sally Burton
Interim Corporate Director – Health and Care Services

24 March 2016

APPENDICES

None

Electoral Division(s): All

Executive Decision

Key Decision

If a Key Decision, is the proposal published in the current Forward Plan? N/A

Is the decision exempt from call-in on grounds of urgency? No

If exempt from call-in, has the agreement of the Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee been sought or obtained? N/A

Has this matter been considered by Overview and Scrutiny? No

Has an environmental or sustainability impact assessment been undertaken? N/A

Has an equality impact assessment been undertaken? N/A

N.B. If an executive decision is made, then a decision cannot be implemented until the expiry of the eighth working day after the date of the meeting – unless the decision is urgent and exempt from call-in and the Corporate Director has obtained the necessary approvals.

PREVIOUS RELEVANT COUNCIL OR EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

No previous relevant decisions.

CONSIDERATION BY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

No

BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers.
RESPONSIBLE CABINET MEMBER

Patricia Bell – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance
Beth Furneaux – Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care,
Ian Stewart – Cabinet Member for Public Health and Community Services

REPORT AUTHOR

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