

# Better Care Fund Planning 2025-26

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Live Well South Tees Board – 27<sup>th</sup> March 2025

# Purpose

For the Live Well South Tees Health and Wellbeing Board to be assured that Middlesbrough's and Redcar & Cleveland's Better Care Fund (BCF) Plans meet the conditions of the Better Care Fund planning requirements for 2025-26

For the Live Well South Tees Health and Wellbeing Board to approve the Better Care Fund planning submissions for Middlesbrough and Redcar and Cleveland

Appendix A - Joint Narrative for Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland

Appendix B - Middlesbrough BCF Planning Template

Appendix C - Redcar & Cleveland BCF Planning Template

Appendix D - Middlesbrough Capacity and Demand Template

Appendix E - Redcar & Cleveland Capacity and Demand Template

# Background

- Since 2015, the BCF has been crucial in supporting people to live healthy, independent and dignified lives, through joining up health and care services seamlessly around the person.
- This vision is underpinned by 2 core objectives to:
  - enable people to stay well, safe and independent at home for longer
  - provide people with the right care, at the right place, at the right time.
- It requires integrated care boards (ICBs) and local government to agree a joint plan, owned by the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB), governed by an agreement under section 75 of the NHS Act (2006).
- This continues to provide an important framework in bringing local NHS services and local government together to tackle pressures faced across the health and social care system and drive better outcomes for people.

# BCF Planning Requirements 2025-26

The Better Care Fund (BCF) Policy Framework and Planning Requirements were issued on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2025. They set out the national objectives, conditions and funding for 2025-26.

The objectives of the BCF this year reflect the government's commitment to reform via a shift from sickness to prevention and from hospital to home:

## **Objective 1: reform to support the shift from sickness to prevention**

Local areas must agree plans that help people remain independent for longer and prevent escalation of health and care needs, including:

- timely, proactive and joined-up support for people with more complex health and care needs
- use of home adaptations and technology
- support for unpaid carers

## **Objective 2: reform to support people living independently and the shift from hospital to home**

Local areas must agree plans that:

- help prevent avoidable hospital admissions
- achieve more timely and effective discharge from acute, community and mental health hospital settings, supporting people to recover in their own homes (or other usual place of residence)
- reduce the proportion of people who need long-term residential or nursing home care

# Four National Conditions

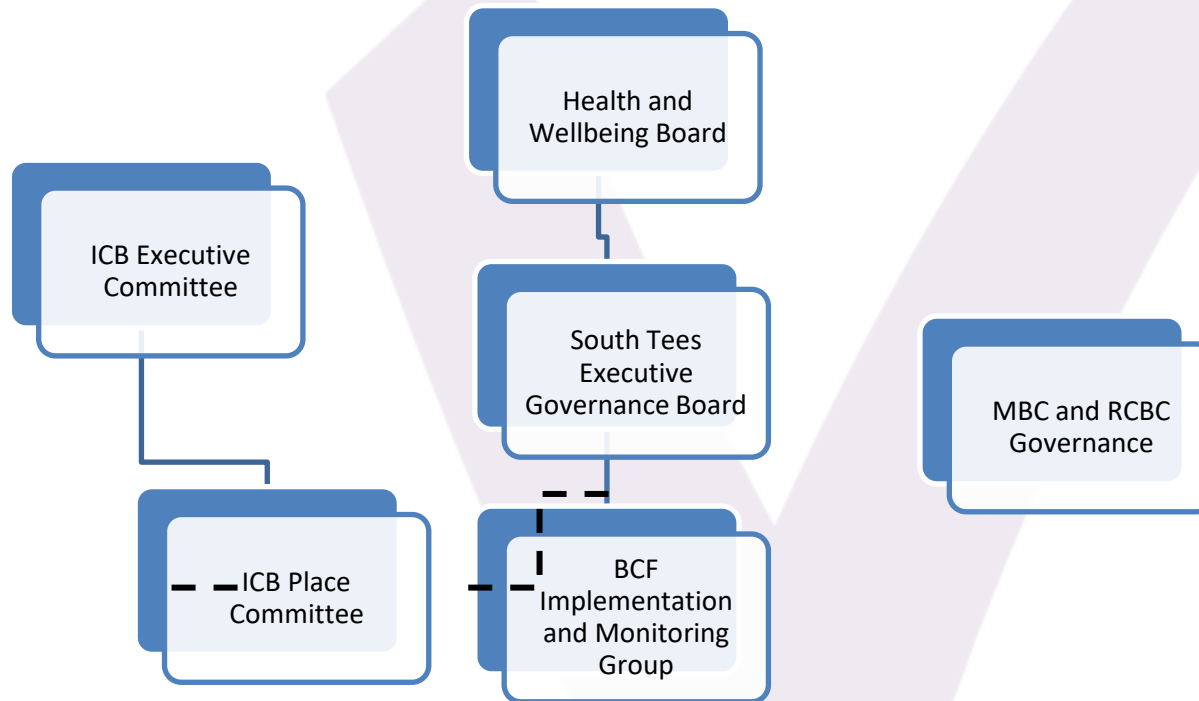
## 1. Jointly Agreeing a Plan

***The ICB and Local Authorities must agree a joint plan, signed off by the HWB, to support the policy objectives of the BCF for 2025 to 2026.***

In South Tees:

- We have established governance arrangements in place to agree and manage the BCF programme.
- BCF plans are discussed and jointly agreed between the Local Authority and the ICB to ensure they continue to meet the conditions, requirements, and strategic priorities of the BCF. This includes modifying or decommissioning schemes and consideration of new business case proposals.
- Local Authority and ICB Finance leads work together to monitor expenditure and confirm the funding available to be considered to support transformation and will identify the ways in which this will be provided through recurring or non-recurring funding.

# South Tees BCF Governance



## 2. Implementing the objectives of the BCF

*HWBs, through their joint plans, should deliver health and social care services that support improved outcomes against the fund's 2 principal objectives*

In South Tees we are confident that our BCF schemes and services do support delivery of the objectives through services and initiatives such as our:

### Objective 1: reform to support the shift from sickness to prevention

- ✓ Assistive technology and home adaptations
- ✓ Middlesbrough's Staying Put Agency
- ✓ Proactive support to care home schemes

### Objective 2: reform to support people living independently and the shift from hospital to home

- ✓ Care coordination through our Integrated Single Point of Access
- ✓ Multi-disciplinary Transfer of Care Hub team who facilitate discharges, home first wherever possible
- ✓ Enhanced reablement services
- ✓ Support to unpaid carers
- ✓ Middlesbrough Mobile Reablement Unit
- ✓ Meadowgate Intermediate Care Centre

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## 3. Complying with grant conditions and BCF funding conditions - including maintaining the NHS minimum contribution to adult social care

*The NHS minimum contribution to adult social care must be met and maintained by the ICB and will be required to increase by at least 3.9% in each HWB area.*

*Local authorities must comply with the grant conditions of the Local Authority Better Care Grant and of the Disabled Facilities Grant.*

*HWB plans will also be subject to a minimum expectation of spending on adult social care, which will be published alongside the BCF planning requirements. HWBs should review spending on social care, funded by the NHS minimum contribution to the BCF, to ensure the minimum expectations are met, in line with the national conditions*

We meet this condition in Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland, as illustrated in our BCF planning templates.



## Four National Conditions

### 4. Complying with oversight and support processes

*Local areas and HWBs are required to engage with BCF oversight and support processes, which include a regionally led oversight process and an enhanced oversight where there are performance concerns.*

In South Tees we:

- ✓ engage regularly with our regional Better Care Manager
- ✓ participate in national webinars and regional events
- ✓ always meet submission deadlines for quarterly returns and plans
- ✓ have had no performance concerns highlighted

# Funding Sources

BCF funding is composed of mandatory contributions from integrated care boards and local authorities comprised of:

- Minimum NHS Contributions – which now include the ICB Discharge Funding
- Local Authority Better Care Grant - which now includes the improved Better Care Fund (iBCF) and Local Authority Discharge Funding
- Disabled Facilities Grant
- Local areas can also carry forward underspends. For 2025-26, this is allowing us to maintain existing BCF schemes as the uplifts received are not sufficient to cover increased costs.

# Middlesbrough BCF Income 2025-26

<b>Disabled Facilities Grant</b>	<b>£2,814,373</b>
<b>NHS Minimum Contribution</b>	<b>£16,898,602</b>
<b>Local Authority Better Care Grant</b>	<b>£10,666,099</b>
<b>Additional LA contribution</b>	<b>£300,000</b>
<b>BCF and DFG Underspend</b>	<b>£1,116,900</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£31,795,974</b>

# Redcar & Cleveland BCF Income 2025-26

<b>Disabled Facilities Grant</b>	<b>£2,221,389</b>
<b>NHS Minimum Contribution</b>	<b>£16,077,302</b>
<b>Local Authority Better Care Grant</b>	<b>£8,546,817</b>
<b>BCF and DFG Underspend</b>	<b>£887,829</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£27,733,337</b>

# BCF Metrics for 2025-26

For 2025 to 2026 there are 3 headline metrics to help local areas to focus on impact and outcomes that are aligned to the revised objectives of the BCF, the outcomes expected from the BCF, and the government's overall reform vision for neighbourhood health.

The metrics are:

- ❖ Emergency admissions to hospital for people aged over 65 per 100,000 population
- ❖ Average length of discharge delay for all acute adult patients, derived from a combination of:
  - proportion of adult patients discharged from acute hospitals on their discharge ready date (DRD)
  - for those adult patients not discharged on their DRD, average number of days from the DRD to discharge
- ❖ Long-term admissions to residential care homes and nursing homes for people aged 65 and over per 100,000 population

In South Tees we are setting realistic but stretching targets as our aims are to reduce admissions, expedite discharges and avoid long term admissions to care homes through our home first approach. We monitor performance against metrics quarterly.

# Recommendations

- Live Well South Tees Health and Wellbeing Board are assured that Middlesbrough's and Redcar & Cleveland's Better Care Fund (BCF) Plans meet the conditions of the Better Care Fund planning requirements for 2025-26
- Live Well South Tees Health and Wellbeing Board approve the Better Care Fund planning submissions for Middlesbrough and Redcar and Cleveland
- Live Well South Tees Health and Wellbeing Board are assured that there is robust management and monitoring of BCF expenditure across South Tees