

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

Report to: Health & Wellbeing Board

Date: 10/09/2025

Subject: Better Care Fund Plan 2025-2026 and Quarter 1 report 2025-2026

Report author: Sharlene Spence, Programme Manager, Peoples Services, H&F

Responsible Director: Katharine Willmette, Director Adult Social Care (DASS)
and Sue Roostan, Borough Director, H&F ICB

SUMMARY

This Better Care Fund (BCF) paper sets out the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham (H&F) and the H&F Integrated Care Board (ICB)'s the BCF Plan 2025 – 2026 and Quarter 1 report. The BCF Plan 2025-2026 was submitted to NHS England on 3 July 2025 and the BCF Quarter 1 report will be submitted 30 September 2025.

NHS England requires the BCF plan and quarterly reports to be approved by the Health & Wellbeing Board (HWB) or the board's Chair on behalf of the HWB where submission deadlines do not align with the sitting of the board. Where NHS England submissions precede the sitting of the board, HWB Chair's approvals will need to be ratified at the next HWB.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Health & Wellbeing Board, ratifies the planned total expenditure and the proposed schemes in the plan for 2025 - 2026 (Appendix 1).
 2. That the Health & Wellbeing Board ratifies the BCF Quarter 1 report for 2025 - 2026 (Appendix 2).
 3. That the Health & Wellbeing Board receive an end of year report outlining the outcomes of each scheme and the difference it has made for residents of H&F.
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Wards Affected: All

Our Values	Summary of how this report aligns to the H&F Values
Creating a compassionate council	The Better Care Fund supports community health and social care resources to reduce the number of people who need to be admitted to hospital and supporting people to get home as soon as they are well.

Background Papers Used in Preparing This Report

None.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. In accordance with the statutory duties and powers given to the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) by the Health and Social Care Act 2012, the Board's Terms of Reference in Hammersmith & Fulham Council's constitution include overseeing the development and use of the Better Care Fund (BCF) by the Council and the H&F Integrated Care System (ICS).
2. For clarity, the Better Care Fund supports community health and social care resources to reduce the number of people who need to be admitted to hospital. Residents that do require admission to hospital are supported to get home as soon as they are well.
3. The H&F BCF plan submitted to NHS England details the following:
 - Planned income and expenditure
 - Planned performance targets against BCF metrics (emergency admissions, discharge delays and residential admissions).
4. A notable highlight in the 2025-2026 plan is the continued ICB discharge funding in 2025/26. This ensures the improvements to our bridging service utilisation, model standardisation, and further embedding of the model continues to reduce delays for pathway 1¹ patients. In addition, this will ensure more patients get access to timely care at home which reduces the risk of deterioration due to unnecessary hospital stays and that more patients have the opportunity to recover at home as the most appropriate support for their on-going care will be identified through an assessment at home.
5. The BCF plan submission deadline date set by NHS England was 3 July 2025, a request to Councillor Alexander Saunderson the Chair of the H&F HWB Board, was made to review and provide chairs sign off for the final version for the BCF Plan before officers submitted it to NHS England. The Chair gave approval on 3 July 2025.

¹ [Hospital discharge and community support guidance](#)

6. The HWB is asked to ratify the BCF Plan 2025 - 2026 and the Quarter 1 report 2025 - 2026 which is enclosed with this paper.
7. The BCF Plan 2025 – 2026 and Quarter 1 report 2025 - 2026 focuses on the use of hospital discharge funding as stipulated in by NHS England and details the following:
 - Planned and actual expenditure to date.
 - Planned and actual outputs delivered to date.
8. The BCF quarter 1 report submission deadline date set by NHS England was 15 August 2025, however NHS England notified H&F and other NWL authorities that we were no longer required to submit the Quarter 1 report on 15 August 2025, due to an agreed later submission date of BCF Plan 2025 - 2026. H&F and ICB made a joint decision to continue with the internal governance for the Quarter 1 report and submit to NHS England as part of good practice.
9. The BCF Plan 2025 – 2026 and BCF Quarter 1 submission 2025 - 2026 will be ratified at the H&F HWB on 10 September 2025.
10. The HWB is asked to ratify the BCF Plan 2025 – 2026 and BCF Quarter 1 submission 2025 – 2026, which is enclosed with this paper.

HWB BCF requirements

11. The HWB is required to confirm whether the four national conditions detailed in the Better Care Fund planning requirements for 2025-26 continue to be met through the delivery of joint BCF plan²
12. The four national conditions are as follows:
 - National condition 1: Plans to be jointly agreed – This continues to be met.
 - National condition 2: Implementing BCF Policy Objective 1: *Enabling people to stay well, safe and independent at home for longer* – This continues to be met as the H&F BCF planning template 2025 - 2026 comprises a list of relevant BCF funded services that were jointly agreed by all partners and signed off through the HWB Chair's action on the H&F HWB on 3 July 2025. The enclosed quarter 1 submission template also details planned versus delivered outputs to date for the BCF funded services.
 - National condition 3: Implementing BCF Policy Objective 2: *Providing the right care in the right place at the right time* – This continues to be met as the H&F BCF planning template 2025 - 2026 comprises a list of relevant BCF funded services that were jointly agreed by all partners and signed off through the HWB Chair's action on the H&F HWB on 3 July 2025. The enclosed quarter 1 submission template also details planned versus delivered outputs to date for the BCF funded services.

² [Better Care Fund planning](#)

- National condition 4: *Maintaining NHS contribution to adult social care and investment in NHS commissioned out of hospital services.* – This continues to be met as the H&F BCF planning template 2025 - 2026 comprises a list of relevant BCF funded services that were jointly agreed by all partners and signed off through the HWB Chair's action on the H&F HWB on 3 July 2025. The enclosed quarter 1 submission template also details planned versus delivered outputs to date for the BCF funded services showing the NHS contribution to adult social care and NHS commissioned out of hospital services.

13. The key purposes of BCF reporting are as follows:

- To confirm the status of continued compliance against the requirements of the fund (BCF).
- In Quarter 2 to refresh capacity and demand plans, and in Quarter 3 to confirm activity to date, where BCF funded schemes include output estimates, and at the End of Year actual income and expenditure in BCF plans.
- To provide information from local areas on challenges, achievements and support needs in progressing the delivery of BCF plans, including performance metrics.
- To enable the use of this information for national partners to inform future direction and for local areas to inform improvements.

List of Appendices

Appendix 1 – BCF Planning Template 2025-26

Appendix 2 – Quarter 1 Submission 2025-26