

**REPORT TO:** Executive Board

**DATE:** 14 September 2023

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Executive Director, Adult Services

**PORTFOLIO:** Adult Social Care

**SUBJECT:** Halton Borough Council and NHS Cheshire & Merseyside: Joint Working Agreement (Better Care (Pooled) Fund) – Key Decision

**WARD(S):** Borough-wide

## 1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To present, for approval, the updated two year Joint Working Agreement (JWA) between Halton Borough Council (HBC) and NHS Cheshire & Merseyside (CM), taking effect from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2025, and which replaces the previous one year JWA which was approved by Executive Board on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2023; updated JWA can be found at *Appendix 1*.

## 2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Board:

- i) **note the contents of the report and associated Appendix; and**
- ii) **approve the Agreement, with delegated authority to the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and the Executive Director, Adult Services to finalise the new JWA.**

## 3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 HBC and NHS CM (previously NHS Halton Clinical Commissioning Group) have had a JWA, including a pooled budget, in place for the commissioning of services for people with Complex Care needs since April 2013.

3.2 Since it's original development, the JWA and associated Pooled Budget has gone through a number of changes including the inclusion of the Better Care Fund in 2015 and the separating out of the Continuing Healthcare and Community Care budget elements in 2020.

3.3 Both HBC and NHS CM remain committed to developing our integrated approach to service delivery and transformation to improve the Health and Wellbeing of Halton residents.

3.4 With this in mind, in March 2023, we sought agreement from Executive Board to extend the current JWA for 12 months to allow time for a fuller review of the agreement to take place.

- 3.5 However, it was acknowledged by both parties that although the current agreement would need to be extended for 12 months, it did need to be amended/updated to reflect changes in organisational structure, governance arrangements associated with the JWA, Pooled Budget and One Halton Partnership governance arrangements.
- 3.6 Following approval in March 2023, national guidance was issued in respect to the requirements regarding the Better Care Fund Plan and that is was intended to be a two year plan (2023/25). Also further discussions took place between HBC and NHS CM regarding the governance arrangements in respect to the pooled budget arrangements which resulted in agreement to formally remove management of the Pooled Budget etc. from the One Halton Partnership governance arrangements.
- 3.7 In the main, this change has resulted in the establishment of a Joint Senior Leadership Team (JSLT) between HBC Adult Social Care and NHS CM.
- 3.8 The JSLT is responsible for the direction, oversight, monitoring of the BCF Plan and associated Pooled Budget. The JSLT is supported in this duty via the Better Care Commissioning Advisory Group (BCCAG). The BCCAG reviews in detail information pertaining to BCF Plan, impact of the Pool Budget, quality, performance, activity and finances, and make recommendations to the JSLT on remedial action plans or future use of the Pool as appropriate.
- 3.9 The new governance arrangements along with links to the two year Better Care Fund Plan has been reflected in the new JWA.
- 3.10 At the time of writing this report, the JWA is currently being taken through NHS CM's associated governance channels, at Place and at main Board level, for approval.
- 3.11 As such, in case any issues are encountered, the Executive Board are asked to give delegated authority to the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and the Executive Director, Adult Social Services to finalise the new JWA, following approval by NHS CM.

#### 4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 None identified.

#### 5.0 **OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Better Care (Pooled) Fund budget for 2023/24 is circa. £30m.

- 5.2 With effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023, the pooled budget will include:-

- Better Care Fund and Improved Better Care Fund (iBCF)
  - Includes spend in areas such as Intermediate Care Services, Carers, Equipment Services, Care Homes, Domiciliary Care, Telecare, Supported Discharge, Community Respiratory and Rehabilitation Services

- Hospital Discharge Funding
- Disabled Facility Grant

## 6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

### 6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

None identified

### 6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

None identified.

### 6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

Those people who are in receipt of long term care whether that is funding from Health or Social Care are those people in our communities with some of the most clinically complex and severe on going needs, so it is essential we have effective mechanisms in place to ensure that people we provide services to receive appropriate outcomes.

The integrated system and pooled budget arrangements will continue to ensure that the resources available to both Health and Social Care are effectively used in the delivery of personalised, responsive and holistic care to those who are most in need.

### 6.4 **A Safer Halton**

None identified

### 6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

None identified

## 7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 The JWA complies with the financial standing orders of HBC and NHS CM and the regulatory and monitoring arrangements contained within.

## 8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 None associated with this report.

## 9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no environmental or climate implications as a direct result of this report.

## 10.0 **REASON(S) FOR DECISION**

10.1 Approval of the Agreement will continue to support both HBC and NHS CM in developing our integrated approach to service delivery and transformation to improve the Health and Wellbeing of Halton residents.

## 11.0 **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

11.1 1. Allow the JWA to cease.

## 12.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE

12.1 The two year JWA takes effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023.

## 13.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Joint Working Agreement between HBC and NHS Cheshire & Merseyside 1.4.23 – 31.3.24	Copy available via Email	Sue Wallace Bonner <a href="mailto:Susan.Wallace-Bonner@halton.gov.uk">Susan.Wallace-Bonner@halton.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0151 511 8825