



# Health and Wellbeing Together

## 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Report title: Black Country ICS – Joint Forward Plan Refresh

Report of: Paul Tulley  
Wolverhampton Managing Director  
Black Country Integrated Care Board

Portfolio: Public Health and Wellbeing

---

### Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

Health and Wellbeing Together is recommended to:

1. Make comments on the refresh of the Joint Forward Plan for consideration by the ICB as it finalises the document for publication on 31<sup>st</sup> March.
2. To authorise the Chair to submit a statement of support for inclusion in the refreshed Joint Forward Plan, which confirms they are satisfied that the plan supports the priorities set out in Wolverhampton Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

## 1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Health & Wellbeing Board on the approach of the Black County ICB Joint Forward Plan refresh.

## 2.0 Background

- 2.1 All ICBs and their partner NHS Trusts were required to prepare a Joint Forward Plan in conjunction with wider system partners covering the period 2023 to 2028. The NHS Black Country Joint Forward Plan (JFP) was published in June 2023. A 'shorter-read' version was subsequently developed which is the version of the plan utilised by the System.
- 2.2 The Joint Forward Plan was shared with members of the Health and Wellbeing Board in draft prior to its approval to provide assurance that the strategic plan for the NHS is aligned with and supports the delivery of priorities set out in your Health and Wellbeing Strategy. A statement of support was received in response from each Health and Wellbeing Board.
- 2.3 Updated 'Joint Forward Plan' guidance was published on the 22 December 2023, which set out the requirement to publish a refreshed plan by the 31 March 2024.
- 2.4 The focus of the refresh has been on the shorter read version of the plan, reflecting progress we have made to date as well as taking into account any known adjustments to be incorporated as a result which may include changes to Health and Wellbeing Board Strategies, Place plans or Collaborative plans, including relevant alignment.

## 3.0 Joint Forward Plan Refresh

- 3.1 We set out five strategic priority areas in our 5-year plan as follows:

**Priority 1** - Improving access and quality of services  
**Priority 2** - Care Closer to Home  
**Priority 3** - Preventing ill health and tackling health inequalities  
**Priority 4** - Giving people the best start in life  
**Priority 5** - Best place to work.

- 3.2 As we move into year two of our plan, we want to refresh it to ensure it is still fit for purpose and meeting the needs of our people and communities. The NHS as a whole in 2023/24 has experienced financial challenge The Black Country is no different, and to reflect this, we believe the update to our Joint Forward Plan should include a new priority to reflect the challenge we face and the work we will need to undertake to improve our finances on a long-term basis.

**Priority 6** - Fit for the future

- 3.3 This new priority recognises that the Black Country health system needs to change the way that it works to embrace the opportunities and meet the challenges it faces. This includes the need to be more productive and cost-effective to meet our financial challenges. We also need to ensure that we support our Places and providers to work better together. We need to reduce the carbon footprint of the NHS and be more sustainable. All of this will require strong, sustainable leadership and enabling functions.
- 3.4 No change is proposed to the Wolverhampton priorities in the Joint Forward Plan, which continue to reflect the priorities set out in the Wolverhampton Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- 3.5 From late February until 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024, we are holding conversations with our partners and giving people an opportunity to let us know if there is anything we are missing as we refresh the document. This year's refresh will be light touch as we prepare for a more comprehensive mid-term review in 2024/25. A summary of the refreshed plan can be found on our [website](#) and local people are invited to share their thoughts by completing an online survey.

#### **4.0 Financial implications**

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the publication of the Joint Forward Plan.

#### **5.0 Legal implications**

- 5.1 The publication of a Joint Forward Plan is a legal requirement for Integrated Care Boards.

#### **6.0 Equalities implications**

- 6.1 The ICB will have regard to its legal duties regarding equalities and health inequalities in the development of the JFP refresh.

#### **7.0 Schedule of background papers**

- 7.1 The Joint Forward Plan is available in a range of accessible formats and can be accessed on the ICB website at <https://blackcountry.icb.nhs.uk/about-us/our-priorities/our-5-year-joint-forward-plan>.