

AGENDA FOR

CABINET

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To: All Members of Cabinet

Councillors : M C Connolly (Leader) (Chair) (Cabinet Member for Business Engagement and Regeneration), R Shori (Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing), J Lewis (Cabinet Member for Communities), S Walmsley (Cabinet Member for Resource and Regulation), A Simpson (Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing), P Heneghan (Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Culture) and T Isherwood (Cabinet Member for Environment)

Dear Member

Cabinet

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Cabinet which will be held as follows:-

Date:	Wednesday, 10 June 2015
Place:	Meeting Rooms A & B - Town Hall
Time:	6.00 pm
Briefing Facilities:	If Opposition Members and Co-opted Members require briefing on any particular item on the Agenda, the appropriate Director/Senior Officer originating the related report should be contacted.
Notes:	

AGENDA

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of Cabinet are asked to consider whether they have an interest in any of the matters of the Agenda, and if so, to formally declare that interest.

3 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Questions are invited from members of the public present at the meeting about the work of the Council and the Council's services.

Approximately 30 minutes will be set aside for Public Question Time, if required.

4 MINUTES *(Pages 1 - 6)*

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 8 April 2015.

5 COUNCIL VISION, PURPOSE AND VALUES 2015 - 2020 *(Pages 7 - 20)*

6 ADULT EDUCATION STRATEGY 2015-2018 *(Pages 21 - 48)*

7 BURRS COUNTRY PARK STRATEGY *(Pages 49 - 102)*

8 ADOPTION OF REVISED SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT 1: OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION IN NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT *(Pages 103 - 142)*

9 FOSTER CARE PAYMENTS *(Pages 143 - 156)*

10 TOWNSHIP FORUMS *(Pages 157 - 174)*

11 URGENT BUSINESS

Any other business which by reason of special circumstances the Chair agrees may be considered as a matter of urgency.

12 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To consider passing the appropriate resolution under Section 100 (A)(4), Schedule 12(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the reason that the following business involves the disclosure of exempt information as detailed against the item.

- 13 CAPITAL PROJECT STAGE 2 BRIEF - HIGHWAYS CAPITAL MAINTENANCE AND BRIDGE STRENGTHENING PROGRAMMES 2015/2016** *(Pages 175 - 196)*
- 14 CAPITAL PROGRAMME STAGE 2 BRIEF - PLAY AREA REFURBISHMENT PROGRAMME 2015/2016** *(Pages 197 - 210)*

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Minutes of:	THE CABINET
Date of Meeting:	8 April 2015
Present:	Councillor M Connolly (in the Chair) Councillors A Isherwood, J Lewis, R Shori and S Walmsley
Apologies:	Councillor G Campbell
Public attendance:	5 members of the public were in attendance.

CA.875 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Connolly declared a personal and a prejudicial interest in respect of Minute number CA.877 Future Service Options for Social Care Provider Services, for the reason that his partner is employed by Adult Care Services. Councillor Connolly left the meeting room during consideration of the item of business.

CA.876 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A period of thirty minutes was allocated for any members of the public present at the meeting to ask questions about the work or performance of the Council or Council services.

No questions were asked.

CA.877 MINUTES**Delegated decision:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2015 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

(Councillor Connolly left the meeting at this point. Councillor Shori took the chair for the following item of business.)

CA.878 FUTURE SERVICE OPTIONS FOR SOCIAL CARE PROVIDER SERVICES

The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing submitted a report and business plan for the establishment of a Local Authority Trading Company as a vehicle to deliver a range of adult social care services currently provided in-house.

The report included a Business Plan which was an exempt document and not for publication for the reason that it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of the Council (Paragraph 3, Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972).

Delegated decision:

That approval be given to the establishment of a Local Authority Trading Company as detailed in the report submitted.

Reasons for the decision:

The Council would continue to fulfil its duties to safeguard those who are most vulnerable whilst targeting the resources available to the Council from 2015/2016. The services would be developed into a new organisation wholly owned by the Council but separate to it. Customers and staff would transfer into the new organisation.

Other options considered and rejected:

To reject the recommendation. Savings would not be achieved and would have to be met elsewhere within the Council. Alternatively the options for closure and privatisation previously considered and dismissed by Cabinet on 1 October 2014 would need to be reconsidered.

(Councillor Connolly returned to Chair the remainder of the meeting at this point.)

CA.879 BURY INVESTING IN GROWTH – LOCAL BUSINESS RATES DISCRETIONARY SCHEME FOR NEW BULDS

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance submitted a report outlining the proposed business rates incentive scheme for new build commercial properties which will be operated in Bury.

Delegated decision:

That approval be given to the Local Business Rates Discretionary Scheme for new commercial buildings.

Reason for the decision:

The scheme presents an opportunity to incentivise businesses to choose Bury as the place to invest and grow. It also directly supports a number of important themes within the Team Bury's Economic Development Strategy and will contribute to the Council's stated objective of creating a strong local economy.

Other option considered and rejected:

To reject the recommendation.

CA.880 BURY SUPPORT FUND

The Cabinet Member for Resources and Regulation submitted a report that outlined the future of the localised Social Fund which now operates as the Bury Support Fund following the withdrawal of Government funding. The report also set out proposals for the shape of the funding scheme for the next three years.

Delegated decision:

Cabinet 8 April 2015

That approval be given to the proposed revisions to the Bury Social Fund.

Reason for the decision:

The scheme will provide much needed support to Bury residents.

Other option considered and rejected:

To reject the recommendation.

CA.881 GREATER MANCHESTER DEVOLUTION – MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

The Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance submitted a report providing information on the Memorandum of Understanding between the Greater Manchester (GM) Local Authorities, GM Clinical Commissioning Group (CCGs) and NHS England. The Memorandum of Understanding creates a framework for the delegation and ultimate devolution of health and social care responsibilities to Greater Manchester. It also sets out the actions required to be taken by the Council to meet the requirements of the Memorandum of Understanding.

Delegated decision:

1. That the report submitted, that was considered and agreed at the joint GM Combined Authority and AGMA Executive Board meeting on 27 February 2015, be noted.
2. That the Memorandum of Understanding, as signed by representatives of AGMA, GM CCGs and NHS England be endorsed. That it also be recognised that it is an important and significant step in the development of a new collaborative partnership for health and social care in Greater Manchester.
3. That the Interim Chief Executive be authorised to submit a report to the meeting of Cabinet in June 2015 setting out how the authority will meet the locality requirements of the Memorandum of Understanding.

Reason for the decision:

The integration of health and social care within Greater Manchester has been a major priority of Greater Manchester's growth.

Other option considered and rejected:

To reject the recommendation.

CA.882 MINUTES OF THE ASSOCIATION OF GREATER MANCHESTER AUTHORITIES / GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

The minutes of the meetings of the Association of Greater Manchester Combined Authority and the Joint AGMA Executive Board and the Greater Manchester Combined Authority held on 27 February 2015 were submitted.

Cabinet 8 April 2015

Delegated decision:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Association of Greater Manchester Combined Authority and the meeting of the Joint AGMA Executive Board and the Greater Manchester Combined Authority held on 27 February 2015 be noted.

CA.883 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Delegated decision:

That in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as detailed in the condition of category 3.

**CA.884 CAPITAL PROJECT STAGE TWO APPROVAL SECONDARY PUPIL
E REFERRAL UNIT – DEVELOPMENT OF ACCOMMODATION**

The Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance submitted a report setting out the details of a capital project for a Secondary Pupil Referral Unit.

Delegated decision:

That approval be given to the financial details as detailed in the report submitted.

Reason for the decision:

The decision will enable the project to progress.

Other option considered and rejected:

To reject the recommendation.

**CA.885 GREATER MANCHESTER HOUSING INVESTMENT FUND
E**

The Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance submitted a report regarding the Greater Manchester Housing Investment Fund (GMHIF).

Delegated decisions:

1. That approval be given to the proposal to enter into a Deed of Indemnity on the terms set out in the report submitted.
2. That the Assistant Director (Legal and Democratic Services) be authorised to complete the necessary documentation.

Reason for the decision:

The GMHIF will provide an opportunity to invest in locally prioritised schemes and give the flexibility required to stimulate the market, accelerate growth and increase housing supply.

Other option considered and rejected:

To reject the recommendation.

Cabinet 8 April 2015

COUNCILLOR M CONNOLLY
Chair

(Note: The meeting started at 6.05 pm and ended at 6.15 pm.)

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REPORT FOR DECISION



DECISION OF:	CABINET – 10 JUNE 2015 COUNCIL – 1 JULY 2015
SUBJECT:	COUNCIL VISION, PURPOSE AND VALUES 2015-2020
REPORT FROM:	THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL
CONTACT OFFICER:	Pat Jones-Greenhalgh, Executive Director of Communities and Well Being
TYPE OF DECISION:	COUNCIL
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/STATUS:	This paper is within the public domain.
SUMMARY:	<p>Bury faces significant challenges in the years to come. Meeting our obligations, staying within budget and managing the expectations of a growing (and ageing) population will require strong leadership and a clear sense of direction.</p> <p>What this means in practice is set out in the form of a 'plan on a page' (attached to this report). Rather than a long document, this new look plan focuses on the actions needed in each aspect of work to transform, by 2020, the Council's approach to public services.</p>
OPTIONS & RECOMMENDED OPTION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For Cabinet to recommend the Vision, Purpose and Values document to Council – and for Council to adopt the plan. This is the preferred option as it will provide a route map for the organisation over the next 5 years. 2. To not approve the plan. This would leave the Council without a plan to deal with the significant cuts expected to local authority and public service budgets.
IMPLICATIONS:	
Corporate Aims/Policy Framework:	Do the proposals accord with the Policy Framework? The Plan, if approved will replace plan previously adopted as part of the Policy Framework.
Statement by the S151 Officer: Financial Implications and Risk Considerations:	<p>This report sets out the Council's "Vision and Values" for the next 5 years.</p> <p>The document is key to informing the future budget strategy of the Council, and will form the basis of the "Medium Term Financial Strategy" for this period.</p>

SK

	<p>Going forward, it is intended to combine performance and financial monitoring reports to provide Members and stakeholders with a fuller picture of the overall performance of the council.</p> <p>Risk Management reports will also be structured to reflect the proposed "Vision & Values"</p>	
Health and Safety	There are no health and safety issues arising directly from this plan. Any changes in services or operating practice will be subject to risk assessments and implemented in line with existing policy.	
Statement by Executive Director of Resources:	The report is a key element of the Council's governance framework and will inform the future direction of supporting strategies, e.g. Workforce, IT / Customer Engagement, and Asset Management.	SK
Equality/Diversity implications:	The plan provides a framework for the future and does not directly impact on any specific group. The implications for people with protected characteristics will be assessed when detailed proposals are brought forward to implement the plan.	
Considered by Monitoring Officer:	The Plan, if approved by Council, will amend the Constitution by replacing the previously approved Bury Plan with the one attached to this report.	JH
Wards Affected:	All	
Scrutiny Interest:	Overview and Scrutiny	

TRACKING/PROCESS**DIRECTOR: Executive Director of Communities and Well Being**

Chief Executive/ Strategic Leadership Team	Executive Member/Chair	Ward Members	Partners
18/5/15	19/5/15		
Scrutiny Committee	Committee	Council	
9/6/15			

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Vision, Purpose and Values is a key document for the Council and serves as a corporate plan to take the organisation, and the Borough, forward through the period of austerity.
- 1.2 Unlike previous plans, this document does not follow a traditional format. In keeping with the times, it has been cut back to focus on the key elements that delivers the Council's vision to lead, shape and maintain a prosperous, sustainable Bury that is fit for purpose.
- 1.3 The strong policy led approach is deliberate. All the evidence points to the Council being a smaller organisation with less money to spend whilst expectations and demand for services continues to rise. A clear sense of direction and passion to deliver local priorities are fundamental managing this scenario and making best use of resources.

2. COUNCIL PRIORITIES 2015-2020

Influences on the plan

- 2.1 A number of internal and external factors have been taken into account when producing the plan.
- 2.2 **Team Bury ambitions.** The Council is fully committed to improving outcomes for local people but many of the issues facing our communities extend beyond single agencies. Working with colleagues in the public, private and voluntary sectors, three key areas have been prioritised: the economy; stronger, safer communities; and health and well being. These are the areas that residents consider to be most important and where, collectively, we can make most difference to the lives of local people.
- 2.3 **The Council's Strategic Outcomes.** Arising from public consultation in 2011, the Council adopted three key outcomes – reducing poverty and its effects; supporting our most vulnerable residents and making Bury a better place to live. These outcomes are still relevant – they exemplify our purpose as an organisation and offer a qualitative benchmark for decision making going forward.
- 2.4 **Financial imperative.** The Council has to prepare for further cuts in funding over the next few years. This will impact on the range and scale of our activities. As we aspire to remain a direct provider of services, we need to explore new ways of working, better use of technology and change behaviours / expectations in order to reduce our cost base and target available resources towards priorities.
- 2.5 **Devolution of powers to Greater Manchester.** The growth and reform agenda is a great opportunity to develop the local economy, increase efficiency and strengthen democratic accountability over a range of services to the public. Bury has to be ready for these changes; be able and willing for its voice to be heard when proposals are shaped; and be match fit when bidding for resources.
- 2.6 **Areas for improvement.** Bury is open and willing to learn. External assessments regularly reveal above average performance at below average costs in many services but the challenges ahead require that we find new ways of informing citizens, managing demand and delivering outcomes with less money and fewer employees. We have also been reticent in celebrating success and recognising the positive things we do. This in itself is an area for development going forward.

Corporate Priorities

- 2.7 Based on what we know and what we want to achieve, six priorities have been identified for the next 5 years:
- Drive forward, through effective marketing and information, ***proactive engagement with the people of Bury to take ownership of their own health and well being.***
 - Continue to ***develop business friendly policies to attract inward investment and new jobs*** so that Bury retains its position as a premier destination for retail, leisure, tourism and culture.
 - Ensure ***new and affordable housing is developed*** to support growth in the Bury and Greater Manchester economy.
 - To build on the culture of efficiency and effectiveness through new, progressive and integrated partnership working models to ***drive forward the Council's and City Region Public Service growth and reform agenda.***
 - To ensure ***staff have the right skills to embrace significant organisational change***, through embedding a culture of ownership, empowerment and decision making at all levels of the organisation.
 - Work towards ***reducing reliance on government funding*** by developing new models of delivery that are affordable, add value and based on need.
- 2.8 The first three priorities spell out where we want to have greatest impact in the community. The remaining three are more organisational imperatives to deliver our ambitions and cope with future challenges.
- 2.9 All of this is summarised in the Plan on a Page (attached). This sheet provides a simple guide to our priorities and the actions we intend to follow over the next few years. The format is a departure from the traditional approach but by keeping it short and focused the key messages can be communicated easily and concisely.
- 2.10 Future strategies and plans will focus on these priorities – to take the Council forward and turn the vision and values into reality.

Monitoring

- 2.11 There will be two aspects to monitoring our progress towards a transformed council:
- Corporate monitoring – this will be a check on the state of the Borough and enable the Cabinet / Senior Leadership Team to consider any adjustments needed to the plan in the light of changing local needs or external factors (legislation, devolution, inspections, etc).
 - Programme monitoring – to ensure good governance, the Council needs assurance that the programme of work arising from this plan is being delivered. This will take the form of statistics, performance indicators and project milestones to assess changes in service activity, levels of efficiency and progress on specific tasks.

- 2.12 An initial list of draft indicators is attached (Appendix 1). These will be developed and refined during the life of the plan to provide better insights into local communities, measure the health of the organisation and demonstrate progress over time.
- 2.13 The results will be reported to Cabinet and Scrutiny.

Values

- 2.14 Changing behaviours in both residents and employees will be critical to success. As the cutbacks take effect, people will need to be less dependent on the Council for many of the services they currently take for granted. With those most dependent frequently being the people most in need, efforts will be made to assist in this transition. Actions have been included in the plan to improve access to information, increase prevention/early intervention techniques and encourage approaches that promote self help/self service/self management.
- 2.15 It will also be a significant change for Council employees. A culture shift is required to operate in the new environment and this will be reflected in a revised People Strategy. Based on the Council's expectations of managers and employees, the strategy will ensure that employees are recruited and developed to deliver the Council's intentions. The Bury Behaviours programme supports this approach and its use as part of Employee Reviews and organisational change will continue to be encouraged.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 With Government funding set to reduce, the cost to the Council of running services has to be cut. How this is achieved will be important. Opportunities need to be taken to modernise services/processes, introduce new models of delivery and generate income where this can mitigate impact of cuts, particularly on services to priority groups and jobs.
- 3.2 Greater efficiency however only takes us so far. Some services will be lost. For others, investment will be required to secure improvement. Short term injections of capital or revenue funding is not being ruled out providing there is a business case for 'investing to save' or where investment will deliver significant future gains for the Council or the Borough as a whole.
- 3.3 To achieve best use of resources, the Council will seek to work more closely with providers and other agencies. All public services are under pressure and aligning spending with our partners to get the best outcomes will be essential. There may also be further opportunities to pool resources (as is happening with the Better Care Fund).
- 3.4 To bring this together, a medium term financial strategy is being developed which, together with the updated People Strategy, will underpin the policy led approach.

4. RISKS

- 4.1 The financial climate makes long term planning more difficult. Paradoxically, the need for a plan is never greater than during times of uncertainty as people want to know what the Council will do and where it is heading. The Vision, Purpose and Values plan sets this out – with the actions having been future proofed as much as possible. It is however recognised that spending decisions may affect the pace and scale at which change can be delivered.

- 4.2 Not everybody will be satisfied with the proposed actions and there could be some resistance to change from residents and/or employees. A balance needs to be struck. The Council will endeavour to protect services and jobs (for example through new models of delivery) but people will also need to change their behaviour to adapt to new ways of working. Work to improve information and develop tools to help behaviour change have been included within the plan.
- 4.3 Most people will adapt to change, particularly when they understand the reasons, feel part of the process and/or perceive the new approach to be an improvement. It is accepted that some struggle with change and efforts will be made to help those individuals along – to minimise the risk of exclusion and ensure compliance with the Council's public sector equality duty.
- 4.4 More joint working and shared services are inevitable if the Council is to maintain services and cut costs. This carries certain risks in terms of not being in total control of timescales, resources and priorities. Services must be convinced that the value of joint arrangements outweigh the negatives of any compromise before entering into such ventures.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 5.1 There are no direct equality issues arising from this report. These will be identified and assessed when the more detailed proposals are put forward to implement this plan. The equality assessment however recognises that by signalling its continued support for vulnerable people, the plan is likely to be positive for the community.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The Vision, Purpose and Values document articulates (on one page) the direction of travel for the Council over the next five years.
 - 6.2 The focus will be on growth and reform – reinforcing efforts to make Bury a great place to live, work, study and visit whilst recognising the reality that the Council will be smaller as a result of reduced Government funding. To minimise the adverse effects on the public, new ways of working and new models of delivery will be explored.
 - 6.3 Supporting this work will be a Financial Strategy and People Strategy to ensure that Council resources are used to best effect to achieve the vision and values.
 - 6.4 It is recommended that:
 - (a) The Vision, Purpose and Values document is approved by Cabinet as the basis of the Council's 5 year plan and recommended to full Council for adoption;
 - (b) Council adopts the plan and amends the Constitution by replacing the previously approved Bury Plan with the one attached to this report.
 - (c) The draft indicators (attached at Appendix 1) are agreed as the basis for corporate monitoring and that further work is undertaken to develop/refine the measures to reflect progress on the work programme;
 - (d) A Financial Strategy and People Strategy are developed to underpin the direction of travel set out in the Visions, Purpose and Values document
-

List of Background Papers:-

Our Vision and Values – Bury's Corporate Plan on a page
Equality Assessment

Contact Details:

Pat Jones- Greenhalgh, Executive Director, Communities and Well Being

Tel: 0161 253 5405

Email: p.jones-greenhalgh@bury.gov.uk

DRAFT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

APPENDIX 1


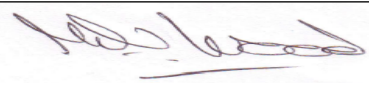
OUR SERVICES	
% household waste sent for re-use, recycling and composting	Higher is better
Residual household waste (kgs per household)	Lower is better
Ave time to process Housing Benefit/Council tax new claims	Lower is better
% of children with 5 GCSEs grade A*-C	Higher is better
% of 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEET)	Lower is better
No of homeless presentations	Lower is better
No of homeless preventions	Higher is better
Business start ups	Higher is better
PARTNERSHIPS	
Overall employment rate for Bury	Higher is better
Proportion of working age people on out of work benefits	Lower is better
Admissions (aged 65+) to hospital and residential / nursing care	Lower is better
No of serious violent crime per 1000 population	Lower is better
No of anti social behaviour incidents per 1000 population	Lower is better
% rate of repeat incidents of domestic violence	Lower is better
PEOPLE	
Resident perception/satisfaction of the Borough	Higher is better
Employee satisfaction	Higher is better
Sickness absence	Lower is better
PREMISES AND FACILITIES	
No of houses built per annum	Higher is better
No of empty properties	Lower is better
Amount of vacant/under utilised land and buildings held	Lower is better
QUALITY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE / FINANCE AND SYSTEMS	
% Council Tax collected	Higher is better
% business rates collected	Higher is better
Business rates yield	Higher is better
Forecast outturn – revenue	Closeness to budget
Forecast outturn – capital	Closeness to budget



Equality Analysis Form

The following questions will document the effect of your service or proposed policy, procedure, working practice, strategy or decision (hereafter referred to as 'policy') on equality, and demonstrate that you have paid due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty.

1. RESPONSIBILITY

Department	Communities and Well Being	
Service	Corporate Policy	
Proposed policy	Council Vision and Values 2015-2020	
Date	May 2015	
Officer responsible for the 'policy' and for completing the equality analysis	Name	Harry Downie
	Post Title	Assistant Director
	Contact Number	0161 253 7570
	Signature	
	Date	29 April 2015
Equality officer consulted	Name	Mary Wood
	Post Title	Principal Officer - Equalities
	Contact Number	0161 253 6795
	Signature	 25/2015
	Date	14 th May 2015

2. AIMS

What is the purpose of the policy/ service and what is it intended to achieve?	<p>The Vision and Values document sets the direction of travel for the Council service for the next five years. It outlines on one page the actions needed to deliver the Council's priorities and shape the organisation to make Bury fit for the future.</p> <p>The financial challenges ahead are expected to require radical change and this plan seeks to manage that process to produce an orderly move towards becoming a smaller, modern local authority.</p>
Who are the main stakeholders?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Council departments and partner agency services ○ Team Bury ○ Elected members ○ All residents in the Borough ○ External regulators and inspectors

3. ESTABLISHING RELEVANCE TO EQUALITY

3a. Using the drop down lists below, please advise whether the policy/service has either a positive or negative effect on any groups of people with protected equality characteristics.

If you answer yes to any question, please also explain why and how that group of people will be affected.

Protected equality characteristic	Positive effect (Yes/No)	Negative effect (Yes/No)	Explanation
Race	No	No	<p>The plan provides a framework for future action and has no direct impact on individuals or groups within the community. It does however set the future tone for the Council and reinforces the positive values and behaviours that the Council wants from employees and residents in the future to support vulnerable people.</p> <p>The impact of service changes on people with protected characteristics will be identified when any detailed proposals are considered.</p>
Disability	No	No	
Gender	No	No	
Gender reassignment	No	No	
Age	No	No	
Sexual orientation	No	No	
Religion or belief	No	No	
Caring responsibilities	No	No	
Pregnancy or maternity	No	No	
Marriage or civil partnership	No	No	

3b. Using the drop down lists below, please advise whether or not our policy/service has relevance to the Public Sector Equality Duty. If you answer yes to any question, please explain why.

General Public Sector Equality Duties	Relevance (Yes/No)	Reason for the relevance
Need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010	No	
Need to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not (eg. by removing or minimising disadvantages or meeting needs)	Yes	The plan reinforces the positive values and behaviours that the Council wants from employees and residents. It also maintains a commitment to support vulnerable people as well as reduce poverty and its effects (many BME, disabled and older people being disproportionately represented in income deprivation figures).
Need to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not (eg. by tackling prejudice or promoting understanding)	Yes	The plan reinforces the positive values and behaviours that the Council wants from employees and residents.

If you answered 'YES' to any of the questions in 3a and 3b

Go straight to Question 4

If you answered 'NO' to all of the questions in 3a and 3b

Go to Question 3c and do not answer questions 4-6

3c. if you have answered 'No' to all the questions in 3a and 3b please explain why you feel that your policy/service has no relevance to equality

4. EQUALITY INFORMATION AND ENGAGEMENT

4a. For a service plan, please list what equality information you currently have available, **OR** for a new/changed policy or practice please list what equality information you considered and engagement you have carried out in relation to it.

Please provide a link if the information is published on the web and advise when it was last updated?

(NB. Equality information can be both qualitative and quantitative. It includes knowledge of service users, satisfaction rates, compliments and complaints, the results of surveys or other engagement activities and should be broken down by equality characteristics where relevant.)

Details of the equality information or engagement	Internet link if published	Date last updated
Consultation with Cabinet		
Public consultation on the proposed budget cuts 2015/16		

4b. Are there any information gaps, and if so how do you plan to tackle them?

There is uncertainty around the level of future funding from the Government which will only become clearer when the expected Comprehensive Spending Review and subsequent budget announcements are made.

The absence of this data however does not, and cannot, stop the Council planning ahead. Action needs to be taken to address the known pressures and these are outlined in the document. Funding availability will influence the pace and scale of change rather than the direction of travel.

5. CONCLUSIONS OF THE EQUALITY ANALYSIS

<p>What will the likely overall effect of your policy/service plan be on equality?</p>	<p>The Vision and Values document sets out the Council's position as it deals with the funding and demographic changes ahead. The plan brings together on one page the priorities, values and actions that the Council needs to transform services and remain fit for purpose.</p> <p>The document does not in itself change services and therefore has no direct impact on people with protected characteristics. It does however set the tone and values of the organisation and reinforces the positive values expected from employees and residents.</p>
<p>If you identified any negative effects (see questions 3a) or discrimination what measures have you put in place to remove or mitigate them?</p>	<p>No negative impacts have been identified at this stage. There may be service change arising from the actions identified in this plan but any impact on people with protected characteristics will be assessed when detailed proposals are brought forward.</p>
<p>Have you identified any further ways that you can advance equality of opportunity and/or foster good relations? If so, please give details.</p>	<p>It is recognised in the plan that the relationship between the Council and citizens will change. To support this approach, proactive engagement with the people of Bury has been made a priority – to strengthen communities and promote greater self determination by local people.</p>
<p>What steps do you intend to take now in respect of the implementation of your policy/service plan?</p>	<p>Following political approval to the plan, the document will be widely publicised throughout the Council and with partners.</p>

6. MONITORING AND REVIEW

If you intend to proceed with your policy/service plan, please detail what monitoring arrangements (if appropriate) you will put in place to monitor the ongoing effects. Please also state when the policy/service plan will be reviewed.

Progress against the plan will be monitored quarterly by the Council's Senior Leadership team with reports also being presented to Cabinet and Scrutiny.

There will be an annual review of the plan and adjustments made if necessary in the light of performance, the financial position or any external influences on the Council.

COPIES OF THIS EQUALITY ANALYSIS FORM SHOULD BE ATTACHED TO ANY REPORTS/SERVICE PLANS AND ALSO SENT TO THE EQUALITY INBOX (equality@bury.gov.uk) FOR PUBLICATION.

REPORT FOR DECISION



DECISION OF:	CABINET
DATE:	10 JUNE 2015
SUBJECT:	ADULT EDUCATION STRATEGY 2015-18
REPORT FROM:	CABINET MEMBER COMMUNITIES
CONTACT OFFICER:	Julie Kenrick, Head of Service
TYPE OF DECISION:	CABINET (KEY DECISION)
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/STATUS:	This paper is within the public domain.
SUMMARY:	<p>The strategy sets a direction of travel for the Council's adult learning service that is more closely aligned to Team Bury priorities and the Council's ambitions. There is a strong focus on actions that increase basic skill levels and reduce other barriers to employment. The role of learning in promoting community cohesion and reducing inequalities is also recognised.</p> <p>The document will form part of the evidence considered by Ofsted when the service is inspected (anticipated later this year) and will support future bids to the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and other funding sources.</p>
OPTIONS & RECOMMENDED OPTION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To approve the strategy. This is the recommended option as it provides direction to the service going forward. 2. To not approve the strategy.
IMPLICATIONS:	
Corporate Aims/Policy Framework:	Do the proposals accord with the Policy Framework? Yes
Statement by the S151 Officer: Financial Implications and Risk Considerations:	<p>The proposed strategy sets out a platform for the future development of the service; recognising potential funding reductions (estimated to be £150,000 in 2015/16).</p> <p>Alternative funding sources will be examined, and fee levels will be reviewed to address this.</p>
Health and Safety	There are no health and safety issues arising directly from this strategy. Any changes in services or operating practice will be subject to risk assessments and implemented in line

SK

	with existing policy.	
Statement by Executive Director of Resources:	The service plays a key role in developing individuals and employers to further the Council's "Stronger Economy" priority.	SK
Equality/Diversity implications:	The Equality Analysis indicates that the proposals support community cohesion and encourage participation in learning by disadvantaged groups. The extent to which this can be delivered will be affected by Government funding decisions.	
Considered by Monitoring Officer:	Yes	JH
Wards Affected:	All	
Scrutiny Interest:		

TRACKING/PROCESS**DIRECTOR: Executive Director of Adult Care Services**

Chief Executive/ Strategic Leadership Team	Executive Member/Chair	Ward Members	Partners
18/5/15	22/5/15		
Scrutiny Committee	Committee	Council	

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Adult Learning Service (ALS) in Bury delivers a range of learning opportunities for local people. From formal qualifications and skill based courses to family and community sessions, a broad curriculum is offered – enabling individuals to return to learning at different points according to their needs and aspirations.
- 1.2 4,000 people were attracted to the service last year (amounting to almost 6000 enrolments) and they were supported by 92 tutors at a cost of £2 million. 80% of the budget is funded by the Government with course fees contributing another 10%. Lottery grants and commissioned services provide the balance. The service operates at no cost to the Council.
- 1.3 Government funding through the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) has been squeezed over many years, mitigated by prudent management and a track record of delivery. However, further spending cuts in the coming year will increase pressure on the range, depth and location of provision. It is therefore timely to review the focus of the service – to keep the alignment with local priorities and satisfy our contractual obligations – without resorting to Council funding or placing an undue financial burden on course participants.
- 1.4 Bury ALS is also due an OFSTED inspection in the next year. An up to date strategy will be a key document when judgements are made on leadership and governance.

2. WHERE ARE WE NOW?

- 2.1 Bury has a high level of qualified residents compared to neighbouring Boroughs but there are still some 23% (equivalent to 42,000 people) who have no qualifications at all. Compared to the 2001 Census (when 29% of residents had no qualifications) this is an improvement but inequalities remain particularly in Bury East, Radcliffe and Besses where deprivation is more prevalent and economic inactivity is higher than the Borough average. By increasing skill levels, people are brought closer to the job market, improving their life chances and employability.
- 2.2 The Council's Adult Education Service performs well in this respect. Success rates for the 4,000 learners are outstanding in both non-accredited provision (95.30%) and accredited provision (90.6%). Retention on courses at over 95% is also excellent. The quality of the service is a major contributing factor to success with 97% of teaching and learning observations graded good or better.
- 2.3 In recent years, greater emphasis has been given to attracting individuals from more deprived areas. In the 2013/14 academic year, 58.13% of learners in Adult Skills provision came from these priority wards. Whilst this rate of participation is welcomed, there is still work to be done to increase numbers further and improve the success rate for BME learners (24% of learners in Adult Skills provision) which, at 84%, is below the overall success rate of 90.6%.
- 2.4 Another area for development is employer engagement. With a large proportion of small and medium sized firms in the Borough, the service has found it difficult to engage with some sectors. Closer links would enable co-production of the skills curriculum (to match outputs to employer requirements), increase work experience and placements for learners as well as improving intelligence on learner progression. Taken together these activities would help to measure the effectiveness of the skills provision.

3. PROPOSALS

- 3.1 To address the factors influencing the future development of the service, the strategy is based on five priorities:
 - **Improving outcomes for learners.** Reducing the number of residents without functional skills (including maths, English and IT) is a key priority. For some this will be about gaining qualifications; for others Bury ALS will be a gateway – a way of building confidence through less formal education to help them cope better with modern life, reduce social isolation or enable them to participate more fully in society.
 - **Improving outcomes for employers.** In supporting Bury's 'stronger economy' priority, the service will work with employers to identify and teach the skills needed so that Bury residents can take advantage of any upturn in the economy. Better skilled people are more likely to qualify for jobs paying higher wages – as long as those skills match the requirements of employers.
 - **High quality.** High achievement and retention rates are dependent on effective, quality teaching. Maintaining standards across the service will enhance our reputation with employers and prospective learners.

- **Strong leadership and management.** There are challenges ahead which will require the balancing of quality, cost and diversity in order to maintain provision which is valued and fully utilised by local people.
- **Sustainable communities.** Learning provides individuals with the skills needed to become more self reliant and confident. These are essential components for reducing demand on services and inequalities in the Borough. Increasing participation from disadvantaged communities will be a key target for the service in the coming years as we set out to raise aspirations and empower more individuals to take control over their own lives.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The strategy has no direct financial implications on the service but provides guidance to managers in respect of prioritising the use of resources.
- 4.2 It is known that Government funding will fall in the coming year. The Skills Funding Agency has signalled a reduction in Bury Council's grant for the 2015/16 academic year which could amount to around £150,000. Options for dealing with this scenario are being evaluated including alternative funding sources, revising fee levels and reducing certain types of provision. The priorities outlined in the strategy will be protected and this means that course fees must remain affordable.
- 4.3 Although adult learning is a discretionary function, it is in the interests of the Council to maintain an in-house service. As well as providing employment for 100 people from tutors and curriculum leaders to support staff, the service operates at no cost to the Council. In fact in 2014/15, the Council benefitted from the service to the tune of over £250,000.

5. RISKS

- 5.1 The primary risk to the service relates to funding and in particular the future of central grants. Whilst funding cuts are unwelcome, it is the uncertainty caused by annual determination of grant levels that makes forward planning difficult. This risk is being mitigated by investigating alternative funding sources, cost reduction measures and targeting activity (as outlined in the strategy priorities) to maximise the return investment.
- 5.2 Continued success depends on maintaining, and preferably, increasing participation levels and participation is known to be influenced by the type and range of courses, quality of teaching and cost. The strategy has focused on these components to minimise any learner resistance to changes that may be needed going forward.
- 5.3 Developing the skills route into employment requires better engagement with local firms. Aligning courses and activities with the needs of local firms is essential to avoid time, effort and resources being wasted. Better tracking of learners will provide further reassurance on the quality and value of this provision.
- 5.4 Not implementing the strategy also carries major risks. Without a focus, the service risks being driven by funding decisions rather than policy – an approach that will lead the service into decline at a time when it needs to be identifying ways to improve the resilience and life chances of individuals as a means of reducing inequalities.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 6.1 By maintaining the focus on skills development, the overall impact of the strategy on disadvantaged individuals and communities is positive.
- 6.2 The unknown aspect at this stage is the detailed implications of funding cuts. Government may, through the SFA, seek to target resources at specific provision to influence the type of learning provided. Analysis of grant conditions and assessment of the options is required before the impact on local provision can be calculated.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The adult learning service is making a difference to people's lives. Through quality provision, individuals are achieving high success rates. This in turn is producing a more skilled workforce and fewer residents with no qualifications. However it is not just about employability. The service is well aware of its responsibilities to reduce disadvantage and this has led to emphasis being given to encouraging individuals from priority wards to participate in learning.
- 7.2 The future strategy builds on this by reinforcing areas of strength, aligning activity more closely to Council priorities and supporting the aspirations of local people. These are expressed through five key priorities:
- Improving outcomes for learners
 - Improving outcomes for employers
 - High quality
 - Strong leadership and management
 - An approach that support sustainable communities
- 7.3 It is recommended that:
- (a) The strategy is approved;
 - (b) Options are developed, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities, to address potential funding shortfalls in the budget and ensure the financial sustainability of the in-house service

List of Background Papers:-

Adult Learning Strategy 2015-18
Self Assessment summary 2013-14
Equality Analysis

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Self Assessment Report Summary 2013-2014

Outcomes for learners

Grade: 2

Key Strengths

- Overall success rates for learners are outstanding in both non-accredited provision at 95.30% and 90.60% in accredited provision
- Overall retention is outstanding at 98.19% in non accredited provision and 95.8% in accredited provision
- Overall achievement rates are outstanding in both non-accredited and accredited provision, 97.06% and 94.6 % respectively
- Employability programmes have outstanding success rates with 36% of learners progressing onto other provision offered by Bury Adult Learning Service in year, 80% of trainees on traineeship programmes moved into employment and 38% started apprenticeships. 19.5% of learners referred by Work Programme providers, who attended provision during 2013-14, have moved into employment
- Community based provision keenly focussed on developing skills that support employability and progression into further learning
- Learner feedback clearly identifies that learners achieve their learning goals, acquire new skills and increase their confidence in learning
- No significant achievement gaps overall between males, females, people with disabilities or people from disadvantaged areas; participation of learners from priority wards (58.13%)
- Learners' work in visual arts of a very high standard with learners demonstrating the acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding to produce outstanding pieces of work

Key Areas for Improvement

- BME learners (24% of learners in ASB provision) success rate is 84.4% which is below the overall success rate of 90.6%
- ESOL overall success rates is 1.8% below national benchmark
- The overall success rate for 16-18 learners (22) is 77.3% which is 4.6% above the benchmark for similar providers but 3.7% below national benchmark. There were 2 learners in ESOL who both withdrew from provision and had a nil result. Excluding these 2 learners the overall classroom based success rate would have hit national benchmark
- Learner progression and destination data is inconsistent and does not present a clear measurement of progression for all learners. In 13/14 there was a 61% return of destination data which identified 32.23% learners as continuing learners, 3% part time work, 8% full time work, 1.5% FE, 1.1% HE and 1.56% Voluntary work. Since 12/13 and thereafter to the current year, 22% of learners have progressed to higher levels of learning. 127 learners from 13/14 have progressed to a higher level in 14/15. However neither the destination nor progression produced from Goldmine includes progression through entry levels
- Measuring outcomes to quantify the impact of community learning provision is not fully developed
- With growing emphasis on getting people into work, employer engagement needs to be developed to increase opportunities to provide learners with work experience /placements as integral parts of their learning programmes or as progression opportunities

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment
Grade: 2

Key Strengths

- Teaching, learning and assessment across all areas are good with outstanding teaching evidence in many areas. 97% of Teaching and Learning Observations graded good or better
- Committed well qualified and highly motivated staff who have excellent subject knowledge used effectively to enhance the learner experience
- Where the percentage of responses to learner surveys was high or discussion groups and flashmobs used to gather feedback from learners, learners expressed very high levels of satisfaction with the quality of teaching
- Strong commitment to continuous professional development that impacts on teaching and learning
- The promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion within most curriculum areas is good. Learners have a good understanding reinforced through tutors and curriculum content
- Effective learner induction and initial assessment inform the development of personal learning plans that support the learning to achieve their learning goals
- Learners feel well supported in their learning and value the care and support that tutors give to help them achieve their learning goals
- Assessment practice on accredited programmes is of a high standard and internal verification processes are supported by excellent external verification reports from awarding bodies
- Matrix assessment was carried out in 13/14 and the Matrix standard achieved

Key Areas for Improvement

- Learner progress is monitored and learners are set appropriate targets and receive constructive feedback throughout their learning. However the recording of learner progress is inconsistent in some areas and targets not sufficiently SMART to effectively measure progress
- Some curriculum areas had low responses to learner surveys and although those who did respond were extremely satisfied with the quality of teaching and learning; the service is working to increase learner feedback
- Internal assessment has highlighted opportunities to promote and integrate English and maths better in some curriculum areas
- There is effective use of ICT in some curriculum areas but it is inconsistent
- A more systematic approach to referring learners across the Service to other curriculum areas that support employability and develop learners skills is needed

Effectiveness of leadership and management
Grade: 2

Key Strengths

- There is a clear strategy in place for improving outcomes for individuals and local communities based on a strong ethos of widening participation and social and economic regeneration. 58.13% of learners in Adult Skills provision come from priority wards and retention, success and achievement rates are high
- The Service contributes effectively to a range of corporate objectives and departmental strategies within the Council in particular in the areas of digital inclusion, mental health and wellbeing, community cohesion and economic regeneration through the delivery of learning that supports skills for employment, everyday living skills, confidence building and personal development, and active citizenship
- Effective budget and resources management with funding targets met year on year
- Good use of local, regional and national data to inform the planning process
- Effective curriculum management has led to an increase in the overall success rate for 19+ learners of 4.1% from 12/13 and retention and achievement and success rates are all above national benchmark
- The promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion is good. EDI training is mandatory for all tutors and there are high expectations that all learners will achieve their full potential within the Service. Retention, success and achievement data are regularly monitored to identify any underachievement amongst specific groups of learners and actions taken to address any areas of concern
- Learners feel safe and are supported by very effective arrangements for safeguarding
- Good partnership arrangements in place within both the community and voluntary sector and other departments within the Council to support the development of flexible, responsive provision
- Learner achievements are recognised and celebrated through a wide range of events and activities, supported by the Leader of the Council and other senior managers.
- Challenging funding targets achieved in Adult Skills provision with learning programmes focused on key government priorities including the successful introduction of Traineeships in partnership with other Council departments
- Very effective management of Brighter Futures Big Lottery Funded project which is targeted at people in non settled accommodation, people with mental health needs, people with alcohol and substance abuse issues, ex offenders. The project takes a holistic approach to learning, volunteering, wellbeing and employment with progress in learning playing a key role. Impact of the project on participants lives is clearly demonstrated through improvements in wellbeing, self confidence and achievement of qualifications and/or progression into further learning

Key Areas for Improvement

- A more rigorous system for the performance management of tutors has been developed but this needs to be fully embedded to assess the impact on teaching and learning
- Enhance the quality assurance process for observations to improve feedback to tutors and subsequent individual development planning and follow-up
- Increase in participation in learning from people living in priority wards is good in specific areas but not sufficiently developed across the Service, particularly in Adult Safeguarded Learning overall (ASL). In ASL 34.4% of learners came from priority wards, which is a 2.4% decrease on the previous year. In ASB provision, participation is at 58.13% There is a slight decrease in new learners enrolling on courses although the percentage is still high at 79% in ASB provision and 60% in ASL provision
- A Community Learning Partnership is in place to ensure a more coordinated approach to the planning and delivery of learning and links closely to economic development priorities for the Borough. However there is room to improve the work of the group
- Engagement with local businesses requires further development in line with the current strategy to ensure that the curriculum offer meets their needs and develops skills that are valued in the workplace
- More stakeholder involvement in the SAR process to influence improvements and help shape provision
- The Service needs to align its operational practice within the new department structures to support and strengthen governance and accountability

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

- Challenging improvement targets are set and following a dip in success rates in 2012-13, overall retention, achievement and success rates for 13/14 are good to outstanding. In most areas of learning, retention, achievement and success rates are above national benchmarks. Success rates for ESOL learners have improved but are still below national average by 1.8%
- Analysis of participation data in all areas of provision has identified that there is good participation in skills based provision (ASB) from people living in priority wards and in family learning but the shift to increase participation in other areas of ASL provision needs to be improved. The introduction of a small number of workshops (16) run as private enterprises by tutors particularly in the areas of arts and crafts and languages, has allowed funding to be moved over to targeted provision
- Learners' achievement of personal outcomes including building confidence and improving social and employability skills is good. Learners enjoy their courses and progress well towards their learning goals. However there are still improvements needed in capturing progress and achievement in some areas, particularly within non-accredited provision
- Work with employers is not sufficiently developed partially due to the large proportion of SMEs in the Borough; this impacts on curriculum design and opportunities for work experience and placements for learners

- Good progression opportunities are available in most curriculum areas with personal progression clearly demonstrated in much of community learning non-accredited provision. However the collection of progression and destination data needs to be improved
- No significant achievement gaps amongst specific groups of learners
- Teaching and learning across all provision is good to outstanding and grades are confirmed through the standardization/moderation process. Further development however is needed in the monitoring of lesson observations and ensuring that feedback to tutors clearly supports good action planning and professional development
- Learners express high levels of satisfaction with the quality of teaching and learning.
- Equality, diversity and inclusion are managed well both within the curriculum by tutors through good teaching and learning practice and within leadership and management ensuring that all learners can participate effectively in learning and succeed. All tutors have received EDI training
- Curriculum planning is effective in most areas and takes into account local needs.
- Robust approach to quality assurance is evident through the processes implemented by managers. Managers continually monitor performance to identify any concerns
- Feedback from learners on all aspects of their learning experience is good. However, although the percentage rate of learner survey returns have increased by 3% from 50% to 53%, there are still some curriculum areas where returns are lower. The use of flashmobs (speaking to learners unannounced as they leave classes) has supported the gathering of learner views and provided managers with a more accurate understanding of quality and performance
- There is very strong corporate commitment from senior management and elected members to provide effective governance of the Service. However the Service needs to align its operational practice within the new department structures to support and strengthen governance and accountability

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BURY ADULT LEARNING SERVICE STRATEGY 2015-18

*Making Bury a great place in which to live,
work, study and visit*

Foreword

Learning is at the heart of civilisation and culture. The acquisition of knowledge and skills is fundamental to our development and opens up many more opportunities for improving life chances. However, a proportion of our population, often from communities that are already disadvantaged, are not able to take up these opportunities due to lack of formal qualifications or practical skills.

At time of writing, this country is going through major change. Expansion of digital services, changes in the labour market and the impact of austerity on public services are creating gaps in society and some individuals risk being left behind. It is against this background that we look to this Strategy to provide some hope to local people. We cannot change the economy but we can create an environment that encourages learning and makes residents less vulnerable to the changes that are happening around them. With this in mind, we have set a bold vision for maintaining and developing adult learning based on five key priorities:

1. Improving outcomes for learners
2. Improving outcomes for employers
3. High quality teaching and assessment – leading to effective learning
4. Strong leadership and management
5. An approach that supports sustainable communities

Delivering continued improvement will be challenging in these times of shrinking resources. We are also starting from a strong base position – Bury has more well educated residents than most other Greater Manchester authorities, is home to strong, distinctive and cohesive communities and the quality of learning provision is high in both in the Adult Learning Service and the Borough's two 'outstanding' colleges. Whilst this is a positive picture, we are not complacent. We live and breathe the Council's aims and values of empowering communities and supporting vulnerable people and, working through the Community Learning Partnership, we will seek to continue delivering better outcomes for local people.



Cllr Jane Lewis
Bury Council, Cabinet
Member for Communities

Basing our priorities on data analysis, self assessment and the views of learners has enabled us to target activity for maximum return. However, not everything is quantifiable. It is difficult to put a price on the increased confidence, reassurance and cohesion that adult learning brings. I am therefore proud that Bury has not only been able to retain a broad curriculum, particularly at a time of severe budget cuts, but is also planning for the future.

We must continue to promote learning, position the Borough to take advantage of opportunities that arise and be primed ready to support the economic growth in the Greater Manchester City Region as and when that occurs.

I believe this Strategy does just that. It is an excellent guide for responding to the current and future learning needs and it gives me great pleasure to introduce the Council's Adult Learning Strategy 2015-18.

Introduction and context

The Bury Adult Learning Service delivers a range of skills based provision leading to a qualification (including traineeships); adult safeguarded learning (ASL) which includes personal and community development, family learning and neighbourhood approaches; and a small amount of 16-18 provision. Funded largely by the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) the service uses its resources to:

- Improve the skills levels of local people
- Deliver training to meet the needs of the local job market
- Alleviate disadvantage and promote social interaction
- Provide and promote high quality learning
- Support wider initiatives such as digital inclusion, community cohesion, health and well being to enable all residents to prepare for, and fully participate in, societal change

This can be paraphrased as helping individuals and communities to reach their potential – and there is work to be done. Whilst 38% of the Borough's 186,500 residents are qualified to Level 3 or 4, 23% (or some 42,000 individuals) have no qualifications at all. Compared to the 2001 Census (where over 29% of residents had no qualifications) this is an improvement with reductions being seen across the Borough. However, there are inequalities; East ward, Moorside, Redvales, Radcliffe East, Radcliffe West and Besses comparing unfavourably when it comes to qualifications held by residents. These wards also featured in the 10% most deprived wards in the country and have the highest rates of economic inactivity in Bury.

Low attainment affects employment opportunities. In Greater Manchester the employment rate for people with no qualifications is below 40%. There is also a correlation between low skills and job insecurity, quality of employment, lower pay and progression. Employers report a deficit of applicants with good English and maths skills – a factor which further impacts negatively on an individual's employability, growth potential and productivity.

Bury has a relatively small local economy as over half our residents commute out to work in other parts of Greater Manchester. As a result, the public sector remains the major employer in the Borough although the number of jobs will reduce in line with budget cuts. Other sectors are growing. Major investment in Bury town centre has boosted the retail industry and there has also been an increase in IT related jobs through O2 which is now the single largest private sector employer in the Borough.

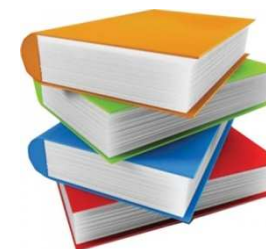
'Labour Insight' suggests that most employers in these sectors are not just looking for people with basic skills – they also require competence in the softer arts of customer service, communication and inter-personal skills. This suggests that learning needs to focus on social as well as technical skills when bringing people closer to the jobs market.

Improving outcomes for learners

The Adult Learning Service is committed to the development and well being of our learners, raising aspirations and supporting success.

Increasing basic and functional skills

Rigour and Responsiveness in Skills (2013) recognised the importance of basic skills to people's life chances especially their employability. Local statistics this bears out. Consequently, our long term ambition is to reduce the number of residents without functional skills (including maths, English and IT) to below 20% by the time of the next Census. This will not only support individuals to progress in the job market but also improves productivity in the local economy.



Accessibility and community cohesion



There is more to Adult Learning than gaining qualifications. It is a gateway to education, a means of building confidence and a less formal way of teaching skills. Through programmes such as ESOL and Brighter Futures, it also brings people together and helps them to participate more fully in society. Maintaining a balanced, community based curriculum is fundamental to building stronger communities particularly in more disadvantaged areas.

Creating a warm, welcoming and safe environment for learners

How we do business is important to us. Our ethos is to treat all individuals with fairness, respect and dignity. We will always aim to offer facilities that are fit for purpose, meet the needs of individuals with differing levels of ability and safeguard learners. Helping people to feel comfortable will provide a more effective learning environment.



We will:

- Increase take up in English, maths and functional skills provision.
- Work with partners to develop provision that meets the specific needs of individuals who are disadvantaged in the job market such as older people, migrant workers and people with mental health issues.
- Continue to monitor and refresh our procedures to protect vulnerable people and ensure individuals are safeguarded.
- Measure the impact of learning and use this intelligence to inform future provision.

Improving outcomes for employers

The Adult Learning Service will be responsive to the needs of employers to enable learners to effectively compete for workplace opportunities.

Matching supply with demand

There has long been criticism from employers about the skill levels of individuals entering the labour market. This needs to be addressed. We want to build on the good relations that exist with local employers in Bury to develop a better understanding of the local economy and tailor courses where this is appropriate to specific needs especially in the emerging sectors of retail, hospitality and IT.

With some individuals being less academic, we will pursue a variety of approaches to learning and skills other than purely class based provision. This will include traineeships, bespoke learning and work experience to help more people overcome any disadvantage when it comes to accessing employment.



Knowing what works

Perceptions of employers, learners and tutors are important but this has to be supplemented by more objective evidence. Some measurement of outcomes is already undertaken but it needs to be more systematic and comprehensive.

Tracking learners and the impact learning has on individual life chances will be expanded as part of our strategy for raising standards, improving outcomes for learners and targeting resources to maximum effect.

We will:

- Work with employers to understand and align their occupational and soft skill requirements to inform course design.
- Liaise with employers to integrate work placements into employability programmes.
- Support traineeships and progression into apprenticeship training to provide a pathway into employment.
- Track progression into work, volunteering or future learning (and review provision in the light of evidence).

High quality

The Adult Learning Service is focused on providing high quality learning experiences which are accessible and valued by learners, employers and partners.

High standards

Reported outcomes, feedback and self assessment indicates that the service is good and meeting its objectives. Maintaining standards however takes sustained effort; the service needs to respond to cohort changes, curriculum guidance and current thinking on teaching styles. To achieve this, the emphasis on assessment and challenge will remain – including using national success rates to compare performance data, surveys and professional assessment to identify good practice (for sharing and transferring across the service) as well as highlighting areas for development. The service will continue to judge itself against the OFSTED Common Inspection Framework to evaluate how effectively provision meets learners' needs

Building on a strong track record for self awareness, the service has developed a positive culture of continuous improvement and this approach will continue as part of this strategy



Quality of teaching

Adult Learning is in the people business. This requires good people to deliver our ambitions. We will keep under review the workforce needs of the service to ensure that highly skilled, motivated and flexible tutors, capable of meeting the needs of learners, are retained – now and in the future. The content, length, timing and location of courses will also be closely monitored to promote accessibility and remove potential barriers that may discourage learners.

We will:

- Rigorously assess performance and outcomes making full use of comparable data where available to improve results.
- Improve the frequency of, and participation in, employer and learner surveys to inform course delivery and teaching methods.
- Ensure key skills are evident and addressed across all curriculum areas.
- Apply sound recruitment methods and employment conditions to attract the best tutors and maintain standards.
- Invest in training, resources and effective supervision to support the delivery of quality learning.

Strong leadership and management

The Adult Learning Service aims to deliver quality outcomes which will support the wider policy objectives for the Borough, within the resources available.

Making Bury a great place to live, work, study, and visit

It has always been a feature of Adult Learning that national guidance and local ambitions are embedded into service priorities. This is still the case. The actions in this strategy meets service contract responsibilities and Council expectations as well as promoting the wider economic and social well being of local people. Working with partners we are keen to see a similar approach operate across all providers in the Borough.



Resources

The Skills Funding Agency (SFA) is the prime funder of Adult Learning Services at over £1 million. As pressure on funding mounts, we will seek to diversify revenue sources. Whilst valuing our relationship with the SFA, this move is necessary to deliver our ambitions and reduce reliance on a single funding agency. Attracting new money into the service will also preserve provision to the community without the cost of learning to the individual becoming a barrier.

Recognising diversity

Adult Learning is a balance – between helping people to attain qualifications, offering opportunities for personal improvement and promoting social development. We want this to continue as it reflects the diversity of our learners and their needs. By taking account of learning abilities, cultural sensitivities and individual needs, the service is looking to assist learners and employees reach their potential.



We will:

- Actively contribute to national and local priorities with particular emphasis on the skills agenda.
- Strengthen and diversify the Community Learning Partnership to develop a strong learning culture in the Borough.
- Maximise the resources available to improve outcomes for local people.
- Set course fees at a level that reflects the cost of provision without being an undue deterrent to participation.
- Promote equality and diversity – valuing the contributions that different perspectives can bring to the service.

Sustainable communities

The Adult Learning Service is working to create an environment where residents are well informed, feel empowered and have confidence in their own abilities.

Bringing people along

Confidence is an issue for many people – some of whom have had difficult experiences with education in the past. We will make it as easy as possible for individuals to develop the learning habit by working with communities to increase take up and create a culture of lifelong learning. Understanding community networks and the information, advice and support that learners need to access provision and make real progress will be fundamental to success.

Communication



Reducing inequalities

Whilst proud of its townships and their distinct identities, Bury is aware of the significant inequalities that exists between areas. More effort is required in those areas where attainment and economic activity is low to engage people in learning. In particular we need to understand the reasons for lower skill levels and remove any barriers to learning that still exist.

The growth of online facilities is replacing many traditional ways of living. The pace and scale of this information revolution risks some people being left behind. We have to tailor our provision in the light of these changing needs so that issues such as digital exclusion and social isolation do not add to the pressures of modern living.

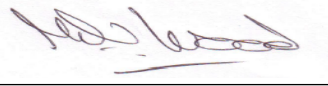
We will:

- Develop ways of identifying community assets, local networks and the learning aspirations of communities.
- Provide information, advice and guidance to support individuals to reach their goals.
- Increase take up from disadvantaged communities, particularly those areas where basic qualifications are low, economic inactivity is high and digital skills are under-developed.
- Offer a range of community based learning opportunities, through local centres, to help residents pursue an interest, gain skills and support their well being

Equality Analysis Form

The following questions will document the effect of your service or proposed policy, procedure, working practice, strategy or decision (hereafter referred to as 'policy') on equality, and demonstrate that you have paid due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty.

1. RESPONSIBILITY

Department	Communities and Wellbeing	
Service	Adult Learning Service	
Proposed policy	Adult Learning Strategy	
Date	1.08.2015	
Officer responsible for the 'policy' and for completing the equality analysis	Name	Julie Kenrick
	Post Title	Head of Service
	Contact Number	0161 253 7457
	Signature	
	Date	12.05.2015
Equality officer consulted	Name	Mary Wood
	Post Title	Principal Officer - Equalities
	Contact Number	0161 253 6795
	Signature	 31/2015
	Date	19 th May 2015

2. AIMS

What is the purpose of the policy/service and what is it intended to achieve?	<p>The strategy sets a direction of travel for the Council's adult learning service that is more closely aligned to Team Bury priorities and the Council's ambitions. There is a strong focus on actions that increase basic skill levels and reduce other barriers to employment. The role of learning in promoting community cohesion and reducing inequalities is also recognised.</p> <p>The document will form part of the evidence considered by Ofsted when the service is inspected (anticipated later this year) and will support future bids to the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and other funding sources, to sustain the available provision and continue to meet the aims of the strategy.</p> <p>The strategy identifies 5 key priorities :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Improving outcomes for learners -Improving outcomes for employers -High quality -Strong leadership and management -Sustainable Communities
--	--

Who are the main stakeholders?	Present and future learners Members of the public, Council Departments, Bury Adult Learning Service, Employers in the borough Community and Voluntary Organisations Skills Funding Agency

3. ESTABLISHING RELEVANCE TO EQUALITY

3a. Using the drop down lists below, please advise whether the policy/service has either a positive or negative effect on any groups of people with protected equality characteristics.

If you answer yes to any question, please also explain why and how that group of people will be affected.

Protected equality characteristic	Positive effect (Yes/No)	Negative effect (Yes/No)	Explanation
Race	Yes	Yes	The strategy prioritises the development of provision to meet the needs of people who are disadvantaged and underrepresented in learning. People from Black and Minority Ethnic Groups are currently well represented in learning in proportion to percentage population with 24.5 % on courses that lead to a qualification in 13/14 and 12.44% on personal and community development learning courses. The strategy highlights that delivery of learning to disadvantaged groups may be affected by government funding decisions .The reduction in funding for 15/16 will affect learners whose first language is not English in that there will be less places on courses that lead to a qualification . However the Service is planning to mitigate against this by offering more non- qualification provision that is community based for people whose first language is not English
Disability	Yes	No	The strategy has a positive impact on learners with a disability or learning difficulty. There will continue to be discrete provision available for LLDD learners with appropriate additional learning support for those who need this in accredited provision which is funded through the SFA. Learners who enrol on personal and community development courses will be supported by trained volunteers on a one to one basis. The Service has been successful in bidding for funding to provide learning opportunities using innovative approaches for people with mental

			health needs - a target group within the strategy .This is an additional resource until March 2016
Gender	No	No	The adult learning strategy will have a neutral impact on gender.
Gender reassignment	No	No	Neutral Impact.
Age	No	No	<p>It is anticipated that there will be similar percentage numbers of participation. Older learners may fall in targeted categories of learners dependent on their personal circumstances e.g older learners who are seeking employment, live in disadvantaged wards.</p> <p>Adult Skills percentage splits according to age: 60+ = 5% 50 - 59 = 24% 40 - 49 = 26% 30 - 39 = 23% 19 - 29 = 21% 16 - 18 = 1%</p> <p>Community Learning percentage split according to age: 60+ = 37% 50 - 59 = 20% 40 - 49 = 15.5% 30 - 39 = 16.5% 19 - 29 = 11%</p>
Sexual orientation	No	No	Neutral Impact
Religion or belief	No	No	Neutral Impact
Caring responsibilities	No	No	Neutral Impact
Pregnancy or maternity	No	No	Neutral Impact
Marriage or civil partnership	No	No	Neutral Impact

3b. Using the drop down lists below, please advise whether or not our policy/service has relevance to the Public Sector Equality Duty. If you answer yes to any question, please explain why.

General Public Sector Equality Duties	Relevance (Yes/No)	Reason for the relevance
Need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010	No	
Need to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not (eg. by removing or minimising disadvantages or meeting needs)	Yes	The courses delivered by Bury Adult Learning Service are based on national priorities (i.e. driven by funding rules and regulations). Informal learning courses are available to meet the learners needs. Particular attention is given to making all courses accessible. The strategy clearly identifies within its priorities and objectives the importance of meeting the needs of all its learners whilst promoting and encouraging participation in learning from those who have limited basic and functional skills, which include people with mental health needs, minority ethnic groups and those living in priority wards, to increase their life chances and employability.
Need to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not (eg. by tackling prejudice or promoting understanding)	No	The role of learning in promoting community cohesion and reducing inequalities is recognised within the strategy.

If you answered 'YES' to any of the questions in 3a and 3b

Go straight to Question 4

If you answered 'NO' to all of the questions in 3a and 3b

Go to Question 3c and do not answer questions 4-6

3c. If you have answered 'No' to all the questions in 3a and 3b please explain why you feel that your policy/service has no relevance to equality.

4. EQUALITY INFORMATION AND ENGAGEMENT

4a. For a service plan, please list what equality information you currently have available, **OR** for a new/changed policy or practice please list what equality information you considered and engagement you have carried out in relation to it.

Please provide a link if the information is published on the web and advise when it was last updated?

(NB. Equality information can be both qualitative and quantitative. It includes knowledge of service users, satisfaction rates, compliments and complaints, the results of surveys or other engagement activities and should be broken down by equality characteristics where relevant.)

Details of the equality information or engagement	Internet link if published	Date last updated
Annual Equalities Monitoring Information published in Self Assessment Report as part of our contractual obligation to the Skills Funding Agency.		
Learner satisfaction surveys		
Learner participation data		
SFA Funding rules and priorities		

4b. Are there any information gaps, and if so how do you plan to tackle them?

[The Service intends to consult with its community partners and seeks their views on the Adult Learning Strategy.](#)

5. CONCLUSIONS OF THE EQUALITY ANALYSIS

What will the likely overall effect of your policy/service plan be on equality?	The strategy will have an overall positive impact on learners from protected equality characteristics, with particular emphasis on race, disability and age as groups who may have limited basic and functional skills. The wider role of learning in promoting good relations, tolerance and understanding, as well as meeting learning needs and minimising disadvantage is important
If you identified any negative effects (see questions 3a) or discrimination what measures have you put in place to remove or mitigate them?	The impact of the funding reduction in 2015-16 on qualification courses for people whose first language is not English will be mitigated by offering more non-qualification provision in community based settings.
Have you identified any further ways that you can advance equality of opportunity and/or foster good relations? If so, please give details.	Continued analysis of recruitment, retention, achievement and success data. Close liaison with community partners
What steps do you intend to take now in respect of the implementation of your policy/service plan?	Bury Adult Learning Service will be seeking approval to adopt the Adult Learning Strategy by the SMT and Members. I will also confirm the views of key community partners through consultation

6. MONITORING AND REVIEW

If you intend to proceed with your policy/service plan, please detail what monitoring arrangements (if appropriate) you will put in place to monitor the ongoing effects. Please also state when the policy/service plan will be reviewed.

An action plan to accompany the Strategy will be drawn up and monitored on a quarterly basis by the Senior Management Team within the Adult Learning Service. Progress against the strategy and action plan will be presented to Communities and Well being SMT and through the Communities portfolio group.

COPIES OF THIS EQUALITY ANALYSIS FORM SHOULD BE ATTACHED TO ANY REPORTS/SERVICE PLANS AND ALSO SENT TO THE EQUALITY INBOX (equality@bury.gov.uk) FOR PUBLICATION.

REPORT FOR DECISION



DECISION MAKER:	CABINET
DATE:	10 JUNE 2015
SUBJECT:	BURRS COUNTRY PARK STRATEGY (FINAL PUBLISHED VERSION)
REPORT FROM:	CABINET MEMBER – COMMUNITIES
CONTACT OFFICER:	MICHAEL WHITEHEAD – SENIOR PLANNING OFFICER
TYPE OF DECISION:	CABINET (KEY DECISION)
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/STATUS:	This paper is within the public domain
SUMMARY:	<p>This report concerns the final publication of a strategy for the future development of Burrs Country Park over a time period of 15 years from 2015 to 2029, which aims to establish Burrs as a 'destination park' of regional significance. A number of projects are identified within the strategy to help modernise and sustain Burrs as a family tourist attraction, the most significant of which is the construction of a station on the East Lancashire Railway which will assist in unlocking the combined potential of Burrs and the heritage railway.</p> <p>A 4-week public consultation on the strategy in March/April of this year has generated a small number of responses, many of which express support for the proposals and suggest changes to improve the document. Some minor changes have been made where appropriate.</p>
OPTIONS & RECOMMENDED OPTION	<p>Option 1 (Recommended Option) That Members approve the final publication of the Burrs Country Park Strategy as a material planning consideration in assessing planning applications at Burrs Country Park.</p> <p>Option 2 That Members seek revisions to the Burrs Country Park Strategy. Members to specify the nature of any revisions to be sought.</p> <p>Reasons Option 1 would enable the Burrs Country Park Strategy</p>

	to be taken into account in assessing planning applications, will provide an agreed vision for the park between partners and the community, and will support the implementation of individual projects including funding bids.
IMPLICATIONS:	
Corporate Aims/Policy Framework:	<p>Do the proposals accord with the Policy Framework?</p> <p>The draft strategy is in line with the principles of the following policies and proposals of the Unitary Development Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal RT3/1/4 on Protection of Existing Recreation Provision in the Countryside (Burrs Country Park); • Policy RT4/1 on Tourism Development; • Proposal RT4/6/3 on East Lancashire Railway (Proposed Station Halt, Burrs Country Park).
Statement by the S151 Officer: Financial Implications and Risk Considerations:	<p>The strategy has been developed within existing resources.</p> <p>Future implementation of the strategy will be dependent upon availability of external funding.</p>
Statement by Executive Director of Resources:	Implementation of the strategy will ensure compliance with any planning considerations, and be in line with the Council's overall Asset Management Strategy
Equality/Diversity implications:	<p>No</p> <p>An initial screening has been undertaken (see attached assessment) which did not identify any negative impacts on equality.</p>
Considered by Monitoring Officer:	Yes JH
Wards Affected:	Elton, Moorside, North Manor
Scrutiny Interest:	

TRACKING/PROCESS**DIRECTOR: STEPHEN KENYON**

Chief Executive/ Strategic Leadership Team	Cabinet Member/Chair	Ward Members	Partners
Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet/Committee	Council	
	10th June 2015		

1.0 BACKGROUND & ISSUES

- 1.1 Burrs Country Park has much to offer the visitor and the Council is proud of the transformation undertaken to-date in developing a formerly derelict site into the Green Flag Award-winning flagship park it is today. Burrs remains one of the Borough's major visitor attractions in a growing local cultural and tourism sector although the site is in need of a refresh to help modernise and sustain the park as a 21st Century community facility and to aid in realising its potential.
- 1.2 The strategy sets a 15-year timeframe and is split into three phases aimed at establishing a 'destination park' which is both a regional attraction and forms a key element of the town's tourism portfolio. The strategy includes a number of projects, the most fundamental being the development of a railway station at Burrs on the East Lancashire Railway and an extension to the Caravan Club site under Phase 1. The completion of these two projects will be essential in enhancing the Borough's growing visitor offer, creating a direct link between the park and the attractions and businesses in Bury town centre and along the wider Irwell Valley, increasing the family appeal of Burrs and acting as a catalyst for further improvements such as a new visitor centre and the restoration and enhancement of archaeological and water features.
- 1.3 Members approved a draft version of the strategy at Cabinet on 4 March 2015 for a 4-week public consultation. The draft strategy was made available for comment between 12 March 2015 and 9 April 2015 on the Council's website, at the Town Hall, at the Planning Services reception at Knowsley Place, and at libraries in Bury, Moorside and Brandlesholme.

Consultation responses and changes made to the strategy

- 1.4 In response to the consultation, 14 separate comments were received from members of the local community, landowners, interest groups and statutory agencies and were broadly supportive of the proposals. Some of the key issues raised included the need for more detail on or a commitment to the role of the canal feeder in the development of the area, the generation of on-site energy, opportunities for the historic environment, improving the condition of the River Irwell and the enhancement of ecological value on the site. A suggestion was also made by Bury Canoe and Kayak Club that the proposed station could allow paddlers to access the train with canoes at Burrs and then travel downriver from other stations further upstream.
- 1.5 In response to the consultation comments, the strategy will include a commitment to using low carbon sustainable build materials, the inclusion of a delivery section to highlight the partners who will assist the Council in implementing the strategy proposals, added detail on the work needed to improve the canoe slalom and weir, and new references to the control of invasive species and the enhancement of the river for fish in partnership with local angling bodies under Phase 2.

Final publication and continued use of the strategy

- 1.6 Following consideration of the consultation comments, the Council now wish to publish the final version of the strategy to help set down the agreed 15-year vision for Burrs between partners, the local community and landowners.

Officers have already engaged with a series of key partners to develop the Strategy to-date including the ELR Trust, the Friends of Burrs Country Park and the Caravan Club. In relation to the latter, the Caravan Club have agreed to provide a monetary contribution towards the Burrs Station project and will be taking on additional land following the construction of the platform and associated development to facilitate the extension of their existing site.

- 1.7 Once published, the strategy will be a material planning consideration for decisions made on applications in the park. It will also help with the implementation of individual projects, and in terms of the Burrs Station project will assist with a funding application to landfill bodies by providing evidence of the Council's ambition for Burrs. The support from partners and organisations for this bid is critical to its success and therefore the strategy will be used to promote the Council's proposals and help build momentum through ongoing dialogue.

Risk Management

- 1.8 The intention is to set up a separate working group involving all partners to help drive forward and monitor each of the projects. There is a risk that the individual projects within the Strategy will change over time as different opportunities arise and budgets and priorities fluctuate, although the strategy can be updated to accommodate any changes.

2.0 CONCLUSION

- 2.1 Members are asked to approve the final published version of the Burrs Country Park Strategy as a material planning consideration and allow it to be progressed for implementation purposes.

List of Background Papers:-

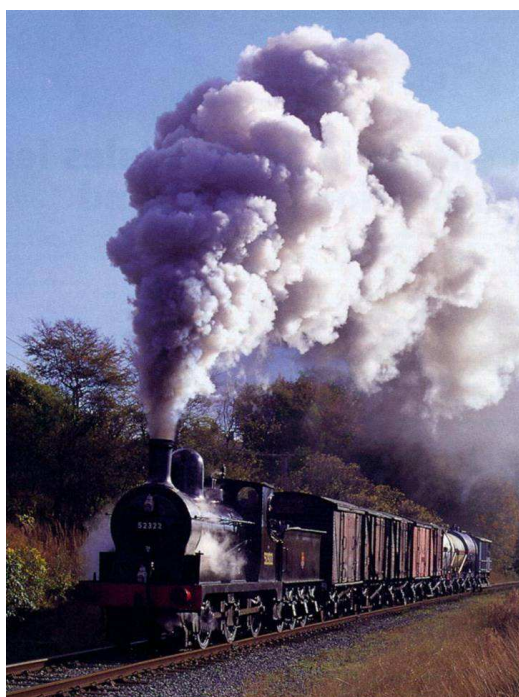
- Burrs Country Park Strategy
- East Lancashire Railway 2020 Strategy (Locum Consulting)

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Burrs Country Park Strategy 2015 - 2029

Published June 2015



Resources and Regulation

www.bury.gov.uk

Bury
COUNCIL

Status of this report

This strategy has been prepared by Bury Council and was the subject of a 4-week public consultation between 12 March 2015 and 9 April 2015.

On 10 June 2015 the Council's Cabinet approved the final publication of the Burrs Country Park Strategy as a non-statutory material planning consideration to guide future development on the site and provide support to the implementation of individual projects.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Burrs Country Park Strategy sets out the Council's vision over a 15 year time period of establishing Burrs as a '**destination park**' which is both a regional attraction and forms a key element of the town's burgeoning tourism portfolio.

Burrs as a country park has much to offer the visitor and the presence of assets such as the Caravan Club and the atmospheric backdrop of the East Lancashire Railway (ELR) give the park the platform to attract tourists. The Caravan Club site in particular plays a pivotal role, recording a total of 45,000 visitor nights in 2014 and contributing an estimated £5 million to the local economy on an annual basis.



Bury is currently bucking the national economic trend, outperforming neighbouring towns in Greater Manchester for both the day and night time economies and boasting a wide range of linked attractions within a growing cultural and tourism sector. Burrs is the Borough's flagship park although it requires a refresh to help modernise and sustain it as a 21st Century community facility and to aid in realising its full potential.

Two principal aims of the strategy are to capitalise on the success of the Borough in developing a strong and vibrant visitor economy by helping to generate higher visitor numbers and longer stays in the area, and to encourage investment in the park and

the wider Irwell Valley. A range of development projects are outlined within the document and include the construction of the proposed Burrs railway station and extension to the Caravan Club site in Phase 1. The completion of these schemes in particular will help to unlock the combined potential of Burrs Country Park and the ELR and broaden the family appeal of the two attractions by opening up opportunities for:

- An expanded events programme including joined-up events between partners;
- Shared marketing, promotions, sponsorship, advertisements and an improved online presence;
- Elevating the role and status of the park through a new Visitor Centre and enhanced infrastructure to help capture secondary income from expected increases in visitor spend;
- An increased range of enhanced recreational facilities in seeking to make Burrs a destination in its own right.

CONTENTS

1.0	Introduction	3
2.0	The Local Context	4
3.0	Planning Context	11
4.0	Burrs – Past and Present	14
5.0	Key Issues and Opportunities	18
6.0	A Vision for Burrs	26
7.0	Delivering the Vision: An Action Plan for Burrs	28
	Appendix 1: Background Information	33

INTRODUCTION

- 1.0 Burrs Country Park is a unique recreational retreat located just one mile north of Bury town centre. Bisected by the winding River Irwell and at what was once the epicentre of the town's contribution to the Industrial Revolution, the site contains remains of former water and steam-powered cotton mills. These industrial remains now tell the story of Burrs' past within a secluded valley setting which allows for a fascinating blend of heritage, recreation and pleasant natural scenery.
- 1.1 In addition, Burrs provides a wide range of events, opportunities for short walks or high-octane leisure activities for the family. The picturesque countryside and passing steam trains of the East Lancashire Railway (ELR) give Burrs the platform to attract tourists, many of whom choose to stay on the site's caravan park and visit Greater Manchester and Lancashire. Burrs also represents a halfway stop on the Irwell Sculpture Trail where an interesting mix of history, art and recreation all come together as one.
- 1.2 Burrs has much to offer the visitor, and the Council is proud of the work undertaken to-date to develop the park over three decades from an abandoned derelict and unwelcoming eyesore to the popular Green Flag award-winning visitor attraction it is today. However, the site still remains full of further development potential and is in need of a refresh to help modernise and sustain it as a 21st Century community facility.
- 1.3 This strategy sets out the local and planning policy context which is relevant to the future development of Burrs Country Park. It describes the park's historical perspective as well as its current functions and features before highlighting the key issues and opportunities for Burrs. It then sets out a continuing Vision and Objectives for the park and identifies key projects that will help to fulfil Burrs' potential to establish itself as a 'destination park' of regional significance and form a direct link with Bury town centre and attractions and businesses along the wider Irwell Valley.
- 1.5 This report has the following aims:
 - To reaffirm the Council's ambition to make Burrs Country Park a quality regional family tourist attraction with much to offer the visitor;
 - To capitalise on the Borough's growing strategic offer and reputation as a sub-regional success story at Burrs, helping to generate higher visitor numbers and longer stays, thereby resulting in increased spend within the local economy;
 - To work with a range of interested partners in encouraging investment and supporting funding applications for future

aspirational projects within the park and the wider Irwell Valley;

- To unlock the combined potential of Burrs and the ELR by establishing a direct Burrs Country Park railway station and developing a shared Marketing/Destination Plan.

2.0 THE LOCAL CONTEXT

- 2.1 Since its establishment in the late 1980s, Burrs Country Park has formed part of an evolving visitor destination offer for the Borough, which now encompasses a vibrant Bury town centre and a set of linked attractions, giving the Borough a strong identity.
- 2.2 Bury has seen substantial investment in recent years which has transformed the town centre and its surrounding areas. This reflects the Council's shared Bury vision in the *Economic Strategy* for the Borough to be 'a great place in which to live, work, visit and study'. As outlined in the Economic Strategy, the Borough starts from a position of strength largely due to its unique sense of place, particularly through the vital asset of Bury Market and supported by other attractions such as the ELR, Bury Transport Museum, The Fusilier Museum, The Met Theatre, Bury Art Museum and the area's attractive valley towns and villages. The addition of the Caravan Club at Burrs along with the Premier Inn in Bury town centre has helped to raise the profile of Bury as an overnight destination.

Bury town centre

- 2.3 A vibrant and viable town, Bury hosts quality retail, leisure and visitor attractions for both residents and visitors and as of 2015 was outperforming neighbouring towns in Greater Manchester for both the day and night time economies. In November 2014, the town was voted a top three national finalist in the Academy of Urbanism's 'Great Town Award' for 2015 and in February 2015 became the first town centre in Greater Manchester to achieve Purple Flag status in recognition of the quality of the evening and night time economy offer in the town centre. This national award and accreditation scheme is designed to promote those towns and cities which provide a diverse range of entertainment and a safe environment for all age groups and all users of the town centre.

Retail market

- 2.4 The £350 million retail and leisure development at The Rock opened in 2010 and together with the Mill Gate shopping centre and the vibrant market, has led to Bury being host to a wide range of both multiple and independent retailers. This coupled with other factors such as enhanced cultural attractions and an expanding food and drink offer has created a vastly improved and more vibrant town centre. Bury is now ranked the 3rd best retail destination in Greater

Manchester¹ - only bettered by Manchester city centre and the Trafford Centre.

- 2.5 In January 2015, The Rock was at 96% occupancy and in 2013 exceeded the UK footfall figures for High Street and Shopping Centres by 6%. The popular shopping complex includes large anchors such as Debenhams and Marks and Spencer, the former winning Store of the Year in 2013 and the latter one of the top performing stores in the North West. The 408 apartments above the retail units are expected to be completed in late 2015 creating additional town centre living.

Developing a visitor economy

Improved 'Destination' offer

- 2.6 The Economic Strategy notes that whilst the town centre is considered a high quality day visit destination it can be improved further with promotion and well-thought out tourist infrastructure. In order to achieve this, an important objective is to further integrate cultural products, activities and events into Bury's strong retail and leisure offer.
- 2.7 Recent years have seen major investment in Bury's visitor attractions. In 2009, the £4.2 million Fusilier Museum opened in the town centre, a move which strengthened the town's Cultural Quarter product. The Museum also became the new location for Bury's Tourist Information Centre. In 2010, Bury Transport Museum reopened after a £3.15 million redevelopment project which saw the museum become an integrated part of the ELR experience.
- 2.8 The growth in the number of quality visitor attractions, and the increased retail offer provided by The Rock has led to the arrival of the first Bury town centre hotel. The 115-room Premier Inn opened in Summer 2011, contributing to a 16% increase in overnight stays within the Borough the following year.
- 2.9 Bury's success as a destination is reflected in its visitor figures. The ELR saw a 22% increase in visitor numbers between 2010 and 2014 (154,540 from 128,711) whilst The Fusilier Museum saw numbers rise from 18,090 in 2010 to 20,000 by 2013. The award-winning Bury Market continues to go from strength-to-strength attracting high numbers of local residents and day visitors. The number of coach groups visiting the market has increased from 1,429 in 2008 to 1,578 coaches in 2014.

¹ Javelin VENUESCORE Retail Rankings 2014



Visitor attractions across the Borough

Clockwise from top left: The Rock, Bury Art Museum, the East Lancashire Railway and Bury Market.

2.10 The story does not end there as Bury continues to develop as a destination. Bury town centre now hosts a growing series of events, including Bury Light Night, and in 2014 the new Bury Sculpture Centre opened as part of Bury Art Museum. In the same year, building on its success, The Fusilier Museum unveiled The Minden Suite which is a £1.4 million conference and events space. The Met won 'Best Entertainment Venue' at the 2014 Manchester Tourism Awards and have plans for a £4.6 million refurbishment with completion expected in Summer 2016, incorporating an increase in theatre capacity (from 220 to 270 seated and from 300 to 380 standing), new rehearsal spaces, offices and a reconfigured main entrance with a larger lift and additional toilet facilities.

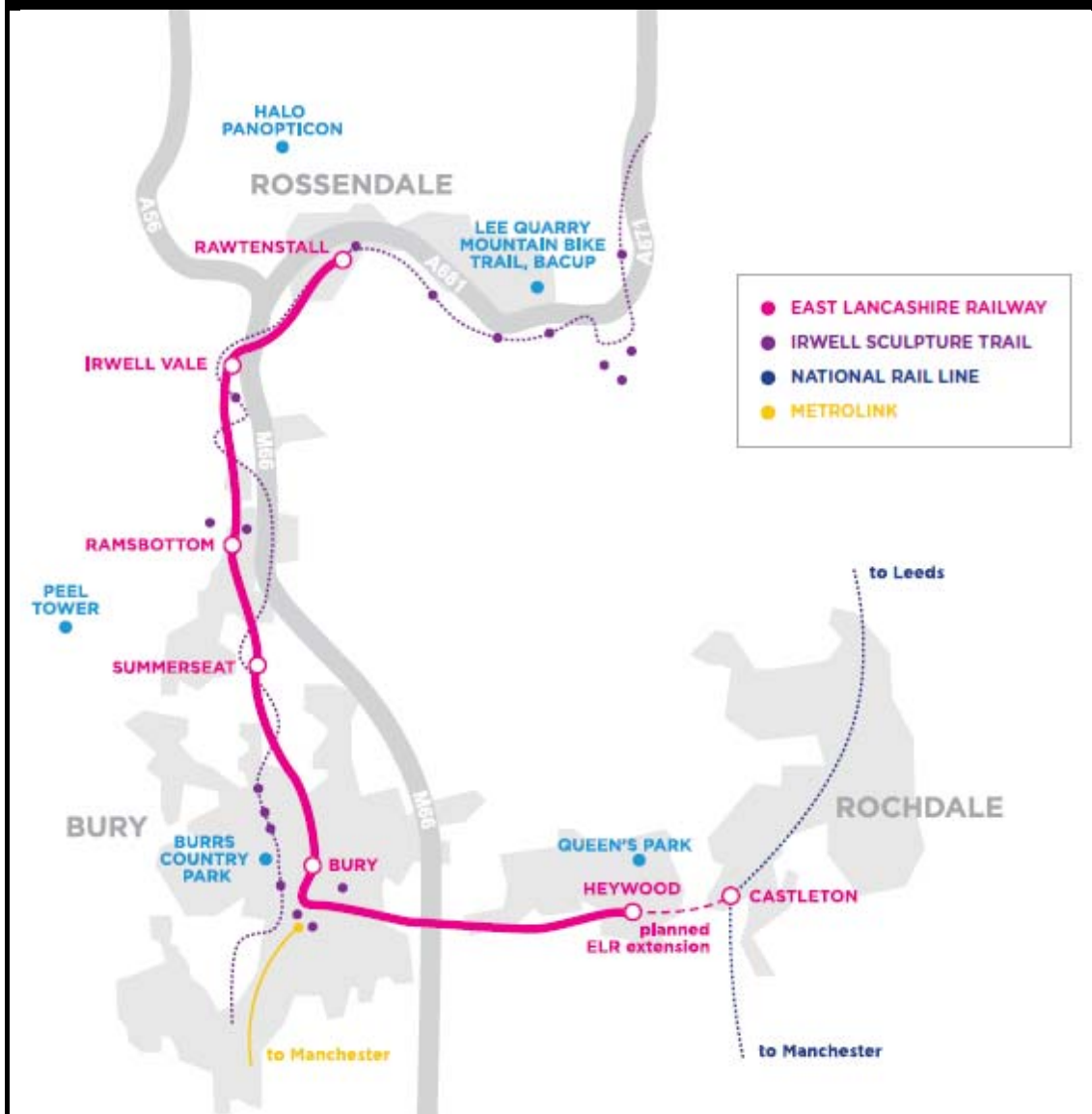
2.11 Research² has shown that Borough-wide visitor spend rose from £238 million in 2009 to just over £302 million in 2012, whilst numbers employed in tourism increased by 14.8% from 3,546 to 4,074 in the same period. As expected there was also an increase in visitor numbers with day visits increasing from £4.4 million in 2009 to £4.9 million in 2012, which has coincided with uplift in overnight visitors from 394,000 to 450,000.

² Figures from Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor (STEAM) - Bury Report 2009-2012

Irwell Valley and the ELR heritage railway

- 2.12 The 12-mile ELR heritage railway line has its principal station within Bury town centre and is a visitor attraction of regional importance. **Figure 1** shows the ELR network, the position of Burrs and how the railway connects with towns and public transport infrastructure in the sub-region.

FIGURE 1
ELR NETWORK AND SURROUNDING AREA



Source: East Lancashire Railway

- 2.13 The ELR added 'Large Visitor Attraction of the Year' from the Lancashire Tourism Awards to its many awards in November 2014. Since the release of its *2020 Development Strategy*, developed by Locum Consulting, the volunteer-run organisation has seen a steady increase in visitors from 128,711 in 2010 to 157,540 in 2014. The all year/all weather attraction now has a full programme of events including Special Event weekends. 'Dining with Distinction'

programme, Steam Experience Days, Rail Ale tours, photography courses and the renowned Santa Specials. Its growth has stimulated wide-ranging economic benefits throughout both Bury's section of the Irwell Valley and into adjoining Boroughs.

- 2.14 In future years, through its project development and increased marketing effort, the ELR are seeking to widen the appeal of the railway to the family sector to reach a target of 200,000 visitors per annum by 2020.
- 2.15 One of the ELR's most popular stops is Ramsbottom which has become a major tourist attraction in its own right. In 2014 the town was announced as a Runner Up for the Daily Telegraph's 2014 'High Street of the Year' survey; the only place in the North West to make the Top 10. The town has developed a reputation for independent shopping and award-winning restaurants as well as a successful programme of events. The annual Ramsbottom Chocolate Festival has developed from a small one day event in 2009 to a two-day festival attracting around 22,000 visitors. The town also hosts the annual Ramsbottom Music Festival which in 2014 saw 9,563 visitors to the event over the weekend.

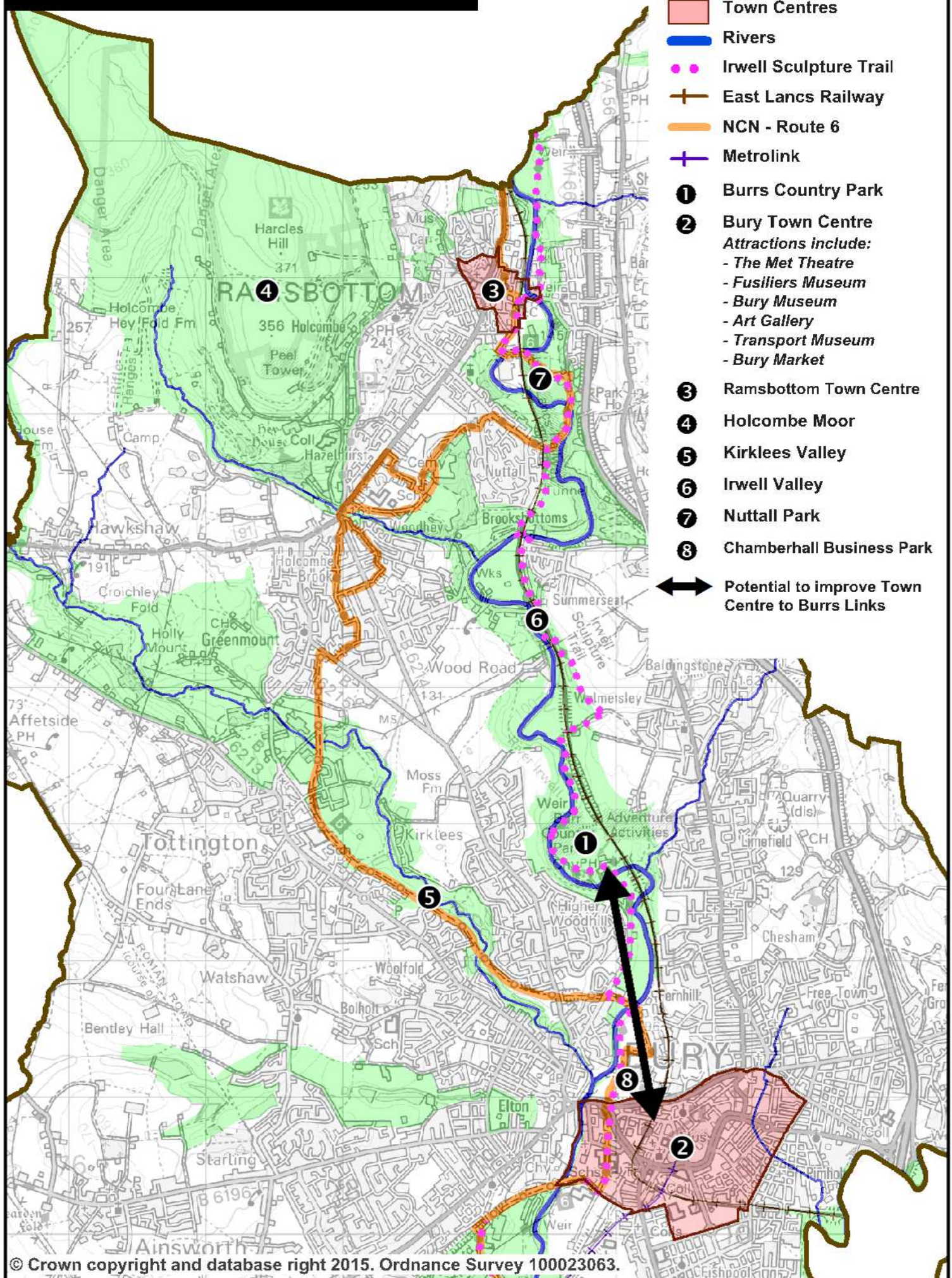
Environmental improvement

- 2.16 Bury continues to fly the flag for the visual attractiveness and quality of its recreational spaces, winning the 'Best Large Town' category in the North West in Bloom Awards for 11 years running and scooping the Gold Medal Award or Britain in Bloom in 2013. Radcliffe has also won the same category for 4 consecutive years. The 'In Bloom' campaigns and subsequent awards help to inspire voluntary work and co-operation between communities and boost the local economy through increased tourism and inward investment and contributing towards efforts to make Bury a vibrant town centre.
- 2.17 The Borough is also a trend-setter for Green Flag Award accreditation, winning the accolade for a 12 of its main parks for the 5th year running. Keep Britain Tidy recognise this achievement for parks that are well-maintained and well-managed with excellent community involvement.
- 2.18 Burrs is the Borough's flagship park and as such is the Borough's showcase for the above awards, not least through the park being a centre of excellence for voluntary work and self-management.

An expanded role for Burrs

- 2.19 Bury continues to buck the national trend, sitting within a very successful sub-region. As recognised in the Economic Strategy, Burrs Country Park is one of the Borough's major attractions in a growing local cultural and tourism sector and is very much part of Bury's success story.

FIGURE 2
BURRS: WIDER CONTEXT



- 2.20 **Figure 2 'Burrs: Wider Context'** illustrates the pivotal position that Burrs holds within the Borough. It sits alongside the ELR and forms part of the Irwell Sculpture Trail and has strong links with the wider Irwell Valley (from Bury town centre to Ramsbottom), the Kirklees Valley and the West Pennine Moors. In particular, the links between the park and the town centre along Woodhill Road and the parkland setting of Chamberhall Business Park have much potential for improvement in opening up riverside access and encouraging pedestrian and cycle access between Burrs and the tourist attractions in the town centre.
- 2.21 A key asset for Burrs is the proximity of the ELR which runs through the park. The 2020 Development Strategy describes the park as being 'well established' and notes that the railway provides an 'atmospheric backdrop' to the wide range of facilities the park offers, including the recent addition of the Caravan Club. Locum identify the establishment of a railway station at Burrs as having tremendous potential in developing family appeal and synergy between the two flagship projects, and outline their view that the station would stimulate visitor numbers substantially to both the ELR and to Burrs Country Park.
- 2.22 Planning permission is in place for Burrs Station and for an extension of the adjacent Caravan Club site. Once complete, the station will support and enhance Bury's growing visitor offer by creating a direct link between Burrs Country Park and the attractions and businesses in Bury town centre and along the wider Irwell Valley.
- 2.23 The Caravan Club attracted 45,000 visitor nights in 2014. In terms of total pitch occupancy this was 20,272 pitch nights, up from 19,317 pitch nights in 2013. Member surveys have shown that the average local off-site spending is £50 per pitch night and so, taking into account the 2014 total pitch occupancy figure above and a multiplier of 5 to reflect economic compounding, this means that the Caravan Club is contributing an estimated £5 million to the local economy on an annual basis. The Caravan Club foresee the proposed extension to generate a pro-rata increase of 25% in terms of occupancy and economic benefit over a build-up period of 3 years.



Above: Irwell Vale station on the East Lancashire Railway

- 2.24 The construction of a heritage railway station and expanded Caravan Club site at Burrs will have a number of transformational benefits for the Borough including:
- Burrs as a destination in its own right, stimulated by a wide range of attractions;
 - Further development of Burrs as a host for joined-up Park/ELR events;
 - Increased economic benefits for the area by encouraging visitors to stay longer and spend more as a result of an improved visitor offer;
 - Tapping into the market of Caravan Club customers – Rail tickets/offers could be offered on the site to help open up the appeal and raise awareness of local attractions such as Ramsbottom;
 - A catalyst for improved access to the Irwell Valley both for visitors to the 'gateway' of Burrs and as part of the ELR's 'Every Stop is a Start' marketing campaign.
- 2.25 The variety of projects listed within this Burrs Strategy, particularly the railway station, can assist in increasing visitor numbers to the area by linking two major attractions to form a cluster, thereby appealing to a broader market. The strategy will oversee significant improvements to the quality of existing facilities and new facilities will be provided to maximise opportunities for visitor spend.

3.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.1 With the publication of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) in March 2012, the Government set out to streamline the planning advice previously contained in a wide range of guidance notes and circulars. At its heart is a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' (Paragraph 14) for both plan making and taking decisions on planning applications.
- 3.2 For decision-taking this means that development proposals which accord with the development plan should be approved 'without delay' unless there are adverse impacts which outweigh the benefits or specific policies (e.g. Green Belt) indicate development should be restricted.
- 3.3 Key policies in the NPPF with relevance to Burrs include:

Core Planning Principles (Paragraph 17)	Planning should proactively drive and support sustainable economic development.
Strong, competitive economy (Paragraph 20)	To help achieve economic growth, local planning authorities should plan proactively to meet the development needs of business and support an economy fit for the 21 st century.
Rural economy (Paragraph 28)	Local Plans must take a positive approach to economic growth in rural areas by supporting sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside. This should include supporting the provision and expansion of tourist and visitor facilities.
Transport (Paragraph 29)	The transport system should be balanced in favour of sustainable transport modes to give people a real choice about how they travel.
Design (Paragraph 58)	Planning decisions should aim to ensure that developments establish a strong sense of place and optimise the potential of the site to create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses, including green infrastructure, and support local facilities and transport networks.
Healthy communities (Paragraph 70)	Planning decisions should plan positively for the provision of community facilities and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.
Green Belt (Paras 89/90)	New buildings in the Green Belt are considered appropriate where they are for agriculture and forestry or involve extension/alteration, replacements in the

	same use or redevelopment of brownfield land, providing they do not cause harm to the openness of the Green Belt. Reuse of a building is also appropriate provided it preserves openness and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt.
Flood Risk (Paragraph 100)	Development should be directed away from areas at highest risk of flooding, but where development is necessary, making it safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere.
Natural environment (Paragraph 114)	Planning positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure.
Historic environment (Paragraph 131)	Planning applications should take into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, the positive contribution they can make to sustainable communities and the desirability of new development and its positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Bury Unitary Development Plan

- 3.4 The *Bury Unitary Development Plan (UDP)* was adopted in August 1997 and remains the Borough's statutory land-use plan. Burrs sits within the River Valley but Policy OL5/2 allows for development or change of use of land where it does not divide the open parts of the valley into sections. The site is also within the Green Belt but, as indicated above under national policy, the conversion and re-use of buildings would generally be appropriate providing that the general openness of the Green Belt is maintained.
- 3.5 In terms of recreation and tourism, Burrs Country Park is protected for recreation purposes under Policy RT3/1, which safeguards the Borough's most important focal points for informal recreation. Furthermore, Policy RT4/1 on Tourism Development encourages and support proposals for the development of appropriate visitor related attractions and facilities throughout the Borough, particularly in the Upper Irwell Valley, noting that this location is 'an area where preference will be given to locating tourist attractions and facilities' and that 'development proposals will be particularly encouraged where they build on existing strengths, such as the East Lancashire Railway, and places of interest including...Burrs Country Park'.
- 3.6 Under Policy RT4/6 the Council encourage and support proposals for the further development and enhancement of facilities associated with the East Lancashire Railway, and includes a proposal for a 'Proposed Station Halt' at Burrs which it argues would greatly benefit the development of the area.

- 3.7 There are also a number of environmental designations in the area relating to Wildlife Links and Corridors, Special Landscape Areas and Ancient Monuments. The design and layout of future development proposals would need to ensure that these policy designations are taken into account and features protected or enhanced where possible.
- 3.8 Appendix 1 contains further background information on the national, regional and local context underpinning this strategy.

4.0 BURRS – PAST AND PRESENT

- 4.1 Burrs has played a key role in Britain's industrial past and has undergone significant transformation and improvement in getting to where it is today.

Industrial History

- 4.2 The following sets out some of the key milestones in Burrs' historical industrial growth and subsequent decline.

200 BC - 250 AD	First evidence of a settlement was an iron age hillfort at Castlesteads, a sandstone bluff, overlooking the River Irwell at Burrs.
1752	Farmhouse built on How Lane (now The Brown Cow PH).
1780-1800	A major site for the development of water power industrial processes. Two cotton mills were built by Robert Peel Snr. and Robert Calrow at Higher Woodhill and Lower Woodhill, and two self-contained communities including workers' cottages formed around them based on family and child labour. Burrs had one of the largest water wheels at the Calrow's Higher Woodhill site similar to that at Quarry Bank Mill in Styal, Cheshire.
C. 1803	Burrs canal feeder was constructed to supply water to Elton Reservoir south of Bury Town Centre which served the Manchester Bury and Bolton Canal.
1850	Boom period in cotton industry. Higher Woodhill Mill rebuilt with new water wheel and steam engine.
1861-80	Cotton famine leads to Calrow family business going into liquidation. Burrs cottages consisted of 28 homes housing 141 people. Mills sold in 1870 and bridge built across river.
1880-1900	Change in function for both mills: Higher Woodhill used for paper manufacturing and Burrs Mill operates as bleachworks.
1920-1925	Bowling green and cricket ground laid out for mill workers to north of Burrs Mill lodge. Woodhill Road and Mill Manager's house built (now The Garsdale PH).
1930-35	Higher Woodhill Mill demolished and Burrs Mill closes during the Depression.
1939-45	Brief history as an internment camp for Italian prisoners of war during 2 nd World War.
1982	Burrs Mill demolished.

Developing a Country Park

- 4.3 Since the decline of Burrs as an industrial area, Bury Council has continuously developed the site to help transform the area into a country park. The Council is also one of the four Trust partners involved in developing the ELR. Both the Burrs project and the heritage railway project were conceived within the same overarching regeneration strategy for the Upper Irwell Valley and share the vision of establishing a sustainable economic revival for

the valley's towns, villages and countryside. The following identifies some of the key developments throughout this process.

Mid 1980s	Site bought by the former Greater Manchester Council in a derelict and semi derelict state as part of a wider programme of improving derelict land within river valleys in the sub-region. The closed Bury to Rawtenstall British Rail line was identified by GMC as having potential to lead a wide ranging regeneration strategy for the Upper Irwell Valley.
1986	GMC abolished and Bury MBC inherited the site with an interest in developing it as a Country Park in line with the Croal Irwell Valley Plan proposals. ELR Trust established to carry on work started by GMC.
1987	ELR line from Bury to Ramsbottom opened with an aspiration to open a halt at Burrs to compete with other heritage railways around the country.
Late 1980s	Woodhill Road bridge rebuilt, archaeological excavations carried out at Burrs Mill and at Castlesteads, site cleared.
1989	Work began on forming the canoe slalom.
1992	Higher Woodhill Mill excavations, replacement of former aqueduct with footbridge.
1994-1996	Old workers' cottages demolished and rebuilt to create new self-run activity centre, cafe, bunkhouse, kitchen, changing rooms, showers and equipment store.
1995	Interpretation of historical features. Formed a canoe slalom in the Irwell and practice pool with floodlights at the lodge behind the former Burrs Mill. Agricultural showground moved to Burrs from Bury Ground.
1995-1998	Introduction of public art to Burrs. 'Waterwheel' public art installed at entrance to park in December 1995. Further art pieces were added as part of the Irwell Sculpture Trail with the 'Stone Cycle' in 1997 and the 'Picnic Area' in 1998.
2003	Attained the Green Flag Award standard for parks.
2005	Suite of interpretation panels and signs installed.
2006	Permission granted for installation of high and low ropes course near to activity centre.
2007	Caravan Club site opened.
2009	Permission granted for Caravan Club extension and railway station.

Burrs Today

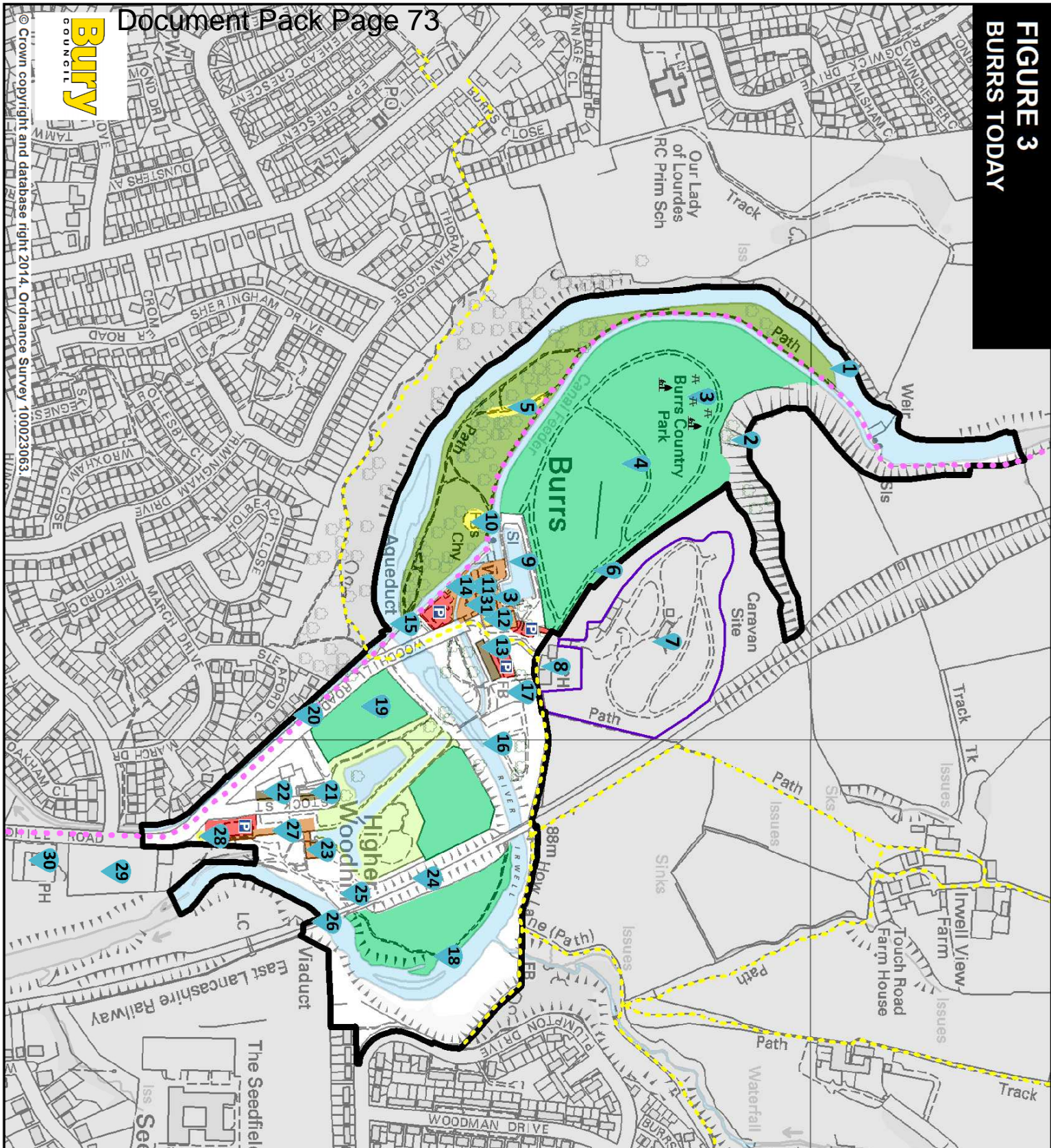
- 4.4 Since its acquisition in the 1980s, the 40 hectare Burrs site has been progressively reclaimed and developed into a flagship country park for the Borough that has achieved Green Flag status for its high standards of maintenance, range of facilities and future ambitions. The images below show the transformation of Burrs from the derelict remains which the Council inherited to the pleasant recreational asset it is today.



- 4.5 **Figure 3 'Burrs Today'** sets out a plan of the park, its key buildings, areas and facilities. Currently, Burrs has been developed to a stage where it encompasses a collection of key elements as set out below:

- ❖ **Industrial archaeology:** The historical remains of the two mills at Burrs and Higher Woodhill and associated wheelpits, goit systems and waterways have been restored and reclaimed and are supported by interpretation on-site which includes an insight into the social history surrounding the families that first set up the two mills. In particular, the significance of the site in harnessing water

FIGURE 3
BURRS TODAY



KEY

- 1 Mill Remains
- 2 Building Structures
- 3 Rivers / Canals / Ponds
- 4 Woodland
- 5 Wetland / Nature
- 6 Open Land
- 7 Sculptures
- 8 Parking
- 9 County Park Boundary
- 10 Caravan Club Site
- 11 Iwells Sculpture Trail
- 12 Public Rights of Way / Footpaths
- 13 Canoe Slalom Start
- 14 Castledowns
- 15 Picnic Benches
- 16 Showground Site
- 17 'Troll Trail' Sculpture
- 18 Trim Trail
- 19 Caravan Club
- 20 Brown Cow PH
- 21 Canoe Training Pond
- 22 'Stone Circle' Sculpture
- 23 Chimney
- 24 'Bench' Sculpture
- 25 Activity Centre / Cafe
- 26 'Picnic Area' Sculpture
- 27 Aqueduct
- 28 Canoe Slalom End
- 29 High Ropes Course
- 30 Fishing Area
- 31 Over Flow Car Parking
- Manchester, Bolton & Bury Canal
- Ranger Base
- Barn
- Wheel Pit
- East Lancashire Railway
- Gasometer
- Higher Woodhill Viaduct
- Former Higher Woodhill Mill
- 'Waterwheel' Sculpture
- Play Area
- The Garsdale PH
- Former Burrs Mill

power has been a guiding influence in its reclamation strategy to-date and helping to give an insight into manufacturing technology and life in the early 19th Century.

- ❖ **Water resources:** The unique site characteristics comprising the River Irwell, Canal Feeder and former mill water system fuelled local enthusiasm for the establishment of a canoe white water training centre that has since expanded into an activity centre offering a range of sporting short courses to schools and family groups including canoeing, canoe polo, kayaking, rafting, fishing and angling.
- ❖ **A focus for outdoor recreation and learning:** The park has been developed as an outdoor classroom for school groups on day visits and general park users. In addition to the watersports listed above, the activity centre also offers training for climbing, abseiling, mountain biking, archery, orienteering and tackling high ropes, with opportunities for adventure games, team building and problem solving. Equipped play facilities are also provided at the entrance to the park on Woodhill Road and also recently in the form of a 'Trim Trail' exercise training area adjacent to the Caravan Club site.
- ❖ **Wildlife and ecology:** Former industrial reservoirs have been converted into fishing ponds and wildlife wetland areas for local angling societies and quiet walking areas for other park users.
- ❖ **Good access on foot or by cycle:** Burrs lies just off National Cycle Route 6 from Manchester to Preston, the Kirklees Trail which has recently been improved by the construction of a viaduct at Woolfold (aided by Sustrans funding) and a new riverside path at Chamberhall.
- ❖ **Sculpture Trail "cluster":** Five significant public art works have been established to provide interest for park users and for the visitors passing through on what is a significant 'stop' on the 33-mile Irwell Sculpture Trail.
- ❖ **'Caravan Club' site:** An 85-pitch national touring caravan and camping site was established in 2007 and has been a major success, with demand for pitches often exceeding availability.
- ❖ **ELR:** The sights and sounds of the steam railway which runs directly through the park add its distinctive character and similarly the views across Burrs and the wider Irwell Valley from the railway are major drivers for tourism in this part of Bury.
- ❖ **Events programme:** The establishment of a multifunctional showground has stimulated the showcase of a collection of events over the Summer months including the Bury Agricultural Show, Family Fun Day/Car Boot Sale, Military Mayhem, the Forces and Forties Weekend and most recently the Lost Carnival.

5.0 KEY ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- 5.1 This section sets out the key issues and opportunities for Burrs Country Park going forward and refers to a number of development projects which are listed in the Action Plan at Section 7.

Burrs Station and Caravan Club

- 5.2 Burrs Country Park is a flagship park within the Borough and offers an array of leisure facilities locally. Both the well-established ELR and the successful Caravan Club site are considerable assets for the park and the Council believe that linking the two major features to create one cluster of attractions can increase the appeal of Burrs further to a much broader market. The projects listed in Phase 1 of the Action Plan will begin to lay the foundations for elevating Burrs as a tourist attraction within Greater Manchester and the North West.
- 5.3 To add to the many awards to-date, the ELR has recently won the 'Large Visitor Attraction' Award at the Lancashire Tourism Awards 2014. The railway's new strapline is "Every stop is a start" which refers to the continuing aspiration for the attraction to be more than just a journey on the railway but also a means of exploring the towns and villages of the Irwell and Roch valleys, their facilities and events, all of which offer something for every age and interest. In 2015, the ELR plan to develop local area initiatives to encourage people to visit the railway and local businesses to promote it; one such venture will be a walking and cycling guide showcasing routes which can involve a journey on the ELR. A countryside rail station at Burrs would provide an excellent focus for this work with its accessibility and network of footpaths and cycle routes towards the Irwell Valley, Kirklees Valley and Bury town centre.



- 5.4 The construction and opening of Burrs Station is identified as a key project in the adopted ELR Locum Report for increasing the number of visitors per year to its target of 200,000 per year by 2020 (see Section 2) and in widening the appeal to the family sector on a year-round basis and not just for special events. A direct link between the heritage railway and the park will be established for the first time, offering mutual benefits for the two primary attractions in the Irwell Valley. The ELR envisage the project as being instrumental in enriching the overall visitor experience of the railway, particularly for families who can break their journeys to explore this part of the Irwell Valley and the expanding park facilities on offer. Through its timetable, the ELR already encourage

visitors to break their journey at any station after having purchased a full line ticket.

- 5.5 Burrs Caravan Club site is the only Greater Manchester facility in the organisation's portfolio, offering 85 pitches; 64 of which are hardstandings and 21 are reinforced grass. Since its opening in July 2007, families and train spotters alike have been attracted to the site, some from overseas, using it as a base to explore Manchester and South Lancashire. Taking account of all ages, the Caravan Club estimate the touring park accounted for an estimated 45,000 visitor nights in 2014. The proximity of the planned station to the expanded 107 pitch facility will allow its guests to board the train at Burrs instead of travelling into Bury by car.
- 5.6 Both projects 1A and 1B have the benefit of planning permission and initial issues with the diversion and closure of public rights of way have been rectified as of October 2014. The key obstacle remaining is the availability of grant funding to finance the building of the station platform and formation of access arrangements (**Project 1A**), which itself must be completed before the Caravan Club extension can start (**Project 1B**) as land and access for construction traffic is restricted.

Key Issues/Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The creation of enhanced linkages between the ELR and Burrs and the wider Irwell Valley through the implementation of the planning approval for Burrs Station and the Caravan Club.

Events and Traffic Management

- 5.7 The annual Bury Agricultural Show is a key event on the town's tourism calendar attracting record-breaking attendances each year and its stunning countryside setting on the large area of open land to the rear of the site often attracts large numbers of first time visitors to the park. The Council is keen to establish Burrs as a location for outdoor events in Bury with the implementation of a regular events programme. The Agricultural Show, Fun Day, Military Mayhem and Forces and Forties Weekend currently provide a busy period around May and September but there is still potential for other types of events of varying scale during the summer, possibly in connection with food, music or arts and crafts. 'The Lost Carnival' is a new immersive theatre and circus experience which was held at Burrs over the May 2015 bank holiday weekend and attracted in the region of 6,000 people over three days.
- 5.8 Surface car parking at Burrs is free and totals 66 permanent spaces (including 2 disabled). The car parks are situated at the main entrance, adjoining the activity centre, at Burrs Mill, and adjacent the Brown Cow pub. Such a limited provision is adequate for a local country park facility, although events add extra pressure on

infrastructure. An additional 319 car parking spaces are available during events on the three sites highlighted at Figure 4 under **Project 1C**, one of which has a reinforced Fibra-sand surface adjacent Woodhill Road.

- 5.9 It is expected that the railway station will help to alleviate the problem of on-site car parking during large events as joint marketing initiatives such as a combined train and admittance ticket could be introduced to allow visitors to park off-site and catch the train. The stone-sett access roads, paths, bridges and parking areas on the site are not equipped to accommodate large volumes of traffic or footfall, and therefore the proposals under Phase 1 in particular will require a review of the way different users move through the site e.g. general visitors to the park compared with Caravan Club customers. It will be important for local partners and organisations to work more closely together in planning for future events to avoid timetable clashes on popular holiday weekends and to reduce the stress on the ELR network which links all the attractions.

Key Issues/Opportunities

- The potential to establish Burrs as a key location for outdoor events.
- The need to enhance the park's infrastructure to facilitate its anticipated increased use and to minimise conflict between different user groups.

Caravan and Camping Facilities

- 5.10 Burrs is currently home to an 85 pitch Caravan Club site and this is the only such site in the sub-region. The site is close to capacity on most weekends, particularly from March to November, where in 2014 the Caravan Club recorded pitch occupancy as being at 95% or more on 67 days. A total of 20,272 pitch nights were recorded for 2014 and as expected the highest monthly occupancy figures were in the spring and summer months, the highest being July at 86%. However, not all pitches are suitable for all-weather use and the number of pitches available can vary throughout the year, only reaching the capacity of 85 pitches between April and September.
- 5.11 At present, the Caravan Club site does not offer facilities for camping and there are no campsites elsewhere in the Borough. However, a high level of enquiries at Bury's Tourist Information Centre and at the Caravan Club would suggest there is demand.
- 5.12 The three sites under **Project 1C** are linked by an access track and gate from Woodhill Road and offer adaptable space which can also be used for camping and to host events themselves. There is high demand for camping in the Borough, particularly owing to the

success of the Caravan Club and the two sites immediately adjacent the railway to the south of the Irwell are suitable for this use. This area has been regularly used for major ELR events and Ramsbottom Festival used it as their official camping site for the first time in September 2014.

- 5.13 Planning permission is in place for an extension to the Caravan Club site to create an additional 20 caravan and 4 camping pitches.

Key Issues/Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The implementation of the planning approval for an extension to the Caravan Club site. ▪ The potential to create camping facilities within the park in order to cater for general demand and demand created during special events.

Visitor centre

- 5.14 The implementation of the station, extended Caravan Club site and a more comprehensive events programme will see Burrs raising its profile as a family attraction whilst adding to the ELR visitor experience. The opening of the station will have stimulated flexible working arrangements between the Council, Burrs Activity Centre and the ELR in forming a joint promotional calendar of events. Visitors arriving by train will have a couple of hours to stay in the park and the increased number and range of events will have helped to satisfy some of this demand. However there will remain no dedicated facilities for visitors beyond the small cafe in the activity centre which has limited opening hours and there will still be no public toilets.
- 5.15 The Council has a long-term aim of establishing a visitor centre for Burrs (**Project 1D**), not least to ensure that the park becomes more of a destination for visitors. The preferred site for the centre is the barn on Stock Street shown at Figure 4. Acting as a visitor information hub, open for 7 days a week, and providing a recognisable headquarters for the park, the new facility will provide a base to explore Burrs, the wider Irwell Valley and find out more about the site's industrial past, things to do in the local area including attractions in Bury and information on the ELR. The new centre and subsequent improvement of facilities under Phase 2 will make the Burrs Station significantly more viable, extend the visitor experience of Burrs Country Park and ultimately contribute to the ELR Trust's ambition to lift the annual number of visits to the railway.
- 5.16 In addition the Council views Burrs as a favoured location for creative independent 'green' businesses which can generate their own events and activities, attract visitors and provide a rent income.

Starter units for such self-sustaining enterprises will be incorporated within the centre, offering a degree of flexibility to appeal to a range of operators and activities such as crafts, wood carving and local produce. Spend opportunities at the park are presently limited and a better quality offer is required to help capitalise on the expected rise in day and staying visitors at the Caravan Club and the surrounding areas. Catering facilities at parks have improved locally, particularly at Heaton Park in Manchester, and the Council aspire to attract a business which could provide a family-focused offer in addition to the services offered by the Garsdale and Brown Cow public houses. Commercial operations such as bike hire could create further opportunities for spend.

Key Issues/Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The need to make provision for a dedicated visitor centre within the park. ▪ The potential to create an independent 'green business' lodge.

Marketing

- 5.17 Tied to the projects of Phase 1 is a need for a new marketing push for Burrs to spread the news of its benefits and growing reputation to the wider public. Promotion of the park and its facilities is presently undertaken via the Council's web pages, the ELR website, the Burrs Activity Centre website, the Council-published 'What's On' Guide (circulated four times a year) and a quarterly newsletter from the Friends of Burrs community group. The Caravan Club site and Burrs Country Park as a whole are currently promoted via the official Greater Manchester tourism website 'Visit Manchester' and by the VisitBury website. The Caravan Club also promote their facility through their website.
- 5.18 The implementation of the projects under Phase 1 and Phase 2 will not be a success however without an agreed comprehensive marketing and destination strategy and programme to understand potential impact of the railway station on the park and how various partners can work together to reap the benefits that come with an increase in visitor numbers.
- 5.19 Burrs can be a real asset to the Council, the ELR and the Borough as a whole if marketing is central to the ethos of what the park is trying to achieve. Through a joint marketing strategy, partners could investigate the potential for an increased online presence, particularly through social media and the inclusion of information on the VisitBury website, in helping to get the message across to a wider audience.

Key Issues/Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The need to increase the profile of Burrs through the development of an effective marketing and destination strategy and programme for Burrs.

Sustainability and upkeep of the park

- 5.20 Burrs is the flagship park for the Borough's entry in the Bury in Bloom campaign and for the Green Flag Award and owes its success to the Council's workforce as well as the volunteer sector, particularly the Activity Centre, Friends of Burrs and volunteer rangers who have contributed to Burrs having a strong track record for organising events, outdoor activities, self-promotion and ensuring the daily upkeep of the site.
- 5.21 Self-management will be critical to the future of the park and a management plan should be formed between key partners involved to commit to maintaining standards and to exploring methods of conserving resources and generating secondary income in the long-term.

Key Issues/Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secure the involvement of the voluntary sector and other key partners in Burrs' future.

Improvement of existing facilities (*Projects 2A and 2B*)

- 5.22 Much work was undertaken in the late 1980s and early 1990s to uncover the most interesting industrial remains such as the mill chimney, mill floors and water wheel pits, and revitalise the unique still and moving watercourses through the site to make them suitable for canoeing and similar activities. The mill goit and canal feeder were cleaned and the Council formed a partnership with the Bury Canoe and Kayak Club to develop a canoe slalom in the river. Following the restoration of the former mill lodge at Burrs Mill and the rebuilding of the cottages, the club formed a not-for-profit company Burrs Activity Centre Ltd and have offered a range of leisure activities for a number of years on a shared management basis using a mixture of volunteer and paid staff employed by the company. Interpretation of the archaeological remains was introduced in 1995 and was refreshed in 2005.
- 5.23 However, the majority of these facilities are outdated and in some cases have fallen into disrepair. In particular, the river features of the site have deteriorated over time due to attrition and to the point where the canoe slalom course and gates have become unusable. The slalom once benefited from the gradient of the River Irwell but has now collapsed due to water pressure and erosion from the build

up of rocks in the river. The canal feeder is prone to silting up and requires funding to dredge the channel, whilst the goit passing the rear of the activity centre is very slow-moving which may be due to algae growth. The man-made weir to the north is in a state of collapse and requires maintenance. The water features need to be cleaned up and be subject to a regular monitoring programme to ensure they are fit for purpose in serving a regionally significant country park. Enhancement of the canal feeder may allow for new walking and cycle links beyond the park towards the Kirklees Trail.

- 5.24 The activity centre has a clear purpose of providing support and training to school groups and other visitors who wish to experience the range of leisure activities Burrs has to offer. The Visitor Centre (**Project 1D**) will allow the activity centre to focus on this sole purpose and will take away the pressure of welcoming visitors to the park and providing information and support of a wider remit, which it is difficult to offer on a part-time basis. The lease for the centre is to expire shortly and this should be extended on the basis that this continued role is recognised. The promotion of the park to higher and wider numbers of users would provide the scope for the activity centre to offer more flexible leisure activities on the day rather than the current requirement to pre-book courses.
- 5.25 The mill remains are annually inspected and a repair programme is undertaken to prevent deterioration but there is much more potential to add interest to the features, such as the rear walls of Burrs Mill at the site of the former water wheel and at the wheel pit of Higher Woodhill Mill which is in a poor state and needs substantial weed clearance. Many of the signs and panels are out-of-date and require an overhaul or replacement.
- 5.26 The Council are keen to raise the quality of facilities within the park to gradually elevate Burrs to a level in keeping with a regional attraction. Visual improvements under Phase 2 will therefore be crucial in raising standards and will be reinforced by the agreed sustainability/ management plan agreed in Phase 1. The varied biodiversity of Burrs, particularly through the centre of the site and within the River Irwell is highly valued and it is recognised that its continued management and enhancement is important in attracting visitors. Another key part of the Council's proposals in this regard is to substantially increase Burrs' contribution to the Irwell Sculpture Trail by adding to the five sculptures already installed within the park.

Key Issues/Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The need to upgrade and enhance outdated and dilapidated facilities within the park. ▪ Biodiversity and riverine enhancements. ▪ Improved pedestrian/cycle links alongside the canal feeder. ▪ Increased number and range of sculptures.

Improved Links to Bury Town Centre

- 5.27 A longer-term aspiration of the Council is to expand the boundaries of Burrs southwards alongside the River Irwell to take advantage of the open character of the river valley outside the entrance to the park. This would help to facilitate access to the riverside, forming a clear off-road route for pedestrians and cyclists who are currently steered away from the river along Woodhill Road. However, land ownership issues currently provide obstacles to this objective and so this is unlikely to move forward for another 10 years.
- 5.28 Chamberhall is a large site that sits between Burrs and Bury Town Centre and the Council has aspirations for this site to form a high-quality business park. The proximity of Burrs to the Chamberhall site could help to attract prospective businesses to locate on the site given that the newly expanded facilities at Burrs would be readily accessible to employees. A riverside footpath and cycleway has recently been laid out alongside the river at Chamberhall connecting the NCN6 route to the highway network at Bury Bridge.
- 5.29 Burrs is only 1 mile from Bury Town Centre. The proposed riverside path under **Project 3A** will aid in expanding the recreational benefits of this corridor and help to form a connection between key visitor attractions in this part of the Borough. In particular, the ELR's Bury Transport Museum opened in 2010 is a popular visitor attraction just off Castlecroft Road north of Chamberhall which is well signposted from the Bury Bolton Street station. The introduction of signage and enhanced public realm outside the museum could persuade visitors to walk up the valley towards Burrs where they could spend a couple of hours before catching a return train back to Bury Bolton Street. Currently on certain days in the year the Bury Transport Museum uses one of its historic buses to run a bus service to Burrs. The marketing and destination strategy under Phase 1 could play a key role in taking these ideas forward.

Key Issues/Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potential to expand the park southwards and to provide a riverside footpath/cycleway in order to improve linkages to Bury Town Centre.

Increased and Improved Recreation Provision

- 5.30 The 7.4 hectare site between Woodhill Road and the river is in Council ownership but is currently leased on an agricultural tenancy. The size and layout of the site together with its ease of access allows for the provision of sports pitches under **Project 3B**, a type of recreation that Burrs currently lacks. The 2015 Greenspace Audit and Strategy records a quantitative deficiency of 7.05 hectares for outdoor sports facilities in Bury West and in qualitative terms playing pitches are also below the required standard. With only 4 senior football pitches in this Township, Bury West is the most under-provided area in the Borough.
- 5.31 Opportunities to provide a major high quality play facility in keeping with the Burrs 'house-style' which is of a sufficient standard to add to the overall visitor attraction offer will also be explored in this area.
- 5.32 The Council is currently investigating the feasibility of securing and developing an additional showground on this site in order to relieve pressure on the main Burrs site and its infrastructure whilst minimising conflict with other users such as the Caravan Club. As referred to previously, the Borough has a shortage of camping sites and should the sites under **Project 1C** be insufficient for needs, this site may provide an alternative to meet requirements.

Key Issues/Opportunities

- To incorporate additional recreational facilities of higher quality within an extended park in order to address some of the current quantitative and qualitative deficiencies in provision.

6.0 A VISION FOR BURRS

- 6.1 After almost thirty years of continuous improvements aimed at transforming the site from a derelict and underused industrial space to a country park with an expanding tourism and leisure offer, the Council's vision for Burrs is:

To embark on a programme of enhancements over a 15 year period to establish a 'destination park' which is both a regional attraction and a key element of the town's burgeoning tourism portfolio.

6.2 Underpinning this Vision are the following principles:

- To develop Burrs as the gateway to the upper Irwell Valley and West Pennine Moors, forming the visitor hub of an improved, planned and managed green infrastructure corridor of attractions from Bury town centre out towards the town of Ramsbottom and linked by the Irwell Sculpture Trail;
- To establish the park as the new countryside heart of an expanded ELR network linking eastwards towards West Yorkshire with the national rail and M62 at Castleton and northwards to Lancashire at Rawtenstall;
- To expand and further strengthen Burrs' potential as a family destination through the implementation of a major events programme and close-working with the ELR to maximise the benefit of the station;
- To strengthen the off-road links with Bury town centre and its attractions on foot, by cycle and by rail;
- To support and improve the health and wellbeing of visitors to Burrs Country Park by providing accessible facilities for all users including the disabled and those with special needs;
- To make Burrs the location of choice for caravan users and campers to the Manchester area who wish to use the park as a base to explore the Irwell Valley, travel on the ELR and visit surrounding towns and Manchester City Centre;
- To launch a 'house style' for materials and features at Burrs to help improve the quality of the brand and the 'story' of the site's history; by retaining and enhancing the character and identity of previous development and ensuring a consistent approach towards new elements such as the station and Visitor Centre, using low-carbon sustainable methods of construction where possible;
- To enhance the existing visitor facilities and the potential for commercial opportunities such as cafes and tours.

7.0 DELIVERING THE VISION – AN ACTION PLAN FOR BURRS

- 7.1 The following Action Plan sets out the three phases required to deliver the Vision and principles for Burrs. **Figure 4 'Development Strategy 2015-2029'** illustrates this on plan marking out the key projects under each phase.

PHASE 1 (2015-2019)

Project	Outline/Progress
1A: Burrs Station <i>The establishment of a countryside rail station to stimulate mutual benefits for Burrs Country Park users and ELR visitors.</i>	<p>Planning permission was secured in September 2009 for the construction of the railway station/access ramp, change of use of open land to caravan park with access road and the construction of a footpath diversion route. The station scheme will consist of a platform, sheltered waiting area, lighting, seating, pedestrian and vehicular access.</p> <p>A material amendment application was submitted in May 2015 to make minor alterations to the construction of the platform, the arrangements for emergency access and increase the number of camping pitches.</p> <p>Project 1A is already underway. A material start was made on-site in September 2012. As of October 2014, the public right of way which previously bordered the Caravan Club and crossed the railway was diverted along a newly opened footpath to the east of the railway, offering a safer pedestrian route underneath the existing bridge.</p>
1B: Caravan Club expansion <i>The addition of further pitches and camping facilities to the Caravan Club site adjacent to the new station, helping to satisfy demand for a popular facility which is close to capacity on most weekends of the year.</i>	<p>As stated above, planning permission was secured in September 2009 and a material amendment application was submitted in May 2015 to increase the number of camping pitches.</p> <p>The public right of way which previously bisected the site has been closed and diverted, therefore opening up the site for development.</p>

<p>1C: Expanded events programme</p> <p><i>Implementation and sustainment of an annual calendar of events agreed between Council and partners.</i></p>	<p>The Council is actively exploring opportunities to work with event organisers in broadening the number and range of events at the park to help establish an annual rolling programme on what is an under-used site at certain points of the year. The central band of the site (see plan) should be kept open to allow for flexibility in accommodating large events and will be suitable for camping and overspill car parking.</p>
<p>Traffic management</p> <p><i>Review of traffic flows through the site and position of car parks.</i></p>	<p>The hosting of regular events and an influx of additional visitors to the park in connection with the ELR station and expanded Caravan Club site will put pressure on the infrastructure of Burrs. A review will ascertain whether existing car parking, roads and paths are fit for purpose and works will be implemented accordingly with the aim of relieving congestion and conflict between users.</p>
<p>1D: New visitor centre</p> <p><i>Forming an accessible 'hub' for visitors to the park, sustainable local businesses and as a permanent base for staff.</i></p>	<p>The park requires a dedicated building to welcome visitors to Burrs throughout the week as opposed to the Activity Centre which has a specialist role of providing opportunities for leisure and has restricted opening hours.</p> <p>The visitor centre should occupy a central location within the park (possibly the Stock Street barn with access from Woodhill Road) and include a reception, café, toilets, interpretation facilities, starter units for local businesses, meeting rooms, offices and storage depot. Other facilities could include cycle hire and short-stay parking.</p>
<p>Marketing and destination strategy</p> <p><i>Establish a stronger brand image for the park which is up-to-date and capable of presenting the benefits of Burrs to a wider audience.</i></p>	<p>This should be based on improved joint marketing opportunities in pursuing an improved working relationship as explored above with particular regard to the ELR, Caravan Site, Activity Centre and its attractive location central to the Irwell Valley.</p>

Sustainability/ Management Plan

Commitment to sound management, housekeeping and prudent use of resources.

Burrs is a centre of excellence for volunteering and self-management. A management plan will be agreed between partners to ensure this work is sustained going forward, committing to maintaining the Green Flag/Bury in Bloom standard, embracing the voluntary sector and exploring opportunities for maximising secondary income and energy resources wherever possible.

PHASE 2 (2020-2024)

Project	Outline/Progress
2A: Restoration and enhancement of archaeological features and refresh of interpretation boards <i>The historic mill remains at Burrs and Higher Woodhill will be improved along with the corresponding information boards to sustain their appeal for increased visitors to the park.</i>	<p>With the aid of grant funding, the Council is keen to maintain the upkeep of Burrs' industrial past and enhance features where possible to help tell the story, which may involve restoration of key elements and clearance of vegetation. In connection with the wider marketing push below, the existing notice boards will be replaced with new boards which provide up-to-date information, images and contact details.</p>
2B: Enhance Burrs' water elements and refresh the Activity Centre <i>The Centre and watersports activities are the lifeblood of the park and need to be maintained/revamped to keep pace with the growth of a major tourist attraction.</i>	<p>The key objectives underneath this project are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renewal of Activity Centre lease; • Dredging of canal feeder; • Canoe slalom renovation • Repair of weir in partnership with the Environment Agency; • Enhancement of the river for fish in partnership with the Ramsbottom Angling Association. <p>Refurbishment of the canal feeder in particular will open up opportunities for the provision of walking and cycle links beyond Burrs.</p>

Further visual improvements to raise standards of quality

Improvements to wildlife, flora and fauna and the establishment of a recognised sculpture 'cluster'.

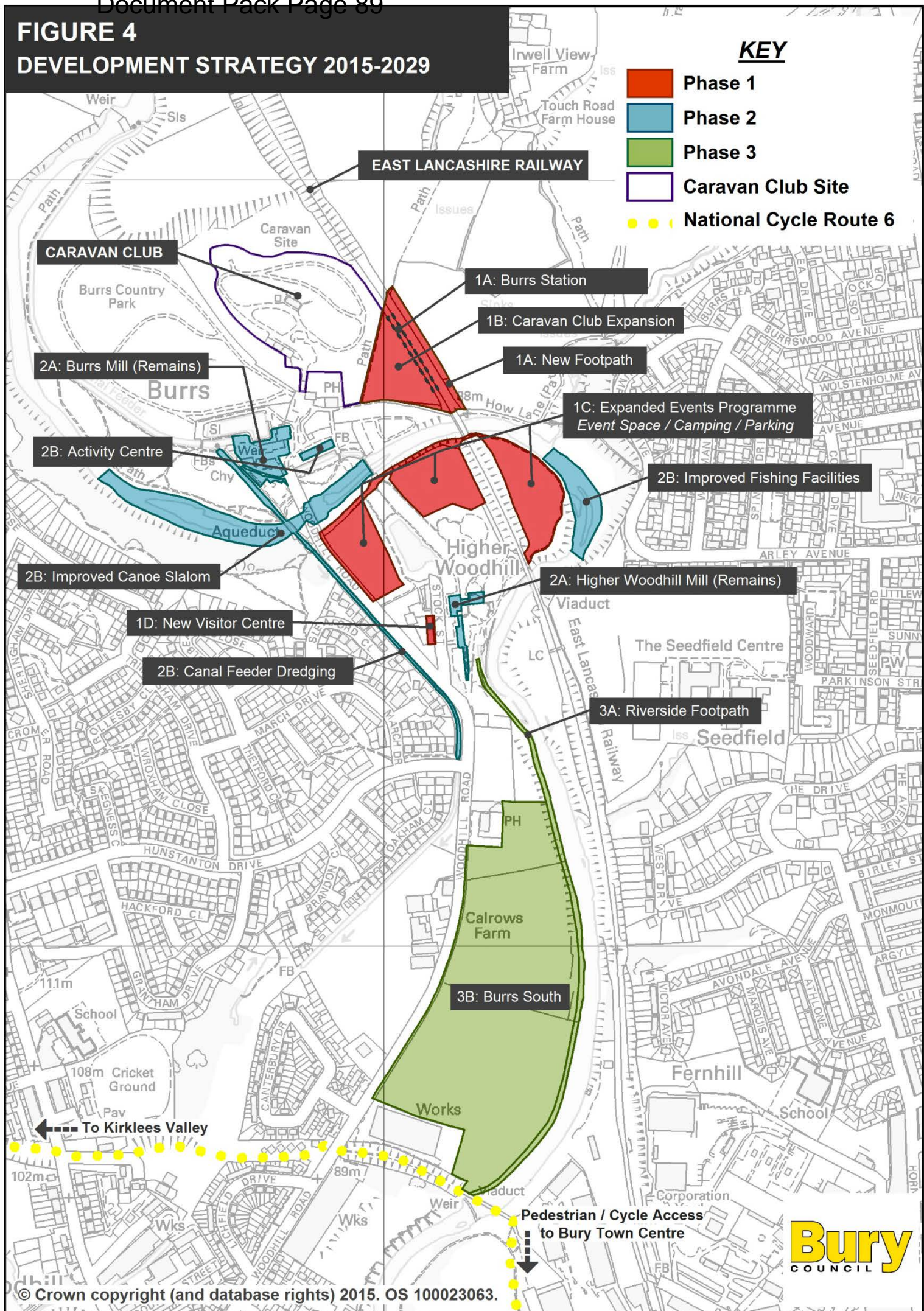
In addition to Projects 2A and 2B above the emphasis will be on managing and enhancing on-site biodiversity. Invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam are known to be a concern and these will be controlled where necessary.

The Irwell Sculpture Trail is a tremendous asset for Burrs and there are aspirations to form an 'epicentre' for the trail, helping to raise the profile by expanding the number and range of sculptures within the park.

PHASE 3: 2025-2029

Project	Outline/Progress
3A: Riverside Cycle/Footpath <i>The establishing of a riverside greenway from Burrs, offering improved off-road connections into Chamberhall and Bury Town Centre.</i>	<p>After leaving the park in the Higher Woodhill Mill area close to the car park, the path will follow the river and link up with the Sustrans Cycle network, forming a direct connection with the Chamberhall Business Park and Bury town centre's tourist attractions such as Bury Transport Museum, the ELR Bolton Street Station, The Fusilier Museum, Bury Art Museum and Sculpture Centre, Bury Market and The Met.</p>
3B: Burrs South <i>Expanding the park southwards towards the town centre to provide an increased range of facilities in an accessible and attractive riverside location.</i>	<p>To expand the park's physical size by taking back into the Council's direct management farm land that is currently on short tenancies. This will allow for the park's growing pains to be eased with the introduction of improved park facilities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sporting facilities; • High quality play provision; • Events space; • Seating areas; • Camping.

- 7.2 The Council will seek to work in partnership with relevant organisations and local volunteering groups in implementing the strategy whilst pursuing opportunities for capital investment, inward investment and access to external funding streams wherever possible to help deliver individual projects.
- 7.3 The following partners will be instrumental in bringing forward various elements of the strategy. Subject to resources, the Council's intention is to set up a working group consisting of some of these

FIGURE 4**DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2015-2029**

bodies and this would meet periodically to help drive forward the projects and monitor their progress:

- East Lancashire Light Railway Company
- Caravan Club
- Burrs Activity Centre Limited
- Irwell Shufflers Kayak Club and Bury Canoe & Kayak Club
- Friends of Burrs
- Environment Agency
- Canal and River Trust
- Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal Society
- Historic England
- Ramsbottom Angling Association

APPENDIX 1: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

National guidance

Tourism

A strategic framework for tourism 2010-2020 from Visit England has a vision of maximising tourism's contribution to the economy, employment and quality of life in England. The strategic framework aims to achieve four interdependent objectives which are designed to address the opportunities and challenges for England's visitor economy. Of particular relevance are the objectives 'to offer visitors compelling destinations of distinction' and 'facilitating greater engagement between the visitor and the experience'.

The success of the strategy is based on delivery by a range of strategic tourism partners and its adoption by the appropriate constituents in the public and private sectors. Tourism businesses, alongside destination management organisations, local government and relevant sectors, such as transport, must share responsibility for creating a successful destination experience.

Outdoor sport

Sport England is the strategic lead for delivering the Government's sporting objectives in England. The aim of the ***Sport England Strategy 2012-17*** is to have transformed sport in England by 2017, five years after the Olympic Games, so that sport becomes a habit for life for more people and a regular choice for the majority. It seeks a year-on-year rise in the proportion of people who play sport once a week for at least 30 minutes. In particular, the percentage of people in the 14 to 25-year olds age bracket that play sport once a week will have increased and the proportion of those dropping out of sport will have reduced.

In terms of planning, Sport England's objectives are to protect existing sports and recreational facilities and land including playing fields, enhance the quality, accessibility and management of existing facilities and to provide new facilities to meet demand.

Green Infrastructure

The 2011 Natural Environment White Paper, ***The Natural Choice: securing the value of nature***, pledged to put nature at the heart of our decision-making by facilitating greater local action to protect and improve nature, create a green economy, strengthen the connections between people and nature to the benefit of both and to protect and enhance natural assets globally. It is claimed that past action has been on too small a scale and that an integrated approach focused on securing net biodiversity gain and supporting healthy, well-functioning ecosystems will create a resilient ecological network across England. The White Paper endorses the approach in 'Making Space for Nature' of addressing the fragmentation of our natural environment by restoring ecological networks

at the 'landscape scale', taking account of the individual components and habitats in these networks.

Within their **Green Infrastructure Guidance**, Natural England defines GI as 'a strategically planned and delivered network comprising the broadest range of high quality green spaces and other environmental features. It should be designed and managed as a multifunctional resource capable of delivering those ecological services and quality of life benefits required by the communities it serves and needed to underpin sustainability.' GI has the potential to offer a range of functions including access, leisure, recreation, habitat provision, energy production and flood attenuation. This 'multifunctionality' can apply to individual sites and routes, but it is when the sites and links are taken together that a fully multifunctional GI network is achieved.

The Town and Country Planning Association's **Good Practice Guidance for Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity** highlights the opportunities of GI in protecting and enhancing the value of the natural environment, particularly its essential 'ecosystem services' such as the recycling of air and water, and responding to the challenge of climate change. The guidance states that GI provision is as important as 'grey infrastructure' e.g. transport and waste management systems and includes a number of principles for its planning including the connection, improvement and restoration of existing assets and the maximisation of opportunities provided by other policy drivers and initiatives.

Regional/sub-regional guidance and strategies

Economic growth and developing the visitor economy

The **Greater Manchester Strategy** vision is that 'By 2020 the Manchester city-region will have pioneered a new model for sustainable economic growth based around a more connected, talented and greener city region where all our residents are able to contribute to and benefit from sustained prosperity'.

The **Greater Manchester Strategy for the Visitor Economy 2014-2020** argues that the document will help to deliver the above aspirations for sustainable growth by creating a distinctive sense of place and raising the global profile of Manchester as a place to live, work and invest.

Manchester is the UK's second most visited destination after London (4.1 million in 2012) although the proportion of these staying for leisure purposes does not compare well with other UK cities such as Edinburgh and Liverpool. Total visits to top 10 attractions in Manchester also perform much lower than these cities. In terms of visitor perceptions of Manchester's strengths, attractions and quality of food and drink were rated 'below average'.

The strategy has an ambition of 'developing and promoting the Greater Manchester product offer for leisure and business visitors' by 2020, two aims which underpin this are to 'further develop Manchester as a leading

events destination' and to 'improve the quality and appeal of the product offer'. Key targets include the following through to 2020:

- To increase staying visitor numbers from 10.3 million to 13.7 million;
- To increase the number of day visitors from 95.2 million to 127 million.

Supporting the GM Strategy for the Visitor Economy is the **Greater Manchester Destination Management Plan: Visitor Economy Action Plan 2014-17**. Strategic Aim 3 'To improve the quality and appeal of the product offer' has the following actions of relevance:

- Ensure that Manchester's visitor experience exceeds expectations and delivers quality at all levels;
- Support projects and opportunities that will help develop a stronger sense of place;
- Improve the quality of the public realm, particularly greenspace and waterways.

Restoring the river valleys

Burrs lies on the River Irwell, one of the principal river valleys in Greater Manchester which was once of significance to the sub-region in providing water power, as was the case at Burrs Mill. In the 1960s much of the river valleys de-industrialised and local authorities met to consider how the large derelict areas of land left in their wake could be improved.

Greater Manchester Council (GMC) formed in 1974 and later set about preparing a plan for the valleys of the Irwell and the River Croal, the latter of which originates in Bolton and meets the Irwell near Kearsley. The **Croal Irwell Valley Local Plan** was subject to a Surveys and Issues Report consultation in 1979 which highlighted that informal recreation provision was inadequate and that the Plan should be concerned with environmental improvement, improving public access and improving the scope for recreation. Later adopted in 1986, the Plan identified the land at Burrs as one of 186 site-specific proposals. Proposal no. 158 was a priority 1 proposal and required 'Reclamation for informal recreation including interpretation of historical features, recreational use of the lodge, car park and tree planting'. Part of the reasoning was 'to provide a focus for recreational use and trips in this part of the Valley by taking advantage of a derelict site with substantial historical importance'. Also a top priority was a proposal no. 140 to construct a footpath from Higher Woodhill to Bury Ground alongside the Irwell 'to improve pedestrian access within the Valley by filling the only gap in a chain of public paths linking Bury town centre and Ramsbottom'. However, of the two proposals, only Proposal no. 158 for Burrs was carried forward into the Bury Unitary Development Plan, along with 43 others for the Borough as a whole.

Regional parks and developing green infrastructure

The former **North West Regional Spatial Strategy**, revoked by an order of parliament in April 2013, included a policy on GI at Policy EM3 and on Regional Parks at Policy EM4 which was complementary to GI

policy to the GI approach. Policy EM3 required plans, strategies, proposals and schemes to deliver wider spatial outcomes that incorporate environmental and socio-economic benefits by conserving and managing, GI, creating new assets and enhancing its functionality, quality, connectivity and accessibility. The identification, development and management of new sites should be complemented by the retention, enhancement and adaptation of existing sites. Policy EM4 earmarked three areas of search for Regional Parks, the Mersey Basin being the key area for Greater Manchester, and the Croal/Irwell Valley was listed as being a potential project within this area.

A definition of GI is offered in the ***North West Green Infrastructure Guide*** which was compiled by a large number of bodies including the Environment Agency, Forestry Commission and the former North West Regional Assembly, citing the concept as forming 'the Region's life support system – the network of natural environment components and green and blue spaces that lies within and between the North West's cities, towns and villages which provides multiple social, economic and environmental benefits.' The guide was developed to support the former Regional Spatial Strategy Policy EM3 but is still relevant to planning for GI under the NPPF. It argues that the environment should be owed the same consideration as 'grey' infrastructure in allowing GI to be planned in advance as a system of interconnected parts, and that it is a 'core outcome of any regeneration programme involving land or water'.

The Economic Value of Green Infrastructure from Natural Economy Northwest considered how GI could help to achieve the region's priorities and objectives for economic growth in the region, highlighting that the North West's environment generates an estimated £2.6 billion in Gross Value Added (GVA) and supports 109,000 jobs. It is argued that GI can improve the image of a place, help to attract investment and talent, improve property values and improve educational achievement. In terms of more tangible outputs, tourism is a key sector in the North West with visitors being worth £10.9 billion per year to the economy, health and wellbeing can benefit from increased leisure and exercise activities, whilst improved local leisure opportunities can protect the global environment and local economy by encouraging local residents not to travel long distances on holiday.

The most relevant benefit in terms of Burrs however is 'quality of place' in that green infrastructure plans and projects can help to arrest the decline of urban green spaces through creative approaches to land ownership and management such as community management which help to offer cost savings and encourage a local sense of community.

TEP Consultants prepared a report on behalf of the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) and Natural England in 2008 entitled ***Towards a Green Infrastructure Framework for Greater Manchester***. The report highlights that a healthy natural environment is a pre-requisite for supporting growth and development in terms of the social and economic benefits that can be derived from a high quality environment. It identifies priority areas for green infrastructure

investment and includes the Irwell and Roch Valleys within its suggested network.

TEP followed up this report in 2010 with advice on ***Bury's Green Infrastructure***. This outlined that, although flood risk arising from the River Irwell is a negative factor affecting property values, investor confidence and regeneration activity, the wider Irwell Valley is recognised as critical GI for the image of Greater Manchester which serves a 'green lung' for the city. Bury's countryside is seen as being 'essential to many tourism, leisure and pub/catering businesses...providing an attractive setting for the East Lancashire Heritage Railway, an important sub-regional tourism asset'. In reviewing the evidence base for the Borough, TEP outline under the theme of open space that the upper section of the Irwell Valley have little accessible Council-owned space other than Burrs, although the public footpaths in the area do provide some public access. The importance of the Irwell and tributaries to Bury is recognised by the report, citing that 'the physical layout of Bury's urban area is such that the countryside is never far away and the river valleys are ideal conduits for access to the open spaces'.

The report concludes with advice to support the Core Strategy policy on GI, sub-dividing the borough's resource into seven main areas, four of which form the suggested strategic GI network. The upper Irwell Valley is one of these areas and TEP advise policy direction on the 'conservation of the existing high quality of the river valleys (landscape, heritage and biodiversity), and promoting their role in access to the wider countryside, especially the West Pennine Moors' and that policy should 'promote facilities to enable increased access to the countryside'.

Local evidence and strategies

The audit of the ***2015 Bury Greenspace Audit and Strategy*** records Burrs as a 'Large Urban and Country Park' in the 'Parks and Gardens' typology. The park has a site area of 26.17 hectares and received the minimum quality standard of 'Good' in the audit assessment. The strategy notes the good performance of parks and gardens across the Borough in terms of quality and references the strong year-on-year performance in the Green Flag Awards for 12 of its parks, one of which is Burrs. The commitment to a long-term development plan for Burrs Country Park is earmarked as Objective PG2 of the strategy.

Supporting the Greenspace Strategy is the Council's ***Rights of Way Improvement Plan*** which foresees the potential for parks and greenways to be utilised as gateways to the rights of way network and therefore to the countryside.

Sources

Image on front cover of the fishermen at Burrs was taken by Brian Rigby from the Ramsbottom Angling Association.

Equality Analysis Form

The following questions will document the effect of your service or proposed policy, procedure, working practice, strategy or decision (hereafter referred to as 'policy') on equality, and demonstrate that you have paid due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty.

1. RESPONSIBILITY

Department	Resources and Regulation	
Service	Planning Services	
Proposed policy	Burrs Country Park Strategy	
Date	06/05/15	
Officer responsible for the 'policy' and for completing the equality analysis	Name	Michael Whitehead
	Post Title	Planning Officer
	Contact Number	0161 253 6154
	Signature	
	Date	06/05/2015
Equality officer consulted	Name	
	Post Title	
	Contact Number	
	Signature	
	Date	

2. AIMS

What is the purpose of the policy/service and what is it intended to achieve?	<p>This report concerns a Council Strategy for the future development of Burrs Country Park over a period of 15 years, setting out the Vision and Objectives before identifying key projects that will help to fulfil Burrs' potential to establish itself as a 'destination park' of regional significance.</p> <p>In addition to highlighting the potential of Burrs as a quality regional family tourist attraction, the Strategy aims to develop the park as the gateway to the Upper Irwell Valley. This will help to encourage investment and support funding applications for future projects within the park and the wider Irwell Valley in conjunction with partners such as the East Lancashire Railway (ELR).</p>
Who are the main stakeholders?	<p>In addition to the Council, the main stakeholders are key businesses with interest in the park such as the Caravan Club, East Lancashire Railway Trust and Bury Activity Centre Ltd, relevant national bodies such as the Canal and Rivers Trust and community groups such as the Friends of Burrs Country Park.</p>

3. ESTABLISHING RELEVANCE TO EQUALITY

3a. Using the drop down lists below, please advise whether the policy/service has either a positive or negative effect on any groups of people with protected equality characteristics. If you answer yes to any question, please also explain why and how that group of people will be affected.

Protected equality characteristic	Positive effect (Yes/No)	Negative effect (Yes/No)	Explanation
Race	No	No	
Disability	Yes	No	Some projects make provision for new/upgraded recreation and transport facilities. These will include facilities for the disabled, allowing adequate access to the site, coupled with appropriate movement within the site and the use of associated facilities.
Gender	No	No	
Gender reassignment	No	No	
Age	No	No	
Sexual orientation	No	No	
Religion or belief	No	No	
Caring responsibilities	No	No	
Pregnancy or maternity	No	No	
Marriage or civil partnership	No	No	

3b. Using the drop down lists below, please advise whether or not our policy/service has relevance to the Public Sector Equality Duty. If you answer yes to any question, please explain why.

General Public Sector Equality Duties	Relevance (Yes/No)	Reason for the relevance
Need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010	No	
Need to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not (eg. by removing or minimising disadvantages or meeting needs)	No	
Need to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not (eg. by tackling prejudice or promoting understanding)	No	

If you answered 'YES' to any of the questions in 3a and 3b

Go straight to Question 4

If you answered 'NO' to all of the questions in 3a and 3b

Go to Question 3c and do not answer questions 4-6

3c. If you have answered 'No' to all the questions in 3a and 3b please explain why you feel that your policy/service has no relevance to equality.

4. EQUALITY INFORMATION AND ENGAGEMENT

4a. For a service plan, please list what equality information you currently have available, **OR** for a new/changed policy or practice please list what equality information you considered and engagement you have carried out in relation to it.

Please provide a link if the information is published on the web and advise when it was last updated?

(NB. Equality information can be both qualitative and quantitative. It includes knowledge of service users, satisfaction rates, compliments and complaints, the results of surveys or other engagement activities and should be broken down by equality characteristics where relevant.)

Details of the equality information or engagement	Internet link if published	Date last updated
Consultation and ongoing dialogue has been carried out with officers within the Council, the East Lancashire Railway and the Caravan Club throughout the preparation process for the Burrs Strategy and a 4-week consultation in March/April 2015 rolled this out to statutory bodies, other organisations, parties and local residents with an interest in Burrs. No issues concerning equality and community cohesion have been raised as a result of these consultations.	http://www.bury.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=4962	12.03.15

4b. Are there any information gaps, and if so how do you plan to tackle them?

N/A

5. CONCLUSIONS OF THE EQUALITY ANALYSIS

What will the likely overall effect of your policy/service plan be on equality?	No issues concerning equality and community cohesion have been raised
If you identified any negative effects (see questions 3a) or discrimination what measures have you put in place to remove or mitigate them?	N/A
Have you identified any further ways that you can advance equality of opportunity and/or foster good relations? If so, please give details.	N/A
What steps do you intend to take now in respect of the implementation of your policy/service plan?	N/A

6. MONITORING AND REVIEW

If you intend to proceed with your policy/service plan, please detail what monitoring arrangements (if appropriate) you will put in place to monitor the ongoing effects. Please also state when the policy/service plan will be reviewed.

Officers in Planning Policy and Projects, Parks and Countryside and Property and Asset Management will keep the strategy under review to monitor the progress on individual projects and will update the document as appropriate.

COPIES OF THIS EQUALITY ANALYSIS FORM SHOULD BE ATTACHED TO ANY REPORTS/SERVICE PLANS AND ALSO SENT TO THE EQUALITY INBOX (equality@bury.gov.uk) FOR PUBLICATION.

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REPORT FOR DECISION



DECISION MAKER:	CABINET
DATE:	10 JUNE 2015
SUBJECT:	ADOPTION OF REVISED SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT 1: OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION IN NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT
REPORT FROM:	CABINET MEMBER – RESOURCES AND REGULATION
CONTACT OFFICER:	Michael Whitehead – Senior Planning Officer
TYPE OF DECISION:	CABINET - KEY DECISION
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/STATUS:	This paper is within the public domain
SUMMARY:	<p>This report brings forward a revised version of the existing Supplementary Planning Document 1 (SPD 1) on open space, sport and recreation provision in new housing developments which will replace the existing SPD1 advice once adopted.</p> <p>Members previously approved the draft version of SPD1 on 11 February 2015 for a 4-week public consultation. Minor changes have been made to the document following consultation, and therefore approval is sought for the adoption of the revised SPD1 which will then apply to all relevant planning applications determined from the date of adoption.</p>
OPTIONS & RECOMMENDED OPTION	<p>Option 1 (Recommended Option) That Members adopt the attached revised SPD1.</p> <p>Option 2 That Members seek revisions to SPD1 before adoption. Members to specify the nature of any revisions to be sought.</p> <p>Option 3 That Members do not adopt the revised SPD1 and specify reasons for their decision.</p> <p>Reasons Option 1 would ensure that the SPD1 is up-to-date and is afforded weight in the consideration of all planning applications determined from the date of adoption.</p>

IMPLICATIONS:	
Corporate Aims/Policy Framework:	<p>Do the proposals accord with the Policy Framework? Yes</p> <p>The SPD1 supplements Saved Policy RT2/2 of the Bury Unitary Development Plan and takes account of national planning guidance.</p>
Statement by the S151 Officer: Financial Implications and Risk Considerations:	<p>This report formalises the Council's Supplementary Planning Document in light of recent consultation.</p> <p>New Government Planning guidance restricts the Council's ability to apply "s106" agreements to small scale developments, and new Community Infrastructure Levy regulations will further limit the extent to which agreements can be pooled.</p> <p>These changes potentially mean a loss of resources and reduced flexibility for the Council.</p>
Statement by Executive Director of Resources:	Adoption of this policy will ensure that the Council's approach will be in line with national guidance and legislative requirements.
Equality/Diversity implications:	<p>No</p> <p>An initial screening has been undertaken (see attached assessment) which did not identify any negative impacts on equality.</p>
Considered by Monitoring Officer:	The SPD will, upon adoption, be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The Council is required under the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 to consult on the SPD and to take into account all consultation responses received before adopting the SPD.
Wards Affected:	All
Scrutiny Interest:	

TRACKING/PROCESS

DIRECTOR: STEPHEN KENYON

Chief Executive/ Strategic Leadership Team	Cabinet Member/Chair	Ward Members	Partners
Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet/Committee	Council	
	10th June 2015		

1.0 BACKGROUND & ISSUES

- 1.1 Supplementary Planning Documents expand on and provide further details on policies contained in the Council's Unitary Development Plan (UDP). UDP Policy RT2/2 on Recreation Provision in New Housing Development provides the policy basis for requiring development proposals for housing development to make an appropriate contribution for recreation provision for the prospective residents – either on site or as a financial contribution. The Policy is supported by SPD1, which provides additional guidance on the contributions required and how the policy will be implemented.
- 1.2 The current version of SPD1 was formally adopted on 1 February 2012 and the need has arisen to review and update it.

Draft SPD1 consultation

- 1.3 Members approved the draft version of the revised SPD1 for a 4-week public consultation at Cabinet on 11 February 2015. It was advised that the revisions to SPD1 were required to provide updates to take account of changes to Government guidance on seeking developer contributions for small-scale developments of 10 dwellings or less and to respond to new Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations which introduced pooling restrictions on Section 106 contributions from 6 April 2015. As such, the draft SPD included advice on how future legal agreements would operate within the new pooling restrictions and set out that the guidance would only apply to developments of 10 dwellings with a maximum combined floorspace of more than 1,000 square metres and developments of 11 dwellings or above.
- 1.4 The consultation draft of SPD1 was made available for comment at deposit points and on the Council's website from 20 February to 20 March 2015.

Representations received and changes made

- 1.5 A total of 10 formal representations were made during the consultation from a range of respondents including statutory bodies such as English Heritage and Natural England and from the development industry such as Barratt Homes. There was general support for the SPD and its content with some suggested minor amendments to the wording, a number of which have been incorporated within the final document. Some of the issues raised include the spending of Section 106 monies on ensuring safe and secure access, the Council's evidence on recreation and the need for clarity on the approach towards green infrastructure.

- 1.6 Three minor changes were made to the document following the consultation to respond to representations from ARCON Housing Group and Sport England and to provide more clarity at Appendix 2. The Statement of Consultation is appended to this report and sets out a summary of the main issues that were raised and how the issues have been addressed within the SPD.

Adoption

- 1.7 Once adopted, SPD1 will replace the existing advice which has been in place since 1 February 2012. The Council's guidance will consequently be in line with national guidance and latest legislation on pooling restrictions. The costs for establishment, enhancement and maintenance of open spaces will also be up-to-date and reflective of modern prices.
- 1.8 Should Members resolve to adopt revised SPD1, it will apply to all relevant planning applications to be determined from this date forward.

2.0 CONCLUSION

- 2.1 Members are asked to adopt the attached revised SPD1.

List of Background Papers:-

- Supplementary Planning Document 1: Open Space, Sport and Recreation in New Housing Development (February 2012)
- Bury Unitary Development Plan
- National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)
- National Planning Practice Guidance (March 2014) – Section on 'Planning Obligations' recently updated on 28 November 2014.

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SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT 1

Open Space, Sport and Recreation Provision in New Housing Development

ADOPTED – JUNE 2015



This Supplementary Planning Document is aimed at developers and providers of new housing areas and the contents are as follows:

- Pre-text
- Introduction
- Context
- Advice
- Further advice
- Glossary
- Appendices
 - Saved Unitary Development Plan Policy RT2/2 (Appendix 1)
 - Off-site standard charge for 10-50 dwellings (Appendix 2)
 - Viability appraisal methodology (Appendix 3)

PRE-TEXT

This Supplementary Planning Document 1 (SPD1) is designed to provide more detailed guidance on the Council's approach to the provision and enhancement of open space, sport and recreational facilities as part of new housing developments. It has been prepared taking into account:

- Saved Policy RT2/2 of the Bury Unitary Development Plan;
- The National Planning Policy Framework;
- The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended);
- Evidence within Bury's Greenspace Audit and Strategy; and
- National Planning Practice Guidance.

The SPD was the subject of a 4-week consultation period from 20 February to 20 March 2015. The representations received during this consultation have been considered and changes have been made where appropriate. The Cabinet Member for Resources and Regulation resolved to adopt SPD1 on 10 June 2015. The adopted SPD1 supersedes guidance in the Council's former SPD1 (February 2012).

The guidance contained within this document will be used by the Council's Development Management team as one of a number of considerations in the determination of applications for residential development.

Applicants are therefore strongly advised to have regard to this SPD when preparing applications for residential development within the Borough and are also encouraged, prior to the submission of applications, to make an appointment with a case officer who can provide pre-application advice including guidance on the implementation of this SPD. Please note that pre-application discussions for this type of development will involve a charge. Further information is available on the Council's website at <http://www.bury.gov.uk/4603>.

1.0 - INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This SPD provides advice in relation to developer contributions towards the provision, enhancement and maintenance of open spaces in Bury. It is supplementary to saved Policy RT2/2 of the Bury Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and takes account of the National Planning Policy Framework's (NPPF) approach to open space, sport and recreation. The context for the SPD continues to evolve and therefore also takes account of latest evidence in Bury's Greenspace Audit and Strategy (February 2015), the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 as amended (CIL Regulations) and the national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) on planning obligations.
- 1.2 Opportunities to access high quality open space can have a major influence on people's quality of life. It is not just about providing places for people to walk the dog or enjoy an informal kick about, high quality open spaces and sports and recreational facilities can help to ensure that Bury is a place where people want to live and can contribute towards:
- Regenerating deprived areas;
 - Providing wildlife habitats;
 - Adaptation to climate change by improving air quality and cooling;
 - Promoting health and well-being by providing opportunities for exercise, leisure and relaxation;
 - Offering learning opportunities, for example about biodiversity.
- 1.3 New housing development usually leads to an increased local population and this can in turn, result in increased demand and additional pressure on existing open space, sport and recreation facilities. It is essential, therefore, that developers of new housing make an appropriate contribution towards the provision or enhancement of open space, sport and recreation in order to meet the needs of the prospective residents and avoid the deterioration of existing assets.
- 1.4 In terms of 'open, space sport and recreation' facilities, this SPD is referring to the typologies¹ identified in the Council's Greenspace Audit and Strategy² which have set provision standards, including:
- Parks and gardens;
 - Natural and semi-natural greenspace;
 - Outdoor sports;
 - Amenity greenspace;
 - Provision for children and young people; and
 - Allotments.
- 1.5 This SPD sets out the following:
- The context against which this SPD has been developed;

¹ 'Typology' is defined in the glossary.

² Bury Greenspace Audit and Strategy, February 2015.

- The Council's approach to the scale of housing development where provision will need to be made and the circumstances where provision should be made off-site (via a one-off payment) or, where applicable, on-site provision (through the creation of new open space);
- Advice on the level of payment required for off-site contributions;
- Guidance on the design and maintenance of open space, sport and recreation;
- Guidelines on Section 106 obligations, viability and requirements for specific types of development such as specialised accommodation.

2.0 - CONTEXT

- 2.1 Saved Policy RT2/2 of the Bury UDP requires all proposals for new housing consisting of 10 units or more to make provision for the recreational needs of the prospective residents. The policy guidelines vary according to the size of the development:
- Larger residential developments (i.e. 50 or more units), are required to make provision for recreation, either within or adjacent to the site.
 - Smaller residential developments (i.e. 10 to 49 units), the developer may alternatively, by negotiation, provide a one-off payment to the Council via a Section 106 agreement for the upgrading of an existing public open space or the implementation of an outstanding recreation allocation in the nearby area.
- 2.2 National guidance in paragraph 73 of the NPPF requires councils to undertake robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sport and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. The Council has undertaken such an assessment and Bury's Greenspace Audit and Strategy compares the current provision of open space with recommended provision standards for quantity, quality and accessibility. The findings demonstrate that currently all areas of the Borough are deficient in all typologies of open space, whether that be measured in terms of quantity, quality or accessibility.
- 2.3 Planning obligations are required to follow the statutory requirements under the CIL Regulations, the NPPF and the advice on Planning Obligations within the PPG. There are three tests which govern the use of planning obligations, and these state that planning obligations must be:
- Necessary to make the proposed development acceptable in planning terms;
 - Directly related to the proposed development; and
 - Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development.

- 2.4 In November 2014, the Government produced additional guidance in the PPG to clarify that contributions for tariff-style obligations should not be sought from developments of 10 units or less and which have a maximum combined floorspace of no more than 1,000 square metres. By virtue of the evidence which has been compiled, it is considered that the SPD complies with all of the above tests and associated guidance. Further information on planning obligations in the context of this SPD is available in Section 4.
- 2.5 The principle of securing provision for open space, sport and recreation in conjunction with new housing development is established through saved Policy RT2/2. However, more recent Government policy and guidance as well as up-to-date evidence within the Bury Greenspace Audit and Strategy have informed a different approach in terms of the Policy's thresholds for requiring on-site and off-site provision. Section 3 of the SPD sets this out in more detail.

3.0 – ADVICE

Overview of requirements

The Council's priority is to seek off-site contributions towards the provision or enhancement of existing open space, sport and recreation facilities.

If the housing development involves 10 dwellings with a maximum combined floorspace of more than 1,000 square metres or 11 dwellings and above (regardless of floorspace):

- You will be required to make off-site provision by way of a one-off payment.
- The amount payable can be calculated using the matrix in Appendix 2 or the online calculator at: <http://www.bury.gov.uk/7281>³.

The Council will only consider on-site provision in exceptional circumstances as set out later in this section. However, should circumstances exist whereby on-site provision would be a preferable option:

- You will be required to make provision of a high qualitative standard.
- You will be required to make a commuted sum payment to cover the costs of future maintenance if you intend for this provision to be managed and maintained by the Council.

³ Please note the matrix in Appendix 2 should only be used in the event of the proposal totalling under 85 dwellings. The online calculator can be used for any size of development.

Development thresholds

- 3.1 Under UDP Policy RT2/2, developers of new housing comprising 10 dwellings, irrespective of floorspace, would be required to make provision for the open, space, sport and recreational needs of the prospective residents.
- 3.2 However, this threshold has been superseded by Government advice on planning obligations which was added to the PPG in November 2014 (see Section 2). This SPD therefore reflects the development threshold in the PPG by requiring such provision from **developments of new housing comprising 10 dwellings with a maximum combined floorspace of more than 1,000 square metres⁴ and developments of 11 dwellings and above (regardless of floorspace).**

Off-site provision

- 3.3 Open space, sport and recreational facilities will only fulfil their purpose and meet people's needs if they are of a sufficiently high standard to encourage people to use them. This is reflected in the NPPF which states that access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities.
- 3.4 Of particular concern, therefore, is the conclusion from the Greenspace Audit and Strategy that the quality of existing facilities is below the required standards for much of the Borough. Such facilities may be inadequate to provide for the needs of new development and an increase in population can place additional pressure on them. The Council's priority is to address qualitative issues and improve the usability and capacity of existing open space, sport and recreation facilities rather than to necessarily add quantity.
- 3.5 As such, developers of new housing that meets the thresholds identified above will normally be required to make a one-off contribution based on a standard charge per dwelling and the Council's priority will be to use monies to implement qualitative improvements to existing open space, sport and recreation facilities.
- 3.6 The standard charge required for each dwelling type is set out in Table 2 and incorporate the household size figures from the 2011 Census. These charges will be linked to the RICS Building Cost Information Service Tender Price Index and revised annually, in order to take account of inflation. All financial contributions will be index linked (using the Retail Prices Index: all items) from the date of the Section 106 Agreement to the date of payment.

⁴ The majority of developments involving detached, semi-detached and terraced properties are likely to exceed the relatively small threshold of 1,000 square metres and therefore off-site contributions would be required under this SPD.

Table 2: Costs per dwelling type

Dwelling type	Standard charge per dwelling (£)	Charge for sheltered housing schemes (£) ⁵
Detached	2925.54	2852.76
Semi-detached	2821.06	2744.70
Terraced	2564.18	2496.16
Flat	1561.95	1545.24

3.7 In order to make it easier to calculate the sum that would be required for any development proposal there are two simplified methods for calculating the off-site contribution required. A 'ready-reckoner' table is included at Appendix 2 for developments of 10 to 50 dwellings.

3.8 Alternatively, and for developments of all sizes, users are directed to the online calculator on the Council's website at <http://www.bury.gov.uk/7281> to calculate the required contributions.

Example of calculating the contribution required using Table 2

For a development comprising 8 detached, 12 semi-detached and 10 terraced dwellings:

8 detached = 8 x £2,925.54 = £23,404.32
 12 semi-detached = 12 x £2,821.06 = £33,852.72
 10 terraced = 10 x £2,564.18 = £25,641.80

Total contribution = £82,898.84

On-site provision

3.9 As specified previously, in requiring contributions towards open space, sport and recreation, the Council's priority is to secure these off-site.

On-site provision will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and where justified by the individual merits of a site.

3.10 For example, on-site provision may be considered appropriate on sites that are within an area that is identified in the Greenspace Audit and Strategy as suffering a significant or major quantitative deficiency of open space, or where on-site provision would be consistent with the Council's priorities for alleviating demand pressures e.g. allotment waiting lists.

3.11 The Council may also consider proposals for on-site provision where it would clearly assist in improving connectivity with other areas of greenspace or corridors or where it would serve a dual purpose in creating an opportunity for the provision of sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS).

⁵ The figures in this column can be used to calculate the off-site contribution required per dwelling type for a sheltered housing (category C3 scheme) should the play provision element of the standard charge be waived (see Section 4).

- 3.12 However, in all cases, on-site provision must fulfil its purpose, be useable and be consistent with the Council's minimum acceptable site sizes⁶.
- 3.13 For the avoidance of doubt, the provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities needs to be publicly accessible. Therefore, any private and where applicable, shared garden areas, affiliated to any new dwellings shall not constitute open space for the purposes of this SPD. Furthermore, the provision of sites or corridors that make up the on-site offer must be of a suitable size to fulfil the recreational function required.
- 3.14 It is for the developer to make provision for future maintenance. It should not be assumed the Council will adopt the land, although if this is the case then a developer will need to enter into negotiations with the Council to address issues of future site maintenance costs and the transfer of the land to the Council. Prior to adoption the Council will seek a 25 year commuted sum to cover the cost of maintenance.

4.0 - FURTHER ADVICE

Spending developer contributions

- 4.1 As highlighted in Section 3, the Council's priority is to seek off-site contributions towards improving the quality of existing open space, sport and recreation facilities. These contributions will be secured via a Section 106 Agreement and will be spent in accordance with the three tests set out in the CIL Regulations. Monies will be directed towards addressing the issues identified in the Greenspace Audit and Strategy, and towards other existing facilities requiring investment as necessary according to Council priorities⁷.
- 4.2 As of April 2015, the CIL Regulations and supporting advice in the PPG impose a limit on the pooling of developer contributions from planning obligations towards infrastructure such as recreation provision. These restrictions prevent obligations being entered into that will result in the pooling of more than five separate planning obligations for a project or type of infrastructure. Section 106 Agreements will need to identify the site-specific project(s) to be the recipient of the contribution prior to the signing of the Agreement and therefore officers will identify a suitable project during the life of the application and particularly following validation.

⁶ The size of space required would depend on the population generated by the development and the quantitative provision standards for open space set by the Greenspace Audit and Strategy.

⁷ In addition to acquisition, the laying out of open space or purchasing new equipment, contributions may facilitate improved accessibility to an open space facility.

Section 106 planning obligations

- 4.3 Recreation contributions are planning obligations secured through Section 106 Agreements or Unilateral Undertakings.
- 4.4 At the validation stage of a planning application for residential development which is required by this SPD to provide a recreational contribution, each application shall be accompanied with an up-to-date title plan and title document relating to the land the subject of the application as well as a completed Section 106 proforma. The proforma requires the applicant to provide details of, for example, the legal advisor acting for the applicant and acknowledge that legal, sealing and monitoring fees shall be payable as part of the Section 106 agreement.
- 4.5 When an application is validated and the processing of the application begins, the Council will write to the legal advisor and provide a draft Section 106 Agreement relating to the application. The applicant and professional advisors shall progress the matter with due diligence and use all reasonable endeavours to procure the completion of the Section 106 Planning Agreement within the processing time of the application.
- 4.6 It should be noted that the signing of the Section 106 planning obligation by the applicant does not pre-dispose the Council to approve the application. Additionally, the refusal to enter in to the Section 106 planning obligation may result in the application proposals being refused.
- 4.7 Fees will be payable towards legal costs and monitoring, although this will be dependent on the scale and nature of the development involved.

Viability

- 4.8 The Council will take into account national planning policy in giving careful attention to viability and costs in plan-making and decision-taking. Should an applicant argue against the provisions of this SPD on the grounds of viability, the Council will require a full viability appraisal which satisfactorily demonstrates that such provisions would render a scheme unviable. This should be carried out on the basis of a 'residual land valuation' and Appendix 3 sets out the minimum amount of information that should be included within an appraisal.
- 4.9 In particular it is recognised that affordable housing schemes delivered by Housing Associations or Registered Providers are often dependent on external funding and planning obligations can often threaten their viability. Such schemes will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will take account of the full scale of developer contributions required.
- 4.10 Applicants should be aware that negotiations on recreation provision will be on the basis that an applicant has bought a site or is purchasing a site at a price that has taken account of all known constraints and planning policy requirements, including recreation provision.

Applicants looking to negotiate the recreation provision required will need to demonstrate this, together with the particular site circumstances that would warrant a reduced provision. Such information may need to be independently assessed and where this is the case, the reasonable costs for doing so will be borne by the applicant.

Specialised accommodation

- 4.11 Nursing homes, or category C2 schemes will cater for people who are in need of attentive care and whose physical mobility is likely to be restricted. Such uses would not place a significant demand upon the need to provide new formal recreational facilities, although on-site amenity land or communal space will be required as part of the development, such as through landscaping or the provision of benches.
- 4.12 Sheltered housing schemes (Category C3) are unlikely to generate demand for a play area or young people's area, and therefore the play provision element of the standard charge can be waived for these schemes⁸. Should viability be raised as an issue to the satisfaction of the Council (see 'Viability'), the Council may accept the provision of on-site amenity space for residents similar to that required for category C2 schemes (see above) to meet the requirements of the SPD depending on the circumstances of the application.

Redevelopment sites

- 4.13 Applications for redevelopment sites (i.e. where existing housing is to be demolished and replaced with new housing) will be subject to an assessment of the net gain in dwellings resulting from the development. In cases where there the net gain is less than 10 dwellings no provision for recreation will be required.

Quality of open spaces

- 4.14 Where it is considered appropriate for a developer to make on-site provision, the Council will expect the quality of that provision to be of the highest standard using materials that enable the facility to be safe, well-maintained and accessible to all. The Borough's 12 Green Flag-accredited parks have set the benchmark, and the Council has thus built up a reputation for high standards of recreational space.
- 4.15 In respect of playing pitches, the Council will seek to achieve the Performance Quality Standards set by Sport England guidance as a minimum.

⁸ See Table 2 in Section 3 for the revised charge for sheltered housing.

GLOSSARY

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL): A new levy that local authorities in England and Wales can choose to charge on new developments in their area. The money can be used to support development by funding infrastructure that the Council, local community and neighbourhoods want – for example park improvements or a new health centre.

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): Supplementary Planning Documents provide supplementary information about the policies in Local Plans. They do not form part of the development plan and are not subject to independent examination.

Typology: This is a term used in government guidance to denote a type of open space sport or recreational facility e.g. allotments, parks and gardens.

Unitary Development Plan (UDP): A single tier document to replace previously prepared structure plans and local plans (under previous statute), and produced by metropolitan districts to set out detailed policies and proposals for the use of land.

APPENDIX 1 – SAVED UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICY RT2/2

RT2/2 Recreation Provision in New Housing Development

Developers of new housing on sites of 10 or more dwellings will be expected to provide for the recreational needs of the prospective residents, by providing and laying out recreational open space within or adjacent to the development, equivalent to a standard of 2.4 hectares per 1,000 population. Development proposals will be assessed and considered in accordance with the following criteria:

- (a) For larger developments, generally 50 or more dwellings, such provision would normally be expected to be by the allocation of land in accordance with the above standard. Provision should, wherever possible, be in a single plot, with a minimum site size of 0.4 hectares;
- (b) For smaller developments, generally those of 10 to 49 dwellings (inclusive), the developer may alternatively, by negotiation, provide a commuted sum to the Council for the equivalent enhancement of public open space or the implementation of an outstanding recreation allocation in the nearby area;
- (c) In the case of phased developments on adjacent sites, the total amount of recreational open space to be provided shall, whenever possible, be determined at the earliest application stage, in accordance with the above standard. Again, provision should be in a single plot, and laid out in accordance with a phasing programme to the satisfaction of the local planning authority.

Justification

New housing developments can put additional pressure on existing public recreation facilities, particularly in those areas where a shortfall of provision already exists. The analysis of the Borough's Recreation Survey (1989) has shown that Prestwich and Whitefield have the lowest levels of existing provision and it is in these areas that the Council will be most concerned to ensure that additional provision is secured, though this is not to say that local deficiencies do not exist elsewhere. Generally a decision as to whether or not recreation provision will need to be made within a development shall be made after taking the local circumstances into consideration.

The exact location, size and type of open space to be provided will be subject to an agreement, between the local authority and the developer, under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Provision should normally be made as a single plot, in a location which will encourage its use. In some cases it may be more appropriate for developers to finance the refurbishment of nearby play spaces or the implementation of an outstanding recreation allocation.

Also, whilst it will not be a requirement of planning consent, it should be noted for information that for recreation provision made under this policy which is to be maintained by the Council, a 20 year commuted sum for maintenance will be sought by the Council's Competitive Services Department through negotiation.

APPENDIX 2 – OFF-SITE STANDARD CHARGE FOR 10-50 DWELLINGS

Please note the following matrix should only be used in the event of the proposal totalling between 10 and 50 dwellings⁹.

The online calculator can be used for any size of development and can be accessed at <http://www.bury.gov.uk/7281>.

No. of dwellings	Type of dwelling			
	Detached	Semi-detached	Terraced	Flat
1	£2,925.54	£2,821.06	£2,564.18	£1,561.95
2	£5,851.08	£5,642.12	£5,128.36	£3,123.90
3	£8,776.62	£8,463.18	£7,692.54	£4,685.85
4	£11,702.16	£11,284.24	£10,256.72	£6,247.80
5	£14,627.70	£14,105.30	£12,820.90	£7,809.75
6	£17,553.24	£16,926.36	£15,385.08	£9,371.70
7	£20,478.78	£19,747.42	£17,949.26	£10,933.65
8	£23,404.32	£22,568.48	£20,513.44	£12,495.60
9	£26,329.86	£25,389.54	£23,077.62	£14,057.55
10	£29,255.40	£28,210.60	£25,641.80	£15,619.50
11	£32,180.94	£31,031.66	£28,205.98	£17,181.45
12	£35,106.48	£33,852.72	£30,770.16	£18,743.40
13	£38,032.02	£36,673.78	£33,334.34	£20,305.35
14	£40,957.56	£39,494.84	£35,898.52	£21,867.30
15	£43,883.10	£42,315.90	£38,462.70	£23,429.25
16	£46,808.64	£45,136.96	£41,026.88	£24,991.20
17	£49,734.18	£47,958.02	£43,591.06	£26,553.15
18	£52,659.72	£50,779.08	£46,155.24	£28,115.10
19	£55,585.26	£53,600.14	£48,719.42	£29,677.05
20	£58,510.80	£56,421.20	£51,283.60	£31,239.00
21	£61,436.34	£59,242.26	£53,847.78	£32,800.95
22	£64,361.88	£62,063.32	£56,411.96	£34,362.90
23	£67,287.42	£64,884.38	£58,976.14	£35,924.85
24	£70,212.96	£67,705.44	£61,540.32	£37,486.80
25	£73,138.50	£70,526.50	£64,104.50	£39,048.75
26	£76,064.04	£73,347.56	£66,668.68	£40,610.70
27	£78,989.58	£76,168.62	£69,232.86	£42,172.65
28	£81,915.12	£78,989.68	£71,797.04	£43,734.60
29	£84,840.66	£81,810.74	£74,361.22	£45,296.55
30	£87,766.20	£84,631.80	£76,925.40	£46,858.50
31	£90,691.74	£87,452.86	£79,489.58	£48,420.45
32	£93,617.28	£90,273.92	£82,053.76	£49,982.40
33	£96,542.82	£93,094.98	£84,617.94	£51,544.35
34	£99,468.36	£95,916.04	£87,182.12	£53,106.30
35	£102,393.90	£98,737.10	£89,746.30	£54,668.25
36	£105,319.44	£101,558.16	£92,310.48	£56,230.20

⁹ In the case of developments of 10 dwellings, where the maximum combined floorspace is more than 1,000 square metres.

<i>No. of dwellings</i>	<i>Type of dwelling</i>			
	<i>Detached</i>	<i>Semi-detached</i>	<i>Terraced</i>	<i>Flat</i>
37	£108,244.98	£104,379.22	£94,874.66	£57,792.15
38	£111,170.52	£107,200.28	£97,438.84	£59,354.10
39	£114,096.06	£110,021.34	£100,003.02	£60,916.05
40	£117,021.60	£112,842.40	£102,567.20	£62,478.00
41	£119,947.14	£115,663.46	£105,131.38	£64,039.95
42	£122,872.68	£118,484.52	£107,695.56	£65,601.90
43	£125,798.22	£121,305.58	£110,259.74	£67,163.85
44	£128,723.76	£124,126.64	£112,823.92	£68,725.80
45	£131,649.30	£126,947.70	£115,388.10	£70,287.75
46	£134,574.84	£129,768.76	£117,952.28	£71,849.70
47	£137,500.38	£132,589.82	£120,516.46	£73,411.65
48	£140,425.92	£135,410.88	£123,080.64	£74,973.60
49	£143,351.46	£138,231.94	£125,644.82	£76,535.55
50	£146,277.00	£141,053.00	£128,209.00	£78,097.50

APPENDIX 3 – VIABILITY APPRAISAL METHODOLOGY

The following sets out the minimum requirements the Council would expect from applicants when submitting a viability appraisal.

Key Parameters	Guidance
Gross Development Value (GDV)	<p>This is the estimated amount that is anticipated to be received by selling or renting all the properties on a site (e.g. if it is proposed to build a scheme of 50 properties and each unit will be sold at £120,000, this would give a GDV of £6m).</p> <p>This information should be compiled and evidenced through direct comparables (i.e. selling prices of similar sized properties with similar specifications in the vicinity and/or local rental values etc).</p> <p>It should also include any capitalised value/income that is expected to be accrued through ground rents.</p>
Base Development Costs	<p>RICS BCIS are the best indicator of likely development costs for residential schemes. These are updated on a regular basis and are reflective of the average cost of developing sites across regions. The viability assessment should rebase the BCIS information to Bury's locality and the particular type of development proposed.</p> <p>It is the norm for the 'median' cost to be used in viability assessments and the Council would expect this figure to be used. If higher build costs are used this would suggest that the units are built to a higher specification and could therefore command a higher sales value.</p>
Abnormal Costs	<p>No two sites are the same and costs associated with developing out a site will be different for each scheme. Some sites will have 'abnormal' build costs relating to issues such as remediation, flood risk measures, abnormal foundations etc. Any abnormal costs should be fully evidenced in the viability assessment.</p> <p>However, as set out in the main body of this SPD, it is important to note that land should be bought at a price that takes full account of site constraints including the abnormal costs of developing a site. Developers will need to build these costs into the price that they offer or pay for a site.</p>

	<p>Likewise, landowners should not have an unrealistic aspiration as to the value of their land if it has significant abnormal costs (i.e. it will need to be appreciated that a developer may need to incur abnormal development costs to bring the site forward that this is likely to affect the value of the land).</p> <p>Planning policy requirements will not be relaxed simply on the basis that a landowner is not prepared to reduce the value of their land to reflect constraints or because a developer has chosen to pay too much for a site without taking full account of development costs. It is advisable, therefore, that offers made for sites should be subject to appropriate site investigations to determine ground conditions and any likely abnormal costs.</p>
Contingency Costs	It is common for viability assessments to set aside an allowance for contingencies (e.g. to cover unforeseen development circumstances or rise in materials etc). 5% of build costs is generally the norm attributed to this but this can vary.
Development Fees	It is common for viability assessments to include a cost for professional fees, which can vary dependant on individual schemes. In Bury's experience, fees are normally in the region of 7% of build costs.
Finance Costs	It is common for viability assessments to include a cost for borrowing money (i.e. interest payments). These can vary for a number of reasons, including the interest rates set by the Bank of England. In Bury's experience, finance costs in the current market are around 5% of build costs but this will depend on a range of factors, including the nature of the scheme and the developer.
Marketing Costs	It is common for viability assessments to include a cost for the marketing of properties. Again these costs vary depending on the nature of a scheme but are likely to be in the region of 3% of the GDV.
Planning Obligations	<p>In addition to the requirements set out in this SPD, it is also Council policy to secure affordable housing on large residential developments. There may be other Section 106 payments also, including compensation for the loss of employment land, where a higher value use (such as residential) is proposed on employment land that is considered to be still suitable for employment use.</p> <p>The viability assessment will need to be submitted with all of these planning obligations (if and when</p>

	applicable) built into the costs of the scheme, to help identify the residual land value.
Profit Margins	<p>It is appreciated that different developers will have different business models and will seek different profit margins (which may vary according the site or type of development). Smaller developers may work to lower margins than larger house builders (e.g. 6/7% of GDV as opposed to around 15%). The margins sought largely depends on risk, with the greater the risk the greater the rate of return that will be sought.</p> <p>Consequently, there is no set profit margin that the Council stipulates should be included in an assessment. However, a profit margin of 17.5% is set out as a default margin in the Homes and Communities Agency viability toolkit and this is considered to be a reasonable return to include in a viability assessment.</p>
Residual Land Value	<p>The Residual Land Value (RLV) provides an indication of the value that a developer can pay to a landowner after taking account of all development costs (including profit margins) and subtracting this from the GDV.</p> <p>It is for the developer and the landowner to negotiate whether or not the RLV is sufficient to entice the landowner to sell.</p> <p>In addition to an agreed value (e.g. the RLV), some landowners may seek to enter into 'clawback' agreements, where they also receive further payment from the developer should the scheme prove to be more profitable than originally envisaged (e.g. if house prices increase significantly over the build period).</p> <p>In a similar vein, should there be any relaxation of policy requirements, the Council will seek to enter into a legal agreement to secure additional contributions should the actual costs and values differ from those initially presented as part of a planning application.</p>

The Bury Unitary Development Plan (UDP) was adopted in August 1997.

Supplementary Planning Documents have been produced in the form of Development Control Policy Guidance Notes to support the adopted UDP. These Notes give a more formal basis to advice which is given to applicants on a regular basis.

Any queries you may have regarding this Note or the Bury UDP in general should be directed to the Planning Policy and Projects team on 0161 253 5550.

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT 1

Open Space, Sport and Recreation Provision in New Housing Development

ADOPTION – JUNE 2015



STATEMENT OF CONSULTATION

JUNE 2015

CONTENTS

1. Introduction	2
2. Consultation Undertaken	2
3. Responses to Representations	4

Appendix 1 – Representations Received

1.0 - INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement supports the adopted Supplementary Planning Document 1 (SPD1) and has been prepared in order to meet the requirements of the Town and Country Planning Regulations 2012. Regulation 12 (a) requires that before a local authority adopts a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) a statement must be prepared setting out:
- The persons the local authority consulted when preparing the SPD;
 - A summary of the main issues raised by those persons; and
 - How those issues have been addressed in the SPD.
- 1.2 This statement details the internal consultation undertaken during the production of the SPD prior to formal consultation, the representations made during the February-March 2015 consultation period and sets out how the Council has taken on board the comments made in the SPD to be adopted.

2.0 - CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

- 2.1 SPD1 has been subject to a 4-week consultation period which took place from 20 February 2015 and 20 March 2015.
- 2.2 The Council considers that the requirements of the Council's Statement of Community Involvement and Regulation 12 of the Town and Country Planning Regulations 2012 were met for the public consultation. More details are provided below.

Internal consultation (December 2014/January 2015)

- 2.3 Officers from Planning Policy and Projects have worked closely with colleagues from Development Management, Leisure Services and Legal Services in preparing the revised draft version. The main issues that were raised through internal consultation and the changes that have been made to the document as a result, are outlined below.

Issue	Council Response
Move advice on making an appointment with a case officer to 'Pre-text' section.	Change made.
Make reference in the 'Pre-text' section to pre-application charging and include details of the website where applicants can find out more.	Information added.
Refer to the six typologies of open space, sport and recreation from the Greenspace Audit and Strategy within the Introduction.	Information added.
Form a new 'Context' section to set out the recent changes to Regulations and guidance which have influenced the approach taken in the SPD.	Information added.
Add in references to the priority order of the SPD to seek off-site contributions as a matter of principle.	Information added.

Issue	Council Response
Outline that on-site provision will only be considered in exceptional circumstances such as where provision would aid requirements for sustainable drainage systems.	Change made.
Add in further advice on viability and include a supporting appendix which sets out the information expected from applicants when completing a Viability Appraisal.	Information added.

Screening consultation with statutory bodies

- 2.4 A Screening Statement, to determine whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) and an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) would be required for the draft SPD was sent to the statutory consultees on Wednesday 14th January 2015. Responses were received from English Heritage and Natural England, both of whom agreed with the Council that the above assessments would not be required to accompany the SPD.

Public consultation

- 2.5 The following documents were made available at the Planning Reception, Bury Town Hall and selected public libraries during normal opening hours and on the Council's website between Friday 20th February 2015 and Friday 20th March 2015:
- Draft SPD1
 - SEA Statement
 - Consultation Statement
 - SPD matters
- 2.6 Letters and emails were sent out to statutory consultees (Natural England, Environment Agency, English Heritage) and to those consultees on the Council's consultation database that were considered appropriate.
- 2.7 The Council's Planning Services social media accounts on Twitter and Facebook were also used to post campaign 'tweets' and posts which helped to raise awareness of the document and how they could read it and make comments.

3.0 – RESPONSES TO REPRESENTATIONS

- 3.1 A total of 10 formal representations were made on the Consultation Draft of SPD1. Table 1 shows details of the respondents.

Table 1: Consultation Draft respondents

Name	Organisation
Sarah Stansfield	Oldham Council
David Holland	Arcon Housing Association
Gillian Laybourn	English Heritage
Janet Baguley	Natural England
Joanne Miles	Department of Health
Andy Frost	Frost Planning on behalf of Chandos Remediation and The Brickworks (Bury) Ltd
Andy Frost	Frost Planning on behalf of Bellway Homes
Paul Daly	Sport England
Alan Hubbard	National Trust
Simon Artiss	Barratt Homes

- 3.2 All comments received on the Consultation Draft of SPD1 were considered and amendments and revisions were made where considered appropriate. Appendix 1 details the individual representations made. There was general support for the SPD and its content with some suggested minor amendments to the wording, a number of which have been incorporated within the final document. Table 2 below provides a summary of the issues raised and the Council's response to them:

Table 2: What main issues were raised and how were they addressed?

Key issues	Council's response
Include reference to spending on safe and secure access to open spaces as possible improvements, especially for children.	Comments noted, agree with this change.
The residual land value methodology needs to be tested against relevant benchmarks to establish a market acceptable level of return for the developer and landowner. Any viability appraisals should accord with the NPPF and RICS guidance.	Comments noted. There is no agreed approach towards assessing viability and the use of assumptions, however the Council have prepared the methodology using all relevant guidance available.
The Council's assessment of needs for open space, sport and recreation does not fully comply with the NPPF as the Playing Pitch Strategy is out-of-date and the evidence uses standards which is not in line with up-to-date guidance from Sport England.	Comments noted, no change required. The evidence was prepared using the most up-to-date guidance available at the time of the audit and future reviews will take account of new guidance.
Suggestion of using performance quality standards for playing pitches.	Comments noted, agree with this change.

Key issues	Council's response
Lack of clarity on how the SPD will secure contributions towards new green infrastructure, for both Council-owned and private sites, given the focus on existing provision.	Comments noted, no change required. The Council recently updated the Greenspace Strategy and this was published in February 2015. Due to increasing pressure on Council budgets, priorities have shifted towards alleviating the most significant quantitative deficiencies and on improving those sites with urgent need for investment.
Information from the Greenspace Audit and Strategy on quantity and quality should be incorporated within the SPD.	Comments noted, no change required. Information from the Greenspace Audit and Strategy was not included within the document in the interest of brevity. The evidence is referred to within the SPD and is available on the Council's website.
The sums in Appendix 2 have not been viability-tested.	Comments noted, no change required. Development viability is tested on a site-by-site basis using viability appraisal when an application is submitted to the Council. Section 4 and Appendix 3 of the SPD provide further information to guide this process.

Further changes made post-consultation

- 3.3 The following changes have been made to SPD1 following the public consultation and prior to adoption:

Table 3: Post-consultation changes

Change	Commentary
Section 4: Added new footnote 7 to highlight that contributions may be directed towards improving accessibility to an open space.	In response to the representation from ARCON.
Section 4: Added reference to Sport England's Performance Quality Standards when assessing the quality of playing pitches.	In response to the representation from Sport England.
Appendix 2: Figures for 1-9 units added.	To aid with scenarios where a development of 10 dwellings or above contains less than 10 units of a particular house type.

APPENDIX 1

REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

This report sets out the comments received as representations during the consultation in February / March 2015 on the revised SPD1.

REF NO: 400

ARCON HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD

Representation:

Thanks for letting us read and comment on the consultation document. The document is very comprehensive and something that this organisation fully supports. The only comment I would add is that we would like to see included in the spend of the contributions is that in addition to spending on open space, sport and recreation facilities it also includes for safe and secure access to such facilities especially for children. For example there may be a park close to a new development but is across a busy road so some form of safe access, say via a bridge, should also be in the range of possible improvements.

REF NO: 626

Historic England

Representation:

Draft SPD1: Open Space, Sport and Recreation Provision in New Housing Development SPD

Thank you for consulting English Heritage on the above document. At this stage we have no comments to make on its content.

Draft SPD1: Open Space, Sport and Recreation Provision in New housing Development Screening Statement

Thank you for your email dated 20th February 2015 regarding the proposed SEA Screening statement.

In terms of our area of interest, we would concur with your assessment that the document is unlikely to result in any significant environmental effects and will simply provide additional guidance on existing policies which have already been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal. As a result, we would endorse the conclusions that it is not necessary to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the document.

If you have any queries about this matter or would like to discuss anything further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

REF NO: 640

SPORT ENGLAND

Representation:

Thank you for consulting Sport England on the above.

The need to update the existing SPD is recognised given that it supports an UDP that was adopted in 1997, and since that time national planning policy and legislation has continued to evolve. It is also recognised that an SPD can only expand upon / support existing development plan policy. As a result, the scope and extent of amendments to the SPD is somewhat restricted.

Our comments follow:

Paragraph 1.3

Sport England supports the content of this paragraph.

Paragraph 2.2

This paragraph correctly states that para 73 of the NPPF requires councils to undertake robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sport and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. However, we would not agree that the Council's assessment for Bury fully complies with paragraph 73. Sport England has developed guidance on assessing needs and opportunities for indoor and outdoor sports facilities to support the NPPF and this is referenced by National Planning Practice Guidance.

It is recognised that Bury's most recent work on open space, sport and recreation commenced prior to the publication of the Sport England guidance. There are two points that are pertinent to this particular consultation, however. The first is that the Bury's playing pitch strategy (PPS) is regarded by us as being out of date. The PPS was produced in 2011 and the assessment itself is based upon data from 2010. The 'Towards A Level Playing Field' methodology it followed recommended that the data underpinning the assessment was refreshed every two years. Sport England's 'Fit for Purpose Framework' for PPSs using that methodology regards a PPS as being out of date if the data and consultation on which the strategy is based is three years old. Indeed, Bury's own PPS includes an objective to refresh and update the databases containing the assessment data on a season by season basis. This does not appear to have happened. The PPS strategy document on Bury Council's website has a cover which states the document was updated in 2015. However, the content appears largely unchanged from the 2011 version. Moreover, the playing pitch assessment document itself has not been updated and it contains findings based mainly drawn from data relating to the 2009/10 season.

The second point relates to the use of standards. Sport England no longer advocates the use of local standards in relation to assessing or meeting needs for sports facilities. Neither our current playing pitch strategy guidance ('Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance - An approach to developing and delivering a playing pitch strategy') or our assessing needs and opportunities guidance ('Assessing needs and opportunities guide for indoor and outdoor sports facilities - How to undertake and apply needs assessments for sports facilities') includes the calculation of standards. Whilst previous national planning guidance (PPG17 and Companion Guide Guide) identified the need to adopt local standards, the National Planning Policy Framework is focussed on the delivery of specific facility needs. Our assessments therefore set out to identify specific geographic and / or individual facility needs. These can then be clearly set out in a list and taken forward in a strategy/policy document which identifies how best the needs and issues can be addressed and delivered.

The site by site and area by area Action Plan that results can also be linked to proposed housing developments. Part of the Action Plan will identify what improvements/new areas of playing field are needed to accommodate existing unmet demand and future growth. Indicative costs can then be attributed to each site which in turn could be linked to Planning Obligations to ensure contributions go to the right site in order to implement those improvements. Alternatively, the costed new provision / improvements can be used to inform the level of CIL contributions.

The guidance referred to can be found at:

<http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/planning-for-sport/planning-tools-and->

[guidance/playing-pitch-strategy-guidance/](#)

<http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/planning-for-sport/planning-tools-and-guidance/assessing-needs-and-opportunities-guidance/>

Local standards do not identify specific needs. Consequently, a strategy based on achieving a local standard will not address the needs. This can be illustrated using the current Greenspace Audit and Strategy (GAS). The GAS identifies a local standard for outdoor sport provision of 0.83ha per 1000 population. Bury East has an excess of outdoor sport provision based on the quantitative standard for outdoor sport in the GAS (Table 18). This crude standard suggests that in terms of quantity, Bury East has at least adequate provision. Appendix 5 shows local standards based on playing pitches, and Bury East has 0.88 ha of pitches per 1000 pop. Whilst no target standard is shown, this figure is the highest recorded by any township and again suggests a good level of provision.

Bury's playing pitch assessment paints a different picture, though. Leaving aside site specific issues such as pitches being overplayed, for Bury East the PPS identified that at peak times there was a current surplus of 18.5 senior football pitches, but a deficit of -15 junior football pitches and -5 mini football pitches. In addition, there was a deficit at peak time of more than -2 cricket pitches, a deficit of rugby union pitches etc. The GAS standard does not identify any of these sport specific issues (indeed, a single standard could not identify sport specific findings). As a result, the strategy element of the GAS cannot address the issues.

From our perspective, the main concern is that the use of standards will not ensure that the deficiencies relating to sports are correctly identified and addressed. There is also a risk that a developer will try and exploit differences in messages given by detailed findings from a playing pitch strategy and a local standard (eg by arguing a contribution is not necessary).

Para 3.14

The consideration of ongoing maintenance and management of greenspaces is important, especially in the context of continued reductions in local authority budgets. In the case of formal sports provision, inadequate maintenance will quickly result in facilities not being fit for purpose and them being unable to perform their function. Making explicit that developers will have to make provision for future maintenance is therefore supported.

Para 4.14

This paragraph refers to a quality benchmark for parks. Performance Quality Standards (PQS) have been developed to set minimum standards for playing pitches. These cover a range of objective measures (such as slope, evenness, grass cover, water infiltration rate etc.) and national governing bodies for sport have set minimum standards for community sport pitches to achieve. These could be referenced as a minimum quality standard for new pitches. Further information can be found in 'Natural Turf for Sport' which can be found at:

<http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/tools-guidance/design-and-cost-guidance/natural-turf-for-sport/>

Cost information

For information, Sport England produces capital and lifecycle costs for a range of sports facilities which indicate how much it costs to build and maintain them. This information may be of use in calculating the level of developer contribution. Information can be found at:

<http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/tools-guidance/design-and-cost-guidance/cost-guidance/>

I trust the above comments are of use. If you require any further information, please contact me.

REF NO: 646

Oldham Council

Representation:

Thank you for consulting us on Bury Council's Draft Open Space, Sport and Recreation Provision in New Housing Development SPD. Whilst we do not have any specific comments to make on the SPD we look forward to being consulted on further Planning Policy documents and to working together, along with other Greater Manchester Authorities, in the future.

REF NO: 690

NATURAL ENGLAND

Representation:

RE: SEA screening determination for the revised draft SPD1: Open Space, Sport and Recreation Provision in New Housing Development
Natural England have no further comments.

REF NO: 1546

NATIONAL TRUST

Representation:

Thank you for notifying National Trust of the above consultation.

Overall the up-dating of the SPD is supported and generally there is little that we would take issue with.

Our one concern continues to be the somewhat blinkered approach to the provision and management of green infrastructure across the Borough and in particular the role of partners of the Council in delivering and managing green space. In that context it is unclear how developer contributions will be distributed given that the main focus is now on up-grading and improving existing green spaces as opposed to entirely new provision. As noted in the Council's Greenspace Strategy of 2010 many residents of the Borough benefit from access to 'privately-owned' countryside and that its role in off-setting the demand for natural and semi-natural greenspace should not be under-estimated. The Strategy also identified some, albeit not necessarily all, of the issues affecting such areas, e.g. implementation of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan to, inter alia, facilitate access to the countryside, and the improvement of principal sites in the green infrastructure network. It is unclear from the text at paras 4.1 and 4.2 of the draft SPD how this will be achieved, particularly for non-Council owned sites. Clarification of how the proposed mechanisms will be utilised to secure improvements to other green infrastructure should be included in the SPD.

REF NO: 1644

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Representation:

Thank you for your letter of 19 February to the Department of Health about the Council's supplementary planning document. I have been asked to reply.

I have passed your correspondence to my colleagues in the Department's Estates team and they have advised that you may also wish to send your documents to the NHS Bury Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) for information, which is responsible for the commissioning of the majority of healthcare services in the area. The contact details are:

NHS Bury CCG
21 Silver Street
Bury BL9 0EN

REF NO: 5856

Barratt Manchester

Representation:

I hope the following comments assist re: Consultation Draft SPD 1 (February 2015):

1. First, to confirm that we are keen to build new homes in Bury on viable and attractive sites and seek to work with the LPA to achieve this;
2. The SPD supplements not only UDP Policy RT2/2 but also needs to be read within the context of UDP Policies RT1, RT3 and RT4 (if saved). Clearly these policies date back to 1997 and we therefore support the LPA's production of the Greenspace Audit and Strategy (February 2015);
3. We assume that that Strategy (especially Tables 2 and 3 of the Executive Summary) is a robust and up-to-date evidence base. It identifies sub-areas within Bury in terms of both quantity and quality of categories of open space. This nuanced data is material to the application of SPD1. It might be, for example, that a development could upgrade the quality of existing facilities off-site where local quality is a consideration. We therefore ask that SPD1 includes Tables 2 and 3 and makes clear that considerations of existing quality and quantity will inform planning decisions on a site by site basis;
4. Whilst all areas are deficient (Para 2.2 of SPD), the UDP acknowledges that it is not a realistic objective to reach level or above. Equally, cross-boundary cooperation on assessing supply and accessibility would give a fuller picture and we note the conurbation-wide Greater Manchester Spatial Framework. Conurbation wide, certain sport and recreation facilities will serve a wide population (eg. Cycle Velodrome) and this too may be material especially with good Metrolink connections (accessibility being one measurement of provision);
5. We support the principle of your priority of off-site contributions rather than on-site provision (Section 3) for all scales of development. Residential proposals with higher densities, as a consequence, should be supported and not resisted on the basis of density;
6. Para 3.13 - private gardens do, however, serve a purpose and should not simply be disregarded. Typically, a private garden reduces the need for public space relative to a scheme with no private play space;
7. 3.14 - we typically make Management Company provisions for on-site POS, either via Condition or S106;
8. 4.2 - these CIL provisions apply from 1st April and therefore S106 will need to be correctly worded;
9. 4.4 - we seek up-front agreement on the level of the fees referred to here, to control our costs;
10. Viability (4.8-4.10) - any such assessment to accord with NPPF and RICS guidance and typically BCIS is used as an acceptable standard. Viability still remains an issue for the industry and we support reference to it here;
11. Appendix 2 - the sums referred to have not been viability tested (see above). Furthermore, most schemes have a mix of house types;
12. Appendix 3 - we have undertaken many viability reports to industry-accepted standards (supported at appeal) and look to work with an LPA on that basis, using BCIS costs.

We ask that you consider the above when revising the Draft SPD1 prior to formal adoption.

REF NO: 6254

Frost Planning Ltd on behalf of Chandos Remediation and The Brickworks (Bury Ltd)

Representation:

On behalf of Chandos Remediation and The Brickworks (Bury) Ltd, and with advice from Grasscroft Development Solutions (GDS), please see our response below. We have extracted the relevant paragraphs and provided comments in red below each paragraph.

Viability

4.8 The Council will take into account national planning policy in giving careful attention to viability and costs in plan-making and decision taking. Should an applicant argue against the provisions of this SPD on the grounds of viability, the Council will require a full viability appraisal which satisfactorily demonstrates that such provisions would render a scheme unviable. This should be carried out on the basis of a 'residual land valuation' and Appendix 3 sets out the minimum amount of information that should be included within an appraisal.

Grasscroft Development Solutions (GDS) agree with the Authority's approach to adopt the 'residual land value' methodology. However, this approach in isolation can only work if tested against one, or a number of relevant benchmarks to establish a market acceptable level of return for both developer and land owner. Examples of this include benchmarking the residual land value against comparable residential land values; existing use value plus an uplift to incentivise the land owner to sell, or a market acceptable level of profit on Gross Development Value (GDV).

4.9 In particular it is recognised that affordable housing schemes delivered by Housing Associations or Registered Providers are often dependent on external funding and planning obligations can often threaten their viability. Such schemes will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will take account of the full scale of developer contributions required.

4.10 Applicants should be aware that negotiations on recreation provision will be on the basis that an applicant has bought a site or is purchasing a site at a price that has taken account of all known constraints and planning policy requirements, including recreation provision. Applicants looking to negotiate the recreation provision required will need to demonstrate this, together with the particular site circumstances that would warrant a reduced provision. Such information may need to be independently assessed and where this is the case, the reasonable costs for doing so will be borne by the applicant.

The Authority's inference that the developer and / or landowner should reduce their profit margin and / or site value, below an acceptable market level to factor in full policy requirements is contrary to Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPF) and RICS Guidance Note: Financial Viability in Planning.

The Authority's draft wording disregards that a land owner and developer should both make a competitive return.

Paragraph 173 of the NPPF states.. .

'To ensure viability, the costs of any requirement likely to be applied to development, such as requirements for affordable housing, standards, infrastructure contributions or other requirements should, when taking into account the normal cost of development and mitigation, provide competitive returns to a willing land owner and willing developer to enable the development to be deliverable.'

The PPG makes specific reference to a land owner's competitive return in Paragraph 24 .. .

‘A competitive return for the land owner is the price at which a reasonable land owner would be willing to sell their land for the development. The price will need to provide an incentive for the land owner to sell in comparison with the other options available. Those options may include the current use value of the land or its value for a realistic alternative use that complies with planning policy.’

Paragraph 2.1.2 of the RICS Guidance Note: Financial Viability in Planning further reinforces the above, by stating that financial viability for planning purposes is defined as follows . . .

‘An objective of the financial viability test is the ability of a development project to meet its costs including the cost of planning obligations, whilst ensuring an appropriate site value for the land owner and a market risk adjusted return for the developer in delivering that project.’

Please confirm due receipt of this representation.

REF NO: 6255

Frost Planning on behalf of Bellway Homes Ltd

Representation:

On behalf of Bellway Homes Ltd and with advice from Grasscroft Development Solutions (GDS) please see our response below. We have extracted the relevant paragraphs and provided comments in red below each paragraph.

Viability

4.8 The Council will take into account national planning policy in giving careful attention to viability and costs in plan-making and decision taking. Should an applicant argue against the provisions of this SPD on the grounds of viability, the Council will require a full viability appraisal which satisfactorily demonstrates that such provisions would render a scheme unviable. This should be carried out on the basis of a ‘residual land valuation’ and Appendix 3 sets out the minimum amount of information that should be included within an appraisal.

Grasscroft Development Solutions (GDS) agree with the Authority’s approach to adopt the ‘residual land value’ methodology. However, this approach in isolation can only work if tested against one, or a number of relevant benchmarks to establish a market acceptable level of return for both developer and land owner. Examples of this include benchmarking the residual land value against comparable residential land values; existing use value plus an uplift to incentivise the land owner to sell, or a market acceptable level of profit on Gross Development Value (GDV).

4.9 In particular it is recognised that affordable housing schemes delivered by Housing Associations or Registered Providers are often dependent on external funding and planning obligations can often threaten their viability. Such schemes will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will take account of the full scale of developer contributions required.

4.10 Applicants should be aware that negotiations on recreation provision will be on the basis that an applicant has bought a site or is purchasing a site at a price that has taken account of all known constraints and planning policy requirements, including recreation provision. Applicants looking to negotiate the recreation provision required will need to demonstrate this, together with the particular site circumstances that would warrant a reduced provision. Such information may need to be independently assessed and where this is the case, the reasonable costs for doing so will be borne by the applicant.

The Authority’s inference that the developer and / or landowner should reduce their profit margin and / or site value, below an acceptable market level to factor in full policy requirements

is contrary to Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPF) and RICS Guidance Note: Financial Viability in Planning.

The Authority's draft wording disregards that a land owner and developer should both make a competitive return.

Paragraph 173 of the NPPF states .. .

'To ensure viability, the costs of any requirement likely to be applied to development, such as requirements for affordable housing, standards, infrastructure contributions or other requirements should, when taking into account the normal cost of development and mitigation, provide competitive returns to a willing land owner and willing developer to enable the development to be deliverable.'

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'A competitive return for the land owner is the price at which a reasonable land owner would be willing to sell their land for the development. The price will need to provide an incentive for the land owner to sell in comparison with the other options available. Those options may include the current use value of the land or its value for a realistic alternative use that complies with planning policy.'

Paragraph 2.1.2 of the RICS Guidance Note: Financial Viability in Planning further reinforces the above, by stating that financial viability for planning purposes is defined as follows .. .

'An objective of the financial viability test is the ability of a development project to meet its costs including the cost of planning obligations, whilst ensuring an appropriate site value for the land owner and a market risk adjusted return for the developer in delivering that project.'

REPORT FOR DECISION



DECISION OF:	CABINET
DATE:	10 JUNE 2015
SUBJECT:	FOSTER CARE PAYMENTS
REPORT FROM:	EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND CULTURE
CONTACT OFFICER:	ELIZABETH SHINGLER
TYPE OF DECISION:	CABINET KEY DECISION
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/STATUS:	THIS PAPER IS WITHIN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN
SUMMARY:	<p>This paper addresses changes to the foster care payment system. It addresses 3 main issues:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To afforded Family & Friends carers the opportunity to qualify for the payment of the fostering fee <p>Currently family and friends who are approved as foster carers are paid the fostering allowance but are paid a fostering fee which is reserved to 'mainstream carers' as a reward for opening their homes to unrelated children. A High Court judgement ruled against this sort of differentiation and Local Authorities are now required to ensure that any fee or 'reward element' of a payment system must be open to all carers.</p> <p>It was, therefore, necessary to develop new criteria for the payment of a fee. It is proposed that this is best done by the introduction of a payment for training and skill development</p> To promote training and development for foster carers <p>Previously all carers who were approved to take unrelated children received the full fee on taking their</p>

	<p>first placement. In future it is proposed that on taking a first placement a fee that is equivalent to 50% of the full fee will be paid in recognition of having completed the 'Skills to Foster' training with the other 50% of the fee being earned by completing induction training. The full fee would be maintained thereafter by undertaking regular training that consolidated developed skills and knowledge. Those wishing not to undertake this level of training would remain on the 50% fee level.</p> <p>This Payment for Skills system would be open to all carers and would thereby not only comply with the High Court ruling but incentivise training and development.</p> <p>3. To put in place an enhanced fee to underpin the development of a specialist foster care scheme</p> <p>The Fostering Service have identified a need and an opportunity to recruit and develop a small group of foster carers who would be trained and supported to offer placements to young people who have multiple and complex needs and who are likely to be otherwise placed in Independent Fostering Agency placements or residential homes. A 'team around the child' approach would be taken.</p> <p>The fee paid to these carers would recognise their specialist skills that would be developed through an extensive training and development programme and their availability to the young person.</p> <p>The full details of the scheme are set out in the attached paper</p>
<p>OPTIONS & RECOMMENDED OPTION</p>	<p>1. Maintain the status quo</p> <p>This is not recommended as it would not comply with the High Court ruling on payments to Family & Friends Foster Carers and leave the Local Authority open to Judicial Review. Training and development would not be incentivised. The specialist scheme could not be developed</p> <p>2. Maintain the current payment system and include all Family & Friends Foster Carers</p> <p>This would comply with the High Court ruling but would be expensive without adding value to the fostering service, as training and development would not be incentivised</p> <p>3. Introduce the new payment for skills without developing the specialist foster care scheme</p>

	<p>This would be compliant and would add value to the service as training and development would be incentivised but the service would not have the opportunity to try to maintain young people with multiple and complex needs in Bury.</p> <p>4. Introduce the new payment scheme in full</p> <p>This would address all 3 issues in that it would assure compliance, incentivise training & development and allow the development of the specialist scheme</p> <p>It is recommended that option 3 or 4 be approved</p>
IMPLICATIONS:	<p>A consultation period with foster carers would be required</p> <p>A new rolling, training programme for carers would be introduced to ensure that carers are able to progress through the fee structure within agreed timescales.</p> <p>Recruitment of specialist carers would commence</p> <p>Financial Implications</p> <p>It is estimated that the additional annual on-going costs of the Family and Friends Foster Carers could be as much as £35,000.</p> <p>The proposed Specialist Foster Carers will lead to significant savings of approx £20,000 per placement and should cover the above additional costs.</p>
Corporate Aims/Policy Framework:	<p>Do the proposals accord with the Policy Framework?</p> <p>Yes</p>
Statement by the S151 Officer: Financial Implications and Risk Considerations:	<p>There are two financial consequences to this report;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Additional payments to Family & Friends Foster Cares could incur additional costs up to £35,000. 2) The proposed use Specialist Foster Carers could lead to savings of up to £20,000 <u>per placement</u>. <p>If both elements of the report are approved, the proposals are expected to be self-financing, relieving pressure on the Children's Social Care budget, and ultimately delivering better care outcomes.</p> <p>Following the High Court judgement on payments to Family and Friends Foster Carers, there is a significant financial risk to the Council if the payments to these Carers are not adopted.</p>

Health and Safety Implications	Health and Safety considerations are addressed as part of the placement process.
Statement by Executive Director of Resources (including Health and Safety Implications)	There are no wider resource implications.
Equality/Diversity implications:	Yes No (see paragraph below)
Considered by Monitoring Officer:	Yes Comments
Wards Affected:	ALL
Scrutiny Interest:	

TRACKING/PROCESS**DIRECTOR:**

Chief Executive/ Strategic Leadership Team	Cabinet Member/Chair	Ward Members	Partners
Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet/Committee	Council	

1.0 BACKGROUND *[brief]***1.1 Legal compliance in payments to family and friends foster carers**

Current payment scheme discriminates against family and friends carers and is open to legal challenge. Family and friends carers are approved foster carers and test cases have ruled they must be able to access the same payments as general foster carers. The new scheme has been designed to ensure an equitable payment structure and minimise the impact of additional payments made to family and friends carers by introducing a banded payment structure with payments dependent upon training and the development of skills.

1.2 Differentiation of payments to incentivise training and skills of foster carers

Under current arrangements all approved general foster carers receive the same age related allowances and skills payments, regardless of experience, training or qualifications. The only differentiation is the discretionary payment of a £100 per week for a child considered to be difficult to place. The new payment scheme aims to introduce a payment structure based upon training

and the development of specialist skills aimed at increasing placement stability and a higher standard of care.

1.3 Introduction of professional foster carers as alternative to IFA placements

The Invest to Save initiative has had a positive impact on increased recruitment and in-house occupancy levels, which supported by the work of the placement panel and a more flexible placement strategy has reduced the number of IFA placements. To further manage and reduce the number of IFA placements it is proposed to recruit up to 10 professional foster carers over a 2 year period. Professional foster carers would receive additional training and support and be paid a salary in addition to the age related child allowance.

1.4 Financial implications

1.4.1 Family and Friends Foster Carers

The additional cost of complying with the High Court judgement for payments to Family and Friends Foster Carers is dependent upon the take-up of family and friends carers of the regular and on-going training.

Currently there are 38 Family and Friends placements and 27 are going to continue as foster placements, of which these will be entitled to access the new training payment for skills scheme.

It is estimated that no more than 50% of the Family and Friends Foster Carers will undertake the training and therefore only these will receive the additional payment.

Subsequently the potential additional annual cost will be approximately £35,000, which will be funded by on-going savings from within the Children's Agency budget as a result of the development of the Specialist Foster Carers Scheme (see below).

1.4.2 Specialist Foster Carers Scheme

This scheme will incur additional costs in increased payments to these professional Foster Carers. These additional payments will be outweighed by significant savings in reduced placements with Independent Fostering Agencies (IFA) and in some instances in very expensive residential accommodation, which can range between £2,000 and £5,000 per week.

The proposed 'Professional Payment and Allowances' would be £26,000 per placement per year, while the average payment for an IFA placement is £46,000 per year, thereby reducing costs by £20,000 per placement.

It is proposed that 10 professional salaried Foster Carers be recruited over the next 2 years, with a recruitment campaign continuing in future years. If these levels are achieved then there could be a potential £200,000 saving occurring in 2016/17.

2.0 ISSUES

Equality and Diversity

Overwhelmingly children within the care system come from families in the lower socio-economic groups; the overall, intended impact of the scheme is to improve the care given to these children to improve their wellbeing and life-chances.

The opportunity for Family & Friends carers to undertake training and thereby qualify for the fostering fee provides additional income to families who are often in the lower socio-economic groups.

The opportunity of training promotes learning and development for foster carers who, national research shows, generally have poor education attainment

The introduction of the specialist fostering scheme provides opportunities for very vulnerable young people to receive a high level of support in all aspects of their lives with the intention of promoting emotional well-being, social, education and training opportunities and a reduction in offending opportunities thereby keeping them out of the criminal justice system.

The scheme also provides economic opportunities for those working on the scheme

3.0 CONCLUSION

The introduction of the full Payment for Skills scheme would allow the Fostering Service to move forward in updating its approach to the training and development of foster carers, make it compliant with High Court Ruling and provide an opportunity to keep more young people within the Borough in order that they might benefit from a tightly co-ordinated care plan and a well supported placement.

List of Background Papers:-

Foster Carer Payment for Skills (attached)

Contact Details:-

Elizabeth Shingler
0161 253 6075

Foster Carer Payment for Skills

Background

The review of foster carer payments in Bury is driven by three key factors:

- The need to incentivise training for foster carers to ensure a higher level of compliance with regulations and the professionalization and modernisation of the service
- The development of a fairer payment and reward system which recognises the importance of the contribution made by family and friends foster carers and to ensure all foster carers are rewarded on the basis of their skills and contribution to the care of children
- The establishment of a payment and reward structure that provides an opportunity for the development of skills and specialisation in areas of current unmet need such as older teenage children with more challenging behaviours currently placed with Independent Fostering Agencies (IFAs)

Following discussion with the fostering service managers and a development day held with the full team, a subgroup was established to streamline the training programme to provide greater access to a core induction training programme which would need to be completed within 6 months of approval by the fostering panel to ensure payment of the full fee. This would apply equally to all newly approved foster carers including those approved as family and friends carers.

Training for Skills

The proposed new training and payment scheme applies to all new foster carers completing the pre approval skills to foster training and subsequently approved by the fostering panel. On approval and at first placement a foster carer would receive the current age related boarding out allowance, ranging from £122.00 to £179.00 per week plus 50% of the current age related fee ranging from £55 to £60 per week per child.

On completion of the induction skills training programme and a satisfactory first review the foster carer would receive the full fee payment. A foster carer review would be held 6 months after approval and subsequent annual reviews would need to include a review of the fee element to ensure continued payment of the full fee. It is a regulatory requirement that all foster carers should complete the Training Standards Development (TSD) Workbook. If foster carers fail to complete the TSD within 18 months of initial approval the fee will reduce to 50% of the full fee until such time as the TSD work book is completed and signed off. Equally should approved foster carers fail to complete the consolidation training within the prescribed time scale the fee will be reduced by 50%.

The revised training programme for approved foster carers comprises 3 distinct training elements;

- **Induction training**
- **Consolidation training**
- **Specialist Training**

The training programme has been revised to provide regular **induction** skills training which will run on a 5/6 monthly cycle to ensure foster carers are given the opportunity to develop their skills and have the incentive to receive the additional fee payment before their 6 monthly review.

The induction skills training will consist of the following training modules:

- Safeguarding children and young people and E Safety
- First Aid
- Record keeping
- Promoting Contact
- Food Handling and Hygiene

Following the first 6 monthly review the following **consolidation** training must be completed to ensure maintenance of the full fee payment: The consolidation module is based around competencies which support and underpin the TSD workbook learning.

- Valuing Diversity
- Child Development
- Memory Books
- TSD Training Workbook

The foster carer will be expected to complete the TSD Workbook within 18 months of approval and by the time of their second annual review for the full fee payment to be maintained.

Developing Skills and Specialisation

Supervision and annual reviews should focus on developing the foster carer's skills and widening their experience and intervention skills. Further training opportunities will be made available on an annual basis to enable the development of specialist areas of intervention which may be able to form the basis for a small group of specialist foster carers taking more difficult to manage placements. (Professional Foster Carers) It is recognised that some foster carers enter fostering with considerable experience of looking after children in a professional capacity and in these cases prior accredited learning will be taken into consideration in determining the payment for skills and developing their individual training and development programme.

Many such training opportunities can be accessed through Bury Children's Safeguarding Board and includes:

- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Domestic Violence
- Parental Drugs and substance misuse
- Teenage Pregnancy
- Safeguarding children
- Adult mental health

The Fostering Changes Training has proven effective in equipping foster carers with a better understanding of the factors triggering difficult behaviour in some children and young people. The service needs to ensure that this training is targeted at those

carers able to use these skills and put them into practice. The training will not be provided unless foster carers have completed induction training and TSD Workbook.

Other specialist training can be provided through expertise within children's services and would include CAMHS, Health and Education making significant contributions especially in respect of Professional Foster Carers.

The following training would also be available to foster carers and would need to be identified through a more robust review process which has a focus on the development of skills:

- Promoting Education
- Contact and working with birth families
- Recording and keeping safe
- Child development and attachment
- The health of looked after children
- Emotional health of looked after children
- Aspects of Autism
- Anti bullying strategies
- Extra Mile

Proposed Allowances and Skills Payments based on current 2014 Bury rates

Group 1	Skills Payment	Allowance	Total
0 – 4 years	-	122.00	122.00
5 – 10 years	-	134.00	134.00
11 – 15 years	-	154.00	154.00
16 plus	-	179.00	179.00
Group 2	Skills Payment	Allowance	Total
0 – 4 years	55.00 (36.85)	122.00	177.00
5 – 10 years	55.00 (36.85)	134.00	189.00
11 – 15 years	60.00 (40.20)	154.00	214.00
16 plus	60.00 (40.20)	179.00	239.00
Group 3	Skills Payment	Allowance	Total
0 – 4 years	110.00 (77.00)	122.00	232.00
5 – 10 years	110.00 (77.00)	134.00	244.00
11 – 15 years	120.00 (84.00)	154.00	274.00
16 plus	120.00 (84.00)	179.00	299.00
Group 4 Professional Carers	Weekly Skills Payment	Allowance	Total
0 – 4 years	346.00	122.00	466.00
5 – 10 years	346.00	134.00	480.00
11 – 15 years	346.00	154.00	500.00
16 plus	346.00	179.00	525.00

*Subsequent children subject to 30 % Reduction in skill payment shown in brackets.

Operating a Skill Based Foster Carer Payment Scheme

The payment for skills scheme will apply to local authority foster carers who care for children not previously known to them (General Foster Carers) and to Family and Friends (connected persons) who care for specific children where generally there is some form of established relationship or connection. Payments to both groups of foster carers will be subject to the carer meeting the criteria outlined below for the relevant group payment. A foster carer's position within a payment group will be subject to annual review through the Fostering Regulations Review process and will take account of the skills, training and criteria detailed for each specific payment group. All skilled based assessments will be based on evidence provided in the carer's portfolio, annual review and the fostering team's assessment.

Progressing through the payment for skills scheme

Foster carers may progress through the payment groups by acquiring the relevant skills, evidence and qualifications. Any carer wishing to move to a higher group should notify their supervising social worker in writing attaching the evidence to support their application. In determining the length of fostering experience the date of first placement will be the starting point of measurement rather than the date of approval at the fostering panel.

Upon receipt of the application the supervising social worker will undertake a skill based assessment using the criteria outlined below in the payment group guidance. The assessment should be completed within 4 weeks of receipt of the written request from the carer. If the application is successful the increase in payment will commence from the date of receipt of the written request from the carer should there be a child or young person in placement.

In relation to group 3 and 4 the fostering team manager and strategic lead will consider the annual review of group 3 carers in terms of their group payments and approve any applications for group 4 carers on the professional scheme following their assessment.

If an application to progress through the payments scheme is not supported by the supervising social worker and relevant manager, the foster carer will have a right to appeal this decision. If appropriate the appeal should be considered by the strategic lead or through representation to the fostering panel. The same process will apply should a foster carer be moved down a payment group following annual review of their group payment status. Bury fostering service reserve the right to move a foster carer to a lower group where the foster carer is considered responsible for not continuing to meet the requirements of their payment group. Examples may include non attendance at training/development events identified through supervision and ceasing to contribute to the fostering service such as withdrawing from a mentoring role or from recruitment events.

It is possible under certain circumstances for foster carers to commence their fostering career in group 3 or 4 of the scheme. Foster carers who have previously been employed in a registered or regulated child care setting with direct responsibility for the day to day care of children may be considered suitable to be placed in group 3 or 4 if all of the other relevant criteria for the group are met. This employment needs to have been for a minimum of 2 years and no more than 5 years previous to their approval as a foster carer.

Foster carers who have been previously approved by a registered fostering agency and have fostered children for a period of 2 years or more may also be considered suitable to be placed in group 3 or 4 of the payment scheme should all the relevant criteria of the payment group be met. The fostering experience will need to have ended no more than 5 years previous to their approval as a Bury foster carer.

Criteria for skill payment groups

Group 1 foster carers comprise:

- Foster carers caring for children not previously known to them, have attended skills to foster training, successfully completed a full competency based assessment and have been approved through the fostering panel and by the Agency Decision Maker (ADM) but who fail to complete their induction training within 6 months of approval will move into Group 1.
- Family and friends foster carers who are caring for a specific child and are in the process of completing a competency based assessment (Regulation 24 of Fostering Regulations)
- Family and friends foster carers who have completed a full competency based assessment but not wishing to progress further through the skill payment scheme.

All Group 1 foster carers must evidence and demonstrate the following minimum skills

Caring for Children

- An ability to provide a good standard of care to other people's children which promotes healthy emotional, physical and sexual development as well as their health and education achievement
- An ability to work closely with children's families and others who are important to the child
- An ability to set appropriate boundaries and manage children's behaviour within these, without the use of physical or other inappropriate punishment
- Knowledge of normal child development and an ability to listen to and communicate with children appropriate to their age and understanding

Providing a Safe Environment

- An ability to ensure the children are cared for in a home where they are safe from harm and abuse
- An ability to help children keep themselves safe from harm and abuse and to know how to seek help if their safety is threatened

Working as part of a Team

- An ability to work with other professional people and contribute to the department's planning for the child/young person
- An ability to communicate effectively
- An ability to keep information confidential
- An ability to promote equality, diversity and the rights of individuals and groups within society

Own Development

- An ability to appreciate how personal experiences have affected themselves and their families and the impact that fostering is likely to have on them all
- To have access to people and links in the community to provide support in the fostering task
- A willingness to undertake training and improve personal skills
- An ability to sustain positive relationships and maintain effective functioning through periods of stress

Group 2 foster carers comprise:

- Foster carers, who have successfully completed a competency based assessment, are approved by the fostering panel and ADM, have completed the Skills to Foster training and have enrolled to complete the induction training course. The induction training should be completed within 6 months of approval by the fostering panel and ADM unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- Foster carers who do not wish to progress further through the skills based scheme following completion of their induction training
- Foster carers who meet the criteria for group 1 foster carers and have undertaken any training specified at the point of approval or subsequently through supervision or annual review which is identified as necessary by the supervising social worker
- Foster carers who have attended a minimum of 50% of support group meetings

Group 3 Foster carers comprise:

- Foster carers who meet the relevant criteria for groups 1 and 2 and have successfully completed the induction training course including
 - Safeguarding children and young people and E safety
 - First aid
 - Record keeping
 - Promoting contact
 - Food handling and hygiene
- Foster carers must complete the consolidation training modules within 6 months of completing the induction training (within 12 months of approval by the fostering panel and ADM) to maintain their group 3 payment status the modules include
 - Valuing diversity
 - Child development
 - Memory books
 - TSD training workbook
- Foster carers who have a minimum of 2 years previous fostering or residential child care experience within the last 5 years
- Foster carers who have undertaken training specified at the point of approval or subsequently through supervision and annual review
- Foster carers who have completed a successful annual review
- Foster carers who have or can demonstrate the following key skills in addition to those required for Group 1 and 2
 - An ability to help children develop appropriate behaviour helping them to become more independent and enabling them to cope with their emotions as appropriate to their age and ability
 - An ability to help children to develop basic aspects of memory thinking, imagination and manipulative skills through play etc

- An ability to help children develop their language skills and self expression
- An ability to help children learn the boundaries of acceptable behaviour without resorting to physical punishment.
- To manage children's negative reactions and unacceptable behaviour by encouraging positive behaviour patterns within the requirements of current fostering policy
- An ability to plan and prepare an appropriate routine which balances the child's needs for security, stability and emotional warmth
- An ability to respond appropriately to the possibility of child abuse and neglect
- An ability to observe and assess a child's development and record accurately
- To act as an advocate for children and ensure personal practice is anti discriminatory and respects all children and their families

It is an expectation of the fostering service that Group 3 foster carers are able to offer their skills in some of the areas below to help to develop the service

- To help children and families cope with loss and bereavement – this may be due to a life threatening illness, separation through adoption or loss of their family
- To work closely with other professionals, with appropriate support and supervision, in carrying out individual therapeutic programmes, skills development, behaviour modification or supporting education programmes for children and young people
- A willingness to assist in the recruitment of other foster carers
- A willingness to participate in the training of foster carers
- A willingness to support other foster carers by acting as a mentor or buddy

Group 4 Foster carers – Professional Foster carers

- The primary approved foster carer will not be engaged in any other form of paid employment
- Where there are 2 approved foster carers in a household partnership there is an expectation that both will be actively involved in providing care for and supporting the young person in placement
- Generally children placed will be aged 13 plus and will have the involvement of a number of child care professionals
- Initially at placement no other LAC children should be in placement
- In addition to meeting the criteria for groups 1 to 3 Professional Foster carers will be expected to meet the following additional criteria
 - An ability to care for children assessed as presenting behaviour which may cause significant management problems
 - Maintain a knowledge and awareness of current legislation, current issues in child care and best practice developments
- To help achieve these goals professional Foster carers will complete the following additional training
 - Fostering changes training
 - Attachment and loss and trauma training
 - Supporting education and achievement
 - Working with professionals in a team

- Substance misuse
 - Managing challenging behaviour
- In addition to the 8 key skills required for Group 3 foster carers, Group 4 Professional Foster carers must be able to demonstrate competency in the areas highlighted below
 - To help children cope with loss, trauma and bereavement
 - Working closely with a range of professionals in carrying out therapeutic programmes, education support programmes and other individual interventions with appropriate professional support and supervision
 - To take responsibility for individual programmes of skill development for children and work with them and their families and other professionals to achieve the goals of the programme
 - To work pro actively, where appropriate to return children to live with their families by developing positive relationships with birth families and undertake supervised contact visits
 - A willingness to assist with the recruitment and training of prospective foster carers
 - To act as a mentor or buddy to other foster carers where appropriate
 - To attend and participate in professional meetings.

<p>REPORT FOR DECISION</p>



DECISION OF:	CABINET - 10 JUNE 2015 COUNCIL – 1 JULY 2015
SUBJECT:	TOWNSHIP FORUMS
REPORT FROM:	CABINET MEMBER – COMMUNITIES
CONTACT OFFICER:	Cindy Lowthian - Communities Manager
TYPE OF DECISION:	COUNCIL
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/STATUS:	This paper is within the public domain
SUMMARY:	This report seeks approval to a number of recommendations to enhance Township Forums. Significant budgetary challenges facing the Council and partners, combined with a changing local partnership landscape and advances in digital technologies provide opportunities to refresh the Forums to make them more efficient, locally focused and effective.
OPTIONS & RECOMMENDED OPTION	<p>Option 1 (recommended)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the proposals outlined in the report. • Recommend to the July meeting of Council that the Operating Framework for Township Forums is amended to incorporate these proposals. • Recommend to the July meeting of Council that these proposals are implemented during the 2015/16 municipal year. <p>Option 2 (not recommended) Reject the proposals.</p> <p>Recommendation Option 1 is the recommended option as this would enhance the effectiveness of Township Forums. The proposals will help to reduce duplication across partners in relation to community engagement and strengthen local focus and accountability.</p>
IMPLICATIONS:	
Corporate Aims/Policy	Do the proposals accord with the Policy

Framework:	Framework? Yes	
Statement by the S151 Officer: Financial Implications and Risk Considerations:	All proposed changes are to be implemented within the existing budget provision for Township Forum activity.	SK
Health and Safety Implications	There are no known health and safety implications arising from this report	
Statement by Executive Director of Resources (including Health and Safety Implications)	Any Community Right to Bid applications will be dealt with in line with the Council's agreed procedures. There are no wider resource implications.	SK
Equality/Diversity implications:	Yes (see paragraph below).	
Considered by Monitoring Officer:	Yes The Operating Framework for Township Forums is part of the Council's Constitution. It is therefore recommended that Council amend the Constitution to reflect the proposed changes.	JH
Wards Affected:	All	
Scrutiny Interest:	Overview and Scrutiny	

TRACKING/PROCESS**DIRECTOR: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
COMMUNITIES AND WELL BEING**

Chief Executive/ Strategic Leadership Team	Cabinet Member/Chair	Ward Members	Partners
26/5/15	22/5/15		
Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet/Committee	Council	
	10/6/15		

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Township Forum Annual progress report presented to Council on 20 May highlighted the achievements of Township Forums over the past year. Township Forums have helped to co-ordinate a number of local projects and initiatives through Township Plans. They have also helped to attract external funding through the Bury East Alcohol Prospectus Scheme and the Radcliffe Our Place project. Whilst overall attendance has decreased slightly throughout the year by 8.66% (compared to the previous year), it still represents an increase of 17.31% compared to 2012/13. The value of the Forums is also recognised in facilitating public consultation exercises.
- 1.2 The report also highlighted a number of opportunities and challenges for the Forums over the coming year. Significant budgetary challenges facing the

Council and partners, combined with a changing local partnership landscape and advances in digital technologies provide opportunities to refresh the Forums and build more efficient, integrated locality working approaches.

2.0 CONSULTATION

2.1 To inform the recommendations, views were sought at the last round of Township Forum meetings on the following proposals:

- a) Reduce the number of generic presentations to help make meetings more locally relevant and purposeful.
- b) Formalise police involvement in the Township Forums.
- c) Reduce the frequency of meetings, at the same time promoting alternative community engagement mechanisms.
- d) Strengthen the role of Township Forums in relation to provisions within the Localism Act, particularly the Community Right to Bid (Assets of Community Value).
- e) Funding – delegate decisions relating to a combined small grants/ community funding pot to Township Forums.

2.2 In total 72 individual responses were received via the Township Forums. Appendix A provides a summary of these. The majority of responses indicate widespread consensus and support for the proposals with one exception; proposals to reduce the frequency of meetings generated a more mixed response, particularly from Whitefield and Unsworth, Prestwich and Radcliffe Township Forums.

3.0 PROPOSALS

(a) Reduce the number of generic presentations

3.1 Township Forums have helped facilitate a number of community consultation exercises with local councillors, community representatives and members of the public. However, too many presentations, particularly if they are not directly related to the local area lead to consultation fatigue, with the Township Forums in danger of losing their local focus and ability to address local priorities.

3.2 To address this, it is proposed that each Township forum provides a 'market place' prior to each meeting. Council Officers and partner representatives will be given the opportunity to attend, erect stands and stalls and provide details of any ongoing consultations and community information. This should reduce the need for generic presentations whilst at the same time still providing members of the public opportunities to ask questions and share their views. The majority of consultation responses received via the Township Forums are in favour of this proposal (72%).

3.3 Where presentations are made, these must address specific concerns to the township or be tailored to meet the particular needs of that area. The intention is not to stop communication or debate – but to improve the focus which is often missing in generic presentations. The Township Forum presentation protocol will be refreshed to reinforce this requirement to those presenting at future meetings.

(b) Formalise Police involvement in the Forums

- 3.4 Throughout the year, police attendance at Township Forums has been mixed. Township Co-ordinators state that where Police do attend, this has been positively received by both Township Forum members and the public who value the opportunity to raise and discuss local community safety concerns. The majority of consultation responses received via the Forums are in favour of this proposal (81%).
- 3.5 The Operating Framework for Township Forums states that Township Forum Advisory Group members “*can be made up of representatives from voluntary and community groups and partner organisations with an interest in the area*”. Discussions held so far with Greater Manchester Police (GMP) indicate willingness for the Police to formalise their membership on Township Forums. Over the coming months, Township Co-ordinators will work with their local police representatives to agree representation on the Township Forums.
- 3.6 Further opportunities to streamline engagement approaches with other partners will also be explored, particularly health colleagues.

(c) Reduce the frequency of meetings & harness wider engagement mechanisms

- 3.7 Township Forums provide an important tool to communicate with and engage local people. However, they are not the only instrument available. There are a wide range of other methods which can be used to share information, engage and empower people. These include tenant and resident groups, Youth Cabinet, Older People Forum, Customer Task Force, Patient Cabinet, Health Watch and councillor surgeries.
- 3.8 Significant advances in digital technology and social media also mean that increasing numbers of people prefer to share their views online rather than attend formal meetings e.g. through Facebook or Twitter. During the next year, we will explore opportunities to harness this technology to test approaches to online meetings in relation to key topic areas.
- 3.9 Other changes such as the refresh of the Council’s website to make it easier to contact and access services – and the Bury Directory providing a wide range of information on local services, groups and assets – are strengthening on-line communication. With the technology making access available 24/7 at times that matter to local people, more people are being nudged towards electronic rather than personal interaction.
- 3.10 In this context, it is proposed that a recommendation is made to Council to amend the Operating Framework for Township Forums which reduces the frequency of meetings from six to four per year from 2015/16 onwards. Although the consultation response from the Forums to this proposal was mixed, attendance figures show that relatively small proportions of the overall public attend the meetings on a regular basis, the business has become routine and there are a wide range of other methods for people to express their views.
- 3.11 Having fewer meetings combined with the other changes recommended in this report should help ensure the Forum meetings are more productive and locally focussed. Other (community led) meetings and events can still be organised by community representatives and/or residents as required. The intention is for the council organised Township Forum meetings to add value to the range of

other community engagement methods and tools available, thereby avoiding duplication and engagement fatigue.

(d) Localism Act 2011

- 3.12 The Localism Act requires local authorities to maintain a list of assets of community value which have been nominated by local community groups. It is designed to give communities more opportunity to take control of land or buildings important to them by giving them time to purchase the asset should it ever be listed.
- 3.13 Since the introduction of the Act, there have been five successful nominations listed by the Council. The current procedure involves seeking the views of local councillors prior to the determination of a nomination. It is proposed that future nominations will be shared through Township Forum members to seek their views prior to the determination of a nomination by the relevant Cabinet member. Most of the consultation responses received via Township Forums are supportive of this proposal.

(e) Community Funds

- 3.14 The Council already has a process for awarding small grants to organisations and it is proposed to delegate these community funding decisions to Township Forums to better align funding to township plan priorities. The intention is to strengthen local transparency and accountability in relation to the allocation of these grants and to develop a new process that increases community involvement in the decisions. The majority of consultation responses received through township forums supported this proposal.
- 3.15 The Council proposes to allocate £8,000 to each Township Forum, supporting the work of voluntary and community groups with applications being determined during the June, September, November and March cycle of meetings. The applications will be considered by a sub group meeting prior to the forum with the decisions being announced during the Township Forum. A maximum of £250 individual grant is available for formally constituted organisations.
- 3.16 Additionally, a borough-wide allocation of £8,000 will be available for "cross-township" applications for activity that takes place across township boundaries. The applications will again be open to constituted community and voluntary organisations in the third sector, with a maximum grant of £500 per application. These applications would be determined by the Council's Small Grants Panel. Funding decisions for both these schemes would be reported to the relevant Township Forum(s) with a follow-up evaluation after 3-6 months.

4.0 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 Consultation has taken place with each of the Township Forums. The results of this exercise (attached) indicate significant levels of support for most of the proposals. The issue which divides the Forums is the frequency of meetings.
- 4.2 It is accepted that decision making in relation to small grants through Township Forums could be slower if the frequency of meetings is reduced. In mitigation, a small contingency pot has been retained centrally to be allocated (through the Small Grants Panel) where more urgent decision making is required.

- 4.3 There is also a counter-risk from not taking action. Attendance levels (as a proportion of resident population) continue to be low. These proposals seek to increase community engagement by giving the Forums new powers, reducing the number of generic presentations and increasing attendance by the Police at meetings.

5.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 5.1 The Equality Analysis (EA) indicates that the changes will have little impact on individuals with protected characteristics. The increasing powers to Township Forums and attempts to increase community engagement are however seen as positive in terms of improving community relations and cohesion.
- 5.2 Subject to approval by Council, the changes will be monitored and their impact reported to Annual Council in 2016.

6.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 Township Forums provide a unique opportunity for local councillors, community representatives and residents to work together to address local priorities and improve local outcomes.
- 6.2 This report outlines a number of areas which should help to further enhance the work of the Forums. Cabinet are requested to support the proposals and recommend to Council that:
- (i) The changes outlined in section 3 of this report are approved;
 - (ii) Recommend to the July meeting of Council that the Operational Framework for Township Forums is amended to include the new tasks and reduce the frequency of Township Forum meetings from six to four per year from 2015/16 and onwards.

List of Background Papers:-

Annual Progress Report – Township Forums (Full Council, 20 May 2015).
Township Forum Operating Framework
Localism Act 2011 - Community Right to Bid Guidance.
Equality Assessment

Contact Details:-

Cindy Lowthian, Communities Manager, Communities and Wellbeing.
C.Lowthian@bury.gov.uk, (0161) 2535121.

TOWNSHIP FORUM QUESTIONNAIRE

We are seeking your view on the following proposals to our Township Forums. Your views are important to us so that we may provide a better service delivery to our communities

	RTNM			Bury East			Bury West			Radcliffe			Whitefield/Unsworth			Prestwich			COMBINED			% OF 72		
	Agree	Do n't	N/A	Agree	Do n't	N/A	Agree	Do n't	N/A	Agree	Do n't	N/A	Agree	Don't	N/A	Agree	Do n't	N/A	Agree	Do n't	N/A	Agree	Don't	N/A
Presentations: Review protocols to reduce number of generic presentations at meetings	7			12			4	1		9		2	15	8	4	5	1	4	52	10	10	72 %	14 %	14 %
Pop-up information stands: Introduce a local 'market place' at each meeting. This will involve erection of stands/stalls providing details of any ongoing consultations and relevant community information - reducing need for presentations	6	1		11	1		4	1		8	1	2	21	5	1	8		2	58	9	5	81 %	13 %	7%
GMP Partnership: Explore opportunities to formalise Police involvement in the Township Forums	6	1		12			5			11			25	1	1	9	1		68	3	1	94 %	4%	1%
Frequency of Meetings: Reduce number of meetings from 6 to 4 per year	3	3	1	9	2	1	3	2		2	8	1	9	15	3	2	7	1	28	37	7	39 %	51 %	10 %
Engagement: Promote other engagement mechanisms, including Councillor surgeries, use of social media, Health Watch, Patient Cabinet	4	2	1	11		1	3	2		10	1		16	1	10	9	1		53	7	12	74 %	10 %	17 %

[illegible]

Equality Analysis Form

The following questions will document the effect of your service or proposed policy, procedure, working practice, strategy or decision (hereafter referred to as 'policy') on equality, and demonstrate that you have paid due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty.

1. RESPONSIBILITY

Department	Department of Communities & Wellbeing	
Service	Communities Team	
Proposed policy	Enhancing Township Forums – Cabinet Report	
Date	12 May 2015	
Officer responsible for the 'policy' and for completing the equality analysis	Name	Cindy Lowthian
	Post Title	Communities Manager
	Contact Number	0161 253 7455
	Signature	
	Date	12 May 2015
Equality officer consulted	Name	Mary Wood
	Post Title	Principal Officer – Equalities
	Contact Number	0161 253 6795
	Signature	 32/2015
	Date	20 May 2015

2. AIMS

What is the purpose of the policy/service and what is it intended to achieve?	<p>To approve recommendations to enhance the operation of Township Forums.</p> <p>Significant budgetary challenges facing the Council, combined with a changing local partnership landscape and advances in digital technologies provide opportunities to refresh the Forums to make them more efficient, locally focussed and effective.</p> <p>The following proposals are included in the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Reduce the number of generic presentations carried out at meetings. Too many generic presentations pull the forums away from local issues and priorities. Protocols will ensure that where presentations are made, these are locally relevant and address specific concerns to the township. A local market place will run prior to each Forum meeting involving the erection of stalls and stands allowing partner agencies to seek the views of the public on more generic issues. (ii) Formalise Police involvement in the meetings –
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	<p>giving the public opportunities to raise and discuss community safety concerns.</p> <p>(iii) Reduce the frequency of meetings and harness wider engagement mechanisms. The intention is that the Forums will compliment a range of other community engagement methods, avoiding duplication and consultation fatigue.</p> <p>(iv) Localism Act 2011 - Community right to Bid. Ensure the views of Forums are sought on future nominations.</p> <p>(v) Community Funds – strengthen the decision making powers of the Forums in relation to the fund. This should help strengthen local transparency and accountability in relation to their allocation.</p> <p>Feedback on the proposals was sought at the last round of Township Forums; this feedback has helped shape the recommendations outlined in the report.</p>
Who are the main stakeholders?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public • Elected Members • Advisory Group members • Partners, particularly Police and Health organisations • Voluntary, community and faith sector groups • Local businesses • Community Groups and Tenant/Resident Associations • Faith representatives • Bury Council Departments

3. ESTABLISHING RELEVANCE TO EQUALITY

3a. Using the drop down lists below, please advise whether the policy/service has either a positive or negative effect on any groups of people with protected equality characteristics.

If you answer yes to any question, please also explain why and how that group of people will be affected.

Protected equality characteristic	Positive effect (Yes/No)	Negative effect (Yes/No)	Explanation
Race	Yes	No	<p>The proposals will ensure more time is given at the Forum meetings to local issues and priorities aimed at reducing disadvantage within and between communities. This includes people from different minority communities and backgrounds.</p> <p>Enhancing the Township Forums and harnessing wider engagement methods should also help strengthen community relations and cohesion.</p> <p>Strengthening decision making powers in relation to grant funding will enhance local accountability and transparency. Forum members have the local knowledge and networks to help ensure funds are allocated to local projects which help reduce disadvantage within and between people from different ethnic backgrounds.</p>
Disability	Yes	No	<p>Enhancing the Township forums and harnessing wider engagement methods should help to ensure that people with disabilities are able to participate and engage using a variety of methods tailored to their needs.</p> <p>Township Forum members have the local knowledge and networks to help ensure Township Forum Grant funding is allocated to local projects which help reduce disadvantage within and between people from different communities, including those with disabilities.</p>
Gender	Yes	No	Enhancing Township forums and

			<p>harnessing wider engagement methods should help to ensure that all individuals are able to participate and engage using a variety of methods tailored to their needs.</p> <p>Township Forum members have the local knowledge and networks to help ensure Township Grant funding is allocated to local projects which help reduce disadvantage within and between people from different communities, including between different gender groups.</p>
Gender reassignment	Yes	No	<p>Enhancing Township forums and harnessing wider engagement methods should help to ensure that all residents, including those who have or are about to undergo gender reassignment, have opportunities to participate and engage using a variety of methods tailored to their needs.</p>
Age	Yes	No	<p>Township Forum members have the local knowledge and networks to ensure grant funds benefit a variety of local groups and projects, including the needs of young and old people within their areas.</p> <p>The report recognises that significant advances in digital technology and social media mean that increasing numbers of people prefer to share their views on line rather than attend meetings, particularly young people.</p> <p>However, a variety of engagement methods, including Township Forums, will continue to be used, providing opportunities for those who prefer to engage in other ways.</p>
Sexual orientation	Yes	No	<p>Enhancing Township forums and harnessing wider engagement methods should help to ensure that all residents are able to participate and engage using a variety of methods tailored to their needs, regardless of sexual orientation.</p> <p>Township Forum members have the</p>

			local knowlege and networks to help ensure Township Grant funding is allocated to local projects which help reduce disadvantage within and between people from different communities, including the local LGBT communtiy.
Religion or belief	Yes	No	Township Forum members have the local knowlege and networks to help ensure Township Grant funding is allocated to local projects which help reduce disadvantage within and between people from different communities, including local faith groups.
Caring responsibilities	Yes	No	Enhancing Township forums and harnessing wider engagement methods should help to ensure that residents are able to participate and engage using a variety of methods tailored to their needs, including caring responsibilities. Township Forum members have the local knowlege and networks to help ensure Township Grant funding is allocated to local projects which help promote overall wellbeing, including for those with caring responsibilities.
Pregnancy or maternity	No	No	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage or civil partnership	No	No	

3b. Using the drop down lists below, please advise whether or not our policy/service has relevance to the Public Sector Equality Duty. If you answer yes to any question, please explain why.

General Public Sector Equality Duties	Relevance (Yes/No)	Reason for the relevance
Need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010	No	
Need to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not (eg. by removing or minimising disadvantages or meeting needs)	Yes	The Township Forums will be responsible for decision making in relation to a community grant allocation. These Grants will be distributed to voluntary organisations which provide services in response to local needs, many of these services meeting needs that fall below the threshold for statutory intervention but which, nonetheless, improve an individual's quality of life, enable them to participate more fully in society and may mitigate or delay the need for statutory intervention in the future. Proposals to channel more funding through Township Forums means that decisions will be taken more closely to the communities they serve and enable local people to be involved in the process.
Need to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not (eg. by tackling prejudice or promoting understanding)	Yes	The recommendations outlined in the report will help ensure the Township Forums are more locally focussed and effective. Reducing the number of meetings, promoting other engagement methods and reducing the numbers of generic presentations should encourage more active engagement, strengthen community relations and community cohesion.

If you answered 'YES' to any of the questions in 3a and 3b

Go straight to Question 4

If you answered 'NO' to all of the questions in 3a and 3b

Go to Question 3c and do not answer questions 4-6

3c. If you have answered 'No' to all the questions in 3a and 3b please explain why you feel that your policy/service has no relevance to equality.

4. EQUALITY INFORMATION AND ENGAGEMENT

4a. For a service plan, please list what equality information you currently have available, **OR** for a new/changed policy or practice please list what equality information you considered and engagement you have carried out in relation to it.

Please provide a link if the information is published on the web and advise when it was last updated?

(NB. Equality information can be both qualitative and quantitative. It includes knowledge of service users, satisfaction rates, compliments and complaints, the results of surveys or other engagement activities and should be broken down by equality characteristics where relevant.)

Details of the equality information or engagement	Internet link if published	Date last updated
<p>Feedback on the proposals was sought at the last round of Township Forum meetings.</p> <p>A total of 72 responses were received via the Township Forums.</p> <p>The majority of responses received indicate widespread consensus and support for the proposals with one exception; proposals to reduce the frequency of meetings received more of a mixed response, particularly from Whitefield and Unsworth, Prestwich and Radcliffe Township</p>	<p>See Appendix A of the report.</p>	

<p>Forums.</p> <p>However the report recognises that people prefer to share their views using a variety of methods accessible to them. Having fewer meetings combined with the other changes recommended in the report should help improve overall engagement and ensure the Township Forums are more productive and locally focussed.</p> <p>Feedback received via the Township Co-ordinators indicates that where Police attend meetings, this is positively received by members of the public. The report proposes to formalise police involvement in the Township Forums.</p>		

4b. Are there any information gaps, and if so how do you plan to tackle them?

<p>Further opportunities to streamline engagement approaches with partners through township forums will be explored over the coming six months, particularly health colleagues.</p>

5. CONCLUSIONS OF THE EQUALITY ANALYSIS

What will the likely overall effect of your policy/service plan be on equality?	<p>Positive: whilst the changes will have little impact in individuals with protected characteristics and any benefit will be felt by all groups, the proposed changes should help to improve community engagement approaches, thereby improving community relations and community cohesion.</p> <p>Delegating funding decisions through the Township Forums should strengthen local transparency and accountability in relation to the allocation of grants and increase community involvement in decisions.</p>
If you identified any negative effects (see questions 3a) or discrimination what measures have you put in place to remove or mitigate them?	<p>None</p>
Have you identified any further ways that you can advance equality of opportunity and/or foster good relations? If so, please give details.	<p>To continue to promote Township Forums and encourage people to become involved. The work of the Forums will also be complimented through the promotion of other communication and engagement methods which can meet the needs of different communities and groups. This recognises that not everybody wants to attend a formal meeting.</p>
What steps do you intend to take now in respect of the implementation of your policy/service plan?	<p>If approved by Cabinet on 10 June 2015:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A recommendation will be made to the next meeting of Full Council to amend the Operating Framework to reflect the proposals. In particular, to reduce the frequency of Township Forum meetings from six to four per year for 2015/16 onwards. • The decision will be communicated through the next round of Township Forum meetings. • Detailed discussions will take place with groups • The Township Forum 'presentation protocol' will be refreshed to reflect the proposals. • Guidance and governance arrangements will be finalised to facilitate the delegation of grant spending to Township Forums for the new municipal year.

6. MONITORING AND REVIEW

If you intend to proceed with your policy/service plan, please detail what monitoring arrangements (if appropriate) you will put in place to monitor the ongoing effects. Please also state when the policy/service plan will be reviewed.

The Cabinet Member for Communities will receive regular reports on the operation of the Township Forums, particularly in relation to the implementation of the new proposals.

All groups receiving funding from the Communities Fund will be monitored on a quarterly basis to review performance and funding levels.

An annual progress report on the operation of the Township Forums, including grant funding will be submitted to Council at its first meeting of the municipal year 2016.

Guidance will be produced for Township Forums to outline duties and responsibilities in respect of funding local bodies. Control of budgets will be retained centrally (with funding being released according to Forum decisions) whilst governance will be further strengthened by corporate monitoring of spending decisions on a quarterly basis.

COPIES OF THIS EQUALITY ANALYSIS FORM SHOULD BE ATTACHED TO ANY REPORTS/SERVICE PLANS AND ALSO SENT TO THE EQUALITY INBOX (equality@bury.gov.uk) FOR PUBLICATION.

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