

COUNCIL MEETING
30 JANUARY 2013
LEADER'S STATEMENT

Madam Mayor, Fellow Councillors and members of the public, I will now take this opportunity to report to Council on the work of the Cabinet since the last Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 12 December.

The Cabinet received a proposal to implement a new policy concerning the Night Time Economy mainly for Bury Town Centre but this will apply across the Borough.

Our vision for the town centre is that Bury Town Centres will be a stimulating destination providing a safe, secure environment with a vibrant choice and rich mix of entertainment and activity that will appeal to a range of age groups, including families, which will change seamlessly throughout the evening.

It is clear that the recently completed development schemes within Bury town centre have the potential to transform perceptions and the way in which buildings and the public realm are used. A consultation

document has been published which sets out a framework for all partners and licence holders to develop an approach to successfully manage the night time economy and maximise potential benefits.

Strategic Tenancy Policy - Under the Localism Act 2011, all local authorities in England are required to produce and publish a Strategic Tenancy Policy for their area, by 13th January 2013.

The Cabinet agreed a new policy framework following a period of consultation which covers a number of key tenancy issues, including:

Lifetime Tenancies vs. Fixed Term Tenancies - Bury will continue to offer lifetime tenancies in unadapted, general needs, social rented housing and will support and encourage registered providers in the Borough to follow this approach.

Housing for Older People - Older people living in properties specifically designated for older people should be given lifetime tenancies.

Under-occupation and over-crowding - The Council will provide advice and support to tenants who need to move due to under-occupation or over-crowding of their current tenancy.

Private Sector & Homelessness - The Council will seek to use the private rented sector to discharge its homelessness duties. Each decision will be considered on a case by case basis, subject to agreed criteria and guidelines.

Affordable Rent Conversions - The Council will work with registered providers in the Borough to manage conversions to Affordable Rent, to ensure sufficient choice of affordable tenures in the Borough and to minimise negative impacts on benefits costs.

As far as rents are concerned at this point in time, the Council are not going to charge higher rents to higher income households, particularly as there is no evidence of how many households would be affected.

Cabinet approved an update to Environment Services Enforcement Policy

Fair and effective regulation and enforcement is essential to protect the health and safety of the public, the economic interests of businesses and the environment in the Bury Council area. It is recognised that decisions about enforcement action, and in particular the decision to prosecute, can have serious implications for all involved. The Environmental Services enforcement policy seeks to ensure that enforcement action is fair, proportionate and consistent and that everyone understands the principles which are applied when enforcement action is considered.

Home to School Transport – a revised policy was adopted. This decision was subject to a 'Call in' but the Scrutiny Committee after a thorough and lengthy examination of the issues decided not to refer the matter back to Council or Cabinet.

Cabinet have also now approved a new DFE Funding Formula for schools which will, we are assured, simplify Local funding commencing in 2013-14. In addition, local authorities will assume funding responsibility for universal provision for 2 year olds and those students attending Further Education aged 16-25 with Learning Disabilities. The funding will be through the Dedicated Schools Grant.

Many Members will be aware of the news that Manchester Airport Group were successful and their bid to buy Stansted Airport. I believe the acquisition of Stansted has significant and positive outcomes for AGMA and the sub region. The fact that MAG could attract a top top global investor from Australia; the fact that MAG could mount not only a credible but successful bid against global big hitters speaks volumes for AGMA and the Airport's ambitious growth plans. As far as the ten Districts in AGMA are concerned the growth of the Airport's income and future profits will feed down to Districts in the form of increased Dividends for many many years to come.

Madam Mayor, before I close I want to place on record our thanks to all our staff who worked over Christmas and New Year in providing those key front-line services, that at times we take for granted but nevertheless should be recognised. I also want say a special thank you to our 3 Members of staff at Registrars who walked into work from Tottington and Brandlesholme on that snow bound Saturday morning a week or so ago to ensure a planned wedding went ahead and the couple's special day was not spoilt.

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