

## AGENDA FOR

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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**To: All Members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Councillors :** R Caserta (Chair), T Cummings, J Harris, N Jones, K Leach, B Mortenson, M Powell, L Smith, S Smith, Susan Southworth, R Walker and C Walsh

Dear Member/Colleague

### **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee which will be held as follows:-

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <b>Date:</b>                | Thursday, 21 November 2019  |
| <b>Place:</b>               | Meeting Rooms A & B - Town Hall   |
| <b>Time:</b>                | 7.00 pm   |
| <b>Briefing Facilities:</b> | 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. |
| <b>Notes:</b>               |   |

## **AGENDA**

### **1 APOLOGIES**

### **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to consider whether they have an interest in any matters on the agenda and, if so, to formally declare that interest.

### **3 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

A period of 30 minutes has been set aside for members of the public to ask questions on matters considered at the last meeting and set out in the minutes or on the agenda for tonight's meeting.

### **4 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** *(Pages 1 - 14)*

The Minutes of the last meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 12 September 2019 are attached.

### **5 PERFORMANCE IN SCHOOLS** *(Pages 15 - 32)*

Report from the Cabinet Member – Children and Families attached  
Associate Headteacher Scheme - pen portrait briefs attached  
Holy Cross Summary attached – David Frost, Principal  
Elton High School Summary attached – Jonathan Wilton, Head  
Vision Academy Trust summary attached – Carol McLachlain, Head  
Hoyle Nursery attached – Rachel O'Neil, Head

### **6 OMBUDSMAN ANNUAL REPORT** *(Pages 33 - 58)*

### **7 CORPORATE FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT APRIL - SEPTEMBER 2019** *(Pages 59 - 82)*

Report attached

### **8 DEVOLUTION/GM COMBINED AUTHORITY** *(Pages 83 - 88)*

Report attached

### **9 \*CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE COMPLAINTS REPORT - FOR INFORMATION\*** *(Pages 89 - 100)*

### **10 JANUARY MEETING - CHANGE OF DATE**

The next scheduled meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was due to meet on 23 January 2020. This date clashes with the Bury Holocaust Memorial Day event.

Following consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Chair of

Overview and Scrutiny it has been agreed that the January meeting of Overview and Scrutiny will be held on 30 January 2020.

## **11 URGENT BUSINESS**

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

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**Minutes of: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Date of Meeting:** 12 September 2019

**Present:** Councillor R Caserta (in the Chair)  
Councillors T Cummings, N Jones, M Powell, L Smith,  
S Smith, Susan Southworth, R Walker and C Walsh

**Also in attendance:** Mrs M Wilde – Co-opted Member (Education)

**Public Attendance:** No members of the public were present at the meeting.

**Apologies for Absence:** Councillor K Leach and Councillor B Mortenson

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#### **OSC.151 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Harris declared a personal interest in any item relating to Six Town Housing as she is a member of the Board.

Mrs Wilde – Co-opted Member declared a personal interest as a school governor.

#### **OSC.152 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

No members of the public were present

#### **OSC.153 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

##### **It was agreed:**

That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 16 July be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### **OSC.154 CORPORATE CORE UPDATE**

Councillor Jane Black, Cabinet Member Corporate Affairs and HR and Lynne Ridsdale, Deputy Chief Executive, presented a report updating Members on the progress made in establishing Corporate Core Services.

It was reported that since the last update to Overview and Scrutiny in July 2019 significant progress had been made as follows:

- All HR teams have been brought together into a single corporate service which will co-locate and deliver a 20% reduction in costs. The corporate structure is the first stage of a longer programme of improvement in people management. The corporate People Strategy will now be updated to reflect organisational priorities and in the first instance will be aligned with the GM Good Employment Charter across the following key areas of employment practice:
  - Secure work
  - Flexible work
  - A real living wage

- Workplace engagement and voice
- Excellent recruitment practices and progression
- Excellent people management
- A productive and healthy workplace

A fundamental review of all HR related policies, procedures, data and systems is now being planned, with input from managers, staff and in partnership with the Trades Unions.

- A programme managed approach to stabilising IT is underway; the roll out of new devices has been expedited and the telephony system upgrade delivered in September against plan
- The posts in scope of future single Core services as described in section 2.2 have been identified and included in a report to Cabinet seeking permission to consult on establishing the single teams. Subject to agreement, proposals will be the basis of a 90 day consultation period and implemented in early 2020
- Work is underway to strengthen the consistency in compliance and assurance of GDPR and data protection legislation, with workshops underway to refresh the skills and engagement of the network of Information Governance Champions; finalisation of the Council's ROPA (Record of Processing Activity); and a review of arrangements for the disposal of confidential waste
- A review of business support capacity has recently begun, starting with PA provision. Work to date has centred on understanding current activity (eg any variations across departments); benchmarking cost, capacity processes; and considering what elements of work could be addressed through self-service. This review will be subject to detailed stakeholder engagement and staff consultation around any changes
- The Chief Information Officer has taken up post to lead IT, Policy and Performance functions. The early priority for this post holder will be the programme management of the design of a new Bury Strategy. Work is underway at pace and will involve:
  - capturing the plans, priorities and strategies across all Team Bury partners
  - Baselining the associated outcomes and performance measures of partner plans against Borough issues and priorities
  - Hosting a big "conversation" across Bury residents to capture their strengths, concerns and aspirations for Bury over the next ten years
- The Deputy Chief Executive's office continue to lead the network of 'Change Agents' across the Council and CCG. This is a self-selected network of staff who want to drive and support change across the organisations, within and outside of their normal responsibilities. The network meet monthly and maintain a digital network. An opportunity for further development of the Change Agents in the area of

transformational leadership and managing change is being explored through resources available to the CCG. The Change Agents are receiving an early briefing on the Bury Strategy and invited to get involved in the consultation exercise with residents.

The strategic intention is for Council and CCG services to operate as one, in pursuit of efficiencies and shared good practice. The scale and complexity of such change is significant however and therefore the following pragmatic approach to implementation is proposed:

- All Council services to be brought together from former departmental teams into a single corporate service, as a first priority. The scope for ongoing co-provision with the CCG to then be explored. At this stage early priorities for integration are:
  - the communications team, which is already operating under a Joint Head of Service and;
  - the performance and intelligence teams who have worked closely for some time.
- Combined teams, once scoped, to operate under common leadership and to a consistent set of standards and accountabilities but the intention is to avoid Council staff providing any Core support to the CCG on the basis that VAT costs would apply to this arrangement. Further advice on this matter is being pursued by the Finance service.

Moving forward, the process of consulting and finalising scoping proposals for the establishment of corporate teams proposed will be a significant priority. A 90 day consultation period will apply during which staff briefings will be arranged and formal feedback considered through normal consultation procedure. At the end of this period a decision will be taken in relation to all corporate resources in the teams within the remit of the Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate Core)

The development of the Corporate Core is an important undertaking for the council both in terms of culture and effectiveness. Bringing disparate teams together both from within the council itself but also integrating with the CCG will allow for a collection of expertise and more integrated working, whilst removing duplication and inconsistencies.

Those present were given the opportunity to ask questions and make comments and the following points were raised:

- Councillor L Smith referred to contractors that the Council employed being required to pay a living wage and asked where this was up to.

Lynne explained that proposals would have to be drawn up in relation to this and any decisions made would be Council decisions.

- Councillor L Smith referred to the Bury Strategy and asked how wide the consultation would be and whether it would reach the diverse communities across the borough.

It was reported that the consultation would be as far and wide as possible to ensure engagement across the borough and this includes posters and signage in areas with high traffic such as GPs surgeries, hospitals and at events such as Bury 10k. There was a social media campaign that had already begun. It was hoped that all age profiles would take part and engagement will be carried out with service user, partners and residents. There was a competition being held across the borough's primary schools asking young people to 'design Bury 2030'.

Councillor Black explained that Bury means different things to different people and if a resident wanted to comment on the area that they lived or worked rather than Bury as a whole that would be welcomed.

- Councillor S Smith stated that there had been a large consultation carried out across the borough around 10 years ago. Councillor Smith suggested that the results from that are reviewed as part of the process.
- Councillor Caserta referred to alignment with the GM Good Employment Charter and stated that some of the characteristics within the Charter were lacking in detail such as zero hour contracts and NDAs.

Lynne explained that this would be Bury's interpretation and the GM Charter will be a good starting point.

- Councillor Caserta referred to the issue with VAT that had been highlighted and asked whether there was something in place to solve this.

Lynne reported that advice would be sought to help decide how to take this forward.

### **It was agreed:**

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the good progress made since the last update.

## **OSC.155 VOLUNTEERING**

Councillor Jane Black, Cabinet Member Corporate Affairs and HR presented a report giving details of the Council's employee volunteering scheme. Appended to the report was the Bury Council's Supported Volunteering Policy.

It was explained that the scheme has been developed jointly between Bury Council and Bury CCG and allows staff to volunteer up to 3 days' a year in work time.

The policy will operate in collaboration with the newly formed Bury Voluntary, Community and Faith Alliance (VCFA). The success of the scheme is dependent on the VCFA portal offering sufficient and suitable volunteering opportunities.

Those present were given the opportunity to make comments and ask questions and the following points were raised:

- Councillor Walker asked that the scheme wasn't over bureaucratized.



- Councillor Walsh stated that the scheme was very positive and would have good effects on mental health.
- Councillor Southworth referred to the VCFA helping to publicise the opportunities and asked that the big organisations offering volunteering opportunities be included.
- Councillor Caserta asked what the relationship was between the Council and CCG and the VCFA.

It was explained that the VCFA were a partner organisation who organise a lot of the voluntary sector work in Bury. The VCFA will hold a register that staff can look at when considering volunteering opportunities. It was explained that the register would have opportunities to consider but the volunteering opportunities did not have to come from there.

**It was agreed:**

That the contents of the report be noted.

**OSC.156 COMMUNITY SAFETY**

Councillor Sharon Briggs presented a report providing feedback from the Community Safety Partnership on crime statistics in Bury and progress in implementing priorities of the Community Safety Plan.

- Crime levels in Bury are at or below projected levels in 23 out of 26 areas.
- Bury is the second safest borough in GM in terms of Household crime.
- Bury has some of the lowest Juvenile reoffending rates in GM, well below national averages.
- Adult re-offending is also below National averages and Bury is in the top half of GM boroughs.
- Hate-crime levels are also below the GM average but in line with national trend have increased over the last couple of years.
- This report has been written with limited available Police data. However, the Police are in the process of implementing a new IT system which will ultimately enhance data quality and improve general efficiency.

The Community Safety Plan was agreed at Full Council in November 2018.

The priorities identified in the plan link directly to the outcomes identified in the GM Standing Together Police & Crime Plan, which forms the bedrock of all Community Safety Plans across Greater Manchester.

The current issues were set out within the report:

- Domestic Violence and Abuse
- Youth Violent Crime
- Channel/Prevent
- Impact of Brexit

Members were given the opportunity to ask questions and make comments and the following points were raised:

- Councillor Nick Jones referred to the Channel/Prevent and asked what the timescales were around this work.

Tom Hoghton, Community Safety Manager explained that this was currently being negotiated and work was being undertaken on the best way to deliver.

- Councillor Caserta referred to the impact of Brexit and asked how the Council would use the money it had received in relation to this.

It was explained that it is up to each Council to invest in the areas it thinks would be relevant. It was anticipated that this would be food and medicines, investment in the VCFA for communication, working with community groups.

An economic impact assessment will be carried out working with local businesses.

Work will be carried out in relation to civil unrest alongside community safety.

It was explained that the main area of work would be around communication and particularly vulnerable people.

- Councillor N Jones referred to Bury being a safe borough and the statistics provided within the report. Councillor Jones asked whether this information was provided through the new Greater Manchester Police IT system which had been having issues since its introduction in August.

Tom explained that the figures set out in the report was from data collated in July, before the introduction of the new systems.

- Councillor L Smith referred to the Brexit planning and the small retailers within her ward of Besses. Councillor Smith asked that all small businesses were considered when undertaking planning.

### **It was agreed:**

That the contents of the report be noted.

## **OSC.157 CORPORATE FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT (APRIL TO JUNE)**

Councillor O'Brien, Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing presented a report informing Members of the Council's financial position for the period April 2019 to June 2019 and projects the estimated outturn at the end of 2019/2020.

Those present were given the opportunity to ask questions and make comments and the following points were raised:-

- Councillor Walker referred to 4.1.3 of the report and the use of the term 'Demographic Pressures', Councillor Walker asked for this to be explained.

Councillor O'Brien explained that there were a larger number of older people in Bury than was average and a larger number of younger people in Bury than was average as well as a high proportion of people with disabilities.

Mike Woodhead explained that the locality plan that was produced jointly between the Council and the CCG showed in the service user level that 80% of the costs related to 20% of users.

- Councillor N Jones referred to the Council Tax Recovery Team and asked what the level of recovery was.

Councillor O'Brien reported that the team had an additional 2 staff members which had seen a return of seven times their salaries which equated to £5000 per hour worked. In total the amount collected was £800,000.

Councillor O'Brien explained that the Council were currently reviewing the potential for further staff within the team, although pointed out that there would be a critical point when increased staffing would not generate the same proportion of return.

Councillor N Jones asked that it be recorded that the work of the team be commended.

- Councillor Caserta referred to the announcement that TfGM would be charging for travel passes for older people and asked how this scheme would work.

Councillor O'Brien stated that he wasn't sure of the details but it was felt to be the most equitable way forward.

- Councillor Walker stated that he hadn't received any information in relation to the question he had asked about Capital receipts from the sale of assets and asked that this information be provided.
- Councillor N Jones explained that he had asked a question relating to a breakdown of the Council's investment properties and asked that this information also be provided.

### **It was agreed:**

That the contents of the report be noted and information provided to Cllr Walker and Cllr Jones as previously agreed.

## **OSC.158 TRADED SERVICES UPDATE**

Mike Woodhead, Joint Chief Finance Officer presented the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the Schools Traded Services Year on Year Review.

Those present were given the opportunity to ask questions and the following points were raised:

- Councillor L Smith asked whether the Council was making a profit in relation to the services provided to schools.

Mike explained that the profit made had improved in the last year. There was no financial drain on the Council but it was becoming more challenging.

Mike explained that the caretaking service was one area where more work was required and this was ongoing.

- Councillor Jones stated that all schools were able to consider other options not just academies. The service offered needs to be of a standard that can compete with the private providers.
- Councillor Southworth explained that schools are going to look for better value for money and as such the Council needs to offer different options.

### **It was agreed:**

That the contents of the report be noted.

## **OSC.159 BUSINESS GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

Paul Lakin, Director of Economic Regeneration and Capital Growth gave a presentation setting out the implementation of the growth strategy, the key objectives, streamlining and funding of the Directorate, the 2019/2020 early priorities, including the early priorities in relation to Bury Market.

Those present were given the opportunity to ask questions and make comments and the following points were raised:

- Councillor Lucy Smith referred to 5G in public sector buildings and asked how the public sector buildings were being included in the roll out of 5G.

Paul explained that there would have to be a more considered paper presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to 5G roll out across the borough.

- Councillor Powell referred to the development of Prestwich Village and asked where it was up to and whether the 9 Prestwich Councillors will be briefed on future developments.

Paul explained that a Cabinet Paper was in the process of being produced and Councillors will be briefed. This would then lead to public consultation.

- Councillor Southworth reiterated the need for involving local Councillors in all consultations relating to their wards.
- Councillor N Jones referred to early priorities across the borough in general and the big sites that were set out with the presentation including; the former fire station in Bury Town Centre; Chamberhall; Bradley Fold Industrial Estate; Market Chambers and Radcliffe Leisure Centre site.

Councillor Jones asked for information showing actual progress made at the sites.

- Councillor Jones asked how the footfall at Bury Market was monitored.

Paul explained that there were movement monitors attached to the entrances that counted people in. The margin for error was always built into these statistics and the staffing numbers within the markets were also accounted for.

- Councillor Harris referred to Chamberhall and the statement that 50% was already let. Councillor Harris asked what this actually meant.

Paul explained that this referred to the gross floor space available and the fact that a pre let agreement had been signed for 50% of this space. Paul reported that he would provide an update on these figures at a future meeting.

- Councillor Stella Smith referred to the old Police Station site at Irwell Street in Bury Town Centre and what was happening at the site.

Paul explained that the old Fire Station site was in the process of being reviewed. The Council were looking for a very specific type of investor that would enhance the site and would not just accept the highest bid. It was anticipated that this work would inform the decision on the old Police Station site on Irwell Street site also.

- Councillor Stella Smith referred to Bury Market and the reduction in footfall and asked whether there was any demographic information in relation to this.

Paul explained that the Market didn't attract as many young people as it would like.

- Councillor Stella Smith suggested that all social media and other tactics needed to be employed.

Paul explained that following recent dialogue between the Council and market traders it had been agreed to review the current business model. A cross party working group will be set up to oversee the future development of the market.

### **It was agreed:**

1. That the contents of the update be noted.
2. That a report setting out the work of the Bury Market Working Group be brought to a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

## **OSC.160 LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN - EARLY INTERVENTION REPORT**

Tony Decrop, Assistant Director – Social Care and Safeguarding and Karen Dolton, Executive Director – Children and Young People presented a report providing an overview of Bury's Looked After Children and Early Help provision and service development/transformation linked to those workstreams.

The report set out the principles and values of Bury Council's commitment to children in care, gave information in relation to the numbers of children and details of sex, age, ethnicity and where those children had been placed.

The report also gave information in relation to Corporate Parents, Children in Care Council, Bury Children's Rights, the role of the Independent Reviewing Officers, Monitoring and Governance, the Virtual School, Health of Looked After Children, Permanence, the Regional Adoption Agency and Special Guardianship Orders.

Future actions were reported including improving foster care recruitment, the Council and CCG becoming foster friendly employers, developing Corporate Parenting Champions across the Council and the CCG and having a robust Early Help offer.

It was reported that a three month consultation had been carried out which outlined a new proposed Early Help Division which would bring together staff from Team Oasis, Children's Centres – including outreach services, Reaching Children, Families and Parenting workers and the Reach Out Project into a unified early help management structure. Within the consultation existing teams/roles moved to the Early Help and School Readiness division; Integrated Youth Support Services, Connexions, School Attendance Service, Emotional Wellbeing practitioner, Early Years Advisors, Portage, Early Help Youth Offending Practitioners and Domestic Abuse Project. A new role has been developed for School Readiness Lead Officer and Service Manager. In order to strengthen and provide accountability and focus for Early Help and School Readiness, a role of Assistant Director Early Help and School Readiness has been developed; this will help to drive forward changes at pace to have the impact needed to reduce demand on the system.

The SCIL line management has transferred from Communities and Wellbeing and is positioned within Early Help and School Readiness.

It was explained that the Early Help delivery model will be locality based and support communities.

A new early help assessment has been developed through multi-agency consultation. The assessment is called the "Story So Far" and developed with the intention for it to be a live document where a family's story can be captured and added to as their circumstances change stopping them having to re-tell it to different agencies.

Those present were given the opportunity to ask questions and make comments and the following points were raised:

- Councillor Susan Southworth referred to the role of advisor to the Foster Panel and rate of staff turnover in this role. There had been 3 or 4 different people in this post in the past 18 months.

Karen Dolton explained that she was aware of the situation and there had been some performance issues as well as staff leaving if they received a better offer. There had been a programme of improvement and enhanced capacity within the team.

- Councillor Southworth stated that there were an increasing number of family and friends coming forward as carers for looked after children, sometimes with very tenuous links and asked what was done about this.

Karen explained that anybody that wanted to become a foster carer would have to go through the full training process and go through to the foster panel for approval no matter if they were family or friends. It was also explained that the courts expect that all family options are exhausted before permanency and adoption. It was stated that these placements were often the best outcome as the child could still live within their family network and there were fewer breakdowns.

- Councillor Walsh asked what the Council and CCG offered to employees as a Foster Friendly Employer.

It was explained that this would include time away from work to attend training and other appointments associated with fostering.

- Councillor Lucy Smith asked whether being a Foster Friendly Employee was an accredited award.

It was explained that, yes this was the case.

### **It was agreed:**

That the contents of the report be noted.

## **OSC.161 SEND UPDATE**

Karen Dolton and Councillor Tamoor Tariq presented a report giving an update on Special Educational Needs and Disability.

It was explained that the SEND Ofsted revisit in May 2019 found that Bury Local area had made sufficient progress in 5 of the 8 areas and the three other areas had not made sufficient progress as follows:

- Sharing of health information and contribution to Education Health and Care plans (EHCP).
- Health Practitioners were unaware of Children's EHCPs.
- Joint Commissioning Arrangements

The actions that had been carried out to date were set out within the report and it was reported that there is a comprehensive action plan in place to accelerate the pace of change in relation to SEND to ensure that all aspects of the local area offer are effective, joined up and improve the outcomes for all Bury children with SEN.

It was explained that an action plan had been submitted by the CCG and a meeting to go through this was due to be held on 23 September. There were no more planned visits from Ofsted.

The following points were raised:

- Councillor Caserta asked who would be checking on the progress made with regards to the Action Plan.

Karen explained that more would be known around this following the planned meeting on the 23 September. Karen stated that she would report back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update following the meeting.

- Councillor Walsh referred to Education Health Care Plans and the auditing of these and asked who was involved and whether this could be brought to a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny.

Karen reported that additional capacity had been brought in to undertake independent multi agency reviews for each plan.

**It was agreed:**

That the contents of the report be noted.

**OSC.162 UPDATE ON PERFORMANCE IN SCHOOLS/SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT WORKING GROUP**

Councillor Tamoor Tariq, Cabinet Member for Children and Families and Julien Kramer, Interim Assistant Director, Education and Inclusion presented a report giving the Overview and Scrutiny Committee an update on the work being undertaken in relation to School Improvement.

It was reported that the initial meeting of the Performance in Schools working Group had met. The next meeting of the group was due to be held on 11 November and would receive the following information:

- The vision for School Improvement Strategy
- Performance profile of schools
- Single page Summary
- Associate Heads School-led service

Councillor Tariq reported that one school in the borough had received a formal warning notice and Officers had had an informal conversation with the school head and the Chair of Governors. The school had 15 working days to respond to the notice and would then be invited to a meeting for a presentation of findings judgement which will determine the next steps.

It was explained that there was one more school that would be issued with a warning and go through the same process.

It was reported that the intervention powers were used carefully and that everything was done to protect the children and staff within the schools.

**It was agreed:**

That the update be noted.



**COUNCILLOR R CASERTA**  
**Chair**

**(Note: The meeting started at 7.00 pm and ended at 9.40 pm)**

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**REPORT TO OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE****THURSDAY 21 NOVEMBER 2019****SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT****INTRODUCTION**

School Improvement is central to the Council's Corporate vision of improved lives, improved health, economic regeneration, skills development and innovation. The report notes that: -

- a strategic overview of the 2019/20 school improvement draft programme was agreed in the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 16 July 2019
- a report on 12 September 2019 focussed on securing excellent pupil attendance
- a second focus in that report was on the early years of pupils induction to education

This report outlines the latest validated results for the education service at each key stage and in external examinations.

It also has a set of cameos from Head Teachers and a College Principal on their successful delivery of education in Bury. The authors of each summary will be in attendance to support the Member scrutiny process.

**OPTIONS**

- Members will wish to consider the latest validated results for education in Bury in the context of the school improvement strategy
- Members will wish also to consider good practice as outlined in the cameo summaries
- Members may wish to engage with leading educationalists in the meeting.

In the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting of Tuesday 16 July 2019, Members received and considered a **Performance in Bury Schools report**, which contained:-

- an overview of current school performance
- a summary of school improvement strategies
- an overview of the legal and statutory context

In the subsequent meeting of overview and Scrutiny on Tuesday 12 September 2019 Members considered pupil attendance and early years:

- A review of attendance and early years trends
- A summary of the improvement strategies for both service areas
- An assessment of the performance target set

This report develops the scrutiny conversation about school improvement by providing for Member consideration:-

- a set of the latest validated school performance data which will enable Members to further scrutinise key features of the education service
- An appraisal of successful school and college improvement
- A conversation with leading educational practitioners in Bury

## **RECOMMENDED OPTIONS**

1. Members are asked to agree a validated set of education performance data for 2019/20.
2. Members are asked to consider receiving education cameo summaries of individual school and college success.
3. Members are asked to consider discussing school improvement issues with leading educationalists.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

1. The developing strategic scrutiny of school improvement across all phases should enable Members to assess the relative performance profile of key service areas, and the cumulative value which each subsequent stage adds to pupil learning.
2. Powerful scrutiny of each key area in the school improvement repertoire will enable Members to focus on areas of good practice and areas of performance concern. This will enable both shared good practice, and it will target the work of the service on areas of under-performance.
3. The implications of reviewing the validated data in the context of the new school improvement strategy are self-evident; how children succeed in their learning in Bury is critical in both securing their futures and in sustaining the confidence and resilience of our society.
4. Member scrutiny of the validated education data, and their discussions with successful educationalists are central features in ensuring that effective school improvement sits at the heart of the Bury policy process.

## **1:0 SUMMARY**

This report asks Members of Overview and Scrutiny to consider the validated data for education in Bury for the year 2019. The report proposes scrutiny of data and of educational practice at successful centres in Bury.

## **2:0 MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION/DECISION**

Members will wish to determine whether the report is appropriate and sufficient to support their ambitions in scrutinising school improvement arrangements in Bury.

## **3:0 BACKGROUND**

Although responsibilities, governance and accountability in securing education for young people in England is now dispersed responsibility, the Local Authority continues to be responsible for key aspects of learning.

These include pupil admissions, attendance, exclusions, pupil place planning, SEND, aspects of post 16 provision and a general duty to champion the Rights of the Child and safeguarding.

In total, there are more than 200 duties vested in the Local Authority in relation to pupil learning and well-being.

Beyond what is legally required, Bury Council has a moral duty towards its residents to secure their education, training, well-being and economic success.

For these reasons, it has been of concern, both politically and professionally, that school improvement standards are not uniformly good. Recent performance in key phases of learning has been uneven. Bury has previously held a prominent position both regionally and nationally for the attainment of its young people.

After a period of administrative turbulence, and an associated decline in standards of educational attainment, there is now a determined cross-party approach to securing sustained and resilient school improvement. Each element of the school improvement strategy is being tested and strengthened.

The Overview and Scrutiny work programme is intended to enable Members of that Committee to focus sharply our school improvement across each of their meetings in the current year.

## **4:0 BODY OF THE REPORT**

### **a) Overview of current school performance**

**Early Years** - 72% (excluding PVI's) of pupils achieved a good level of development (GLD) and is on an improving trend. This is in line with 2019 national and 3% above GM where Bury is ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> out of the 10 authorities. It is also 3% above the NW where Bury is ranked 5<sup>th</sup> out of the 23 local authorities. 77% of girls achieved GLD compared to 66% of boys. The boys' performance was in line nationally whereas the girls was 1% below. Children with SEN

support (181) scored 2% below national and also dipped by 5% on 2018.

**Key Stage 1 including phonics** - 82% of pupils passed the Year 1 Phonics test which ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> in GM and 5<sup>th</sup> in the NW. 85% of girls passed compared to 79% of boys. Boys' performance was however 1% above those of boys nationally. Children with SEN support scored 2% below national and dipped 10% on 2018. FSM pupils were 1% below the FSM national with EAL pupils' performance dipping 5% and now being 7% lower than the EAL national. Combined RWM at the expected standard was 4% below national which was a dip of 1% on 2018. However, the gap to national at combined greater depth narrowed to 3%.

At the expected standard reading and writing performance dipped. This was replicated across reading, writing and maths at the greater depth standard with the broadest subject gap to national being 5% in reading. Girls outperformed boys in all areas at the expected and greater depth standard except for GDS maths. Writing was the area where the gap between girls and boys in Bury was most significant- 13% at EXS and 8% at GDS.

Performance of SEN pupils was in line with national at the combined expected standard and above in expected reading and maths. Pupils with EAL performed 9% below national at the combined expected standard with writing as an individual subject evidencing the biggest gap to national at 7%. Performance of disadvantaged pupils was above those nationally by 1% in maths, in line for reading and 1% below in writing.

**Key Stage 2** - Combined reading/writing/maths at the expected standard was 1% below national. At the expected standard Reading is 1% below national but in line for maths and writing. At combined greater depth performance improved by 1% with the gap to national being narrowed to 2%. At greater depth scores in reading, writing and maths were all below national with writing being most significant at 5% below. Boys were above boys nationally in expected maths/GPS with girls also scoring above girls nationally in GPS. However both were below boys/girls nationally in all areas of GDS. Girls outperformed boys in all areas except at GDS maths. The attainment gap for EAL pupils was largest in combined reading/writing/maths with a difference to national of -9 however this an improvement of 4% on 2018. Progress scores were above national in reading, writing and maths for the majority however the progress made by girls, EAL, SEN support and high prior attainment in writing were below national.

**Key Stage 4** - Data release on 17 October 2019 (including special) indicates that: Attainment 8 dipped by 1.8 pts, nationally there was an increase of 0.2; Good pass in English and mathematics Bury dipped by 2% whilst national stayed at 43%; Bury is 6% below national in this measure. English 9 – 5 dipped by 1% whilst maths

dipped by 2%; gaps to national are 3% and 6% respectively; Bury's entry for EBacc increased by 1% and is 12% above national; Progress 8 is on a 4 year decline dipping slightly further by -0.06 in 2019; this places Bury 'below average' for progress between Key Stages 2 and 4 for the second year. 6 Bury schools have progress scores below average; 2 well below average, 4 average and 1 above average.

Note: Further analysis of group performance at Key Stage 4 is to follow.

**Key Stage 5** - In 2019, Bury achieved an overall A level APS score of C+, the same as the North West and England. Our more able students are performing less well than both regional and England averages; the number of students in Bury achieving 3A\*/A grades or better fell from 7.8% in 2018 to 7.3% in 2019; this reflected a drop both at North West and England levels, but Bury is still lagging behind both. Those achieving AAB or better has been slightly improving since 2016 but Bury is still behind the North West and the national average.

## **b) Summary of school improvement priorities/strategies**

**Early Years** - Strengthen the team of Early Years moderators aligned with the school-led system model

**Key Stage 1 including phonics** - Priorities have been shared through the school-led system model and primary clusters have identified one or two priorities for their annual work plans. The priorities are:

Phonics:

- Reduce the gap between the performance of boys (79%) and girls (85%)
- Address the dip in the performance of SEN/EAL children

### **Key Stage 1:**

- Reduce the current 4% gap to national (65%) in combined R/W/M at the expected standard. (Reading and writing have the largest subject gaps to national at 3%)
- Improve performance in greater depth reading which is currently 5% below national and writing and maths that both fall 4% below

Identify an Associate Headteacher to undertake diagnostic to inform actions to improve practice. Legacy group from SSIF to continue based on Wayne Tennent project, 2/3 of practitioners have already shared whole school.

**Key Stage 2** - Improve performance in expected reading particularly boys who are now below boys nationally.

- Reduce the current 2% gap to national (10%) in combined R/W/M at the greater depth standard particularly writing which is 5% below.
- Improve the writing progress for girls, EAL, SEN support and high prior attainers

**Key Stage 4** - Continue Year 2 implementation of improving progress in secondary maths strategy; Develop peer working aligned with subject reviews with specialised subject-specific input – involving lead heads of department and senior leaders. The Model to be underpinned by a peer working structure, probably the Schools Partnership Programme; To explore the impact of Bury's 'high' entry for EBacc – 13% & 12% above national for the last 2 years and how the curriculum offer matches pupils' needs and interests. Explore Open element in Progress 8.

## **5:0 SCRUTINY OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT WORK PROGRAMME**

This should support, challenge and reinforce our efforts to substantially recover educational standards in Bury.

## **6:0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Pen portraits – Hoyle Nursery; Vision Multi Academy Trust; The Elton High School and Holy Cross College  
Overview and Scrutiny Report 12 September 2019  
Overview and Scrutiny Report – School Improvement: July 2019  
Bury Council Meeting – July 2019  
North West Association of Directors of Children's Services (NWADCS)  
Local Authority Self-Assessment Report 2019  
Greater Manchester: Support for School Improvement Peer Review 2019  
Education Act 2016  
Education Act 2011





## **ASSOCIATE HEADTEACHER SCHEME - PEN PORTRAIT BRIEFS**

### **1. Healthy Young Minds**

From the recent successful workshop on the co - commissioning of services for children and young people, the opportunity presents for a Headteacher to work with colleagues in Health. The seconded will identify service delivery opportunities, and work with Heads and Officers in Health to propose ways in which services can be developed to better meet the local needs in inclusive settings.

It makes sense for the Associate Head to gather advice, suggestions and proposals from across both Education and Health. Then to review these with parents, carers, young people themselves and the Healthy Young Minds team as the basis for co-commissioning improved service support and better availability of specialist services.

Impact assessment of this important initiative should include student and parent satisfaction.

### **2. Looked After Children Parenting Champions**

Children and young people who experience being looked after for any part of their lives are rightly regarded as being particularly vulnerable. The Associate Head will stimulate interest across Governors to encourage every governing body in nominating a Parent Champion.

The Associate Head will be able to work with the Bury Association of Governors, and with Head colleagues to raise awareness levels of this important initiative.

Impact assessment will be based on the adoption of designated Parent Champion status across the community of governing bodies and trusts in schools of all designations.

### **3. Promoting Exemplar Pupil Attendance**

Excellent pupil attendance is essential if we are to educate every pupil to a good standard. The Associate Head will systematically gather and share best practice in securing school attendance. Working with officers and the Interim Assistant Director for Education and Inclusion the secondee will contribute to our ambition to achieve and sustain top quartile pupil attendance.

Impact assessment of this role will be based on progressive trend analysis of attendance data to demonstrate improvement.

### **4. Early Years- Start Well**

The secondee will work with early years practitioners within the context of early years quality hubs that bring together early years settings and schools to promote effective strategies to increase the percentage of children who are 'school ready' at age 5. The secondee will link with the Early Years

Advisory Team, building on successful strategies and pilot work including WellComm. This invaluable work links with the Greater Manchester Start Well vision which aims to ensure that every child grows up in a nurturing environment, with access to public service support helping youngsters to fulfil their potential as they move into primary education and Bury Council's focus on locality working. There will be links with Health Services through the Early Help model. The secondee will recommend strategies to further strengthen our early years offer promoting quality practice.

Impact assessment in this key project will include: strategies to support pupils who are not on track to be school ready and locality based approaches which bring together the private and public sectors.

### **5. SEND, building on our recovery**

Our most vulnerable pupils and students are getting a better deal in Bury; but parents and heads are still frustrated at the pace of change. The seconded Head will work creatively across the service: to identify problems or concerns - and to propose solutions. They will liaise with the Inclusion Leads.

There are three suggested themes to this work: champion the child, consider the systems implications of specific problem resolution; and contributing to the development of our wider Parent Voice in special needs.

Impact assessment will include: a register of issues identified- and addressed. Some assessment of wider system changes which followed. Some parent feedback on our work in co-producing services for children.

### **6. Transition from primary to secondary school**

The general interest in building on the work of SSIF project 'Reducing barriers to learning for disadvantaged pupils' suggests that a skilled secondary head, working across the phases, and with officers, can stimulate further improvements in our arrangements for pupil transition.

The suggested theme is making effective use of primary/ secondary liaison to ensure that pupils move swiftly on from their differing starting points.

Impact measures would be based on case study work to identify transition difficulties; strategies to promote effective transition and service-wide proposals to address them.

### **7. Improving standards at Key Stage 1 led by a primary head**

The decline in our performance profile has stabilised at Key Stages 2 and 4. However, in primary there is a need to raise standards in the combined measure at Key Stage 1. The seconded head will identify and share good practice, identify barriers to good pupil progress across Key Stage 1 from the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Impact measures will relate to strategies to overcome barriers; attainment outcomes in specified school settings.

## **8. Reaching for the highest standards**

The decline in our performance profile has stabilised at Key Stages 2 and 4. However, across primary and secondary schools too few pupils reach the highest standards available. The seconded head will explore the factors which are limiting pupils including through looking at LAs outside Bury where performance is strong.

Impact measures will relate to developing a strategy to promote high standards and an action plan to address this.

## **9. Maths Development led by a secondary head**

The Associate headteacher will build on the work of the supported peer reviews and the current Year 2 offer to improve progress in secondary maths, further developing the link with the North West 1 Maths Hub to support the work of maths leaders, and their senior line managers, in secondary schools.

In co-ordination with established maths leaders share good practice and embed successful maths strategies.

Consider the partnership potential with receptive University partners to establish a Maths Specialist school in Bury to support our schools. Explore how Bury may support the recruitment, development and retention of quality maths teachers.

Impact measures will reflect progress in each of the areas identified.

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## HOLY CROSS COLLEGE ~ Continuing Quality Improvement & Progress

Like a number educational institutions in Bury, Holy Cross had been Ofsted Outstanding for a decade before 2017. This reflected the high numbers of students (over 50%) getting A\*, A or B at A level, the huge number (85% plus) progressing successfully to university (including Oxbridge, Russell Group and Medical courses) and the excellent pastoral care and enrichment (including Music, Drama, Art and Sport).

Early in 2017, however, I alerted Bury Heads to a changing emphasis in Ofsted's approach - 'Good was the new Outstanding' - with a much stronger focus on 'Value Added'. This places greater weight on the progress of students. Some Bury schools had high percentages of students gaining good GCSEs – perhaps what parents were seeking – but low 'progress' scores (i.e. the students were coming in from with good SAT scores, and getting good GCSE grades – as expected – but not better than expected.)

Holy Cross at that time similarly had 'Satisfactory' progress measures (i.e. the students were coming in with good GCSEs and getting good A Level grades – as expected – but not better than expected.) Ofsted then came in 2017 and judged the College (on 2016 results) as requiring improvement, stating that 'Satisfactory progress was no longer deemed sufficient'. So we set in place a strategy not only to maintain our high grades, high university success and all the other things, but to work towards 'Very Good' progress as well. This was in fact rapidly achieved, with the Alps progress scores showing:

| <i>2016</i>       | <i>2017</i> | <i>2018</i>   |
|-------------------|-------------|---------------|
| 5- (Satisfactory) | 5+ (Good)   | 3 (Excellent) |

Then Ofsted returned, awarding us a very strong 'Good' in inspection in 2018 as a result of this rapid improvement in progress, added to the continuing success in all the other things the College is known for, such as A level high grades, progression to university, pastoral care and enrichment, as described above. (2019 results have maintained this 'Very Good' level of progress, while doubling Oxbridge admissions, increasing A\* grades etc.)

How was this significant level of improvement achieved and maintained? By a very strong quality improvement planning focussing on the following 6 elements:

- (1) Strong monitoring of Progress/Value Added scores at a teacher, class and subject level: every teacher was trained to monitor the Progress Score for every key assessment and exam (using the Alps system) - it was not just left to senior and middle management. Governors trained too.
- (2) Relentless focus on improving Teaching Learning and Assessment, through Observations and Investment in CPD
- (3) Good use of collaboration with other institutions, to share excellent practice.
- (4) Strong Performance Management based on Teaching Standards
- (5) Ensuring teaching time was maximised, reducing intrusions into teaching, revising timetable
- (6) High visibility, drive and constant insistence on high standards across College.

There was, in other words, no magic bullet. What was needed was focus on progress and the staples of teaching and learning – and a willingness to learn from and work with others to improve. The rewards are great: the College is now not only known for high achievement but also for very strong progress. Recruitment has surged forward, and finances are very strong.

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# The Elton High School



## School Context

Standard admission number of 1,000 (200 places per year group). New build opened in September 2016.

2019-20: Numbers **1048** : Y7 First Choice Apps. **392**

2018-19: Numbers **1032** : Y7 First Choice Apps. **303**

2017-18: Numbers **1011** : Y7 First Choice Apps. **245**

2016-17: Numbers **1012** : Y7 First Choice Apps. **232**

Ofsted inspection – 31 January 2017 – Overall ‘Good’ and ‘Good’ in all categories (previously Requires Improvement, February 2015)

Headline GCSE outcomes:

|                     | 2017  | 2018  | 2019  |
|---------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| <b>Progress 8</b>   | 0.36  | 0.07  | -0.17 |
| <b>Attainment 8</b> | 51.03 | 49.76 | 46.7  |
| <b>Eng / Ma 5+</b>  | 45%   | 52.5% | 37.3% |
| <b>Eng / Ma 4+</b>  | 69%   | 74%   | 67%   |

## Daily Delivery—Good Practice To Be Shared

### Relentless Focus on Standards of T&L

Weekly briefing for all staff: Staff T&L Group: Student T&L Group: Improved QA process (Department Eval Fortnights, Half termly work scrutiny, Teacher Eval Doc), focus on Oracy across school, particular teaching/leadership strengths in MFL/Arts subjects/Geography/Music/RE : *All good practice reinforced with recent curriculum review (2019) across all departments*

### Consistent Promotion of Positive Values

Wide range of student roles (peer mentors, peer readers, sports captains, maths mentors, etc), Fortnightly newsletter to wider school community, new uniform (Sept 2018), strong rewards system, practical support for students (Behaviour Mentors, Counsellor, five Year Learning Co-

ordinators etc.), attendance rewards and weekly attendance focus/intervention.

### Strong Profile of Staff and Daily Presence

SLT on lesson by lesson walkaround, open door policy across school, staff presence at lesson changeover, SLT on daily morning/afternoon duty. Staff turnover is very low (2/69 left in Aug 2019) with experienced middle leaders and general teaching staff.

### Strong Focus on Staff Well-being and Reinforcing Team Morale

Golden Weeks half termly, Wellbeing Drop-ins half termly, increased number of SLE roles for strong staff, full restructure of TLR holders (2017) so as to ensure consistency and fairness of roles.

## Challenges and Opportunities

Our school improvement priorities reflect our evaluation of challenges for the coming months:

### Quality of Education

- To maximise students’ progress across all subjects (particularly PP, SEND, Boys, and English outcomes).
- To embed the best practice, research and thinking into our teaching and learning.
- To further improve our curriculum provision.
- To reinforce practice so as to provide for students with additional needs.
- To ensure the effective use of data so as to have maximum impact in teaching and learning and outcomes.

### Behaviour & Attendance

- To further reduce low level disruptive behaviour in lessons.
- To improve attendance of high needs students.
- To further develop students’ pride in achievement.
- To improve punctuality to school and to lessons.
- To further reinforce a culture of mutual respect within the school community.
- To reduce the number of fixed term exclusions, particularly for high needs students.

### Leadership & Management

- To strategically match CPD to school priorities, focussing on six ‘cogs’ of learning.
- To ensure that alternative provision supports students’ progress.
- To continue to improve staff wellbeing.
- To improve the effectiveness of Governance.

### Personal Development

- To further develop coherent curricular / extra-curricular opportunities for students to expand their cultural capital.
- To improve practice with regard key Gatsby benchmarks as identified by Compass.

We are confident of strong daily processes and highly effective, stable staff team. Longer term challenges are to extend the buildings so as to manage the increasing intake: increase staffing to reduce class sizes and reinforce SEN/pastoral support: extend our collaborative work inside and outside the LA to support other schools and improve our own practice.

***High Expectations, No Excuses, Collaboration, Communication***

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## Vision Multi Academy Trust

- Opened with 3 Bury Schools on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017

- East Ward Primary School
- Higher Lane Primary School
- Sunny Bank Primary School



Totalling 1120 Bury children

## Role of the Trust

*"Vision Multi Academy Trust is a community of schools in which our pupils come first; we are proud of each and every one of them and want them to thrive, flourish and achieve their full potential within a supportive and caring environment. The schools in our trust have come together to recruit, retain and develop the highest quality staff in order to deliver the best educational outcomes – and be the employer of choice."*

- Shared Vision and Values
- School Improvement
- Strategic Leadership Team
- Teams for all subject leaders
- Quality of education
- Professional support and challenge from external reviews
- Schools Partnership Programme
- Cross school moderation
- School to school support
- Networking opportunities
- Resource sharing

## School Improvement Offer

- Professional peer support and challenge
- Central office services
  - Business
  - Finance
  - HR
- Compliance
  - Health and Safety
  - Safeguarding
  - Asset Management
  - Insurance
  - Attendance
  - GDPR
  - Governance
- Policies
- Website
- CPD
- Networking
- Governance
- Safeguarding and safer recruitment

## Academy Improvement & Effectiveness 2019

- End of KS2 72% of children across the Trust achieve the expected or above in Reading, Writing and Mathematics;
- End of KS1 69% of children across the Trust achieve the expected or above in Reading, Writing and Mathematics;
- Year one phonics - 87 % of children across the Trust or above pass the phonics test
- Early Years 70% of children across the Trust achieve a good level of development at the end of the early year's foundation stage.

## Governance

- Members and Trustees support and challenge schools
- Each school has local governing body who focus on school improvement and link with trustees through Chair of Local Governing Body
- School improvement members provide external reviews of school
- Local Governing Body and board complete a skills audit to ensure all governance highly skilled.
- Clearly defines roles through the governance structure.
- Ongoing training and support for all governance.

## Accountability

- Trustees
  - Meetings
  - School Reviews
- DfE
- ESFA
- Companies House
- External Audits
  - Finance
- Internal Audits
  - Safeguarding
  - Health and Safety
  - Governance

## Key Performance Indicators

### Safeguarding

- Whole school audit - no reported breaches or concerns

### Health and Safety

- Full school audits – no high priority concern flags
- All schools in Trust deemed as compliant in external annual audit

- No RIDDOR reported accidents

### HR

- Sickness management and absence procedures followed for all absent staff across Trust
- No grievances reported

### Estate Management:

- Condition Improvement Funding totaling £1.2 million secured for capital works over 2 year period
- Asset management plans high priority needs addressed via CIF funding

## Key Performance Indicators

### GDPR:

- No reported data breaches
- All staff completed mandatory training

### Finance:

- Financial probity: measure: 0 red flags
- No Financial Notice to Improve issued
- Unqualified audited annual accounts
- Robust financial procedures maintained - All schools maintained <75% total income on staffing
- Surplus of general reserves maintained between 4 % to 10% of total GAG income



## Single Page Summary of School Improvement Performance Profile

### School Improvement Summary:

#### SEND

- To embed the SEND policy and practice as an operational part of whole school approach to SEND.

#### Curriculum

- To embed intent, implementation and impact throughout the curriculum to ensure that experiences for children are deeply engaging and provide children for their next steps in learning.
- To review the school's current curriculum and ensure the children experience the awe and wonder of the world in which they live through the seven areas of learning.

#### C&L

- To ensure that all pupils make outstanding progress from their starting points in their language and communication skills.

#### PSED

- To develop and support children's behaviour and well-being to ensure that they are highly motivated and have consistent positive attitudes to their play and learning.

#### Reading

- To develop and enhance the way we teach stories and rhymes throughout the school.
- To continue to enhance the recently updated Phonics teaching and learning strategy.

#### Maths

- To ensure enriched opportunities to develop and improve children's skills by providing challenge for Maths in all areas of provision.

### DATA TRACKING SUMMARY 2018-2019

|            | ENTRY<br>S22-36+ | AUTUMN 2<br>B30-50+ | SPRING 2<br>W30-50+ | EXIT<br>S30-50+ |
|------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| 17 ASPECTS | 5.1%             | 21.9%               | 41%                 | 61%             |
| 12 ASPECTS | 5.5%             | 23.7%               | 42.2%               | 62.3%           |

### DATA TRACKING SUMMARY 2019-2020

|            | ENTRY<br>S22-36+ | AUTUMN 2<br>B30-50+ | SPRING 2<br>W30-50+ | EXIT<br>S30-50+ |
|------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| 17 ASPECTS | 8.6%             |                     |                     |                 |
| 12 ASPECTS | 12.1%            |                     |                     |                 |

### SEF Priorities: Ofsted inspection September 2014

Ensure that the excellent practice that exists in helping children to make rapid progress in learning through their play is consistently demonstrated by all staff.

#### Progress:

- All teaching and learning has been judged at least good with an increased percentage consistently outstanding.
- The school demonstrates consistent overall rates of progress and consistent outcomes over time.
- The school identifies specific targeted objectives on the SIP, which have been successfully met each year.
- The consistency and detailed development of half termly pupil progress meetings for T/TAs ensures clear individual accountability for children's progress and a responsibility for the delivery of quality interventions.
- Observations of the quality of adult/child interactions and embedded ECAT/ELKLAN strategies have promoted high quality, consistent practice.
- The school has delivered a range of INSET and attended external training opportunities to support play and interaction.
- The external SIP who has been supporting the Acting Head Teacher has carried out learning walks and observations alongside the Acting Head Teacher.

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|                            |
|----------------------------|
| <b>REPORT FOR DECISION</b> |
|----------------------------|



|   |  |
|---|--|
|   | <b>JET<br/>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>   |
| <b>DATE:</b>  | <b>2 September 2019<br/>21 November 2019</b>   |
| <b>SUBJECT:</b>   | <b>LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE<br/>OMBUDSMAN COMPLAINTS<br/>AND OMBUDSMAN'S ANNUAL REVIEW LETTER</b>  |
| <b>REPORT FROM:</b>   | <b>THE MONITORING OFFICER</b>  |
| <b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>   | <b>JAYNE HAMMOND, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR – LEGAL<br/>AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES</b>   |
| <b>TYPE OF DECISION:</b>  | <b>REPORT FOR INFORMATION</b>  |
| <b>FREEDOM OF<br/>INFORMATION/STATUS:</b>   | This paper is within the public domain   |
| <b>SUMMARY:</b>   | <b>This report sets out findings and recommendations<br/>of the Local Government and Social Care<br/>Ombudsman</b>   |
| <b>OPTIONS &amp;<br/>RECOMMENDED OPTION</b>   | (a) That the content of the Ombudsman's Annual<br>Review Letter to the Council be noted<br>(b) That the complaints made to the Local<br>Government Ombudsman referred to the Council<br>during 2018/19 and their outcomes be noted |
| <b>Corporate Aims/Policy<br/>Framework:</b>   | Do the proposals accord with the Policy<br>Framework but will need approval of Full<br>Council. Yes  |
| <b>Statement by the S151 Officer:<br/>Financial Implications and Risk<br/>Considerations:</b> |  |
| <b>Health and Safety Implications</b>   | <i>None</i>  |
| <b>Equality/Diversity implications:</b>   | There is no impact on equality matters as the<br>report contains options for a discussion.   |
| <b>Considered by Monitoring Officer:</b>  | Yes  |

JH

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
|                           | The legal implications are set out in the report. (There is a statutory duty for the Monitoring Officer to prepare a formal report to the Council where there has been an act which constitutes maladministration or service failure; and where the Ombudsman has conducted an investigation into the matter). |
| <b>Wards Affected:</b>    | All  |
| <b>Scrutiny Interest:</b> | Overview and Scrutiny Committee  |

**TRACKING/PROCESS**

**DIRECTOR: Deputy Chief Executive**

| Chief Executive/<br>Strategic Leadership<br>Team | Cabinet<br>Member/Chair | Ward Members | Partners |
|--|-------------------------|--------------|----------|
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> September 2019                   |                         |              |          |
| Scrutiny Committee                               | Cabinet/Committee       | Council      |          |
| 21 <sup>st</sup> November                        |                         |              |          |

**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1. The Council receives an Annual Report summarising all complaints dealt with by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (“LGO”). This Report provides a brief commentary on the Ombudsman’s Annual Review letter. (Attached).

**2. Ombudsman’s Jurisdiction**

2.1. The Local Government Act 1974 established the then Local Government Ombudsman for England and for Wales. The Act defines the main statutory functions:

- to investigate complaints against councils and some other authorities
- to investigate complaints about adult social care providers from people who arrange or fund their own adult social care
- to provide advice and guidance on good administrative practice

The main activity under Part III of the 1974 Act is the investigation of complaints, which it states is limited to complaints from members of the public alleging they have suffered injustice as a result of maladministration and/or service failure. The LGO jurisdiction under Part III covers all local authorities (excluding town and parish councils). The LGO changed its name to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman in 2017 to reflect the full scope of their jurisdiction.

## 2.2 Complaints and Enquiries Received by the Ombudsman in 2018/19

2.2.1 The Ombudsman provided, statistics on how complaints upheld against the Council were remedied and those not pursued. This year’s letter again includes a breakdown, showing the complaints and enquiries received and decisions made. The letter and data is attached as Appendix A. The number of complaints and enquiries received for this year as compared to last has increased:

2018/2019 - 67  
 2017/2018 - 44  
 2016/2017 - 57

2.2.2 In addition, it is clearly stated by the Ombudsman in the Annual Review Letter that these figures may not be reflective of the number of complaints made to the Council.

2.2.3 The complaints received by the Ombudsman about the Council in 2018/19 were split across services as follows (note these are LGO designated service categories, see Appendix B). These are compared with last year’s figures:

| <b>Service Number of Complaints</b> | <b>2017/18</b> | <b>2018/19</b> |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Adult Care Services                 | 7              | 11             |
| Corporate & Other Services          | 1              | 0              |
| Education & Children’s Services     | 15             | 17             |
| Environmental Services              | 8              | 10             |
| Highways & Transport                | 3              | 9              |
| Planning & Development              | 2              | 5              |
| Housing                             | 1              | 3              |
| Benefits and Tax                    | 7              | 11             |
| Other                               | 0              | 1              |

## 2.3 Ombudsman Complaint Decisions

| <b>Decision of Ombudsman in</b>    | <b>2017/18</b> | <b>2018/19</b> |
|------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Investigated – Upheld              | 5              | 6              |
| Investigated – Not Upheld          | 1              | 10             |
| Advice given                       | 0              | 0              |
| Closed after initial enquiries     | 11             | 20             |
| Incomplete / Invalid               | 4              | 2              |
| Referred back for local resolution | 20             | 27             |

2.3.2 Appendix C to this report provides details of the six decisions upheld and the required actions by the Council to remedy these. The decision of “Upheld” is applied when the Ombudsman finds there is some fault in the way the Council acted – even if it has agreed to put things right during the course of the Ombudsman investigation; or had already accepted it needed to remedy the situation before the complaint was apparent to the Ombudsman.

2.3.4 The actions required of the Council by the Ombudsman are included within Appendix C. Of the complaints upheld the remedies entailed apologies, financial redress (in three of the decisions) and training/guidance.

2.3.5 In none of the upheld cases did the Council provide a satisfactory remedy before the complaint reached the Ombudsman.

### **3. OMBUDSMAN'S ANNUAL REVIEW LETTER**

- 3.1 The Annual Review letter provides an annual summary of statistics on the complaints made to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) about this Council to the year ending 31 March 2019.
- 3.2 For the first time this year the LGO has launched an interactive map of performance. The map shows annual performance data for all Councils in England, with links to published decision statements, public interest reports, annual letters and information about service improvements that have been agreed by each Council. The intention of this tool is to place a focus on the authority's compliance with the recommendations. The interactive map can be accessed via the following link:  
<https://www.lgo.org.uk/your-councils-performance>
- 3.3 It is intended that the information provided by the Ombudsman, set alongside the data the Council records about local complaints, will assist in assessing the Council's performance.

### **4. FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS**

- 4.1 Members will be acutely aware of the continuing financial constraints being faced by the Council and the tough decisions around service provision that are being taken. The expectation of customers does not reduce in line with the challenges the Council faces. Indeed customers feel more empowered to hold the Council to account; and therefore it is envisaged that more customers will escalate their dissatisfaction beyond the Council's own complaint procedure, to the Ombudsman. Even as the Council becomes more of an enabling authority and commissioning many services, it remains entirely accountable for those services
- 4.2 It should also be acknowledged that complaints to the Ombudsman do not always involve the Council or its appeals processes or any wrongdoing; but that they come from people who would have liked something more, or better, or a different outcome. It is unlikely that public expectations of services will diminish in the short term and therefore there is no reason to suppose that complaints will fall significantly. Despite these challenges, employees are making every effort to ensure that capacity to respond to the Ombudsman is maintained.
- 4.3 It remains the case that the Council does not receive significant criticism from the Ombudsman and therefore we should continue to deliver services within our policy and procedural guidelines, as well as within statutory requirements.
- 4.4 It is important that the Council takes even greater measures to ensure that it is able to evidence that it learns from complaints and uses this learning to improve and maintain the quality of the services it commissions and provides.

---

#### **Contact Details:**

Jayne Hammond  
Assistant Director - Legal and Democratic Services



24 July 2019

*By email*

Geoff Little  
Chief Executive  
Bury Metropolitan Borough Council

Dear Mr Little

### **Annual Review letter 2019**

I write to you with our annual summary of statistics on the complaints made to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman about your authority for the year ending 31 March 2019. The enclosed tables present the number of complaints and enquiries received about your authority, the decisions we made, and your authority's compliance with recommendations during the period. I hope this information will prove helpful in assessing your authority's performance in handling complaints.

### **Complaint statistics**

As ever, I would stress that the number of complaints, taken alone, is not necessarily a reliable indicator of an authority's performance. The volume of complaints should be considered alongside the uphold rate (how often we found fault when we investigated a complaint), and alongside statistics that indicate your authority's willingness to accept fault and put things right when they go wrong. We also provide a figure for the number of cases where your authority provided a satisfactory remedy before the complaint reached us, and new statistics about your authority's compliance with recommendations we have made; both of which offer a more comprehensive and insightful view of your authority's approach to complaint handling.

The new statistics on compliance are the result of a series of changes we have made to how we make and monitor our recommendations to remedy the fault we find. Our recommendations are specific and often include a time-frame for completion, allowing us to follow up with authorities and seek evidence that recommendations have been implemented. These changes mean we can provide these new statistics about your authority's compliance with our recommendations.

I want to emphasise the statistics in this letter reflect the data we hold and may not necessarily align with the data your authority holds. For example, our numbers include

enquiries from people we signpost back to your authority, some of whom may never contact you.

In line with usual practice, we are publishing our annual data for all authorities on our website, alongside our annual review of local government complaints. For the first time, this includes data on authorities' compliance with our recommendations. This collated data further aids the scrutiny of local services and we encourage you to share learning from the report, which highlights key cases we have investigated during the year.

### **New interactive data map**

In recent years we have been taking steps to move away from a simplistic focus on complaint volumes and instead focus on the lessons learned and the wider improvements we can achieve through our recommendations to improve services for the many. Our ambition is outlined in our [corporate strategy 2018-21](#) and commits us to publishing the outcomes of our investigations and the occasions our recommendations result in improvements for local services.

The result of this work is the launch of an interactive map of council performance on our website later this month. [Your Council's Performance](#) shows annual performance data for all councils in England, with links to our published decision statements, public interest reports, annual letters and information about service improvements that have been agreed by each council. It also highlights those instances where your authority offered a suitable remedy to resolve a complaint before the matter came to us, and your authority's compliance with the recommendations we have made to remedy complaints.

The intention of this new tool is to place a focus on your authority's compliance with investigations. It is a useful snapshot of the service improvement recommendations your authority has agreed to. It also highlights the wider outcomes of our investigations to the public, advocacy and advice organisations, and others who have a role in holding local councils to account.

I hope you, and colleagues, find the map a useful addition to the data we publish. We are the first UK public sector ombudsman scheme to provide compliance data in such a way and believe the launch of this innovative work will lead to improved scrutiny of councils as well as providing increased recognition to the improvements councils have agreed to make following our interventions.

### **Complaint handling training**

We have a well-established and successful training programme supporting local authorities and independent care providers to help improve local complaint handling. In 2018-19 we delivered 71 courses, training more than 900 people, including our first 'open courses' in Effective Complaint Handling for local authorities. Due to their popularity we are running six more open courses for local authorities in 2019-20, in York, Manchester, Coventry and London. To find out more visit [www.lgo.org.uk/training](http://www.lgo.org.uk/training).

Finally, I am conscious of the resource pressures that many authorities are working within, and which are often the context for the problems that we investigate. In response to that situation we have published a significant piece of research this year looking at some of the

common issues we are finding as a result of change and budget constraints. Called, [Under Pressure](#), this report provides a contribution to the debate about how local government can navigate the unprecedented changes affecting the sector. I commend this to you, along with our revised guidance on [Good Administrative Practice](#). I hope that together these are a timely reminder of the value of getting the basics right at a time of great change.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M King', with a horizontal line underneath.

Michael King  
Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman  
Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

**Local Authority Report:** Bury Metropolitan Borough Council  
**For the Period Ending:** 31/03/2019

For further information on how to interpret our statistics, please visit our [website](#)

## Complaints and enquiries received

| Adult Care Services | Benefits and Tax | Corporate and Other Services | Education and Children's Services | Environment Services | Highways and Transport | Housing | Planning and Development | Other | Total |
|---------------------|------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------|--------------------------|-------|-------|
| 11                  | 11               | 0                            | 17                                | 10                   | 9                      | 3       | 5                        | 1     | 67    |

## Decisions made

| Incomplete or Invalid | Advice Given | Referred back for Local Resolution | Closed After Initial Enquiries | Detailed Investigations |        |                 | Total |
|-----------------------|--------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|--------|-----------------|-------|
|                       |              |                                    |                                | Not Upheld              | Upheld | Uphold Rate (%) |       |
| 2                     | 0            | 27                                 | 20                             | 10                      | 6      | 38              | 65    |

**Note:** The uphold rate shows how often we found evidence of fault. It is expressed as a percentage of the total number of detailed investigations we completed.

## Satisfactory remedy provided by authority

| Upheld cases where the authority had provided a satisfactory remedy before the complaint reached the Ombudsman | % of upheld cases |
|--|-------------------|
| 0  | 0                 |

**Note:** These are the cases in which we decided that, while the authority did get things wrong, it offered a satisfactory way to resolve it before the complaint came to us.

## Compliance with Ombudsman recommendations

| Complaints where compliance with the recommended remedy was recorded during the year*   | Complaints where the authority complied with our recommendations on-time | Complaints where the authority complied with our recommendations late | Complaints where the authority has not complied with our recommendations |                   |
|---|--|---|--|-------------------|
| 6   | 6  | 0   | 0  | Number            |
|   | 100%   |   | -  | Compliance rate** |
| <p><b>Notes:</b></p> <p>* This is the number of complaints where we have recorded a response (or failure to respond) to our recommendation for a remedy during the reporting year. This includes complaints that may have been decided in the preceding year but where the data for compliance falls within the current reporting year.</p> <p>** The compliance rate is based on the number of complaints where the authority has provided evidence of their compliance with our recommendations to remedy a fault. This includes instances where an authority has accepted and implemented our recommendation but provided late evidence of that.</p> |  |   |  |                   |

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| Reference | Authority                         |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|
| 17019966  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18001422  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18002033  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18000796  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18002606  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18002608  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18002607  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 16017535  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 17012113  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18002035  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18003918  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 17020144  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18004064  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 17003642  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18003093  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18004773  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18002588  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18004188  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18005316  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18004700  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18006264  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18004472  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18005848  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18001851  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 17003329  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18005721  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 17016941  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18007831  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18006410  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 17012207  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18005328  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18005900  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18005976  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18006417  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18007884  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18009502  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 17008442  | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |

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|          |                                   |
|----------|-----------------------------------|
| 18002900 | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18008619 | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18007618 | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18009429 | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18010082 | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18012768 | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18013196 | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18013630 | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18014718 | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18014918 | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18014925 | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18015164 | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18015163 | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18009944 | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18010282 | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18016734 | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18016017 | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18002420 | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18018295 | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18008017 | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18010386 | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18017957 | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18018612 | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18018752 | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18016157 | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18017691 | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18012219 | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18019812 | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |



| <b>Category</b>   | <b>Decided</b> |
|---|----------------|
| Benefits & Tax  | 12 Apr 2018    |
| Highways & Transport                                    | 27 Apr 2018    |
| Adult Care Services                                     | 09 May 2018    |
| Highways & Transport                                    | 16 May 2018    |
| Benefits & Tax  | 21 May 2018    |
| Housing   | 21 May 2018    |
| Housing   | 21 May 2018    |
| Adult Care Services                                     | 24 May 2018    |
| Planning & Development                                  | 04 Jun 2018    |
| Benefits & Tax  | 13 Jun 2018    |
| Benefits & Tax  | 13 Jun 2018    |
| Education & Childrens Services                          | 14 Jun 2018    |
| Adult Care Services                                     | 15 Jun 2018    |
| Benefits & Tax  | 20 Jun 2018    |
| Education & Childrens Services                          | 20 Jun 2018    |
| Adult Care Services                                     | 27 Jun 2018    |
| Education & Childrens Services                          | 03 Jul 2018    |
| Education & Childrens Services                          | 03 Jul 2018    |
| Adult Care Services                                     | 06 Jul 2018    |
| Education & Childrens Services                          | 12 Jul 2018    |
| Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation | 23 Jul 2018    |
| Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation | 24 Jul 2018    |
| Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation | 03 Aug 2018    |
| Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation | 09 Aug 2018    |
| Education & Childrens Services                          | 14 Aug 2018    |
| Benefits & Tax  | 15 Aug 2018    |
| Education & Childrens Services                          | 17 Aug 2018    |
| Null  | 17 Aug 2018    |
| Education & Childrens Services                          | 18 Aug 2018    |
| Adult Care Services                                     | 28 Aug 2018    |
| Planning & Development                                  | 28 Aug 2018    |
| Education & Childrens Services                          | 29 Aug 2018    |
| Education & Childrens Services                          | 10 Sep 2018    |
| Benefits & Tax  | 18 Sep 2018    |
| Benefits & Tax  | 18 Sep 2018    |
| Education & Childrens Services                          | 19 Sep 2018    |
| Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation | 28 Sep 2018    |

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|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| Education & Childrens Services                          | 02 Oct 2018 |
| Education & Childrens Services                          | 15 Oct 2018 |
| Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation | 16 Oct 2018 |
| Housing   | 01 Nov 2018 |
| Highways & Transport                                    | 09 Nov 2018 |
| Education & Childrens Services                          | 16 Nov 2018 |
| Adult Care Services                                     | 26 Nov 2018 |
| Education & Childrens Services                          | 04 Dec 2018 |
| Benefits & Tax  | 31 Dec 2018 |
| Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation | 04 Jan 2019 |
| Highways & Transport                                    | 04 Jan 2019 |
| Education & Childrens Services                          | 08 Jan 2019 |
| Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation | 08 Jan 2019 |
| Adult Care Services                                     | 16 Jan 2019 |
| Education & Childrens Services                          | 28 Jan 2019 |
| Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation | 04 Feb 2019 |
| Highways & Transport                                    | 27 Feb 2019 |
| Adult Care Services                                     | 01 Mar 2019 |
| Planning & Development                                  | 01 Mar 2019 |
| Planning & Development                                  | 04 Mar 2019 |
| Education & Childrens Services                          | 05 Mar 2019 |
| Adult Care Services                                     | 06 Mar 2019 |
| Adult Care Services                                     | 06 Mar 2019 |
| Education & Childrens Services                          | 08 Mar 2019 |
| Highways & Transport                                    | 22 Mar 2019 |
| Highways & Transport                                    | 22 Mar 2019 |
| Planning & Development                                  | 27 Mar 2019 |
| Highways & Transport                                    | 27 Mar 2019 |

| Decision  |
|---|
| 26(6)(a) tribunal Other                                   |
| Premature Decision - advice given                         |
| Premature Decision - referred to BinJ                     |
| 26(6)(c) Court remedy                                     |
| Premature Decision - advice given                         |
| Premature Decision - advice given                         |
| Premature Decision - advice given                         |
| no mal  |
| mal & inj   |
| 26(6)(a) tribunal Other                                   |
| Premature Decision - advice given                         |
| no mal  |
| Premature Decision - advice given                         |
| Not warranted by alleged mal/service failure              |
| Sch 5.1 court proceedings                                 |
| Premature Decision - advice given                         |
| Not warranted by alleged mal/service failure              |
| Not warranted by alleged mal/service failure              |
| Premature Decision - advice given                         |
| No worthwhile outcome achievable by investigation         |
| Premature Decision - advice given                         |
| Premature Decision - referred to BinJ                     |
| Premature Decision - referred to BinJ                     |
| Other reason not to continue with investigation           |
| No worthwhile outcome achievable by further investigation |
| 26(6)(a) tribunal Other                                   |
| mal & inj   |
| Insufficient information to proceed and PA advised        |
| Not warranted by alleged mal/service failure              |
| mal & inj   |
| Not warranted by alleged mal/service failure              |
| no mal  |
| Sch 5.1 court proceedings                                 |
| Not warranted by alleged mal/service failure              |
| Premature Decision - advised                              |
| Premature Decision - advice given                         |
| mal & inj   |

|   |
|---|
| No worthwhile outcome achievable by further investigation |
| Not warranted by alleged mal/service failure              |
| Other agency better placed                                |
| 26(6)(c) Court remedy                                     |
| Not warranted by alleged injustice                        |
| Premature Decision - advice given                         |
| Premature Decision - advice given                         |
| Premature Decision - advice given                         |
| Premature Decision - advice given                         |
| Premature Decision - advice given                         |
| Premature Decision - advice given                         |
| Premature Decision - advice given                         |
| Premature Decision - advice given                         |
| Premature Decision - advice given                         |
| no mal  |
| Other reason not to continue with investigation           |
| Premature Decision - advice given                         |
| 26(6)(a) tribunal TPT/PATAS                               |
| mal & inj   |
| Premature Decision - advice given                         |
| 26(6)(b) appeal to Minister                               |
| mal & inj   |
| Premature Decision - advice given                         |
| Insufficient information to proceed and PA advised        |
| Premature Decision - advice given                         |
| Other Agency better placed                                |
| 26(6)(c) Court remedy                                     |
| no mal  |
| Premature Decision - advice given                         |

| Decision Reason                    |
|------------------------------------|
| Closed after initial enquiries     |
| Referred back for local resolution |
| Referred back for local resolution |
| Closed after initial enquiries     |
| Referred back for local resolution |
| Referred back for local resolution |
| Referred back for local resolution |
| Not Upheld                         |
| Upheld                             |
| Closed after initial enquiries     |
| Referred back for local resolution |
| Not Upheld                         |
| Referred back for local resolution |
| Closed after initial enquiries     |
| Closed after initial enquiries     |
| Referred back for local resolution |
| Closed after initial enquiries     |
| Closed after initial enquiries     |
| Referred back for local resolution |
| Closed after initial enquiries     |
| Referred back for local resolution |
| Referred back for local resolution |
| Referred back for local resolution |
| Referred back for local resolution |
| Not Upheld                         |
| Not Upheld                         |
| Closed after initial enquiries     |
| Upheld                             |
| Incomplete/Invalid                 |
| Closed after initial enquiries     |
| Upheld                             |
| Closed after initial enquiries     |
| Not Upheld                         |
| Closed after initial enquiries     |
| Closed after initial enquiries     |
| Referred back for local resolution |
| Referred back for local resolution |
| Upheld                             |

|                                    |
|------------------------------------|
| Not Upheld                         |
| Closed after initial enquiries     |
| Not Upheld                         |
| Closed after initial enquiries     |
| Closed after initial enquiries     |
| Referred back for local resolution |
| Referred back for local resolution |
| Referred back for local resolution |
| Referred back for local resolution |
| Referred back for local resolution |
| Referred back for local resolution |
| Referred back for local resolution |
| Referred back for local resolution |
| Not Upheld                         |
| Not Upheld                         |
| Referred back for local resolution |
| Closed after initial enquiries     |
| Upheld                             |
| Referred back for local resolution |
| Closed after initial enquiries     |
| Upheld                             |
| Referred back for local resolution |
| Incomplete/Invalid                 |
| Referred back for local resolution |
| Closed after initial enquiries     |
| Closed after initial enquiries     |
| Not Upheld                         |
| Referred back for local resolution |

| Remedy   |
|--|
| Null   |
| Null   |
| Null   |
| Null   |
| Null   |
| Null   |
| Null   |
| Null   |
| Financial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble, Training and guidance, Procedure or policy change/review |
| Null   |
| Null   |
| Null   |
| Null   |
| Null   |
| Null   |
| Null   |
| Null   |
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| Null   |
| Null   |
| Null   |
| Null   |
| Null   |
| Null   |
| Apology, Financial redress: Loss of service  |
| Null   |
| Null   |
| Apology, New appeal/review or reconsidered decision  |
| Null   |
| Null   |
| Null   |
| Null   |
| Null   |
| Null   |
| Null   |
| Apology, Procedure or policy change/review   |





**Service improvement recommendations**

The Council has agreed to remind planning officers of the importance of clearly explaining how decisions have been made in their reports on planning applications. The Council will consider including the definition of 'main aspect' in its supplementary planning document on alterations and extensions to residential property.

Waste Management to review its policy on how it treats complaints - ie distinguishing between informal and formal complaints.



| <b>Reference</b> | <b>Authority</b>                  |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 17006530         | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 17012113         | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 17016941         | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 17012207         | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 17008442         | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |
| 18010386         | Bury Metropolitan Borough Council |

| <b>Category</b>   | <b>Decided</b> |
|---|----------------|
| Education & Childrens Services                          | 05-Dec-17      |
| Planning & Development                                  | 04-Jun-18      |
| Education & Childrens Services                          | 17-Aug-18      |
| Adult Care Services                                     | 29-Aug-18      |
| Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation | 28-Sep-18      |
| Education & Childrens Services                          | 05-Mar-19      |

| Remedy   |
|--|
| Training and guidance  |
| Financial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble<br>Training and guidance<br>Procedure or policy change/review |
| Apology<br>Financial redress: Loss of service  |
| Apology<br>New appeal/review or reconsidered decision  |
| Apology<br>Procedure or policy change/review   |
| Apology<br>Financial redress: Loss of service<br>Financial Redress: Quantifiable Loss<br>Training and guidance       |

| Remedy Target Date | Remedy Achieved Date | Satisfaction with Compliance  |
|--------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 30-Jan-18          | 10-Apr-18            | Remedy complete and satisfied |
| 02-Jul-18          | 03-Jul-18            | Remedy complete and satisfied |
| 17-Sep-18          | 29-Aug-18            | Remedy complete and satisfied |
| 05-Dec-18          | 05-Dec-18            | Remedy complete and satisfied |
| 28-Dec-18          | 20-Dec-18            | Remedy complete and satisfied |
| 08-Apr-19          | 22-Mar-19            | Remedy complete and satisfied |



|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| <b>Agenda Item</b> |  |
|--------------------|--|

**MEETING:** **CABINET OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** **13 NOVEMBER, 2019**  
**21 NOVEMBER, 2019**

**SUBJECT:** **CORPORATE FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT – APRIL 2019 TO AUGUST 2019**

**REPORT FROM:** **CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND HOUSING**

**CONTACT OFFICER:** **MIKE WOODHEAD, JOINT CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER, BURY COUNCIL AND BURY CCG**

**TYPE OF DECISION:** **FOR INFORMATION**

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/STATUS:** This paper is within the public domain.

**SUMMARY:** The report informs Members of the Council’s financial position for the period April 2019 to August 2019 and projects the estimated outturn at the end of 2019/20.

The report also includes Prudential Indicators in accordance with CIPFA’s Prudential Code.

**OPTIONS & RECOMMENDED OPTION** Members are asked to note the projected financial position of the Council as at 31 August 2019.

**IMPLICATIONS:**

**Corporate Aims/Policy Framework:** Do the proposals accord with Policy Framework? Yes.

**Statement by the s151 Officer:** The report has been prepared in accordance with all relevant Codes of Practice. There may be risks arising from remedial action taken to address the budget position; these will be identified by Directors at themed Budget Recovery Boards and at joint JET / Cabinet meetings.

**Statement by Joint Chief Finance Officer :** Successful budget monitoring provides early warning of potential major overspends or

underspends against budgets which Members need to be aware of.

This report draws attention to the fact that, based on prudent forecasts, several budget hotspots exist which will need remedial action.

Members and officers will be examining these areas in more detail at the joint JET / Cabinet meetings as well as at the themed Budget Recovery Boards.

**Equality/Diversity implications:** No

**Considered by Monitoring Officer:** The Council is required by statute to set and maintain a balanced budget. Careful management of the finances in year allows the Council to achieve this. This report provides a means for Members to carefully monitor the situation.  
Budget monitoring is a requirement of the Council’s Financial Regulations to which Financial Regulation B: Financial Planning 4.3. (Budget Monitoring and Control) relates.

**Are there any legal implications?** Yes

**Wards Affected:** All

**Scrutiny Interest:** Overview & Scrutiny Committee

**TRACKING/PROCESS**

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Mike Woodhead**

| Chief Executive/<br>Joint Executive Team | Cabinet         | Overview & Scrutiny Committee | Council | Ward Members | Partners |
|--|-----------------|-------------------------------|---------|--------------|----------|
| <b>21/10/19</b>                          | <b>13/11/19</b> | <b>21/11/19</b>               |         |              |          |

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**



- 1.1 This report informs Members of the forecast outturn for 2019/20 based upon current spend for the period 1 April 2019 to 31 August 2019 in respect of the revenue budget, capital budget, treasury management and the CCG.
- 1.2 Projections are based on current trends, information, and professional judgement from service managers and finance staff.
- 1.3 The report highlights the fact that budget pressures exist in some key areas and it will be necessary to continue to examine options for improving the situation during the remainder of the year.

## 2.0 BUDGET MONITORING PROCESSES

- 2.1 Reports are presented quarterly to facilitate close monitoring of spend and implementation of action plans during the year.
- 2.2 Reports are also presented to the Joint Executive Team (JET) on a monthly basis and detailed monitoring information will also be discussed at joint JET / Cabinet meetings during the year.

Four themed Budget Recovery Boards have also been established to oversee the implementation of savings plans, to develop further pipeline schemes, to monitor additional pressures arising in year, and to identify mitigations. A Council-CCG wide system of tracking progress has been implemented and a savings tracker is updated and shared with senior managers and JET on a fortnightly basis. The four boards are:

- Health and Care
- Corporate Core
- Business Growth and Investment
- Operations and Other Council Services

Other measures include a £1,000 per transaction procurement limit, a Budget Control Group that considers requests for filling vacant posts, a review of external staff resources such as contractors and consultants.

- 2.3 Improvements will continue to be made to the budget monitoring process, building on the significant developments implemented over the past few years.

## 3.0 SUMMARY OF REVENUE BUDGET POSITION

- 3.1 The table below outlines the annual budget and forecast outturn based upon known factors and the professional views of service managers as at month 5:

| <b>Department</b>                   | <b>Budget</b>  | <b>Forecast</b> | <b>Variance</b> |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                                     | <b>£000</b>    | <b>£000</b>     | <b>£000</b>     |
| Communities & Wellbeing             | 70,582         | 71,672          | <b>1,090</b>    |
| Resources & Regulation              | 7,486          | 8,071           | <b>585</b>      |
| Business, Growth and Infrastructure | (924)          | 155             | <b>1,079</b>    |
| Children, & Young People            | 41,184         | 42,341          | <b>1,157</b>    |
| Operations                          | 12,878         | 12,751          | <b>(127)</b>    |
| Art Gallery & Museum                | 565            | 653             | <b>88</b>       |
| Non Service Specific                | 7,091          | 3,686           | <b>(3,405)</b>  |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                        | <b>138,862</b> | <b>139,329</b>  | <b>467</b>      |

- 3.2 The projected overspend of £0.467m represents approximately 0.34% of the total net budget of £138.862m.
- 3.3 Further analysis of the forecasts is provided in section 4.

#### 4.0 SERVICE SPECIFIC FINANCIAL MONITORING

##### 4.1 COMMUNITIES AND WELLBEING

4.1.1 The CWB budget is forecast to overspend by £1.090m, an increase of £0.145m since M4. The main reasons for the monthly movement are worsening savings forecasts within the care in the community and leisure services budgets; and increased utility costs and deteriorating income projections (also within Leisure services)

4.1.2 The M5 overspend is analysed by CWB service area in the table below.

| <b>Communities and Wellbeing Division</b>              | <b>Current Budget (£'000)</b> | <b>Forecast Outturn (£'000)</b> | <b>Month 5 Variance (£'000)</b> |
|--|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Housing Related Services</b>                        | <b>907</b>                    | <b>786</b>                      | <b>(121)</b>                    |
| <b>Care in The Community</b>                           | <b>31,136</b>                 | <b>31,434</b>                   | <b>298</b>                      |
| <b>Commissioning &amp; Procurement Other Services</b>  | <b>16,522</b>                 | <b>16,468</b>                   | <b>(54)</b>                     |
| <b>Finance, Customer Services and Asset Management</b> | <b>1,296</b>                  | <b>1,238</b>                    | <b>(58)</b>                     |
| <b>ASC Operations</b>                                  | <b>7,088</b>                  | <b>6,909</b>                    | <b>(179)</b>                    |
| <b>GM Transformation Fund</b>                          | <b>0</b>                      | <b>0</b>                        | <b>0</b>                        |
| <b>Public Health</b>                                   | <b>10,026</b>                 | <b>10,026</b>                   | <b>0</b>                        |
| <b>Workforce Modernisation &amp; Adult Education</b>   | <b>563</b>                    | <b>553</b>                      | <b>(10)</b>                     |
| <b>Civic Venues</b>                                    | <b>254</b>                    | <b>565</b>                      | <b>311</b>                      |
| <b>Environment</b>                                     | <b>527</b>                    | <b>930</b>                      | <b>403</b>                      |
| <b>Communities</b>                                     | <b>1,006</b>                  | <b>953</b>                      | <b>(53)</b>                     |
| <b>Parks/Countryside</b>                               | <b>171</b>                    | <b>187</b>                      | <b>16</b>                       |
| <b>Sports and Leisure</b>                              | <b>1,086</b>                  | <b>1,623</b>                    | <b>537</b>                      |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>70,582</b>                 | <b>71,672</b>                   | <b>1,090</b>                    |

4.1.3 M5 Material Variances:

- Sports and Leisure is forecast to overspend by £0.537m due to non-achievement of historic savings targets. The Leisure service is part of a wider Growth and Investment Review which includes the option of closure of one or more facilities.
- Environmental Services is forecast to overspend by £0.403m due to non-achievement of historic savings targets. The savings are in scope of the PPRE review (which goes beyond Environmental Health). It was agreed at JET that this saving programme will be led by the AD of Operations who will be taking forward the PPRE review. The savings won't be achieved until next year and work is underway through the Operations Finance Recovery Board regarding in year mitigations.

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- Civic Venues is forecast to overspend by £0.311m, due to income shortfalls at Civic and Leisure venues. Civics is part of the wider Growth and Investment Review and is increasing its use to support the integrated wellness agenda.
- Care in the Community is forecast to overspend by £0.298m and includes an unfunded £0.5m transitions pressure.
- Adult Social Care Operations is forecast to underspend by £0.179m. However, within this underspend is a £0.442m overspend on the community equipment budget which is offset by c£0.620m of salary underspends.

### 4.1.4 M5 Call on Reserves

- The M5 CWB forecast includes a £1.331m contribution from reserves to cover non-recurrent items of expenditure. (Note: This is in addition to the £0.756m use of reserves referenced in the February Cabinet Report)

### 4.1.5 Severance Costs

- As at M5 the forecasted severance payments within the CWB forecast totals £0.236m

### 4.1.6 Savings/Pressures

#### 2019/20 Savings Programme

The 2019/20 CWB savings programmes are forecast to achieve their respective targets:

- The 2019/20 low cost care package (£1m) and medication visit (£0.4m) reviews are forecast to achieve their respective targets, £0.550m is forecast to achieve through the work of the Reviewing team with the remaining £0.850m being offset/mitigated by demand management and the additional growth awarded to Community Care budgets as part of 2019/20 budget setting.
- Although the 2019/20 supporting people saving programme (£0.125m) is expected to achieve a £0.064m saving this still leaves a shortfall of £0.061m. However, it is expected that any shortfall will be mitigated by underspends elsewhere.
- The 2019/20 savings relating to Investment agreement with the LCO (£0.5m) has been met/mitigated through a budget reallocation exercise
- The 2019/20 savings relating to increased HRA (£0.5m) has been met/mitigated through a budget reallocation exercise
- The 2019/20 Public Health Saving Target of (£0.890m) has been fully allocated to saving schemes and is forecast to be achieved.

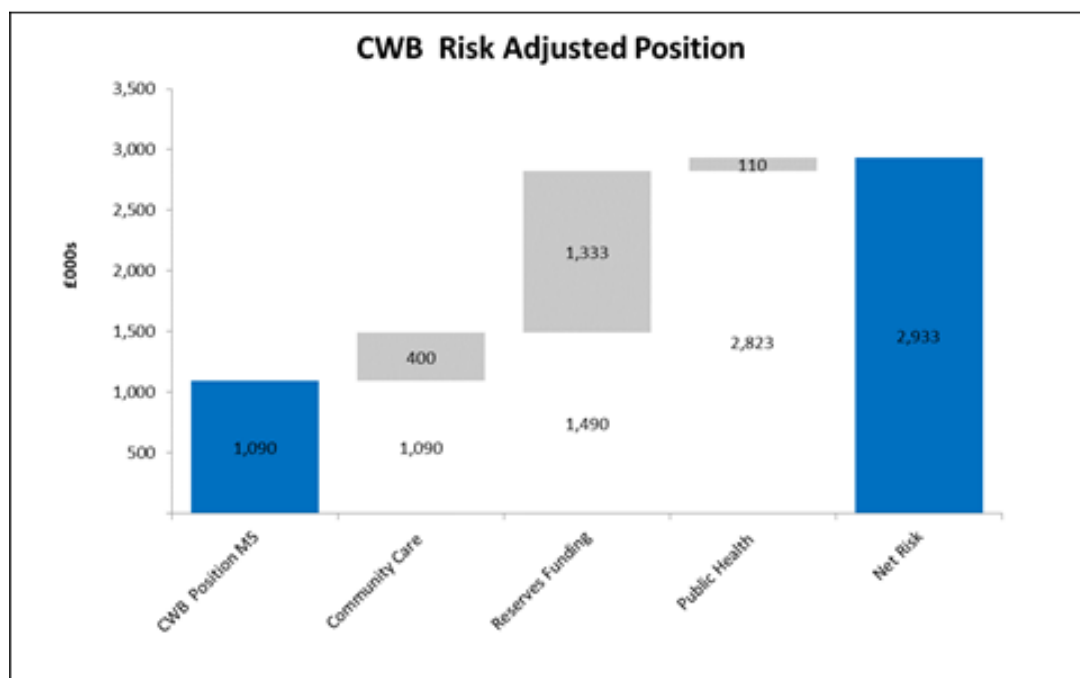
#### Historical Savings/Pressures

There is currently £1.148m of unachieved historical savings/pressures adversely impacting the M5 position.

- Environmental services - £0.370m
- Leisure Services - £0.467m
- Civic budgets - £0.311m

### 4.1.7 Potential Risks/Mitigations

The chart below highlights potential risks/mitigations currently not in the forecast.



Note 1: The Community Care risk relates to a potential understatement regarding client top up expenditure commitments

Note 2: Reserves funding highlights the impact of use of reserves being declined/unavailable

Note 3: The Public Health risk relates to the high risk (in terms of unachievement) of the public Health savings programme

## 4.2 RESOURCES AND REGULATION

4.2.1 The Resources and Regulation budget is forecast to overspend by £0.585m, an increase of £0.262m since month 4. The main reasons for the monthly movement are due to the inclusion of the exit costs and staffing forecasts costs in respect of the HR restructure which has now been completed (£0.202m) together with increases in bank charges (£0.047m) and approval of one-off severance costs in Finance (£0.031m). These are offset by reduced forecast in running costs (-£0.018m).

4.2.2 The Month 5 overspend is analysed by Resources and Regulation service area in the table below.

| <b>Resources and Regulation Department</b>      | <b>Current Budget (£'000)</b> | <b>Forecast Outturn (£'000)</b> | <b>Month 5 Variance (£'000)</b> |
|---|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Operational Services</b>                     | <b>(596)</b>                  | <b>(591)</b>                    | <b>5</b>                        |
| <b>Finance and Efficiency</b>                   | <b>3,674</b>                  | <b>3,933</b>                    | <b>259</b>                      |
| <b>Human Resources</b>                          | <b>463</b>                    | <b>571</b>                      | <b>108</b>                      |
| <b>Corporate People Services</b>                | <b>949</b>                    | <b>1,043</b>                    | <b>94</b>                       |
| <b>Legal and Democratic Services</b>            | <b>1,632</b>                  | <b>1,707</b>                    | <b>75</b>                       |
| <b>Customer Support and Collections</b>         | <b>1,487</b>                  | <b>1,488</b>                    | <b>1</b>                        |
| <b>Information and Communication Technology</b> | <b>(241)</b>                  | <b>(241)</b>                    | <b>0</b>                        |
| <b>Trading Services</b>                         | <b>118</b>                    | <b>161</b>                      | <b>43</b>                       |
| <b>Total</b>                                    | <b>7,486</b>                  | <b>8,071</b>                    | <b>585</b>                      |

#### 4.2.3 M5 Material Variances:

- Finance and Efficiency is forecast to overspend by £0.259m due to non-achievement of savings (£0.200m), payment of one-off exit costs of (£0.133m) less net underspends on staffing and running costs of (- £0.074m) across the services.
- Human Resources is forecast to overspend by £0.108m due to payment of one-off exit costs of (£0.386m) offset by savings slippage of (- £0.200m), both as a result of the recent HR restructure, plus forecast underspend in running costs of (- £0.078m).
- Corporate People Services is forecast to overspend by £0.094m due to a number of temporary supernumerary posts being retained to assist the smooth transition of the HR restructure.
- Legal and Democratic Services is forecast to overspend by £0.075m due to additional costs from the Municipal Election (£0.124m), additional staffing costs of (£0.044m) offset by savings in Members Allowances of (-£0.088m) and minor underspends of (-£0.005m).
- Trading Services is forecast to overspend by £0.043m due to increase in food prices and salaries in High schools of (£0.101m) plus increase in prices, salaries and drop in income in Primary schools (£0.129m) offset by Cleaning SLA income of (- £0.187m).

#### 4.2.4 M5 Call on Reserves:

The month 5 forecast includes a £0.344m contribution from reserves regarding the funding of posts in Customer Support and Collections, £0.206m relating to cost of elections and a contribution to reserves of £0.094m relating to ICT developments. Recurrent funding needs to be identified for all substantive posts as part of the 2020/21 budget setting process.

#### 4.2.5 Severance Costs:

As at Month 5, forecasted severance payments within the Resources and Regulation forecast totals £0.601m

#### 4.2.6 Savings/Pressures:

## 2019/20 Savings Programme

The following 2019/20 Resources and Regulation savings programmes are forecast to achieve their respective targets. These include:

- Pay services income generation of £0.050m from external business.
- Savings of £0.200m, from undertaking legal work in house in respect of insurance claims
- Review of Finance services to achieve savings of £0.200m
- Telephony contract savings of £0.100m
- Data management and storage costs savings of £0.200m
- Reconfiguration of the security service to achieve savings of £0.150m
- Review of discretionary budgets to achieve savings of £0.281m

The following are considered to be high risk and likely to be delayed:

- Savings of £0.200m, to be achieved through joining a mutual insurance scheme; high risk due to uncertainty of go-ahead and start date as well as impact on premiums.
- Savings of £0.100m, as a result of improved debt collection within Customer Support and Collections
- Setting up a central point for financial assessments to achieve savings of £0.100m.

### 4.3 BUSINESS, GROWTH AND INFRASTRUCTURE

4.3.1 The Business, Growth and Infrastructure budget is forecast to overspend by £1.079m, an increase of £0.534m since month 4. The main reasons for the monthly movement are due to the inclusion of estimated costs associated with the office accommodation review which are currently unfunded (£0.345m), a need for urgent compliance works required at the Town Hall (£0.135m) and a more than expected shortfall in Architectural income of (£0.129m). These are offset by reduced staffing and running costs of (-£0.075m).

4.3.2 The Month 5 overspend is analysed by Business, Growth and Infrastructure service area in the table below.

| <b>Business, Growth and Infrastructure</b>     | <b>Current Budget (£'000)</b> | <b>Forecast Outturn (£'000)</b> | <b>Month 5 Variance (£'000)</b> |
|--|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Business Growth Management Team</b>         | <b>726</b>                    | <b>1,175</b>                    | <b>449</b>                      |
| <b>Regeneration</b>                            | <b>108</b>                    | <b>143</b>                      | <b>35</b>                       |
| <b>Planning &amp; Development Control</b>      | <b>431</b>                    | <b>440</b>                      | <b>9</b>                        |
| <b>Property Management and Admin Buildings</b> | <b>(2,405)</b>                | <b>(2,008)</b>                  | <b>397</b>                      |
| <b>Strategic Housing</b>                       | <b>495</b>                    | <b>418</b>                      | <b>(77)</b>                     |
| <b>Architects</b>                              | <b>(279)</b>                  | <b>(13)</b>                     | <b>266</b>                      |
| <b>Total</b>                                   | <b>(924)</b>                  | <b>155</b>                      | <b>1,079</b>                    |

4.3.3

M5

Material Variances:

- Business Growth Management Team is forecast to overspend by £0.449m due to forecast additional costs as a result of the Accommodation Review (£0.389m), unbudgeted consultancy costs (£0.102m), cost of consultancy for the Facilities Management review (£0.116m) and minor overspends (£0.030m) offset by underutilised carbon reduction commitment budget (-£0.188m).
- Regeneration is forecast to overspend by £0.035m due to unachieved savings targets of (£0.050m) offset by net salary savings (-£0.015m).
- Property Management and Admin Buildings is forecast to overspend by £0.397m due to projected overspend of (£0.348m) in Admin Buildings re urgent compliance work in respect of roofing, electrics required for Town Hall, and budget shortfall on rates, cleaning and utilities; additionally, there is a projected overspend on Markets of (£0.033m) due to additional costs for asbestos removal / maintenance / utilities and shortfall of income due to voids (£0.054m). These are offset by projected salary savings of (-£0.038m) due to vacancies. There is projected net nil variance in Property Services. However, there a number of projected overspends in relation to costs associated with empty properties (£0.046m), shortfalls in income due to voids / rent reductions (£0.100m) and additional legal recharges (£0.055m). These are, however, offset by projected underspends due to additional income from investment properties (-£0.132m), additional rental income for Town Centre properties (-£0.022m) as well as salary savings of (-£0.047m).
- Strategic Housing is forecast to underspend by £0.077m due to increases in income and salary savings in Urban Renewal (-£0.069m) as well as additional income from home improvements (-£0.008m).
- Architects is forecast to overspend by £0.266m due to severance costs of (0.135m) and income shortfall of (£0.136m).

#### 4.3.4 M5 Call on Reserves:

The month 5 forecast includes a £0.493m contribution from reserves regarding the funding of Senior Management posts within the department.

#### 4.3.5 Severance Costs:

As at Month 5, forecasted severance payments within Business, Growth and Infrastructure forecast totals £0.268m

#### 4.3.6 Savings/Pressures:

##### 2019/20 Savings Programme

The following 2019/20 Business, Growth and Infrastructure savings programmes are considered to be of medium risk and likely to be delayed. These include:

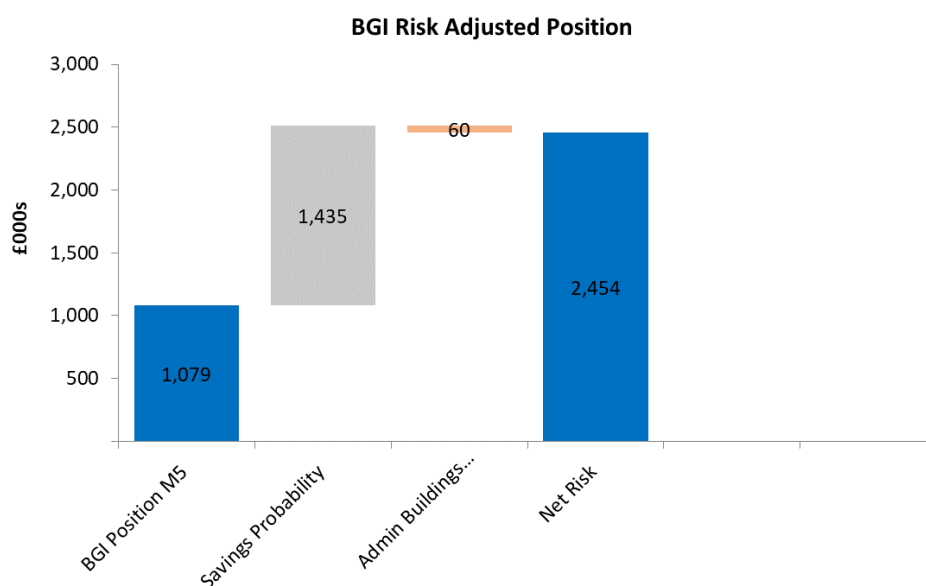
- Facilities Management review Phase 1 of £0.050m
- Office Accommodation review Phase 1 of £0.288m

The following savings programmes have been slipped into 2020/21:

- Facilities Management Review Phase 2 (£0.550m)
- Urban Renewal review (£0.175m)
- Office Accommodation review (£0.212m)
- Review of Architects (£0.150m)
- Investment Properties (£0.348m)

4.3.7 Potential Risks/Mitigations

The chart below highlights potential risks/mitigations currently not in the forecast (see notes for detail)



Note 1: Relates to the risk that the 2020/21 savings programme is not achieved

Note 2: Relates to the mitigation of using the Admin Buildings Reserve of £60,000 if approved to offset compliance works at the Town Hall

**4.4 CHILDREN’S AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

4.4.1. The Looked After Children services and Education Psychologists saw the greatest increases in forecasts which were offset by savings identified on vacant posts relating to the departmental restructure. The month 5 overspend is analysed by C&YP service area in the table below.

| Children & Young People Division       | Current Budget (£'000) | Forecast Outturn (£'000) | Month 5 Variance (£'000) |
|--|------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Learning - Schools                     | (6,310)                | (6,310)                  | 0                        |
| Learning - Non Schools                 | 6,315                  | 6,260                    | (55)                     |
| Early Help & School Readiness          | 980                    | 849                      | (131)                    |
| Childcare & Extended Services          | 559                    | 559                      | 0                        |
| Safeguarding & Young People's Services | 4,241                  | 4,416                    | 175                      |
| Family Support Services                | 2,059                  | 1,984                    | (75)                     |
| Children Looked After                  | 14,877                 | 15,789                   | 912                      |
| Youth Justice                          | 17                     | 17                       | 0                        |
| Services for Young People              | 196                    | 213                      | 17                       |
| Quality Assurance                      | 1,255                  | 1,237                    | (18)                     |



|                                     |               |               |              |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| <b>Other Management Costs</b>       | <b>325</b>    | <b>1,352</b>  | <b>1,027</b> |
| <b>Strategy &amp; Commissioning</b> | <b>1,916</b>  | <b>1,076</b>  | <b>(840)</b> |
| <b>Departmental Wide</b>            | <b>6,881</b>  | <b>6,881</b>  | <b>0</b>     |
| <b>Libraries</b>                    | <b>1,563</b>  | <b>1,708</b>  | <b>145</b>   |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>34,874</b> | <b>36,031</b> | <b>1,157</b> |

**Please note the above table includes School balances**

#### 4.4.2 Month 5 Material Variances:

- Safeguarding & Young People's Services are forecast to overspend by £0.175m, the Safeguarding Teams are set to overspend due to agency staff covering maternity leave/secondment and vacant posts (£0.117m), this is offset by delays in recruitment on the Initial Response Team and Service Manager posts created as part of the restructure(-£0.072m). There are also overspends on the Higher Lane Building costs (£0.050m) and External Legal Fees of (£0.080m).
- Children Looked After is forecast to overspend by £0.912m on Fostering (£0.147m) due to increased pressure from the payment for skills costs and Special Guardianship Orders, Residential and IFA placements are overspending (£0.660m) as a result of additional placements and the complexity of care required and the Adoption placement fees are forecast at (£0.159m) overspend based on the number of children that we are unable to place through the Regional Adoption Agency and will therefore attract placement fees. Delays in recruiting to the Service Manager
  - and other vacant posts has made a saving of (-£0.050m).
- Other Management Costs is forecast to overspend by £1.027m – This is the current forecast of the unallocated/unachieved savings for 2019-20.
- Early Help & School Readiness is forecast to underspend by -£0.131m due to the GM Innovations funding to support the implementation of the Early Help Stockport Families Model.
- Strategy & Commissioning is forecast to underspend by- £0.840m This underspend relates to the Social Care Support Grant allocated to CYP in 2019-20 and will be used to reduce the pressures on Looked After Children.
- Libraries are set to overspend by £0.145m – The ongoing budget pressures include increased business rates, payments to joint authorities, building maintenance costs and increased utility costs.

#### 4.4.3 Month 5 Call on Reserves

During 2019-20 CYP has drawn down £0.130m from long term provisions to fund building adaptations to ensure the ongoing care of a large sibling group placed with an in-house foster carer and allow to facilitate the adoption of a sibling with an existing adoptive family.

#### 4.4.4 Severance Costs

As at month 5 forecasted severance payments within the CYP forecast total £0.082m.

#### 4.4.5 Savings/Pressures

##### 2019/20 Savings Programme

The 2019/20 CYP savings programmes are forecast to achieve or partially achieve their respective targets:

- The Business Support Functions and Traded Service reviews have exceeded the targeted savings of £0.188m by £0.012m.
- The departmental restructure will achieve savings of £0.753m in this financial year against the target of £1,480m, the full year effect of £1,129m will be achieved in 2020-21. The shortfall is mitigated by delays in filling new or vacant posts in the new structure (-£0.355m).

The following are considered to be high risk and likely to be delayed:

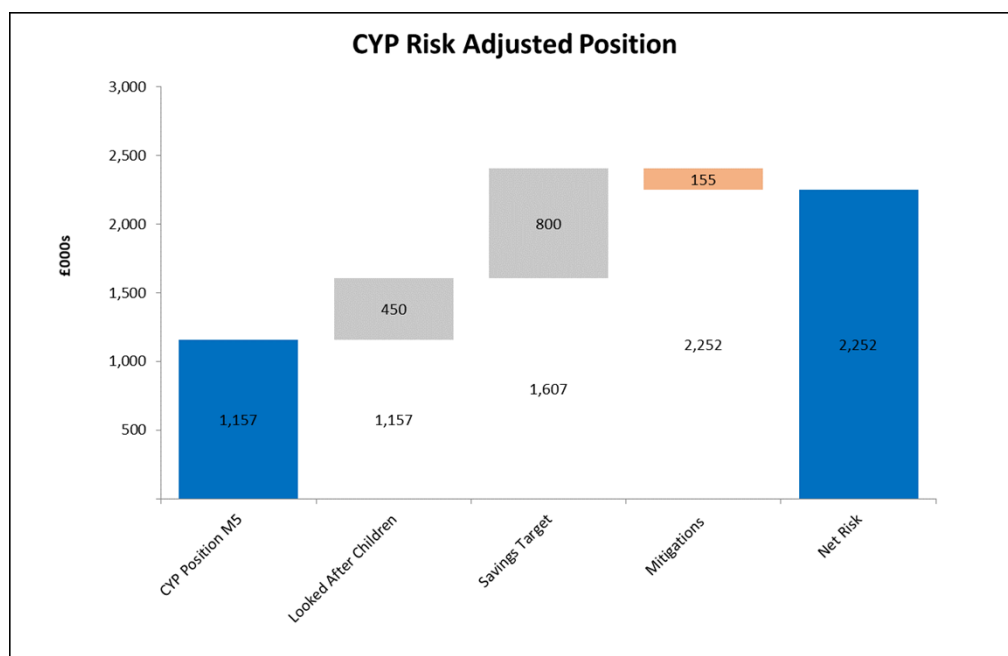
- The Pensions Liabilities remain at the same level as previous years, it is unlikely that the saving of (£0.150m) will be met this year.
- Delays in relocating from Higher Lane has meant that the saving (£0.090m) will be partially achieved this year.
- Procurement & Contract Reviews (£0.150m) and Transformation of Children's Social Care (£0.740m) are likely to be cost avoidance as opposed to budget savings.

#### 4.4.6 Historical Savings/Pressures

There is currently (£0.105m) of unachieved historical savings/pressures adversely impacting the month 5 position.

#### 4.4.7 Potential Risks/Mitigations

The chart below highlights potential risks/mitigations currently not in the forecast (see notes for detail)



**Note 1:** Looked After Children is attached to the risk of an increase in the number/complexity of additional children being taken in to care that are not currently included in the forecast.

**Note 2:** High risk of under achievement of the 2019-20 savings target.

**Note 3:** Mitigations not reported in the month 5 forecast include delays in recruitment to posts within the new structure and identification of external funding.

## 4.5 OPERATIONS

4.5.1 The Operations budget is forecast to underspend by (- £0.127m), a decrease of (- £0.039m) since M4. The main reasons for the monthly movement, is a provision within the revenue budget for the welfare improvements within Transport is no longer required, as funding has now been agreed via the capital programme.

4.5.2 The M5 underspend is analysed by Operations service area in the table below.

| OPERATIONS                         | CURRENT BUDGET | FORECAST OUTTURN | MONTH 5 VARIANCE |
|------------------------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Grounds Maintenance                | 1,742          | 1,712            | (30)             |
| Engineers                          | 5,021          | 4,996            | (25)             |
| Winter Maintenance                 | 271            | 332              | 61               |
| Transport/ Workshop                | 448            | 199              | (249)            |
| Waste Management / Street Cleaning | 5,396          | 5,512            | 117              |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>12,878</b>  | <b>12,751</b>    | <b>(127)</b>     |

## 4.5.3 M5 Material Variances:

- Waste Management / Street Cleaning are forecast to overspend by (£0.117m) this is partly the balance of savings target not achieved (£0.084m); a temporary relief budget (£1,030m) was given in 2019/20, there has also been an increase costs of caddy liners and fuel as at month 5.
- Transport and Workshop is forecast to underspend by (-£0.249m) there has been a reduction in vehicle financing cost, due to the purchase of vehicles in 2018/19.

## 4.5.4 M5 Call on reserves

No call on reserves

## 4.5.5 Severance Costs

As at M5 Actual severance payment within Operations totals £0.017m.

## 4.5.6 Savings/Pressures

### 2019/20 Savings Programme

- The 2019/20 £0.500m savings target within Highways has been achieved.

### Historical Savings/Pressures

- Waste Management £0.084m balance of savings target still to be achieved; a one off £1.030m contribution to savings target in 2019/20 has been added to the budget to alleviate the pressure until a permanent solution has been found. Various options are being costed/considered.
- 
- Car Parking Balanced budget, however a one off £0.300m contribution to the savings target has been added to the budget in 2019/20, to alleviate the pressure until a permanent solution has been found

## **4.6 ART GALLERY & MUSEUM**

4.6.1 There is a forecast net overspend of £0.088m due to the Museum Development income budget of £0.088m from prior years continuing to be unachievable.

## **4.7 NON-SERVICE SPECIFIC**

**4.7.1** There is a forecast net underspend of **£3.405m**. This relates primarily to additional forecast dividend receipts from Manchester Airport of -£0.500m and forecast reduced need for provisions of £2.800m.

## **5.0 CLINICAL COMMISSIONING GROUP (CCG)**

5.1. At month 5 the CCG is reporting a balanced plan position. Within this is an overspend in acute services of £2.3m offset by underspends in other areas. There is a high level

of risk underlying this position, key risks being non-delivery of QIPP, acute over performance, the sustainability of key providers of both acute and mental health services and success of locality transformation.

**Summary Financial Performance for the Period Ending 31<sup>st</sup> August 2019**

| Financial Performance         |                  | £000's           |              |                  |                  |              |
|-------------------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------|------------------|------------------|--------------|
| Area                          | YTD Budget       | YTD Actual       | YTD Variance | Annual Budget    | FOT              | FOT Variance |
| <b>Allocations</b>            | <b>(132,478)</b> | <b>(132,478)</b> | <b>0</b>     | <b>(306,855)</b> | <b>(306,855)</b> | <b>0</b>     |
| Acute Services                | 68,267           | 69,801           | 1,534        | 162,562          | 164,903          | 2,340        |
| Community Health Services     | 12,776           | 12,848           | 72           | 30,615           | 30,717           | 102          |
| Continuing Care Services      | 5,524            | 5,726            | 203          | 13,628           | 13,981           | 353          |
| Mental Health Services        | 12,448           | 11,987           | (461)        | 30,221           | 30,162           | (59)         |
| Other Programme Services      | 3,816            | 3,832            | 16           | 6,212            | 6,662            | 450          |
| Primary Care Services         | 15,258           | 15,478           | 220          | 37,816           | 37,897           | 82           |
| Primary Care Co-commissioning | 11,179           | 11,021           | (159)        | 27,218           | 27,218           | 0            |
| <b>Programme Costs</b>        | <b>129,268</b>   | <b>130,693</b>   | <b>1,425</b> | <b>308,272</b>   | <b>311,540</b>   | <b>3,268</b> |
| Running Cost                  | 1,785            | 1,785            | 0            | 4,303            | 4,303            | 0            |
| <b>Total Costs</b>            | <b>131,053</b>   | <b>132,478</b>   | <b>1,425</b> | <b>312,575</b>   | <b>315,843</b>   | <b>3,268</b> |
| Reserves                      | 1,425            | 0                | (1,425)      | (5,720)          | (8,988)          | (3,268)      |
| <b>(Surplus)/Deficit</b>      | <b>0</b>         | <b>0</b>         | <b>0</b>     | <b>0</b>         | <b>0</b>         | <b>0</b>     |

Financial Performance 2019-20

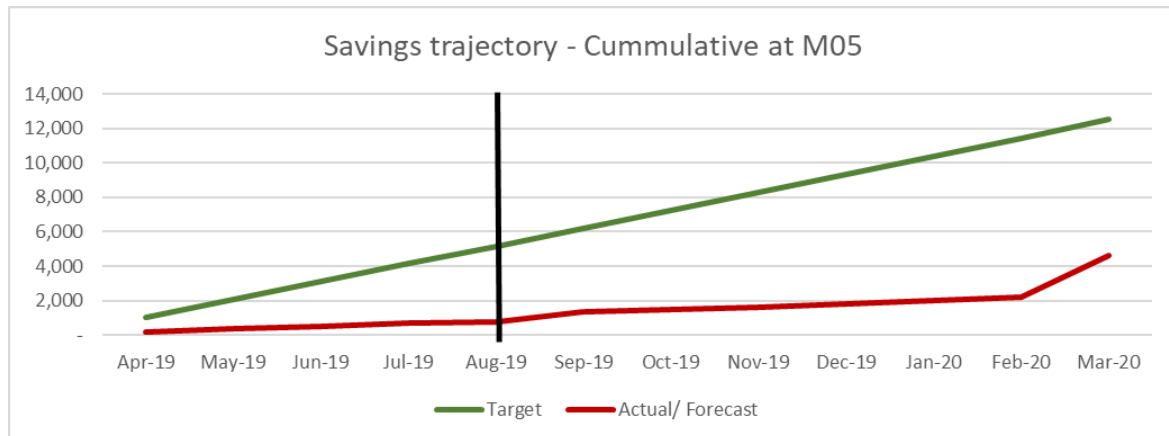
- 5.1.1 The overall position for acute services expenditure at month 5 is a £1,534k overspend. Analysis indicates that this is driven by year to date overperformance in A&E attendances, emergency admissions and critical care at Pennine Acute (PAHT). Alongside this Elective Care is overperforming at both Pennine Acute and at Oaklands Hospital, with a rise of 19% (437) in patients waiting for planned operations since March 2018. There is a consistency of overspend across a number of areas, which has continued on an upward trajectory from Quarter 4 2018/19 with nothing to suggest this will change going forward.
- 5.1.2 The CCG is reporting a forecast underspend of £59k for Mental Health Services reflecting benefits from the 18/19 outturn position. Most of the budgets are covered by block arrangements, volatility being seen mainly in those budgets related to the cost of individual placements for patients with complex needs. The year to date underspend position relates to a reduction in Mental Health placements for complex cases but the uncertainty of this continuing is reflected in the forecast
- 5.1.3 Primary care services are expected to over perform by £82k this year which includes a forecast overspend of £277k in prescribing, which is offset by a number of smaller underspends in other areas.
- 5.1.4 Community services are reporting a forecast overspend of £102k arising from AQP activity. Upon the completion of the transfer of community services from Pennine Care NHSFT to Salford Royal NHSFT there was a projected deficit of £900k, this is being monitored and reviewed and is not yet reflected within the financial position.

**5.1. QIPP Delivery:**

The table below summarizes the QIPP delivery against target at month 5 for the CCG. Unidentified target with high and medium risk schemes totals £10,143k. Options to support the delivery of the target non-recurrently are being explored.

| M05          |               |
|--------------|---------------|
| Delivered    | 1,765         |
| Low risk     | 592           |
| Medium risk  | 1,390         |
| High risk    | 855           |
| Unidentified | 7,898         |
|              | <u>12,500</u> |

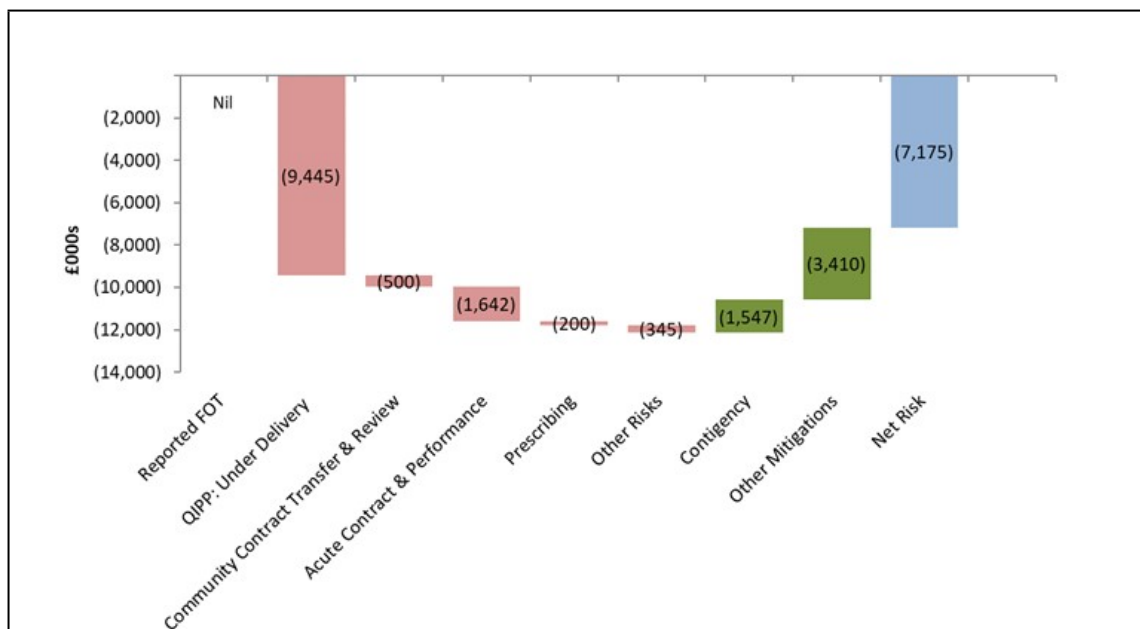
Table 1 - QIPP performance



**5.2. Risk adjusted forecast outturn:**

6. The risk adjusted forecast outturn as shown in the graph below is £7.2m. This is predominantly due to the net undelivered QIPP risk of £7.9m (£9.4m net of £1.5m contingency). Mitigations relate predominantly to possible underspends (reductions in the forecast outturn).

**7. Figure 1: Risk adjusted forecast outturn at month 5**



## 6.0 CAPITAL BUDGET

### 6.1.1 Capital Programme

The revised estimated budget for the Capital Programme 2019/20 at the end of August is shown in the table below:

| 2019/20  | £m            |
|--|---------------|
| Original Capital Programme                     | 52.599        |
| (Approved) Slippage from 2018/19               | 8.990         |
| In year adjustments and contributions          | (689)         |
| <b>Revised Capital Allocation at Mth5</b>      | <b>60.900</b> |
| Estimated re-profiled projects into 2020/21    | (7.859)       |
| <b>Revised working budget for Year at Mth5</b> | <b>53.041</b> |

6.1.2 The expenditure and funding profile for the Capital Programme together with a detailed breakdown of the Original Approved Programme, the Revised Estimate, Forecast Outturn, Actual Spend up to end of Month 5, and the estimated under/over-spend of the capital programme for 2019/20 is shown in Appendix A.

6.1.3 Members should note that given the complexity and size of some of the larger schemes currently in the Council's Capital Programme the information received from budget holders can vary significantly from one quarterly report to the next and should be read in this context.

6.1.4 At the end of month 5, a total of **£7.859m** of the 2019/20 budget has been identified for re-profiling into 2020/21.

### 6.2 Expenditure

6.2.1 The Forecast Outturn for the year at Month 5 is indicated to be **£46.2m** and Budget Managers have reported, after considering the development stages for a number of schemes in the programme, an expected outturn close to this amount by 31 March 2020.

6.2.2 Actual expenditure after accruals that was realised by the end of Month 5 totals **£7.525 m.**

6.2.3 The main areas to record expenditure for the second quarter are:

- Highways Schemes £2.702m
- Children's, Young People and Culture £2.380m
- Corporate ICT - Digital Transformation £1.002m
- Housing Public Sector £0.487m
- Other £0.954m

### 6.3 Variances

6.3.1 Appendix A provides details of variances for each scheme based on the latest available information received from budget managers.

6.3.2 As at Month 5 there are several larger projects that are still awaiting decisions on the direction / profile of spending, such as:

- Place Shaping / Growth Programme (3.485m)
- GM Full Fibre Project (0.469m)
- Economic Development – Neighbourhood Working (0.470m)
- Better Care Fund/Disabled Facilities Grant (1.204m)

6.3.3 Several projects under the heading of 'Property-Other Development Schemes' are showing a projected overspend of 0.207m. The amount is not considered material in relation to the size of the programme and it is expected to reduce as schemes progress and funding details are finalised in year.

6.3.4 All forecasted overspend are routinely monitored and analysed by budget managers with remedial action initiated as soon as the risk is deemed to negatively affect the programme or its outcomes.

6.3.5 Brief reasons for all variances are provided in Appendix A attached with this report.

### 6.4 Funding

6.4.1 The funding profile included in Appendix A shows the resources available to cover the capital programme during 2019/20.

6.4.2 The principal source of funding for Capital schemes approved for the 2019/20 programme is represented by external resources and prudential borrowing.



6.4.3 In addition, slippage of £8.900m supported by a mixed balance of resources that were approved, received and not spent in the previous financial year were carried forward to support the current programme.

6.4.4 The position of the capital receipts and borrowing as at the end of Month 5 is reported below. The figures in the table show the total funding requirement for the revised estimated capital programme inclusive of potential slippage into 2020/21 and the expected Council resources to be used to finance the Programme.

| <b>2019/20 Use of Council Resources for Capital Investment</b>             | <b>£m</b>     |
|--|---------------|
| Revised Capital Programme allocation for the year                          | 60.900        |
| Use of external funding and contributions                                  | (37.278)      |
| <b>Balance of programme relying on Council resources</b>                   | <b>23.622</b> |
| Use of Capital receipts and earmarked reserves                             | 6.400         |
| Use of Prudential Borrowing (2019/20 approved schemes)                     | 13.282        |
| Use of Prudential Borrowing (2018/19 schemes brought forward)              | 3.940         |
| <b>Total Council Resources used to support the Capital Budget for Year</b> | <b>23.622</b> |

## 6.5 Capital Programme Monitoring

6.5.1 The programme will continue to be monitored closely during the year by the Capital Programme Management Group (CPMG) and the Management Accountancy team with an aim to identify potential risks to delivery of schemes on cost and time. A review of the operational programme is underway and this will align schemes in the programme with the reporting timetable and target a slippage into 2020/21 of a maximum 10% of the working programme.

## 7.0 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

7.1 The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) relates to the operation of the Council’s housing stock and can be viewed as a landlord account. It is required by statute to be accounted for separately within the General Fund and is therefore effectively ring-fenced.

7.2 The latest estimates show a projected surplus (working balance carried forward) of £1.040m at the end of 2019/20. The projected outturn shows a deficit balance of £0.579m. See Appendix B.

7.3 There are a number of variations that contribute to the projected outturn position but there is only one significant area where the variance exceeds 10% and £0.050m that has resulted in the projected deficit balance:

- Revenue contributions to capital – the contribution required to the costs of major works to the housing stock last year was significantly lower than the budget due to slippage on planned schemes; these resources are now required

in 2019/20 to complete the 2018/19 programme. The unspent resources in 2018/19 were transferred to the Business Plan Headroom Reserve on a temporary basis and will need to be released back to the HRA to maintain its minimum level of balances.

- 7.4 The main impacts on the HRA year end balance are normally **void levels**, the **level of rent arrears** and the **level of Right to Buy sales**.

**Voids:**

The rent loss due to voids for April to August was on average 1.06% which is better than the 1.1% void target level set in the original budget. If this performance was to continue for the rest of the year there would be an increase in rental income of £0.011m over the original budget; the projections of rental income in Appendix B have been calculated on this basis.

Six Town Housing continue to review the voids processes and the various factors affecting demand.

**Arrears:**

The rent arrears at the end of August totalled £1.754m, an increase of 5.9% since the end of March. Of the total arrears £0.734m relates to former tenants and £1.021m relates to current tenants. An estimated £0.640m of current tenant arrears are in cases where either the under occupancy charge applies or the tenants are in receipt of Universal Credit rather than Housing Benefit.

The Council is required to make a provision for potential bad debts. The contribution for the year is calculated with reference to the type of arrear, the amount outstanding on each individual case and the balance remaining in the provision following write off of debts.

Based on the performance to the end of August, projected for the full year, this provision would require an additional contribution of £0.261m to be made.

The 2019/20 HRA estimates allow for additional contributions to the provision totalling £0.478m, £0.186m for uncollectable debts and £0.292m to reflect the potential impact that welfare benefit changes could have on the level of rent arrears. Therefore there is a potential underspend of £0.101m. The projected outturn has not been amended to reflect this as rent arrears are volatile and an increase in the numbers of Universal Credit cases is expected during the current financial year.

**Right to Buy Sales:**

From April 2012 the maximum Right to Buy discount increased from £0.026m to £0.075m.

This has resulted in an increase in the number of applications and ultimately sales. There were 71 sales in 2017/18, however this reduced to 55 sales last year.

The forecast for 2019/20 was set at 60, this being an increase of 15 on the level of sales assumed for Bury in the Government's self-financing valuation.

From July 2014 the maximum percentage discount on houses increased from 60% to 70% (in line with the discounts allowed on flats). The maximum discount now stands at £82,800.

From 26<sup>th</sup> May 2015 the qualifying period for Right to Buy was reduced from 5 years to 3 years.

The number of sales has a direct effect on the resources available to the HRA – the average full year rent loss for each dwelling sold is around £3,700.

There have been 17 sales in the period April to August. This is 2 less than at this point last year. However the number of applications currently proceeding is higher than at this point last year (102 compared to 82). On this information the forecast has been kept at 60 and will be reviewed again at the end of quarter 3; the projections of rental income in Appendix B have been calculated on this basis.

- 7.5 The Welfare Reform and Work Act requires a 1% reduction in social housing rents for 4 years from 2016/17 which has a significant impact on future HRA resources; it has been announced that following this period there will be a return to the previous rent policy i.e. increases of Consumer Price Inflation (CPI) plus 1% for a period of at least 5 years.

### **8.0 PRUDENTIAL INDICATOR MONITORING**

- 8.1 It is a statutory duty for the Council to determine and keep under review the "Affordable Borrowing Limits". The authority's approved Prudential Indicators (affordability limits) for 2019/20 is outlined in the approved Treasury Management Strategy Statement.
- 8.2 The authority continues to monitor the Prudential Indicators on a quarterly basis and Appendix C shows the original estimates for 2019/20 (approved by Council on 20 February 2019) with the revised projections as at 31 August, 2019. The variances can be seen in the Appendix together with explanatory notes. The Prudential Indicators were not breached during the first five months of 2019/20.

### **9.0 TREASURY MANAGEMENT**

#### **9.1 Investments:**

- 9.1.1 At the 31st August 2019 the Council's investments totalled £8.3 million and comprised:-

| <b>Type of Investment</b>                  | <b>£ Million</b> |
|--|------------------|
| Call Investments (Cash equivalents)        | 8.3              |
| Fixed Investments (Short term investments) | 0.0              |
| <b>Total</b>                               | <b>8.3</b>       |

- 9.1.2 All investments were made in line with Link's suggested credit worthiness matrices and the approved limits within the Annual Investment Strategy were not breached during the first 5 months of 2019/20.

- 9.1.3 The Council has earned the following return on investments:

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|  |       |
|--|-------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> April to 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2019  | 0.66% |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> July to 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2019 | 0.67% |

9.1.4 This figure is higher than Link's suggested budgeted investment earnings rate for returns on investments, placed for periods up to three months in 2019/20, of 0.57%.

### 9.2 Borrowing:

9.2.1 New external borrowing has been undertaken in August 2019. A PWLB loan for £5 million has been taken over 10 years at a rate of 1.23%, and a short term loan (repayable in August 2020) for £3 million at a rate of 0.87%. Both of these loans have been taken to refinance maturing debt.

9.2.2 At 31st August 2019 the Council's debts totalled £192.904 million and comprised:-

|                                |              | 31 August 2019 |                |              |
|--------------------------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|
|                                |              | Principal      |                | Avg. Rate    |
|                                |              | £000           | £000           |              |
| <b>Fixed rate funding</b>      |              |                |                |              |
|                                | PWLB Bury    | 134,073        |                |              |
|                                | PWLB Airport | 11,828         |                |              |
|                                | Market Bury  | 44,000         | 189,901        |              |
| <b>Variable rate funding</b>   |              |                |                |              |
|                                | PWLB Bury    | 0              |                |              |
|                                | Market Bury  | 0              | 0              |              |
| <b>Temporary Loans / Bonds</b> |              | 3,003          | 3,003          |              |
| <b>Total Debt</b>              |              |                | <b>192,904</b> | <b>3.95%</b> |

9.2.3 The overall strategy for 2019/20 is to finance capital expenditure by running down cash/investment balances and taking shorter term borrowing rather than more expensive longer-term loans. This strategy is currently under review. With the reduction of cash balances, the level of short-term investments will fall. Given that investment returns are likely to remain low for the financial year 2019/20, then savings will be made by running down investments and taking shorter term loans rather than more expensive long-term borrowing.

9.2.4 It is anticipated that further borrowing will be undertaken during this financial year.

### 10.0 MINIMUM LEVEL OF BALANCES

10.1 The actual position on the General Fund balance is shown in the following table:

|  | £m           |
|--|--------------|
| <b>General Fund Balance 31 March 2019 per Accounts</b> | <b>7.703</b> |
| Less : Minimum balances to be retained in 2019/20      | (4.250)      |
| Less : Forecast overspend at Month 5                   | (467)        |
| <b>Forecast Available Balances at 31 March 2020</b>    | <b>2.986</b> |

10.2 Based on the information contained in this report, on the risk assessments that have been made at both corporate and strategic level, on the outturn position for 2019/20 and using information currently to hand on the likely achievement of cuts options,

there is no reason at present to take the minimum level of balances above the existing level of £4.250m.

- 10.3 In light of the above assessment it is recommended that the minimum level of balances be retained at **£4.250m**.
- 10.4 Members are advised that using available balances to fund ongoing expenditure would be a breach of the Council's Golden Rules. Likewise, Members are advised that the Authority faces significant funding reductions in the future, and balances are likely to be required to fund one-off costs of service transformation.

### **11.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY**

- 11.1 There are no specific equality and diversity implications.

### **12.0 FUTURE ACTIONS**

- 12.1 Budget monitoring reports continue to be presented to the Joint Executive Committee and Strategic Leadership Team on a monthly basis and on a quarterly basis to the Cabinet, Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Audit Committee.

### **Councillor Eamonn O'Brien, Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing**

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#### **List of Background Papers:-**

Finance Working Papers, 2019/20 held by the Joint Chief Finance Officer, Bury Council and Bury CCG.

**Contact Details:-**Mr M Woodhead, Joint Chief Finance Officer, Bury Council and Bury CCG, Tel. 0161 253 7659, Email: [mike.woodhead@nhs.net](mailto:mike.woodhead@nhs.net)

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**SCRUTINY REPORT**

**MEETING: Overview and Scrutiny**

**DATE: Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2019**

**SUBJECT: Update on devolution in Greater Manchester**

**REPORT FROM: The Leader of the Council**

**CONTACT OFFICER: Chris Woodhouse, Corporate Core**

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## **1.0 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 In February 2018 a report was presented to Overview and Scrutiny on devolution in Greater Manchester. The Committee welcomed the report and requested that such an update became a regular agenda item
- 1.2 This report highlights the most recent updates in relation to the work with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership (GMHSCP), both of which Bury has active involvement with.

## **2.0 GREATER MANCHESTER STRATEGY (GMS) – OUR PEOPLE OUR PLACE**

- 2.1 The GMS is the GMCA's main strategy document to which, with its accompanying implementation plan, an update is provided on every six months. The most recent update was presented to the GMCA meeting in October and marked the three-quarter point of the initial two year plan.
- 2.2 The updates provide a combination of data and narrative against key indicators of success, and updates on activity against each of the ten priorities of the GM Strategy. Some examples of this in relation to Bury are:
  - Bury 2<sup>nd</sup> best in GM for school readiness but still behind England average
  - Bury has relatively low level of NEETS, those not in education, employment or training
  - Median earnings of Bury residents are second highest in GM exceeding local and national averages and growing at decent levels, yet percentage of jobs earning above the living wage is lower than several GM authorities.
  - Bury recorded a low level of 'active or fairly active' adults which is sought to be addressed through the Bury Local Pilot in Radcliffe which the Integrated Wellness Service is leading on as part of GM Moving.

- 2.3 This latest update is being used locally to help inform both our Council (and wider Borough's) plans going forward but also to support the refresh of the GM strategy. Within Bury Executive Directors have been presented with the elements of the GM implementation plan that relate to their work area so that GM level activity can be reflected in the emerging Bury 2030 (Community) Strategy and subsequent Corporate Plan; whilst also ensuring specific initiatives in Bury are articulated in future iterations of the GM plans. This would include where Bury are piloting activity such as the Early Years digitisation project or Energy Path Network.
- 2.4 *Bury 2030* will be the overarching plan for the Borough of Bury; setting out a clear shared vision, outlining our levels of ambitious and bringing together our plans for transforming the Borough and the change in relationships needed to make this a success. When considering how best to structure this it was noted how appropriate the foundations of the GM Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) were – these being *people, infrastructure, place, the business environment* and *ideas* – and these are being used as the building blocks for our plan locally.
- 2.5 Greater Manchester, as one of three national trailblazers, launched the GM LIS in June 2019. This is based on the model of the national Industrial Strategy. Whilst there is no requirement to have a LIS at Borough level, by adopting the foundations of the LIS into our wider strategic thinking, Bury can position itself as demonstrating how wider activity in the public, voluntary and private sector can stimulate business, whilst mainstreaming activity that might otherwise be seen as only relevant to the business sector. An example would be the GM Good Employment Charter, which encourages and supports employers to develop good jobs, deliver opportunities for people to progress and help employers to grow and succeed. Bury was represented at the launch of this in the summer and taking steps to be a Charter Supporter.
- 2.6 The GM LIS recognised health innovation; advanced materials and manufacturing; digital, creative and media; and clean growth as the pillars to drive GM forward. Bury is working together through our Business Leadership Group, Bury Means Business network, colleges and education provision to ensure Bury positions itself as the plan in the conurbation to gain and use the academic and life skills required to take advantage of these growth sectors.

### **3.0 HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE (WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM)**

- 3.1 One of the flagships at the start of GM devolution was the production of the five year plan for health and wellbeing of Greater Manchester. *Taking Charge of our Health and Social Care* outlined how we would collectively improve wellbeing by helping people to better manage their own health, provide more jointed-up care near where people live, and develop the health and care workforce.
- 3.2 £19m was secured from the Transformation Fund to enable the development of new models of care, self-help and behaviour change initiatives as outlined in Bury's initial Locality Plan. This outlined Bury's transformation to drive towards financial and clinical sustainability through the integration of health and social care, keeping people well for longer, reducing failure demand and tackling the wider determinants of health.



- 3.3 At an event in the Elizabethan Suite at the end of October 2019 the progress made with regards to health and care integration was discussed and celebrated. This included an update with regards to the Bury Local Care Organisation, a formal partnership of seven organisations to provide integrated care for the people of Bury in a sustainable way that improves the outcomes for local people. This includes the acute hospital trust (Pennine as part of the Northern Care Alliance), the Council's Adult care provision, Persona, the Bury GP Federation, BARDOC and the Voluntary Community and Faith Alliance.
- 3.4 This work has seen the establishment of 5 integrated neighbourhood teams - Bury East (Bury Town Centre), Bury West (Radcliffe), Prestwich, Whitefield and North (Tottington, Ramsbottom). Each team uses multi-disciplinary meetings involving GPs, mental health services, voluntary organisations and others to plan to meet the needs for individual patients and residents.
- 3.5 This is coupled with on 'People Powered Bury' to take an asset based approach to have difference conversations with the people of Bury - which has included ethnographic training for front line staff so that conversations can be around helping people to help themselves based on positives rather than starting the conversation with asking what is 'wrong'.
- 3.6 At the same time development has taken place locally of our One Commissioning Organisation. This brings together the Council and Bury CCG into a single commissioning function. This October saw the first Strategic Commissioning Board meeting take place, bringing clinicians and Cabinet members together. Whilst initially focusing on health and care commissioning the intention is for the remit of the board to expand into wider determinants of health such as other 'non-care' functions of the Council.
- 3.7 Work is now taking place within Bury and GM to bring together health and social care integration in the context of public sector reform - in effect bringing the work of the GMCA and GMHSCP closer together. This work has already begun in Bury as part of the early thinking around 2030 as outlined in 2.3-2.6 above. Regionally the GMHSCP have been developing *Taking Charge: the Next 5 years - our prospectus* which recognises the importance of unlocking the economic potential of the region through the LIS and building a population health system.
- 3.8 As part of this have asked each Borough to refresh their Locality Plan. Our refresh will focus bringing together the different models of neighbourhood working locally, such as the Integrated Neighbourhood Teams, New Early Help Approach and Six Town Housing estate management. In doing so this will articulate Bury's approach to the GM Model of Public Services, as a means of organising resources (people and budgets) around neighbourhoods rather than organisational silos.
- 3.9 Linked to this, Greater Manchester's Working Well System continues to provide a whole population approach to health, skills and employment, with the Work and Health programme supporting those furthest from the labour market, due to being long term unemployed, or with a long-term health condition or disability, to find and sustain work. The Early Help programme supports employees with health issues at risk of falling out of the labour market and for newly unemployed people to help deal with emerging health issues. The delivery principles of these schemes have been developed through a test and learn pilot which Bury has been central to. These are of personalised support;

integration; and the need for work, health and skills to act as an ecosystem.

### **4.0 GREATER MANCHESTER PLAN FOR HOMES, JOBS AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

- 4.1 On 7<sup>th</sup> October, GMCA published the latest summary report into the consultation on this plan, also known as the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF).
- 4.2 Over 67,000 comments were received on the draft GMSF from across the region with 80% of these in relation to one or more strategic allocations (which in Bury are Elton Reservoir Area, Seedfield and Walshaw) rather than the wider thematic plan. The responses are available upon the gmconsult.com website. Major concerns raised within the responses centred on congestion and wider transport issues and the potential total of greenbelt land in proposed allocations.
- 4.3 The comments submitted are now being considered within the GMCA and along with the wider evidence base will inform the next version of the plan which is to be consulted on in summer 2020. A full consultation report will accompany this consultation which will set out how issues raised have been addressed other through changes to the plan or as an explanations as to why the issue has not resulted in any changes to policies or proposals.
- 4.4 Bury's Local Plan will reflect the Spatial Framework once confirmed. In the meantime the emerging Bury 2030 strategy will look to address infrastructure and environmental issues. Connectivity is a key theme includes connecting people within the region to assets and opportunities including employment, education provision, culture and leisure offers.
- 4.5 GM has been successful in securing £23.8m from the Local Full Fibre network Challenge to connect 1,500 public sector settings, to increase full fibre coverage from 2% to 25% by 2021. Bury Council and CCG officers have been engaged in this process as part of determining potential sites within the Borough and will lead discussions with economic development, highways and communications as this moves into implementation stage.
- 4.6 Bury has benefited from GM's Transforming Cities funding through the Mayor's Cycling and Walking programme, Streets for All. This includes joint work with Metrolink on cycle paring for the Bury line and the recent announcement of improvements as part of Chris Boardman's *Bee Network* initiative. 71 new or upgraded crossings are proposed, enabling 88% of the population to use the network as part of an integrated walking and cycling network across the region.
- 4.7 The *Bee Network* is part of the wider integrated public transport system being proposed for the future as part of GM's *Our Network*. For Bury this sets out proposals for the next 20 years including Metrolink capacity and infrastructure expansions (such as a link to Middleton and proposed tram-train link to Rochdale) and quality bus improvements linking the Bury and Radcliffe to Bolton and the Northern Gateway site into Manchester city centre. Buses more generally are a subject of current consultation as the GMCA seeks views on a proposed franchising system, possible through reform powers available locally through the Bus Services Act (2017). This would allow GM to decide the routes, frequencies, fares and quality of standards across the region. Hard copies of the consultation plans are available at Bury Town Hall, the libraries in Bury,

Radcliffe and Ramsbottom; along with the Longfield Centre in Prestwich and Tottington Centre (Market Street).

- 4.8 This year saw the second GM Green Summit and the launch of a five year Environment Plan for Greater Manchester. The plan outlines five key challenges
- Mitigating climate change
  - Air quality
  - Production and consumption of resources
  - Natural environment (protection)
  - Resilience and adaptation to the impacts of climate change.

In Bury, the Council declared a climate change emergency this summer which is leading to the development of a Climate Change Action Plan. This will set out local actions in light of the the GM Environment Plan and include existing steps on reducing air pollution as part of our Clean Air proposals and progressing with plastic-free Bury.

### **5.0 ADULT EDUCATION**

- 5.1 The devolution of Adult Education budgets (AEB) to the region is now underway, focused on a place based approach to the development and delivery of learning and training that meets local needs particularly around resident progression.
- 5.2 Local Authority Partnership Meetings are being established with all providers locally who receive funding from the AEB who deliver in Bury and these will be facilitated by the GM Strategy and Partnership manager. This will be a positive step in moving towards a co-ordinated and collaborative approach to mapping the current local offer of learning and training within the borough, identifying need and gaps within provision and determining who is best placed to deliver particular learning programmes to avoid duplication and maximise funding.
- 5.3 The GMCA has stated that the principle purpose of the AEB is to “engage adults and provide them with the skills needed for entering and sustaining work or further learning ....with a clear line of sight into the local labour market and future economic development opportunities”. Within this definition there is limited opportunity for recreational learning and as such has meant that many traditional adult learning programmes e .g creative arts and textiles, languages, creative writing have been withdrawn from being eligible for government funding and become self-financing in order to remain available to Bury residents. Bury Adult Learning took this decision 2 years ago and although numbers have declined in this provision, there were 407 learners (727 enrolments) on courses in 18/19. This provision plays an important part in strategies for tackling loneliness and supporting the wellbeing of communities The Service continues to include a small number of introductory courses as part of funded provision and may use traditional courses as engagement activities to widen participation in learning in disadvantaged areas within the borough.

### **6.0 OTHER ACTIVITY**

- 6.1 The Council has continued its commitment to participate with the Rough Sleeping initiative. It has made arrangements to employ 1 Rough Sleepers Co-ordinator and 1.5 Rough Sleepers Outreach workers. This is in the context of establishing a Rough Sleepers Operation group to provide a forum for partners to progress pathways for rough sleepers to access accommodation and support. These are held every fortnight and include representation from the Bury

Council, Housing First, Greater Manchester Police, voluntary sector providers and GMCA. Housing First referrals are made via this Group. With respect to A Bed Every Night (ABEN), this is delivered locally by Adullam Homes. This is a 10 bed provision which enables a warm place for rough sleepers to stay and also provide food and drink. Pathways have been established for move on into more structured and secure accommodation.

- 6.2 Bury Council, along with the other local authorities, has signed up to the GM Armed Forces Covenant. There is a Bury Covenant group who meet and will be focused on generating an action plan, owned across the system, identifying ways to address the themes in the GM Armed Forces Covenant and ensure there is support, services and connections in Bury for our military community.
- 6.3 We have recently launched our new Community Safety Plan for 2019-2021 and this has been designed to strategically align with GM's 'Standing Together' Police and Crime Plan to enable the co-ordination of resources more effectively and undertake regional work where beneficial – to keep people safe; to reduce harm and offending; and to strengthen communities.
- 6.4 In terms of children and young people work has continued to drive school readiness improvement across the region, through engagement of the GM Learning Partnership and an initiative with the BBC to support speech, language and communication resources for parents and professionals. Bury has led the way as trial locality for a data visualisation pilot with regards to embedding early intervention and preventative services in place based teams. Supporting people through education, there has been a second phase of the Mentally Healthy Schools Programme launched in September with a third phase to follow; the implementation of a consistent care leavers offer; and the launch of the Opportunity Pass enabling young people (16-18 year olds) free travel on local buses across Greater Manchester (in addition to half price off peak, day and weekend travelcards on Metrolink) to provide greater freedom to travel, work and learn. This is all particularly pleasing given that Bury Council's Leader is the GM lead for Children and Young People.
- 6.5 It is worth noting that the current term of the GM Mayor will end next year with the Mayoral election scheduled for May 2020.

### **7.0 RECOMMENDATION**

- 7.1 Scrutiny are asked to note this report and indicate if they would like to receive future reports on any particular element of this paper. Should future updates be requested it is proposed to structure these along the themes of the GM LIS, ie Bury 2030 theme.

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### **List of Background Papers:-**

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**DRAFT ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT  
APRIL 2018 – MARCH 2019**

**Jane Whittam  
Assistant Team Manager - Information  
19 April 2019**

## **PURPOSE/SUMMARY:**

This report has been produced in line with the statutory requirement to update Members and provide current information in respect of complaints related to Children's Social Care Services. This report looks at the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019 and will allow Members to see the extent and complexity of Children's Social Care Service's span of activity and to receive information relating to the quality of the services delivered.

Members are asked to note the content of the report and advise Officers of future requirements in respect of the reporting of complaints relating to Children's Social Care Services.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 In line with guidance from the Department for Education, Local Authorities are required to publish an Annual Complaints Report covering the council year. This report is to provide current information in respect of complaints related to Children's Social Care Services for the year 2018 / 2019.
- 1.2 As part of our continued approach to monitoring performance, the status of complaints is also reported weekly to the Children's Senior Management Team. Lessons learnt from complaints are also discussed within the Team Meetings and where there is wider learning discussions take place during the monthly Children's Services Extended Managers Meeting.

## **2.0 WHAT IS A COMPLAINT**

- 2.1 A complaint may be generally defined as 'an expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet' in relation to an individual child or young person, which requires a response. A complaint may be made by written or verbal expression.
- 2.2 Complaints principally concern service delivery issues, including the perceived standard of these services and their delivery by service providers. These recorded figures only represent a percentage of complaints received as many complaints / concerns are managed daily on an informal basis operationally and are thus, not registered formally by the complaints section.
- 2.3 The Complaints Procedure is not designed to deal with allegations of serious misconduct by staff. These situations are covered under the separate disciplinary procedures of the Council.
- 2.4 It is a legal requirement that Children's Social Care Services has a distinct complaints procedure. This statutory procedure provides the means for a child or young person to make a complaint about the actions, decisions or apparent failings of a local authority's children's social care provision. It also allows an appropriate person to act on behalf of the child or young person concerned or to make a complaint in their own right.
- 2.5 For some service users and for children and young people in particular, it is not easy to make a complaint. This can be the case when the person using the service may be apprehensive about what may happen if they do complain. It is important, therefore, that all complaints are treated seriously, in confidence, investigated and are given due attention. It is therefore the role of the Assistant Team Manager (Information) to provide a degree of independence and support

to the complainant whilst ensuring the complaint follows the statutory procedure. If a complaint is received directly from a child or young person, an automatic referral is made for advocate support to Bury Children's Rights Service, which is an independent advocacy service commissioned by Children's Social Care. Feedback to complainants about their complaint is essential.

- 2.6 A prime objective of the Children's Social Care Complaints Procedure is to ensure the Local Authority develops a listening and learning culture where learning is fed back to children and young people who use services. Complaints present an opportunity for the Local Authority to learn why people who are using our services find them unsatisfactory, and how we can improve the services we provide.

### **3.0 THE SOCIAL CARE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

- 3.1 The handling and consideration of complaints consists of three stages:-
- Stage 1: Local Resolution,
  - Stage 2: Independent Investigation
  - Stage 3: Review Panel
- 3.2 Local Resolution requires the Local Authority to resolve a complaint as close to the point of contact with the service user as possible (i.e. through front line management of the service). Emphasis is placed on resolving complaints under Stage 1, local resolution, because this should provide a more timely response and is user friendly. The Department strives to investigate and resolve complaints within 10 working days although the procedure does allow a 20 working day time scale for more complex complaints. In most circumstances complaints are considered at Stage 1 in the first instance.
- 3.3 Where the complaint is not resolved locally, or the complainant is dissatisfied with the Local Authority's response, the complaint can be considered at Stage 2. An independent investigation is completed by a senior manager from outside the team to which the complaint refers to. This has the oversight of an Independent Person from outside the Local Authority to ensure a full and fair investigation is carried out. We aim to send a response with a full report within 25 working days, although this can be extended to 65 working days.
- 3.4 Where Stage 2 of the Complaints Procedure has been concluded and the complainant is still dissatisfied, they will be eligible to request further consideration of the complaint by a Stage 3 Review Panel. The Panel does not reinvestigate the complaint or consider any substantively new issues of complaint that have not been first considered at Stage 2. The purpose of the Panel is to consider the initial complaint and, wherever possible, work towards a resolution. The Panel should be convened within 30 working days of request and its report (including any recommendations) will be sent within 5 working days following the meeting. The Department then issues its response to the complainant within a further 15 working days.
- 3.5 Where a complainant remains dissatisfied with the Local Authority's response to the Review Panel's recommendations, the complainant has the right to refer his / her complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman. The Assistant Team Manager (Information) will assist with this process as far as possible.

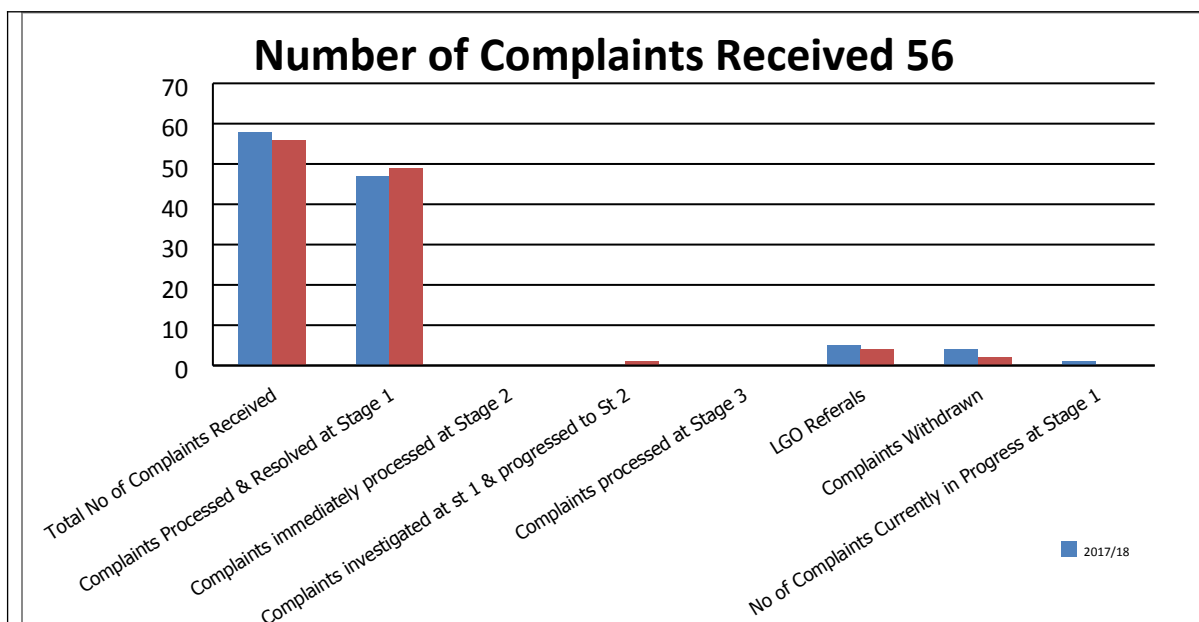
**ANALYSIS OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED**

**All figures detailed below are from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019. Reference is also made to outstanding complaints or complaints which were reported as not being agreed or completed as of 15 April 2019.**

**4.0 SOCIAL CARE COMPLAINTS RECEIVED**

4.1 A total number of 56 complaints were received across all social care teams during the 2018 – 2019 financial year. This reflects a slight decrease in the number of complaints received when compared with the 58 complaints that were received during the last financial year (April 2017 – March 2018).

4.2



4.3 Of the 56 complaints received, 2 complaints were withdrawn and 4 complaints were enquiries from the Local Government Ombudsman. At the time of writing the report, there were no stage 1 complaint investigations outstanding, with the exception of some clarification being requested on a response. This report therefore focuses on the complaints which were actually investigated at Stage 1 of the Social Care Complaints Procedure during the last financial year (April 2018 – March 2019).

4.4 49 complaints were investigated and resolved at stage 1 of the Social Care Complaints Process during 2018 / 2019

4.5 We have also continued to record the number of informal concerns / complaints received into the Complaints Department, which have predominantly been requests for information. This does not include any informal concerns or complaints which have been raised directly with individual teams. There were 83 informal concerns / complaints logged within the Complaints Department which were resolved immediately by telephone and did not result in a formal complaint being made. This is a 14% increase compared with the 73 informal concerns / complaints logged within the Complaints Department during 2017 / 2018; however it should be noted that often this type of concern is raised

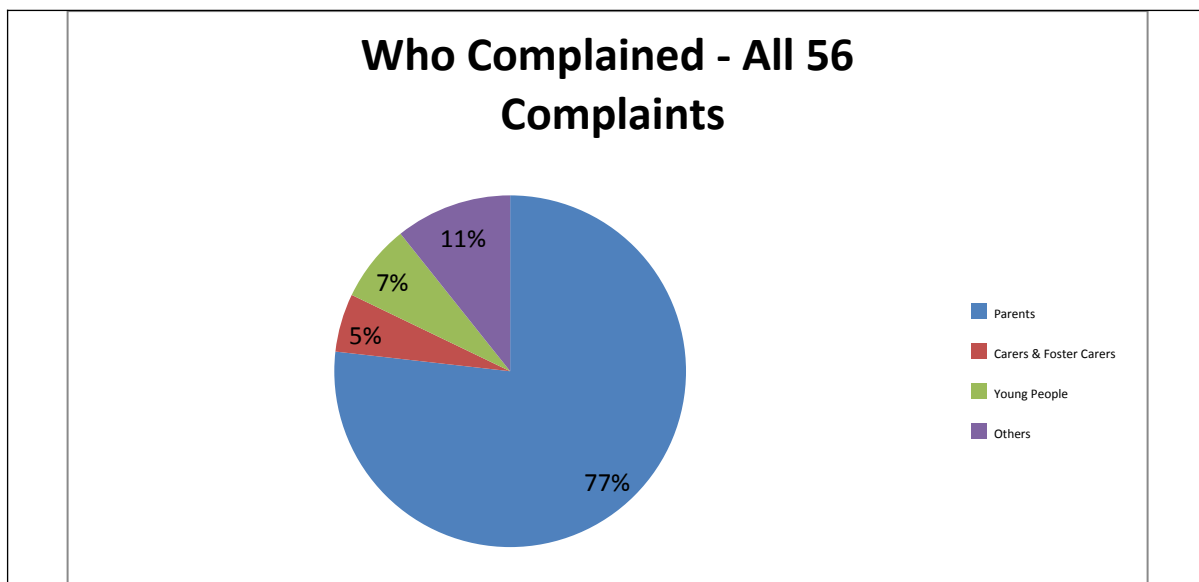


directly with individual team managers and is therefore not captured within this recording.

**5.0 WHO COMPLAINED?**

5.1 The majority (77%) of the complaints received were received from parents. Young people are encouraged to raise their own concerns with the assistance of advocacy from Bury Children’s Rights Service. Bury Children’s Social Care Services and Bury Children’s Rights Service continue to work with their joint working protocol to ensure that a consistent and timely service is offered to children and young people in the care of Bury Local Authority when they raise a concern via their advocate.

5.2



**6.0 ADVOCACY**

6.1 3 complaints were made using the service of an external Advocate, compared with 4 received during 2017 / 2018. These were all received through Bury Children’s Rights Service.

6.2 Concerns and complaints received from Children and Young People in Care are very important. These young people are often supported to make a complaint by Bury Children’s Rights.

6.3 The advocate from Bury Children’s Rights Service will initially raise the concern with the Young Person’s Social Worker, and if no response is received within a timely manner, this will be referred to the Social Worker’s line Manager for a response.

6.4 Should a response not be provided within a timely manner, or if the Young Person is unhappy with the response, their advocate will assist the child or young person to make a formal complaint at Stage 1 of the Statutory Children’s Social Care Complaints Procedure.

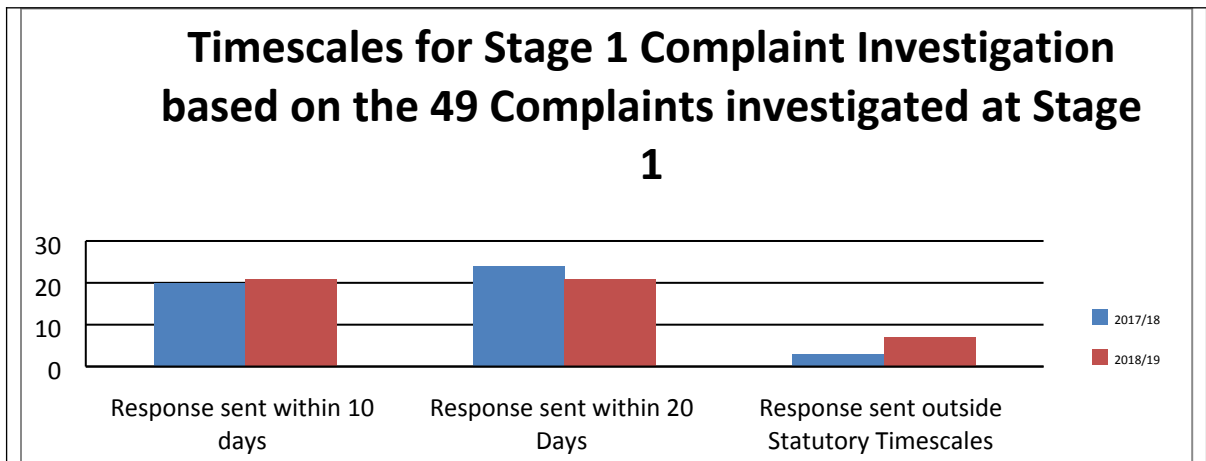
**7.0 TIMESCALES OF STAGE 1 SOCIAL CARE COMPLAINTS**

7.1 Performance Indicators show that there has been a slight increase in the compliance of timescales for responding to complaints within ten working days, but a drop in compliance at 20 working days..

| Year        | 10 Working Days | 20 Working Days |
|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 2009 / 2010 | Unavailable     | 60%             |
| 2010 / 2011 | 32.72%          | 65.46%          |
| 2011 / 2012 | 36.36%          | 79.55%          |
| 2012 / 2013 | 41.86%          | 90.96%          |
| 2013 / 2014 | 46.94%          | 95.92%          |
| 2014 / 2015 | 47.50%          | 82.50%          |
| 2015 / 2016 | 41.18%          | 79.42%          |
| 2016 / 2017 | 48.72%          | 92.31%          |
| 2017 / 2018 | 42.55%          | 93.62%          |
| 2018 / 2019 | 42.85%          | 85.7%           |

7.2 This resulted in 14% of complaints (7) being responded to outside of the statutory timescales. There were a number of reasons for this; new managers who required additional support in carrying out the investigations, complex complaints, sickness of social workers meaning they were unable to be spoken to in respect of the investigation. However, the additional time allowed for a full investigation which resulted in the complaints being resolved at Stage 1.

7.3

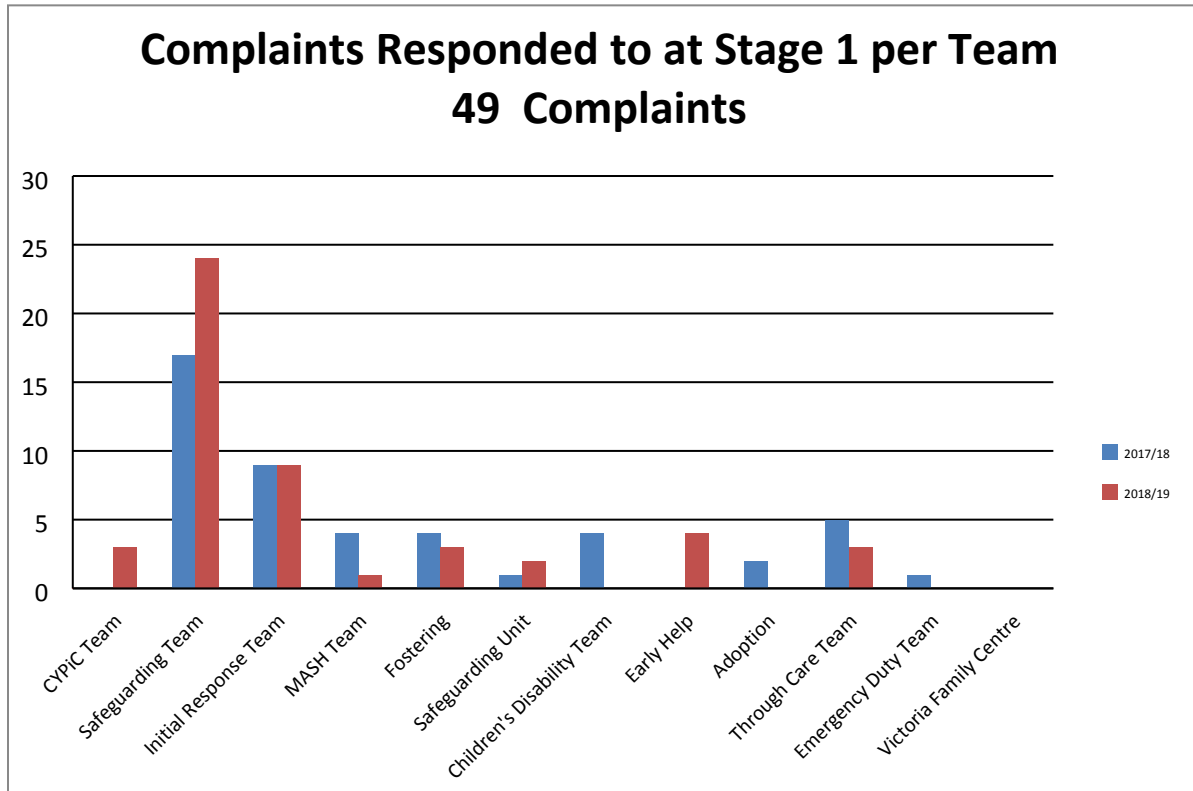


**8.0 COMPLAINTS PER TEAM**

8.1 The majority of complaints received were in respect of work carried out within the Safeguarding Team

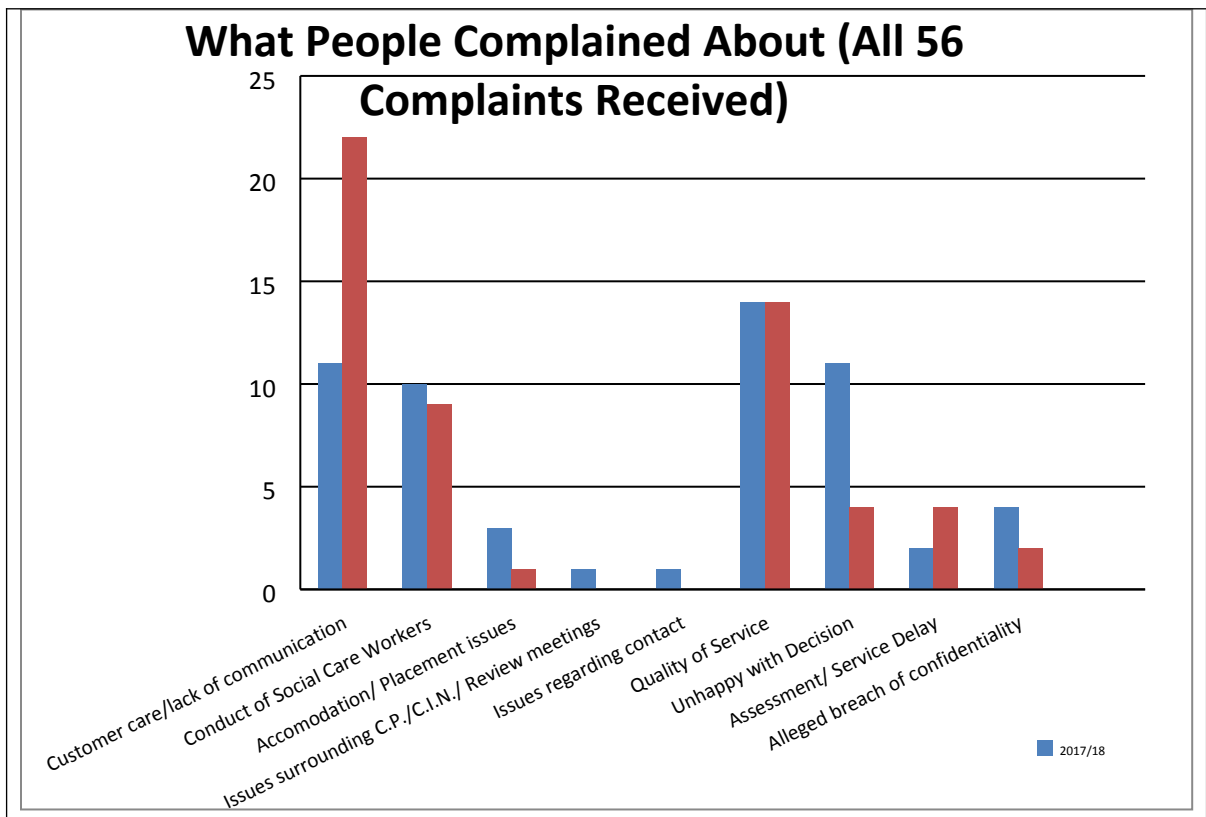
8.3 Whilst there has been an increase in complaints within the Safeguarding Team, this is not unexpected due to the number of assessments carried out in this team along with the disruption in staffing that this Team has seen. New managers within this team are supported in their investigation and response to complaints. We continue to implement quality assurance of complaint responses which assists in the provision of training and guidance to Team Managers who may be new to dealing with complaints.

8.1



**9.0 WHAT PEOPLE COMPLAINED ABOUT**

9.1



9.2 Many of the complaints received cover a variety of issues. Whilst on first glance, the graph above appears to show an increase in complaints about customer care and the lack of communication, we do have to consider that the involvement of

social workers is a service that is often unwanted by families, and they are unhappy with any involvement. Due to the nature of individual complaints it is sometimes difficult to categorise these into specific themes and the categorisation is therefore a broad categorisation. Each individual complaint has been scrutinised and there is no particular pattern to the complaints received in respect of a specific issue or worker; this is pleasing as it does not highlight a particular weak area within the teams / service.

**10.0 HOW WE DEALT WITH COMPLAINTS**

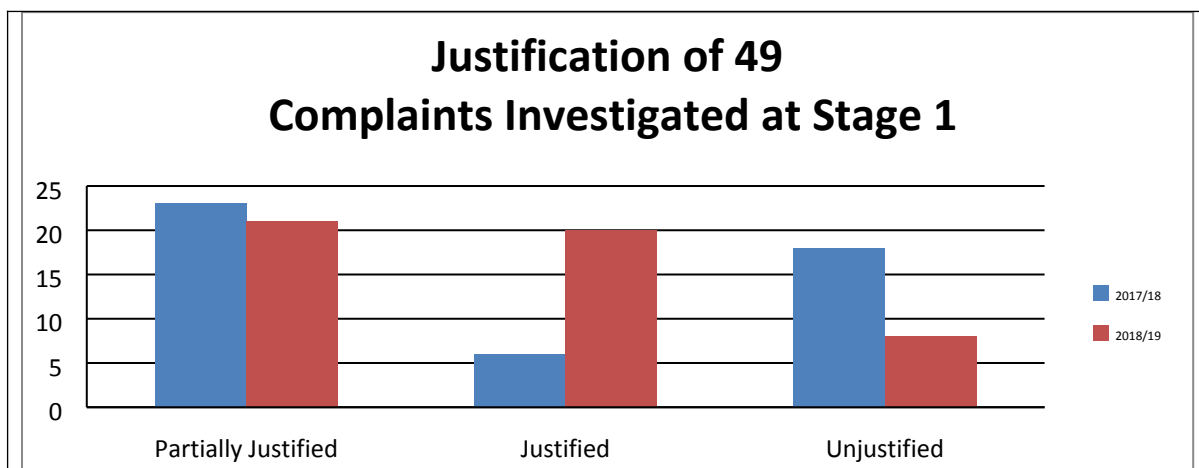
10.1 Each of the 49 complaints investigated at Stage 1 were investigated by the relevant Team Manager, and a response was provided to the Complainant explaining the situation or what the service intends to do as a result of the complaint. In the majority of cases, a letter of explanation or an apology was sufficient to resolve the matter.

10.2 Whilst a number of complainants were initially dissatisfied with the Stage 1 outcome, we were able to resolve the majority of complaints without the need to progress to Stage 2 by offering meetings with the Strategic Lead for Safeguarding and the Assistant Team Manager (Information).

10.3 One complaint was been escalated to stage 2 of the Complaints Procedure; this investigation is currently ongoing.

10.4 There were 4 complaints which was received by the Local Government Ombudsman and which we were asked to supply information to support their enquiry. Following comments received by the Council the LGO discontinued their investigation. The LGO discontinued a third complaint as the case was in the court arena. The LGO have yet to respond in respect of the 4<sup>th</sup> complaint.

10.5

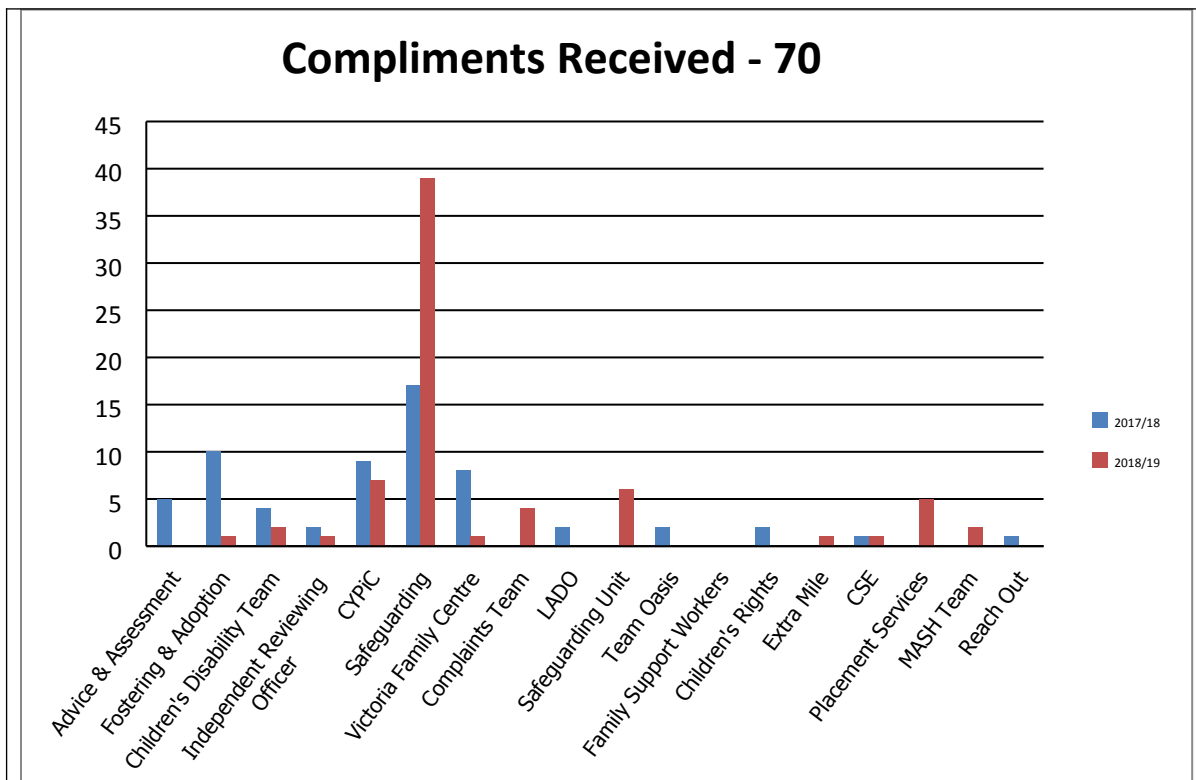


**11.0 QUALITY ASSURANCE / BUDGET POSITION**

Permanent Team Managers are now familiar with carrying out complaint investigations and providing a written response; in addition quality assurance procedures have continued which have resulted in the Local Authority having been able to resolve complaints at Stage 1 of the Complaints process, sometimes with additional mediation. There will be a charge for the Stage 2 investigation which is ongoing.

**12.0 COMPLIMENTS RECEIVED**

12.1



12.2 70 compliments regarding the Children’s Social Care Teams have been received over the last twelve months, compared to 66 during the last financial year, however not all managers forward these to be logged. A discussion has already taken place within team meetings to encourage staff to record the compliments received. It is pleasing to note that whilst the Safeguarding Team received the highest number of complaints, they also received the highest number of complements (39).

**13.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES MONITORING**

13.1 Whilst efforts have been made to monitor the ethnic origin of the Authority’s complainants; many have not returned the diversity questionnaire.

13.2 Due to the limited number of questionnaires being returned, a true and accurate reflection of the Authority’s Complainants cannot be reported.

**14.0 REPEAT AND VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS**

14.1 It should be noted that as reported in the last financial year we do still receive a small number of complaints which may be construed as either vexatious or repeated. This type of complaint impacts greatly on the time of both the Assistant Team Manager (Information) and Departmental Staff, and hinders the completion of other complaints.

14.2 The Local Government Ombudsman remains a source for advice in these situations, especially when it is clear that a Stage 2 Investigation would not provide a different outcome / resolution, and a small number of complainants

were advised to contact the LGO if they remained unhappy with the Local Authority's response.

### **15.0 DEVELOPMENT OF COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT & EXPERTISE**

15.1 The North West Complaints Managers Group meets bi-monthly. Meetings are well attended. The network aims to raise standards for Complaint Management across Authorities. Whilst I have been unable to attend all meetings due to work pressures, the group continues to be a valuable source of advice and support.

### **16.0 LEARNING FROM COMPLAINTS**

16.1 In order to demonstrate learning from complaints and the Department's commitment to use complaints to improve standards of services, all Team Managers complete a "Lessons Learnt" form following each complaint investigation. All recommendations arising from complaints have been recorded and shared with the wider Social Care teams.

16.2 During the last twelve months, discussions have taken place with Team Managers in order that lessons learnt can be fed back to social work staff.

16.3 Feedback and discussion from complaints takes place with Team Managers and is fed back to staff during Team Meetings. Wider learning has also shared during the monthly Extended Manager's Meetings.

16.3 Some complaints identify lessons learnt in dealing with an individual or family; others offer a wider learning experience

16.4 The recommendations which have arisen from complaints during 2018 / 2019 have been shared during Team Meetings. The following recommendations have now been implemented are detailed below:

- Reflective case supervision has been carried out in respect of specific cases in order for social workers to reflect on complaints received.
- The Family safe care policy has been updated in respect of Foster Carers
- Changes have been made in respect of the circulation of Child Protection minutes to ensure these are received by parents
- Managers have received further guidance in respect of the quality assurance of assessments
- Practices in respect of sharing information with partner agencies have been reviewed in line with GDPR compliance
- Good practice information was shared with Managers at the Extended Manager Meeting in respect of Care Leaver Entitlements if a Care Order is revoked prior to the young person becoming 18.
- Adoption Training for frontline Social Workers has been completed
- Managers have been requested to ensure the consistency of decision making when meetings are covered by other workers
- A review of the finance system in respect of Fostering has been carried out to ensure this is fit for purpose.
- Further support / training has been provided to Managers in respect of consistent standards for signing off meeting minutes

## **17.0 CONCLUSIONS**

- 17.1 The Complaints process has been monitored and evaluated throughout the year to ensure that we not only meet the requirements of the statutory regulations and guidance, but those of the families we work with.
- 17.2 There is still scope for the timescales in which we respond to complaints to be improved and for complaints to contribute towards improvements to the services we provide.
- 17.3 To ensure that we continue to work and resolve complaints quickly the Assistant Team Manager (Information) has worked with newer Team Managers in the investigation and response to complaints, and all written responses continue to go through a final stage of quality assurance.
- 17.4 It is essential to the smooth running of investigating and responding to complaints that delays are kept to a minimum, and that any delays in the investigation process do not add to the initial complaint. Whilst there has been a reduction in the number of complaints received, those that have been received have been more complex in nature. Therefore it is encouraging that despite the addition to working pressures for managers, we have improved the timescales for responding to complaints
- 17.5 Strict monitoring and following up on complaint investigation continues to be a priority to ensure complaints are responded to effectively within the ten day timeframe.

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