

**Minutes of:                    OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Date of Meeting:**    14 July 2020

**Present:**                    Councillor R Caserta (in the Chair)  
                                     Councillors T Cummings, R Gold, J Harris, K Leach,  
                                     B Mortenson, M Powell, S Smith, Susan Southworth,  
                                     D.Vernon, R Walker and C Walsh

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

**Apologies for Absence:** None

---

**OSC.73      APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies for absence.

**OSC.74      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Harris declared a personal interest in item 5 as she was a member of the Market task group.

Councillor Walsh declared a personal interest in item 9 as she was employed in the education sector within a local school.

**OSC.75      PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no member of the public present virtually to ask questions under this item.

**OSC.76      MINUTES**

That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 10 March be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**OSC.77      BURY MARKET COVID-19 RECOVERY**

Councillor Jane Black, Cabinet Member for Cultural Economy presented a report giving the Overview and Scrutiny Committee an update on a range of initiatives aimed at supporting the recovery of Bury Market, which was of interest to Overview and Scrutiny.

The report outlined the support that has been given and offered to Market Traders since COVID-19 lockdown measures were introduced by the Government and the control safety measures that have been implemented.

The recovery plan that was being implemented by Market Management, the Market Task and Finish Group and Cross Party Working Group was to consider future opportunities that exist for the Market and the Capital Programme that is underway for upgrades to the Market over the next 4 years.

Following the enforced closure of Bury Market, due to lockdown measures, all Market Traders were given a two month rent free period from 16<sup>th</sup> March 2020 to 16<sup>th</sup> May 2020, which was subject to a review on completion. A decision was subsequently taken to continue with a rent free period from 16<sup>th</sup> May 2020, to the end of June 2020 (6 weeks), and to 18<sup>th</sup> July 2020 for businesses that started trading on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2020 (8 weeks).

The initial two month rent freeze for all Traders equated to a loss of income of £400,600. The additional rent free period from 16<sup>th</sup> May 2020 to the end of June 2020 (6 weeks), and to 18<sup>th</sup> July 2020 for businesses that started trading on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2020 (8 weeks), equates to a loss of income of £318,850. The total rent concession to date stands at £719,450.

A number of measures were taken to ensure the Market met the Government guidance when it reopened on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2020 and all Traders were required to complete a risk assessment prior to reopening.

For the Markets team the challenge in the long term is to attract footfall to ensure the markets viability whilst ensuring the safety of visitors to the market. A thorough and detailed recovery plan had been developed by Market Management.

The Markets Task and Finish Group and cross party working group had been established to: -

- To agree a strategy for Bury Market to ensure that it remains at the heart of the towns retail experience.
- To help create a vision for how the Market evolves to meet changing consumer tastes and preferences.
- To identify big investment opportunities that can ensure the future of the Market.
- To identify how the Market can better connect with local residents that don't currently use it.
- Identify how the Market can adapt.

It was agreed at Cabinet in May 2020 that £50,000 is allocated to develop a Masterplan for the Market and the Town Centre as a whole, an indication the Market is seen as vital to the future success of Bury Town Centre.

The Chair asked when the formal paper with clear recommendations will be generated, as stated in the report.

It was reported that the first meeting of the Cross Party Working Group had taken place with second meeting set to be held shortly, once the next meeting had been held a clearer timeline would be available.

Paul Lakin added that designs were to be drafted for a flexible Market Hall space and tenders for this would be produced in the next few weeks.

Councillor Susan Southworth commented on the report and amendments were proposed to the Markets Rules and Regulations, including a review of current opening/closing times.

It was hoped that working closely with traders may enable options for Sunday opening and Christmas Markets.

Councillor Harris asked what was the anticipated daily licence open market occupancy rate expected to be in October.

Andrew Hayes from the Markets office explained that the majority of leases expire in February 2023 although daily trading licenses have a higher turnover. Whilst there was no waiting list there was positive work being undertaken.

Councillor Smith had concerns about how smaller stalls may survive having to comply with social distancing and were any creative measures planned. She added that Radcliffe Market seemed to be a success and was not in direct competition to Bury.

Indoor cafes would be communicated with about spacing requirements and creative measures had been investigated with mini food courts and stalls all contributing to a Bury Market Christmas hamper.

Councillor Walsh placed on record that the Market was a fabulous asset and added if hampers could be produced at other times of the year including Easter and for mothering Sunday.

Councillor Vernon enquired about the breakdown of market costs. It was reported that this report did not include that information but the breakdown on support packages had been forwarded to the Chair. The operational costs could be forwarded to Members of the committee for their information.

The Chair asked how the £169,000 high street grant from central government would be used?

It was reported that some of this money had been used in the town centre and borough already whilst the European development funds would be looked at by the 3 town centre boards to identify its use.

**It was agreed:**

That the contents of the report be noted and a request was made if the Cabinet Member for Cultural Economy could report back to a future meeting later in the year with the November meeting date mentioned.

**OSC.78 REGENERATION GOING FORWARD FOR BURY & RADCLIFFE**

Councillor Eamonn O'Brien, Leader and Cabinet Member for Regeneration presented a report giving the Overview and Scrutiny Committee an update on regeneration going forward for Bury and Radcliffe.

Town centres had been facing unprecedented challenges in recent years and these are likely to be accelerated by the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

The Council had a long-standing recognition that town centre master planning can play a vital role in shaping the role and function of a town centre and in promoting and stimulating the growth, investment and development required to underpin them.

It was now a critical time to refresh previous masterplans and work was taking place on a new Strategic Regeneration Framework for Radcliffe with plans to shortly commission updated work on Bury town centre.

An overview was given on the challenges and future opportunities available for both Bury and Radcliffe centres.

Councillor Powell asked about the timescales involved for the masterplans, had consultations taken place and where was the finance coming from.

It was reported that as much external funding would be sought and there was a commercial focus for the future of Bury town centre with a possible consolidation of it. The masterplan would not conclude that every part required improvement but the interchange was used as an example for an upgrade.

Councillor Harris enquired what would happen with the former fire and police station sites. It was reported that there had been complications with demolition process and both sites were being promoted on the development market to investigate the demand. An educational campus estate was mentioned as a possible usage.

Councillor Stella Smith asked if ward councillors could be kept updated with consultations for developments in their ward so they could communicate with residents.

Councillor Walker mentioned the proposals for a new secondary school in Radcliffe. Comments said this would be key to help to improve educational attainment in the town and the provision of a new secondary school in Radcliffe would also reduce the need for existing and potential future Radcliffe residents from having to travel to schools outside of the town;

The Chair asked if Council Officers could produce the masterplan and when would it be available. It was reported that there was not enough capacity internally to produce it and costs would not be high with an expected return date of the autumn.

The Chair enquired about the reopening of Bury Town Hall in September.

Donna Ball reported that a lot of work was currently taking place following the water damage from the roof and a full health and safety check including asbestos monitoring would be required. Certain parts of the building such as the ground floor would re-open quicker than the damaged rooms on the second floor.

The Chair asked about Manchester Airport and it was reported that there would be more details made at the next Cabinet on this topic.

**It was agreed:**

That the contents of the report be noted.

**OSC.79 COMBINED AUTHORITIES**

The Chair reported with the time constraints of the previous items and the business left on the agenda, would Members be in agreement for a Combined Authority update to be discussed at the next meeting.

**It was agreed:**

That the update be deferred until the September meeting.

**OSC.80 CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE - RESETTING THE EDUCATION SERVICE IN BURY**

Councillor Tamoor Tariq, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Skills presented a report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the work being undertaken to reset the education service in Bury.

The recovery of learning, skills and life opportunities for children and young people, sit within the wider Bury Recovery Programme. Whilst some children have flourished during the Covid 19 pandemic lockdown, others including the most vulnerable children (those Children who have an allocated social worker, those children who are looked after by the local authority, those children in receipt of free school meals or in receipt of and EHCP) have lost valuable learning and a focus on their needs was required.

The report focusses on vulnerable young people in Bury; and within their family context. It highlighted the key issues and concerns which had been identified and proposed strategies to secure safe school return. It plans to recover well-being and lost educational opportunities and it sets a strategic longer term agenda for the ambition that education in Bury should become, one of the best both regionally and nationally.

The report provided a further update on the progress being made during the Covid-19 pandemic to reset the education service.

It also reviewed the latest national guidance on pupil return to schools and proposed a local response to resetting education.

The report also highlighted mitigation to secure safe practices, whilst the service was being recovered over the coming weeks and months.

Councillor Vernon referred to section 5.8 of the report which detailed a summer school activity programme was available.

It was reported that this would be seen by Cabinet first and Scrutiny could view it soon. Whilst a letter had been sent to Gavin Williamson about the planned programme some of the items were being finalised with activities being put together which would also focus on mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Julian Kramer added that other information in the report provided the current position and included:-

Phase one: Preparing for Children to return to school

Phase Two: Medium Term Recovery Work, for at least the next academic year.

Phase Three: The Strategic Reset which was concurrent with phases one and two.

Councillor Walsh again placed on record her thanks to all staff who work in the education sector and they would deserve their break over the summer.

Councillor Susan Southworth stated that she had spoken to a head teacher and they reported on how lots of details had been required by the local authority such as risk assessments. They felt that the network of experienced heads and deputies had supported other schools.

Councillor Smith enquired if less summer provision was being delivered this summer and would schools be provided with extra finances in September.

Councillor Harris asked what measures were in place to track catch up funding.

It was reported that National COVID-19 Catch Up was a one-off funding grant, to schools and not the local authority, this would be available during the next academic year to support 'catch up' due to lost teaching time.

Headteachers would be able to use this funding flexibly against need however, there is an expectation that this will include one to one and small group tuition.

**It was agreed:**

That the contents of the report be noted and an update be provided for a future meeting in the autumn period.

**OSC.81 URGENT BUSINESS**

No other business was reported.

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

**(Note: The meeting started at 6.30pm and ended at 8.50pm)**