

Geoff Little
Chief Executive

Our Ref CA
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Date 30 June 2020
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Lynne Ridsdale
Deputy Chief Executive Bury Council

TO: All Members of Council

Councillors : J Black, S Briggs, R Caserta, R.Cathcart, P Cropper, T Cummings, C Cummins, J Daly, I Gartside, R Gold, J Grimshaw, D Gunther, S Haroon, J Harris, M Hayes, T Holt, S Hurst, K Hussain, D Jones, N Jones, G Keeley, O Kersh, K Leach, J Mason, G McGill, A McKay, C Morris, B Mortenson, E O'Brien, T Pickstone, M Powell, A Quinn, T Rafiq, I Schofield, D Silbiger, A Simpson, L Smith, M Smith, S Smith, Sarah Southworth, Susan Southworth, T Tariq, C Tegolo, K Thomas, D.Vernon, R Walker, S Walmsley, C Walsh, M Whitby, S Wright and Y Wright

Dear Member/Colleague

Council

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

Date:	Wednesday, 8 July 2020
Place:	Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams
Time:	7.00 pm
Briefing Facilities:	If Opposition Members and Co-opted Members require briefing on any particular item on the Agenda, the appropriate Director/Senior Officer originating the related report should be contacted.
Notes:	https://councilstream.com/burycouncil/109

AGENDA

The Agenda for the meeting is attached.

Reports are enclosed only for those attending the meeting and for those without access to the Council's Intranet or Website.

The Agenda and Reports are available on the Council's Intranet for Councillors and Officers and also on the Council's Website at www.bury.gov.uk – click on **Agendas, Minutes and Forward Plan**.

Copies of printed reports can also be obtained on request by contacting the Democratic Services Officer named above.

Yours sincerely



Chief Executive

AGENDA

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Council are requested to declare any interests which they have in any items or issues before the Council for determination.

2 MINUTES (Pages 1 - 4)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 20 May 2020. (Copy attached).

3 MAYORAL COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

To receive communications from the Mayor and any announcements by the Leader of the Council or the Chief Executive on matters of interest to the Council.

4 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

To answer questions from members of the public, notice of which has been given, on any matter relevant to the Council or its services to the community. Up to 30 minutes will be set aside for this purpose. If time permits, further questions will be invited from members of the public present.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS OF CABINET AND COUNCIL COMMITTEES

If any.

6 LEADER'S STATEMENT AND MEMBER QUESTION TIME (Pages 5 - 18)

To receive a Statement from the Leader of the Council on the work of the Cabinet and to answer written questions from Members of the Council to the Leader and Cabinet Members on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties which affect the Borough, provided the necessary written notice has been given.

7 REPORT ON SPECIAL URGENCY (Pages 19 - 30)

A report from the Leader is attached.

8 SCB COUNCIL VOTING REPORT (Pages 31 - 48)

Report from the Deputy Monitoring Officer attached.

9 APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM MONITORING OFFICER (Pages 49 - 50)

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive.

10 NOTICES OF MOTION

(i) **COVID-19 Recovery:**

The Council Notes:

COVID-19 has had an adverse effect on the communities here in Bury. This Council needs to place on record its thanks to the key workers, residents, businesses and organisations for going above and beyond. This Borough owes you a debt of gratitude. Now is the time to plan for the recovery phase, to support our residents and local businesses, in the changing need for public services.

Bury Council requires a plan to prepare and kickstart the economic recovery following the impact of COVID-19 and provide our residents and businesses with a strategic vision for the future. The plan should involve all stakeholders in order to develop the best possible forward plan for the council, our residents and businesses.

The Council resolves:

The Council therefore resolves to create "*The Bury MBC COVID-19 Recovery Plan*".

The Bury MBC COVID-19 Recovery Plan will focus on:

- Economic impact, recovery & growth for our high streets, Bury Market and businesses
- Residents - improving the skills-base to lift wages for lower income residents and adapt to the changing needs of local businesses
- Health and Social Care delivery
- Financial resilience and ensuring minimal waste of taxpayers' money to ensure money reaches frontline council services such as bins, highways and tackling flytipping which saw an increase over lockdown.
- Transformation of Bury MBC to ensure that we deliver services efficiently and more accessible to residents.
 - A review in to the spatial framework and our environment - with an inevitable economic slowdown, there will be less of a need for housing. Lockdown has made us appreciate the environment we have around us and the council should recognise what we can do to enhance it to deliver health benefits for our residents.

Progress updates should be provided to the Joint Executive team on a weekly basis and the Cabinet as a standing item each month. A report will be presented at the September Full Council Meeting.

A cross-party working group will be established to monitor and track the progress of the recovery. The Group will remain in operation as long as there is a need for a recovery response to COVID-19. The plan will be evidence based and will closely monitor the impacts and the effectiveness of the responsiveness of Bury Council in a post-COVID world.

In the names of Councillors R Caserta, P Cropper, J Daly, I Gartside, D Gunther, J Harris, S Hurst, K Hussain, N Jones, G Keeley, O Kersh, I Schofield, D Silbiger, D Vernon, R Walker, and Y Wright

(ii) Securing a Fair Deal for Private Renters and Selective Licensing

This Council Notes:

1. The significant contribution that private-rental property makes to the borough's housing market.
2. That poor housing management and low standards in the sector can lead to the failure of a local housing market. Low demand and antisocial behaviour can result in unsettled communities, along with other social and economic problems.
3. That private renters spend a higher proportion of their income on housing than with other tenures, and that moving costs can be prohibitively expensive, with high letting fees and large deposit requirements.
4. The impact that the Coronavirus pandemic has had on private renters, with recent research finding that 1 in 8 have fallen behind with housing costs due to lost income as a result of the crisis.
5. The potential of 'selective licensing', already successfully used by some of our neighbouring authorities such as Manchester and Oldham, requiring landlords in finite geographical areas to register with the Council enabling certain standards to be enforced.

The Council Resolves:

1. To give full consideration to introducing a selective licensing scheme in specific areas, such as in Prestwich, Radcliffe and East Bury, to tackle antisocial behaviour and support wider housing market renewal and regeneration and to help develop more sustainable communities.
2. That by the end of this calendar year, a report be brought to Overview and Scrutiny and then to Cabinet, reporting back on whether a selective licensing approach is appropriate for parts of Bury. The report should include:
 - a comprehensive assessment of privately rented accommodation in Bury
 - an update on criminality and antisocial behaviour and any link between

this and the private rented sector

3. To continue to work with Six Town Housing, to address how the Council can help bring empty properties into use through assisting with private sector renting, in return for nomination rights.
4. To call on the Government to provide greater assistance for those private renters who are particularly struggling during the Coronavirus pandemic.

In the names of: Councillors M Powell, T Pickstone, C Tegolo and S Wright

(iii) Independent inquiry into the handling of coronavirus

This council notes with sadness that up to the 12th June 2020 there have been 228 deaths of Bury residents attributed to coronavirus. Our thoughts are with the families and friends of those that we have lost. We also wish to pay tribute to the hard work of our health and care staff, volunteers across Bury, local businesses and council officers. Our community has stepped up and stepped in when this government has abjectly failed to do so. Ten years of Conservative austerity, aided and abetted by the Liberal Democrats for five of those years, have seen the very institutions that have been at the forefront of this effort run down, yet still they responded magnificently.

Our local council, NHS and the voluntary and community sector, as well as local businesses have been at the forefront of the response to this devastating health crisis over the past months. They have supported the creation of community hubs that have brought together hundreds of local volunteers; they have been on the frontline in our hospitals, care homes and other health and care settings; they have donated to the food banks that are supplying much needed essentials to hard working local families; they have worked tirelessly and often with little recognition to keep council services running and got support to where it has been needed in the community; and they have manufactured or sourced PPE to support our frontline staff.

This crisis has brought out the best in community spirit, but while there is much to praise about the community response to COVID-19 this council believes that the Conservative government has systemically failed to manage the crisis from day one and has made vital errors in the handling of this crisis when it comes to national policy decisions.

We note with sadness that the UK has the highest death toll in Europe and these deaths will haunt this country for years. The failure of this Conservative administration to deal with the COVID crisis from day one is nothing short of a national scandal.

Critically, the government has failed to provide the reassurances needed to local government on funding. Local councils up and down the country face serious long-term financial harm as a result of coronavirus due to increased costs, lost revenue and a funding shortfall.

Here in Bury, the council is facing losses of £29 million. After a decade of cuts totalling over £102 million, this council, like many other councils nationwide cannot undertake more austerity without cutting further services and jobs that would push us to the brink of insolvency due to no fault of our own. The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government promised local councils "whatever it takes" but we are still waiting.

This government has also catastrophically failed our BAME communities. It was clear as the death toll was rising that this crisis was disproportionately affecting those from BAME backgrounds. The British Medical Association and other organisations called for an urgent investigation, but this was ignored and significantly delayed by the government. An investigation was eventually carried out belatedly, but the government then missed its own deadline for publishing the official review into the matter. A version of the report was then leaked, but with the recommendations buried, and now that the final report has been published the government is yet to confirm that it will be implementing all the recommendations.

In Bury, we are proud of our diverse communities, yet we know that those from religious minorities are more likely to be adversely affected by coronavirus. Recent ONS data show that Muslim men have the highest death rates among all religious groups, with Jewish men also recording a higher mortality rate. This council is shocked that in the face of such clear evidence, this government is not prioritising the protection and care of our BAME communities.

More broadly, it is clear that this government made fatal errors in the handling of the health and care response to this crisis. As the crisis was unfolding, the prime minister himself missed five Cobra meetings, missed eight calls with EU leaders, missed two opportunities to bulk buy PPE and ventilators with the EU and went on holiday for two weeks.

The government failed time upon time to recognise the urgent need for PPE, as well as the need to roll out a major testing programme.

Tragically this government failed to learn the lessons of Exercise Cygnus in 2016. This was an exercise when a pandemic was simulated. Cygnus predicted the very failings of this government, they were forewarned but took no notice. It allowed mass events to go ahead like race meetings, concerts and football matches. It had the advantage of seeing what was unfolding in Europe but failed to act, failed to prepare, failed to protect its own citizens.

Then there is the scandal of care homes where our senior citizens were discharged from hospitals without being tested.

More recently, we have seen another missed deadline as the Health Secretary has admitted that the NHS contact tracing app will be scrapped in its current form with a new version in development for winter. The original release date was the end of May. On tracing and testing, this was abandoned on March 12th only for the PM to state in May that we would have a "world class" system in place for June 1st. This date now looks to have been pushed back to September.

These grotesque failings have hit public confidence in the government's handling of the crisis, but nothing has raised questions over the prime minister's ability to lead the country through this emergency than his abject failure to deal with his own special adviser who was found to have broken the lockdown rules. Dominic Cummings broke the rules, refused to apologise and yet he remains in a job. People across Bury have made significant personal sacrifices in order to follow the rules to protect themselves and others, but it is clear that there is one rule for us and another for the prime minister and his inner circle. This breaks down trust at a time when trust in government, public figures and our national institutions is integral to the handling of this crisis.

We must learn from the lessons of COVID-19.

Therefore, this Council proposes that we should:

- 1) call on the government to commission an independent inquiry into its handling of coronavirus and that;

This council resolves to:

- 1) write to the prime minister to demand an independent inquiry into the handling of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This inquiry should be wide ranging in scope bringing in evidence from national and international experts and local and community stakeholders. It should report back in a timely manner – we suggest before the end of this year – with clear recommendations on what the government needs to do to make amends for the mistakes made thus far, but importantly to ensure those same mistakes are not made again.

In the names of Councillors J Black, S Briggs, R Cathcart, A Cummings, C Cummins, R Gold, J Grimshaw, M Hayes, S Haroon, T Holt, D Jones, K Leach, G McGill, C Morris, B Mortenson, E O'Brien, A Quinn, T Rafiq, A Simpson, L Smith, S Smith, Sarah Southworth, Susan Southworth, T Tariq, K Thomas, S Walmsley, C Walsh and M Whitby

11 **SCRUTINY REVIEW REPORTS AND SPECIFIC ITEMS "CALLED IN" BY SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

If any

12 **COMBINED AUTHORITY UPDATE** (Pages 51 - 54)

Questions, if any.

13 **DELEGATED DECISIONS OF THE COUNCIL COMMITTEES**

Questions on the delegated decisions made by the Regulatory Committees and Scrutiny Committees published since the last ordinary meeting of the Council, providing four clear working days' notices has been given of the question.