

**Geoff Little**  
**Chief Executive**

*Our Ref* JG  
*Your Ref* C/JG  
*Date* 11 January 2022  
*Contact* Democratic Services  
*Direct Line* 0161 253 6640  
*E-mail* Julie.Gallagher@bury.gov.uk  
*Web Site* www.bury.gov.uk

**TO: All Members of Council**

**Councillors** : R Bernstein, C Birchmore, C Boles, N Boroda, R Brown, S Butler, R Caserta, P Cropper, C Cummins, L Dean, U Farooq, I Gartside, R Gold, J Grimshaw, S Haroon, J Harris, M Hayes, T Holt, S Hurst, K Hussain, N Jones, J Lancaster, K Leach, J Lewis, J Mason, L McBriar, G McGill, C Morris, B Mortenson, E O'Brien, K Peel, T Pickstone, T Pilkington, M Powell, A Quinn, D Quinn, T Rafiq, J Rydeheard, A Simpson, L Smith, M Smith, G Staples-Jones, T Tariq, C Tegolo, K Thomas, D.Vernon, 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:-

<b>Date:</b>	Wednesday, 19 January 2022
<b>Place:</b>	Bury Art Museum & Sculpture Centre Moss St, Bury BL9 0DR
<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**

The Agenda for the meeting is attached.

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](http://www.bury.gov.uk) – click on **Agendas, Minutes and Forward Plan**.

**Yours sincerely**



**Chief Executive**

**(Note: Members are reminded that under Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, if a Member of a Local Authority has not paid Council Tax for at least two months and, even if an arrangement has been entered into to pay arrears, then at any meeting where consideration is given to matters relating to, or which might affect the calculation of Council Tax, that Member must declare the fact that he/she is in arrears and must not vote on the matter).**

## AGENDA

### 1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

### 2 **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.

### 3 **MINUTES** (Pages 9 - 20)

Minutes attached.

### 4 **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.

### 5 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME** (Pages 21 - 24)

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.

### 6 **RECOMMENDATIONS OF CABINET AND COUNCIL COMMITTEES** (Pages 25 - 32)

<b>Committee/Date</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
Cabinet – 12 <sup>th</sup> January 2022	Appointment of Mayor/Deputy Mayor	That Council be recommended to appoint Councillor Shaheena Haroon as Mayor and Councillor Sandra Walmsley as Deputy Mayor for the Civic year 2022/23.
Audit Committee – 12 <sup>th</sup> January 2022	External Audit Procurement	That the Council accepts the PSAA invitation to opt into the sector-led option for the appointment of external auditors to principal Local Government and Police Bodies for five financial years from 1 April 2023.

### 7 **LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2022/23** (Pages 33 - 46)

Report and appendix is attached.

### 8 **LEADER' STATEMENT AND CABINET QUESTION TIME** (Pages 47 - 84)

To receive a report 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, Cabinet Members and Chair of a Committee 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. (30 minutes)

A member may ask a verbal question of the Leader, any Member of the Cabinet or Chair of a Committee about any matter on the Council agenda and which the Council has powers or duties or which affects the Borough. Only one verbal question per Councillor. (20 minutes)

9 **COMBINED AUTHORITY REPORT AND QUESTIONS TO THE COUNCIL'S COMBINED AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVES** (Pages 85 - 118)

(A) A combined authority update report is attached, for information

(B) Questions (if any) on the work of the Combined Authority to be asked by Members of the Council for which the necessary notice has been given in accordance with Council Procedure Rules (20mins)

10 **NOTICES OF MOTION**

(i) **OFSTED Report**

A motion had been received and set out in the Summons in the names of:

**Bernstein, Brown, Caserta, Cropper, Dean, Gartside, Harris, Lancaster, Hurst, Hussain, N Jones, Lewis, McBriar, Rydeheard, Vernon, Y Wright**

The Council received a report from OFSTED on Friday 17th December 2021 following an inspection of Children's Services between 25 October 2021 to 5 November 2021.

This Council is deeply concerned with the recent OFSTED report and notes that children are at risk in our borough now.

**This Council notes:-**

- The Conservative Group in December 2021 requested an Emergency Council Meeting to be held before New Year (2022) due to the reported risk to Children in Bury as it believed it was of upmost importance to address the report quickly.
- The Mayor of Bury passed the emergency request to the Chief Executive of Bury Council to consider the contents of the report published 17th December 2021 prepared by HM Inspector, Lorna Schlechte attached to this motion.
- The Council is required to submit an improvement plan to the Department for Education before 31 March 2022.

**This Council resolves to:-**

- Call on the Chief Executive to schedule briefings each week with Leaders of Political Groups to update on the progress.
- Conduct an urgent review of all cases to identify risk and ensure, as per the OFSTED report that they are not over-optimistic in their analysis.
- Instruct the Chief Executive and the relevant Executive Director to bring a report on the progress of the programme and updated risk register to the monthly Cabinet and ordinary Council meetings.
- Implement an Improvement Plan with progress of implementation to be monitored by the Council's Children's Scrutiny Committee as a standing agenda item until the completion of all actions.

## **(ii) TACKLING FUEL POVERTY**

A motion had been received and set out in the Summons in the names of:

**Councillors M Powell, C Tegolo and S Wright**

### **Council notes that:**

Research from Friends of the Earth shows that 13% of households in Bury are living in fuel poverty – and heating homes accounts for 44% of local carbon emissions.

Rising energy prices will make this significantly worse, and the National Energy Action charity has warned that rising household energy bills could cause at least 2 million more homes to slip into fuel poverty

All housing in our borough should be insulated to a minimum of EPC C standard with good quality loft insulation, cavity wall insulation, double-glazing and draught exclusion.

The Government have set a target to upgrade all housing to the above standard by 2030. To meet this target a total of 5,859 homes in Bury would need insulation upgrades each year.

The scale of this challenge is significant but at the same time we must make a commitment to end fuel poverty and excess carbon emissions from poorly insulated homes and develop a strategy to achieve this goal.

### **Council therefore commits to:**

- 1 Ensure that we are doing what we can as an Authority to provide advice and support to residents struggling through fuel poverty, and specifically ask for the appropriate Cabinet Member to bring a report to meetings of the Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the next two months providing an update on the support the Council and its partners are able to offer.
- 2 Strengthen its procedures to enforce minimum standards of energy efficiency in the private rented sector – making sure landlords without an EPC certificate for their properties are fined, and properties with an inadequate EPC rating are prevented from being rented.
- 3 Publish a statement of intent and set locally appropriate eligibility criteria to access Energy Company Obligation funding via Local Authority Flexibility arrangements – allowing more vulnerable and low-income households in our area to access funding to better

insulate their homes.

- 4 Ensure new housing is built to the highest possible energy efficiency standards through reviewing Local Plan policies and introducing additional Supplementary Planning Guidance to ensure the use of low-carbon materials, heat pumps rather than gas heating systems, and renewable energy as much as possible.
- 5 Instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs asking that the Government adopt the recommendations relating to retrofitting homes and buildings in the Blueprint for a Green Recovery report published in January 2021.
- 6 Request the appropriate Cabinet Members to bring a report on these wider issues to a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee within the next twelve months.

**(iii) SAVE OUR DEBT ADVICE SERVICES**

A motion had been received and set out in the Summons in the names of:

**Councillors C Boles, N Boroda, S Butler, C Cummins, U Farooq, R Gold, J Grimshaw, S Haroon, M Hayes, T Holt, K Leach, G McGill, C Morris, B Mortenson, E O'Brien, K Peel, T Pilkington, A Quinn, D Quinn, T Rafiq, A Simpson, L Smith, T Tariq, K Thomas, S Walmsley, C Walsh and M Whitby.**

**The council recognises:**

The challenging financial situation many residents find themselves in as a result of cuts to Universal Credit and the rising costs of food, fuel and energy.

The increasing number of residents struggling with debt due to these financial pressures - Citizens Advice Bury & Bolton dealt with over 4,000 debt enquiries during 2021.

The importance of free, impartial, local debt advice services to support residents to manage their debts and get back on track.

**The council notes:**

The procurement process that was being undertaken by the Government's Money and Pensions Service to commission debt advice services beyond April 2022.

The loss of £3 million for debt advice services in the North under the Government's plan.

The switch in emphasis so that two thirds of future funding would be directed to remote telephone and webchat advice services and the proposed cut of 50-60% of face-to-face debt advice.

The inaccessibility of remote services for some, including the most vulnerable clients, and the risk of a postcode lottery of support which this creates.

The vital importance of local debt advisers with relationships with councils, housing providers, foodbanks etc. and the importance of retaining this face-to-face advice and support in our local area.

The pause of the procurement process shortly before Christmas in the face of growing concern about the proposals and the continuation of funding for existing services for just 6 months beyond April.

The lack of any commitment from the Government to address the concerns raised.

**The council resolves to:**

Support the calls by Advice UK, the Institute of Money Advisers, the Law Centres Network, the We Are Debt Advisers campaign, the Unite Debt Advice Network and Greater Manchester Money Advice Group, among others, for the Government to:

- Scrap the current procurement process entirely
- Extend funding for 12 months for existing services to enable them to plan properly and retain staff
- Re-examine the process and the evidence for the cut in face-to-face advice services, including the impact the proposed changes will have on the most vulnerable clients
- Re-balance the funding so the North doesn't lose out

Write to the Chief Executive of the Money and Pensions Service and the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to make clear our support for the above and the continuation of face-to-face debt advice services in Bury.

11 **COUNCIL MOTION TRACKER** (Pages 119 - 132)

A report setting out progress in respect of Motions passed at the last meeting of Council is attached for information.

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

13 **QUESTIONS ON THE WORK OF OUTSIDE BODIES OR PARTNERSHIPS**

Questions on the work of Outside Bodies or partnerships on which the Council is represented to be asked by Members of the Council (if any).