

Geoff Little
Chief Executive

Our Ref JG
Your Ref C/JG
Date 11 January 2022
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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:-

Date:	Wednesday, 19 January 2022
Place:	Bury Art Museum & Sculpture Centre Moss St, Bury BL9 0DR
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:	

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 – 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)

Committee/Date	Subject	Recommendation
Cabinet – 12 th 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 th 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).

Minutes of: **COUNCIL**

Date of Meeting: 24 November 2021

Present: The Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor , in the Chair)
Councillors R Bernstein, C Birchmore, C Boles, N Boroda, R Brown, S Butler, R Caserta, P Cropper, L Dean, U Farooq, I Gartside, R Gold, J Grimshaw, S Haroon, J Harris, M Hayes, T Holt, K Hussain, N Jones, J Lancaster, 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, L Smith, M Smith, T Tariq, C Tegolo, D.Vernon, S Walmsley, C Walsh, M Whitby, S Wright and Y Wright

Apologies for Absence C Cummins, S Hurst, K Leach, A Simpson, G Staples-Jones and K Thomas

Public Attendance: 30 Members of the Public were present at the meeting.

C. 30 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1. Councillor A Quinn declared a personal interest in all matters under consideration as both his son and daughter-in law, work for the NHS, he is a member of the Trade Union, Unite and the Downs Syndrome Association.
2. Councillor D Quinn declared a personal interest in all matters under consideration as an employee of the Citizens Advice Bureau and both her son and daughter-in law, work for the NHS
3. Councillor T Pilkington declared a personal interest in all matters under consideration as an employee of the Manchester Foundation Trust.
4. Councillor S. Wright declared a personal interest in all matters under consideration as his wife works for a school in the Borough.
5. Councillors Brown and Rydeheard declared personal interests in agenda Common Minimum Licensing Standards C.XXX as they both undertaken legal work representing the Taxi trade.
6. Councillor LJ Dean declared a personal interest in agenda item Notice of Motion C.XXX as a Chair of Governors
7. Councillor Farooq declared a personal interest in all matters under consideration as an NHS Employee working at Fairfield General Hospital.
8. Councillor Lucy Smith declared a personal interest in all matters under consideration as her husband is employed by the NHS.
9. Councillor Joan Grimshaw declared a personal interest in all matters under consideration as her daughter works for the Combined Authority.

C. 31 MINUTES

That the minutes be agreed subject to the following amendments:

Declarations of Interest

Councillors Brown and Rydeheard declared personal interests in agenda Common Minimum Licensing Standards C.XXX as they both undertaken legal work representing the Taxi trade.

C. 32 MAYORAL COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor reported that Colonel Eric Davidson was unable to be presented with his Plaque in recognition of his work for over half a century in organising the remembrance Sunday parades due to ill health. The Mayor will ensure the Plaque is delivered to him with the Councillors best wishes.

The Mayor reported the sad news of the death of the former Leader and Mayor, Mike Connolly, the Mayor requested that his condolences and that of all Elected Members present be passed on to Mikes husband Ian and his friends and family.

C. 33 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Notice had been received of 6 questions, due to the number of items scheduled for consideration, questions were only answered from those members of the public present at the meeting. The Leader gave an undertaking that copies of those questions and responses not taken at the meeting will be circulated to all Councillors. The Leader also gave an undertaking to make these available on the Council Web Site.

Questioner	Topic	Responding
1. Catherine Lavan	Parking at Vaccination Centre	Leader
2. Owen Dykes	Private George Peachment	Leader
3. Anton Slawycz	Road Safety	Leader
4. Carol Bernstein	Children in Care	Leader
5. Andrew Luxton	Anti-social behaviour	Leader
6. Muhammad Warraich	Licensing Department	Leader

C. 34 RECOMMENDATIONS OF CABINET AND COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Meeting of Democratic Arrangements Forum – 6th October 2021 - Appointment of Co-opted members to the Children and Young Peoples Scrutiny Committee

It was moved by Councillor O'Brien and seconded by Councillor S Wright and it was:

RESOLVED:

That one Trade Union and one Young Person (chair of the Youth Cabinet) be appointed as co-opted non-voting Members of the Children and Young Peoples Scrutiny Committee.

Employment Panel – 02 November 2021 Business Growth & Infrastructure Department Leadership Structure

It was moved by Councillor Rafiq and seconded by Councillor O'Brien and it was:

RESOLVED:

That the Executive Director (Place and Housing) role (Band H) is redesignated as Executive Director (Place) which has been evaluated at Band G (amended) of the Council's Chief Officer structure.

That the Assistant Director of Housing role (Band C) is deleted and a Director of Housing role established. This role has been evaluated at Band F of the Council's Chief Officer structure. The proposed role will report directly to the Chief Executive.

Licensing and Safety Committee 11th November 2021 - Review of Statement of Principles under the Gambling Act 2005

It was moved by Councillor Morris and seconded by Councillor Walmsley and it was:

RESOLVED:

That the Licensing and Safety Committee notes the report and recommends that Council accept and adopt the proposed Statement of Principles as set out in Appendix 1 to the report without amendment.

Licensing and Safety Committee 11th November 2021 - Common Minimum Licensing Standards- Stage 2 (vehicles)

It was moved by Councillor Morris and seconded by Councillor O'Brien and it was:

RESOLVED:

Council approve and adopt the following;

The recommendations presented in Section 4 (Lead Officer Recommendations) for each proposed standard for implementation except for Vehicle Proposed Standard 5 in relation to Vehicle Livery.

That in relation to Vehicle Proposed Standard 5 (Vehicle Livery), Bury Council having carried out further consultation with taxi drivers and operators and following this, it's recommended that the Council implements the following GM livery standards proposed below:

That all vehicles will:

Display permanently affixed licence plates on the front and back of the vehicle

That all PHVs will:

Only display stickers provided by the licensing authority (at cost) which will bear the operator name and phone number, 'advanced bookings only', 'not insured unless pre-booked' and the licensing authority logo (the design, dimensions and placement of the stickers on the vehicle is to be determined at a future date)

Display those stickers on both rear side doors and the back window

Not use any magnetic stickers

That any decision regarding the implementation of the proposed 'GM approved' bonnet sticker will be delayed for a period of 2 years while more work is carried out with the trade and GMP to address the concerns raised by the trade relating to antisocial behaviour.

That existing vehicle livery standards in Bury will be retained until the new GM livery design, dimensions and placement are confirmed and procured. Ahead of the changes, the existing livery standards will be reviewed to accommodate the GM livery

C. 35 REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

It was moved by Councillor O'Brien and seconded by Councillor N Jones, and;

It was agreed:

That consideration of the report from the Independent Remuneration Panel will be deferred to the next meeting of Full Council.

C. 36 BOUNDARY COMMISSION REPORT

It was moved by Councillor O'Brien and seconded by Councillor N Jones and Council;

RESOVLED:

That Council notes the final recommendations of the LGBCE review and commencement of an internal polling district and polling station review.

C. 37 BURY COUNCIL CONSTITUTION UPDATE REPORT

It was moved by Councillor O'Brien and seconded by Councillor R Bernstein, and Council

RESOLVED:

1. Adopt the revised sections of the constitution as highlighted in the sections appended.
 - Reduction in the number of Articles (Appendix A)

- Updates to the Council Procedure Rules (Appendix B)
- Updates to the Committee Procedure Rules (Appendix C)
- Amendments to the Cabinet Portfolios and Committee Membership – Details at Appendix D
- Details of the updated Committee membership are attached at Appendix E

2. Readopt the remainder of the constitution

3. Note the annual review of the constitution and review schedule as set out in Appendix F

4. Note the terms of reference as set out in Appendix G

C. 38 LEADER' STATEMENT AND CABINET QUESTION TIME

The Leader of the Council, Councillor E O’Brien, made a statement on the work undertaken by him since the date of the last Council meeting.

The Leader and the relevant Cabinet Members answered questions raised by Councillors on the following issues:

Cabinet Member	Questioner	Topic
1. Cllr Gold	Cllr Vernon	Hardship Fund
2. Cllr Quinn	Cllr Whitby	Springwater Park
3. Cllr O’Brien	Cllr Boroda	Post offices
4. Cllr Quinn	Cllr Y Wright	Market St, Tottington
5. Cllr O’Brien	Cllr Farooq	Rough Sleepers
6. Cllr O’Brien	Cllr Peel	Universal Credit
7. Cllr Gold	Cllr LJ Dean	Civic location for George Peachment
8. Cllr O’Brien	Cllr Powell	Governance Review
9. Cllr O’Brien	Cllr Peel	New Planning Formula

Due to the lack of time to answer questions 10 to 32 inclusive, the Leader gave an undertaking that copies of those questions and responses will be circulated to all Councillors. The Leader also gave an undertaking to make these available on the Council Web Site.

Cabinet Member	Questioner	Topic
1. Cllr O'Brien	Cllr N Jones	Staffing
2. Cllr O'Brien	Cllr Powell	Prestwich Walk in Centre
3. Cllr O'Brien	Cllr McGill	Support for Military Personnel
4. Cllr O'Brien	Cllr Birchmore	Vaccination Centres
5. Cllr O'Brien	Cllr L Smith	Funding for Social Care
6. Cllr O'Brien	Cllr McBriar	Community Hubs
7. Cllr O'Brien	Cllr Butler	Brownfield First
8. Cllr O'Brien	Cllr S Wright	Longfield Centre Rental

C. 39 COMBINED AUTHORITY REPORT AND QUESTIONS TO THE COUNCIL'S COMBINED AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVES

The Council received a report on the work of the Combined Authorities.

The following questions had been received in accordance with Council Procedure Rules:

Combined Authority Member	Questioner	Topic
1. Cllr Peel	Cllr Harris	Bus service improvement plan
2. Cllr Peel	Cllr L Smith	Cycle network
3. Cllr Peel	Cllr Butler	City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement
4. Cllr Gold	Cllr Bernstein	Police and Crime Panel
5. Cllr Peel	Cllr Boles	Public transport network
6. Cllr Peel	Cllr Farooq	Cycling and the BAME community
7. Cllr Gold	Cllr N Jones	Naloxone nasal spray trial
8. Cllr Peel	Cllr Powell	Buses and the clean air zone

Due to the lack of time to answer questions nine to 18 inclusive, the Mayor gave an undertaking that copies of the questions and responses will be circulated to all Councillors and made available on the Council Web Site.

C. 40 NOTICES OF MOTION

(i) Stop the Council Tax Squeeze

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 Chancellor and Conservative Government have openly admitted that this winter will be tough for many as we see soaring energy prices, rising costs in shops and cuts in Universal Credit. With the Bank of England warning a possible rise of inflation as high as 5%, many people across Bury are facing a real cost of living crisis – one that has been exacerbated by last month's Budget.

Despite a 10% hike in national insurance on workers and businesses, local councils across the country are facing no other but to also raise council tax next year in order to maintain frontline services - in fact, the Government's spending figures for local government rely on councils doing so, it is there in black and white in the Budget.

The council notes:

- That direct funding to local government has been cut year on year by the Conservatives with a cut to Bury Council of over £100 million so far since 2010.
- That the Conservative Government's latest Budget expects us to raise Council Tax by 3% in order to increase our spending power.
- Even with this hike in Council Tax, Bury Council will still be forced to make around £18m in cuts by the financial year 2023/24.

This council resolves to:

1. Call on the Government to stop the squeeze and fund Bury Council directly to avoid increases in council tax.
2. Call on the Government to reverse tax cuts on banks and consider a windfall levy on individuals and enterprise whose wealth grew exponentially in the pandemic.
3. Write to Bury's Conservative MPs asking them to co-sign a letter demanding true levelling up for Bury, by restoring our direct funding grant so that Council Tax payers don't have to bear an even heavier burden of funding vital local services, which should be funded by Government.

On being put with

(ii) Supporting our wonderful high streets over the festive period

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 recognises:

Bury Council notes the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has had on residents and businesses across the borough over the last two years. The Borough owes a

debt of gratitude to our key workers, residents, businesses and organisations for all that they have done through the pandemic.

As the festive period approaches the Council must do all it can to support our fantastic independent businesses across the borough and our high streets

The Council notes:

The Government provided over £100 million to Bury MBC to support residents and businesses whether the COVID-19 storm across the borough

In the October Budget our borough was awarded two levelling up bids totalling £40 million to regenerate Bury Market and Radcliffe Town Centre. Now we must celebrate this success and support our high streets, encouraging residents and visitors to shop local this festive period.

There are 4 Saturdays in December, including Small Business Saturday on the 4th, and as a Council we must do all we can to support business

This motion aims to support the boroughs high streets and independent retailers across Ramsbottom, Tottington, Bury, Radcliffe, Whitefield, and Prestwich and promote shopping locally throughout the month of December

The Council resolves to:

- All Council-owned car parks to be free every Saturday in December 2021 across Ramsbottom, Tottington, Bury, Radcliffe, Whitefield and Prestwich including Christmas Day
- Actively support and promote 'Small Business Saturday' in December by spreading the word across the Borough via locally via the Council website and all digital media channels
- Promote 'Shop Local' throughout the month of December across all the Councils digital media channels and share press releases with local media to drum up support for our wonderful towns this festive period

Councillor Jones moved and Councillor Liam James Dean seconded that in order to expedite the discussion that the question now be put and the Council moves to a recorded vote.

On being put with 26 voting for and 18 voting against, and the Mayor abstaining the motion that the question now be put was lost.

It was moved by Councillor Peel and seconded by Councillor Pilkington as an amendment to:-

DELETE:

- ~~All Council-owned car parks to be free every Saturday in December 2021 across Ramsbottom, Tottington, Bury, Radcliffe, Whitefield and Prestwich including Christmas Day~~

ADD:

Call on officers and the Combined Authority to explore options to fund free or discounted bus travel for the first three weekends in December

On being put, with 44 voting for, 0 voting against, and with the Mayor abstaining, the Mayor declared the amendment carried.

On being put with 44 voting for, 0 voting against and the Mayor abstaining the substantive motion was carried.

(iii) Children's Catch-up Funding

A motion had been received and set out in the Summons in the names of:
Councillors Powell, Tegolo and S Wright.

This Council recognises that:

- There has been an enormous impact from Covid-19 on schoolchildren in Bury
- The staff, pupils and Governors in our schools in Bury have worked incredibly hard to make sure the impact of Covid is mitigated
- For months at a time, most children have not been able to attend school, been isolated from their friends, and missed out on valuable experiences such as playing sports or learning a musical instrument
- The Government's former Education Commissioner Sir Kevan Collins recommended that £15 billion is required to help schoolchildren catch up on the learning and experiences they have lost during the pandemic
- The Liberal Democrats announced a policy at their Party Conference in September 2021 calling for the full £15 billion to be made available as a 'Catch-Up Fund' for schoolchildren
- £5 billion of this fund would go directly to parents in the form of vouchers to be spent in the best way they see fit. This would mean each school child in Bury would receive £200 worth of vouchers a year for each of the next three years (these vouchers would increase to £400-£600 a year for those from the most disadvantaged backgrounds or those in need of additional support)

This Council resolves to:

- Welcome these proposals and acknowledge they would result in parents and carers being able to give their children new opportunities and experiences that they have sorely missed out on over the past 18 months
- Instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Education to demand that the recommendations of the Liberal Democrat's Children's Catch-Up Policy are implemented in full. In particular, that the full £15 billion is made available as a Catch-Up Fund for schoolchildren, and that £5 billion of this goes directly to parents in the form of vouchers that can be spent on their choice of approved courses and experiences

It was moved by Councillor Whitby and seconded by Councillor Tariq as an amendment to:-

[ADD] – The Labour Party launched its £15 billion “Children’s Recovery Plan” in June, in line with Sir Kevan Collins’ recommendations. This plan includes Breakfast clubs and new activities for every child, Quality mental health support in every school, Small group tutoring for all who need it, not just 1%, Continued development for teachers, An Education Recovery Premium and Ensure no child goes hungry.

~~[REMOVE] - The Liberal Democrats announced a policy at their Party Conference in September 2021 calling for the full £15 billion to be made available as a ‘Catch-Up Fund’ for schoolchildren
–£5 billion of this fund would go directly to parents in the form of vouchers to be spent in the best way they see fit. This would mean each school child in Bury would receive £200 worth of vouchers a year for each of the next three years (these vouchers would increase to £400–£600 a year for those from the most disadvantaged backgrounds or those in need of additional support)~~

This Council resolves to:

~~[REMOVE] - Welcome these proposals and acknowledge they would result in parents and carers being able to give their children new opportunities and experiences that they have sorely missed out on over the past 18 months~~

[ADD} – Welcome the Labour Party’s proposals and support the provision of the necessary resources for a strong recovery for our children and their education.

~~[REMOVE] - Instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Education to demand that the recommendations of the Liberal Democrat’s Children’s Catch-Up Policy are implemented in full. In particular, that the full £15 billion is made available as a Catch-Up Fund for schoolchildren, and that £5 billion of this goes directly to parents in the form of vouchers that can be spent on their choice of approved courses and experiences~~

[ADD] - Instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Education to demand that the recommendations of the Labour Party’s “Children’s Recovery Plan” are implemented in full.

On being put, with 26 voting for, 18 voting against, and with the Mayor abstaining, the Mayor declared the amendment carried.

On being put with 29 voting for, 15 voting against and the Mayor abstaining the substantive motion was carried.

C. 41 COUNCIL MOTION TRACKER

The Motion Tracker was circulated for information.

C. 42 SCRUTINY REVIEW REPORTS AND SPECIFIC ITEMS "CALLED IN" BY SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

There were no Scrutiny Review Reports or specific items "called in" by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be considered at this Council meeting.

C. 43 QUESTIONS ON THE WORK OF OUTSIDE BODIES OR PARTNERSHIPS

There were no questions received in accordance with Council Procedure Rules.

THE WORSHIPFUL THE MAYOR

(Notes: Part 1 of the meeting started at 7.10 pm and ended at 10.30 pm)

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Public Questions – January Council

- 1. From April 2011- April 2021 (exactly 10 years) how many members of staff left the waste management service- retirement etc, and how many were appointed to positions from outside waste management. How many agency staff were used on an average week and percentage to full time staff.**

Supplementary question How many members of staff were required to provide a full refuse collection service based on summer collection services numbers

Ian Astley

During the specified period, there were 106 leavers from within the Waste Management service. Of those 106 leavers, 57 were transferred into a new position, either within the waste management service or another part of the Council, with the remaining 49 leaving the Council's employment.

86 appointments were made during the period.

Of the 86 appointments, 22 of them were external appointments. The remaining 64 appointments relate to individuals already employed by the Council in some other capacity, from either a different role within the waste management service, a different role within another Council service, or through Bury ACES (Council in-house casual worker bank).

In respect of agency workers, our records only go back to January 2017.

Over period 01/01/2017 – 31/12/2021 (5 years), records demonstrate that on average, 22 agency workers per week worked within Waste Management, which accounts for 33.98% of total budgeted hours worked.

Whilst there has always been a desire to keep agency staffing to a minimum, historically this has not been achieved due to the inability to fill vacancies during a number of services reviews where recruitment was put on hold.

Following a recruitment campaign during Autumn 2021, all vacant permanent driver and loader positions have been filled. Agency staff are currently only used for covering holidays and sickness.

Supplementary question

In terms of budgeted established posts, there are 24 Team Leader/HGV Driver posts and 41 operative posts.

2. From a public perspective what cultural changes do you intend to implement to deliver a good OFSTED outcome in the future?

Carol Bernstein

Acknowledgement across the Council and wider partnership is that services delivered to children have not been good enough. This is system failure.

Establish an improvement plan that is owned by partners and the wider council, with clear lines of accountability and is outcome focused.

Shared commitment and motivation to transform services across the partnership and wider Council.

Children and families at the heart of everything that we do – Improvement Plan is branded as “Let’s do it for Children” - This is a need for Bury Wide support, across partners, the Council and the Community.

Commitment of additional resource to support improvement

Creating a culture of learning and development, working in partnership with the DfE and Ofsted, we will be supported by authorities that are judged to be good or better, via sector led improvement.

The outcome of monitoring visits undertaken by Ofsted will be in the Public domain.

3. Bury Council recently received an overall OFSTED rating of inadequate.

The opening line of the report is concerning given it reads ‘ there are serious failures which leave too many children at risk’

What reassurance can you give the public that Bury Council Children’s Services will improve given how damning the report was in December?

Anton Slawycz

There is an acceptance of the issues and commitment across the partnership to improve services to children and families.

An LGA Peer review was commissioned in July of last year in recognition of the need to bring external scrutiny to children and family’s social work.

There is a commitment by the Council to make resource available to support the improvement journey, for example to bring in additional staff to reduce caseloads and reduce managerial spans of control.

Two managed teams were commissioned last year to support create additional capacity in the service.

We are establishing a robust improvement system with a plan and an independently chaired improvement board.

The Improvement journey will be overseen by Ofsted and the DfE advisor, who will offer support and critical challenge

- 4. The Clean Air Zone framework, on page 8, point 47, say that a goal of the clean air zone is to encourage council's to optimise traffic management, and that options might include "improving road layouts and signage."**

Are there currently any more plans to change road layouts and signage, and do the council plan to consult key stakeholders such as the taxi trade, emergency services and the wider public on this?
Andrew Luxton

As part of the assessment of potential actions to meet nitrogen dioxide target levels in the shortest time possible, as required by the Government direction, a number of traffic management solutions were considered. Detailed modelling of these solutions by TfGM showed that they would not significantly reduce the time needed to comply with nitrogen dioxide targets and could not therefore be justified.

- 5. Has an analysis of the operational issues set to be incurred by various council departments in implementing the Clean Air Zone been done?**

April Fenton

The operation of the Clean Air Zone will be managed and delivered by TfGM and third-party contractors and should have no impact on Bury Council departments.

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Classification: Open	Decision Type: Non-Key
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Report to:	Audit committee	Date: 12 January 2022
Subject:	External Audit procurement	
Report of	Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Growth	

1. Summary

- 1.1 The current auditor appointment arrangements cover the period up to and including the audit of the 2022/23 accounts. The Council, as with the vast majority of other Council's, opted into the 'appointing person' national auditor appointment arrangements which were established by Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) for the period covering the accounts for 2018/19 to 2022/23.
- 1.2 PSAA is now undertaking a procurement exercise for the next appointing period, covering audits for the 2023/24 to 2027/28 financial years. During Autumn 2021 all Local Government bodies need to make important decisions about their external audit arrangements from 2023/24. The other options for the procurement are to arrange their own procurement and make the appointment themselves or, in conjunction with other bodies, they can join and take advantage of the national collective scheme administered by PSAA.
- 1.3 This report concludes that the sector-wide procurement conducted by PSAA is the best option for the Council because:
- collective procurement reduces costs for those submitting bids and for individual authorities compared to a multiplicity of smaller local procurements;
 - if the Council does not use the national appointment arrangements, the Council will need to establish its own auditor panel with an independent chair and independent members to oversee a local auditor procurement exercise and ongoing management of the audit contract;
 - it is the best opportunity to secure the appointment of a qualified, registered auditor - there are only nine accredited local audit firms, and should the Council undertake our own procurement exercise, the Council would be drawing from the same limited supply of auditor resources as PSAA's national procurement, and;
 - supporting the sector-led body helps to ensure there is a continuing and sustainable public audit market into the medium and long term.
- 1.4 If the Council wishes to take advantage of the national auditor appointment arrangements, it is required, under the Local Audit Regulations, to make the decision at full Council. The opt-in period started on 22 September 2021 and closes on 11 March 2022. To opt into the national scheme from 2023/24, the Council must return completed opt-in documents to PSAA by 11 March 2022.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 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.

3. Reasons for recommendation(s)

- 3.1 The preferred option is therefore to opt-in to the national auditor appointment scheme.
- 3.2 Regulation 19 of the Local Audit (Appointing Person) Regulations 2015 requires that a decision to opt-in must be made by a meeting of the Council (meeting as a whole), except where the authority is a corporation sole.
- 3.3 The Council then needs to respond formally to PSAA's invitation in the form specified by PSAA by the close of the opt-in period (11 March 2022).
- 3.3 PSAA will commence the formal procurement process in early February 2022. It expects to award contracts in August 2022 and will then consult with authorities on the appointment of auditors so that it can make appointments by the statutory deadline of 31 December 2022.

4. Alternative options considered and rejected

- 4.1 **Option 1** is to opt into the PSAA external audit appointment arrangements as outlined in the report.
- 4.2 **Option 2** - If the Council chose not to opt-in to the PSAA appointment arrangements, there would be a need to establish an independent auditor panel to make a stand-alone appointment. The auditor panel would need to be set up by the Council itself, and the members of the panel must be wholly or a majority of independent members as defined by the Act. Independent members (who are in scarce supply) for this purpose are independent appointees, excluding current and former elected members (or officers) and their close families and friends. This means that elected members will not have a majority input to assessing bids and choosing to which audit firm to award a contract for the Council's external audit.
- 4.3 **Option 3** - The Act enables the Council to join with other authorities to establish a joint auditor panel. Again, this will need to be constituted of wholly or a majority of independent appointees. Further legal advice would be required on the exact constitution of such a panel having regard to the obligations of each Council under the Act and the Council would need to liaise with other local authorities to assess the appetite for such an arrangement.
- 4.4 **Options 2 and 3** would be more resource-intensive processes to implement for the Council, and without the bulk buying power of the sector-led procurement would be likely to result in a more costly service. The Council and its auditor panel would need to maintain ongoing oversight of the contract. Under the PSAA contract this is provided at a high level by this organisation.
- 4.5 The national offer provides the appointment of an independent auditor with limited administrative cost to the Council. By joining the scheme, the Council would be acting with other councils to optimise the opportunity to influence the market that a national procurement provides.

Report Author and Contact Details:

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Department: Core - Finance

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5 Background

- 5.1 Under the Local Government Audit & Accountability Act 2014 (“the Act”), the Council is required to appoint an auditor to audit its accounts for each financial year. The Council has three options:
- a. To appoint its own auditor, which requires it to follow the procedure set out in the Act
 - b. To act jointly with other authorities to procure an auditor following the procedures in the Act
 - c. To opt-in to the national auditor appointment scheme administered by a body designated by the Secretary of State as the ‘appointing person’. The body currently designated for this role is Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited (PSAA).
- 5.2 To opt-in to the national scheme, the Council must make a decision at a meeting of the Full Council.
- 5.3 The auditor appointed at the end of the procurement process will undertake the statutory audit of accounts and Best Value assessment of the Council in each financial year, in accordance with all relevant codes of practice and guidance. The appointed auditor is also responsible for investigating questions raised by electors and has powers and responsibilities in relation to Public Interest Reports and statutory recommendations.
- 5.4 The auditor must act independently of the Council and the main purpose of the procurement legislation is to ensure that the appointed auditor is sufficiently qualified and independent.
- 5.5 The auditor must be registered to undertake local audits by the Financial Reporting Council (FRC). They must also employ authorised Key Audit Partners to oversee the work. As this report sets out, there is a currently a shortage of registered firms and Key Audit Partners available to undertake this work.
- 5.6 Auditors are regulated by the FRC, which will be replaced by a new body with wider powers, the Audit, Reporting and Governance Authority (ARGA) during the course of the next audit contract period.
- 5.7 As a result of these oversight arrangements, Councils therefore have limited influence over the scope of the audit services they are procuring, with the availability of firms available limited to nine.

6 Current Position

- 6.1 Much has changed in the local audit market since audit contracts were last awarded in 2017. At that time the audit market was relatively stable, there had been few changes in audit requirements, and local audit fees had been reducing over a long period. 98% of those bodies eligible opted into the national scheme and attracted very competitive bids from audit firms. The resulting audit contracts took effect from 1 April 2018.

- 6.2 During 2018, a series of financial crises and failures in the private sector led to questioning about the role of auditors and the focus and value of their work. Four independent reviews were commissioned by Government: Sir John Kingman's review of the Financial Reporting Council (FRC), the audit regulator; the Competition and Markets Authority review of the audit market; Sir Donald Brydon's review of the quality and effectiveness of audit; and Sir Tony Redmond's review of local authority financial reporting and external audit. The recommendations are now under consideration by Government, with the clear implication that significant reforms will follow. A new audit regulator (ARGA) is proposed to be established, and arrangements for system leadership in local audit are to be introduced. Further change will follow as other recommendations are implemented.
- 6.3 The Kingman review has led to an urgent drive for the FRC to deliver rapid, measurable improvements in audit quality. This has created a major pressure for audit firms to ensure full compliance with regulatory requirements and expectations in every audit they undertake. By the time firms were conducting 2018/19 local audits during 2019, the measures they were putting in place to respond to a more focused regulator were clearly visible. To deliver the necessary improvements in audit quality, firms were requiring their audit teams to undertake additional work to gain deeper levels of assurance. However, additional assurance work requires more time, posing a threat to the firms' ability to complete all their audits for the price tendered by the target date for publication of audited accounts. Delayed opinions are not the only consequence of the FRC's drive to improve audit quality. Additional audit work must also be paid for. As a result, many more fee variation claims have been submitted than in prior years.
- 6.4 This situation has been exacerbated by growing auditor recruitment and retention challenges, the complexity of Local Government financial statements and increasing levels of technical challenges as bodies explore innovative ways of developing new or enhanced income streams to help fund services for local people. These challenges have increased in subsequent audit years, with Covid-19 creating further significant pressure for finance and audit teams.
- 6.5 None of these problems is unique to Local Government audit. Similar challenges have played out in other sectors, where increased fees and disappointing responses to tender invitations have been experienced during the past two years.

7 The Invitation from the PSAA

- 7.1 PSAA is specified as the 'appointing person' for principal Local Government under the provisions of the Act and the Local Audit (Appointing Person) Regulations 2015. PSAA let five-year audit services contracts in 2017 for the first appointing period, covering audits of the accounts from 2018/19 to 2022/23. It is now undertaking the work needed to invite eligible bodies to opt in for the next appointing period, from the 2023/24 audit onwards, and to complete a procurement for audit services. PSAA is a not-for-profit organisation whose costs are around 4% of the scheme with any surplus distributed back to scheme members.
- 7.2 In summary the national opt-in scheme provides the following:
- a) the appointment of a suitably qualified audit firm to conduct audits for each of the five financial years commencing 1 April 2023;
 - b) appointing the same auditor to other opted-in bodies that are involved in formal collaboration or joint working initiatives to the extent this is possible with other constraints;

- c) managing the procurement process to ensure both quality and price criteria are satisfied. PSAA has sought views from the sector to help inform its detailed procurement strategy;
- d) ensuring suitable independence of the auditors from the bodies they audit and managing any potential conflicts as they arise during the appointment period;
- e) minimising the scheme management costs and returning any surpluses to scheme members;
- f) consulting with authorities on auditor appointments, giving the Council/Authority the opportunity to influence which auditor is appointed;
- g) consulting with authorities on the scale of audit fees and ensuring these reflect scale, complexity, and audit risk; and
- h) ongoing contract and performance management of the contracts once these have been let.

7.3 PSAA are now inviting the Council to opt in for the second appointing period, for 2023/24 to 2027/28, along with all other eligible authorities. Based on the level of opt-ins, it will enter into contracts with appropriately qualified audit firms and appoint a suitable firm to be the Council's/Authority's auditor.

7.4 The prices submitted by bidders through the procurement will be the key determinant of the value of audit fees paid by opted-in bodies. PSAA will:

- a) seek to encourage realistic fee levels and to benefit from the economies of scale associated with procuring on behalf of a significant number of bodies;
- b) continue to pool scheme costs and charge fees to opted-in bodies in accordance with the published fee scale as amended following consultations with scheme members and other interested parties (pooling means that everyone within the scheme will benefit from the prices secured via a competitive procurement process – a key tenet of the national collective scheme);
- c) continue to minimise its own costs, around 4% of scheme costs, and as a not-for-profit company will return any surplus funds to scheme members. In 2019 it returned a total £3.5million to relevant bodies and in 2021 a further £5.6million was returned.

7.5 PSAA will seek to encourage market sustainability in its procurement. Firms will be able to bid for a variety of differently sized contracts so that they can match their available resources and risk appetite to the contract for which they bid. They will be required to meet appropriate quality standards and to reflect realistic market prices in their tenders, informed by the scale fees and the supporting information provided about each audit. Where regulatory changes are in train which affect the amount of audit work suppliers must undertake, firms will be informed as to which developments should be priced into their bids

7.6 The scope of a local audit is fixed. It is determined by the Code of Audit Practice (currently published by the National Audit Office)¹, the format of the financial statements (specified by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA)/ The Local Authority (Scotland) Accounts Advisory Committee (LASAAC)), and the application of auditing standards regulated by the FRC. These factors apply to

¹ The Governments Spring statement proposes that overarching responsibility for Code will in due course transfer to the system leader, namely ARGA, the new regulator being established to replace the FRC.

all local audits irrespective of whether an eligible body decides to opt into PSAA's national scheme or chooses to make its own separate arrangements. The requirements are mandatory; they shape the work auditors undertake and have a bearing on the actual fees required.

- 7.7 There are currently nine audit providers eligible to audit local authorities and other relevant bodies under local audit legislation. This means that a local procurement exercise would seek tenders from the same firms as the national procurement exercise, subject to the need to manage any local independence issues. Local firms cannot be invited to bid. Local procurements must deliver the same audit scope and requirements as a national procurement, reflecting the auditor's statutory responsibilities.

Links with the Corporate Priorities:

Please summarise how this links to the Let's Do It Strategy.

A strong financially sustainable Council is essential to the delivery of the Let's do it Strategy.

Equality Impact and Considerations:

Please provide an explanation of the outcome(s) of an initial or full EIA.

This proposal does not adversely affect equality.

Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows: A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to –

- a. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- b. Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- c. Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. 16.

The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services.

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

Please provide an explanation of the carbon impact of this decision.

The decision by cabinet from this report would have no carbon impact

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
fails to appoint an auditor in accordance with the requirements and timing specified in local audit legislation	These risks are considered best mitigated by opting into the sector-led approach through PSAA.
does not achieve value for money in the appointment process.	These risks are considered best mitigated by opting into the sector-led approach through PSAA.

Legal Implications:

Section 7 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 requires a relevant Council to appoint a local auditor to audit its accounts for a financial year not later than 31 December in the preceding year.

The Act sets out that the procedure for appointment. The procedure states that the Council must consult and take account of the advice of its auditor panel on the selection and appointment of a local auditor. Section 8 of the Act provides that we need to publicise the appointment of our auditors.

If the council do not appoint auditors we must immediately inform the Secretary of State, who may direct the Council to appoint the auditor named in the direction or appoint a local auditor on behalf of the Council.

Financial Implications:

To be completed by the Council's Section 151 Officer.

There is a risk that current external audit fee levels could increase when the current contracts end (however the external auditor is appointed). The depth of the external audit work to be undertaken has increased, requiring more resources.

Opting into a national scheme provides maximum opportunity to ensure fees are as realistic as possible, while ensuring the quality of contract documentation to oversee the undertaking of the audit is maintained, by entering into a large-scale collective procurement arrangement.

If the national scheme is not used some additional resource may be needed to establish an auditor panel and conduct a local procurement. Until a procurement exercise is completed it is not possible to state what, if any, additional resource may be required for audit fees from 2023/24.

Background papers:

Please list any background documents to this report and include a hyperlink where possible.

Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.

Term	Meaning



Classification	Item No.
Open	

Meeting:	Council
Meeting date:	18 th January 2022
Title of report:	Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2022/23
Report by:	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Growth
Decision Type:	Key Decision
Ward(s) to which report relates	All

Executive Summary:

- 1.1 Each year local authorities are required to formally approve their Council Tax Support Scheme. The scheme must be approved by Full Council and must be considered as part of the budget setting process. As part of the process, local authorities are required to consider whether to revise their existing scheme or replace it with a new one.
- 1.2 The report outlines the background, current scheme, context of overall Welfare Reform and recommendations for delivering a local scheme of Council Tax Support with effect from April 2022

Recommendation(s)

That:

- the scheme continues in its current form for the year 2022/23
- the current disregard of all War Widow's/Widower's Pension or War Disablement Pension is continued

- the performance of the scheme continues to be closely monitored and will be reviewed and amended as appropriate on an annual basis.

Key considerations

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The original local scheme was introduced in Bury from April 2013. This was amended in 2017 so that the maximum amount that any working age claimant could receive is 80% of the liable Council Tax charge

3 COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2022/2023

- 3.1 The Council is required to review and amend its scheme annually.
- 3.2 In doing this it is necessary to consider a variety of factors:
- Performance of the scheme
 - The level, and adequacy, of Government funding for 2022/23
 - The Council's overall financial position
 - Options for changing the scheme if required
 - The outcome of the previous consultation

Performance of the Scheme

- 3.3 The operation of the scheme is meeting its objectives during the financial year 2021/22.
- 3.4 The Council is seeing an increase in the number of claimants who are in arrears on the amounts of council tax that they owe. Working practices have been amended to try and minimize the number of these accounts that proceed to recovery through the courts and beyond. The council is working hard to support it's residents who may be experiencing financial hardship via signposting to various agencies for further benefits and support.

The Council's Overall Financial Position

- 3.5 The Council, like most Authorities, is experiencing significant financial pressures due to funding reductions in previous years further impacted by the Covid pandemic. Therefore the opportunity to provide additional funding over and above what is already provided is limited and would create a cost pressure that would need to be managed elsewhere within the Council's budget.

The Outcome of Previous Consultation

- 3.6 Any change in the Council Tax Support Scheme requires consultation with the major preceptor, the GMCA with regard to the Mayoral Police and Crime Commissioner precept and the Mayoral General Precept including Fire Services. There is also a requirement to carry out public consultation.

3.7 As no change to the scheme is being proposed, there is no requirement for formal consultation.

4 EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS WITHIN THE SCHEME

4.1 For audit purposes the external auditors have asked that consideration is given to the disregard for War Widow's/Widower's Pension or War Disablement Pension

4.2 When deciding claims for Housing Benefit/Council Tax Support The Social Security Administration Act 1992 section 134(8)(b) and 139(6)(b) provides Local Authorities with the discretion to increase the amount of war pension it disregards. Local Authorities can introduce a local scheme to disregard some or all of any War Widow's/Widower's Pension or War Disablement Pension remaining after the mandatory disregards have been applied. Bury currently applies a full disregard and have been doing so for a number of years. The auditors have asked that a reminder of this arrangement is set out in the report to members when considering the 2022/23 scheme as this is now a requirement of the annual audit certification process.

5 Discretionary Council Tax fund

5.1 A Discretionary Council Tax fund has been available for customers who may be experiencing significant hardship often as a result of multiple changes to the welfare system or complex circumstances, Members are requested to agree a continuation of the existing budget of £200k for the year 2022/23.

6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 It is recommended that:

- the scheme continues in its current form for the year 2022/23;
- the current disregard of all War Widow's/Widower's Pension or War Disablement Pension is continued;
- the performance of the scheme continues to be closely monitored and will be reviewed and amended as appropriate on an annual basis.

Community impact / Contribution to the Bury 2030 Strategy

This policy supports our local community particularly those who are experiencing hardship. This relates to both the local and strengths based elements of the Bury 2030 strategy in order to support our residents from getting into debt

Equality Impact and considerations:

Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;*
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;*
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.*

The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying ‘due regard’ in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services.

Equality Analysis	<i>Please provide a written explanation of the outcome(s) of either conducting an initial or full EA.</i>

**Please note: Approval of a cabinet report is paused when the ‘Equality/Diversity implications’ section is left blank and approval will only be considered when this section is completed.*

Assessment of Risk:

The following risks apply to the decision:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
<p>The Covid pandemic increased the number of eligible claimants for the scheme during 20/21. This number has gradually fallen during 21/22 and whilst it remains higher than pre-Covid levels there is a risk that funding may not be sufficient to cover all of the increased costs.</p> <p>The number of claimants requiring welfare support or who are unable to pay the remainder of the council tax bill remains higher as a result of Covid and this will increase pressure on the council in terms of costs and also other types of support and resources.</p>	<p>No changes to the scheme are proposed and the utilisation of the fund to support increased demand enables the council to maintain support at current levels.</p> <p>Regular monitoring is in place to review increase in demand and to consider further options for providing welfare and hardship support.</p>

Consultation:

There is no requirement for public consultation as no changes to the existing scheme are being proposed

Legal Implications:

Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 ("the 1992 Act") requires each billing authority in England to make a scheme specifying the reductions which are to apply to amounts of council tax payable by persons, or classes of person, whom the billing authority considers are in financial need. This must be decided by 11th March the preceding financial year.

Financial Implications:

Councils have a responsibility to support our most venerable residents within the working age range, via the council Tax Support Scheme, for those who don't meet the criteria for national benefit schemes. As we emerge from the pandemic the council wishes to support our residents, who, with rising utility bills, are most at risk of household poverty.

Report Author and Contact Details:

Ian Davenport Service Development Manager (acting up) i.davenport@bury.gov.uk

Appendix 1 –

Council Tax Support explained

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Council Tax Support explained

Council Tax Support will help to pay your Council Tax bill if you are on a low income.

How much Council Tax Support you get depends on:

- how much income you and your partner have
- how much you both have in savings, and
- whether you are working age or pension age.

You need to be:

- liable for Council Tax and
- living at the property

The online calculator, provided by Entitled to, takes about 10 minutes to complete.

Will I have to pay towards my Council Tax if I get Council Tax Support?

Council Tax Support may not cover all of your Council Tax.

Minimum contribution

In Bury everyone of working age who gets Council Tax Support has to pay at least 20% of their Council Tax.

If you're pension age, you may be able to get Council Tax Support to cover all of your Council Tax.

Council Tax band limit

If your property is in Council Tax band C, D, E, F, G or H, Council Tax Support will be worked out as though you are in a band B property. **This is as well as the 20% minimum contribution.** The following groups are exempt from the Council Tax band limit:

- all pensioners
- people who receive :
 - Disability Living Allowance (all care and mobility components)
 - Attendance Allowance (all components)
 - Personal Independence Payments (all components)
 - Employment Support Allowance (Support Related component only)
 - Carers Allowance
 - War Disablement Pension
 - War Widows/Widowers allowance
 - Armed Forces and Reserve Forces Compensation Scheme
- lone parents with a child or children aged under 5
- someone who has suffered a bereavement of a partner or child in the last 12 months. This exemption will last for 12 months from the date of the bereavement

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EQUALITY ANALYSIS

This Equality Analysis considers the effect of Bury Council/ Bury CCG activity on different groups protected from discrimination under the Equality Act 2010. This is to consider if there are any unintended consequences for some groups from key changes made by a public body and their contractor partners organisations and to consider if the activity will be fully effective for all protected groups. It involves using equality information and the results of engagement with protected groups and others, to manage risk and to understand the actual or potential effect of activity, including any adverse impacts on those affected by the change under consideration.

For support with completing this Equality Analysis please contact corporate.core@bury.gov.uk / 0161 253 6592

SECTION 1 – RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	
<i>Refer to Equality Analysis guidance page 4</i>	
1.1 Name of policy/ project/ decision	Council Tax Support Scheme
1. 2 Lead for policy/ project/ decision	Executive Director Finance
1.3 Committee/Board signing off policy/ project/ decision	Council
1.4 Author of Equality Analysis	<i>Name: Ian Davenport Role: Acting Head of Service Contact details: i.davenport@bury.gov.uk</i>
1.5 Date EA completed	<i>11th January 2022</i>
1.6 Quality Assurance	<i>Name: Sam McVaigh Role: Director of People and Inclusion Contact details: s.mcvaigh@bury.gov.uk Comments:</i>
1.7 Date QA completed	<i>11th January 2022</i>
1.8 Departmental recording	
1.9 Next review date	<i>1st July 2022</i>

SECTION 2 – AIMS AND OUTCOMES OF POLICY / PROJECT	
<i>Refer to Equality Analysis guidance page 5</i>	
2.1 Detail of policy/ decision being sought	Each year local authorities are required to formally approve their Council Tax Support Scheme. The scheme must be approved by Full Council and must be considered as part of the budget setting process. As part of the process, local authorities are required to consider whether to revise their existing scheme or replace it with a new one. There is no change proposed to the current means tested Council Tax Support scheme.
2.2 What are the intended outcomes of this?	The council Tax Support scheme supports our most vulnerable residents and those most at risk of household poverty.

SECTION 3 – ESTABLISHING RELEVANCE TO EQUALITY & HUMAN RIGHTS

Refer to Equality Analysis guidance pages 5-8 and 11

Please outline the relevance of the activity/ policy to the Public Sector Equality Duty

General Public Sector Equality Duties	Relevance (Yes/No)	Rationale behind relevance decision
3.1 To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by Equality Act 2010	No	There are no proposed changes in the policy.
3.2 To advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.	Yes	The scheme is designed to financially support households on low incomes, an improved financial situation assists in reducing inequality.
3.3 To foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not	No	The proposal is not relevant to this duty.
3.4 Please outline the considerations taken, including any mitigations, to ensure activity is not detrimental to the Human Rights of any individual affected by the decision being sought.		
The proposals do not contravene human rights expectations. Consideration has been given across the six FREDA principles and no detrimental impact identified.		

SECTION 4 – EQUALITIES DATA

Refer to Equality Analysis guidance page 8

Protected characteristic	Outcome sought	Base data	Data gaps (to include in Section 8 log)
4.1 Age	Through the offering of a support scheme there are no differential impact on this characteristic. That the scheme addresses inequity and mitigates the impact of different protected characteristics.	There is no data in relation to the protected characteristics of the Council Tax Base. However, consideration has been given to the overall demography of Bury in considering the nature of the scheme. – Headline data is included in Appendix 2 of Bury Council and CCGs joint inclusion strategy	The Council has seen no evidence which suggests a disproportionate impact in relation to protected groups. However, consideration will be given to strengthening our base data on protected characteristics in relation to Council Tax Support over the coming year.
4.2 Disability			
4.3 Gender			
4.4 Pregnancy or Maternity			
4.5 Race			
4.6 Religion and belief			
4.7 Sexual Orientation			
4.8 Marriage or Civil Partnership			
4.9 Gender Reassignment			
4.10 Carers			
4.11 Looked After Children and Care Leavers			
4.12 Armed Forces personnel including veterans			
4.13 Socio-economically vulnerable			

SECTION 5 – STAKEHOLDERS AND ENGAGEMENT

Refer to Equality Analysis guidance page 8 and 9

	Internal Stakeholders	External Stakeholders
5.1 Identify stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff within relevant teams within Finance Elected Members 	All Bury residents, including specifically those in receipt of the support at present
5.2 Engagement undertaken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managers of the Finance Department and other Departments 	Information is available and signposted on our website, available to all residents.
5.3 Outcomes of engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determined that the scheme achieves its objectives and should continue unchanged 	Consultation has not been undertaken as the scheme has not changed. Only 4 appeals against decisions made under the scheme were received during the last year. None related to inclusion or particular protected characteristics.
5.4 Outstanding actions following engagement (include in Section 8 log)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None Noted 	None Noted

SECTION 6 – CONCLUSION OF IMPACT

Refer to Equality Analysis guidance page 9

Please outline whether the activity/ policy has a positive or negative effect on any groups of people with protected inclusion characteristics

Protected Characteristic	Positive/ Neutral Negative/	Impact (include reference to data/ engagement)
6.1 Age	Neutral	The scheme in respect of pension age applicants is defined by Central Government within the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2012 and the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended). The Council has no discretion in relation to the calculation of Council Tax reduction in respect of the pension age scheme and it is designed to provide broadly the same level of support provided within the previous (Council Tax Benefit) scheme.
6.2 Disability	Positive	By disregarding DLA, PIP we prevent disability related incomes detrimentally affecting the persons CTS entitlement
6.3 Gender	Neutral	No differential impact identified
6.4 Pregnancy or Maternity	Neutral	No differential impact identified
6.5 Race	Neutral	No differential impact identified
6.6 Religion and belief	Neutral	No differential impact identified
6.7 Sexual Orientation	Neutral	No differential impact identified
6.8 Marriage or Civil Partnership	Neutral	No differential impact identified
6.9 Gender Reassignment	Neutral	No differential impact identified

6.10 Carers	Negative	Not all Carer's receive Carer's allowance by the DWP. Those that do receive Carer's Allowance receive an increased premium that offsets part of the Carer's Allowance income when calculating their CTS entitlement. This currently relates to offsetting circa. 50% of what an individual receives through carers allowance. – Whilst this could be increased, the financial impact would be significant. The position is consistent with the previous year's scheme.
6.11 Looked After Children and Care Leavers	Neutral	No differential impact identified
6.12 Armed Forces personnel including veterans	Positive	No differential impact identified - Legislation sets out that the council is able to disregard the war widow/widowers' pension when calculating the support; the Council continues to disregard this income.
6.13 Socio-economically vulnerable	Positive	Council Tax Support scheme is available for people in financial difficulty and resident in a property.
6.14 Overall impact - What will the likely overall effect of your activity be on equality, including consideration on intersectionality?	Positive	

SECTION 7 – ACTION LOG

Refer to Equality Analysis guidance page 10

Action Identified	Lead	Due Date	Comments and Sign off (when complete)
Look at available data for the general population to further analyse the percentages of people with protected characteristics that are in receipt of CTS.	Ian Davenport	30 th September 2022	
7.2 Actions to address gaps identified in section 5			
Consider a fresh consultation exercise to encourage up to date input from residents in relation to the scheme with specific regard to inclusion	Ian Davenport	30 th September 2022	
7.3 Mitigations to address negative impacts identified in section 6			
The Council currently discounts circa. 50% of the impact of carers allowance. – During the coming year analysis will be undertaken of the potential to increase this support. Financial analysis indicates the costs of this would be prohibitive at this point.	Ian Davenport	30 th September 2022	

7.4 Opportunities to further inclusion (equality, diversity and human rights) including to advance opportunities and engagements across protected characteristics			
N/A			

SECTION 8 - REVIEW			
<i>Refer to Equality Analysis guidance page 10</i>			
Review Milestone	Lead	Due Date	Comments (and sign off when complete)
Implementation	Ian Davenport	April 2022	
Initial impact and feedback	Ian Davenport	July 2022	

Please make sure that every section of the Equality Analysis has been fully completed. The author of the EA should then seek Quality Assurance sign off and departmental recording.

SECTION 9 – QUALITY ASSURANCE		
<i>Refer to Equality Analysis guidance page x</i>		
Consideration	Yes/ No	Rationale and details of further actions required
Have all section been completed fully?	Yes	
Has the duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimization and other conducted prohibited by the PSED and Equalities Act been considered and acted upon?	Yes	
Has the duty to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not been considered and acted upon	Yes	
Has the duty to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, been consider and acted upon	Yes	
Has the action log fully detailed any required activity to address gaps in data, insight and/or engagement in relation to inclusion impact?	Yes	
Have clear and robust reviewing arrangements been set out?	Yes	
Are there any further comments to be made in relation to this EA	Yes	

REPORT FOR DECISION



DECISION OF:	The Council
DATE:	19th January 2022
SUBJECT:	Leaders' Report
REPORT FROM:	Leader of the Council
TYPE OF DECISION:	Non key decision
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/STATUS	This paper is within the public domain.
SUMMARY:	This report provides an update on the activity of the Council against the Corporate Plan.
OPTIONS & RECOMMENDED OPTION	That Council notes the report and agrees that further updates are provided to future Council meetings.
IMPLICATIONS:	
Corporate Aims/Policy Framework:	Do the proposals accord with the Policy Framework? Yes
Equality/Diversity implications:	Equality Impact considerations included on the individual Council reports.
Wards Affected:	All Wards.
Scrutiny Interest:	Overview and Scrutiny

1 Leader's note

- 1.1 I am pleased to provide Council with my report covering the period from 17th November 2021 to 11th January 2022.
- 1.2 I'd like to wish the residents of Bury a Happy New Year. We have a lot to look forward to in the coming year, especially with continuing progress on our exciting regeneration plans across the borough, but we can also look forward to; making progress on the New High School for Radcliffe, continuing our promise to make Bury greener and cleaner, building much needed houses for the peoples of our Borough in-keeping with our Brownfield First approach, the improvements for Bury Market and Radcliffe Flexi-Hall following our successful Levelling-up bids, the impact of our integrated public service teams, and getting the community involved through new initiatives like 'Let's Do It Together' Forums, Community Champions scheme and Race Listening events.
- 1.3 Prior to the festive season, I visited Trinity Foodbank and Caritas Red Door to see how their organisations support those in need, particularly over the winter period. The visits were very insightful, listening to people's stories and the challenges that they are going through. It is vital that groups like these are able to operate and support the Council and other services in helping those who are vulnerable.
- 1.4 I would like to make a renewed plea to everyone in the Borough who is eligible for their first, second or booster vaccine to come forward and take it, both for yourself and for those you come in contact with. The vaccine drive has already led to tens of thousands of lives being saved and is even more crucial now with the Omicron strain of the virus circulating more easily and rapidly than any of the previous variants. You can find out more about the vaccines and book your appointment though www.bury.gov.uk/coronavirus-vaccine
- 1.5 Following on from the announcement that Bury Council is now an accredited Real Living Wage employer, I am delighted to share that we have now become a member of the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter. The charter is a voluntary membership and assessment scheme which aims to raise employment standards across Greater Manchester for all organisations of any size, sector or geography. Becoming a Member of the GM Good Employment Charter not only shows our commitment to being a good employer but allows us to lead by example and encourage others to raise employment standards across the borough. We value our workforce and absolutely recognise the critical role

they play in supporting our residents and communities and driving delivery of our Let's Do It ambition

- 1.6 At the Cabinet meetings in November and December we approved the Bury Town Centre Masterplan and Ramsbottom Town Plan. These plans once again signify this Council's ambition to make our Borough a great place for residents, visitors and businesses. The Ramsbottom Town Plan includes proposals to reduce conflict between pedestrians and vehicles, improve linkages between attractions, address parking issues for visitors and help business growth. This includes plans for a dedicated space to host events and entertainment and measures to help businesses thrive through the creation of an enterprise centre and offices. The Bury Town Centre Masterplan will ensure that the town centre will thrive for decades to come.
- 1.7 Following the signing of the Armed Forces Covenant in November, we were proud to announce that from the beginning of December all serving members of the armed forces and veterans can now use Council-run leisure centres for free. It formally recognises the contribution that serving personnel, reservists, veterans and military families make to Bury, ensuring that they are not disadvantaged and, in certain specific areas, are actually given priority.

Reporting progress against stated commitments in Corporate Plan

The following table provides a brief summary of the Council's progress against the priorities set out in our Corporate Plan since the last report.

Dept	Priority	Deliverables
BGI	Approval of Accelerated disposal programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two assets sold at auction for 90k (guide price 50k) and £185k (guide price £2k). • Summerseat House to be remarketed in January 2022 • Review of Phases 1, 2 and 3 assets is ongoing, and work is underway to continue to prepare them for disposal • Community Asset Transfer (CAT)– work ongoing to undertake final checks on the documentation (toolkit and policy). Work continues to move one CAT through the process – Philips Park.
	Bury Flexihall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Levelling Up Fund (LUF) inception meetings with Department for Levelling

		<p>up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) due to take place on 22nd December.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexihall – Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) stage Two consultation ongoing and close to completion. • Pre-Construction Services Agreement (PCSA) remains under review (End December 2021 targeted) • Progress on the 5 required property acquisitions. (2 under offer)
	Radcliffe Strategic Regeneration Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hub project - RIBA Stage Two consultation complete, design pack and report due in January 22 • LUF inception meetings with DLUHC due to take place in December • First commercial tenants from South/North Blocks are due to move into new premises in January 22 • Transport programme work ongoing, car park surveys now complete and report due in February 22
	One Public Estate Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is ongoing regarding planning the decant of tenants from Humphrey House to 3KP and conversations continue with the various health partners • Work is underway to consider the decant of St Mary's Place into 6KP, so St Mary's Place can then be disposed of – disposal planned via auction by end March 2022.
	Places for Everyone (Pfe)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently analysing representations to identify key issues raised from consultation. • Preparing for submission in January/February 2022.
	Bury Interchange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) / Council continuing to work through the Strategic Outline Business Case stage. • Looking to move to outline business case as early as possible in the new year.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secured circa £45m in the CRST funding.
	Full Fibre Rollout (5G network will follow)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bury will be the first in north GM to complete, a press release to promote the completion of a multimillion-pound project.
	Brownfield Housing Land Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Street Radcliffe (89 homes) and Green Street Radcliffe (136 homes) have concluded pre application planning consultation. Legal resources are in place and contracts drafted. Anticipated execution of contracts and planning submission by Jan 22. Cabinet has now consented to the disposal of Seedfield Bury to Hive Homes for the delivery of 92 homes.
CYP	Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education Business Plan drafted. Education assurance protocol – Autumn term universal quality assurance visits underway for all schools. Ongoing support and guidance to schools on management of COVID-19. Working with school clusters agreed criteria for support. Continued development of analysis/reporting of attendance data from schools for Autumn half term 2.
	SEND	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation with schools on mainstream top-started. Reported to Schools Forum on Project Safety Valve (PSV) and implications. PSV summary update produced for briefing Bury Governors Association, Strategic Education Board. Local area Special Educational Needs (SEND) strategic action plan being developed. Agreement for new Social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) Restorative Practices (RP) at Tottington Primary – detail being developed.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeguarding visits to alternative provision continue.
	Children's Social Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery Board met on 23 Nov to review the work completed to date. ILACS Ofsted inspection (see report to 12 January Cabinet) Children in Need (CIN) managed service has commenced, with a focus on managing child in need cases, currently in safeguarding and move to locality-based approach (significant increase in CIN numbers). Thematic sampling across a number of areas has been carried out: Child in Need, Domestic Abuse, Permanency, Step down to Early Help and Repeat child protection Plans. Recommendations have been agreed. Review of all high-cost placements has been completed; actions to look at decision making and reduction in high cost placements is underway.
	Early Help	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal developed to align Early Help cluster and inclusion partnership. Early Help Strategy presented to Children's Partnership Board for sign off. Steering Group for Bury East Pilot established . Charter for Bury East has been developed. Winter Holiday Activity Fund Programme developed and launched. Bury education, employment and training figures are in the top 1% of the Country for positive education, employment and training figures post 16.
Operations	Climate Change Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate Change Officers attended Neighbourhood Hub meetings to promote the establishment of Climate Action Forums in the new year and the £100k Climate Action Fund..

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £100k Climate action fund open for applications and closed on 30 November with the fund oversubscribed.
	Environmental Quality: Strategy in respect of community ownership – keeping the Borough clean and tidy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issued 9 Fixed Penalty Notices in October 7 for littering and 2 for fly tipping. Prepared 2 prosecution files for 3 offences. 6 interviews under caution planned for November. Clearing the volume/backlog of fly tipping enquiries – progressing well. Environmental quality programme developed for Radcliffe which will commence in Spring 2022. Many of the Environmental volunteer groups have applied for grants as part of the health improvement community fund scheme.
	Waste and Transport: Waste collection review including optimisation and balancing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remaining vehicles have been delivered. Waste collection has settled. Review of rounds underway. Head of Service recruited to and commences 6/12/21.
	Strategic Transport Capacity and Transport plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The consultants WSP have been appointed to write a Borough-wide Transport Strategy. A Strategic Transport Group has been established which is attended by Leader, Portfolio, Chief Executive and senior officers. A Transport Officers Group has also been established to oversee delivery of Transport Strategy and to seek out funding opportunities.
	Increased taxi testing capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tender opportunity closed with no bids submitted. Documentation amended following consultation with garages and presentation

		<p>produced by procurement to support garages to apply.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tender readvertised with closing date of 22 December 2021.
OCO	COVID Response: Vaccination Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Booster Programme and 12-15 vaccine programme initiated and being monitored weekly through Vaccine Assurance Group. Plans for extension in development.
	COVID response: Outbreak Management Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outbreak Management Plan refresh completed to reflect Govt Autumn Winter Plan. Monitored through weekly Health Protection Board and fortnightly Gold.
	Secondary Care Service Reconfiguration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update paper submitted for the December Bury Strategic Commissioning Board Meeting for agreement of the secondary care model following the acute reconfiguration and to assure the board of the system work to review the Bury primary and community pathways. Bury System Urology Task and Finish group agreed Terms of Reference and membership – all partners engaged. Review of primary and community pathways underway – working to optimal integrated pathway. Links being made to Northern Care Alliance Being Well Development Group to support elective recovery.
	Neighbourhood Team Working in Health and Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operating model for Integrated Neighbourhood Team (INT) working approved at integrated delivery collaborative board.
Corporate Core	Domestic Abuse Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft produced and shared with Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Board in December.
	Community recovery "Pitch" participatory budget scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applications received including a good spread across the borough. Planning for face-to-face events in progress. Bury East scheduled for end of November. The remaining to be held in December subject to Covid Plan B.

	Agile working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial evaluation shared with Members. Work now focused on strengthening and embedding the model and programming wider building closures
	Inclusion strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work progressing and Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion manager to be appointed. External funding to support inclusion work across Bury and Rochdale awarded via GM Health and Social Care Partnership.
	Culture strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further promotion of the Opportunity Pass around December / Christmas events, including the Tour of the Museum. Still some underspend on the micro-grants, recommendations going to Portfolio lead on the 10th of Dec.
	RLW in Bury Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Real Living Wage Status Awarded on 15 November.

List of Background Papers:-

None identified

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GENERAL REPORT OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 NOVEMBER 2021

COUNCIL TAX ON EMPTY PROPERTIES

1. Councillor Eamonn O'Brien, the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Growth, presented the report seeking approval to consult on a proposal to remove the Council Tax discount given to empty properties and the second homes discount with effect from 1 April 2022.
2. Members discussed the report, noting that home buyers were not being discouraged or penalised, but the Council had to prioritise where it spent budgets and, although flexibility would be retained, it couldn't necessarily offer this discount in the same way. It was noted that a higher tax rate was charged for long-term absences and this was not proposed to change.
3. In response to Members' questions it was noted that the consultation would be targeted to those who would be affected most, including letters to homes receiving the discount and an article in the VCFA newsletter to engage groups offering support to vulnerable people.
4. Cabinet approved the recommendations as set out in the report.

THE COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30TH SEPTEMBER 2021

5. Councillor Eamonn O'Brien, the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Growth, presented the report outlining the forecast financial position of the Council at the end of 2021/22 based on the information known at the end of the second quarter, 30th September 2021, and providing the mid-year Treasury Management Update. The report outlined the write off of bad debt, set out the position for both revenue and capital, and provided an analysis of the variances, both under and overspending.
6. In response to Members' questions it was noted that investment into senior management was vital as identified through the LGA Peer Review to ensure the Council had the right vision and strategy for the borough and could bring staff along to improve services. The biggest risk was not finding the savings identified, and it was agreed that a strong focus was now on delivery, as aspects of the transformation plan not realising savings until the next financial year. Mitigations were being identified and brought forward as early as possible, for instance the empty properties report earlier in the agenda.
7. In terms of barriers to transformational change, it was noted that the organisation was very complex and wide-ranging, and some enablers of change were easier to fix than others. Cultural change, for example, took longer than IT improvements or management change. In response to Member's question regarding capital spending, it was noted that these works were slow to begin with, with specifications, design, and planning applications needed before delivery. Some funding was time sensitive and these projects were prioritised, though it was noted that some timescales were unrealistic (i.e. decarbonisation projects, where an extension had been secured).
8. Councillor Nick Jones requested that detail on how the BGI directorate was meeting its stretch targets be sent outside the meeting and voiced the Conservative Group's support for the Transformation Strategy. It was noted that full update would be brought to the next Cabinet meeting.
9. Cabinet approved the recommendations as set out in the report.

SUCCESS ON LEVELLING UP FUND BIDS AND CITY REGION SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT SETTLEMENT

10. Councillor Eamonn O'Brien, the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Growth, presented the report regarding the recent successful bids to the Government's Levelling Up Fund and the benefit to Bury from the recent submission by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) to the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement. The report also set out next steps on implementation of the schemes funded from these sources. Members expressed their thanks to all involved, including MPs and officers.
11. Cabinet approved the recommendations as set out in the report.

BURY TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN - PROGRESS AND EMERGING HEADLINES

12. Councillor Eamonn O'Brien, the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Growth, presented the report providing an update on the key concepts that have been developed from the work on the masterplan for Bury Town Centre so far. It was noted that a draft of this masterplan would be submitted to Cabinet at its meeting in December 2021 where details of the consultation process will be set out for approval.
13. In response to Members' questions it was noted that work to formalise governance arrangements was underway. This project, like others undertaken by the Council were ambitious and working with external partners helped officers to leverage their skills with outside expertise to ensure delivery to a high standard.
14. Cabinet approved the recommendations as set out in the report.

ACQUISITION OF THE MILLGATE ESTATE BURY - PART A

15. Councillor Eamonn O'Brien, the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Growth, presented the report which outlined the rationale for intervention and the exploration of a Joint Venture with Bruntwood to deliver the proposed project and sought the first stage approval for the acquisition of the Millgate estate. Members noted their cross-party support for regeneration in the Town Centre and the ambition to keep up with neighbouring boroughs and ensure a modern town centre suitable for the needs of local residents.
16. Cabinet approved the recommendations as set out in the report.

BROWNFIELD HOUSING DELIVERY STRATEGY: DISPOSAL OF LAND AT SEEDFIELD BURY AND WILLIAM KEMP HEATON BURY - PART A

17. Councillor Clare Cummins, the Cabinet Member for Housing Services, presented the report which sought approval for the disposal of two Council-owned Brownfield sites in Bury that had the potential to be redeveloped to deliver much needed housing and generate a significant capital receipt. These two sites had the potential to deliver 129 new homes between them, including 60 affordable homes with provision for 15 supported living apartments for people with learning disabilities and/or autism.
18. Cabinet approved the recommendations as set out in the report.

DELIVERY OF A NEW SECONDARY SCHOOL IN RADCLIFFE: LAND PROPOSAL TO DFE & STAR ACADEMIES - PART A

19. Councillor Eamonn O'Brien, the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Growth, presented the report outlining the conclusions of a study to determine the extent of the site to be utilised for the school, and seeking approval of the proposal to lease the

identified land to the DfE and for occupation by Star Academy Trust. In response to Members' questions it was noted that the Council would use its influence on Star Academy Trust to aim for a zero carbon school, and it was noted that Transport for Greater Manchester were already engaged on the project.

20. Cabinet approved the recommendations as set out in the report.

SIX TOWN HOUSING LIMITED OPERATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

21. Councillor Clare Cummins, the Cabinet Member for Housing Services, presented the report regarding changes to the operational arrangements for Six Town Housing Limited's meetings and its committees. Councillor Jones highlighted his interest as a board member for Six Town Housing.

22. Cabinet approved the recommendations as set out in the report.

GREATER MANCHESTER COLLABORATIVE AGENCY CONTRACT

23. Councillor Tahir Rafiq, the Cabinet Member for Corporate Affairs and HR, presented the report detailing the background and process followed for the retendering of the shared contract regarding agency staff. It was noted that there was no minimum level of spend and no obligations of exclusivity.

24. Cabinet approved the recommendations as set out in the report.

BURY CORPORATE PLAN PERFORMANCE AND DELIVERY REPORT QUARTER TWO 2021-22

25. Councillor Tahir Rafiq, the Cabinet Member for Corporate Affairs and HR, presented the report which provided a summary of key delivery and performance that occurred during quarter two 2021-22 aligned to the 3R priorities, and highlighted intelligence on waiting times for referral to treatment for consultant led services.

26. In response to Members' questions regarding how the Let's Do It strategy was understood by all Council staff, it was noted that staff briefings were going well. Early consultations demonstrated a low understanding, but this was being improved over time with engagement on how this strategy applied to Council services and regeneration projects. Staff and partners had helped write and develop the strategy, and the next stage was organisational development.

27. Cabinet approved the recommendations as set out in the report.

GREATER MANCHESTER VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL ENTERPRISE SECTOR (VCSE) ACCORD

28. Councillor Richard Gold, the Cabinet Member for Communities, presented the report regarding the new Greater Manchester Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Accord (GM VCSE Accord), a tri-partite agreement between the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership and the Greater Manchester VCSE Leadership Group on behalf of the VCSE sector in the region, which works to develop collaborative working with VCSE organisations to improve outcomes for local communities.

29. In response to Members' questions it was noted that a lot of community groups were already involved but participation in listening events had varied, with some very poorly attended. Adjustments were being made to facilitate better engagement, such as changing the time or day of events, and Councillor Gold welcomed any feedback from Members into how their local residents could be best reached.

30. Cabinet approved the recommendations as set out in the report.

UPDATE ON HIGHWAY INVESTMENT STRATEGY, TRANCHE 2 (HIS2)

31. Councillor Alan Quinn, the Cabinet Member for Environment, Climate Change and Operations, presented the report which provided an update on the Highway Investment Strategy Tranche 2 initiatives. In response to Members' questions it was noted that a timeline could be provided outside the meeting.
32. Cabinet approved the recommendations as set out in the report.

GENERAL REPORT OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 DECEMBER 2021

LEVELLING UP FUND APPROVAL OF EXPENDITURE - PART A:

33. Councillor Eamonn O'Brien, the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Growth, presented the report which detailed the proposed expenditure required to complete the prescribed design development and technical works for the Radcliffe Hub and Bury Flexi Hall projects. Full detailed breakdown of the costs and programme were in Part B of this report. In response to Members' questions, it was noted governance proposals for the projects were anticipated to come to Cabinet in January 2022.
34. Cabinet approved the recommendations as set out in the report.

RAMSBOTTOM TOWN CENTRE PLAN - CONSULTATION DRAFT:

35. Councillor Eamonn O'Brien, the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Growth, presented the report which set out the draft Ramsbottom Town Centre Plan and detailed the six-week consultation period.
36. Members discussed the report, noting the positive reception from local residents so far and welcoming the consultation. In response to questions, it was noted that it was hoped targeted social media ads would run for the full consultation period though this wasn't guaranteed, and it was agreed that hard copies would be available in all partner buildings. Councillor O'Brien advised that he welcomed funding from the government but recognised the hard work from Councillors and Officers to achieve this. Cabinet approved the recommendations.

BURY BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT:

37. Councillor Eamonn O'Brien, the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Growth, presented the report regarding the proposal to develop a Business Improvement district (BID). Councillors agreed this was an exciting opportunity to strengthen business partnerships in Bury. Cabinet approved the recommendations as set out in the report.

BURY TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN - CONSULTATION DRAFT:

38. Councillor Eamonn O'Brien, the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Growth, presented the report which presented the report which set out the draft Bury Town Centre Plan and detailed the six-week consultation period.
39. Members discussed the report, noting the importance of being in control of changes to Bury and remaining forward-looking. With regards to "minor modifications" to the masterplan, these would be typos or factual errors. In response to questions it was noted that numbers couldn't be estimated at this point, but the ambition was to secure as much housing as

possible on brownfield land in line with the brownfield first policy. This would hopefully provide the basis for a strong argument to the government and planning inspectorate to protect as much green space as possible.

40. With regards to a recent petition, the Leader advised that exiting the Places for Everyone (PfE) plan would remove the Council's control over the type and quality of houses being built and leave the Council exposed to government action, potentially tripling the housing requirement, as well as negating the 2000 units that had been displaced through the PfE plan. Instead, this plan and the hard work to identify and create further brownfield sites was the best way forward to protect as much green space as possible.
41. Cabinet approved the recommendations as set out in the report.

TRANSFORMATION UPDATE:

42. Councillor Eamonn O'Brien, the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Growth, presented the report which provided an update of progress against the strategy including some revision to the forecast financial savings.
43. In response to Members' questions, it was noted that the risk register reflected an increase in severity of risk as well as an increase in likelihood. Red ratings for digital services had been flagged at Audit Committee and work was underway with external partners to minimise the risks, with follow up actions for PSN accreditation being reported to Audit Committee in the new year. With regards to budget implications from the reduction in expected savings, it was noted that targets were now in line with original estimates and still delivered what was set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy. Savings were still able to be delivered, it was the timescales that were changing and mitigations were being explored.
44. Cabinet approved the recommendations as set out in the report.

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	Party / response	Question
1	Labour	<p>Could the Leader give a further update on the impact of the cut to Universal Credit and the likely future impact of impending rises in energy prices, and increases in National Insurance contributions on residents of Bury? Cllr Hayes</p> <p>Supplementary - The shadow Secretary of State at the DWP, Jonathan Ashworth M.P. visited the Brandlesholme Community Centre Foodbank on 15th December and heard heart-breaking stories from volunteers about the experiences of local residents' dependant on Universal Credit. What measures can the Council take to support the work of Foodbanks in alleviating the suffering of residents affected by the upcoming economic pressures.</p>
	Cabinet Member: Cllr O'Brien	<p>The Council's Support Fund has seen an increase in requests for help of 300% over the same period last year with most people sighting difficulties with paying for food and fuel.</p> <p>The Government provided Household Support funding is being spent to support residents whose children receive Free School Meals with help during the holidays and with a further substantial amount going towards helping those residents in receipt of both Universal Credit and Council Tax Support with a payment towards food and fuel. We have supported the local Bury Community Support Network (of which Brandlesholme Community Centre Foodbank are a member) in recognition of the essential support they are providing our residents in these extremely difficult time, and also using their local knowledge of vulnerable residents to help direct people to the Councils schemes to help with additional support.</p>
2	Labour	<p>What progress has been made on the allocation of participatory budget funds as agreed in the budget last year and how are we evaluating their impact on our community strategy? Cllr Hayes</p> <p>Supplementary - Can the Cabinet Member please give details of the community groups and organizations in Elton Ward which have received funding from the Council in the last twelve months, and join me in congratulating them on the amazing work they do for our local community?</p>
	Cabinet Member: Cllr Gold	<p>The 2021 Pitch funding scheme was designed with Ward Councillors, the Bury Voluntary and Community Faith Alliance and informed by feedback from previous funding rounds. Community Groups were invited to make one bid for up to £5,000 funding to support community recovery.</p>

	Party / response	Question
		<p>The opportunity was promoted to all residents and community groups through a communications and digital media marketing programme and the leadership of the Community Hub in each neighbourhood. A total of 78 eligible applications were received, totalling over £340k in total.</p> <p>As a participatory scheme, the community was invited to vote for the schemes they thought best supported community recovery. Voting was arranged through digital and face to face channels. In-person events were arranged for every neighbourhood but, due to Covid infection levels, were postponed or stood down in some neighbourhoods.</p> <p>Successful projects have so far been awarded in the East, Prestwich and Whitefield neighbourhoods. Budget spend and the impact of the initiatives will be managed by the local Community Hub Manager across quantitative and qualitative outcomes (eg volumes of delivery; numbers of people involved and outcomes achieved), along with opportunities for projects to showcase their work and how local people can get involved.</p> <p>Supplementary:</p> <p>As in every Ward in the Borough, the local voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise groups and organisations in Elton play a vital role in local life and are central to the delivery of Let's Do It. Within the last twelve months Brandlesholme Community Centre, Boomerang Centre, Incredible Edibles Brandlesholme and Woodbank Cricket Club have received Health Improvement Funds; the Sunnywood Project, Brandlesholme Warriors and All Saints Elton Operatic Society received Covid Community Resilience Funding; the Brandlesholme Community Foodbank has been supported via the Bury Community Support Network and Household Support Fund; the Friends of Burrs Park were successful with in receiving Town of Culture community funding, as were Bloco Ashe samba band, whilst Fusilier Court Association received monies to tackle social isolation and reduce loneliness. A number of these projects are also involved in the current Neighbourhood Pitch funding round with funding decisions due in February 2022.</p>
3	Conservative	What is the explanation as to why the Council's corporate performance process failed to identify the deterioration in Children's Services since October 2020? Cllr. Bernstein
	Cabinet Member: Cllr Tariq	From October 2020 social workers and managers remained primarily working from home and business continuity measures were in place which ensured statutory work continued but there is no doubt that aspects of continuous development and monitoring was more challenging in this environment when teams were not meeting together.

	Party / response	Question
		<p>In hindsight the decision to continue to implement a new practice model was ambitious considering the changes in leaderships and the instability of the workforce.</p> <p>Since new interim leadership arrangements were put in place we have developed a more robust approach to all areas of practice and quality assurance which include regular Childrens leadership meetings, regular meetings with the elected member, continued audit activity, and monthly performance management meetings. These steps will ensure continuous improvement.</p> <p>The Service Delivery Board established in September has transitioned into an Improvement board, independently chaired, and will be attended by the CEO, the DfE advisor, have broad partnership attendance, and will have cross party representation.</p>
4	Labour	<p>Following the Council's successful accreditation as a Real Living Wage employer, what more has the Council done to promote good employment standards for staff in Bury Council and our partners? Cllr Grimshaw</p> <p>Supplementary – With a cost-of-living crisis looming, it is even more important that we promote a real living wage in our borough. How much will our commitment on this at the Council benefit our lowest paid workers in the Council and what more can we do to promote this for other employers in the borough?</p>
	Cabinet Member: Cllr Rafiq	<p>Bury Council was accredited as a Real Living Wage employer in November 2021 and I am pleased to confirm that the quality of our employment offer was further recognized in December with confirmation of our Membership of the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter. The Charter recognizes employers who commit to an independently developed definition of good work considering approaches to: secure work, pay, recruitment, health and wellbeing, flexible work, engagement and voice and people management.</p> <p>Bury is the only Greater Manchester Local Authority to be recognized as both a Charter Member and Real Living Wage Employer and has been promoting the standards which the Council is working to across Greater Manchester networks over the winter.</p> <p>It is crucial that the Council stands out as an employer of choice. If we are to deliver on our ambition for the borough, we need to attract and retain the best talent to work for us. We must also lead by example in</p>

	Party / response	Question
		<p>demonstrating, through our actions as well as our words, the standards of good employment we want to see across Bury.</p> <p>The Council has also taken this opportunity to promote good employment standards within the Borough through the Team Bury network of all public and community sector partners; the direct engagement of commissioned providers, particularly within adult social care and the Bury Business Leadership Group.</p> <p>As a result I am pleased to also report that Six Town Housing was also recognized as a Member of the Good Employment Charter in December and is working towards Real Living Wage accreditation.</p> <p>Supplementary:</p> <p>As I reported when the Council adopted the Real Living Wage, our commitment here has seen a direct increase in pay to the real living wage rate for around a thousand employees across Council Services and schools, with pay rates for a further circa. three thousand staff in Bury rising in Commissioned services, mainly the adult care sector.</p> <p>This is a long-term commitment and, from April, subject to agreement by Council, our lowest point of pay will raise further, to the new Living Wage rate of £9.90 further supporting a significant number of employees as well as those working for our providers.</p> <p>I would ask all Members to share in my personal commitment to promote the Living Wage to employers across the Borough in support of our commitment to good work within the Let's Do It Strategy and the Greater Manchester aspiration of becoming the UK's first Living Wage City Region.</p>
5	Labour	<p>Last year, Council agreed to work on a review of safety for women and girls in the borough. Can we have an update on the work that has been done on this? Cllr Farooq</p> <p>Supplementary – How does the Council plan to support the work at a Greater Manchester level, through the recent launch of the Gender Based Violence strategy?</p>
	Cabinet Member: Cllr Morris	<p>A draft women's safety charter has been produced following regular meetings in coordination with Greater Manchester Police and Community Safety and Public Protection.</p>

	Party / response	Question
		<p>The draft Women's Safety Charter looks to promote Bury as a town where all women feel confident, welcome and safe in the night-time economy. The charter plans to reintroduce and include the 'Ask for Angela' scheme which is aimed at raising awareness, help and support for anyone experiencing harassment by any staff in a premises signed up to the scheme. The charter will also include promotion of the anti-spiking scheme which have been run over the Christmas period by Greater Manchester Police. The proposed Women's Safety Charter will require interested businesses to sign up and commit to the Charter on an annual basis and will seek to promote and provide a list of businesses who have made a commitment to the Women's Safety Charter on the Councils website.</p> <p>Support material has been produced and collated including posters, guidance and training material which will be made available on a dedicated page on the Councils Website.</p> <p>Engagement has taken place with Pub Watch groups. Greater Manchester Police have been approached to produce a training video which will be available to businesses to access via the Councils website to facilitate training annually or re-training of staff on demand by businesses.</p> <p>Confirmation on the appropriate governance for the Women's Safety Charter is being sought and further engagement with Pub Watch groups in Bury is scheduled for January and February 2022.</p> <p>A communication plan is being drawn up including plans for a future launch of the scheme following the appropriate governance and adoption of the Charter by the Council.</p> <p>In the longer-term the new 3-year Community Safety Plan identifies Domestic Abuse and women's safety in public places as specific priorities for the Community Safety Partnership which will keep this issue at the forefront.</p> <p>Supplementary –</p> <p>The specific recommendations of the GM Gender Based Violence strategy will be reflected in the Bury CSP Plan. The Council is an active partner in GM networks and will work closely with them on implementation</p>
6	Conservat	Can the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Skills detail how

Party / response	Question																																			
ive	<p>many Social Workers and at what level did the Council employ in years 2017/18, 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2021/22 and can the Cabinet Member share the details of the numbers of Social Workers the Council intends to recruit and what level of these social workers they will be? Cllr. Y Wright</p>																																			
<p>Cabinet Member:</p> <p>Cllr Tariq</p>	<p>We have various levels of social workers employed by Bury Council. Since 2017, at any one time, we have employed between 115 and 131 qualified social workers.</p> <p>We have agreement to initially recruit to an additional 6 Social Workers which we will recruit to our high demand areas.</p> <p>In Phase 2 we have a plan to scope out the requirement for any additional social workers to achieve caseloads of 15 per social worker, with team members having line manager responsibility for 6 social workers, achieving smaller teams will provide additional management support to SW's to improve retention, aide learning and development and thereby improve practice.</p> <p>We have a recruitment campaign underway with adverts out in December and January, this is supported by our comms team which will be utilising social media channels. This will then be rolled out every three months so we have a continual recruitment campaign. Our focus is on attracting experienced workers into the Council, but we know this is challenging, both in Bury but nationally. We are developing our career pathway for social workers so that our newly qualified workers can progress, and we retain workers as we develop our unique Bury offer.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="359 1429 1465 2027"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="359 1429 643 1621" rowspan="2">Social Work Role (Permanent Staff)</th> <th colspan="5" data-bbox="643 1429 1465 1496">Date</th> </tr> <tr> <th data-bbox="643 1496 807 1621">01/04/17</th> <th data-bbox="807 1496 971 1621">01/04/18</th> <th data-bbox="971 1496 1136 1621">01/04/19</th> <th data-bbox="1136 1496 1300 1621">01/04/20</th> <th data-bbox="1300 1496 1465 1621">01/04/21</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="359 1621 643 1733">Advanced Practitioner</td> <td data-bbox="643 1621 807 1733">4</td> <td data-bbox="807 1621 971 1733">5</td> <td data-bbox="971 1621 1136 1733">5</td> <td data-bbox="1136 1621 1300 1733">4</td> <td data-bbox="1300 1621 1465 1733">6</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="359 1733 643 1845">Assistant Team Manager</td> <td data-bbox="643 1733 807 1845">6</td> <td data-bbox="807 1733 971 1845">9</td> <td data-bbox="971 1733 1136 1845">7</td> <td data-bbox="1136 1733 1300 1845">10</td> <td data-bbox="1300 1733 1465 1845">10</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="359 1845 643 1957">EDT Advanced Practitioner</td> <td data-bbox="643 1845 807 1957">0</td> <td data-bbox="807 1845 971 1957">0</td> <td data-bbox="971 1845 1136 1957">3</td> <td data-bbox="1136 1845 1300 1957">10</td> <td data-bbox="1300 1845 1465 1957">9</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="359 1957 643 2027">IRO</td> <td data-bbox="643 1957 807 2027">6</td> <td data-bbox="807 1957 971 2027">7</td> <td data-bbox="971 1957 1136 2027">8</td> <td data-bbox="1136 1957 1300 2027">6</td> <td data-bbox="1300 1957 1465 2027">8</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Social Work Role (Permanent Staff)	Date					01/04/17	01/04/18	01/04/19	01/04/20	01/04/21	Advanced Practitioner	4	5	5	4	6	Assistant Team Manager	6	9	7	10	10	EDT Advanced Practitioner	0	0	3	10	9	IRO	6	7	8	6	8
Social Work Role (Permanent Staff)	Date																																			
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	Party / response	Question					
		Service Manager	0	1	1	3	4
		Social Worker	89	89	75	68	64
		Strategic Lead	4	4	4	2	3
		Team Manager	16	16	17	12	13
		Total Qualified Social Work Staff	125	131	120	115	117
		<p>Please note: The above data is provided based on a headcount of all staff in Social Work qualified roles (strategic lead and below) in the CYP Directorate who were in position on 1st April of the specified year (so, in effect, a snapshot position which is the only way to do this without distorting / double counting people).</p> <p>Data does not include agency workers.</p> <p>Data has needed quite a lot of manual identification to get this, in terms of classifying staff to standard tiers and identifying Social Work / Non-Social Work roles, so I do have the underlying data sets if further work is needed.</p>					
7	Lib Dem	After purchasing the Istanbul restaurant in Prestwich for over half a million pounds about 2 and a half years ago as part of the Prestwich regeneration plan, can the Leader inform us why the Council didn't renegotiate the lease on the property at the same time? Cllr S Wright					
	Cabinet Member: Cllr O'Brien	<p>I believe we made the right decision on this purchase, both strategically and financially. The Council purchased the restaurant when it was on the market, preventing any other interested parties from purchasing the restaurant and potentially stalling our regeneration plans. The Council has also received rental income since the purchase of the restaurant.</p> <p>The restaurant forms crucial frontage to Bury New Road and will be incorporated into the Prestwich Village project, delivered by Muse Developments.</p>					

	Party / response	Question
8	Labour	<p>How has the current Covid situation impacted children returning to school in Bury? Cllr Boles</p> <p>Supplementary – With so much disruption to their education taking place, it is vital that we prioritise support to those most impacted. In light of this then, can I ask if Bury took part in the DfE’s Holiday Activity and Food Programme over Christmas or provide any other support to eligible FSM children?</p>
	Cabinet Member: Cllr Tariq	<p>The Council has maintained a strong relationship with all its schools, academies, and colleges throughout the pandemic, providing support, advice, and guidance in respect of the impact of COVID-19, and also to support the recovery of learning.</p> <p>With that support, schools have effective measures in place that has enabled the impact of COVID-19 to be mitigated, although the impact on children and young people and their loss of learning remains significant.</p> <p>Schools have continued to plan for the emerging challenges that COVID-19 presents, and have contingency arrangements in place, particularly in provided access to remote learning when pupils are unable to attend.</p> <p>Pupils have returned to school successfully following the festive break, and whilst there continues to be some impact on the school workforce and school communities, this is being managed effectively. The Council is mindful that, as all schools have now returned (with some having a staggered return) that there is a potential for cases to begin to rise. Schools will be supported if this is the case.</p> <p>Supplementary –</p> <p>From the introduction of lockdown measures in March 2020, the Council has funded food vouchers for the families of over 6,000 children and young people during every school holiday period.</p> <p>The number of families receiving this support has continued to increase throughout the pandemic, with approximately 6,500 children and young people now eligible.</p> <p>Alongside the provision of food vouchers, the Council has facilitated the Healthy Activity and Food programme. This programme targeted at this same group of families aims to provide access to a range of activities during key holiday periods. The HAF programme provided access to</p>

	Party / response	Question
		<p>activities for one week during Easter 2021, four weeks during the summer, and a further week over the festive break.</p> <p>Through this combination of food vouchers and access to activities delivered through the HAF programme, the Council has ensured significant support for some its most vulnerable families.</p> <p>Bury Council took part in the DfE's Holiday Activity and Food Programme (HAF) over the winter holiday. In addition, the Council provided food vouchers to the parents of 6500 young people eligible for benefit related free school meals to ensure that the didn't go hungry over the Christmas period. The HAF programme will continue through 22-23 and we are already planning for Easter activities.</p>
9	Labour	In light of its importance to members of our community, what is the Council doing to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day this year? Cllr D Quinn
	Cabinet Member: Cllr Gold	<p>Cllr Gold: The Council has been working since August with Partners on the development of our annual Holocaust Memorial Event, which was planned for Holocaust Memorial Day on 27th January. This year's theme is 'One Day' and our planned event involved a series of stories, music, a story from a Holocaust survivor and participation from Bury schoolchildren both, as part of the event, and a lesson plan we developed to be delivered in primary and secondary schools.</p> <p>Unfortunately, the Pandemic has meant that we have had to cancel our in-person event, but in its absence we have filmed a version which will go out on the 27th, and we will be promoting this in due course. We have managed to keep in the key messages and stories and look forward to sharing it with you all.</p> <p>Relatedly, we are working with the Association of Jewish Refugees to hold a tree planting event that is taking place on the 23rd January in Whitefield. The event in question is to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Association of Jewish Refugees and 80 trees are being planted across the UK to mark each year of the organisation's existence.</p>
10	Conservative	The OFSTED report states that assessments are not focused enough on the impact enough of harmful experiences on children, which leads to over-optimistic decision making and unidentified risk. Can the Cabinet Member Children, Young People and Skills explain what they intend to do in order to reduce risk and ensure that assessments are focused and why they believe they were not focused to begin with? Cllr. Brown

	Party / response	Question
	<p>Cabinet Member:</p> <p>Cllr Tariq</p>	<p>Social workers were requested to work from home from March 2020 but have continued to see children regularly throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. At the time of the Ofsted inspection in October 21 which, in the main, reviews the quality of case work in the last 12 months, there were restrictions on social workers in place for most of this time which limited the ability of social work to spend time with families and included a reduction in live multi-agency discussions which support assessment work. Partners were also mainly working from home and schools had significant periods of closure and disruption. This context has contributed to assessments being much more task focused and narrow with an emphasis on self-reporting from parents which was identified in the Ofsted report.</p> <p>Additionally, the last 12 months has seen high levels of staff movement with several workers joining during covid lockdown which has impacted on usual induction processes. All of which has impacted on the quality of the assessment work.</p> <p>We have also seen increased demand in the system which has pushed up caseloads and which, as the Ofsted report recognised, hinders workers ability to deliver quality services including assessment work.</p> <p>We have already taken steps to address this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have sampled all cases to provide some immediate assurance in respect of children’s safety and acted where required • We are now looking at longer term changes need to drive up improvement in practice • We have commissioned two additional teams in July and November to reduce caseloads. We are still experiencing high demand which continues to impact on caseloads, but we are seeing a slow reduction • We have agreed additional monies to recruit to 6 additional social work posts • We have reduced team sizes so managers can have a stronger grip on practice and quality • We have refreshed the Quality Assurance Framework so that we build in quality assurance mechanisms at every stage of service provision • Learning and development of staff is a key area of focus within the workforce strategy, <i>building a confident, skilled, and experienced</i>

	Party / response	Question
		<p><i>workforce is key</i> We will deliver further training and learning sets around further developing the assessment skills of social workers, including professional curiosity, understanding the lived experience of children, parental capacity to change and analysis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The final plan version of the Improvement plan (due to be submitted to Ofsted at the end of March) will include a detailed training plan addressing all aspects of children and families social work.
1 1	Labour	Following the steep rise in cases and hospitalisations due to Covid, can we have an update on how this has impacted health and care services across Bury and what delays patients can expect to their care? Cllr McGill
	Cabinet Member: Cllr Simpson	<p>I am sure all members will appreciate this has been an enormously challenging time for the health and care system nationally and here in Bury over the last 3 weeks. Community incidence rate of Covid 19 had risen exponentially to well over 2000 per 100,000 of population. This has generated significant pressure in demand on all health and care services, compounded by enormous staffing pressures due to the numbers of staff ill or isolating.</p> <p>In adult social care, the rise in cases has caused workforce shortages across the Council and our care services. Within our social work teams this loss of workforce has caused the numbers waiting to see a social worker to rise to its highest level but is now dropping as workers return and currently stands at 250 (14/01/2022).</p> <p>Despite reduced staffing within our care services, we have continued to function, but the availability of new care packages and new care home placements has reduced as there have been insufficient staff to support his new work. This is beginning to return now that staff are returning from isolation.</p> <p>As of 07 January 2022, local data from the Infection Control Team shows a total of 64 social care settings with cases or outbreaks. Of these 47 are care homes that have had cases within the last 14 days and are therefore likely to be closed to new admissions (note that in some circumstances such homes may be able to receive new residents on a risk-assessed, case-by-case basis).</p> <p>In primary care we have seen staff absences of clinical and non-clinical staff of up to 20% and higher in some practices and this has created</p>

	Party / response	Question
		<p>major pressure.</p> <p>For Hospital services, the pressure on Hospitals across Greater Manchester has been close to a critical incident collectively, although demand appears to show some signs of easing and staffing levels are recovering. At Fairfield General there have been some very difficult days reflecting in very high bed occupancy, and ambulance turnaround times at A&E. In the last week this position has eased.</p> <p>Members will however recall the note across GM suspending most elective care - non-urgent surgery and appointments, due to the rising impact of COVID-19. We recognise this is causing distress to very many Bury residents. It will be noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urgent treatments and cancer operations will continue to be prioritised. • Hospitals across the ICS will continue to work together to care for patients so that everyone who needs urgent care and treatment received it. • The Christie will continue to provide cancer care in a COVID-19 secure way. • Rochdale Infirmary continues to provide cancer and other urgent surgery as a COVID-19 secure site for Greater Manchester. • All diagnostic tests and most outpatient clinics continue to operate, with an increased focus on offering and utilising virtual wards and online appointments where possible. • The suspension of elective care is being reviewed on a regular basis by the GM wide Hospital leadership group and will be recommenced as soon as possible. • Anyone waiting for treatment is being directed for advice and support to the Greater Manchester While You Wait website - whileyouwait.org.uk. • From the GM platform Bury patients can access the local While You Wait resources. • Messages are going out to the public reiterating that if they have health concerns to continue to come forward for help and treatment in the usual way, using their local emergency department only for serious illnesses or injuries and NHS 111 for urgent medical problem where patients aren't sure what to do. <p>I am sure all members will wish to join me in paying tribute to health and care staff in the borough who have worked in very challenging circumstances over the Christmas period.</p>

	Party / response	Question
1 2	Labour	<p>Can the Cabinet Member for the Environment bring the council up to speed on tree planting efforts across the Borough? Cllr Pilkington</p> <p>Supplementary – One idea proposed to celebrate the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee is the Queen’s Green Canopy, what is Bury council doing to help play our part in this?</p>
	<p>Cabinet Member:</p> <p>Cllr Quinn</p>	<p>The council has obtained matched funding from Northern Forest, Trees for Climate and Urban Tree Challenge.</p> <p>By March 2022 this funding will have been used to plant 25,442 whips, 395 standard trees, created over 12.5 hectares of new woodland and established 11 community orchards.</p> <p>Answer to Supplementary: As part of the Queen’s Green Canopy we are planting oak trees in each of our 12 green flag parks and helping a number of community groups across the borough with planting schemes to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee.</p>
1 3	Conservative	<p>Can the Cabinet Member for Culture and The Economy outline what is the expected impact on culture and the economy in Bury following the anticipated clean air charge due to be implementation later this year by the Mayor of Greater Manchester? Cllr. Rydeheard</p>
	<p>Cabinet Member:</p> <p>Cllr Morris</p>	<p>Greater Manchester is experiencing dangerous and illegal air quality due to nitrogen dioxide exhaust emissions and other vehicle pollution, leading to serious health problems and 1,200 premature deaths every year. Modelling has shown that there are 152 locations across the 10 Greater Manchester local authority areas where nitrogen dioxide emissions will remain beyond legal levels without action.</p> <p>In March 2020, the government issued a legal direction requiring the ten GM local authorities to address the problem by introducing a Category C charging clean air zone - which would introduce a daily charge for principally commercial vehicles including HGVs, buses, coaches, minibuses, vans, taxis and private hire vehicles that do not meet prescribed national standards for nitrogen dioxide emissions. The current Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan was prepared with government to meet the terms of this direction to achieve legal nitrogen dioxide Limit Values in the shortest possible time and by 2024 at the latest.</p> <p>The Clean Air Zone is designed to encourage the most polluting vehicles to upgrade so that no one pays a charge, unlike a Congestion Zone,</p>

	Party / response	Question
		<p>where all or most vehicles are charged.</p> <p>The Greater Manchester Authorities, including Bury, recognise that the introduction of a Clean Air Zone will be a major challenge for many individuals and businesses and must be accompanied by a fair package of financial support. Accordingly we have been able to secure £120 million of Government funding across Greater Manchester to help our local businesses to upgrade their vehicles. This was less than then c.£150m package that was requested and did not include the hardship funding that GM councils and the Mayor had asked the government for.</p> <p>A full appraisal of the economic impact of the Clean Air Plan has been undertaken and this included consultation with key commercial stakeholders to gain a direct understanding of relevant issues. This appraisal showed that there would be a 'moderate to high' adverse affordability impact on businesses with the most substantial impact on micro businesses and sole traders. The proposed funding packages for retrofit or replacement vehicles was expected to mitigate this impact from 'moderate to high' to 'slight' adverse.</p> <p>With this existing adverse impact in mind alongside further concerns re the economic impact of the pandemic Councillor Western, GMCA Green City Region Lead formally contacted the Government in Summer 2021 to request money for a hardship fund that could be used to help those businesses with specific problems meeting the cost of vehicle upgrades. The Minister responded to say that they were not convinced that this was the best way to mitigate the impact of uncertainty due to the pandemic. However, they agreed to work with GM to understand the situation in the future in relation to funding if the impact is found to be more severe than they anticipated.</p> <p>In recent months evidence has emerged to suggest there are now additional significant challenges related to the vehicle supply chain and cost inflation. Based on this evidence, there is a fundamental concern that these global and national factors may impact on the ability of local businesses and individuals to upgrade their vehicles and whether the current financial support package agreed with government is sufficient.</p> <p>A thorough, detailed review is needed to understand whether this situation could create significant financial hardship for commercial vehicle users – already facing fuel and cost of living increases on top of the impact of the pandemic. What this means for Greater Manchester local authorities, and its impact on our ability to comply on time with a legal direction from government to tackle illegal levels of air pollution, is also to be determined.</p> <p>This review would look to ensure that the right funding arrangements can be put in place quickly to better reflect the additional costs and vehicle</p>

	Party / response	Question
		<p>availability problems that businesses are facing.</p> <p>On 20 January the Greater Manchester Air Quality Administration Committee will therefore be recommended to seek approval from the Secretary of State to pause opening of phase two Clean Air funding support at the end of January 2022 for vans, taxis, and private hire vehicles. This pause will enable an urgent and fundamental joint policy review with government to identify how a revised policy can be agreed to deal with the supply issues and local businesses' ability to comply with the Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan.</p> <p>GM is still under a legal direction from government to achieve legal limits of nitrogen dioxide in the shortest possible time and by 2024 at the latest. Therefore, the Committee will also be asked to confirm that the first phase of the Clean Air Zone due to launch in May 2022 – applying to buses, coaches, HGVs and taxi and private hire vehicles which are not registered in Greater Manchester – should go ahead. This will include the ongoing provision of funding support for HGVs and buses to upgrade. Greater Manchester coach operators who need more time to upgrade are being urged to apply for an exemption to 1 June 2023.</p> <p>It is anticipated that with the co-operation of Government, the proposed actions described above will allow us to meet air quality targets to safeguard the health of our communities whilst minimising negative impacts on our local economy and our local culture</p>
1 4	Lib Dem	<p>Following the recent BBC investigation into accommodation for asylum seekers that has uncovered serious concerns about housing conditions, can the Council give an update about the conditions of emergency housing in Bury supporting asylum seekers and refugees? Cllr Tegolo</p>
	Cabinet Member: Cllr Cummins	<p>All accommodation procured by the Council for the recent Afghan crisis and the homeless dispersed temporary accommodation that assists with the wider asylum seekers and refugees in Bury are checked and inspected weekly to ensure the properties and furnishings remain to the required standards. The inspections include all H&S checks such as smoke alarms and fire doors etc. All property inspections are recorded, and any repairs are reported and carried out as soon as is necessary. Serco and the Home Office also have circa 150 properties within Bury to accommodate asylum seekers and refugees while the Home office determine the status of these cases. The Home office and Serco are responsible for ensuring these properties are to the required standard.</p>
1 5	Conservative	<p>At the November Council meeting, the Labour Group opposed the Conservatives motion for free parking on Council owned car parks in the run up to Christmas. The Labour group proposed free bus travel</p>

	Party / response	Question
		throughout Bury instead. Could an update be provided as to why the Council failed to implement their plan after rejecting the original motion that would have benefitted residents and businesses at this important time. Cllr Vernon
	Cabinet Member: Cllr O'Brien	<p>It should be noted that we sought to explore the possibility of free or discounted bus travel for the first three weekends in December. The Council could not lawfully enter into contracts with bus companies, so we worked TfGM and the Combined Authority to explore the practicalities of this, however the additional legal and practical challenges meant that there was not enough time prior to Christmas to bring in such a scheme.</p> <p>Despite not being able to offer free or discounted bus travel prior to Christmas, this is still something we are exploring and may offer at a convenient time in the future.</p> <p>This again highlights the importance of having a publicly controlled bus network, which the Conservative Group voted against.</p> <p>Currently, free parking is available everywhere except Bury Town Centre, so the free parking scheme suggested by the Conservative group would only benefit one of our towns (Bury).</p> <p>I would like to remind the Cllr Vernon that we still supported businesses in a multitude of ways across the Christmas period:</p> <p>Awaiting list</p>
16	Conservative	Throughout the borough a considerable number of roads have been resurfaced. However, the road markings have not been reinstated. As a result, several accidents have taken place in Church Ward and across the Borough Please can the Cabinet Member responsible look into this issue and provide an update on progress towards completion? Cllr Harris
	Cabinet Member: Cllr Quinn	<p>Many of the roads in Church ward have been surface dressed this year using our Highway Investment Strategy funding. This work has been welcomed by many local residents and shows our commitment to improving our local roads.</p> <p>The contractor has been delayed from reinstating all of the road markings on these streets as this work cannot be done when the road surface is damp, which it has been almost continuously since completion of the surface dressing work.</p>

	Party / response	Question
		<p>Other types of carriageway surfacing can be forced dry to allow markings to be installed in damp conditions. However, the drying process would damage the newly applied surface dressing and so this is not an option. Our contractor knows that this work is a priority and will reinstate the markings when we have a dry spell.</p>
1 7	<p>Conservative</p>	<p>The Council is expected to have an OFTSED Action Planning in June 2022, can the Cabinet Member for Cabinet Member Children, Young People and Skills outline what the Council will do to prepare for this and how key stakeholders will be informed of outcomes i.e Councillors, MPs and Members of the public. Cllr. McBriar</p>
	<p>Cabinet Member: Cllr Tariq</p>	<p>On 12/01/22 senior leaders met with the DfE to assure them we are taking appropriate steps to progress the improvement Journey. DfE officials were assured that we are taking appropriate steps, and that we have established a robust system of improvement with the establishment of an independently chaired Improvement Board and wider council and partnership support.</p> <p>In relation to Ofsted, the DCS has contacted the lead HMI, seeking confirmation of the date for the action planning meeting. The feedback from this meeting will be shared at the Improvement Board.</p> <p>Other actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The independent chair will hold the department to account • the CEO has scheduled regular monthly meetings with Councillors. Childrens Scrutiny will challenge the progress of the improvement journey. • The focus of Scrutiny will be aligned to the workstreams of the Improvement Plan, Leadership and Management, and the quality and impact of social work practice upon outcomes for children and building a skilled, confident, and experienced workforce. <p>The 5 or 6 monitoring visits undertaken by Ofsted during the 3year cycle of improvement will (except for the first report) be published by Ofsted and therefore be in the public domain and will be made available to Councillors.</p> <p>The formal 6 month reviews undertaken by the DfE will be considered by the Secretary of State and will be made available to Councillors.</p>

	Party / response	Question																																																																													
18	Conservative	Can the Cabinet Member for Communities outline how many CCTV cameras there are provided and managed by the Council in the borough broken down per Ward? Cllr. Caserta																																																																													
	Cabinet Member: Cllr Gold	<p>The Council manages 131 CCTV across the Borough. These are made up of 95 permanent cameras, 11 rapid deployment cameras which can be relocated based on need and 25 cameras in fly tipping hotspots.</p> <p>A full break down by ward can be provided as requested.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th></th> <th colspan="3">PUBLIC AREA</th> <th>TOTAL</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th></th> <th>PERMANENT</th> <th>RAPID DEPLOY</th> <th>FLY TIPPING</th> <th></th> </tr> <tr> <th>AREA</th> <th>WARD</th> <th></th> <th></th> <th></th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td rowspan="3">Bury East</td> <td>Moorside</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>9</td> <td>16</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Redvales</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>East</td> <td>40</td> <td></td> <td>8</td> <td>48</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Bury West</td> <td>Elton Ward</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Church Ward</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="3">Ramsbottom, Tottington and North Manor</td> <td>Ramsbottom</td> <td></td> <td>4</td> <td></td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>North Manor</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tottington</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="3">Radcliffe</td> <td>Radcliffe North</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Radcliffe West</td> <td>1</td> <td></td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Radcliffe East</td> <td>29</td> <td>3</td> <td>6</td> <td>38</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			PUBLIC AREA			TOTAL			PERMANENT	RAPID DEPLOY	FLY TIPPING		AREA	WARD					Bury East	Moorside	3	4	9	16	Redvales					East	40		8	48	Bury West	Elton Ward					Church Ward					Ramsbottom, Tottington and North Manor	Ramsbottom		4		4	North Manor					Tottington					Radcliffe	Radcliffe North					Radcliffe West	1		2	3	Radcliffe East	29	3	6	38
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		Whitefield and Unsworth	Pilkington Park				
			Besses				
			Unsworth				
		Prestwich	St Mary's	7			7
			Sedgley	8			8
			Holyrood	7			7
		TOTAL		95	11	25	131
19	Lib Dem	How is the rollout of electric charging points going in the Borough and what is the Council doing to ensure good quality and access of these charging points? Cllr Tegolo					
	Cabinet Member: Cllr Quinn	<p>The Council has recently completed the procurement for a supplier to install Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (EVCI) at Bradley Fold and Bury Cemetery to allow the council to charge the electric vehicles that will be procured as part of the ongoing actions to green our fleet. These new chargepoints will be installed by the summer 2022.</p> <p>During 2021 we worked with TfGM to use Government Clean Air Early Measures funding to install 2 rapid chargers at The Millgate and The Rock Shopping Centre car parks. These are both now in full operation.</p> <p>Work is progressing with TFGM to install 3 rapid charging hubs for Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles. The proposed are sites currently undergoing feasibility studies with a view to installation later in 2022.</p> <p>We are also commencing a procurement process to appoint a contractor to be able to bid for Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) for On-Street Residential Charging Scheme (ORCS) funding. This funding pays towards the installation of public electric vehicle chargepoints aimed at residents without access to off-street parking.</p> <p>We have developed a long list of possible locations for public chargepoints throughout our borough and this is currently going through our approval process.</p> <p>Once a list of sites has been agreed this will put the Council in a better</p>					

	Party / response	Question
		position to apply for funding or to explore alternative options to install charging infrastructure.
20	Lib Dem	Can the Leader please provide an update on the plans for Phillips Park Hall as part of the Council's accelerated land and property disposals and what discussions have been undertaken recently with the existing tenants? Cllr Powell
	Cabinet Member: Cllr Quinn	The community asset transfer process is ongoing, the next steps following advertising will be to engage with interested parties and receive formal applications. It is our understanding that existing tenants have been consulted and it is expected that they will be part of an overall submission to the Council.
21	Lib Dem	What progress has been made on plans to implement 'no idling' zones outside schools in Bury, as agreed upon at a Council meeting three years ago? Cllr Wright
	Cabinet Member: Cllr Quinn	We are committed to address the issue of idling vehicles specifically where it can impact on vulnerable members of our community. In the UK, it is illegal under the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 to leave a vehicle's engine running unnecessarily while that vehicle is stationary on a public road. Doing this can incur a £20 fixed penalty fine under the Road Traffic (Vehicle Emissions) Regulations 2002. This is only imposed if the driver fails to turn off their engine when asked to do so. Enforcement of this legislation sits with local authorities and the legal powers are in place for parking enforcement officers to issue the necessary fixed penalty notices. As the enforcing officer has to give the driver the opportunity to switch off the engine first and the penalty for idling is relatively small (£20), Greater Manchester Local Authorities do not consider the Regulation to be an effective deterrent. The Government has previously announced proposals to consult on toughening up rules on vehicle idling and increasing fines for drivers who leave their engine running while parked. The GM Authorities have written to the Transport Secretary asking for the launch of the public consultation

	Party / response	Question
		<p>on this issue to be brought forward.</p> <p>Given limited council resources along with the limited enforcement deterrent, Bury and the other GM Authorities are planning to focus more on awareness raising campaigns in the first instance. The aim will be to inform our populations of the impacts of idling vehicles on air quality and therefore health.</p> <p>With this in mind, in 2021 the council purchased 3 air quality sensors which are being located outside schools to show the impact of the school run on local air quality emissions. These sensors will be moved around our schools on a rota basis and council officers will work with the schools and parents to help raise awareness of the impacts of poor air quality on health and the benefits of walking and cycling as a means of getting to and from school.</p> <p>We are also working with TFGM to develop "School Streets" in our borough and have recently been notified that 3 "School Street" schemes have been approved for Guardian Angel RC Primary, Chesham Primary and Hazel Wood High School. These schemes will allow us to restrict access to motorised traffic outside schools at drop off and pick up times. We will gain experience and learning from these first schemes which should allow us to roll out similar schemes at a wider range of our schools.</p>
2 2	Lib Dem	Can the Leader confirm whether there are any plans to upgrade the CCTV in Prestwich village? Cllr Powell
	Cabinet Member: Cllr Gold	I can confirm the cameras in Prestwich will be upgraded during the forthcoming financial year as part of the overall upgrade of Prestwich, Radcliffe and Ramsbottom CCTV. The tender for this has just been awarded and the budget allocated to cover the work.

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DECISION OF:	The Council
DATE:	19th January 2022
SUBJECT:	Update on Greater Manchester Combined Authority Activity
REPORT FROM:	Leader of the Council
TYPE OF DECISION:	Non key decision
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/STATUS	This paper is within the public domain.
SUMMARY:	This report provides an update on the activity of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority.
OPTIONS & RECOMMENDED OPTION	That Council notes the report and agrees that further updates on the Combined Authority are provided to future Council meetings.
IMPLICATIONS:	
Corporate Aims/Policy Framework:	Do the proposals accord with the Policy Framework? Yes
Equality/Diversity implications:	Equality Impact considerations included on the individual Combined Authority reports.
Wards Affected:	All Wards.
Scrutiny Interest:	Overview and Scrutiny

1 Background

- 1.1 This report provides an update on work of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) following an update to Council in November 2021.
- 1.2 Since the last update there have been two meetings of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority.

2 Homeless Families Review – Progress Update

- 2.1 At the [26th November 2021 meeting of GMCA](#), a report was brought to update members on the progress of the Homeless Families Review. The GM Homeless Families Task and Finish Group was established as a subgroup of the GM Homelessness Programme Board to progress and improve the understanding of the issues facing Homeless Families, informed by the work of Shared Health Foundation reports 'Homeless Families – A Gold Standard' and 'A Call to Action'. The group was made up of a range of sectors and organisations with a role and interest in supporting families experiencing homelessness.
- 2.2 The Task and Finish Group initially responded to the issues raised in the Gold Standard report by exploring them individually in detail and mapping the roles of the organisations and sectors involved in responding to these. Where gaps were identified, connections to wider work programmes were sought such as early years, models of neighbourhood working, and Troubled Families. There were a number of areas identified where it was felt progress could be made by reviewing existing working practices and working more collaboratively across the existing system. These were:
- GM Bed & Breakfast Framework.
 - Homeless Families and Inclusion Health.
 - VCSE and Faith Sector support.
 - Early Help and Children's Services.
- 2.3 Having put in place activity to support delivery aligned to the above themes, the Task and Finish Group stood down at the end of July 2021, with a final report to the GM Homelessness Programme Board. This set out the work to date and made recommendations on future activity and oversight. The paper brought to this meeting of the GMCA drew together the work undertaken by the group against each of the themes, including updates post July 2021 where relevant. The progress was noted and members stated GMCA would continue its support.

3 The Mayor's Cycling and Walking Challenge Fund (MCF) and Side Road Zebra Study

- 3.1 The release of up to £532,000 of MCF funding for the Stockport Hazel Grove Phase 1 scheme was approved.
- 3.2 In March 2019, and following agreement with GM Highways Group, GMCA approved a research commission tasked with gathering evidence to assess the risks and benefits of novel side road junction zebra crossings and help build a case to change national traffic sign regulations. The ability to introduce such crossings at side-roads is recognised as key to delivery of the active travel components of the Bee Network. As such £0.34 million was approved by the GMCA to undertake this work, with Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) appointed to the role.

- 3.3 In summary, the research concluded that the evidence gathered sufficiently demonstrated that side road zebra crossings were universally understood by the public and significantly improved the proportion of drivers giving way to pedestrians (30% uplift) when compared to no crossing provision, and without any increase in the level of harmful interaction. The study followed a series of sequential stages, of which the final stage was on-street trials within Tameside.
- 3.4 The 2-year study concludes by recommending 'that regulatory approval be sought to implement crossings at a larger number of sites for longer term monitoring'. These findings have been shared with key stakeholders, including GM Highway Authority partners, Living Streets and the Department for Transport.
- 3.5 It is envisaged that if regulatory approval is provided, side road zebra crossings will provide local highway authorities an additional crossing type that is low-cost, effective and can be used regularly at side roads in support of enhanced pedestrian provision. Side road zebra crossings would also represent a practical method for meeting the 'double buggy' test for walking contained as set out in the interim GM Active Travel Design Guide.
- 3.6 These measures could be introduced, at little or no marginal cost, to on-going cycling and walking schemes or new, additional targeted areas could be enabled to further establish the priority GMCA wish to give to vulnerable pedestrians, especially in local neighbourhoods, on routes to schools and complementing, for example; school streets or active neighbourhoods, subject to the identification of suitable funding.
- 3.7 At the November 2021 meeting of GMCA, members approved the release of MCF funding for the Stockport Hazel Grove Phase 1 scheme and requested Transport for greater Manchester (TfGM) to seek regulatory approval from the Department for Transport to allow further long-term side road zebra trials as recommended.

4 GMP Site, Chester Road, Trafford

- 4.1 Consideration was given to entering into a Joint Venture (JV) with Trafford Council and a Developer Partner and to agree to the disposal of the Chester Road site.
- 4.2 The disposal of the GMP Chester Road Site was approved. GMCA also:
- Approved GMCA entering in a Joint Venture with Trafford Council and a Developer Partner on terms to be agreed.
 - Approved the £642,500 of funding needed to appoint a development partner and obtain detailed planning consent for the scheme.
 - Delegated authority to the GMCA Chief Executive and Treasurer to commence the procurement process and appoint a development partner.
 - Delegated authority to GMCA Chief Executive and Treasurer to agree appropriate legal agreements with Trafford Council.

- Delegated authority to the GMCA Treasurer acting in conjunction with the GMCA Monitoring Officer to prepare and effect the necessary legal agreements.

5 GM Housing Investment Loans Fund – Investment Approval Recommendations

- 5.1 At the November 2021 meeting of the GMCA, members approved a GM Housing Investment Loan of £1.464m to Corbar Ltd for the development of 5 new build houses in Great Moor, Stockport.

6 Greater Manchester Strategy Refresh

- 6.1 At the [17th December 2021 meeting of GMCA](#), a report was considered on the Greater Manchester Strategy Refresh, along with the proposed performance framework approach, targets and metrics to be used, and an initial delivery plan with process for approval for the further development of the delivery plan and implementation process.
- 6.2 The refresh of the Greater Manchester Strategy (GMS) has been developed following several months of engagement from across sectors, partners and communities. The draft strategy builds from the issues and actions in the Living with Covid Resilience Plan, and forms the systemwide response to the findings and recommendations of the Independent Inequalities Commission and the Marmot Build Back Fairer report.
- 6.3 The new strategy places the interconnected challenges of climate change and tackling inequalities at its heart, providing the lenses through which Greater Manchester activity should be framed and challenging where policy or delivery is contrary to climate and equalities ambitions. The strategy positions Greater Manchester as a greener, fairer and more prosperous city-region - delivered through the unique and distinctive neighbourhoods, towns and cities, coming together in a vibrant successful Greater Manchester. The strategy sets out shared outcomes and commitments to be attained over the period of the strategy, and which are underpinned by collective ways of working.
- 6.4 The draft strategy provides a ten-year vision and direction of travel for Greater Manchester, leading the recovery and renewal as the city-region comes out of the pandemic and learns to live with the ongoing implications from it. The strategy is accompanied by a three-year delivery plan, which initially captures those specific programmes of activity being delivered currently which support the shared outcomes and commitments in the strategy, with a proposition for the further development of a more comprehensive delivery planning process as set out below.
- 6.5 Members approved the final strategy, approved the performance framework, noted the delivery plan and approved the establishment of a multiagency Delivery Support Group.

7 Integrated Rail Plan for the North and the Midlands

- 7.1 On Thursday 18 November the Government published the Integrated Rail Plan for the North and Midlands (IRP), setting out a blueprint for the development of the strategic rail network in the North and the Midlands over the next 30 years.
- 7.2 A report was considered at the December meeting of the GMCA to set out the IRP's headlines for Greater Manchester. The IRP confirms the delivery of HS2 Phase 2b, from Crewe to Manchester (the 'Western Leg'), with new high speed rail stations at Piccadilly and – subject to "local" or "third party" funding - at the Airport. The High Speed Rail (Crewe to Manchester) Bill was announced in the Queen's Speech in May 2021, and is now expected to be deposited in early 2022. GM Partners continue to develop the Growth Strategies at Piccadilly, Manchester Airport, Wigan and Stockport to maximise benefits of HS2 in Greater Manchester.
- 7.3 Regarding the approach to the new high speed station at Piccadilly, the IRP explains that the Government continues to consider that an enlarged (6-platform) surface station can meet [the requirements for services provided by HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail] at substantially lower cost and construction impact than underground alternatives.
- 7.4 Greater Manchester continues to regard an underground station as the right solution on the basis of capacity for future high speed services, future economic growth, customer experience, resilience and reliability, and fit with local strategic regeneration and other policy priorities. While capital costs would be higher, GM's position is that these would be mitigated by a greater return on investment over the whole life of the infrastructure, including through local economic benefits accrued by way of greater opportunities to leverage regeneration and inward investment with an underground option.
- 7.5 In addition, the IRP contains significant new uncertainty over timescales and indicates that the Western Leg to Manchester may not be delivered until the early-to-mid 2040s, significantly behind the previously-expected timeframe: the HS2 Phase 2 Business Case set a 2033 completion date; the National Infrastructure Commission's 'Rail Needs Assessment' described a completion date of 2038. Further information is being requested from the Department for Transport regarding these timescales.
- 7.6 The IRP includes the Golborne Link, the infrastructure which would enable HS2 services to carry on to Wigan via the West Coast Mainline. However, the IRP notes that the Union Connectivity Review will consider whether any alternative approaches to the link to the West Coast Main Line could achieve faster and higher capacity connections for passengers from HS2 to Scotland.
- 7.7 The Union Connectivity Review was published on Friday 26th November and recommends that further work is carried out to explore an alternative connection to the WCML, for example at some point south of Preston, saving 2-3 minutes more than the Golborne link. Such a proposal could bypass Wigan.

- 7.8 The IRP also provides for a new line between Warrington and Manchester, which would connect with the HS2 line via the Airport and into Manchester and provide connectivity through 'Northern Powerhouse Rail' between Liverpool and Yorkshire. According to the IRP this new line could be delivered by the early-to-mid 2040s.
- 7.9 Between Manchester and Leeds a new line will be delivered connecting the high speed station at Piccadilly to the existing Transpennine Route near to Marsden. According to the IRP this new line could be delivered in the early-to mid-2040s. An upgrade of that Transpennine Route was already in planning pre-IRP (the 'Transpennine Route Upgrade') and the IRP further-enhances the scope of the TRU. However, Transport for the North's preferred network for Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR), with a new high speed line between Manchester and Leeds via a new city centre station in Bradford, is omitted.
- 7.10 Therefore, while the IRP sets out a long-term prospectus for investment into Greater Manchester's railway, the pre-IRP plan for HS2 and NPR envisaged a new, segregated, high speed rail network across the North and the Midlands in which connectivity between Manchester, Leeds, Liverpool, Bradford, Sheffield and beyond would be dramatically improved; a level of connectivity which would generate significant additional economic and other benefits across the whole network, including for Greater Manchester. The downgrading of this plan in the IRP therefore represents a missed opportunity for the whole of the North. This is exacerbated in the Union Connectivity Review, which highlights 6 'Fast growth cities' – Swindon, Oxford, Milton Keynes, Cambridge, Peterborough and Norwich – all of them in the south east of the Union.
- 7.11 Finally, IRP also signals a change in the role of Transport for the North (TfN) in the future development of NPR, with TfN being reclassified as a "cosponsor" for the programme. TfN has previously had co-client status; however, the Secretary of State for Transport will be the sole client going forwards, supported by a central delivery mechanism comprising Network Rail, HS2 Ltd and other parties as determined.
- 7.12 At the December 2021 meeting of GMCA, members:
- Noted the early TfGM analysis of the Integrated Rail Plan and also noted that it fell substantially short of expectations in terms of connectivity through HS2 on both the east and western side of the country and linked by a high speed east & west (HS3/Northern Powerhouse Rail) service.
 - Noted that Manchester City Council would bring forward further evidence of the detrimental economic and wider regenerational impact as a consequence of the proposed overground station development proposals for Manchester Piccadilly.

- Noted that there were ongoing strategic discussion underway with Trafford Council regarding the wider impact of the proposals, noting the scope for similar discussions across GM regarding the wider impact and opportunities including active travel solutions that may potentially arrive from HS2 that the opportunities be raised with Government continuously.
- Noted that the GM Mayor would relay these concerns through the Transport for the North Board.
- Noted that collectively the Northern Leaders, were considering options, including proposals for land value capture along the original proposed new line from Liverpool through Warrington to Manchester Airport and Bradford/Leeds, as an alternative proposal for submission to Government.
- Noted work was underway to respond to the HS2 Bill, including petitioning specifically against the Bill if it included the surface level Piccadilly Rail Station.

8 GMCA Response to the Public Consultation on December 2022 Timetable Option to Improve Rail Performance in the North of England

- 8.1 The Manchester Recovery Taskforce (MRTF) was set up in January 2020 to develop and deliver solutions that improve the reliability of rail services for passengers. The MRTF was attended by a range of organisations, including the Department for Transport, Transport for the North (TfN), Network Rail, train operators and Transport for Greater Manchester amongst others. The objective for the MRTF was to recast the rail timetable to address some of the structural issues around the pre-Covid timetable and provide reliable performance to passengers while different infrastructure solutions, with longer lead times, were planned, and delivered.
- 8.2 Earlier this year, the Department for Transport, TfN and Network Rail sought views of the public and stakeholders on rail timetabling work that had been undertaken during 2020 by the MRTF; this consultation ran from 14 January to 10 March.
- 8.3 The views expressed in the consultation feedback, including and in particular by GMCA and GM Local Authorities, were considered by the MRTF and led to a revised recommended timetable structure being developed for implementation in December 2022. The revised option, Option B+, was endorsed by the Rail North Committee in exchange for a clear plan on future infrastructure delivery and closer partnership working with city regions and TfN.

- 8.4 Since that activity, Northern and TransPennine Express have produced indicative timetables based on Option B+, which were published on 15 November. These timetables, which will be introduced in December 2022, are now subject to consultation. The formal consultation on these timetables will end on 31 December 2021.
- 8.5 Overall, GM supported the aims of MRTF work to improve train performance, maintain service levels and capacity for as many passengers as possible, and create a timetable based on sound principles from which it will be possible to build improvements as infrastructure investment becomes available. However, based on the options presented, GM did not state a preferred option as all the options presented did not give a service pattern that meets GM's needs adequately. In all options, there were unacceptable compromises either to capacity, frequency, or connectivity, with a clear imbalance of impact on some of the Local Authorities.
- 8.6 In addition to highlighting impacts of Option B+ on GM, it was intended to make the following key points in the response:
- The lessons of the failure of the May 2018 timetable must be learnt, with much closer working permitted between TfGM and the Train Operators, Network Rail and Rail North Partnership. As part of the Timetable Consultation TfGM will continue to support Local Authorities with individual responses. TfGM has undertaken a detailed assessment of the impacts of the proposed timetables district-by-district and has issued this to Local Authority Lead Officers to help shape their individual responses. TfGM officers will continue to help support their submissions.
 - That a first step to improve rail performance and rebuild passenger trust should be 'making best use of what is available now' providing longer, higher capacity vehicles with simpler service patterns to improve reliability and punctuality.
 - That any changes to the timetable must be part of a wider Covid-19 recovery plan for the railway which helps encourage people back to the railway post-pandemic to support Greater Manchester's social, economic and environmental objectives.
 - Further to the above, that the Sunday service provision needs to be substantially enhanced to reflect that the leisure market has recovered most strongly as GM emerges from Covid-19, and move closer to the service levels envisaged in the original 2016 franchise plans for Northern.
 - That the long-term solution to improving the reliability and resilience of rail services across the north is to deliver infrastructure enhancements in central Manchester at the earliest opportunity.

8.7 At the December 2021 meeting of GMCA, members:

- Noted that the proposals for rail timetable improvements for December 2022 included a reduction in the current service levels in the north of England, given limitations of the current infrastructure.
- Agreed that the GMCA formally object to the new timetable proposals, unless a timetable for the required infrastructure improvements be provided.
- Agreed that the declassification of train services on the Pennine route, to enable increased capacity on those services be pursued.
- Noted that the analysis undertaken by TfGM has suggested that the network could support 2 trains per hour, throughout the day, on the on the Greenfield and Mosley line from May 2022 and that the proposal would be included in the formal response to the timetable proposals.
- Delegated authority to the Chief Executive Officer, GMCA & TfGM, in consultation with the Mayor of Greater Manchester, to approve and submit a response to the consultation on behalf of GMCA.

9 Youth Homelessness Prevention Pathfinder

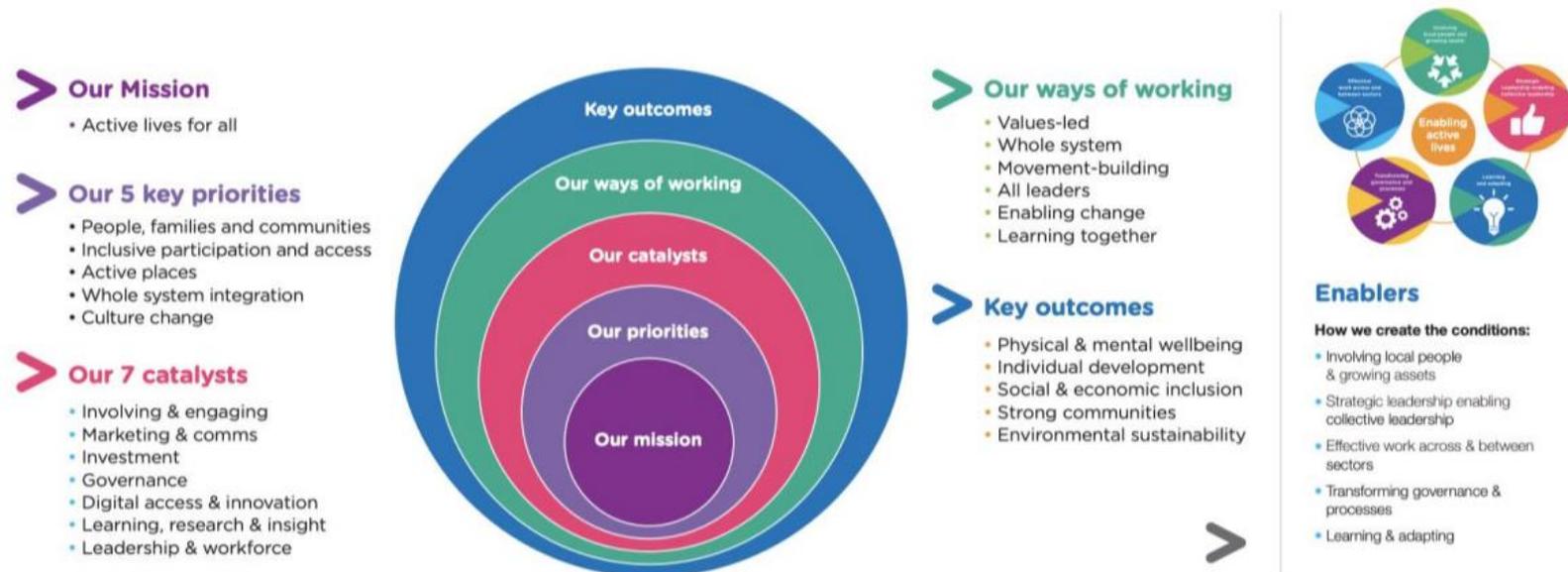
- 9.1 A GM Youth Homelessness Prevention programme was envisaged in late 2019 following the Dame Louise Casey review of A Bed Every Night which identified a high proportion of young people (54%) in transient and persistent forms of homelessness and associated risks.
- 9.2 Prior to the Covid-19 crisis work had commenced on a proposition for a GM Homelessness Prevention programme, which would take the form of an outcomes-based contract (Social Impact Bond) using funding from the £5m Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) Life Chances element of the Reform Investment Fund. It was anticipated that this investment would be matched through local contributions in line with the expectations set out when Government agreed to allocate this funding to the GM Reform Investment Fund. This was later agreed as £2.5m from the 2019/20 retained business rates contributions at the GMCA meeting December 2020.
- 9.3 Government agreed to bring together a number of different funding streams under the auspices of the Reform Investment Fund which included an £5m allocation from DCMS's Life Chances Fund in 2018. With the arrival of COVID-19 in early 2020, the GMCA decided to fund a 'Pathfinder' on a fee-for-service basis for 12 months to establish a working model that could be procured as a full social outcomes contract. The Youth Homelessness Prevention Pathfinder ran from December 2020, and will end in December 2021, by which time it will have supported 250 young people at risk of homelessness.

- 9.4 The Pathfinder has been delivered as a partnership between GMCA, Greater Manchester Better Outcomes Partnerships (GMBOP), a special purpose vehicle established by Bridges, and DePaul UK. The service has worked with 250 young people at risk of homelessness across three boroughs; the City of Manchester, Salford and Bolton.
- 9.5 The Pathfinder has had two principal objectives:
1. Provide support to young people identified as being at high risk of becoming homeless, helping them secure and sustain suitable, safe accommodation, engage in meaningful activities, and improve their overall wellbeing.
 2. Build a detailed understanding of the circumstances of the young people accessing the service, the systemic barriers they face, and the intervention approaches needed to support them to feed into the design of a future service.
- 9.6 The Pathfinder has shown the central operating model to be highly effective, preventing homelessness for 84% of the cohort¹ and diverting demand from Local Authority Housing Options teams when referral pathways mature to targeted community based interventions.
- 9.7 Key lessons learned:
- Identified key support needs contributing to accommodation insecurity; mental health, finances and money management, relationships and support networks.
 - Understanding of demand, appropriate pathways to enable prevention and 'what works' for young people.
 - Building an understanding of local ecosystems, community assets and viable delivery partners, with particular regard to Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCSFE) sector organisations.
 - Testing out and supporting the development of social outcomes requirements.
- 9.8 At the December 2021 meeting of GMCA, members noted the update in relation to the Youth Homelessness Prevention Pathfinder 2020/21, delegated contract award to GMCA Treasurer, and approved funding for the contract from the Reform Investment Fund (£2.5m) and 2019/20 Business Rates (£2.5m) contribution totalling £5m for years 2022-2024.

10 GM Moving In Action - GM Moving Strategy 2021-31

- 10.1 GM Moving in Action is the Greater Manchester strategy for physical activity. It is shaped and powered by GM Moving, the 'movement for movement'. Everyone has a role to play in GM Moving; people, communities and

organisations, from every sector and place across the city region, pulling in the same direction and with a shared goal to help people move more.



10.2 The above visual captures the shared mission, key priorities, the catalysts, the collective ways of working, key outcomes and enablers. These all align to the priorities and principles of the Greater Manchester Strategy, and this plan will be a key building block for delivering on shared GM outcomes.

10.3 The strategy was shared at an online launch and conference event in September, with over 400 people and a range of community, locality, Greater Manchester and national leaders supporting sessions on the strategy. These included panel discussions on the collective leadership required, with Andy Burnham, Jaweeda Ido (GMHSCP), Pritesh Patel (Bury Council) and Tim Hollingsworth (CEO Sport England) and the learning that can inform the approach to the next phase of GM Moving, with the GM Moving evaluation partner.

10.4 Since the launch, each priority within the strategy is being progressed, with leadership coming from across the whole system, under the GM Moving Executive Group. This group comprises members from GMCA, GMHSCP, TfGM, 10GM, GM Active, GreaterSport, Sport England. A review of governance has taken place to ensure that the group can lead effectively into the next phase.

10.5 At the December 2021 meeting of GMCA, members:

- Endorsed the Strategy and the approach, for local authorities and other partners across the system to enact.
- Recommended that senior leaders from across Greater Manchester agencies continue to provide visible strategic leadership on this agenda at the highest level.
- Recommended that Local Authority senior leaders provide ongoing support to their district integrated locality teams and local networks, supporting culture change, system change and behaviour change.
- Recommended that Local Authorities facilitate a meeting of key strategic leaders across the integrated system in each district in 2022.

11 Devolved Adult Education Budget - Proposed Priorities and Approach for 2022/2023 onwards

- 11.1 The Adult Education Budget (AEB) is a single budget stream bringing together adult further education (all 19yrs+ provision with the exception of apprenticeships/ traineeships), community learning, and discretionary learner support. The AEB is intended to fund provision which supports the local labour market and economic development. In particular, it focuses on ensuring that adults have the core skills that they need for work, including guaranteeing a number of statutory entitlements relating to English, maths and digital skills, as well as first Level 2 and 3 qualifications and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).
- 11.2 It is one part of the education, skills and work support landscape in Greater Manchester, which brings together large-scale national programmes managed and funded by various central government departments, devolved/co-commissioned activity developed and commissioned at GM level, and smaller scale targeted activity focused on priority cohorts, sectors and geographies (funded variously at national, GM and LA levels).
- 11.3 The GM ambition is to bring all of this activity together to create an integrated education, skills and work system through strategic leadership and commissioned services and programmes that will ensure:
- Young people leave education and training ready to succeed in the labour market, with a balance of academic, technical and 'life ready' skills.
 - Adults can acquire the skills, mindset and support they need to fulfil their career potential and adapt to changing employer needs throughout their lives, from entering employment for the first time through to highly skilled careers and retraining.

- Employers have access to a system that is flexible, resilient and adaptable, and which meets their needs in the rapidly changing 21st century world of work, driving a sustainable economic future for GM in which companies compete on the basis of high productivity, good quality work, and excellent employment practices.
- Residents are supported by a welfare system, under Universal Credit, that provides access to good work for those who can, support for those who could, and care for those who can't.

11.4 As part of that long-term journey of change that would deliver positive outcomes for the region's residents the following priorities were set:

- 11.4.1 Closer Working with Providers - To work much more closely with the provider base to develop improved analysis of learner journeys, with a focus on positive outcomes and progression, and understanding whether the activity improves an individual's employability and quality of life.
- 11.4.2 Place-based Approach - To create a more place-based approach to the delivery of adult skills, recognising that for all of the ten local authorities, the supply and demand for skills is different, and that a 'blanket approach' to providing education and skills provision will not achieve the ambitions for increased productivity and better outcomes for residents.
- 11.4.3 Response to Employer Needs - To work with partners, local authorities and internal colleagues in the Industry Skills and Labour Market Intelligence Team to better respond to employer skills/talent needs, specifically in the growth and foundation economy sectors outlines in the GM Local Industrial Strategy.
- 11.4.4 Barriers to Adult Education - To gain a better understanding of residents' barriers to accessing adult education and skills provision and working collaboratively with local authorities, stakeholders and skills providers to respond directly to local challenges and remove these barriers to learning.
- 11.4.5 To shift the focus of AEB funding away from the traditional view that it is simply there for 'second chance' essential skills, towards one that also supports businesses and residents to keep pace with changes in the labour market and the global economy at all levels.
- 11.4.6 Utilising skills providers as key strategic planning and delivery partners - recognising the important proactive role that is played by skills providers, contributing to the impact aimed towards the communities, places and economies.

- 11.5 In October 2018, GMCA set a number of priorities, against which there has been considerable progress. GMCA are now proposing refreshing the priorities with a set of overarching objectives and themes which will provide greater clarity of what the GM devolved Adult Education funding will deliver for GM residents and businesses.
- 11.6 The aim is to have Adult Education understood more clearly by stakeholders and residents equally and address GM and local needs in the right way, not based upon a national format of funding and qualifications. The aim is to be clearer on who the GM Adult Skills Programme is for, across GM, and what it will fund and why. Improving take up by residents by making the system clearer for learners and AEB skills providers.
- 11.7 Three key objectives have been identified for all residents on programmes funded through the Adult Education Budget and these will underpin the priorities above. The objectives are to ensure that all residents over the age of 19 can:
- Encourage residents to re-engage with skills and training at any point in their lives, no matter what qualifications they have previously attained.
 - Acquire a good level of competence in essential life skills such as maths, English and digital literacy.
 - Helping residents develop the skills and occupational competence needed to progress in learning, work or careers on courses aligned with local employer needs.
- 11.8 At the December 2021 meeting of GMCA, members noted the progress against the planned priorities, agreed the proposed process for continuing plan-led grant funding agreements and extension to the procured contracts for 2022/2023 academic year, and agreed the proposed refreshed objectives for the Adult Education Programme, in preparation for implementation from 2022/2023 academic year.

12 Growth Locations Update

- 12.1 Working with the district partners, GMCA have identified six 'Growth Locations' which represent opportunities for the whole city-region to bring forward development at a scale that can drive the transformational change we want to see in GM. The six Growth Locations are: North East Growth Corridor, Eastern Growth Cluster, Airport & Southern Growth Corridor, Central Growth Cluster, Western Gateway, and Wigan & Bolton Growth Corridor.
- 12.2 The Growth Locations each include unique opportunities and assets to respond to the variety of needs and challenges present in different parts of the conurbation. The Growth Locations will provide the platform for a levelling up approach across GM, by creating value through new development and in turn

ensuring that the resultant benefits and outcomes are experienced across wider GM communities.

- 12.3 The Growth Locations will make an important contribution to meeting the objectives of some of the key plans including the Greater Manchester Strategy (GMS), GM Five Year Environment Plan, Local Industrial Strategy, Transport Strategy 2040 and GM Places for Everyone (PfE) by supporting growth across the following key areas: Employment and supply chain, education and skills, housing, transport, innovation, and low carbon.
- 12.4 The North East Growth Corridor includes significant opportunities for new employment and housing growth in the north of Greater Manchester, supported by key sub-regional town centres in Bury, Oldham and Rochdale. The North East Growth Corridor is the single largest employment opportunity for the city region, delivering c1,500,000sqm of new employment floorspace, thousands of quality jobs and thousands of new quality, low carbon homes linked to sustainable transport.
- 12.5 Of fundamental importance to this growth location is the Northern Gateway. As one of the largest opportunities for employment development in the country, this site alone has the potential to deliver transformational change with capacity for around 1,200,000 sq.m. of employment floorspace, including proposals to incorporate a significant element of advanced manufacturing and major investment in transport infrastructure.
- 12.6 With sustainability and the ambition of zero carbon integral to the design of all the growth locations, it is proposed that the North East Growth Corridor will be connected to surrounding areas via sustainable public transport infrastructure, including proposals for tram-train developments connecting Bury, Rochdale, Oldham, Middleton and beyond, as well as a Bus Rapid Transit system.
- 12.7 Work is already underway with the district partners, coordinated through Directors of Place, to set out the vision and plans to support the opportunities identified in each of the Growth Locations. Each of the Growth Location steering groups have already met and agreed plans for the preparation of the following key documents:
 - Growth Plan – The Growth Plan sets out the strategic narrative for each growth location and describes the type and scale of growth the area can support. The Growth Plan considers the key employment sectors, development opportunities, significant infrastructure and anticipated benefits of each location. A growth plan has been drafted for each of the Growth Locations in collaboration between GMCA and districts.
 - Local Investment Frameworks (LIFs) – A number of LIFs will be developed for each of the growth locations to set out a more detailed proposal for specific opportunity areas / projects that require significant public sector intervention and the appropriate sequencing of such intervention. The purpose of the LIF is to develop the early framework for an investment proposition, which could be progressed into a full

business case or funding application in response to specific investment opportunities.

12.8 The next steps for the Growth Locations work include:

- Continue the preparation of key documentation and project planning. Seeking approval to use Evergreen surplus funding (or partners' resource support) to commission key feasibility studies or required evidence to support delivery and investment proposals.
- Coordinate engagement with key external stakeholders on the Growth Location opportunities and seek their input and support to target resource as plans progress.
- Consider opportunities from the imminent CSR announcement and ensure the Growth Location activity responds accordingly.

12.9 At the December 2021 meeting of GMCA, members endorsed the six GM Growth Locations, noted the work plan, progress update, and next steps, and noted that further details on each of the Growth Locations would be shared at the 'A new era for Greater Manchester - Greener, Fairer and more Prosperous' event in January 2022.

13 Delivering Net Zero Carbon Social Rented Homes: A Whole System Challenge For Greater Manchester

13.1 The GM Mayor's manifesto commitments included a stepping up of earlier pledges around affordable housing delivery. It does so in two ways: Taking an existing (GM Housing Strategy, draft GM Spatial Framework and now Places for Everyone) commitment to deliver 30,000 social and affordable rent homes by 2037, and focusing specifically on 30,000 social rented homes; and further requiring that these 30,000 homes should be net zero carbon, as a step toward the existing 2028 target date for all new development in GM to be net zero carbon.

13.2 There is a further Mayoral manifesto commitment to the publication of a detailed plan for the delivery of those 30,000 homes, and the report considered by the GMCA is a first interim step in the production of that plan. This is a big financial challenge, and GMCA will undoubtedly need additional support from Government to be successful.

13.3 The detailed plan for delivery of the 30,000 net zero homes needs to recognise the current landscape in which GMCA are operating and set some ambitions, steps and milestones that the whole system needs to strive to meet in order to achieve the total delivery target by 2038. With the anticipated adoption of Places for Everyone and the net zero new homes target included for 2028, this plan focusses on the steps needed to ramp up systems during the period from 2022 to December 2028 such that the adoption of the new standards within Places for Everyone are commercially deliverable from 2028 onwards.

- 13.4 This approach recognises that during the period to 2028, there will be an incremental improvement to the carbon emissions of new social homes delivered with Greater Manchester, with the objective of being able to commercially deliver net zero homes beyond 2028 and having the appropriate supply chain in place to deliver at the required annual delivery rate to meet Places for Everyone planned housing targets.
- 13.5 The whole systems challenge approach is welcomed by Bury – additional resources will also be required within the local authority in terms of training and staff time to commit to the process. This will involve commitment from officers within planning, housing delivery, affordable housing and environment.
- 13.6 The benefits for local communities would be an increased supply of social rented homes with lower associated day to day running costs as a result of being zero carbon. Training programmes may be required for the residents of zero carbon homes to understand and maximise the benefits of the new technologies used.
- 13.7 The increase in the share of social rented homes would lead to a consequent reduction in other forms of affordable housing – such as affordable rent, shared ownership and discounted market housing. The opportunities for affordable home ownership would be reduced.
- 13.8 Investment in skills and training will be required to ensure that local people can benefit from job opportunities arising from the delivery of zero carbon homes.
- 13.9 A full plan will be brought back to the Combined Authority by the end of May, setting out more specific actions and milestones, with an implementation plan to follow later in the year. The plan will clearly distinguish between those actions which can be delivered by GMCA and partners with available powers, capacity and funding, and those where GMCA will need to seek additional Government intervention, support or funding to deliver. This will be detailed in the full plan, and GMCA will engage with Government in the interim period to 21 understand their focus and areas where they will be able to help such that this can be reflected in the implementation plan.
- 13.10 At the December 2021 meeting of GMCA, members:
- Noted that a further report detailing a robust Delivery Plan will be submitted to the GMCA in the New Year.
 - Agreed that the GMCA support the call for more support from Central Government to enable Greater Manchester to reach its ambition and specifically for a change in the criteria to enable all GM Local Authorities to access the Affordable Homes Grant.
 - Endorsed the ambitions set out in the GM Mayor’s manifesto to achieve the delivery of 30,000 net zero carbon social rented homes by 2038.

- Agreed that the adoption of the whole system challenge approach to delivery of these ambitions, and the commencement of the work outlined.
- Noted that significant support will be required from Government to achieve substantial and sustained progress toward the ambitions.

14 Greater Manchester Go Neutral – Smart Energy Opportunity Pipeline

- 14.1 The Scatter GM preferred carbon reduction pathway sets out the need for solar PV on 50% of domestic properties and an additional 5.5km² on commercial roof space and ground mounted sites. Deployment at this scale will require the region to develop a long-term pipeline of land, car park and building based generation opportunities with an effective route to market.
- 14.2 Our response to this challenge is Go Neutral - a GMCA-led smart energy programme to decarbonise the city region and deliver social value, community wealth-building and inclusive growth, with a focus on affordability and impact.
- 14.3 In conjunction with other GMCA-led low-carbon initiatives, Go Neutral will put GM on the pathway to:
- Take control of how GMCA generate, use and trade the energy locally to create a resilient and connected energy system.
 - Create investment opportunities that will support new jobs and skills on the pathway to carbon neutral by 2038.
 - Create greener, healthier, and more affordable lifestyles.
- 14.4 Go Neutral will identify, develop, and deliver a pipeline of smart energy opportunities via a range of investment and delivery models. The initial phase will seek to deliver 85 MW of solar power generation with battery storage and electric vehicle charging infrastructure. These will be located on circa 430no. public sector owned land, car park and building assets. It is expected to require circa £155m of capital investment and £5.5m at-risk revenue expenditure, via a range of investment and delivery models.
- 14.5 Activity to assess, prioritise, and shortlist public sector owned assets is now nearing completion. This has involved geospatial assessment of the sites, GMCA/partner review and determination of a preferred shortlist for the call-off framework. This exercise will help to de-risk the sites being brought to market and provide clear signals to the market on partners readiness to engage.
- 14.6 A total of 9,436 land assets, 864 car parks and 2,495 buildings were submitted by public sector partners for the site assessment and prioritization exercise. For the initial phase, circa 10% of these assets are undergoing review by GMCA partners. Of the sites that have been reviewed and confirmed onto a preferred shortlist so far, GMCA are on track to achieve the target size of opportunity pipeline for the call-off framework. Through this activity GMCA have received unanimous support from partners (ten Districts, Environment Agency and TFGM) to engage with the next stage of the process.

14.7 At the December 2021 meeting of GMCA, members approved the establishment of a Smart Energy call-off framework, approved a call-off framework fee structure, noted that if viable projects were achieved, GMCA partners may require additional support to access funds to further develop and deliver the projects, and noted that the environmental outcome was to substantially reduce the carbon emissions of Greater Manchester’s public estate, through new and additional renewable energy generation and storage capacity.

15 GM Investment Framework, Conditional Project Approval

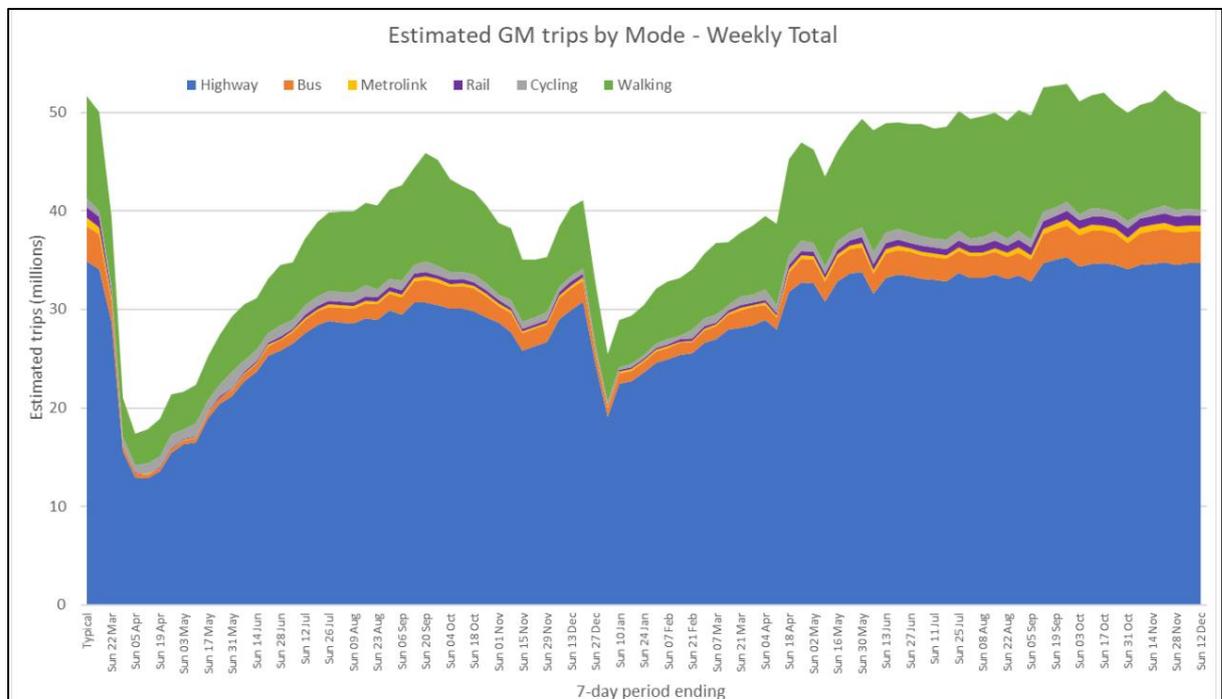
15.1 At the December 2021 meeting of GMCA, the following decision was taken on the GM Investment Framework:-

- That an investment into My First Five Years Ltd of up to £750k be approved.
- That a follow-on investment into Immersify Education Ltd of up to £200k be approved.
- That a follow-on investment into Tootoot Limited of up to £100k be approved.
- That authority be delegated to the GMCA Treasurer and GMCA Monitoring Officer to review the due diligence information in respect of the above Fund, and, subject to their satisfactory review and agreement of the due diligence information and the overall detailed commercial terms of the investment, to sign off any outstanding conditions, issue final approvals and complete any necessary related documentation in respect of the investment noted above.

16. TfGM – Bury Transport Update

16.1 Network Patronage and Facemask Compliance

16.1.1 During the seven-day period ending Sunday 19 December there were an estimated 49.9million trips on the Greater Manchester transport network, 1.5% below the previous week and 7.9% below the same week in 2019 (pre-pandemic).

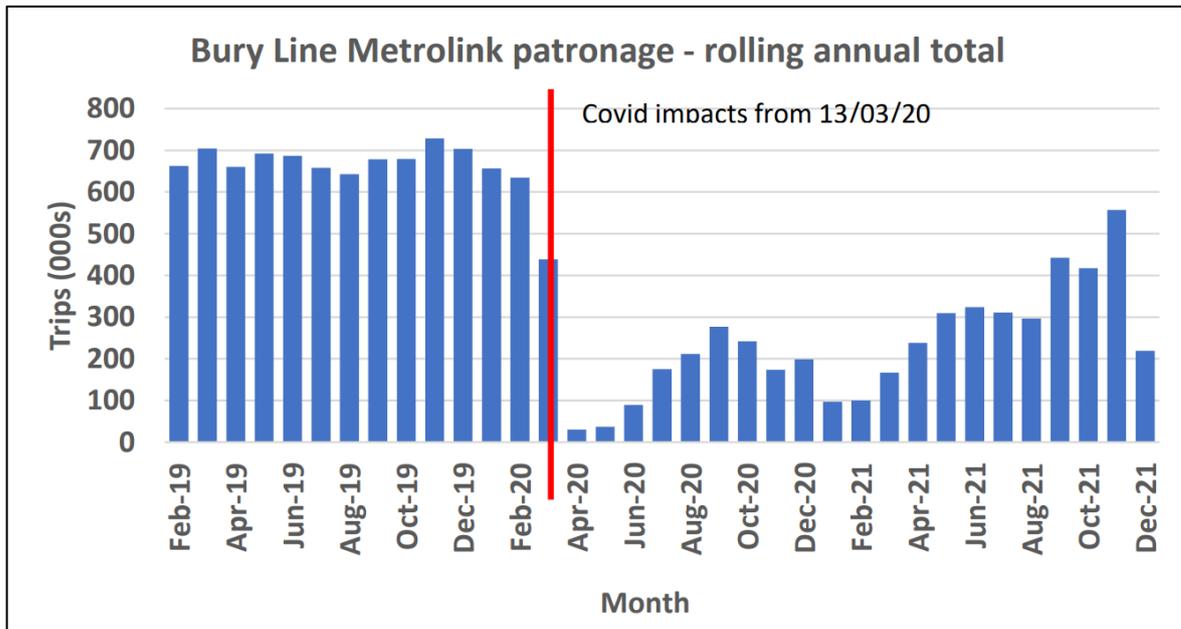


16.1.2 Traffic volumes across GM remained consistent with the previous week, but 4.9% below the same period in 2019. For Bury, traffic volumes were 1% lower than the previous week. Weekend volumes were 1.7% down on last weekend and were 0.5% below the same weekend in 2019. Saturday was the busiest weekend day of the winter period so far 1% up on last week. However, Sunday was 5% down on last week.

16.2 Metrolink

16.2.1 Bury Line Performance and Patronage

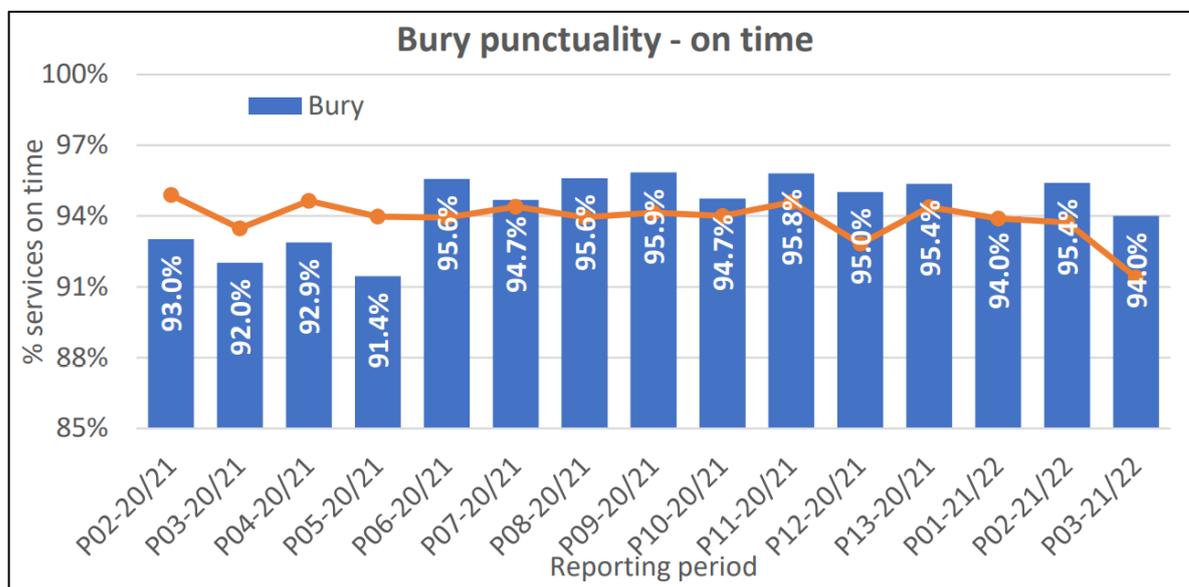
16.2.2 Rolling annual patronage for the Bury line is shown below. Following a consistent increase in patronage following the summer period, initial data is now showing a downwards trend following the issuing of Government work from home advice, increasing avoidance of public transport due to the spread of the Omicron variant, and approaching Christmas period.



16.3. Punctuality

16.3.1. Punctuality is measured at every stop on each line. The chart below shows the on-time punctuality (within 2 mins of schedule) for the Bury line.

16.3.2 Punctuality has remained consistently above 90% over the time frame shown. Despite a network wide drop to 91%, the Bury Line is still consistent with the last 11 reporting periods.



16.4 Face Covering Compliance

- 16.4.1 54% of passengers on the network have been complying with face covering requirements, up from 28% in early November, following changes in government advice and encouragement to wear face coverings by Metrolink staff.

17 Network Rail and Metrolink Line Closures

- 17.1 Essential track replacement work is due to be carried out at the Victoria Metrolink stop over the next two months. The work will begin after the last Metrolink service at approximately 2am on 1 January and will continue until the first tram in service at 4am on Tuesday 4 January 2022. Maintenance work will continue on 9 and 16 January. During this time no trams will run through Victoria and the following Metrolink lines will be affected:
- Bury line services will terminate at Queens Road.
 - Rochdale/ Oldham services will terminate at Monsall.
 - East Didsbury services will terminate at Exchange Square.
 - Airport line services terminate at Cornbrook.
- 17.2 To help minimise disruption, replacement bus services will be in operation, signed pedestrian walking routes will be in place and Customer Service Representatives will be at stops to direct passengers to the nearest replacement bus stop.
- 17.3 The work has been programmed to coincide with other essential heavy rail works, which will be carried out separately by Network Rail, between Victoria rail station and Queens Road railway bridge. This is to limit the overall duration of both works and the impact on passengers and local community.

18 Restoring Your Railway Round 3 Bids – Rawtenstall - Buckley Wells

- 18.1 As part of the Autumn Budget, awards to bids in Round 3 of the Restoring Your Railways 'Ideas Fund' were confirmed. One such successful bid for funding to investigate Rawtenstall-Buckley Wells was made by Rossendale Council, sponsored by MPs Jake Berry and Sara Britcliffe.
- 18.2 This scheme would require services to run on the East Lancashire Railway (ELR) between Rawtenstall and Bury (Bolton Street), continuing down to Buckley Wells (where the line interfaces with the Metrolink network).
- 18.3 TfGM's understanding is that the RYR Rawtenstall scheme would not need proposed services to enter the existing Bury Interchange or operate of the Bury Metrolink Line. Instead an interchange station at Buckley Wells is proposed, where passengers would transfer at a new Metrolink station.
- 18.4 TfGM has not yet been approached by Rossendale Council to discuss potential implications of the scheme for the Metrolink network. Next steps would likely see the securing of consultants to undertake a feasibility study, with a report submitted to DfT in summer/autumn 2022, in line with other Round 3 schemes.

19 Active Travel Grant Launch

- 19.1 In order to support GM businesses, employers and organisations to embed and encourage active travel, two active travel grants have reopened for applications.
- 19.2 The Active Travel Facility Grant is available to GM businesses who are looking to enable and encourage active travel amongst their employees. The grants can be used for interventions such as cycle parking, pool bikes or changing and storage solutions. Organisations of any size can apply, however there must be fewer than 250 staff employed at any site/s where funding is to be used. Further application guidance can be found on the business travel portal.
- 19.3 The Cycling Parking Grant is available to four audiences: NHS, education, housing associations and small organisations (employing 20 staff or less) who are located within several catchment areas that have been identified as having the greatest potential for increases in walking and cycling trips. The grant is intended to be used by organisations wishing to install cycle parking that will be available for use by anyone travelling to that location by bicycle, including but not limited to staff, pupils, residents, patients and visitors. Further application guidance can be found on the dedicated Active Travel webpage.
- 19.4 Both grants are available up to a maximum of £10,000 and application deadlines are 31 January 2022 at 5pm.

20. Clean Air Zone Financial Support Scheme

- 20.1 In November, a Clean Air Zone Financial Support Scheme was launched in order to help Greater Manchester registered HGV owners adapt before the introduction of the Clean Air Zone. The scheme will initially be open to Greater Manchester-registered HGV owners and will provide vehicle financing before the Zone comes into effect on 30 May 2022. Letters have been delivered this week direct to Greater Manchester-registered owners of non-compliant HGVs that would be subject to Clean Air Zone daily charges – directly notifying those affected of exemptions and funding support.
- 20.2 All vehicle owners can answer a series of simple questions at cleanairm.com/prepare to find out whether they will need to pay a charge to drive in the Clean Air Zone, if they might be eligible for an exemption or funding support, and further vehicle-specific information regarding their options and timescales.
- 20.3 Funding for Greater Manchester-licensed private hire vehicles (PHVs) and hackney carriages, coaches, minibuses and vans (LGVs) will launch at the end of January 2022. These vehicle owners will also receive letters from early in the new year to notify them of 5 exemptions and funding support available. While those eligible for an exemption will also be able to make an application from the end of January.

21 TravelSafe Special Operations

- 21.1 Following the launch of a new TravelSafe campaign in early November, the partnership continue to carry out targeted activity on the network, designed to tackle crime and ASB. Special Operations took place at Bury (15 November) and Cornbrook (18 November) Metrolink stops, with a total of 2,760 passengers stopped across the two events: this saw 256 penalty fares issued, 4 arrests and 7 antisocial behaviour incidents dealt with. TfGM continue to promote the work of TravelSafe across our social channels, including clips and graphics detailing security features in place across the network and how people can report incidents.

22 GMCA Update on Waste and Resources Contract

22.1 Van, pickup truck and twin axle trailer permit

- 22.1.1 The permit scheme is part of the access restriction policy introduced last year to deter trader from illegally using the HWRCs to dispose of trade waste. The sites are for household waste only, all waste from trader and businesses are chargeable and should be disposed of at the appropriate licenced facility.
- 22.1.2 The permit is helping the SUEZ operatives to identify genuine residents disposing of household waste. The permit allows up to 18 visits per year (April 21 to March 22) for residents using a van, pick-up or twin axle trailer.

- 22.1.3 Residents using a car, single axle trailer or vehicle adapted to carry a wheelchair do not need to apply for a permit.
- 22.1.4 As of 20th December, SUEZ have had approximately 5,000 applications, 2597 have been approved. Reasons for applications being declined include the following:
- they don't live in any of the 9 boroughs;
 - they're a trader;
 - they've uploaded incorrect documentation (V5 logbook and proof of address such as a utility bill or council tax bill); and
 - they're using a works van, in these cases, SUEZ ask for a letter from their employer to give permission for them to use the van for their own domestic use. In most cases, they do not continue with their application.

23 R4GM Food Waste Campaign – Buy, Keep, Eat, Repeat.

- 23.1 The campaign aims to encourage residents to reduce their food waste and to use the council's food waste recycling service for any unavoidable food waste.
- 23.2 Out of home advertising throughout December aimed to encourage residents to think about the food they buy at Christmas and to only buy what they're going to eat.
- 23.3 In January the campaign continues with a focus on a younger audience with 'Plan your Scran'. This looks at planning meals, using up leftovers and how to save money by wasting less food.

24 ReNew Hub Update

- 24.1 The ReNew Shops located at the 3 household waste recycling centres in Trafford, Oldham and Salford reached sales of £100,000 in December.
- 24.2 Money raised goes to the R4GM Community Fund and the Greater Manchester Mayors Charity.
- 24.3 In the New Year, SUEZ will be introducing online sales through Facebook Marketplace which will allow residents to 'click and collect' larger items such as electricals, white good and furniture.

25 Recommendation

- 25.1 That Council note the updates from the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Transport for Greater Manchester, and Recycle for Greater Manchester, with further updates to be presented to future Council meetings.

List of Background Papers:-

None identified

Contact Details:-

James Mulvaney
Executive Policy and Research Advisor
j.mulvaney@bury.gov.uk
0161 253 5105

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Joint Authority Questions

1. Given the pressure on the Courts system through austerity and Covid what more is being done to avoid putting unnecessary cases through Court but also ensure that criminals are being held to account for their actions. **(Cllr Hayes)**

This area of work has far-reaching impacts not only for the capacity of the criminal justice system but also for re-offending and rehabilitation rates.

One of the key levers in this area is Out of Court Disposals which are a way of dealing with a crime or offence that does not require a prosecution in court such as Cautions, penalty notices and community resolutions. For any out of court disposal to be used there must be an admission of guilt by the offender.

Following a national review of Out of Court Disposals, a new model for adults has been piloted in Salford, Greater Manchester. This model moves from six potential Disposals to just two and sees an end to those that are just warnings not to reoffend.

The 2 remaining disposals will have rehabilitative, reparative, or punitive conditions attached to them and work with Partners to develop pathways for offenders addressing reasons why they offend

Of the 82 individuals given an OOCDisposal in the pilot area, just 6 reoffended. This was measured over 6 months and re-offending rates are normally measured over 2 years but these initial findings are very promising. The new system will be rolled out across Greater Manchester from January 2022.

2. Can TFGM update Councillors on progress in finalising the CRSTS programme and Bury's allocation? **(Cllr Farooq)**

At its meeting on 10th September, GMCA approved the submission of the Prospectus based upon the upper bound guideline of £1.19bn for government consideration as part of the 2021 Spending Review process. Then, following the conclusion of the Spending Review in October, GM's CRSTS proposals received an indicative allocation with funding to 90% of the Prospectus submission (£1.07bn against the £1.19bn submission).

On 22 November 2021, the Secretary of State wrote to the GM Mayor to say that GMCA had been awarded an indicative allocation of £1.07 billion of capital funding conditional on the submission of a programme business case by the end of January 2022, noting that initially the Secretary of State letter requested submissions by 14th January. This date has now been revised to the end of January. The Secretary of State letter and other feedback from Government provided additional guidance that GM needs to

consider in developing the programme business case with regard to funding and prioritisation. TfGM and district officers are now working through a proposal for how GM should respond to this guidance and, at the end of January, GMCA will be asked to agree submission of a draft of the Programme Case, which will then be reviewed by Government before they make a final award. Once this is final award is received, the final CRSTS Programme Case will be produced and published. This is currently expected to be by the end of the March 2022. It is expected that individual authorities will receive allocations for highways maintenance and Integrated Transport Block, with the remainder of the funding allocated on a project by project, basis conditional on the submission and approval of an appropriate level of project level business case as per GM's Single Pot Assurance Framework.

3. What steps does Councillor Gold believe Greater Manchester Fire Service should be taking in response to the recent inspection report that questioned the services 'ability to keep people safe' and also identified it could 'do more to protect the public' Cllr. **(Russell Bernstein)**

It is important that the Fire Service work on the areas in the inspection report requiring improvement and that the Police, Fire and Crime Panel scrutinise the progress of this. I raised the issues at the last panel meeting and have also had a written response as follows.

The Service has recently launched a new online home fire safety check – an online tool which will enable any resident of Greater Manchester to undertake a simple and intuitive assessment of the fire risk in their own home (or for someone else). If the outcome shows low risk the resident will receive personalised online advice and guidance. Anyone recording higher levels of risk having completed the online check will be entered into the GMFRS systems to be referred for a Home Fire Safety Assessment (HFSA) where a physical visit will be undertaken by fire fighters or prevention staff.

The new intervention process will be targeted at those most at risk, be person centred and aligned to a nationally recognised standard that has been specifically designed to reduce the risk from and impact of fire in the home. It will ensure households where the risk of fire is deemed to be lower are able to access important safety advice, whereas those identified as higher risk will receive a physical visit.

The Service is partway through a review of its prevention education offer and is seeking to introduce an all-age approach, targeting resource at those most at risk while supporting general education for all communities using online resources as well as

providing physical interventions and support programmes which are better suited to challenges such as deliberate fire setters. Whilst many of the initiatives outlined above relate to the Service triggering interventions through data sharing or proactive means, we are committed to strengthening our links within localities and will be introducing a new place based working framework to improve how the Service both receives and shares information on vulnerable people with partners at a local level.

In recognition of societal changes such as a greater use of technology, the Service is reviewing and upgrading all online content to both update existing content as well as increasing accessibility for all communities. We have created a dedicated Safeguarding role to support the work of the organisation. This investment will ensure all staff are suitably trained to identify safeguarding matters and ensure that where these are identified, other agencies are alerted.

With regards to our fire safety provision, GMFRS is investing in all areas of Protection and has been focussed on increasing the number of Fire Safety Officers with two phases of recruitment over the last 18 months and since 2018/19 we have doubled the number of Fire Safety Officers. We are committed to developing Officers in line with the national Competency Framework, however as fire safety qualifications are not generally available outside of vocational training all training is undertaken in role and this limits the number of staff that can be recruited at any one time as supporting development is essential.

We have further recruitment planned over the next 12 months to further increase the number of Fire Safety Officers who can carry out inspections from our risk based inspection programme. In addition we are refining our procedures to ensure that we can target our work where it will have the most impact and free up additional time for inspections. In 2020/21 we implemented a Business Engagement Strategy increasing the number of businesses we pro-actively target with advice and utilising social media as well as targeted mailshots. Since 2020 GMFRS has provided targeted advice to all schools and care homes in Greater Manchester about managing fire safety in parallel with Covid Regulations and provided advice to over 4000 hospitality premises when lockdown restrictions were lifted. We will build on this approach to extend the advice and information available to businesses and regulated premises.

4. Does TFGM have any information about the delay to announcing BSIP allocations **(Cllr McGill)**

DfT wrote to all Local Transport Authorities on 11 January. The letter includes that '[DfT] continue to review and assess the BSIPs

covering all 79 LTAs and expect to provide details of indicative funding by February 2022.'

5. For each year Dec 17 to Nov 18, Dec 18 to Nov 19, Dec 19 to Nov 20 and Dec 20 to Nov 21, how many Catalytic Converters were stolen in Greater Manchester broken down by borough and what is the sanction detection rate for each of these years? (Cllr. Jordan Lewis)

The data reported is based on a keyword search and therefore may not be completely accurate as thefts may have occurred but the key words searched for may not have appeared in the text, or the keywords may have appeared in the text but the crime was not actually one of theft of a catalytic converter. Missing data may also occur due to spelling errors and specific words not being used. The Force has tried to reduce these instances, with that in mind, it is not possible to state how accurate these figures are.

Borough	Dec 17 – Nov 18	Dec 18 – Nov 19	Dec 19 – Nov 20	Dec 19 – Nov 20
Bolton	3	198	58	196
Bury	8	92	101	162
City of Manchester	8	184	360	804
Oldham	52	145	170	236
Rochdale	17	162	140	196
Salford	8	99	95	197
Stockport	10	81	183	240
Tameside	23	138	180	147
Trafford	1	41	117	159
Wigan	10	73	72	161
Total catalytic converter theft / attempts	140	1213	1476	2498
Number of sanction detections* (Investigative Outcome Codes 1-8)	1	1	3	15
% of total resulting in a sanction detection (Investigative Outcome Codes 1-8)	0.71%	0.08%	0.20%	0.60%

*Sanction Detections¹

Investigative outcomes included in the definition of "section detection" are crimes where:

- ***A suspect was charged or summonsed to court for the offence***
- ***A suspect was cautioned for the offence***
- ***The offence was taken into consideration (also known as TIC) with other offences that the suspect is charged with committing***
- ***The suspect received a Penalty Notice for Disorder***
- ***The suspect had died before justice could be served***
- ***The suspect received a cannabis warning for the offence***
- ***The suspect received a community resolution for the offence***

Early thefts of catalytic converters used to be from 4x4 vehicles. This shifted into vans, in particular Mercedes Sprinter vans, where the converters were stolen as part of the exhaust unit (which cost £2.5k to refit). The trend now; however, has moved to smaller cars, for example; Prius and Honda Jazz. With smaller cars being targeted, there need to be more thefts to make the same amount of money. These thefts track the price of metal very closely

6. Could the Authority's spokesperson on the Greater Manchester Transport Authority inform members on the percentage increase on the average Metrolink fare in each of the previous five years, and proposed fare increases going forwards? (Cllr Powell)

The table below shows the overall price increase of Metrolink fares in recent years. The % increases represent a 'weighted average', as there are many types of fares and ticketing products and limitations on cash handling vending machines that require fares to be in multiples of 10p. As a result, individual fares can be above or below that 'weighted average' increase.

Year	RPI (%)*	Average Fare Change (%)	Notes
2015	2.5	0	No increase during network expansion.
2016	1.0	0	No increase during network expansion.
2017	1.9	0	No increase during network expansion.
2018	3.6	5.93	Agreed 'catch-up' following 3 years of fare freezes.
2019	3.2	2.1	Originally intended to be 5.93% but "zonal" system introduced and fare harmonisation meant some reduction is and better value for passengers making multiple trips.
2020	2.8	2.20	Less than RPI increase to avoid increasing certain ticket types.
2021	1.6	0	No increase in midst of pandemic.

*** Provided for comparison as an indication of how Metrolink's costs change. Measured in July of each of the years listed. The most recently published RPI figure (at November 2021) was 7.1%. The December RPI figure is due to be published during January.**

TfGM is reviewing Metrolink fare levels in the context of the ongoing uncertainty in relation to ongoing government funding/ support beyond March 2022; and the aspiration for an integrated public transport network, with attractively priced, simply structured and integrated fares and ticketing.

7. Please detail the number of cameras being installed across Greater Manchester, broken down by borough, and the cost of these cameras to monitor the Clean Air Zone and when we can expect the announcement?
(Cllr. Roger Brown)

The breakdown re the number of cameras installed across GM is as follows

Local Authority	Number of ANPR Cameras
Bolton	81
Bury	61
Manchester	168
Oldham	77
Rochdale	66
Salford	83
Stockport	106
Tameside	75
Trafford	68
Wigan	74
Total	859

The cost of the cameras including the establishment of back-office technology, contact centre and base operations costs is £48.1m

The breakdown of costs for the programme, contained within the FBC Financial Case, has yet to be released. The costs of the Egis contract (£48.1m) includes the cost of the cameras, as well as the establishment of the back office technology, contact centre and the base operational costs inclusive of business case transaction volumes

8. Could the Authority's spokesperson on the Greater Manchester Police and Fire Committee inform members on how many homes are affected by the revised Government guidance for higher rise buildings, and what work both the fire service and the local authority can do to inform residents of their increased access to funds? **(Cllr Tegolo)**

"GMFRS plays an active role in the Greater Manchester High Rise and Building Safety Task Force and also works closely with housing providers and managing agents responsible for the management of blocks of flats both inspecting buildings, holding information events and providing advice. We also work hard to support residents in individual buildings affected by fire safety issues and work closely with the Manchester Cladiators who represent affected residents.

GMFRS welcomed the recent announcement of the Secretary of State which set out the future approach of Government to tackling the building safety crisis and a further commitment to protecting leaseholders from the costs of work to make their homes safe. It is not possible to estimate how many buildings are affected by the changes as the announcement was focussed on a change in policy approach and no details of how any additional funds will be made available or administered have been announced.

Therefore, at this stage GMFRS cannot determine how many buildings will benefit from the change of direction indicated by the Government. The current Building Safety Fund only covers buildings over 18metres and will only fund work to remove and replace combustible cladding. This means that all buildings under 18m are not eligible for funding and many buildings are unable to access funding to carry out all of the necessary works as the fund will not meet the costs of fixing compartmentation breaches or works like installing missing cavity barriers. There are currently 171 blocks of flats across Greater Manchester which have identified fire safety defects which are so serious they have been necessitated a change to the evacuation strategy away from Stay Put. Of these buildings 33 are under 18m and the fire safety issues are not all related to external fire spread. GMFRS has proactively shared information and advice from Government since 2017 and will continue to do so. We will be writing to housing providers and managing agents in relation to the change in Government advice on fire safety in buildings and the introduction of a new standard for fire risk assessments. A further information event will be held when the Fire Safety Act comes into force which is anticipated to be in February. As information becomes available following the Government announcement we will proactively share this and work with the Manchester Cladiators to provide information to residents.

In addition in January 2021 GMFRS and the GMCA agreed to administer the Waking Watch Relief Fund for Greater Manchester for buildings over 18m and secured and approved £2.4m of funding for the installation of fire alarms of which £1.5m has been paid out with installation of alarms

completed in all but 3 developments with work ongoing to install the alarm in those buildings. The Secretary of State announced a further expansion of the scheme to include buildings under 18m and the GMFRS has agreed in principle to oversee the administration of this funding.”

Bury Council will be liaising with the Fire service and including advice in comms once everything is clarified.

9. Could the authority’s spokesperson on the Greater Manchester Pension Fund inform members on what investments the Authority holds in companies that have profits based on fossil fuels. Will the Pension Authority be supporting the campaign by Divest UK and others to move the fund away from Fossil Fuels entirely? **(Cllr Wright)**

Thank you for question. The Council has appointed myself (Councillor Grimshaw) as the Council’s representative on the GM Pensions Advisory Committee, I will raise this issue when we next meet.

ITEM	RESPONSE / ACTION REQUIRED	OFFICER LEAD	PROGRESS/DATE COMPLETED
<p>Stop the Council Tax Squeeze</p>  <p>Labour NOM.docx</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Call on the Government to stop the squeeze and fund Bury Council directly to avoid increases in council tax. 2. Call on the Government to reverse tax cuts on banks and consider a windfall levy on individuals and enterprise whose wealth grew exponentially in the pandemic. 3. Write to Bury's Conservative MPs asking them to co-sign a letter demanding true levelling up for Bury, by restoring our direct funding grant so that Council Tax payers don't have to bear an even heavier burden of funding vital local services, which should be funded by Government. 	<p>Chief Executives Office</p>	<p>Letters issued to Bury's MPs on 29 November.</p> <p>Response to be received.</p>
<p>Supporting our wonderful high streets over the festive period</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call on officers and the Combined Authority to explore options to fund free or 	<p>Jacqui Dennis/TfGM</p>	<p>Matter to be considered by Combined Authority.</p>

			Extensive advertising through digital channels, social media, out of home, press and radio ensured reach to the target audiences
<p>Children's Catch-up Funding</p>  <p>Lib Dem Amendment V1.doc</p>	<p>[ADD] – Welcome the Labour Party's proposals and support the provision of the necessary resources for a strong recovery for our children and their education.</p> <p>[ADD] - Instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Education to demand that the recommendations of the Labour Party's "Children's Recovery Plan" are implemented in full.</p>	Chief Executives Office	<p>Letter sent to the Secretary of State for Education on 29 November.</p> <p>Response received.</p>

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Our Ref GL/HM/Council
Date 29 November 2021
Please ask for Geoff Little
Direct Line 0161 253 5103
E-mail g.little@bury.gov.uk

Christian Wakeford
MP for Bury South

Letter sent via email

Dear Christian,

Bury Council at its Full Council meeting on 24 November 2021 debated a notice of motion in relation to Council Tax.

The Council noted:

1. That direct funding to local government has been cut year on year by the Conservatives with a cut to Bury Council of over £100 million so far since 2010.
2. That the Conservative Government's latest Budget expects us to raise Council Tax by 3% in order to increase our spending power.
3. Even with this hike in Council Tax, Bury Council will still be forced to make around £18m in cuts by the financial year 2023/24.

The Council resolved to:

1. Call on the Government to stop the squeeze and fund Bury Council directly to avoid increases in council tax.
2. Call on the Government to reverse tax cuts on banks and consider a windfall levy on individuals and enterprise whose wealth grew exponentially in the pandemic.
3. Write to Bury's Conservative MPs asking them to co-sign a letter demanding true levelling up for Bury, by restoring our direct funding grant so that Council Tax payers don't have to bear an even heavier burden of funding vital local services, which should be funded by Government.

Accordingly, I am writing to you in relation to this matter.

I look forward to your response so that an update can be provided to Members of Bury Council.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "G Little".

G Little
Chief Executive

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Our Ref GL/HM/Council
Date 29 November 2021
Please ask for Geoff Little
Direct Line 0161 253 5103
E-mail g.little@bury.gov.uk

James Daly
MP for Bury North

Letter sent via email

Dear James,

Bury Council at its Full Council meeting on 24 November 2021 debated a notice of motion in relation to Council Tax.

The Council noted:

1. That direct funding to local government has been cut year on year by the Conservatives with a cut to Bury Council of over £100 million so far since 2010.
2. That the Conservative Government's latest Budget expects us to raise Council Tax by 3% in order to increase our spending power.
3. Even with this hike in Council Tax, Bury Council will still be forced to make around £18m in cuts by the financial year 2023/24.

The Council resolved to:

1. Call on the Government to stop the squeeze and fund Bury Council directly to avoid increases in council tax.
2. Call on the Government to reverse tax cuts on banks and consider a windfall levy on individuals and enterprise whose wealth grew exponentially in the pandemic.
3. Write to Bury's Conservative MPs asking them to co-sign a letter demanding true levelling up for Bury, by restoring our direct funding grant so that Council Tax payers don't have to bear an even heavier burden of funding vital local services, which should be funded by Government.

Accordingly, I am writing to you in relation to this matter.

I look forward to your response so that an update can be provided to Members of Bury Council.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "G Little".

G Little
Chief Executive

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Our Ref GL/HM/Council
Date 29 November 2021
Please ask for Geoff Little
Direct Line 0161 253 5103
E-mail g.little@bury.gov.uk

The Rt Hon Nadhim Zahawi MP
Secretary of State for Education
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT

Letter sent via email Sec-OF-STATE.PS@education.gov.uk

Dear Secretary of State,

Bury Council at its Full Council meeting on 24 November 2021 debated a notice of motion in relation to support for children in Bury.

The Council noted that:

1. There has been an enormous impact from Covid-19 on school children in Bury.
2. The staff, pupils and Governors in our schools in Bury have worked incredibly hard to make sure the impact of Covid is mitigated.
3. For months at a time, most children have not been able to attend school, been isolated from their friends, and missed out on valuable experiences such as playing sports or learning a musical instrument.
4. The Government's former Education Commissioner Sir Kevan Collins recommended that £15 billion is required to help school children catch up on the learning and experiences they have lost during the pandemic.
5. The Labour Party launched its £15 billion "Children's Recovery Plan" in June, in line with Sir Kevan Collins' recommendations. This plan includes Breakfast clubs and new activities for every child, Quality mental health support in every school, Small group tutoring for all who need it, not just 1%, Continued development for teachers, An Education Recovery Premium and Ensure no child goes hungry.

The Council resolved to:

1. Welcome the Labour Party's proposals and support the provision of the necessary resources for a strong recovery for our children and their education.
2. Instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Education to demand that the recommendations of the Labour Party's "Children's Recovery Plan" are implemented in full.

Accordingly, I am writing to you in relation to this matter.

I look forward to your response so that an update can be provided to Members of Bury Council.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "G Little".

G Little
Chief Executive



2021-0051156RWPO

Robin Walker MP

Minister of State for School Standards

Sanctuary Buildings Great Smith Street Westminster London SW1P 3BT
tel: 0370 000 2288 www.education.gov.uk/contactus/dfe

Mr Geoff Little OBE
Chief Executive, Bury Council
By email: g.little@bury.gov.uk

Your ref: GL/HM/Council

13 December 2021

Dear Mr Little,

Thank you for your letter of 29 November, addressed to the Secretary of State, regarding education recovery. I am replying as the Minister of State for School Standards.

The Government is grateful to all teachers and leaders who have worked incredibly hard throughout the pandemic, including in their remarkable commitment to keeping the public safe and the dedication they have shown in enabling schools to remain open and supporting pupils with remote education.

Every child and young person in the country has experienced unprecedented disruption to their education as a result of COVID-19, and those from the most vulnerable and disadvantaged backgrounds will be amongst the hardest hit. Over the past year, we have made several major announcements to support education recovery. Each has been a step in our efforts to make sure children and young people are supported through their ongoing education recovery, using evidence-based practice.

In February 2021 the Government announced the recovery premium, a new one-off grant worth over £300 million for state-funded schools in the 2021-22 academic year. Building on the pupil premium, the recovery premium will help schools to deliver evidence-based practices to support the most disadvantaged pupils.

We recognise that educational loss is significant and widespread. However, we also know that disruption has been more acute for some pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged and vulnerable. The one-off recovery premium allocations will reflect disadvantage funding eligibility. In this way, schools with more disadvantaged pupils will receive larger amounts.

We have included a 'floor' to ensure that no eligible primary school will receive less than £2,000 and no secondary school, special school, pupil referral unit or hospital school will receive less than £6,000.

Schools have flexibility in how they choose to spend the recovery premium, and they are encouraged to consider using it to support a wider cohort than the pupils who attract the funding. The premium for the academic year 2021-22 is being paid as a grant to all eligible schools in England in four payments over the course of the year.

The Department has updated the Using Pupil Premium guidance with a short guide to help schools make best use of their pupil and recovery premium, alongside their pupil premium funding, which is available at: tinyurl.com/22k6ae5v.

On 2 June, the Government announced an additional £1.4 billion to support education recovery for children ages 2 to 19 in schools, colleges and nurseries. This includes £1 billion for tutoring, which, combined with the funding for tutoring we have already announced, will allow us to provide up to 100 million tutoring hours for children and young people across England by 2024.

In October, the Government announced that schools will receive an additional £4.7 billion in core funding in 2024-25, including £1.6 billion in 2022-23. This is in addition to the previously planned increases from the 2019 spending review, equating to a total increase of £1,500 per pupil between 2019-20 and 2024-25. This additional investment will also support the delivery of a £30,000 starting salary for all new teachers.

This funding sits alongside a further £1.8 billion dedicated to supporting young people to catch up on missed education, following on from the existing investment in catch up for early years, schools and colleges, including for tutoring and teacher training opportunities.

The funding takes the Government's direct investment in education recovery to almost £5 billion, building on the high-quality tutoring for millions of pupils and world-class training for thousands of teachers and early years staff, already being provided. This additional investment in recovery will mean every school and college will have extra dedicated funding to support those who most need help catching up.

Primary schools will continue to benefit from the same per pupil rate as this year's recovery premium, while secondary schools are expected to receive nearly double that amount, meaning an average secondary school could attract around £70,000 a year. This extra support at secondary level reflects evidence showing the larger gaps in older pupils' learning and the amount of time those pupils have left in education.

The dedicated education recovery funding will complement the significant expansion of the National Tutoring Programme (NTP), with millions of children set to benefit from high quality tutoring over the next three years, alongside world-class training for thousands of teachers and the summer schools that took place up and down the country through the school holidays.

There is extensive evidence that tutoring is one of the most effective ways to accelerate pupil progress. The NTP is an ambitious scheme which supports schools to access targeted support for disadvantaged pupils who need the most help to catch up. The NTP is comprised of three elements: a tuition programme for 5 to 16 year olds, a 16 to 19 tuition fund, and a targeted early language support programme for reception-aged children. In order to maximise the impact of tutoring and to support schools, the Education Endowment Foundation has provided a guide on how to get the best out of tutoring, available at: [tinyurl.com/Y4Jv2Glr](https://www.tinyurl.com/Y4Jv2Glr).

We will build on the successful NTP by introducing an additional school-led approach to tutoring from 2021-22. Schools will be provided with £579 million of funding to develop this localised school-led tutoring. Working alongside the scaled-up existing NTP pillars, this will mean that from 2021-22 we will vastly expand the reach of tutoring. This will help ensure more disadvantaged pupils benefit from tuition support.

We are also investing £253 million to help provide 500,000 teacher training opportunities, which includes £69 million to extend the rollout of the Early Career Framework reforms and £184 million for middle and late-career National Professional Qualifications. Additionally, we are providing £153 million for training for early years staff to support the educational development of the very youngest children.

Regarding free school meals and breakfast clubs, the continuing provision of free school meals to children from households that are out of work or on low incomes is of the utmost importance to the Government. This means these children receive a healthy, nutritious meal, and helps to ensure they are well nourished, develop healthy eating habits and can concentrate and learn. Under the benefits-based criteria, there are currently around 1.7 million pupils eligible for and claiming a free school meal. This saves families around £450 each year.

We introduced a number of immediate measures to ensure children who usually receive benefits-related free school meals still had access to this support while they were not attending school due to COVID-19. Now schools are fully open, all children should be able to access a nutritious meal at school, free to those that are eligible for free school meals. Where pupils eligible for benefits related free school meals are required to stay at home, schools should work with their school catering team or food provider to offer good quality lunch parcels. This is the same arrangement that was in place in the last academic year.

Alongside our national approach to supporting free school meal pupils, we are committed to supporting schools and children who also benefit from our breakfast club programme. The Government is committed to continuing support for breakfast clubs and will support approximately 2,500 schools in disadvantaged areas, including opportunity areas which will be targeted by the programme. The Government is funding up to £24 million into the programme from 2021-2023.

Our suppliers, Family Action, along with Magic Breakfast, are in contact with schools on the programme, where possible, and are working closely with them to target the children most in need to continue to provide them with a healthy breakfast.

With regard to your concern for students' mental health following the COVID-19 outbreak, I would like to assure you that mental health and wellbeing are a priority for the Government. We hope that our package of measures for examinations in 2022 will help to relieve some stress, however the Government is also providing significant mental health support to schools.

We are providing more than £17 million this year to build on existing mental health support in education settings, including £9.5 million to enable up to a third of schools and colleges to train a senior mental health lead, as part of our commitment to fund training for leads in all schools and colleges by 2025.

In September, we invited state-funded schools and colleges to begin booking the Department's quality-assured training courses for their senior mental health lead, to support them to implement an effective whole school or college approach to mental health and wellbeing. The guidance on this training is available at: tinyurl.com/J99n8JYb.

We are committed to working with parents, teachers and schools to develop a long term plan that ensures pupils are not further disadvantaged by the disruption to their education and are able to catch up.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julie Walker'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'J' and 'W'.