

Minutes of: COUNCIL

Date of Meeting: 13 September 2023

Present: The Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor , in the Chair)
Councillors A Arif, S Arif, R Bernstein, D Berry, C Birchmore, C Boles, A Booth, R Brown, C Cummins, L Dean, D Duncalfe, U Farooq, E FitzGerald, N Frith, I Gartside, R Gold, D Green, J Grimshaw, S Haroon, J Harris, M Hayes, K Hussain, B Ibrahim, J Lancaster, G Marsden, L McBriar, G McGill, C Morris, E Moss, E O'Brien, T Pilkington, D Quinn, T Rafiq, I Rizvi, M Rubinstein, J Rydeheard, L Ryder, L Smith, M Smith, G Staples-Jones, T Tariq, S Thorpe, D Vernon, S Walmsley, M Walsh, M Whitby and Y Wright

Apologies for Absence N Bayley, N Boroda, J Mason and A Quinn

Public Attendance: 6 Members of the public were in attendance.

C. 21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Tariq declared a personal interest in all items under consideration in light of recent appointments to the LGA and North west employers and his work for Healthwatch Oldham including as co-opted member of the Oldham Scrutiny Committee and Health and Wellbeing Board.

Councillor Farooq declared a personal interest in all items under consideration in light of her appointment as Secretary of the Bury Faith Forum.

C. 22 MAYORAL COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor reported to those present, duties undertaken as Bury's first citizen since the last Council meeting.

C. 23 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 19th July be approved and signed by the Mayor.

C. 24 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Questioner	Topic	Responding
C Davidson	Boroughs Roads	Cllr O'Brien
A Hay	Mike Connolly	Cllr O'Brien
L Heaney	Post code query	Cllr O'Brien

C. 25 POLLING PLACE AND POLLING STATION REVIEW SEPTEMBER 2023

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

1. That the compulsory polling district and places review commences on Monday 2 October 2023.

2. That the outline table for the review is approved
3. That approval is granted to follow the review process described in this report.
4. That the ERO (Electoral Registration Officer) is authorised to take the necessary measures as soon as possible to give effect to parliamentary constituency changes, ensuring that the register reflects existing and new constituencies until the boundaries are fully in force.
5. That the Electoral Registration Officer is authorised to take the necessary measures to give effect to any new or amended polling districts on completion of the polling district review, ensuring that the register reflects existing and new boundaries until the boundaries are fully in force.
6. That power to designate polling places in accordance with section 18 and 18B of the Representation of the People Act 1983 is delegated to the Chief Executive, in their role as Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer.

C. 26 APPOINTMENT OF LOCAL RETURNING OFFICER FOR COMBINED AUTHORITY ELECTIONS

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

The Council appoints the Chief Executive, Lynne Ridsdale as the Returning Officer for Bury Council at the Combined Authority Mayoral elections.

C. 27 RECOMMENDATIONS OF CABINET AND COUNCIL COMMITTEES

It was moved by Councillor Whitby and seconded by Councillor Gold; on being put with all Members voting for and Councillors A Booth, D Berry, G Marsden, C Birchmore, D Duncalfe, M Smith, M Walsh and the Mayor abstaining; that:

Council agrees the proposed amendments to the Constitution in relation to the authorised debt write-off thresholds as set out in the report.

C. 28 LEADER' STATEMENT AND CABINET QUESTION TIME

(a) Written question (Notice given)

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:

	Questioner	Cabinet Member	Topic
1	Cllr McBriar	Cllr L Smith	SEND
2	Cllr E Moss	Cllr Morris	Economic Development Strategy
3	Cllr Staples Jones	Leader	Chapelfield nature reserve
4	Cllr Rydeheard	Cllr Staples Jones	Tree Pruning
5	Cllr M Smith	Cllr L Smith	RAAC
6	Cllr Grimshaw	Cllr Gold	Black History Month

7	Cllr Rizvi	Leader	Prestwich Regeneration
8	Cllr Vernon	Leader	Traffic Cameras
9	N Frith	Cllr Morris	Burrs Live
10	Cllr McGill	Cllr Gold	Cost of living crisis
11	Cllr Lancaster	Leader	Planning Inspectorate
12	Withdrawn		
13	Cllr Green	Cllr Morris	Taxi licensing
14	Cllr LJ Dean	Cllr Staples Jones	Council Tax rebate Scheme

Due to the lack of time to answer questions 15 to 18 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.

b) Verbal Questions

Questioner	Cabinet Member	Topic
Cllr Bernstein	Cllr O'Brien	£450k for Bury FC
Cllr M Smith	Cllr L Smith	Admissions policy for Radcliffe School
Cllr Green	Cllr Morris	Taxi licensing
Cllr Farooq	Cllr O'Brien	Clean Air Plan
Cllr Pilkington	Cllr O'Brien	Promote cycling in the Borough
Cllr S Arif	Cllr O'Brien	Muslim Burials costs
Cllr J Lancaster	Cllr Tariq	Contraceptive and sexual health services
Cllr Birchmore	L Smith	School uniform
Cllr Rizvi	Cllr O'Brien	Sinkhole update

C. 29

COMBINED AUTHORITY REPORT AND QUESTIONS TO THE COUNCIL'S COMBINED AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVES

- (a) The Council received a report on the work of the Combined Authorities.
- (b) The following questions had been received in accordance with Council Procedure Rules:

Questioner	Combined Authority Member	Topic
Cllr Brown	Cllr Gold	Vetting Breaches
Cllr McGill	Cllr Staples-Jones	Gm Bus Strategy
Cllr Ibrahim	Cllr Gold	Gender based violence
Cllr Harris	Cllr Gold	Crime figures
Cllr Rydeheard	Cllr Staples-Jones	£2 capped bus fare

C. 30 NOTICES OF MOTION

Council considered a notice of motion received from Councillors: A Arif, Bayley, Boles, Boroda, Cummins, Farooq, Fitzgerald, Frith, Gold, Green, Grimshaw, Haroon, Hayes, Ibrahim, McGill, Morris, Moss, O'Brien, Pilkington, Quinn Alan, Quinn Deborah, Rafiq, Rizvi, Rubinstein, Ryder, Smith Lucy Staples-Jones Gareth, Tariq, Thorpe, Walmsley, Whitby.

Entitled Let's Fix It": Bury Demands a Fair Deal On Funding

This Council notes that:

1. Since the beginning of austerity in 2010, local government funding has seen the biggest departmental cut across government, with a 60% reduction.
2. In Bury, this has led to cuts of nearly £150m since 2010.
3. It also comes at a time when demand pressures for adult's and children's social care, SEND and inflation are at their highest levels in decades.
4. A recent BBC investigation has discovered a £5 billion "black hole" in local authority budgets, with the average Council facing a £33m gap by 2025-26, a rise of 60% from two years ago.
5. SIGOMA (Special Interest Group of Municipal Authorities) has reported that at least 26 member Councils are at risk of effective bankruptcy within the next two years.

This Council further notes that:

1. A recent study by the Institute for Fiscal Studies, an independent economic think tank, concludes that Bury's local government funding was underfunded by 8.5% compared to the national average – the equivalent of nearly £14m a year less to spend on services.
2. A fair funding review of local government has been promised since 2016 but not happened and currently there is no indication of when it will be carried out and implemented.

This Council resolves to:

1. Launch a public campaign calling on the Government to fix the broken system of local government finance and give Bury what it needs and deserves.
2. Highlight as part of this campaign what the Council and residents can do to support reducing costs and demands on local services.
3. Write to our Members of Parliament, requesting they support our campaign and lobby Ministers for a fair deal for Bury.

An amendment was moved by Councillor Bernstein and seconded by Councillor Vernon to:

This Council notes that:

1. Since the beginning of austerity in 2010, local government funding has seen the biggest departmental cut across government, with a 60% reduction.
2. In Bury, this has led to nearly £150m in reduced core funding since 2010. However since 2019 in excess of £100 million has been allocated to Bury to spend on agreed projects as well as Bury Council received in excess of \$79 million additional support during the COVID pandemic.
3. It also comes at a time when demand pressures for adult's and children's social care, SEND and inflation are at their highest levels in decades.
4. A recent BBC investigation has discovered a £5 billion "black hole" in local authority budgets, with the average Council facing a £33m gap by 2025-26, a rise of 60% from two years ago. However it should be noted that some BBC investigations historically have not followed best practice.
5. SIGOMA (Special Interest Group of Municipal Authorities), (whose leadership is all Labour Councillors and a Labour MP) has reported that at least 26 member Councils are at risk of effective bankruptcy within the next two years.

This Council further notes that:

1. A recent study by the Institute for Fiscal Studies, an independent economic think tank, concludes that Bury's local government funding was underfunded by 8.5% compared to the national average – the equivalent of nearly £14m a year less to spend on services.
2. A fair funding review of local government has been promised since 2016 but not happened and currently there is no indication of when it will be carried out and implemented.

This Council resolves to:

1. Write an all party letter to the Secretary of State for Levelling up Housing and Communities calling on the Government to undertake a Local Government Fair Funding Review.
2. Highlight what the Council and residents can do to support reducing costs and demands on local services.
3. Recognise the Government's commitment through the GM Devolution Trailblazer deal to give GMCA single capital and revenue funding settlements at the next spending review, agreed directly through a single process with the government.
4. Accept the opportunity the single funding settlement will give to enable the council to have more accountability for its spending.
5. Write to our GM Mayor and nine other GM Leaders urging them to ensure Bury receives an equitable share within any single funding settlement

Members moved to vote on the amendment:

On being put with 11 Members voting for, and 36 members voting against, the Mayor declared the amendment lost.

Members voted on the substantive motion:

On being put, with 36 members voting for, and 11 Members voting against, the Mayor declared the motion carried.

(ii) Corporate Parenting in Bury

Council considered a motion received in the names of COUNCILLORS ARIF, BERNSTEIN, BROWN, DEAN, GARTSIDE, HARRIS, HUSSAIN, LANCASTER, McBRIAR, RYDEHEARD, VERNON

Members agreed to an alteration to the motion submitted by the Members detailed above that:

This Council notes:

One of the most crucial roles which we as Elected Members and as a Council as a whole have is that of corporate parents.

This is a role with significant responsibility and through our decision making and actions the children and young people who are in our care, should always be at the forefront of our minds.

During the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board, the Children In Care Council (CICC) often report that we as a council could do more to take a proactive approach for our looked after children.

The Council acknowledges that:

We take a more active role in the lives of our looked after children, providing them as much support as possible in fulfilling our duty as Corporate Parents.

As part of a more active role we must continue with participating in the lives of all the children and young people who come into our care providing help and support throughout their lives.

This Council resolves to:

Encourage all stakeholders and partners involved in decision making in relation to looked after children to meet regularly to discuss good practice and improve joined up working to improve timely and better outcomes for all. The outcome of this to be reported to the Corporate Parenting Board and Children's and Young Peoples Scrutiny Committee.

Regularly provide updates to the CICC as to decisions made by this Council and the impacts it will have on their day to day lives.

Instruct all Councillors to attend Corporate Parenting training on an annual basis to ensure a clear understanding of their role as Corporate Parents.

Ensure all Council employees understand their role in supporting Corporate Parenting initiatives such understanding to be included in annual staff appraisals.

Work with all stakeholders to provide opportunities for our looked after children.

Instruct the Chief Executive to contact Bury Football Club, as a community asset, to ascertain if tickets can be provided to our looked after children and their carers, to ensure family activities are made available.

To maintain contact with Children and Young People who have been in our care throughout their lives by sending Birthday, Christmas cards and acknowledging other issues of significance in their life's

DELETE

Offer free membership to our children in care and care leavers to Castle Leisure Centre to provide leisure activities.

ADD

Add 'Ensure Corporate Parenting champions are on all council committees in order for all decision made by Bury Council to be consulted on with our looked after children and young people.

On being put with all Members present including the Mayor voting in favour, the Mayor declared the motion carried.

**C. 31
C. 32**

**FOR INFORMATION ONLY - COUNCIL MOTION TRACKER
SCRUTINY REVIEW REPORTS AND SPECIFIC ITEMS "CALLED IN" BY
SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

There were no scrutiny review reports and specific items "called in" by scrutiny committees.

C. 33 QUESTIONS ON THE WORK OF OUTSIDE BODIES OR PARTNERSHIPS

There were no questions on the work of outside bodies or partnerships.

THE WORSHIPFUL THE MAYOR