

AGENDA FOR CABINET



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To: All Members of Cabinet

Councillors : E O'Brien (Leader and Cabinet Member, Strategic Growth) (Chair), C Cummins (Cabinet Member, Housing Services), R Gold (Customer Service, Communications and Corporate Affairs), C Morris (Cabinet Member, Culture, Economy & Skills), A Quinn (Cabinet Member, Environment, Climate Change and Operations), L Smith (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member, Children and Young People), T Tariq (Adult Care, Health and Public Service Reform), S Thorpe (Deputy Leader, Finance and Transformation) and S Walmsley (Cabinet Member, Communities and Inclusion)

Dear Member/Colleague

Cabinet

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

Date:	Wednesday, 11 March 2026
Place:	Council Chamber - Town Hall
Time:	6.00 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

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of Cabinet are asked to consider whether they have an interest in any of the matters of the Agenda and, if so, to formally declare that interest.

3 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Questions are invited from members of the public about the work of the Cabinet.

Notice of any question must be given to Democratic Services by midday on Monday, 9 March. Approximately 30 minutes will be set aside for Public Question Time, if required.

4 MEMBER QUESTION TIME

Questions are invited from Elected Members about items on the Cabinet agenda. 15 minutes will be set aside for Member Question Time, if required.

Notice of any Member question must be given to the Monitoring Officer by midday Friday 6 March.

5 MINUTES *(Pages 5 - 20)*

Minutes from the meeting held on 11th February 2026 are attached.

6 PRESTWICH VILLAGE REGENERATION PROJECT: DELEGATED AUTHORITY TO APPOINT THE THIRD-PARTY OPERATOR FOR PHASE 1A (TRAVEL HUB) *(Pages 21 - 32)*

Report of the Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth is attached.

7 PRESTWICH VILLAGE REGENERATION PROJECT: PHASE 1B & 2 APPOINTMENT OF DEMOLITION CONTRACTOR - PART A *(Pages 33 - 44)*

Report of the Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth is attached.

8 BUSINESS RATES AND COUNCIL TAX DISCRETIONARY POLICY *(Pages 45 - 64)*

Report of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation is attached.

9 WRITE OFF POLICY 2026 *(Pages 65 - 76)*

Report of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation is attached.

10 CORPORATE PLAN QUARTER THREE 2025-26 PERFORMANCE & DELIVERY *(Pages 77 - 108)*

Report of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation is attached.

11 2025-26 Q3 FINANCE POSITION *(Pages 109 - 132)*

Report of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation is attached.

12 ADULT SOCIAL CARE PROVIDER FEES *(Pages 133 - 142)*

Report of the Cabinet Member for Adult Care, Health and Public Service Reform is attached.

13 ANNUAL REVIEW OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE FEES AND CHARGES FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2026/27 *(Pages 143 - 158)*

Report of the Cabinet Member for Adult Care, Health and Public Service Reform is attached.

14 ADULT SOCIAL CARE PERFORMANCE QUARTER THREE REPORT 2025/26 *(Pages 159 - 206)*

Report of the Cabinet Member for Adult Care, Health and Public Service Reform is attached.

15 STEP FORWARD FOSTER CARERS *(Pages 207 - 216)*

Report of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children and Young People is attached.

16 HOUSING IT AND SYSTEMS - QL IMPROVEMENTS AND UPGRADE *(Pages 217 - 226)*

Report of the Cabinet Member for Housing Services is attached.

17 APPROVAL TO PROCEED WITH BURY'S INTEGRATED TRANSPORT BLOCK (ITB) MINOR WORKS ROAD SAFETY PROGRAMME OF WORKS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2026/27 *(Pages 227 - 234)*

Report of the Cabinet Member for Environment, Climate Change and Operations is attached.

18 BURY TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER (PSPO)-REVIEW *(Pages 235 - 252)*

Report of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Inclusion is attached.

19 SUPPORTING BURY'S VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY, FAITH AND SOCIAL ENTERPRISE SECTOR THROUGH THE GM VCFSE ACCORD AND INVESTMENT IN LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE ORGANISATION

PROVISION (*Pages 253 - 276*)

Report of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Inclusion is attached.

20 APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY MAYOR

To consider the appointment of Deputy Mayor for 2026/27.

**21 MINUTES OF ASSOCIATION OF GREATER MANCHESTER
AUTHORITIES / GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY**
(*Pages 277 - 308*)

To consider the minutes of meetings of the AGMA Executive Board and Greater Manchester Combined Authority held on 28 November and 12 December 2025, and 30 January 2026.

22 URGENT BUSINESS

Any other business which by reason of special circumstances the Chair agrees may be considered as a matter of urgency.

23 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To consider passing the appropriate resolution under Section 100 (A)(4), Schedule 12(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the reason that the following business involves the disclosure of exempt information as detailed against the item.

**24 PRESTWICH VILLAGE REGENERATION PROJECT: PHASE 1B & 2
APPOINTMENT OF DEMOLITION CONTRACTOR - PART B** (*Pages 309 - 360*)

Report of the Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth is attached.

Minutes of: CABINET

Date of Meeting: 11 February 2026

Present: Councillor E O'Brien (in the Chair)
Councillors C Cummins, R Gold, C Morris, A Quinn, L Smith,
T Tariq, S Thorpe and S Walmsley

Also in attendance: Councillors M Smith, A Arif, R Bernstein, D Vernon

Public Attendance: Five members of the public were present at the meeting.

Apologies for Absence: None

CA.114 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies received.

CA.115 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

CA.116 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The following question was submitted in advance of the meeting by a member of the public, Raymond Portman:

On the land adjacent to residential properties on Heywood Old Road, there is a well established population of protected and priority wildlife species, including brown hare, lapwing, common snipe, jack snipe, grey partridge, roe deer, skylark, bank vols.

Many of these species are UK priority or declining species and are native to this area. Can the Council explain how the presence of these species has been identified, assessed, and taken into account at the plan-making stage for the Simister Bowlee development framework, and how the Council can justify progressing the allocation in the absence of published ecological surveys, impact assessments, or demonstrable biodiversity net gain proposals?

A further supplementary question was submitted:

If the ecological surveys are not being completed or published will the council commit to commissioning a full seasonal appropriate survey before any planning application is determined and will allocating be recognised if significant of priority species impacted?

Councillor O'Brien reported that as part of planning assessment, biodiversity of site must take place. To ensure we are holding developers to account and allows planning committee to take this into account.

The GM ecological unit ensures these sorts of investigations and evidence are pulled together and robust enough to ensure we have the information to make informed decisions. Through biodiversity net gain we can ensure biodiversity is enhanced by the fact we have these strong legal agreements.

The following question was submitted in advance of the meeting by a member of the public, Lindsey Bothwell:

Can the Council explain how it can justify approving a substantially larger “new town” development that relies on Heywood Old Road for access, when that road has repeatedly and historically been assessed as incapable of safely accommodating additional traffic, when no material highway improvements have been made over the last 20–30 years, and when existing traffic — including diverted motorway and heavy goods vehicle traffic — already causes demonstrable safety risks, congestion, environmental harm, and structural damage to nearby homes?

By way of scale, the Simister Bowlee allocation proposes up to 1,550 new homes, which even on a conservative assumption of two cars per household could introduce in excess of 3,000 additional vehicles, rising further when multi-vehicle households and adult children are taken into account.

Responding, Councillor O'Brien reported that strategic highway modelling has indicated that the existing highway network can accommodate the level of traffic that is envisaged to come from the developments with a series of off-site highways works. These are listed in Appendix D of Places for Everyone and include:

- M60 Junction 19/A576 Middleton Road
- M62 Junction 19/A6046 Heywood Interchange
- Corridor improvements on A576 Middleton Road/Manchester Old Road in the vicinity of M60 Junction 19
- A6045 Heywood Old Road/A576
- A6045 Heywood Old Road/Langley Lane
- Active travel improvements
- Introduction of local bus services to, from and within the site

This strategic modelling was fully tested at the PfE Examination.

More detailed highways modelling will be undertaken as part of the as part of the planning application process and this may identify additional mitigation measures to improve accessibility and to mitigate highways impacts arising from the development.

Public transport and active travel will also be provided to provide alternative means of movement in and around the sites.

A further supplementary question was submitted:

It has been widely reported that there is growing frustration with governments new town policies. Traffic congestion is already severe on Heywood Old Road with extended journey time, speeding and ongoing vibration and damage to nearby homes. How can the council justify progressing the Simister Bowlee development, how is this consistent with statutory duties to prevent unacceptable harm to existing residents and with Greater Manchester's commitment on air quality and CO2 reduction.

Councillor O'Brien reported that what is being proposed is not a 'new town'. There are substantial improvements set out to the highways within the proposals. These have been tested at public examination and supported by independent experts. Confident it will mitigate an uncontrolled development.

Set out in the proposals are things the developers will have to contribute to, which we will use to hold them to account.

The following question was asked by a member of the public, Danny Jacobs

The council is reducing the live streaming of democratic meetings. I am live streaming the meeting at the moment, and have 200 viewers. The Council is not trying to maximise the number of viewers. What is more important is that we have clipped parts of the council meetings and it has been viewed more times. If we put it on the right platform we may get more viewers.

You have the money to live stream but don't have the willingness to do so. Residents won't go on the Bury Council website to view council meetings. Need to look at it as more of an archive and less as a content stream. Is that a fair assumption?

Responding, Councillor O'Brien reported that all committee meetings are public meetings and there are opportunities for public questions. All Members are elected and representatives of the public.

The Council live streams council and cabinet where key decisions get made. Where there are other meetings where significant will be made it is at the discretion of the chair for the meeting to be streamed. For example, at Overview and Scrutiny last night, the chair and committee members felt it was important for it to be live streamed so arrangements were made to do so.

When we have live streamed in the past, meetings have had a limited number of views, and we took a decision that it was not value for money. We do not think we need to expand the meetings that are livestreamed.

The following question was asked by a member of the public, Angus

As of today, is the council the legal registered owner of the Pinfold Lane library site?

Responding, Roger Frith, Assistant Director of Corporate Assets & Facilities Management reported that we have sold the land however the land registry have yet to complete the registration.

Councillor O'Brien reported that the sale has been agreed and completed by the parties.

CA.117 MEMBER QUESTION TIME

There were no Member questions submitted in advance.

CA.118 MINUTES

It was agreed:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2026 be approved as a correct record.

CA.119 ANNUAL HRA BUDGET 2026/27 & RENT SETTING

The Cabinet member for Finance and Transformation presented the report to members. The report highlights the proposed Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Annual Revenue Budget and Capital Investment Plan Programme for 2026-27, including the proposed increases in rents,

garage rents, service charges and any other relevant charges within the HRA for 2026/27 Councillor Vernon advised members that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee did scrutinise the budget at their meeting on 10 February 2026, and thanked the Director of Finance and staff for the work they had undertaken.

Councillor Mike Smith queried rent convergence and whether there is an aim to close the gap between affordable and social rent?

Neil Kissock, Director of Finance advised that there has been a consultation around it however there has been a delay in being able to implement it.

Councillor Mike Smith also sought assurance around the debt peaking on HRA, and whether this was a doomsday scenario.

Neil Kissock, Director of Finance responded that this is worst case scenario and work will be completed over the next few years around this.

Decision Cabinet:

1. Approved the 2026/27 budget for the Housing Revenue Account
2. Agreed and approve the proposed HRA Capital Investment Plan for 2026/27.
3. Approved the setting of individual social formula rents for 2026/27 based on the current National Social Rent Policy, giving a real rent increase of 4.8% with effect from 1st April 2026 (being September 2025 CPI (Consumer Price Index) 3.8% plus 1%).
4. Approved the setting of individual actual affordable rents for 2026/27 based on the current National Social Rent Policy, giving a real rent increase of 4.8% with effect from 1st April 2026.
5. Approved shared ownership rents to be increased by RPI (as at February 2026) plus 0.5% in line with provisions set out within shared ownership agreements with effect from 1 st April 2026.
6. Approved an increase in Garage rents of 4.8% with effect from 1st April 2026.
7. Approved an increase in Sheltered Management and Support Charges of 4.8% from 1 st April 2026.
8. Approved an increase in Service and Amenity Charges of 4.8% from 1st April 2026.
9. Approved an increase in Support and Heating charges of 4.8% from 1st April 2026.
10. Approved an increase in Furnished Tenancy charges of 4.8% from 1st April 2026.
11. Approved continuation of the policy that when a social rent property is re-let to a new or transferring tenant the rent level will be revised to match the formula rent (target rent) for that property.
12. Noted in accordance with the Rent Standard, that where an affordable rent property is re-let to a new or transferring tenant the rent level be set by reference to 80% of the market rent (including service charges where applicable) for a similar property at the time of letting or the formula rent for the property, whichever is the greater.
13. Approved in principle in line with Government's commitment confirmed in January 2026, the re-introduction of Rent Convergence for Bury's HRA stock, which will come into effect from April 2027, with an additional rent charge of £1 per week in 2027-28, and £2 per week from 2028-29 onwards until Rent Convergence is achieved.
15. Noted that Government has confirmed its commitment to the re-introduction of rent convergence from April 2027, with a proposed additional £1 per week charge from April 2027 and £2 per week from April 2028. Until the changes are finally confirmed the additional income has not been assumed in the revenue plan.
16. Noted that following the Cabinet decision to wind down and close Six Town Housing
17. (STH), a working group has been set up to oversee this process, led by Management Consultants Campbell-Tickell. This process will take at least 12-18 months, and at this stage it is not possible to state what implications if any

there will be for the Council's General Fund and HRA. The options as to what will happen to the remaining assets currently held by STH will be presented to Cabinet at the appropriate time for any decisions to be made.

18. Noted and approved the revisions made to the HRA 30-Year Business Plan.

Reasons for decisions:

To ensure that there is a balanced budget in place for the HRA, covering both revenue and capital requirements for 2026/27. The approval of these budget plans for 2026/27 will mean that Bury Council can continue to provide critical housing services to our current tenants and invest in maintaining and improving their homes. This sits within a core set of key policy principles for the housing service: -

- Ensure the application of the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- Continue to invest in the existing stock to maintain the Decent Homes Standard.
- Maintain and develop effective engagement with tenants.
- Continually monitor the impact of welfare changes such as Universal Credit on tenants and ensure that they have the appropriate support.
- Work with private landlords to improve their stock where appropriate.
- Undertake environmental improvements to estates if and when possible, acknowledging the impact that this can have in creating safe and clean estates.
- Support the delivery of Affordable Homes across the Borough.
- Undertake direct development, acquisition and refurbishment to bring properties back into use if appropriate and affordable.
- Create sustainable tenancies and maximise rental income collection.
- Undertake sustainability measures across the housing stock as appropriate and affordable to help address the Climate Change Emergency.

CA.120 THE COUNCIL'S 2026/27 REVENUE BUDGET AND MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY (MTFS) FOR 2027/28 THROUGH TO 2028/29

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth presented a report that sets out key elements of budget proposals. It makes available the latest financial information that will underpin the budget and MTFS and

- Proposes a legal budget that demonstrates we are making strides to reduce funding gaps and reliance on reserves
- Enables us to continue to deliver key strategic objectives
- Continues the work to support our continuing financial sustainability

Councillor Bernstein thanked the Finance Director and Councillor Thorpe for the briefings over the last few months around the budget. He sought reassurance whether Q3 was likely to increase the need to go into reserves and how challenging it would be to some of the political issues. He questioned whether there would be an argument that if we had chosen to do something about the real living wage, the call on reserves would be significantly less.

Councillor Thorpe responded that participating in real living wage is the morally right thing to do. Whilst these are some of the least paid people in our economy, we rely on them heavily for some important work. If we lost these staff wouldn't be able to look after some of the most vulnerable residents in the Borough. Councillor Thorpe assured Councillor Bernstein that nothing is off the table, and we will consider all the options.

Councillor Mike Smith queried whether the efficiencies being looked at were a short term fix. Is it more realistic that a whole rethink needs to be had about how councils are financed?

Councillor Thorpe responded that around 70% of the council's budget goes on statutory services in adult and children's social care. Demand is not abating and unlikely to do so at any point in the future. Plan over next few years is to review services to ensure they are more efficient. There is a case for reforming the system and the government have already reviewed the settlement provided for councils. Government yesterday announced additional funding for SEND for all Local Authorities.

Councillor Mike Smith queried the increase in income around EV cross pavement charges and what they are?

Councillor Thorpe advised that this was essentially setting a channel in pavements. It is being trialled in councils across both Manchester and nationally.

Councillor O'Brien confirmed that options are being explored and we will wait to see the outcomes of these trials.

Councillor Bernstein questioned the overspend in Q2 and whether this was likely to increase or reduce?

Councillor Thorpe confirmed that pressures aren't abating. Neil Kissock, Director of Finance confirmed we are not in a position to discuss Q3 at the present time. An update will be provided to the March cabinet meeting.

Councillor Bernstein observed that there had been lots of debate about housing developments and when we look at council tax income, it is significantly less than all other Local Authorities. Additional properties will help to increase the income to the council

Councillor Thorpe confirmed this was a good point. There will be challenges in next 2-3 years. Need to maintain sustainability.

Councillor O'Brien remarked that if the council had developed homes at the level to meet the demand over the last decade, it would have had the benefit of supporting council tax income and local economies.

Decision:

Cabinet:

1. Approved the Medium-Term Financial Strategy to 2028/29 and the assumptions regarding resources and spending requirements.
2. Approved the Council Tax base for Bury Council for 2026/27 of 58,709.94 Band D equivalent dwellings, this is the basis on which the Council Tax funding has been calculated (Appendix 1).
3. Approved the net revenue budget of £252.135m for 2026/27.
4. Approved the Council Tax requirement of £124.224m and the increase in Council Tax in 2026/27 of 2.99% in terms of General Council Tax and a further 2% for the Adult Social Care precept for 2026/27 (Appendix 1).
5. Approved the budget assumptions of £29.364m in 2026/27.

6. Approved new revenue budget proposal relating to additional Place Directorate income to be achieved across 3 areas: car parking, moving vehicle offences and EV cross pavement fees. Delivery plans will be brought forward for consideration by Cabinet in the new financial year, including the detail of any specific consultation exercises that
7. may be required to be undertaken. The consultation outcomes will be considered by Cabinet before implementation along with any financial implications adopted in the 2027/28 budget proposed by Cabinet to Council.
8. Noted the remaining budget gap of £21.155m over the medium-term to 2028/29.
9. Approved the use of £3.977m of reserves from the budget stabilisation reserve for 2026/27.
10. Noted the forecast position on reserves over the medium-term to 2028/29.
11. Approved the recommendations set out in the Treasury Management Strategy (Appendix 2):
 - i. To approve the Treasury Management Strategy including the associated Prudential Indicators and Annual Investment Strategy.
 - ii. To approve the Treasury Management Policy Statement.
 - iii. To approve the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy Statement.
12. Approve the Capital Strategy and the Programme for 2026/27 – 2028/29 (Appendix 3).
 - Cabinet to recommend and council to approve the use of £2m flexible use of capital receipts in 2026/27. 23.
13. Approved the Dedicated Schools Grant budget for 2026/27 at £257.345m and approved the allocations between the four funding blocks as set out in Appendix 4 of this report.
 - i. The Schools and Academies 2026/27 funding unit values as recommended by Schools Forum and detailed at Annex 1 to appendix 4.
 - ii. Approve the 2026/27 hourly rates for all early year's providers as follows: i.
14. £5.77 per hour for 3- and 4-year-olds. ii. £8.35 per hour for 2-year-olds. iii. £11.30 per hour for under 2's. 24. Note the Equality Impact Assessment for the budget report (Appendix 5).
15. Noted the Chief Finance Officer (Director of Finance) statement on the robustness of estimates and adequacy of financial reserves in setting the budget (Appendix 6).

Reasons for decisions:

The Council has a legal requirement annually to set a balanced budget and Council Tax and where necessary undertake consultation with the public, businesses, stakeholders and internally with staff and through Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

- The current assumption within the 2026/27 budget and medium term is for an ongoing 4.99% annual Council Tax increase (2.99% general precept and 2% adult social care precept). The government's Core

Spending Power calculations include the assumption that Councils will increase the Council Tax by these percentages.

- An alternative option could be made to increase its 'relevant basic amount of council tax' above the levels set out in the Provisional 2026/27 Local Government Finance Settlement published in December 2025 of 4.99%, but this would require holding a local referendum and a majority vote.
- A 1% increase or decrease in Council Tax is the equivalent to c.£1.242m

CA.121 CHILDREN'S SERVICES - YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE PROPOSAL

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children and Young People introduced the report to bring youth justice service back into Bury whilst achieving better outcomes for children and young people

Decision:

Cabinet:

1. Approved the establishment of a standalone Bury Youth Justice Service. With a target go-live date of 1 September 2026, subject to discussion and agreement with Rochdale Brough Council.
2. Approved the termination of the current Youth Justice Collaborative Agreement dated 12 th November 2015 with Rochdale Borough Council.
3. Authorise officers to identify and secure an appropriate local venue within Bury from which the Youth Justice Service will operate.
4. Delegate authority to the Executive Director for Children's Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, to take all necessary steps to implement the new service arrangement, including any TUPE transfer of staff, whilst ensuring compliance with Youth Justice Board requirements and inspection expectations.
5. Consider the proposal in line the wider Families First Partnership reforms, and the development of a targeted adolescent service which is outlined below.

Reasons for decisions:

The recommendation is driven by the need to ensure that Bury's Youth Justice provision is fully aligned with national expectations, including the Youth Justice Board's child-first, trauma informed approach and the focus on prevention, diversion, and reducing reoffending.

Establishing a local service will enable stronger oversight of quality and performance, improved partnership engagement, and greater responsiveness to the specific needs and profiles of Bury's children and young people. Delivering our own Youth Justice Service will provide us with a greater opportunity to develop the service tailored to local demographics and priorities supported by the ability to make decisions locally.

The original agreement was put in place to achieve economies of scale with shared staffing and management, training, case management tools, and the input of specialist services which would have been less affordable if Bury had delivered the service alone. In addition, working in partnership with Rochdale Council was considered to be beneficial due to joint governance arrangements with Police, Health and Education driving service improvement and performance leading to improved outcomes for young people.

Both Bury and Rochdale Children's Services now consider it to be in the best interests of both Local Authority areas to separate and deliver local Youth Justice Services.

If agreed we would take the opportunity to redesign the service under one Directorate ensuring effective use of resources aligned to local services around our wider adolescent offer for example Youth Service, Prevention, Keeping Families Together, and Complex Safeguarding ensuring a more tightly joined up approach and greater impact.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

- Option 1: Continue the partnership arrangement with Rochdale Council. This option was rejected due to limited local control, reduced visibility of performance, and challenges in ensuring services are delivered close to where Bury young people live.
- Option 2: Enter a partnership with another local authority. This option was rejected as it would continue to create dependency on external governance arrangements and would not fully support the integration of youth justice with Bury's wider children's services.
- Option 3: Commission the service from an external provider. This option was rejected due to higher costs, potential instability, and reduced direct accountability to the Council and statutory partners.

CA.122 WALSHAW DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK - CONSULTATION DRAFT

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth recommended the Members take questions of all three reports together, Member agreed with this approach.

Councillor O'Brien introduced the reports and explained that as we have heard tonight, these big decisions do cause questions and concerns.

The papers for the meeting are the detailed development frameworks that start to fill in some of the gaps around infrastructure that is required and what safeguards and assurances we can give to the public to ensure we get the right things in at the right time.

Councillor Vernon advised that members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee had a long discussion about the framework at their meeting on 10 February 2026. Queries and concerns raised at the committee covered biodiversity, infrastructure, housing and housing density. Members considered the format of publication.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee thanked officers for their work and Councillor Vernon confirmed that a further scrutiny meeting will be held to discuss the plans again as well as the Bury West Transport Framework and the Local Plan.

Councillor O'Brien agreed that the frequently asked question accompanying the consultation document would be amended and confirmed this has been completed.

Councillor Mike Smith queried the living wage and that many properties are unaffordable for residents.

Councillor O'Brien advised that the technical definition of 'affordable housing' is subjective. For some people it is affordable for others it isn't. The Council have to use planning language and terminology.

Councillor Mike Smith queried what protections were in place to prevent land banking?

Councillor O'Brien confirmed that the legal powers to the Council are limited. Developers leading on the sites have spent a lot of time, money and effort to get to this stage. Council would work to ensure these risks are limited as far as possible.

Councillor Quinn highlighted there will be a problem with a shortage of skilled individuals to undertake the building work.

Councillor O'Brien confirmed that work is being carried out in Greater Manchester to ensure skills supply is there to meet the demand alongside a £10m pot from government to focus on construction skills.

We have also had confirmation that a technical excellence college in Wigan and Leigh is being set up. The Leader is also convening a meeting with Councillor Craig and Councillor Dennett to develop this work.

Councillor O'Brien confirmed a range of property types, tenures and densities were needed to support rented and supported housing.

Councillor Morris commented that a case was made that this development wasn't needed in Walshaw, which the council agreed with. This was overruled by the planning inspectorate. Councillor Morris is pleased to see the framework come forward and will be encouraging residents to engage with the consultation.

Councillor Lucy Smith commented that this is not just talking about houses, it's talking about how we create homes and communities.

Councillor Arif expressed concerns that green belt land is not just waiting to be built on. These areas cannot be replaced once destroyed and the council must use brownfield land first.

Councillor O'Brien commented that this isn't a repeat debate about Places for Everyone as the principles have been agreed and reminded Members that over half of the Borough would remain as green belt.

Each recommendation was considered as follows -

Decision Cabinet:

1. Approved the draft Walshaw Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document (Appendix 1) as the basis for public consultation for six week period commencing on 13th February 2026.
2. Delegated power to the Executive Director of Place to make minor nonmaterial editorial amendments to the draft Walshaw Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document before consultation commences.

Reasons for decision

To enable stakeholders to have the opportunity to submit comments on the draft Walshaw Development Framework and to comply with the statutory requirements for consultation.

Alternative options considered and rejected

To not approve the WDF for consultation. This would prevent stakeholders from commenting on the WDF and would prevent the Council from being able to proceed to adopt the WDF as a Supplementary Planning Document because it is a statutory requirement that such documents must be consulted on before adoption.

CA.123 ELTON RESERVOIR DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK - CONSULTATION DRAFT

Decision

Cabinet:

1. Approved the draft Elton Reservoir Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document (Appendix 1) as the basis for public consultation for six-week period commencing on 13th February 2026.

2. Delegated power to the Executive Director of Place to make minor nonmaterial editorial amendments to the draft Elton Reservoir Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document before consultation commences.

Reasons for decisions:

To enable stakeholders to have the opportunity to submit comments on the draft Elton Reservoir Development Framework and to comply with the statutory requirements for consultation.

Alternative options considered and rejected

To not approve the ERDF for consultation. This would prevent stakeholders from commenting on the ERDF and would prevent the Council from being able to proceed to adopt the ERDF as a Supplementary Planning Document because it is a statutory requirement that such documents must be consulted on before adoption.

CA.124 SIMISTER BOWLEE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK CONSULTATION DRAFT

Decision

Cabinet:

1. Approved the draft Simister Bowlee Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document (Appendix 1) as the basis for public consultation for a six-week period commencing on 13 February 2026.
2. Delegated power to the Executive Director of Place to make minor nonmaterial editorial amendments to the draft Simister Bowlee Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document before consultation commences.

Reasons for decisions:

To enable stakeholders to have the opportunity to submit comments on the draft Simister Bowlee Development Framework and to comply with the statutory requirements for consultation.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

To not approve the SBDF for consultation. This would prevent stakeholders from commenting on the SBDF and would prevent the Council from being able to proceed to adopt the SBDF as a Supplementary Planning Document because it is a statutory requirement that such documents must be consulted on before adoption.

CA.125 BURY WEST TRANSPORT FRAMEWORK

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth introduced the report advising that on top of the development frameworks this transport framework has been produced to identify and set out the types of infrastructure we need to support the plans.

Significant challenges come with development and this report shows how we can deliver better public transport solutions across this part of the borough.

Councillor Bernstein welcomed the paper and commented that it gives reassurance that we have listened to residents and have sought to mitigate the challenges.

Councillor Walmsley welcomed the report. Area where there is piecemeal development sites that are having an impact on local residents. Shows forward planning that is needed.

Decision Cabinet:

1. Endorsed the Bury West Transport Framework and delegate authority to the Executive Director of Place to make non-material adjustments to the document as the Elton Reservoir and Walshaw projects progress.

Reasons for decisions:

The Bury West Transport Framework sets out the transport vision for the Bury West area, and its endorsement will support sound decision making through the planning process alongside the proposed Supplementary Planning Documents. The Framework will also be a critical tool in making the case for and securing the investment needed to deliver the required transport infrastructure, from a number of funding sources, including financial and nonfinancial contributions from the private sector.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

The development of a Transport Framework is a best practice planning requirement to set the vision-led strategy for these sites. The public sector has developed the Bury West Transport Framework to ensure it adequately reflects planning and transport policy requirements and can be applied to applications across these sites as they come forward. The alternative option for each developer to produce a Transport Plan for individual application areas, risks a noncohesive approach and would undermine the overall strategy to develop these sites.

CA.126 BURY FLEXI HALL - OPERATOR CONTRACT AWARD - PART A

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth introduced the report. Following public consultation, a name has been agreed for the flexi hall, 'Casewell's'.

Councillor O'Brien thanked everyone who has been part of the project up until now.

Councillor Mike Smith ask a question regarding Radcliffe Market Councillor Morris confirmed she would contact Cllr Smith to update on the matter.

Councillor Tariq highlighted that this is a significant step forward for the borough and will benefit the local community.

Councillor Walmsley welcomed the development and is assured it will improve the town centre.

Decision

Cabinet:

1. Approved the grant of a lease for a term of 15 years with an option to grant a further 10-year term to MEB to occupy the ground floor and if required part of the 1st floor for use as a food and events hall.
2. Approved a 12-month rent free period.
3. Approved the loan to MEB of up to £1.1m.
4. Delegated any minor variations to the final Heads of Terms and Key Performance
5. Indicators (KPIs) to the Assistant Director for Corporate Assets and Facilities Management.
6. Delegated the commercial terms of the loan facility to the Section 151 Officer.
7. Delegated the signing of all the required documents to complete the transaction, including the Agreement for Lease, Lease and Loan Agreement to Director of Law and Governance.
8. Noted that the name selected for Bury Flexi Hall as 'Casewells'.

Reasons for decisions:

MEB has a strong track record in delivering and operating successful food, drink and events venues, providing confidence in their ability to activate and manage Casewells effectively.

Granting the lease and enabling the associated loan for fitout works will ensure the operator can deliver a high-quality food and events venue, supporting the Council's regeneration objectives for the town centre.

Alternative options considered and rejected

- Do not proceed with the lease and loan to MEB and Bury Council operate and manage the facility directly. This option has been discounted due to lack of internal capacity and experience of operating modern food and entertainment facilities.
- Lease to another third party. The Council undertook a procurement exercise to secure best terms for a third party and this bid aligns with the Council's objectives and timescale for delivery. To rerun the exercise would delay the opening of Casewells and incur further cost to the Council and could negatively impact the Council's reputation.

CA.127 IN-HOUSE DELIVERY OF BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ON COUNCIL-OWNED LAND - PART A

The Cabinet Member for Environment, Climate Change and Operations introduced the report which sets out how these receptor sites can be brought forward through in-house delivery now that the options available to the Council have evolved following Defra's grant of Responsible Body status to Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA).

Councillor Mike Smith queried the Defra calculations Councillors Quinn and O'Brien confirmed that these were specialist calculations carried out by the GM ecology unit.

Councillor Mike Smith queried whether planning applications would be legally restricted.

Councillor Quinn confirmed no development would be allowed.

Decision Cabinet:

1. Noted the opportunities identified in relation to in-house delivery of BNG on Council owned land.
2. For the six Council-owned receptor sites, authorised the Executive Director of Place, Head of Property and Director of Law and Governance, in consultation with the relevant portfolio holders to:
 - a. engage in works to prepare the sites for delivery;
 - b. enter into an agreement with the GMCA for the commissioning of the GMCA Responsible Body service, and agree to use the service for a period of three years;
 - c. sign a legal agreement securing the sites for 30 years, if terms can be agreed; and d) submit the sites to the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs for inclusion on their register of biodiversity gain sites to enable the Council to advertise the units for sale.
3. Noted the intention to initially submit two pilot receptor sites at Hollins Mount and Chesham (if legally secured with GMCA) to the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs for inclusion on their register of biodiversity gain sites;
4. Approved the in-house self-management of the sites and authorise up-front investment required to bring these sites to market, recognising that this work will require a dedicated resource to track and manage the delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain in the Borough; and
5. Authorised the Director of Finance to ringfence income from Biodiversity Unit sales to cover 30-year management and, maintenance costs along with any profits to support resourcing demands and, where relevant, implement other nature related projects across the Borough in accordance with the Bury Biodiversity Strategy.

Reasons for decisions:

To help ensure that the benefits of biodiversity net gain from development in the Borough are secured locally, as opposed to regionally or nationally.

To improve management of, and maximise investment in, Council-owned greenspace.

To have the ability to redirect any surpluses/profits to support the growth of resources to implement other nature related projects across the Borough.

To support and facilitate the delivery of development in Bury which meets the statutory BNG requirements.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

- To take no action. The lack of opportunities for developers to deliver off-site BNG within Bury is likely to result in developers delivering this outside of the Borough meaning that Bury would not benefit from biodiversity enhancements.
- Furthermore, the Council would lose the opportunity to secure investment in and enhancement of its land.

CA.128 STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOR BURY'S LEISURE CENTRES

The Cabinet Member for Adult Care, Health and Public Services thanked everyone involved in this piece of work. The report presents a proposed strategic approach for the Council's leisure services in the context of the wider 2026/27 budget-setting process.

Councillor Quinn congratulated the team on the work completed.

Councillor Bernstein welcomed the Local Authority leisure provision but queried whether closure was an option.

Councillor Tariq responded that investment was required and there were benefits from retaining leisure facilities.

Councillor Cummins confirmed her delight in still have leisure offer in Ramsbottom and across the Borough.

Decision

Cabinet:

1. Approve enabling repair and maintenance investment totalling £4.5million across Ramsbottom (£1 million) and Castle Leisure Centre (£3.5 million), ensuring facilities remain safe, operational, and capable of supporting enhanced commercial activity.
2. Approve the implementation plan for repairs, commercialisation, and opening of the Radcliffe leisure offer within the new Radcliffe Hub.
3. Approve the commercialisation programme, including pricing changes (including a 10% increase per year over 3 years), enhanced income-generation activity, and service modernisation.
4. Note that performance and income will be monitored quarterly through the Council's financial reporting cycle, with a commitment to bring a further Cabinet report should targets not be achieved with alternative proposals.
5. Note the consultation outcomes.

Reasons for decisions:

To maintain safe, legally compliant facilities, to protect valued public health assets and to unlock commercial potential.

To deliver required savings while protecting services, to reflect consultation feedback and to improve long term sustainability of the leisure offer.

To ensure robust financial oversight, provide transparency and accountability and allow for reconsideration of options should income not materialise as planned.

To demonstrate decisions have been informed by feedback along with openness and transparency.

Enables an organised timely delivery programme, supports a coordinated transition linked to Radcliffe and ensures service can meet revenue targets.

Alternative options considered and rejected

- Reduce the estate - (e.g., close one site) to achieve savings through reduced operating costs. It was clear through the consultation that it was important to the public to retain all sites and commercialise.
- Do nothing – This would make achieving the savings unattainable.

CA.129 URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

CA.130 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Decision:

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting under Section 100 (A)(4), Schedule 12(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, for the reason that the following business involves the disclosure of exempt information as detailed against the item.

CA.131 BURY FLEXI HALL - OPERATOR CONTRACT AWARD - PART B

CA.132 IN-HOUSE DELIVERY OF BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ON COUNCIL-OWNED LAND - PART B

COUNCILLOR E O'BRIEN
Chair

(Note: The meeting started at 6.00pm and ended at 8.10pm)

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Classification: Open	Decision Type: Key
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Report to:	Cabinet	Date: 11 March 2026
Subject:	Prestwich Village Regeneration Project: Delegated Authority to Appoint the Third-Party Operator for Phase 1A (Travel Hub)	
Report of	Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth	

Summary

- 1.1 The Prestwich Village Regeneration Project will deliver a comprehensive re-development of the Prestwich Village site including the Longfield Centre. The Council has formed a Joint Venture (the JV) with Muse Places to deliver this activity. The project will deliver a new village centre and contribute to the Council's strategic aims (Bury 2030) and 'Let's Do It' Strategy.
- 1.2 Extensive progress continues to be made on the development and implementation of the project. The first phase (Phase 1A Travel Hub) remains on site with construction of the new facility still on schedule to be delivered by July 2026.
- 1.3 Once the Travel Hub has reached practical completion (PC), for it to become operational, there will need to be a management team in place from day one to oversee the day-to-day running and facilities management responsibilities.
- 1.4 It is also crucial that the third-party operator is appointed and in contract as soon as possible. This will enable them to connect with VINCI Construction UK Limited who are constructing the Travel Hub and for their input with the operational management items before PC and handover of the building, avoid abortive work and unnecessary costs to the project.
- 1.5 Further to Cabinet on 15th October 2025 that approved the recommended operations management model for the Travel Hub and consequently, the undertaking of a two-stage procurement process for appointment of an external operator, the Crown Commercial Services Framework (CSS) was agreed as the preferred route to market. The first stage (soft market engagement) is complete, and the second stage (invitation to tender [ITT] and evaluation process) is currently being undertaken.
- 1.6 Approval is therefore being requested to delegate authority to appropriate senior management officers to be able to scrutinise and approve the procurement process once complete and approve the awarding of the contract to the preferred third-party operator to avoid unnecessary delay.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that Cabinet approve:

- 2.1 Delegation of authority to Executive Director of Place in consultation with the Director of Regeneration and Project Delivery to approve the completion of the procurement process and award the contract.
- 2.2 Delegation of authority to the Director of Place in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance and the Director of Finance to finalise contractual arrangements and execute the contract.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

- 3.1 Approval of the appointment of the third-party operator is required in order for the Travel Hub to become operational once construction has reached PC and handover has taken place.
- 3.2 As per the 15th October 2025 Cabinet approval, an operator should be appointed as soon as possible in the construction delivery process to enable them to contribute to the final stages the of construction i.e. operational management items. This will also help with the smooth opening of the facility.
- 3.3 Delegating authority to the Director of Law and Governance in consultation with the Executive Director of Place and/or Director of Regeneration and Project Delivery and the Director of Finance will enable the contract to be expediently executed within required timeframes.

Alternative options considered and rejected

- 4.1 To fully complete the procurement process and seek approval at a future Cabinet meeting. This would reduce the ability for the preferred third-party operator to engage with VINCI Construction UK Ltd and reduce the contact time they have, to work together during the final stages of construction and have the potential to delay the opening of the Travel Hub.

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Background

- 5.1 As part of the Council's vision for 2030, Bury Council is working collaboratively with our communities to achieve faster growth than the national average

alongside lower levels of average deprivation. The 'Let's do It!' strategy focuses on building a better future for our children and young people, promoting inclusion, improving our environment, and delivering improvements in prosperity and quality of life.

- 5.2 The Prestwich Village Regeneration Project will deliver a framework for modern urban living, working and social enjoyment in Prestwich Village centre. It aims to bring forward a cohesive programme of regeneration that will see the development of a new village centre which is inclusive, sustainable, reflects the needs and aspirations of residents and delivers an attractive urban environment alongside a thriving local economy.
- 5.3 As noted in the Cabinet report of the 12th July 2023, the project has the potential to bring in significant capital investment which will help to deliver multi-faceted regeneration, economic growth, and environmental improvements in Prestwich Village.
- 5.4 To realise the vision, Cabinet approval was given on 13th October 2021 for the Council and Muse Places to legally form the Prestwich Regeneration LLP (the JV) to bring forward a multi-phase mixed use regeneration project. Under this arrangement, Muse Places operate as the developer for the project, delivering construction and development activity on behalf of the JV.
- 5.5 The Prestwich Village Regeneration Project consists of three phases:
 - **Phase 1A** – Delivery of a modern Travel Hub facility consolidating parking in a single town centre location and making available land at Rectory Lane for redevelopment.
 - **Phase 1B** – Delivery of new retail units including a market hall, new leisure/community facilities, a modern new home for the Prestwich Library and new attractive public realm.
 - **Phase 2** – Delivery of 248 new homes.
- 5.6 The Travel Hub represents the first phase of development of the Prestwich Village Regeneration scheme. It is currently under construction by VINCI Construction UK Limited following successful design, planning and contractor procurement activities and will be completed July 2026.
- 5.7 The Travel Hub must be operational from day one so the third-party operator must have been appointed and be in contract well in advance of this day. This is to ensure that post PC and handover of the building the facility is open to the public. It is vital there is parking provision in Prestwich Village ahead of the delivery of Phase 1B and Phase 2 as this will see the removal of the one remaining surface car park (Longfield car park) to facilitate construction of the rest of the project.

- 5.8 It is also of importance that the third-party operator is in place as soon as possible as this will enable them to connect with VINCI Construction UK Limited who are constructing the Travel Hub. The operator's input will be crucial to the operational management items before PC and handover of the building which will avoid abortive work and unnecessary costs to the project.
- 5.9 The operational management items will include:
- Security requirements – roller shutters, access control etc.
 - Payment method e.g. the requirement of ticketing machines.
 - Signage.
 - Entry and exit point management.
 - MEP requirements e.g. camera locations.

Procurement Process

- 5.10 On 15th October 2025 Cabinet approved the recommended operations management model for the Travel Hub, which was the use of an external, specialist travel hub operator as this represents best value for money for the Council. The report explains in detail the reasons for this recommendation.
- 5.11 The same Cabinet report approved the undertaking of a two-stage procurement process for appointment of an external operator covering an initial soft market testing process followed by an external competitive procurement in-keeping with Bury Council's Contract Procedure Rules to ensure Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR 2015) compliance.
- 5.12 In consultation with the Council's Procurement Service, the Crown Commercial Services Framework (CSS) was agreed as the recommended route to market given the nature of the service that needed to be procured.
- 5.13 The first stage (soft market engagement) ran from 31st October 2025 to 21st November 2025. This involved an Expression of Interest process supported by an established industry expert to ensure that the procurement scope/technical specification is tested, is effective, represents value for money and is aligned with wider development aspirations for the Prestwich Village Regeneration scheme. Of the four suppliers on the relevant LOT on the framework, this resulted in a positive agreement to the draft scope/technical specification, two non-responses and one declined to respond.
- 5.14 The second stage (invitation to tender and evaluation process) is currently being undertaken. It was launched on 27th January 2026 and after the inclusion of a period for clarification questions within the timescale, the opportunity closed on 27th February 2026.
- 5.15 The submitted bids are currently being evaluated via an evaluation panel consisting of officers from several disciplines i.e. Regeneration, Parking Services and Procurement. The industry expert is supporting the process

which is following the principles of the Most Economically Advantageous Tender and being assessed across three areas: Qualification, Technical, and Commercial. There is a split in weightings Quality, Price and Social Value and the award of the resultant contract will be on the basis of the 'Most Economically Advantageous Tender'.

- 5.16 Post evaluation, the remaining timescale ahead of appointing the preferred third-party operator is:

Action	Timescale
Consensus Call with CCS to determine final scores following evaluation	w/c 9 th March 2026
CCS Award Recommendation Report and approval	w/c 16 th March 2026
Outcome letters sent and draft contract to preferred operator	w/c 16 th March 2026
Standstill period	w/c 16 th March – w/c 23 rd March 2026
Proposed Award Date of contract	31 st March 2026
Expected execution of contract by both parties	3 rd April 2026
Expected commencement of contract	w/c 6 th April 2026

The expected commencement timescale for the contract for the preferred operator post evaluation and reporting will be the start April 2026, at which point the preferred third-party operator will begin working with UK Vinci Construction Ltd to finalise design items ahead of the Travel Hub becoming operational.

Delegated Authority

- 5.17 To ensure that the preferred third-party operator is in contract as soon as possible and to enable Bury Council to meet the associated procurement requirements and timescale, approval is being sought to delegate authority to award and execute the contract.

Bury Council's Procurement Service will support the work required as appropriate.

- 5.18 As previously explained in this report, it is so important that the Council meets the timescales for the tender process and the preferred third-party operator is able to work with VINCI Construction UK Limited to ensure that the relevant operational management matters are in place prior to the opening of the Travel Hub. The latter will avoid abortive work by VINCI Construction UK Limited and unnecessary associated costs, as well as the potential need for additional work by the third-party operator that will also potentially result in additional operational costs that will have to be met.

Social Value

- 6.1 The project has a Social Value Vision Statement that quantifies the overall Social Value that it has the potential to bring to the local community in terms of new jobs and additional local spend, as well as the broader social, economic and environmental value benefits. This was previously established alongside Bury Council's Social Value Strategy in order to identify priorities.
 - 6.2 There is also a Prestwich Village Construction Social Value Action Plan that covers the expected outcomes, measures, associated monetary values and delivery mechanisms to ensure that all construction phases meet their stated objectives. Such outcomes and associated targets will be discussed with the selected contractor and form each action plan that will be part of the contract and regularly monitored.
 - 6.3 This document will be in line with the Council's Social Value Strategy.
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Links with the Corporate Priorities:

- 7.1 The redevelopment of Prestwich Village supports delivery of the 'Let's Do It!' strategy and the four principles that underpin it as they all have a correlation to how the Council will design the future of our towns:

Local Neighbourhoods:

The Let's Do It strategy commits to strengthening neighbourhoods, improving the quality of place, and creating environments where residents can live well.

The Prestwich Travel Hub contributes to this priority through:

- Acting as the first major milestone in a once-in-a-generation regeneration that will reposition Prestwich as "one of the best places to live and spend time in the North-West," enhancing the local environment and community offer.
- Introducing infrastructure that significantly improves local accessibility, including modernised parking, enhanced cycle provision, and integration with wider transport networks.
- Ensuring construction practices are delivered in a way that minimises disruption to residents and neighbours, with works planned "as quietly and swiftly as possible" to reduce local impact during the build period.

These actions collectively support the creation of vibrant, accessible, and resilient neighbourhoods, consistent with the goals of the Bury 2030 Community Strategy.

Enterprise to drive economic growth and inclusion:

The strategy sets an ambition for faster economic growth, greater inclusion, and stronger local business ecosystems.

The Prestwich Travel Hub supports these ambitions by:

- Serving as a key enabler for unlocking future phases of the £100m Prestwich regeneration scheme, catalysing further investment and commercial activity in the village centre.
- Contributing directly to local job growth, with 130 construction jobs already created and an estimated 350 new jobs to follow as regeneration progresses.
- Enhancing access to local businesses through improved transport connectivity, helping increase footfall and economic participation.
- Providing modern, inclusive mobility infrastructure—including EV charging points, cycle storage and car club facilities—which reduces transport barriers and broadens access to employment and services across the borough.

These outcomes support a more dynamic local economy in line with the strategy's economic and social inclusion goals.

Delivering Together:

A core pillar of Let's Do It is collaborative delivery across public services, partners, businesses, and communities.

The Prestwich Travel Hub exemplifies this through:

- Delivery via Prestwich Regeneration LLP, a partnership between Bury Council and Muse, with construction led by VINCI Construction UK Limited and funding secured through the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS), demonstrating strong multi-agency collaboration.
- Cross-departmental coordination within the Council, including highways, regeneration, commercial asset management, property and parking services, ensuring unified delivery of the project.
- Ongoing communication with residents and local businesses through programme updates, road closure notifications and mitigation planning, ensuring a shared approach to managing the impacts of regeneration.

This partnership-led approach reflects the strategy's intent to deliver public services as "one system" with communities.

A Strength-Based Approach

The Bury 2030 Strategy emphasises valuing local strengths, skills, assets, businesses, and community identity.

The Prestwich Travel Hub contributes by:

- Building on Prestwich’s strong local identity and existing assets to deliver a long-term transformation that enhances the village’s character and appeal.
- Supporting environmental ambitions through low-carbon construction, UK-sourced materials, EV charging and active travel infrastructure, aligning with Greater Manchester’s wider Bee Network and sustainability goals.
- Strengthening local economic capabilities, with 58% of construction supply chain spend directed to local businesses, reinforcing local capacity and resilience.
- Providing 600+ hours of training to workers on site, enhancing local skills and supporting residents to benefit from regeneration-related opportunities.

These actions demonstrate how the development leverages and enhances the strengths within the Prestwich community and local economy.

Equality Impact and Considerations:

- 8.1 A full Equality Impact Assessment was completed by a third party as part of planning permission for the Prestwich Regeneration project. This identified some potential temporary negative impacts with mitigations during the demolition and construction phase resulting in reduced or eliminated negative impacts during this phase.
- 8.2 There are no outstanding equalities concerns or considerations at this stage.

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

- 9.1 One of the project’s objectives is to deliver a sustainable development. As noted in the report to the 12th July 2023 Cabinet, delivering sustainable developments is now a primary goal for the Prestwich Regeneration LLP. It has adopted Muse Places’ Sustainability Strategy which includes a Sustainable Development Brief and Sustainable Action Plan which will be utilised on the project – both making up the Sustainable Development Strategy.
- 9.2 The Planning and Regeneration Statement submitted as part of the hybrid planning application provides summary detail on the environmental impact of the project, including carbon emissions and biodiversity. It states that:

“The project will be low and net zero carbon by design – sustainability and carbon reduction are fundamental to the proposals. Proposed measures include new energy and water efficient buildings to minimise carbon in operation, the use of sustainable building materials to reduce upfront embodied carbon, photovoltaic panels and air source heat pumps.”

“The proposals for Prestwich Village will secure a significant increase in biodiversity when compared with what is on the site at the moment. The proposals will uplift biodiversity by more than 40%. This will be supported by significant levels of new tree planting, open spaces and public spaces where people and nature can thrive.”

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Submitted bids not meeting the requirements of the scope/specification.	Soft market testing stage.
Not meeting the procurement process timescale.	<p>Regular reviews of the timelines for each step of the process with Procurement and Legal Services.</p> <p>Delegated authority to the Director of Law and Governance in consultation with the Executive Director of Place and/or Director of Regeneration and Project Delivery and the Director of Finance to finalise contractual arrangements and execute the contract.</p>
Delay in appointing the preferred third-party operator post leading to reduced/no time for them to work with VINCI Construction UK Limited that could delay the opening of the Travel Hub.	Legal Services will be instructed ahead of schedule to ensure that the contract is executed by the required date.

Legal Implications:

- 10.1 As a contracting authority, the Council is required to adhere to relevant procurement law in procuring goods, works and services, in addition to following its own Contract Procedure Rules. Both the Procurement Act 2023, and its predecessor the Public Contract Regulations 2015 provide for the utilisation of a Framework as a compliant route to market.
- 10.2 Cabinet can delegate the contract award decision under the Council’s Constitution and Scheme of Delegations. Approving the recommendation would enable the award decision to be made by the delegated decision maker within

the parameters already agreed by Cabinet, and in accordance with the Council’s Contract Procedure Rules. The delegated officer must ensure that the procurement has been conducted lawfully and in accordance with the published evaluation criteria. Delegation avoids the need to return to Cabinet and does not present additional risk, provided that the award is within the scope of the approvals already given.

Financial Implications:

11.1 As the procurement process is still on-going, the financial implications associated with the delivery of the contract are not yet finalised.

11.2 The financial implications associated with the finalised contract will be set out in the delegated report (subject to Cabinet approval to delegate the decision). However, it is anticipated the external car park operator costs will be fully recovered from car parking income collected from the Prestwich Travel Hub.

Appendices:

There are no appendices for this report.

Background papers:

- Prestwich Regeneration – Joint Venture (Parts A and B) October 2021.
- Prestwich Village Regeneration – Progress Update and Draft Development Plan July 2023.
- Prestwich Village Regeneration Scheme: Delivery of Phase 1A (Travel Hub) – Legal Structure and Funding Approval (Parts A and B) July 2024.
- Procurement of Third-Party Operator for Phase 1A (Travel Hub) October 2025

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

Term	Meaning
Prestwich Regeneration LLP (JV)	The Joint Venture company that comprises of Bury Council and Muse Places Ltd that has been established to deliver the Prestwich Village Regeneration Project.
PC	Practical Completion – the stage in a construction contract when the works are finished, save for minor defects but allowing occupation of the building for its intended purpose.
ITT	Invitation to Tender – a formal, structured and competitive procurement process to invite supplies to submit offers for goods, works or services.
CCS	Crown Commercial Services Framework – a framework that supports the public sector achieve

Term	Meaning
	best value when undertaking procurement exercises.
PCR 2015	The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 is the primary legislation governing public sector procurement in the UK for contracts above certain thresholds, ensuring processes are fair, transparent and competitive.
LOT	A specific category or subdivision within a larger procurement framework separating products and services by subject.
CRSTS	City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement – a UK Government programme to transform local transport networks.
MEP	Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing linked to building systems.
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment – this is a mandatory procedure for large-scale development projects likely to have environmental effects. An Environmental Statement is submitted with the planning application.

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Classification: Open	Decision Type: Key
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Report to:	Cabinet	Date: 11 March 2026
Subject:	Prestwich Village Regeneration Project: Phase 1B & 2 Appointment of Demolition Contractor Part A	
Report of	Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth	

Summary

- 1.1 The Prestwich Village Regeneration Project will deliver a comprehensive re-development of the Prestwich Village site including the Longfield Centre. The Council has formed a Joint Venture (the JV) with Muse Places to deliver this activity. The project will deliver a new village centre and contribute to the Council's strategic aims (Bury 2030) and 'Let's Do It' Strategy.
- 1.2 Extensive progress continues to be made on the development and delivery of the project. The first phase (Phase 1A Travel Hub) remains on site with construction of the new facility still on schedule to be delivered by July 2026.
- 1.3 Work has continued at an incredibly fast pace to prepare for the delivery of the remaining development phases (Phases 1B and 2). This, as previously explained in the approved Cabinet report 3rd December 2025 is to hit three Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) milestones by end March 2026 to secure funding from the GMCA. These milestones are – a meaningful start on site of demolition works (of the Longfield Centre), submission of the planning application for the next phase and early contractor engagement.
- 1.4 Further to the approval at Cabinet on 3rd December 2025, preparation work in relation to the meaningful start on site of demolition works has been carried out at pace. This milestone has now reached a point where approval from Cabinet is required for the appointment of the demolition contractor following a Public Contracts Regulations 2015-compliant procurement process through the Pagabo National Framework for Demolition and Land Remediation- Lot 4 (Pagabo Framework for the North) to keep the delivery of the project on track.
- 1.5 Approval at Cabinet is requested due to the value of the current demolition contract (£537,437.14 excluding VAT) requiring a key decision to appoint DSM Demolition Limited (company number 02266325) to carry out the required demolition of the Longfield Shopping Centre, noting that this will be undertaken in two phases as explained further in this report. This is a follow-up report to the one approved in December 2025.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1 Accept the tender process that was undertaken via a Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR 2015) was a compliant process, and approve the appointment of DSM Demolition Limited (company number 02266325) to undertake the demolition works package with a total estimated contract value of £537,437.14 excluding VAT subject to the agreement of the contract terms and conditions.
- 2.2 Accept there may be a small adjustment required to fix the above contract sum based on an outstanding R&D (Refurbishment/Demolition) survey that cannot be fully carried out until the Prestwich Library vacates its current location.
- 2.3 Delegate authority to the Director of Law and Governance in consultation with the Executive Director of Place or Director of Regeneration and Project Delivery to finalise contractual arrangements and execution of the contract.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

- 3.1 Approval of the demolition contractor is required for there to be a meaningful start on site of demolition works ahead of the end March 2026 to meet one of the three GMCA milestones to secure funding to deliver the next phase of the Prestwich Village Regeneration Project.
- 3.2 Delegating authority to the Director of Law and Governance in consultation with the Executive Director of Place or Director of Regeneration and Project Delivery will enable the contract to be executed without delay and within the required timeframes.

Alternative options considered and rejected

- 4.1 No alternative way(s) of selecting the demolition contractor has been considered as the tender process was via a framework ensuring procurement was conducted in a fair, transparent and open manner.
- 4.2 Delegation to key senior officers ensures expedient appointment of the demolition contractor to meet GMCA timescales. As there is currently no clear alternative route to external funding for the project, other than that which is on offer from the GMCA, meeting their timescales is essential to the success of the project to secure full project delivery.

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Background

- 5.1 As part of the Council's vision for 2030, Bury Council is working collaboratively with our communities to achieve faster growth than the national average alongside lower levels of average deprivation. The 'Let's do It!' strategy focuses on building a better future for our children and young people, promoting inclusion, improving our environment, and delivering improvements in prosperity and quality of life.
- 5.2 The Prestwich Village Regeneration Project will deliver a framework for modern urban living, working and social enjoyment in Prestwich Village centre. It aims to bring forward a cohesive programme of regeneration that will see the development of a new village centre which is inclusive, sustainable, reflects the needs and aspirations of residents and delivers an attractive urban environment alongside a thriving local economy.
- 5.3 As noted in the Cabinet report of the 12th July 2023, the project has the potential to bring in significant capital investment which will help to deliver multi-faceted regeneration, economic growth, and environmental improvements in Prestwich Village.
- 5.4 To realise the vision, Cabinet approval was given on 13th October 2021 for the Council and Muse Places to legally form the Prestwich Regeneration LLP (the JV) to bring forward a multi-phase mixed use regeneration project. Under this arrangement, Muse Places operate as the developer for the project, delivering construction and development activity on behalf of the JV.
- 5.5 The Prestwich Village Regeneration Project consists of three phases:
- **Phase 1A** – Delivery of a modern Travel Hub facility consolidating parking in a single town centre location and making available land at Rectory Lane for redevelopment.
 - **Phase 1B** – Delivery of new retail units including a market hall, new leisure/community facilities, a modern new home for the Prestwich Library and new attractive public realm.
 - **Phase 2** – Delivery of 248 new homes.

Progress to Date

Phase 1A (Travel Hub)

- 5.6 Since a progress report was provided as part of the Cabinet report 3rd December 2025, significant progress continues with the construction of Phase 1A (Travel Hub), with practical completion still expected July 2026.

- 5.7 Further to approval given at Cabinet 15th October 2025 to undertake a two-stage procurement process for the appointment of an external operator for the Travel Hub, the procurement process is underway through the Crown Commercial Service Framework. Stage One (soft market testing) is complete with a level of interest from third-party operators shown and Stage Two (full competitive tender) commenced on 26th January 2026 with expected completion i.e. appointment of the operator by early-mid April 2026.

Phase 1B & 2 (Commercial and Residential)

- 5.8 As already mentioned, this phase is incumbent on the JV hitting three GMCA milestones by end March 2026 which are:

1. **Planning Permission:** The Planning Application for the project should have been submitted to the Local Planning Authority for validation.
2. **Procurement:** The Bury/Muse Places Joint Venture (JV) should have selected a main contractor, agreeing the relevant Pre-Construction Services Agreement (PCSA).
3. **Demolition:** Plans for demolition activity on the site should be advanced with a meaningful start on site having commenced.

- 5.9 **Planning Permission** – work has been underway at an incredibly fast pace with the support of a planning consultant and architect to achieve the most efficient route to realising full planning permission which as reported in the Cabinet report 3rd December 2025 is to carry out a full EIA Planning Submission for Phases 1B and 2 combined. This is building on designs already developed and approved in full for Phase 1B and reflect any scope changes required to ensure that the project is deliverable alongside Phase 2 that currently has outline planning permission.

The submission of the planning application to the Local Planning Authority was made on 27th February 2026 following a short period of further community consultation.

- 5.10 **Procurement** – through the Pagabo Framework for the North, work is on track to achieve early contractor involvement through a PCSA for the main works contractor. There will be one preferred contractor selected that will deliver both the main works for Phase 1B and Phase 2 to achieve efficiency and value for money.

Progress to date through the framework confirms a very satisfactory level of interest for both contracts. The evaluation process is complete with the resultant tender report pending approval from the JV to enable progression to appointment.

5.11 **Demolition** – all the remaining tenants in the Longfield Centre have been served notice with full vacant possession expected by no later than 7th April 2026. Some tenants previously had to vacate due to the condition of the Longfield Suite roof. The approval of this report will enable the selected demolition contractor to be appointed, and for the required meaningful start of demolition to commence on site before end March 2026. The demolition of the centre will be undertaken in two phases with works complete by Summer 2026:

- Phase 1: End March 2026 – mid May 2026.
- Phase 2: Mid-April 2026 – start June 2026.

Demolition activity on the site is permissible under the existing Planning Application granted in July 2024. All discharge of planning conditions in relation to demolition from this approval are complete.

Procurement Process

Pre-tender Process

5.13 Due to the demanding timescales associated with the three milestones and to demonstrate that a PCR 2015 compliant process was followed, as well as ensuring an expedient route to market was achieved, two frameworks were initially explored – the Salford Demolition Framework that all GM councils have access to and the Pagabo Framework for the North.

5.14 The Salford Demolition Framework was discounted in favour of the Pagabo Framework for the North as the priority is timescale. Although the former was accessible and compliant, the latter had a shorter timeframe. Both frameworks had suitable demolition contractors on them and are viable routes to market.

5.15 The Pagabo Framework for the North has eight demolition contractors on it who all have the ability and technical experience to successfully and safely carry out the required demolition works.

5.16 An Expression of Interest was issued to the contractors on 22nd January 2026 and seven out of the eight confirmed an intention to participate in the tender process. Tender documents were then issued to the seven parties on 29th January 2026 with a tender return date of 18th February 2026. All seven parties completed a tender return but some of the returns were incomplete.

Procurement Route

5.17 The main objective of the procurement route was to quickly ascertain a good price and demonstrate value for money as well as confirming that best value had been achieved by quality (methodology, mobilisation, timescale etc). On

this basis, a quality and commercial scoring assessment was used with a 70% (Quality) / 30% (Commercial i.e. price) split respectively.

5.18 The 70% Quality criteria breakdown consisted of:

- Schedule of Amendments (a document used in construction to record, organise and agree changes to standard contract terms to ensure clarity, risk allocation and legal validity).
- Project Team CVs.
- Case studies.
- Social Value.

5.19 To achieve a strong level of competition, a single stage competitive tender was used which resulted in seven tender returns being received.

Evaluation

5.20 Following tender evaluation, tender adjudication and a moderation session, DSM Demolition Limited were the ***Most Economically Advantageous Tender*** achieving the highest score against the tender criteria. Although they ranked second on Quality (64% out of 70%) and third on Commercial (25.92% out of 30%) achieving a combined total of 90.32%; second place overall scored 87.59%.

5.21 DSM Demolition Limited have priced within the value approved at Cabinet on 3rd December 2025 (£1m). This is below the expected cost and is a current tender adjudicated price of £537,437.14 excluding VAT. However, there may be a further small adjustment required to fix the contract sum based on an outstanding R&D (Refurbishment/Demolition) survey that locates all asbestos-containing materials before demolition commenced. This cannot be fully carried out and completed until the Prestwich Library vacates its current location in the Longfield Centre. This adjustment will not exceed the £1m approval.

5.22 DSM Demolition Limited also submitted a fully compliant and well-ordered tender, followed tender instructions properly and were the only contractor to show a start on site within the required timescale.

5.23 The Part B report contains a copy of the full tender analysis and report which is commercial sensitive and is restricted under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Social Value

6.1 The project has a Social Value Vision Statement that quantifies the overall Social Value that it has the potential to bring to the local community in terms of new jobs and additional local spend, as well as the broader social, economic

and environmental value benefits. This was previously established alongside Bury Council's Social Value Strategy to identify priorities.

6.2 There will also be a Prestwich Village Construction Social Value Action Plan (as there is for Phase 1A) that covers the expected outcomes, measures, associated monetary values and delivery mechanisms to ensure that all construction phases meet their stated objectives. Such outcomes and associated targets will be discussed with the selected contractor and form each action plan that will be part of the contract and regularly monitored.

6.3 Both documents will be in line with the Council's Social Value Strategy.

Links with the Corporate Priorities:

7.1 The redevelopment of Prestwich Village supports delivery of the 'Let's Do It!' strategy and the four principles that underpin it as they all have a correlation to how the Council will design the future of our towns:

Local Neighbourhoods: The delivery of the project will support the Council fulfil the aims of the neighbourhood delivery model, making the borough a safe place to live, putting the borough on track for carbon neutrality and building houses that are homes.

In summary, the project will:

- Provide a new community hub that will re-provide a modern-day library, adult learning provision, community space and health related services which will be a true connection to the community and integrated public service teams in the village centre.
- Build new homes will endeavour to meet the eco-homes standard and be high quality, carbon neutral and affordable.
- Promote active travel – provision of a travel hub and walking and cycling routes that will connect people with local amenities. Design a new village centre that will include 'secure by design' principles to allow people to feel safe and secure.

Enterprise to drive economic growth and inclusion: The project will:

- Create more flexible and innovative/digital workspaces for local entrepreneurs to grow.
- Modern retail space to encourage more new and independent businesses to open and remain in Prestwich.
- Invest in the physical infrastructure and work with key stakeholders such as Transport for Greater Manchester to enable local people to access employment and training opportunities to contribute to the growth of the local economy.

Delivering Together: The project will:

- Make sure that everyone's voice is heard via community engagement/consultation at various stages of the development of the project and through a variety of media platforms, including a dedicated website.
- Develop new buildings which will promote the use of them as community assets i.e. community hub, market hall and public realm which will in turn, support community involvement and organisations and connect people to them.
- Provide the opportunity to drive digital inclusion using the latest technology in the new buildings.
- Provide better transport connectivity through its design and involvement of the Active Travel agenda.

A Strength-Based Approach: The project will:

- Promote community wealth building and community capacity as community groups have and will continue to be encouraged to be part of the community engagement/consultation processes.
- Build on previous links to development the project that have been made with Bury VCFA.
- Provide flexible community space in the community hub and outdoor space for events that will promote community inclusion within the village.
- Recognise the importance of population health due to the likely relocation of the existing NHS services into the community hub building, as well as providing the opportunity to increase health provision in the village.

Equality Impact and Considerations:

- 8.1 A full Equality Impact Assessment was completed by a third party as part of planning permission for the Prestwich Regeneration project. This identified some potential temporary negative impacts with mitigations during the demolition and construction phase resulting in reduced or eliminated negative impacts during this phase.
- 8.2 There are no outstanding equalities concerns or considerations at this stage.

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

- 9.1 One of the project's objectives is to deliver a sustainable development. As noted in the report to the 12th July 2023 Cabinet, delivering sustainable developments is now a primary goal for the Prestwich Regeneration LLP. It has adopted Muse Places' Sustainability Strategy which includes a Sustainable

Development Brief and Sustainable Action Plan which will be utilised on the project – both making up the Sustainable Development Strategy.

- 9.2 The Planning and Regeneration Statement submitted as part of the hybrid planning application provides summary detail on the environmental impact of the project, including carbon emissions and biodiversity. It states that:

“The project will be low and net zero carbon by design – sustainability and carbon reduction are fundamental to the proposals. Proposed measures include new energy and water efficient buildings to minimise carbon in operation, the use of sustainable building materials to reduce upfront embodied carbon, photovoltaic panels and air source heat pumps.”

“The proposals for Prestwich Village will secure a significant increase in biodiversity when compared with what is on the site at the moment. The proposals will uplift biodiversity by more than 40%. This will be supported by significant levels of new tree planting, open spaces and public spaces where people and nature can thrive.”

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
<p>Financial – the Council are yet to receive a Grant Funding Agreement (GFA) to secure the required funds from the GMCA.</p> <p>The Council have been given comfort at a senior level by the GMCA that funds will be assigned following the completion of the three milestones and for the purposes of this report, a start on site of demolition.</p> <p>Council monies previously committed as underwrite costs remain considered ‘<i>at risk</i>’ until the GFA is complete. Should the GMCA funds not be made available, the cost will fall on Bury Council in its entirety.</p>	<p>The delivery plan for the milestones is on track and will be achieved in the timescale scheduled by GMCA.</p> <p>Collaborative activity between the JV and Council officers is on-going at pace with regular reporting to the GMCA who is fully sighted on progress and have no concerns.</p> <p>Significant comfort has been given to Bury Council and the Prestwich JV from the GMCA in terms of funding availability.</p> <p>Cabinet gave approval 3rd December 2025 for the underwriting of costs to enable the milestones to be met to secure the funding.</p>
<p>Financial – the cost of demolition exceeds the approved cost underwrite figure of circa £1m (Cabinet report 3rd December 2025).</p>	<p>The preferred demolition contractor sum is £537,437.14.</p>

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Delivery – site conditions, including unforeseen conditions resulting in cost increases.	Site investigations, appropriate cost planning and contractor engagement, form of contract, warranties etc.
Delivery – supplier risk i.e. availability of specialist contractors.	Effective procurement strategy and robust contractual arrangements including due diligence.
Permissions – delay in discharging pre-commencement planning conditions (demolition) that effect a start on site.	Regular meetings pre-contract have taken place to ensure timescales are met. The application to discharge the conditions linked to demolition (under the full planning permission previously granted for Phase 1B) has been made and all conditions have been discharged.

Legal Implications:

- 10.1 As a contracting authority, the Council is required to adhere to relevant procurement law in procuring goods, works and services, in addition to following its own Contract Procedure Rules. Both the Procurement Act 2023, and its predecessor the Public Contract Regulations 2015 provide for the utilisation of a Framework as a compliant route to market.
- 10.2 Pagabo Framework for the North was published in November 2021 and is therefore governed by the Public Contract Regulations 2015. The award that the Council now seeks to make to DSM Demolition Limited has followed a compliant route to procuring of these works.

Financial Implications:

- 11.1 In the December 2025 Cabinet report on the Prestwich Village Regeneration Project: Phase 1B and 2 Development Strategy, the Council agreed to underwrite the demolition costs of up to £1m, to be reimbursed from the GMCA Growth Fund (subject to a successful bid). The cost detailed within this report of £0.537m falls within that funding envelope.
- 11.2 The December report assumed that the bid would be successful and the Council would not have to underwrite the demolition costs. If the bid is unsuccessful, the Council will incur unbudgeted, on-going revenue costs associated with this expenditure.
-

Appendices:

Tender Report – Part B.

Background papers:

- Prestwich Regeneration – Joint Venture (Parts A and B) October 2021.
- Prestwich Village Regeneration – Progress Update and Draft Development Plan July 2023.
- Prestwich Village Regeneration Scheme: Delivery of Phase 1A (Travel Hub) – Legal Structure and Funding Approval (Parts A and B) July 2024.
- Prestwich Village Regeneration Scheme: Phase 1B and 2 Development Strategy December 2025.

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

Term	Meaning
Prestwich Regeneration LLP (JV)	The Joint Venture company that comprises of Bury Council and Muse Places Ltd that has been established to deliver the Prestwich Village Regeneration Project.
GMCA	Greater Manchester Combined Authority – made up of the ten Greater Manchester councils and the Mayor who work with local services, businesses, communities and other partners to improve the city region.
PCR 2015	The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 is the primary legislation governing public sector procurement in the UK for contracts above certain thresholds, ensuring processes are fair, transparent and competitive.
Expression of Interest	A formal document used in procurement to express interest in a project. It acts as a preliminary/pre-qualification step before a full proposal is requested.
PCSA	Pre-Construction Services Agreement – a contract that allows for the appointment of a contractor to undertake pre-construction services in advance of the main Building Contract.
VP	Vacant possession – when a property is delivered empty of people and possessions by an agreed date.
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment – this is a mandatory procedure for large-scale development projects likely to have environmental effects. An Environmental Statement is submitted with the planning application.

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Classification: Open	Decision Type: Key
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Report to:	Cabinet	Date: 11 March 2026
Subject:	Business Rates and Council Tax Discretionary Policy	
Report of	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation	

Summary

In accordance with Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 and in addition to any national relief schemes, the council can exercise discretion to provide additional reductions to the amounts of Business Rates due to be paid by ratepayers.

The Local Government Act 2003 extended the Council discretion to allow discretionary Council Tax discount to be awarded where the Council sees fit.

The Council directly contributes to the cost of any discretionary relief awarded, therefore decisions must take into account the Council's overall financial position, the interests of the borough's taxpayers, and alignment with the priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Strategy.

In order to safeguard the above, it is critical to have the Council's intended use of discretionary support clearly outlined within a policy document, and for this to be regularly reviewed and updated to account for national and local priority shifts.

It is a number of years since the council reviewed and/or updated their DRR policy, leading to a requirement to update the policy for the coming financial year.

Furthermore, the policy must be adopted on the 1st April of the given financial year.

Recommendation(s)

1. That Cabinet makes a recommendation to Council to approve the new Business Rates and Council Tax Discretionary policy from 1st April 2026.
2. That Cabinet note that adoption of the policy must be made by Full Council.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

There is a governance requirement for the council to hold an up to date and robust DRR policy.

Alternative options considered and rejected

N/A

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Background

In accordance with Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 and in addition to any national relief schemes, the council can exercise discretion to provide additional reductions to the amounts of Business Rates due to be paid by ratepayers.

The Local Government Act 2003 extended the Council discretion to allow discretionary Council Tax discount to be awarded where the Council sees fit and where it can be demonstrated that previously, attempts to secure other Council Tax discounts, exemptions and Local Council Tax Support have been made.

The Council directly contributes to the cost of any discretionary relief awarded, therefore decisions must take into account the Council's overall financial position, the interests of the borough's taxpayers, and alignment with the priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Strategy.

In order to safeguard the above, it is critical to have the Council's intended use of discretionary support clearly outlined within a policy document, and for this to be regularly reviewed and updated to account for national and local priority shifts.

In accordance with the Non-Domestic Rating (Discretionary Relief) Regulations 1989, all concerned ratepayers were provided at least 12 months' notice of the change to the policy in writing and prior to 1st April 2025.

Therefore, an updated DRR Policy has been drafted by officers, with the intention of this coming into force on 1st April 2026.

Links with the Corporate Priorities:

3. Reduce Child Deprivation & Inclusive Economic Growth– By providing financial support through Business Rates Relief to not for profit and charitable organisations, the policy helps enable sustainability for organisations supporting families who are suffering from deprivation, as well as employing residents in paid employment.
-

Equality Impact and Considerations:

A full EIA has been completed which has identified no material impact on any characteristic except for the socio-economically vulnerable where the policy would have a positive impact.

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

4. Not applicable

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Fraudulent applications for DRR made leading to unnecessary council expenditure	Robust application and review process to be implemented alongside the policy utilising new e-form software to enable more meaningful data capture and award assessment.

Legal Implications:

The Council may grant discretionary relief, pursuant to section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (LGFA), from all or part of the amount payable in respect of hereditaments occupied by a charity for charitable purposes, by certain voluntary bodies of a philanthropic nature, for recreation, or by clubs and societies not established or conducted for profit.

Section 49 of the LGFA 1988 permits the Council to reduce, or remit the whole of, an amount of non-domestic rate in circumstances where it is satisfied that (a) the ratepayer would otherwise sustain hardship and (b) it is reasonable to do so having regard to the interests of Council Tax payers.

The Non-Domestic Rating (Discretionary Relief) Regulations 1989 allow the Council to grant the relief for a fixed period. One year's notice is required of any decision to revoke or vary the amount of relief granted, if in the case of a variation, it would result in the amount of payable rates increasing. The notice must take effect at the end of the financial year.

It is a decision for Full Council to approve policies and practices regarding the granting of a discretionary rate relief in accordance with section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

Section 13A(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by the Local Government Finance Act 2012, provides that each billing authority in England must make a scheme specifying the reductions which are to apply to amounts of council tax payable, in respect of dwellings situated in its area, by people they consider to be in financial need.

Financial Implications:

5. The projected DRR expenditure for 2026/27 is £594,725.

Appendices:

Bury Council Business Rates Discretionary Rate Relief and Council Tax Discretionary Relief Policy

Business Rates Discretionary Rate Relief and Council Tax Discretionary Discount Policy

1. Introduction

Bury Metropolitan Borough Council is committed to the fair and transparent administration of Discretionary Rate Relief on National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) for qualifying organisations operating within the borough and Council Tax Discretionary Discount for council taxpayers.

This policy outlines the principles and criteria guiding the award of Discretionary Rate Relief, in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (as amended). While Discretionary Rate Relief is discretionary, this document provides a framework to support consistent decision-making without limiting the Council's ability to exercise discretion.

Discretionary Rate Relief is a financial award by which certain businesses and organisations are granted relief on all or part of the NNDR which they are required to pay, in addition to any statutory relief (known as Mandatory Rate Relief) to which such organisations may be entitled.

This policy also outlines the principles and criteria guiding the award of Council Tax Discretionary Discount, in accordance with Section 13A (1) (c) Local Government Finance Act 1992.

2. Background

In accordance with Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 and in addition to any national relief schemes, the council can exercise discretion to provide additional reductions to the amounts of Business Rates due to be paid by ratepayers. The Local Government Act 2003 extended the Council discretion to allow discretionary Council Tax discount to be awarded where the Council sees fit.

The Council directly contributes to the cost of any discretionary relief awarded, therefore decisions must take into account the Council's overall financial position, the interests of the borough's taxpayers, and alignment with the priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Strategy.

Applications for Discretionary Rate Relief will be assessed based on the contribution of each organisation or business to the well-being of Bury's residents and the strength of the local economy. While all applications will be carefully considered, it may not be possible to grant relief to every applicant.

Business Rates Discretionary Rate Relief

3. Mandatory Rate Relief

The Local Government Finance Act 1988 requires the Council to grant Mandatory Rate Relief of 80% of the business rates to the following categories of business rates payers:

- Charities where the property is wholly or mainly used for charitable purposes
- Registered Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) for any club with the appropriate registration with HMRC.
- Rural relief - if your business is in an eligible rural area with a population below 3,000

4. Discretionary Rate Relief Scheme

The Local Government Finance Act 1988 requires the Council to maintain a Discretionary Rate Relief Scheme, with the option to award Business Rates relief of up to 100% to organisations which operate within specified criteria.

This includes:

- Charitable bodies (who receive 80% Mandatory Rate Relief) – the Council has further discretion to 'top up' this relief to 100% of the rates due
- Registered Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) (who receive Mandatory Rate Relief) – the Council has further discretion to 'top up' this relief to 100%
- Non-profit making organisations – the Council has discretion to grant 'standard' Discretionary Rate Relief of between 0-100% of the Business Rates due

The Council will consider applications from charitable bodies, CASCs, non-profit making organisations and ratepayers of retail premises under the discretionary scheme.

In determining applications, the Council may grant Discretionary Rate Relief of:

- up to 20% of the rates due from ratepayers in receipt of 80% Mandatory Rate Relief;
- up to a maximum of 100% of the rates due from non-profit making organisations;

The council may also refuse an application for any amount of Discretionary Rate Relief.

Throughout the application process, ratepayers must ensure payments are made as per their most recently issued bill whilst any application for Discretionary Rate Relief is being considered.

4.1. Charitable bodies (charities)

Mandatory Rate Relief of 80% is granted to charities in the following circumstances:

- The ratepayer of a property is a charity or the trustees of a charity, and;
- The property is wholly or mainly used for charitable purposes and objectives (including charity shops, where the goods sold are mainly donated and the proceeds are used for the purpose of the charity).

Registration under the Charities Act 1993 is evidence of an organisation's charitable status.

Bodies which, under the 1993 Act, are excepted from registration or are exempt charities, are also eligible for Mandatory Rate Relief and providing the above criteria is met, 80% Mandatory Rate Relief is applicable.

In cases where a charity is in receipt of Mandatory Rate Relief of 80%, in accordance with this policy the Council has discretion to grant up to a further 20% additional rate relief. This is known as Discretionary Rate Relief top up.

The Council will consider applications for a Discretionary Rate Relief top up on a case-by-case basis, with each application judged on its own merits.

In determining an application for Discretionary Rate Relief, the following matters will be taken into consideration:

- How the charity supports and links into the council's Corporate Strategy;
- The purpose of the charity and the specific activity carried out within the building for which the relief is requested; and
- Whether the charity operates at a local or national level. Where relevant, the availability and use of local and national funding streams, as well as the Charity's overall financial position, will be taken into account. This

includes any financial surpluses and how those funds are distributed or utilised.

4.2. Registered Community Amateur Sports Clubs

A Mandatory Rate Relief of 80% is granted to registered Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASC). To qualify as a CASC, a sports club must fulfil the following criteria:

- Be open to the whole community; and
- Run as an amateur club; and
- Be a non-profit making organisation; and
- Aim to provide facilities for, and encourage people to take part in, eligible sport.

In cases where a CASC is in receipt of Mandatory Rate Relief of 80%, the Council has discretion to grant up to 20% additional rate relief as a discretionary top up.

The Council will consider applications for a Discretionary Rate Relief top up on a case-by-case basis, with each application judged on its own merits.

In determining an application for Discretionary Rate Relief, the following matters will be taken into consideration (list is not exhaustive):

- How the CASC supports and links into the council's Corporate Strategy;
- The membership and fee structure and whether the CASC is accessible to all residents, including whether there are concessions for certain groups, for example people on a low income or young people under 18;
- Membership numbers and the number and percentage of these members that are Bury residents;
- If the CASC has due regard to equality issues and if it actively encourages members from under-represented groups, for example ethnic minority residents, people over 50 and people with disabilities;
- Whether facilities are available to the wider community regardless of ability.

Applicants will be required to provide additional financial information to support their application. This information will form part of the council's assessment process and may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- If the CASC runs a bar or food provision, the level of income from this activity and how this money is used; and

- whether the CASC operates at a local or national level. Where relevant, the availability and use of local and national funding streams, as well as the CASC's overall financial position, will be taken into account. This includes any financial surpluses and how those funds are distributed or utilised.

4.3. Non-profit making organisations (other than charities, CASCs or other sports and leisure clubs) and Community Interest Companies (CIC)

The Council has the power to grant Discretionary Rate Relief of up to 100% of the rates due to other non-profit making organisations. Discretionary Rate Relief can be awarded to properties used by non-profit making organisations for recreational, charitable, philanthropic, or religious purposes or in connection with education, social welfare, science, literature, or the fine arts.

Community Interest Companies (registered with the Office of the Regulator of Community Interest Companies) can apply for Discretionary Rate Relief which can be paid at any rate up to 100%.

In determining an application for Discretionary Rate Relief, the following matters will be taken into consideration (list is not exhaustive):

- How the organisation supports and links into the council's Corporate Strategy.;
- Whether the facilities provided include education and/or training for members as a whole or for special groups;
- The extent to which the facilities provided reduce the demand for Council services or produce savings;
- Any membership and fee structure and whether the facilities are accessible to all residents, including whether there are concessions for certain groups, for example people on a low income or young people under 18;
- If covered by a membership scheme, membership numbers and the number and percentage of these members that are Bury residents;
- If the organisation has due regard to equality issues and if its facilities are used by all members of the community, for example ethnic minority residents, people over 50 and people with disabilities.
- If the organisation takes on another premises, whether this enhances the charities objectives.

We will also require additional financial information including:

- If the organisation runs a bar or food provision, or receives any other income from other sales, the level of income from this activity and how this money is used; and
- Whether the organisation operates at a local or national level. Where relevant, the availability and use of local and national funding streams, as well as the organisation's overall financial position, will be taken into account. This includes any financial surpluses and how those funds are distributed or utilised.

4.4. Rural Rate Relief

Mandatory Rate Relief applies to a qualifying property which is within a settlement identified in an authority's rural settlement list for the chargeable financial year where its rateable value is not, at the beginning of the year in question more than a relevant prescribed amount. The rateable value limits are as follows:

- For the only village food shop, general store or post office with a rateable value of up to £8,500.
- For the only public house or petrol station with a rateable value of up to £12,500.

In addition, discretionary rate relief may be allowed if:

- The property is in a rural settlement
- The rateable value of the property is £16,500 or less.
- The property is used for purposes which are of benefit to the local community: and
- It is reasonable for the Council to grant relief taking into account the interests of its council taxpayers

4.5. Other National/Local Reliefs

From time to time the government may introduce relief schemes in response to a specific incident (such as flooding) Where such schemes are introduced, the cost of additional relief is normally met by central Government without any impact on local Business Rates income.

Any such schemes that are introduced, in so far as they fall to be administered under Section 47 of The Local Government Finance Act 1988, will be administered in accordance with instructions and guidance set out by Government at that time.

Backdating of any local reliefs from either a new/split or merged hereditament will be considered on each individual merit. However, any relief awarded under these schemes that the customer held previously will continue to be awarded to the relevant financial year and if still applicable.

The Council may refuse an award of Discretionary Rate Relief to any ratepayer where it considers it appropriate not to and/or were doing so would not be considered in line with the Council's Corporate Strategy.

5. Part Occupied Relief

The Council has discretion under Section 44a of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 to allow relief to be provided to a business that is partially occupying a property for a short period of time (no more than 6 months), typically, but not exclusively, as part of a phased move in or phased move out.

The Council will consider each case on its merits and will take into account the following;

- The circumstances leading to the part occupation
- The intention of the ratepayer to fully occupy or vacate the premises
- Evidence that it will be empty only for a short period of time
- The financial implications of granting relief

The amount of relief that can be granted will be determined by the Valuation Office Agency, who will assign a rateable value to the unoccupied element of the property.

Relief will not be granted if an application is received after the property has become fully occupied or fully empty.

6. Discretionary Hardship Relief

The Council can exercise its discretion under Section 49 of The Local Government Finance Act 1988 to provide either partial or full relief from Non-Domestic Rate payments in cases of hardship where it would be considered reasonable to do so.

Hardship must be due to an unforeseen change in economic circumstances causing financial or other difficulties or due to extraordinary external factors causing the failure of a business or preventing premises from being re-let or re-occupied. The main consideration is the effect a loss of a business will have on

local council tax payers, for example, the loss of a major employer or the only provider of an essential service in an area.

As there is no statutory definition of hardship, the Council decides each case on its own merits. When deciding whether to award hardship relief, as well as being confident that the organisation is experiencing hardship, the principle consideration will be that any relief is in the best interests of the council taxpayers, as the Council must bear the cost of any relief granted.

The period for the award to be determined on a case by case basis.

7. Local Business Rate Discount

Section 69 of The Localism Act 2011 amends Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 and allows the Council to grant locally determined Business Rate discounts (in addition to the already available Discretionary Rate Reliefs).

This power recognises that the current Business Rates scheme is broadly prescribed by central government and its aim is to provide increased flexibility to local authorities to support organisations, recognising the variations in economic conditions across and within local authority boundaries.

When an application for relief under the Localism Act 2011 is received, assessing whether it is reasonable to award relief in the interests of Council Tax payers can be complex. Each situation may involve different factors, and there is no universal set of criteria that can be applied in every case. For this reason, every application will be reviewed individually and judged on its own merits. Examples of the types of considerations that may be taken into account include:

- Whether awarding the relief is likely to support long-term business growth, encourage investment in the area, and/or create new jobs.
- The length of time the organisation intends to remain operating within the area.
- The financial impact on the Council of granting the relief.
- The history and previous use of the property, for example whether it has been vacant for a significant period or was previously exempt from Business Rates.
- Any potential impact on, or perceived unfairness to, other ratepayers if relief is awarded.
- Whether a clear business case has been provided addressing the relevant considerations listed above.

Council Tax Discretionary Discount (Section 13A)

8. Care Leavers Discount

Since the 1st April 2018 the Council has exercised its discretionary power under Section 13A (1) (c) Local Government Finance Act 1992 to award a partial or full Council Tax Discretionary Discount to care leavers aged 18 to 25 years.

To qualify for this discount, you must:

- be under 25 years of age
- have a Council Tax bill from Bury Council in your name
- have been in care, with any local authority, on or after your 16th birthday
- have been in care for at least 13 weeks (continuous or not) anytime from the age of 14

If your name is not on the Council Tax bill, we cannot award a discount.

The council tax discount took effect from 1st April 2018. Care leavers who become liable for council tax after this date will be granted the discount from the date of occupation.

For anyone already living independently prior to 1st April 2018 but not yet 25, the discount will be applied from 1st April 2018 up to their 25th birthday or until they cease to be liable for council tax.

The level of discount applied will be 100% of any council tax liability after any entitlements to any national reliefs, exemptions or other discounts (including single person discount) have been calculated and awarded.

If after an award, the care leaver's liability for council tax reduces for example if the care leaver becomes entitled to a single person's discount, the care leaver discount will be amended to ensure the award does not exceed the care leavers council tax liability.

Where awarded the discount will remain in force until the care leaver reaches the age of 25 or ceases to become responsible for council tax, whichever date occurs first. In these circumstances the annual bill is apportioned.

9. Special Constables Discount

Since the 1st April 2020 the Council has exercised its discretionary power under Section 13A (1) (c) Local Government Finance Act 1992 to award a 50% Council Tax Discretionary Discount to Special Constables living in Bury.

To qualify for this discount, you must be:

- responsible for paying the Council Tax at an address in the borough
- in the role of a Special Constable for a Police force and you;
 - have completed the required training
 - are spending a minimum of 16 hours a month in the role.

There can only be one Special Constable discretionary discount per household.

The level of discount applied will be a maximum of 50% of any council tax liability and includes any other national reliefs, exemptions or other discounts your household is eligible for.

10. Council Tax Hardship Relief

The Council can exercise its discretion under Section 13A (1) (c) Local Government Finance Act 1992 to award partial or full Council Tax Discretionary Discount in exceptional circumstances, where a person is in financial need and it is considered reasonable to do so.

The Council will look at each case on its own merits and will consider various factors which may include some of the following considerations:

- entitlement to all other eligible discounts / reliefs / income / welfare benefits must have been explored/claimed before making a claim for Section 13A.
- evidence that the application is for exceptional circumstances, which are unexpected and unforeseen.
- we must be satisfied that the applicant has taken or will be taking all reasonable steps to resolve the situation (for example consideration of moving to a lower banded property or lowering the price of a property for sale).
- the amount outstanding must not be the result of wilful refusal to pay or culpable neglect. Arrears built-up as a result of non-payment will not qualify for this reduction.
- the taxpayer must not have access to other assets that could be used towards their council tax liability.

- whether the situation can be resolved by some other legitimate means for example postponing payment pending sale or extending instalments.
- any social or health issues currently being faced by the resident and/or their immediate family. For example, the effect the situation is having on vulnerable members of the family.
- other evidence in support of an application (such as information from professional bodies, e.g. a doctor or social worker).
- where applicable, confirmation of what information/advice has been sought and obtained previously, for example from the C.A.B or other welfare organisations.

11. Applications and review process

Business Rates Discretionary Rates Relief

All applications for Discretionary Rate Reliefs should be made using the Council's application forms.

The Council will also require evidence to support applications,

- The organisation's main purposes and objectives set out in, a written constitution, a memorandum of association, or set of membership rules;
- A full set of audited accounts relating to the two years preceding the date of application. Where audited accounts are not available for the current financial year, projected figures should be provided instead; and
- Details of how the organisation meets the criteria outlined in these guidelines.

Any additional information required should be submitted when requested, failure to provide the requested information may result in your application being delayed or ultimately refused.

Applications may be considered against any national reliefs that are available in the first instance.

If a ratepayer is not satisfied with the decision they can request, in writing within 21 days, for the decision to be reviewed. If they are still not satisfied with the decision after the review has taken place they retain the right to make a complaint under the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure.

The council may request further information from a ratepayer in connection with any request to reconsider a decision.

Council Tax Discretionary Hardship Relief

Any application for Council Tax Discretionary Hardship Relief should be made using the Council's application form which can be obtained upon request.

Before applying, applicants must be able to demonstrate they have taken all reasonable steps to resolve the problems that are causing them to apply for the relief.

- apply for any other types of Council Tax reduction they may be entitled to. Please see our webpage, [Council Tax discounts, reductions and exemptions - Bury Council](#) for more information.
- see if they can reduce their Council Tax by challenging their Council Tax band, if they have grounds to do so. If they feel that the property is in such a dilapidated condition that it no longer exists as a dwelling they may want to contact the Valuation Office Agency to investigate whether they will remove the property from council tax. This could apply for example where a property has extensive damage to external walls, no roof etc.

There are many organisations that can offer free support and advice if a council taxpayer is struggling with their finances. Please see webpage [Let's manage tough times - Bury Council](#) for more information on support available.

If a council taxpayer is unable to demonstrate that they have explored the relevant points above the application will not be considered.

Any additional information required should be submitted when requested, failure to provide the requested information may result in your application being delayed or ultimately refused.

Applications may be considered against any Council Tax discounts/exemptions that are available in the first instance.

If a council taxpayer is not satisfied with the decision they can request, in writing within 21 days, for the decision to be reviewed. If they are still not satisfied with the decision after the review has taken place they retain the right to make an appeal to the Valuation Office Agency within 28 days, who can be contacted at www.gov.uk/contact-voa or phone 03000 501 501

The council may request further information from a council tax payer in connection with any request to reconsider a decision.

12. Decision Making and Approval

Applications will be considered within the Corporate Collection and Support service with oversight by a Business Manager or a nominated individual, in consultation with other services within the council and the Director/Assistant Director of Finance (or nominated individual) where necessary.

The primary consideration in awarding discretionary relief is that it serves the best interests of Bury's taxpayers and aligns with the strategic priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Strategy.

13. Award Periods

Business Rates Discretionary Rate Relief

Discretionary Rate Relief may be granted for up to 100% of the amount due for a period of up to 12 months and will be reviewed annually if required.

The organisation must inform the Council of any change in circumstances, which might affect eligibility for relief. The change should be notified within two weeks of the date it occurs.

The Council reserves the right to review the award should the circumstances of the organisation change during the period of the award. Where an organisation ceases to meet the eligibility criteria, Discretionary Rate Relief will be withdrawn following a notice period of 12 months.

Council Tax Discretionary Discount

Discretionary discounts may be awarded for any amount (up to 100% of the charge due), for a specific period, for a fixed amount or for an ongoing period of liability. Where the period is ongoing, the award will be subject to regular review.

The applicant will be notified of the decision as soon as possible after it has been made and any award will be applied to the relevant Council Tax account.

14. Backdating of Awards

Business Rates Discretionary Rate Relief

Whilst there is no time limit for an organisation to make an application for Discretionary Rate Relief, the maximum period for which the council will consider awarding relief is the start of the preceding financial year. For example: relief application received on 1st January 2024 and approved – the earliest period the

award could be backdated to would be 1st April 2023 unless there are exceptional circumstances where the council see fit to backdate an award further.

Council Tax Discretionary Discount

Discretionary discounts may be awarded for any amount (up to 100% of the charge due), for a specific period, for a fixed amount or for an ongoing period of liability. Where the period is ongoing, the award will be subject to regular review.

The applicant will be notified of the decision as soon as possible after it has been made and any award will be applied to the relevant Council Tax account.

15. Financial Implications

Business Rates Discretionary Rate Relief

Discretionary Rate Relief is funded in part by the Council and therefore has a direct impact on its financial resources. Under the Business Rates Retention Scheme, the Council retains a significant proportion of business rates income, meaning any relief awarded reduces the funding available for local services. As such:

- Awards of discretionary relief must be made with careful consideration of the Council's overall financial position.
- Relief decisions should reflect the interests of Bury's taxpayers and align with the Council's Corporate Strategy and budgetary priorities.
- The Council reserves the right to limit or refuse relief where the financial impact is deemed unsustainable or inconsistent with strategic objectives.
- Relief will not be awarded retrospectively beyond six months after the end of the financial year to which the application relates, unless exceptional circumstances apply.

Council Tax Discretionary Discount

Council Tax Discretionary Discount is funded wholly by the Council and therefore has a direct impact on its financial resources.

Awards of discretionary relief/discount must be made with careful consideration of the Council's overall financial position and relief decisions should reflect the interests of Bury's taxpayers and align with the Council's Corporate Strategy and budgetary priorities.

Any officer or member involved in the decision-making process for discretionary relief must declare if they have any interest or association with the organisation/individual which is applying for discretionary relief.

Applicants will be notified in writing of any decision, whether they are successful or not. A revised NNDR/Council Tax bill will be sent where appropriate.

16. Subsidy Allowances

Business Rates Discretionary Rate Relief

Discretionary Rate Relief may constitute a subsidy under the UK's subsidy control regime, which replaced EU State Aid rules following Brexit. In accordance with the Subsidy Control Act 2022, the Council must ensure that any relief granted:

- Complies with the principles set out in the Act, including transparency, proportionality, and minimal distortion of competition and trade.
- Does not exceed the thresholds for Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA), currently set at £315,000 over a three-year period for most undertakings.
- Is recorded and reported in line with government requirements, including publication on the UK Subsidy Database where applicable.
- Is assessed for its potential impact on competition and investment, particularly where the recipient operates in markets that extend beyond the local area.

Please note that it is up to the organisation applying for relief to advise if they comply with Subsidy allowances and to inform the council as necessary.

17. Fraud

Where a ratepayer falsely applies for any relief/discount, or where the ratepayer/chargepayer provides false information, make false representations, or deliberately withholds information in order to gain relief, prosecutions will be considered under the Fraud Act 2006.

18. Policy Review

This policy will be periodically reviewed as necessary, or sooner should there be a change in legislation that impacts on its operation.

19. Conclusion

This policy is designed to reflect the Council's corporate direction and incorporates the values outlined in the Corporate Strategy to guide the decision-making process for awarding Business Rates Discretionary Rate Relief and Council Tax Discretionary Discount.



Classification: Open	Decision Type: Key
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Report to:	Cabinet	Date: 11 March 2026
Subject:	Write Off Policy 2026	
Report of	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation	

Summary

Approval is sought for a new Write Off policy covering all council-related income streams.

The policy provides a robust, consistent and efficient approach to the write off of council debts.

The policy also introduces a framework for irrecoverable debts – essentially debts that the council has no choice but to write off due to the circumstances surrounding it – which drives down the level of administrative work involved whilst retaining a sufficient level of governance.

The policy also alters the Scheme of Delegation and threshold levels therein to enable a more practical approach to the write off of debt and reasonable intervention points for executive officers and above.

Recommendation(s)

1. That Cabinet approve the new policy and relevant changes to the constitution being forwarded to Full Council for ratification
2. That Cabinet note that adoption and constitution changes must be by Full Council

Reasons for recommendation(s)

There is a governance requirement for the council to hold an up to date and robust Write Off policy, and for any constitution changes to be put before Full Council.

Alternative options considered and rejected

N/A

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Background

Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires that local authorities make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs. Part of these arrangements includes establishing a policy for the writing off of irrecoverable debts. These arrangements are underpinned by Part 4 Procedures Rules, Section 6 Financial Regulations of the Council's constitution.

Recent centralisation of the council's income streams into one service – Corporate Collection and Support – has enabled adoption of more consistent collection principles across these different streams.

This approach has now led to the drafting of a new corporate Write Off policy.

The purpose of this new policy is to provide a consistent, efficient and corporate approach to the writing off of unviable and irrecoverable debts whilst seeking to maximise the opportunity for collection and thereby minimising the need for write off. The policy also establishes a disciplined approach across the Council for the writing off of those debts that are not recoverable. It establishes clear guidance for all Council Officers on the recording, reporting, recovery and monitoring of the Council's debt and income.

Its core intention is to set out clear criteria and processes for when debts may be considered for write-off, ensuring fairness, objectivity, and accountability. This includes outlining circumstances such as insolvency, death, untraceable debtors, financial hardship, or uneconomical recovery. The policy also establishes approval thresholds, responsibilities of officers, and the need for evidence so that write-off decisions are made consistently, efficiently, and in line with legislation, including specific rules for Adult Social Care and Housing Benefit overpayments.

Overall, the policy is designed to reduce the level of write-offs by improving debt collection practices, strengthening performance management, and supporting informed decision-making across all service areas. It ensures that resources are focused on debts that are realistically recoverable, that historical or unsupported debts are properly addressed, and that appropriate use is made of third-party collection services. The policy also reinforces good financial governance by requiring regular reporting, maintaining proper records, and ensuring adequate bad debt provision.

Links with the Corporate Priorities:

3. Reduce Child Deprivation & Inclusive Economic Growth– By upholding a robust write off policy and procedure, families who are struggling financially and obtain statutory financial measures such as Debt Relief Orders will benefit from an efficient write off of their debts. A robust write off policy forms a key part of any income collection regime and will help ensure debt profile

refinement is maintained and officers are able to better focus on viable debt caseloads.

Equality Impact and Considerations:

The analysis has identified there is no material impact on all characteristics with the exception of the Socio-economically vulnerable where the policy is likely to have a supportive positive impact

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

4. Not applicable

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Debt over £10,000 is incorrectly classified as irrecoverable, and is written off by the Head of Service without need to refer to Section 151 Officer.	A full list of all debts written off as irrecoverable to be taken to Finance Board on a quarterly basis for ratification.

Legal Implications:

The Council is required by its Financial Regulations to have sound financial management policies in place. An adopted policy supports consistency of decision-making and transparency in relation to decisions to write-off irrecoverable debts.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications arising from this report

Appendices:

Bury Council Write Off Policy 2026

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Bury Council Write Off Policy April 2026

Introduction

The purpose of this new policy is to provide a corporate approach to the writing off of bad and irrecoverable debts whilst seeking to maximise the opportunity for collection thereby minimising the need for write off. The policy also establishes a disciplined approach across the Council for the writing off of those debts that are not recoverable. It establishes clear guidance for all Council Officers on the recording, reporting, recovery and monitoring of the Council's debt and income.

Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires that local authorities make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs. Part of these arrangements includes establishing a Policy for the writing off of irrecoverable debts. These arrangements are underpinned by Part 4 Procedures Rules, Section 6 Financial Regulations of the Council's constitution.

Objectives

This Policy has the following objectives:

- to promote a consistent and fair approach to the writing off of debt across the Council,
- Enable debts to be written off in a timely and efficient manner,
- Provide a framework that sets out the criteria for writing off debt.

Outcome

The outcomes expected from this policy:

- Minimise the level of write off necessary,
- To ensure cases recommended for write off are done so every quarter,
- Minimise the level of resources provided for bad and irrecoverable debts,
- Standardise the write off process across all income and debt areas,
- Avoid the use of subjective judgement and criteria when considering cases for write off, by providing clear objective criteria and procedures,
- Introduce effective performance management arrangements,
- Help focus resources on potentially recoverable debts (by disciplined writing off of irrecoverable debts),

Debts covered by this Policy

For the avoidance of doubt this policy document applies to all debts and income due to the Council including but not limited to the list below, and include any other debts across the Council:

- Council Tax,
- Business Rates,
- Housing Rents
- Sundry Debts (incl. Commercial Rents, service charges and insurance, licensing, fees, statutory notices, subscriptions, etc.),
- Adult Social Care,
- Housing Benefit Overpayments

General Collection Policy

It is Council policy to pursue the collection of all debts owed to the Council as vigorously as possible. Every effort will be made to recover any Council debt before write off is considered. Service Areas will work together, where appropriate to do so share data, to make informed decisions about debt recovery and write off.

This policy supports the decision process for debts that may have become uneconomical to pursue or are irrecoverable.

It must be noted that a debt may be written off but can be reinstated if deemed recoverable at a future date and is appropriate to do so.

The policy will be reviewed as required to ensure processes remain fair and in line with legislation and best practice.

The policy may be extended to include other forms of revenue and income collected by the Council.

General Principles

The general principles adopted in this policy are as follows:

- To ensure a professional, consistent and timely approach to debt write off across all of the Council's functions,
- To promote, where Data Protection legislation allows, a coordinated approach towards sharing debtor information internally and managing multiple debts owed to the Council,
- To ensure that debts are managed in accordance with legislative provisions and best practice,
- To ensure that any steps taken to recover debt / income are in line with the Council's corporate policies.

Delivering the Policy

Writing off of debt should be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules, as outlined within the financial limits contained within the Council's constitution.

Adult Social Care debt write offs must be carried out in accordance with Annex D of the Statutory Guidance to the Care Act 2014.

Delivering the policy involves a number of processes which are explained in more detail below:

- Ensuring a consistent approach,
- Pre-request for write off,
- Request for write off,
- Writing debts off,
- Reinstating written off debt,
- Evasion and fraud,
- Credit balance write offs,
- Dealing with historical debts.
- Insufficient Evidence to Enforce Debts
- Bad debt provision,

Ensuring a consistent approach

In line with this policy, the Council will have a consistent approach across all directorates in responding to debt write offs. Proposal for write offs should be considered at every appropriate stage in line with the framework.

Pre Request for Write Off

All debts of the Council will be acted on in accordance with its Financial Rules. If the debt remains unpaid, after exhausting all appropriate recovery methods, the debt should be considered for write off. All requests to write off debts must be approved by authorised officers and within the approval thresholds set out in this policy.

The Service Area will take reasonable steps to contact the debtor to discuss the matter before making any final decisions on recovery actions, of which, write off may be considered as an option based on the circumstances of the debtor. As a result of these discussions, or in the view of the service area, if the debt is considered uneconomical to pursue or considered irrecoverable then the service area may propose the debt for write off.

A debt may be written off when one or more of the following apply (this list is illustrative and not exhaustive):

- **Council error** – The debt was caused by a local authority mistake, and the debtor could not reasonably have known about it.
- **Deceased debtor** – The debtor has died and there are not enough funds in the estate to clear the debt.
- **Low-value debt** – The total debt is under £50 and no payment has been made within six months of the final reminder.
- **Custodial sentence** – The debtor is serving a prison sentence of 12 months or more and recovery is unlikely.

- **Debtor untraceable** – The debtor cannot be located for at least six months. (The Council may reinstate the debt if the debtor is later found.)
- **Debtor overseas** – The debtor is living abroad, and the law does not allow the Council to enforce recovery.
- **Statute-barred debt** – The debt cannot legally be pursued due to the time limits set out in legislation.
- **Debt Collection Agent unable to recover** – All recovery options have been exhausted, and the agent confirms the debt is unrecoverable.
- **Legal advice** – Legal Services advise that the debt is not recoverable or that legal action would not be cost-effective.
- **Uneconomical to collect** – The cost of recovery would exceed the value of the debt.
- **Bankruptcy or liquidation** – The debtor is declared bankrupt, or a company has gone into liquidation.
- **Company arrangements** – A Company Voluntary Arrangement (CVA) or administration order prevents or limits recovery.
- **Financial hardship or vulnerability** – Recovery action would cause serious financial difficulty, or the debtor is considered vulnerable or in hardship.
- **Multiple debts with limited means**
Where the debtor owes several debts to the Council and a financial assessment shows they do not have sufficient means to pay them all, consideration may be given to writing off some debts to support sustainable repayments.
Evidence of financial circumstances is required. If the debtor fails to maintain the agreed payment plan, the write-off may be reversed.
- **Insolvency confirmation** – The Official Receiver or Administrator confirms there is no prospect of settlement.
- **All recovery options exhausted** – No further recovery actions are available.
- **Court remission** – The court has formally remitted (cancelled) the debt.

Write off is a formal process and when authorised, ceases all debt recovery action for that specific debt, albeit recovery action may continue for other debts connected to the debtor.

Where authorised, a request for write off does not mean the debt cannot be reinstated in future, where appropriate. The write off will be removed and action will continue giving weight to the statute of limitations, and corporate debt management.

Request for Write Off

As per the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 (as amended), debts should only be written off with approval of the responsible finance officer (Section 151), or such members of staff, where this function has been delegated in line with the current Financial Regulations and Financial Delegations.

Write off proposals and subsequent decision papers will be retained for the current year plus six years as per the Council's Record Retention Policy.

Once appropriate authorisation has been received and final authorisation for the write off obtained from the Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) or delegated officers, the debt will be removed from the relevant accounting system and charged against the appropriate cost centre/fund.

Write offs of Housing Benefit caused by an Official Error where the debt has been determined as unrecoverable can only be made in conjunction with the relevant Housing Benefit legislation and guidance.

Any write off relating to Adult Social Care debt is governed by the Care and Support Statutory Guidance Annex D, in addition to the above process.

Writing Debts Off (framework)

The writing off of debt should be administered in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules, as outlined in the Financial Limits contained in the Council constitution.

Irrespective of the amount to be written off, the following list of exceptions* is delegated to Heads of Service to authorise write offs. Write off of debts in accordance with the list of exceptions will be reported quarterly to the Council's Finance Board & Section 151 Officer.

**Evidence is required under the following categories (outlined below).*

List of exceptions:

- **Death of the debtor**
The debtor has passed away and there are no assets in the estate to cover the debt, the remaining balance may be written off.
**Written confirmation of this is required from a solicitor or executor.*
- **Bankruptcy or Liquidation**
A debtor has been declared bankrupt (individual) or has entered liquidation (company), creditors may only receive a portion of the owed amount, or nothing at all, depending on the available assets.
**Bankruptcy or Liquidation number or documentation should be provided*
- **Debt Relief Order granted to the Debtor.**
**Appropriate entry in the Insolvency Register or documents should be provided,*
- **Individual Voluntary Arrangement.**
**Appropriate entry in the Insolvency Register and documents should be provided,*
- **Company Voluntary Arrangement / Administration Order.**
**Appropriate documents should be provided,*
- **Debt remitted by court.**
**A statement to confirm the decision of the court is needed.*
- **Debtor living abroad.**
The debtor is believed to be living overseas, and the legislation does not permit debt pursuance.
**Evidence to confirm this position is required*

Once appropriate authorisation has been received and final authorisation for the write off obtained from the Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) or delegated officers, the debt will be removed from the relevant accounting system and charged against the appropriate cost centre/fund and bad debt provision.

Authorised officers and approval thresholds

The following Scheme of Delegation is in place for authorised officers to write off debts owed to the Council.

Authorisation to write off* is delegated, after all appropriate recovery options have been exhausted.

Value	Approval Required	Reported to
Up to £10,000	Head of Service	Director
In excess of £10,000 but not more than £25,000	Responsible Director in consultation with the Assistant Director of Finance	Section 151 Officer
In excess of £25,000 but not more than £50,000	Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Monitoring Officer	Relevant Cabinet Member
In excess of £50,000	Cabinet	

*Excluding the list of exceptions detailed in the Writing Debts Off (framework).

Reinstating Written Off Debt

Service Areas must be aware of an individual's circumstances during all financial related dealings, and this includes being aware of any current and written off debt(s) that the debtor may have.

Where a debtor's circumstances change and the original grounds for writing off the debt no longer stand, the Council reserves the right to reverse the write-off and pursue the outstanding amount through normal recovery procedures.

Fraud and Misrepresentation

If an allegation or suspicion of fraud arises, the Council will investigate the matter. Should fraud be established, the Council may reverse the write-off and pursue criminal proceedings where warranted.

Credit Balance Write Offs

When an account is closed and a credit balance remains, the credit must be checked against any other debts owed to the Council and, where appropriate, offset against those debts. If the credit is repayable, it will be refunded by BACS where bank details/address are known.

Where no forwarding address is available, reasonable efforts must be made to identify the correct address for repayment. If no address can be found, the credit will

be removed from the account. If an address is identified at a later date, the credit may be reinstated, offset against another outstanding debt, or refunded where no other debts exist.

Dealing with Historical Debts

Historical debts will be dealt with outside of this policy. A separate procedure will be designed for this which will be subject to separate approval.

Insufficient Evidence to Enforce Debts

Where there is insufficient evidence to create a debt then these amounts should not be raised at the outset by either the service or finance staff. It is always important to consider this at the inception of raising a debt and whether the funds can or cannot be successfully recovered.

If a debt is raised and then subsequently with the passage of time, the debt becomes not credible either on the challenge of the debtor or because there is insufficient evidence to support the debt, then this debt should be removed from the finance system by way of a credit note. This will effectively remove the debt from the Council's aged debt portfolio and reduce it to nil.

It is important that where any debts fall into this area that they follow the credit note process, and not the debt write off route. Debts that should not have been raised or cannot be supported should not be written off.

Any debts raised which fall into the recovery process which later require a credit note will be collated and reported quarterly to the Finance Board & Section 151 Officer. Service Area's responsible will report need to report why the debt was raised, why it is not being pursued and the steps which have been put in place to avoid a reoccurrence.

Use of Third Party Collection Services

Where appropriate to do so, and prior to the submission for write off, debts of £300 or more should be considered for referral to the Council's appointed collection agent who will undertake further checks to determine if the debt can be traced and / or collected.

- Trace and collect – where a forwarding address cannot be determined, further checks will be made with third parties to determine if address information can be found. This is a further check, prior to write off, to support the write off recommendation,
- Collection of debts where all internal remedies to collect have been exhausted. The debt will be passed to a third party collection agent, who will attempt to secure payment in line with appropriate legislation/contractual arrangements in place.

Bad Debt Provision

The Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) in conjunction with Heads of Service must ensure there is adequate provision for bad debts, in accordance with 'CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in United Kingdom – A Statement of Recommended Practice'.

Debts where a bad debt provision has been assigned should be appropriately reviewed on a timely basis with effective recovery methods applied. Where debts are not recoverable, suitable evidence should be provided to progress the case / debt to write off.

Any debts which form part of the proof of debt sent by the Council to the to the insolvency practitioner are written off if they meet all the terms of the insolvency agreement. The insolvency practitioner may make payments in the form of dividends to Bury Council which will be offset against the debt and the amount written off will be reduced accordingly.

A separate bad debt provision is held for each service area so that any increase required in the provision will be charged to the service area concerned. Conversely, if the debt for which a bad debt provision is paid then the provision for that debt will be credited back to the relevant service area.

Classification: Open	Decision Type: Non-Key
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Report to:	Cabinet	Date: 11 March 2026
Subject:	Corporate Plan Quarter Three 2025-26 Performance & Delivery	
Report of	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation	

Summary

1. In June 2025, Cabinet approved the Council's Corporate Plan for 2025/26. The Plan sets out the Council's strategic priorities and delivery objectives for the financial year and our role in delivering the overarching vision of the borough's LET'S Do It! Strategy.

Despite the scale of ambition contained with the 2024/25 Corporate Plan, and alongside those other unforeseen activities that required additional capacity, most of the plan was delivered. However, there is still much work to do to deliver the Council's three priorities, all of which contain multi-year programmes of work, to align with the vision set out in LET'S. Focus will need to continue to be sustained to improve outcomes in these areas:

- **Sustainable Inclusive Growth**
- **Improving Children's Lives**
- **Tackling Inequalities**

Within these priorities, the Corporate Plan for 2025/26 includes clear and tangible deliverables, with principal regeneration sites underway and new services up and running. The outcomes of inspections with the CQC and Ofsted, and potentially Housing, will be known during the year and therefore provision has been made within the Plan for the actions which follow. With regards to Tackling Inequalities, the national and regional integrated health and care systems are subject to significant change as part of the NHS reform program. As such, local plans will need to be monitored and reviewed considering new models of care, mapped against our understanding of need at a neighbourhood level.

2. These challenges continue to be worked on by Team Bury as part of the refreshed LET's Do It! strategy, with particular focus on tackling the root causes of deprivation and ensuring sustainable economic growth that all residents can share success in.
3. To support monitoring of the Plan, alongside measuring delivery of the agreed milestones (Appendix One), an initial set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) was set out. The three priorities and an additional enabling priority are repeated for the 2025/26 planning year. Key objectives have been described against each of these priorities, together with a clear set of quarterly delivery milestones.
4. This report describes the progress made in the third quarter of the financial year (October – December 2025)

Recommendation(s)

5. Cabinet is asked to:
 - a. Note the Quarter Three position on progress against the Corporate Plan 2025-26

Reasons for recommendation(s)

6. To enable transparency and robust monitoring of performance and delivery of the Corporate Plan.

Alternative options considered and rejected

7. Not applicable.

Report Author and Contact Details:

Name: Helen Corbishley

Position: Head of Performance and Delivery

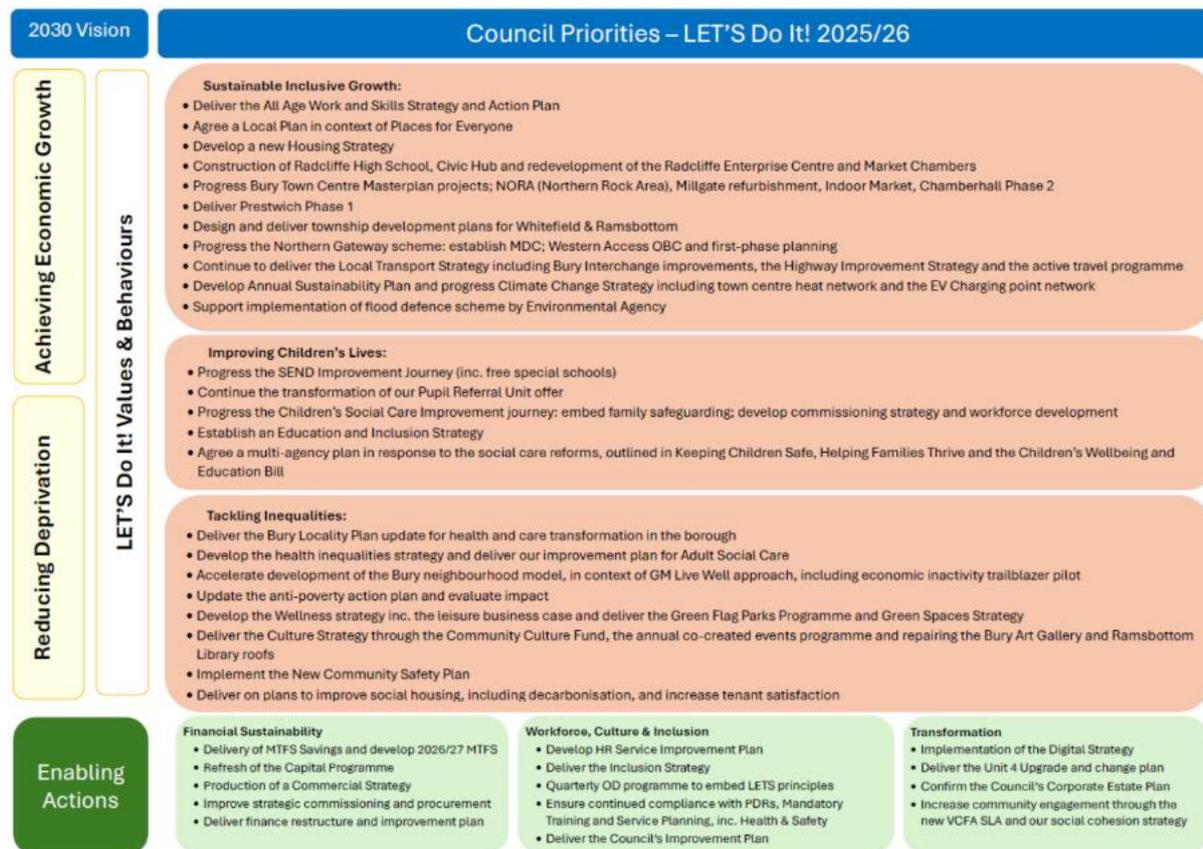
Department: Corporate Core

E-mail: h.corbishley@bury.gov.uk

Background

8. Background

The 2025/26 Corporate Plan was agreed by Cabinet in June 2025 and sets out the Council’s strategic priorities and delivery objectives for the year. The final version of the Plan is below:



Links with the Corporate Priorities:

9. This report supplements the LET’s Do It! Outcomes Report in terms of providing further information on the contribution of the Council to the 2030 vision. The Corporate Plan priorities are linked to the seven objectives of the LET’S vision.

Equality Impact and Considerations:

10. An EIA was completed at the launch of the Corporate Plan for 2025/2026 ensuring inclusion was at the heart of it. This report demonstrates the continuing commitment to inclusion in all that we do as a council.

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

11. There are no specific environmental considerations within this report however the data tracks progress towards the environmental commitments within the Council’s Corporate Plan.

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Lack of capacity to deliver against the Corporate Plan priorities which reduces our ability to achieve the LET’S Vision	

Legal Implications:

- 12. This report forms part of our governance framework ensuring that our corporate plan is tracked and monitored.

Financial Implications:

- 13. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Appendices:

None.

Background papers:

Report to Cabinet, June 2025: [Corporate Plan 2025/26](#)

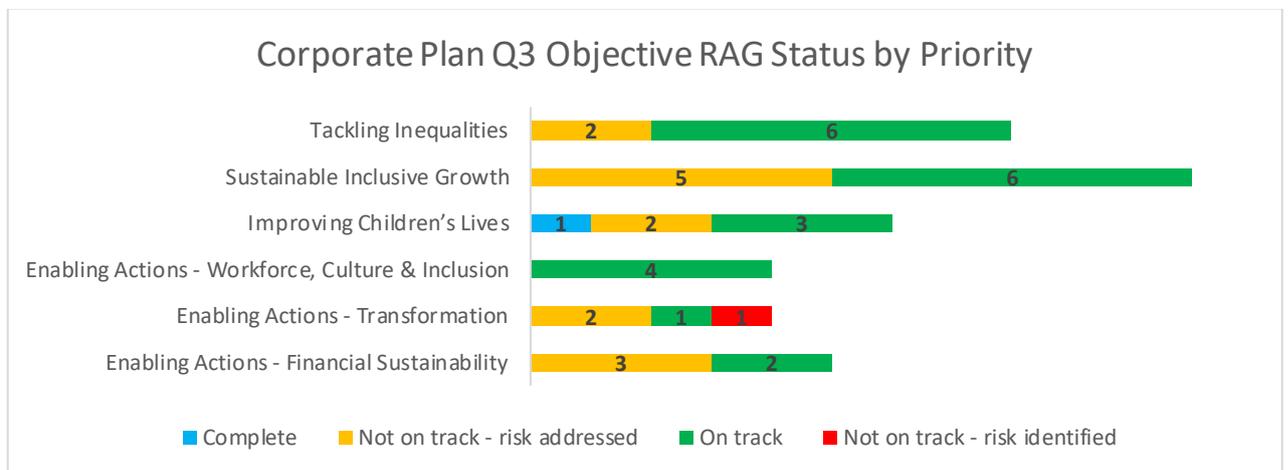
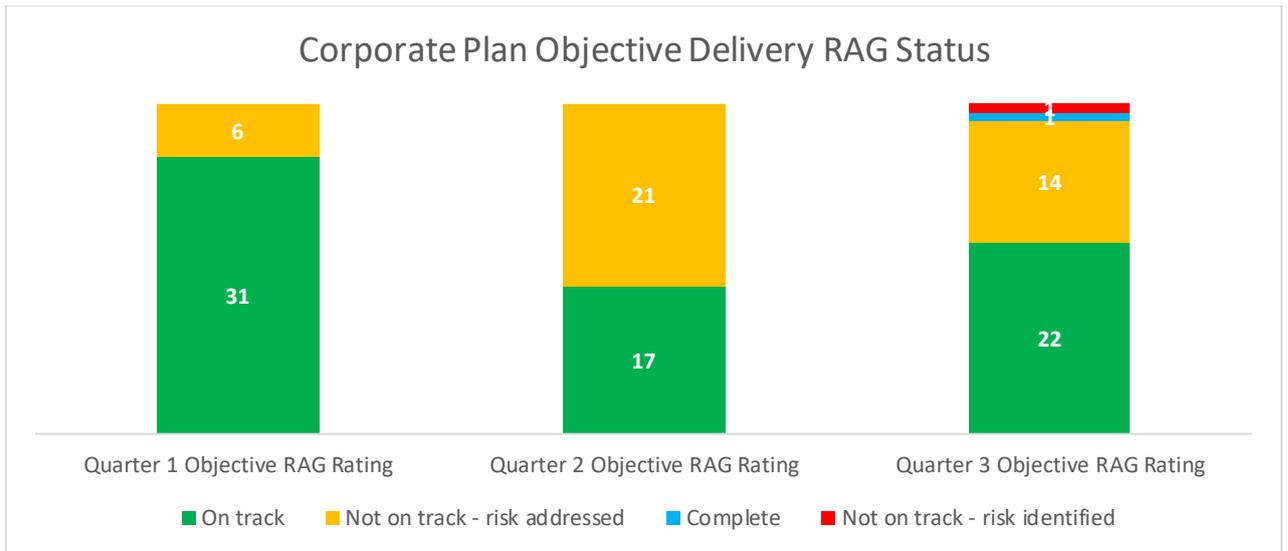
Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.

Term	Meaning
CLA	Children Looked After
CPP	Child Protection Plan
CVD	Cardiovascular Disease
EET	Education, Employment, or Training
ELT	Executive Leadership Team
IMC	Intermediate Care
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LGA	Local Government Association
MAG	Members Assurance Group
MTFS	Medium Term Financial Strategy
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Corporate Plan Q3 2025-26 Performance & Delivery

1. Progress since the approval of the 2025/26 Corporate Plan

The table in Appendix Two provides a snapshot overview of progress against the Quarter Three milestones. This review of progress has been further supplemented by information gathered for the latest Leader’s statement to Council. Of the objectives planned for Quarter Three, 1 is complete, 22 are on track and highlighted green, 14 are not on track but the risks have been addressed, highlighted amber and 1 is highlighted red and will be delivered in this corporate plan.



2. Sustainable Inclusive Growth

2.1. Key Achievements

- A major milestone achieved in Quarter 3, the completion of our new Bury Market canopies. The new canopies are now fully completed ahead of schedule creating a new layer of weather protection for traders and providing an improved visual for the market itself.
- The work undertaken in Quarter 3 is part of the large investment in the market and Bury Town Centre, with the market canopies and flexihall being joined by an additional £80m confirmed by central government to upgrade the transport interchange.

- The new Milltown Bridge is now in place and spanning the Irwell, replacing a link that was destroyed in the winter storms of 2015. With regards to future works, phase 1 of our flood defence project is complete will full completion by the end of the calendar year. An update is awaiting from utility companies regarding this completion.
- The Prestwich travel hub is scheduled to open in 2026. Further to the previously failed bids in July and October 2025, GMCA provided confirmation in December 2025 that funds will be available to deliver Phases 1B and 2 in their next Patient Equity funding round in March 26. This is subject to meeting 3 agreed GMCA milestones. A funding application will be made with a view to Cabinet approval in March/April 2026. Alongside this the submission of planning applications for the Longfield Centre, to transform the area into a modern community hub with new retail spaces, market hall and a new village square.
- The Housing Strategy has been commissioned and a draft scope is in place. Focus for the next quarter will be consultation and stakeholder involvement and development of delivery partnerships.
- In Quarter 2 performance data shows the biggest increase in EV charge points installation (70) since data collection commenced.
- There is a start in the decline of those economically inactive compared to the end of the last financial year. Economic Inactivity is a priority locally for Team Bury with participation in the GM pilot intending to provide intelligence into why certain cohorts of the population are economically inactive.

3. Tackling Inequalities

3.1. Key Achievements

- Winter Warmer Packs are continuing to be shared across the borough alongside Warm Spaces to support residents through the winter period. This is all part of our 'Winter Well Scheme' designed to support those who need it over winter, including financial support, the aforementioned Warm Spaces and Winter Warmer Packs, as well as support with the cost of living and vaccinations against winter bugs like coronavirus or the flu.
- The CQC recently visited our Falcon and Griffin Extra Care Scheme, under new framework that recently came into force. Falcon and Griffin support tenants across 69 properties, with a warden system that provides help and support 24/7. The service was been rated as 'Good' by the CQC, noting that the staff were confident in management, accommodation was well maintained and of a good quality, and the residents said they felt safe and supported.
- The first Live Well centre is on track to partially open in April 2026 and there is a current review of Live Well hallmark compliance of the Radcliffe Hub. Work supporting the GM economic activity pilot has been delayed until the next quarter due to confirmation of the cohort.
- 25 individual cultural events have been delivered so far which has resulted in £80k being delivered to community and Culture Organisations.
- There has been a delay to the Bury Art Museum roof repair due to gap between funding and costs, other opportunities and options are being explored and due to be considered at Cabinet in later this year. However this has not stopped the work of the Bury Art Museum, through Local Growth and Place Flexible Grants, the team to date have coordinated 69 events working with 30 groups and 80 individuals engaging 54,000 people across social media and 2,000 attendance.
- GMP Bury is leading on refresh of the Serious Violence Duty needs assessment and corresponding action plan, as part of refresh of this priority of the Community Safety Partnership led by the Uniform Superintendent. There has been a Winter of Action in Town Centres including ASB surgeries, joint patrols with GMP, BID Security Officials and Council Public Protection colleagues which will continue in 2026.
- The open grant round of Standing Together attracted over 30 applications, with funding awards made; Alliance round focusing on Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls is now open.
- The Overview and Scrutiny Committee reviewed the work of the CSP and this was well received.

- School readiness for our youngest children has increased in the last year from 65.0% to 65.2%. Improvement in this area is a priority piece of work locally across the Team Bury partnership with a local target set by national government.
- Following recent targeted work, the average waiting time on the housing register has reduced from 788 to 611. This is likely due to some seasonal activity reduction which is typically seen over Christmas. In addition a new officer has joined the team to support the processing of applications alongside a data cleansing project. There is much more to do to continue this trajectory and monthly processes have been embedded which target customers at annual review point resulting in a more accurate register with fewer inactive or unresponsive applicants.

4. Improving Children's Lives

4.1. Key Achievements

- In late November the Believe and Achieve awards were held to recognise the achievements of our children in care and our care leavers. 136 children and young people were nominated, across categories for personal growth, teamwork, wellbeing, education, sport, creativity and community spirit. Winners included two young children who raised money for Bury Hospice, and a young person who made the big step of joining their local theatre group
- The new Foster Carers hub was launched in Bury Town Hall, providing a central space for foster and kinship carers to come together, have meetings, attend training, socialise and build a stronger fostering community.
- The new Education and Inclusion strategy was launched on target by our recently appointed Director of Early Years, Ben Dunne, Executive Director of Children And Young People Jeanette Richards and Councillor Lucy Smith. The new strategy is a shared vision between the council and our local schools, reaffirming the strong commitment to ensuring that every child and young person has access to a high quality education that allows them to reach their potential, built on strong partnerships, trust and transparency.
- The future plans for building of special free schools have changed with the Department for Education withdrawing funding for the Free Special Primary School. This has now been replaced with national funding of £3bn to support High Needs capital investment. Bury will be receiving £3.9m over 3-years to support 80 additional places across the borough. This work is being addressed through the SEND Sufficiency Strategy and the identification and development of Resource Provision/SEN units in mainstream settings.
- An alternative site for the combined PRU at Milton Road is now being progressed and due to be considered at the February Estates and Property Board.
- The Chesham Fold Family Hub can still not open until refurbishment works have been completed. Work is planned on the roof and fire doors to be completed in quarter 4.
- 3100 children now have an EHCP in Bury however compliance with statutory timescales continues to perform well.
- There has been a continued reduction in children's frontline social workers who are agency staff.
- Over the last 6 months there has been a substantial reduction in the number of children becoming subject to child protection plans and in the number of children entering care. Taken together with a decline in the number of children and families newly opening to Children's Services and the number of child protection enquiries, Bury is beginning to move to a performance profile more typical of a Family Safeguarding local authority and this is to be welcomed.
- Against a rising regional and national trend, the number of Bury children in residential care (Children's Homes) has remained steady across the year at 50 children. This reflects extensive work to move children into foster care, supported accommodation, or to support their return home where appropriate. Despite this success, the average cost of residential homes has continued to rise, reflecting growth in the number of children in very high-cost homes.

5. Enablers

A large proportion of the enabling actions in this year's corporate plan, alongside delivering business as usual and organisational health activity, is being driven by the Council's Improvement Plan which has been developed in response to external auditors' judgement in December 2024. In addition below are key updates against some business as usual programmes:

- **Budget Setting 2026/27:** Updated funding and expenditure assumption and savings proposals approved for consultation at December Cabinet. The report noted the requirement to identify further proposals to further reduce the £7.5m funding gap to be considered at Cabinet and Budget Council in February.

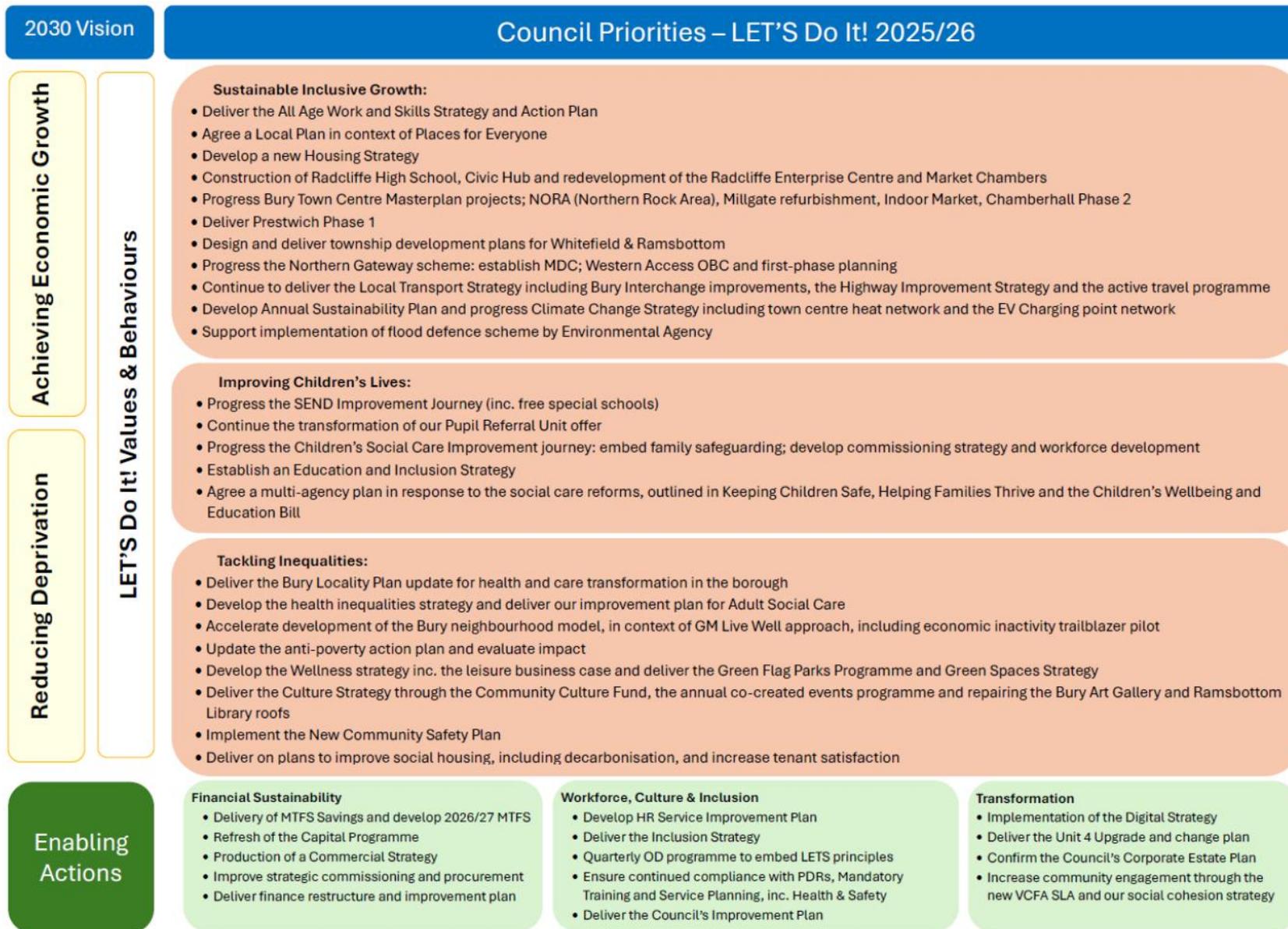
- **Unit 4/Finance Transformation:** Additional complexities have been identified with regard to feeder systems, process mapping and coding structures that will need to be addressed before going live with the upgraded system. The work required to be completed will require a delay to the original target April implementation date and the programme plan and resource requirements are being updated.
- **Estate Transformation:** Resource identified from NHS to work with CYP and Adults to agree strategy for delivery of Live Well centres in each neighbourhood. The output will feed into the retained buildings for Corporate Landlord. Consultant appointed regarding Corporate Landlord model, started in post January 2026 due to report findings to Property and Estates board and to Chief Officer April 2026.

In terms of the Council's workforce:

- 71.4% of annual staff employment reviews have been completed in the past 12 months. This is likely to increase in the next two quarters due to the service plan cycle being reviewed which will seek to have most reviews complete in advance of the next financial year.
- 81% of staff have completed GDPR training and 88% completed health and safety training. There is continued engagement with staff to maintain these high levels of compliance.
- The number of days lost to sickness absence has increased slightly this quarter from 10 in June to 11.7 in December. This could be due to an increase in seasonal illnesses in the past quarter including the flu pandemic. However, comparing year on year sickness overall there has been an improvement in sickness absence in the last year and this spiked increased aligning with previous seasonal patterns.

6. Conclusion

Following the review of amber at risk milestones last quarter – the picture this quarter is more positive in terms of projected delivery completion by the end of the year. There are a large number of green on track milestones and in addition one completed milestone. However, there is also one milestone that is now rated red. A mitigation plan has been agreed by the Performance, Delivery and Transformation and Finance Boards to support delivery of this project within new timeframes.



Appendix Two: Corporate Plan Q3 2025-26 Delivery Summary

Council Priority	Objective	Quarter 3 Objective Update	Quarter 3 Objective RAG Rating
Sustainable Inclusive Growth	Delivery of the All-Age Work and Skills Strategy and Action Plan	Continued delivery of actions on plan for All Age Work and Skills Strategy.	On track
Sustainable Inclusive Growth	Agree a Local Plan in context of Places for Everyone	<p>Although not fully complete, made good progress on responding to comments received in response to consultation on the draft Local Plan.</p> <p>Evidence base work ongoing and due to be complete December/January 2026.</p> <p>Amendments to Local Plan ongoing - instructed legal advice in December.</p>	On track
Sustainable Inclusive Growth	Delivery of a new Housing Strategy	<p>Place update - Housing Strategy commissioned. Arc4 briefed and draft scope in place. Focus for Q4 will be consultation and stakeholder involvement, formation of key governance and delivery partnerships to oversee programme.</p> <p>Housing services update: Pathfinder Project completed 31/3/2025, Report completed demonstrating proof of concept. Report to be shared with GMCA project sponsors.</p> <p>The review has been completed, and the report has been drafted incorporating the new Independent Living (IL) offer. This includes the introduction of Motion Sensors (PIRs) and a restructuring of the current team to strengthen and expand the existing service offer.</p>	On track
Sustainable Inclusive Growth	Construction of Radcliffe High School, Civic Hub and redevelopment of Radcliffe Enterprise Centre and Market Chambers	Access package to Radcliffe High School complete. The Radcliffe Hub is due to complete in the first week of July 2026.	On track
Sustainable Inclusive Growth	Progress Bury Town Centre Masterplan projects; NORA (Northern Rock Area), Millgate refurbishment, Indoor Market, Chamberhall Phase 2	Place update - Housing Strategy commissioned. Arc4 briefed and draft scope in place. Focus for Q4 will be consultation and stakeholder involvement, formation of key governance and delivery partnerships to oversee programme. Chamberhall phase 2 cabinet agreement to sell site to bring forward new office development ready for presentation in January	Not on track - risk addressed

Council Priority	Objective	Quarter 3 Objective Update	Quarter 3 Objective RAG Rating
		Works to refurbish Millgate Mall and Minden House will commence, subject to a funding decision at the JV Board on 26 March.	
Sustainable Inclusive Growth	Deliver Prestwich Phase 1	<p>Further to the previously failed bids in July and October 2025, GMCA provided comfort (December 25) that funds will be available to deliver Phases 1B and 2 in their next Patient Equity funding round (March 26) alongside GMCA grant and combined with Council Prudential Borrowing. This is subject to meeting 3 agreed GMCA milestones. A funding application will be made with a view to Cabinet approval in March/April 2026.</p> <p>The Planning submission for Phase 2 will be an EIA application with Phase 1B. This will be submitted by end February 2026, in line with meeting one of the three GMCA milestones as mentioned above.</p>	Not on track - risk addressed
Sustainable Inclusive Growth	Develop & deliver township development plans for Whitefield & Ramsbottom	<p>Town Plan interventions progressing within the LGPFG envelop. Project Include:</p> <p>Ramsbottom: Progressing Civic Hall transformation to RIBA stage 4 Improvements to public realm Business Groups/Websites/Branding</p> <p>Whitefield: Improvements to public realm Business Groups/Websites/Branding</p> <p>Bury: Improvement to public realm, CCTV, Wayfinding Street Cleaning for all</p>	On track
Sustainable Inclusive Growth	Progress the Northern Gateway scheme: establish MDC; Western Access OBC and first-phase planning	Milestone completed and interim director in post for MDC. MDC paper agreed and in place for approval at January cabinet.	On track

Council Priority	Objective	Quarter 3 Objective Update	Quarter 3 Objective RAG Rating
Sustainable Inclusive Growth	Continue to deliver the Local Transport Strategy including Bury Interchange improvements, the Highway Improvement Strategy and the Active Travel Programme	<p>Interchange Phase 1 Southern Access: Contract award - likely to commence Q4. TFGM working on finalising detailed design options for wider interchange redevelopment</p> <p>MCF Tranche 5 - Fishpool & MCF Tranche 6 Pimhole - construction commenced on Market Street 05/01/2026</p> <p>Radcliffe Phase 0 - on programme due to completion March 2026</p> <p>HIS 4 business case to be presented to Leader and Cabinet member Jan/Feb 2026 prior to budget setting</p>	Not on track - risk addressed
Sustainable Inclusive Growth	Develop Annual Sustainability Plan and progress Climate Change Strategy including town centre heat network and the EV Charging point network	<p>secured a £100k grant from HNDU for use to progress Heat Network Design Phase, however, not yet clear whether this funding will be sufficient. Therefore, awaiting new Government specification for detailed project design (DPD) so a determination can be made for if the £100k will be enough to deliver a DPD, which is the next stage along in the project progression of a Heat Network. Timescales for this, are outside of the control of the council at this stage. Update and timescale (If known) to be provided in Q4.</p> <p>Second stage of the procurement has begun – evaluating tenders currently Bury Council Unit Manager actively involved with the evaluating panel</p> <p>Money secured for EVCI installation will be used for recruitment of an EVCI officer on a two-year fixed term– new JD prepared to reflect funding and to be submitted for job evaluation January 2026</p> <p>CRSTS money to be used for charge point installation to also help pay for new EVCI officer for 2-year fixed term contract - Recruitment to be undertaken in Q4.</p>	Not on track - risk addressed

Council Priority	Objective	Quarter 3 Objective Update	Quarter 3 Objective RAG Rating
		Climate Change Strategy reviewed and currently under consultation through Climate Action Board Delay. EV infrastructure strategy delayed aligning with new resource linked to CRSTS funding for charge point installation and new EVCI officer role (2-year fixed term contract), EVCI officer to be appointed with task of developing a Bury EVCI Strategy aligned to EV Charge Point awardee.	
Sustainable Inclusive Growth	Support implementation of flood defence scheme by Environmental Agency	Target completion is planned for Q2 2026. Phase 1 is complete, and we are awaiting an update from ENW on the completion of the Phase 2 diversion works. The remaining works cannot progress until ENW has finished the diversion activities	Not on track - risk addressed
Improving Children's Lives	Progress the SEND Improvement Journey (inc. free special schools)	<p>Self-evaluation completed at the beginning of October.</p> <p>DfE have withdrawn funding for the Free Special Primary School. Now replaced with national funding of £3bn to support High Needs capital investment. Bury will be receiving £3.9m over 3-years to support 80 additional places across the borough. The risk is being addressed through the SEND Sufficiency Strategy and the identification/development of RP/SEN units in mainstream settings.</p> <p>Improvement activity set out within the Priority Impact Plan (PIP) continues. We had a successful launch of our Communities of Practice in October, with strong attendance from school and positive feedback from attendees.</p> <p>Our Ofsted Annual Engagement meeting took place in October and went well.</p>	On track
Improving Children's Lives	Continue the transformation of our Pupil Referral Unit offer	Wellington Road has been ruled out due to the presence of hazardous materials under the topsoil. Redvales build is progressing with facilitation meetings with the DfE already taken place. An alternative site for the combined PRU at Milton Road is being progressed and considered at the February Estates and Property Board. The EP Board will be considering early-stage scale and massing designs and site investigations. Should all be satisfactory, then approval to progress will be sought to further design options and then construction.	Not on track - risk addressed

Council Priority	Objective	Quarter 3 Objective Update	Quarter 3 Objective RAG Rating
Improving Children's Lives	Progress the Children's Social Care Improvement journey: embed family safeguarding; develop commissioning strategy and workforce development	<p>Self-evaluation completed at the beginning of October. Next steps are for all local authorities are required to complete a questionnaire by the deadline of 26 January 2026.</p> <p>Recruitment for some of the identified roles has been successfully completed, and the onboarding process is now underway. All successful candidates are expected to be fully in post by the end of Q4. Recruitment into remaining vacancies will recommence in early 2026.</p> <p>As part of our broader improvement activity, we continue to deliver against the refreshed Improvement Plan which was shared with Ofsted in November 2025. Family Safeguarding remains a key priority, and we have adapted our Family Safeguarding partnership arrangements to widen its scope and include the national social care reforms (Families First Partnership Programme) in its remit, to ensure the reforms build on the Family Safeguarding model.</p>	On track
Improving Children's Lives	Establish an Education and Inclusion Strategy	The Education and Inclusion Strategy was officially launched at a dedicated event on 4th November.	Complete
Improving Children's Lives	Agree a multi-agency plan in response to the social care reforms, outlined in Keeping Children Safe, Helping Families Thrive and the Children's Wellbeing and Education Bill	The Bury partnership delivery plan for the reforms has been submitted to DfE. This has been produced alongside partners through a series of meetings, with updates on progress shared with CYP Scrutiny and the Council Exec.	On track
Improving Children's Lives	Develop and implement a boroughwide neighbourhood family hub model	<p>The refurbishment has been completed, however subsequent work to the roof and fire doors are needed.</p> <p>Chesham Fold Hub cannot open until the work on the roof and fire doors are completed which is likely to take place at the end of quarter 4</p> <p>Terms of reference for Best Start Board refreshed to capture boroughwide family hub planning</p>	Not on track - risk addressed
			On track

Council Priority	Objective	Quarter 3 Objective Update	Quarter 3 Objective RAG Rating
Tackling Inequalities	Deliver the Bury Locality Plan update for health and care transformation in the Borough	<p>Tobacco control plan approved at December locality board meeting.</p> <p>Sexual health needs assessment complete and approved by H&WB board</p> <p>H&C neighbourhood model in progress for submission to ICB by February 2026. NB national guidance on neighbourhood working is due January 2026.</p> <p>Live Well funding secured.</p>	
Tackling Inequalities	Develop health inequalities strategy and deliver Adult Social Care Plans	<p>Procurement of supported living services went out to market.</p> <p>Health inequalities strategy delivered</p>	On track
Tackling Inequalities	Accelerate development of the Bury neighbourhood model, in context of GM Live Well approach, including economic inactivity trailblazer pilot	<p>On track for first Live Well centre in Whitefield to partially open in April 2026 and current review of Live Well hallmark compliance of the Radcliffe Hub.</p> <p>First test cohort for economic inactivity delayed until quarter four. Further cohorts to follow in quarter four also.</p>	Not on track - risk addressed
Tackling Inequalities	Relaunch of the council's approach to Anti-Poverty and development of a 4 year Let's Tackle Poverty strategy for April 2026	<p>Targeted HSF support to priority groups will be completed by end of January.</p> <p>LTP Strategy proposal has been approved.</p> <p>Phase 1 of the strategy design - scoping of current Bury offer - has been completed with Phase 2 - Lived Experience engagement - to take place in February, and completion of strategy development in March.</p> <p>Let's Tackle Poverty summit held on 21st January with relevant service leads and Team Bury partners to obtain contributions and steer on strategy approach and focus.</p>	Not on track - risk addressed
Tackling Inequalities	Develop the Wellness strategy: leisure business case and deliver the Green	Op Dec submitted for approval to secure core team	On track

Council Priority	Objective	Quarter 3 Objective Update	Quarter 3 Objective RAG Rating
	Flag Parks Programme and Green Spaces Strategy	<p>Leisure report due to be presented at cabinet in February 2026.</p> <p>Top Park 3G - looking to have ribbon cutting ceremony in March 2026, finishing of snagging and finalising formal lease and land restriction.</p>	
Tackling Inequalities	Delivering the Culture Strategy through the Community Culture Fund, the annual co-created events programme and repairing the Bury Art Gallery and Ramsbottom Library roofs	<p>25 Individual events have been delivered so far. £80k delivered to community and Culture Organisation.</p> <p>Delay to BAM roof repair due to gap between funding and costs, other opportunities and options are being explored and due to be considered at Cabinet in 2026.</p> <p>Through Local Growth and Place Flexible Grants, Bury Art Museum team to date have coordinated 69 events working with 30 groups and 80 individuals engaging 54,000 people across social media and 2,000 attendance. Finale 20 events delivered via LGPFG Investment to be delivered before 31st March 26. Commence planning regarding additional LGPFG Investment for 26/27</p>	On track
Tackling Inequalities	Implement the New Community Safety Plan	<p>GMP Bury leading on refresh of Serious Violence Duty needs assessment and corresponding action plan, as part of refresh of this priority of the Community Safety Partnership led by the Uniform Superintendent.</p> <p>Winter of Action in Town Centres including ASB surgeries, joint patrols with GMP, BID Security Officials and Council Public Protection colleagues, continuing into January 2026.</p> <p>Open grant round of Standing Together attracted over 30 applications, funding awards made; Alliance round focusing on Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls now open</p> <p>Overview of work of the CSP well received at Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 25th November 2025</p>	On track

Council Priority	Objective	Quarter 3 Objective Update	Quarter 3 Objective RAG Rating
Tackling Inequalities	Deliver on plans to improve social housing, including decarbonisation and increase tenant satisfaction	<p>The review has been completed, and the report has been drafted incorporating the new Independent Living (IL) offer. This includes the introduction of Motion Sensors (PIRs) and a restructuring of the current team to strengthen and expand the existing service offer. Tenancy Sustainment Training complete November 2025. We have also received training on ASB, Tenancy Fraud and Adults Services Safeguarding Team.</p> <p>For quarter 3 there are 346 properties completed on SHDF. Works have started for SHWHF (wave 3) with 3 contractors on site with properties open and works being undertaken, as part of the schemes social value has included swift boxes, supporting Bury colleges women in construction group female leaders in construction and talk to electrical level 1 and 2 supporting cv and advice retrofit works. Winter warmer packs and advice leaflets.</p>	On track
Enabling Actions - Financial Sustainability	Delivery of MTFS Savings and develop 2026/27 MTFS	2026/27 updated funding and expenditure assumption and savings proposals approved for consultation at December Cabinet. The report noted the requirement to identify further proposals to further reduce the £7.5m funding gap to be considered at Cabinet and Budget Council in February.	On track
Enabling Actions - Financial Sustainability	Refresh of the Capital Programme	Updated capital programme and capital strategy to be considered at Cabinet and Budget Council in February.	Not on track - risk addressed
Enabling Actions - Financial Sustainability	Production of a Commercial Strategy	ZBB process over the summer identified some opportunities for generating additional income for the 2026/27 budget proposals along with some additional lines of enquiry to inform further work being undertaken that will support a new commercial strategy to be approved in 2026/27 financial year.	Not on track - risk addressed

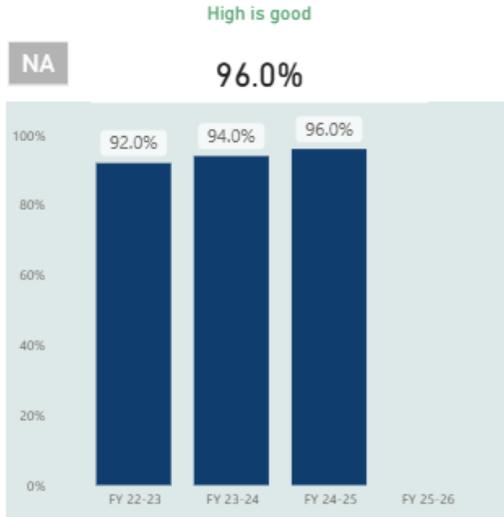
Council Priority	Objective	Quarter 3 Objective Update	Quarter 3 Objective RAG Rating
Enabling Actions - Financial Sustainability	Improve strategic commissioning and procurement	Procurement Continuous Improvement Group made of up of Procurement and Commissioning officers set up reporting through to Finance Board and overseeing delivery of agreed contract savings. Procurement and Contract Management Operating Model business case approved at January Cabinet for investment in the service and directly support the delivery of an additional £3m of savings over the next 3 financial years.	On track
Enabling Actions - Financial Sustainability	Deliver finance restructure and improvement plan	Phase 1 recruitment in progress and first stage appointments made and working through notice periods. Phase 2 consultation to begin following s188 meeting in January.	Not on track - risk addressed
Enabling Actions - Workforce, Culture & Inclusion	Develop HR Service Improvement Plan	Project outline agreed, resource secured, activity commenced November. Delivery of pilot workforce data and online approval process	On track
Enabling Actions - Workforce, Culture & Inclusion	Deliver the Inclusion Strategy	Workplace adjustment process (LETS Work Well Passport) in place & communicated to staff.	On track
Enabling Actions - Workforce, Culture & Inclusion	Quarterly OD programme to embed LETS principles	Programme of activities delivered, including Leadership & Management conference.	On track
Enabling Actions - Workforce,	Ensure continued compliance with PDRs, Mandatory Training and Service Planning inc. Health & Safety	Communications have been sent and compliance reported to GAB. Will review approach and refresh appropriately in quarter 4. Exploration of training data to establish and assure accuracy is underway.	On track

Council Priority	Objective	Quarter 3 Objective Update	Quarter 3 Objective RAG Rating
Culture & Inclusion			
Enabling Actions - Transformation	Implementation of the Digital Strategy	Digital strategy in draft and due to be finalised.	Not on track - risk addressed
Enabling Actions - Transformation	Delivery of the Unit 4 Upgrade and change plan	Additional complexities have been identified with regard to feeder systems, process mapping and coding structures that will need to be addressed before going live with the upgraded system. The work required to be completed will require a delay to the original target April implementation date and the programme plan and resource requirements are being updated.	Not on track - risk identified
Enabling Actions - Transformation	Confirm the Council's Corporate Estate Plan	<p>Baseline corporate property protocols - work to commence 26/27</p> <p>Resource identified from NHS to work with CYP and Adults to agree strategy for delivery of Live Well centres in each neighbourhood. The output will feed into the retained buildings for Corporate Landlord.</p> <p>Consultant appointed regarding Corporate Landlord model, started in post Jan 2026 due to report to Property and Estates board and to Chief Officer April 2026.</p> <p>Baseline first draft corporate estates policy- work to commence on completion of the work in paragraphs above</p> <p>Complete early-stage design and business case for Bury Town Hall refurbishment - RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architects) stage 2 report received and presented to ELT. Further work on funding strategy and 'do nothing' options being developed.</p>	Not on track - risk addressed
Enabling Actions - Transformation	Increase community engagement and cohesion through the new VCFA SLA and our social cohesion strategy	The Council have played a central role in responding to the atrocious terrorist attack at Heaton Park Synagogue on Yom Kippur. Engagement has taken place across different channels and approaches including Team Bury conference on 16th October, direct dialogue with community leads, messaging through	On track

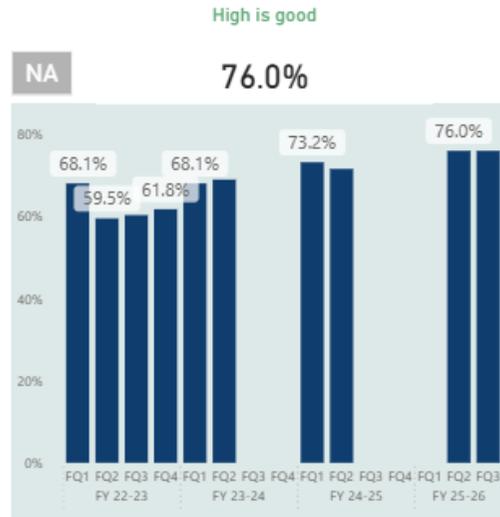
Council Priority	Objective	Quarter 3 Objective Update	Quarter 3 Objective RAG Rating
		<p>Synagogue notice boards and direct messaging. This also included messaging to broader communities who faced concerns within their communities.</p> <p>Inaugural Bury Faith Action Network meeting held in November 2025, delivering on the Greater Manchester Faith & Belief Covenant.</p> <p>Inaugural Civic Menorah lighting for Hanukkah in Mayor's Parlour held on 15th December.</p>	

Appendix Three: Corporate Plan Performance Dashboards
Priority: Growth - Corporate Performance - Power BI

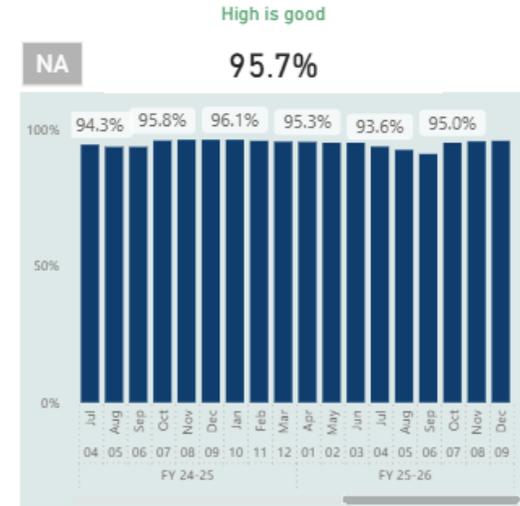
% Housing completions on brownfield land boroughwide



% of street lighting converted to LED



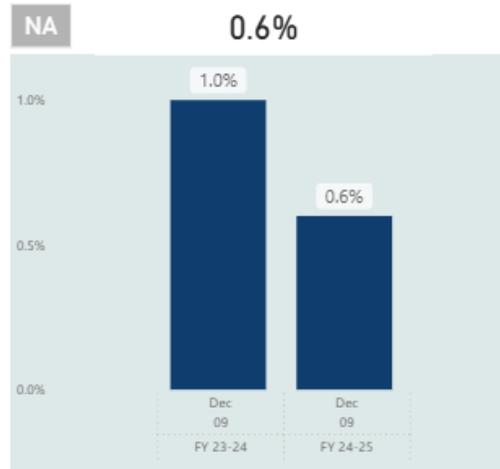
Education, Employment, or Training (EET) of 16-17 year olds (%)



Energy efficiency of housing in the borough (% Band A-C)



GM Neighbourhood Floor Target - % of premises unable to access download speeds of at least 30 mbits/s

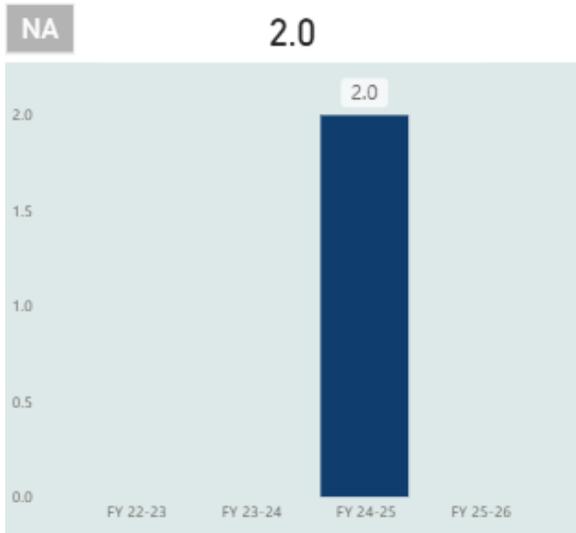


Annual housing completions boroughwide



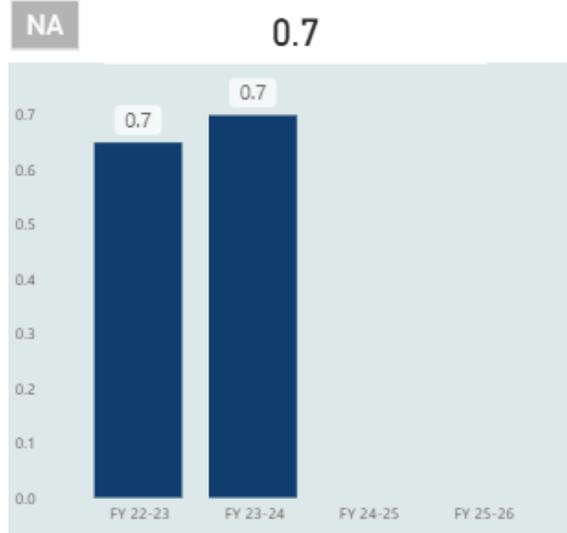
Borough rank within GM for digital connectivity

Low is good



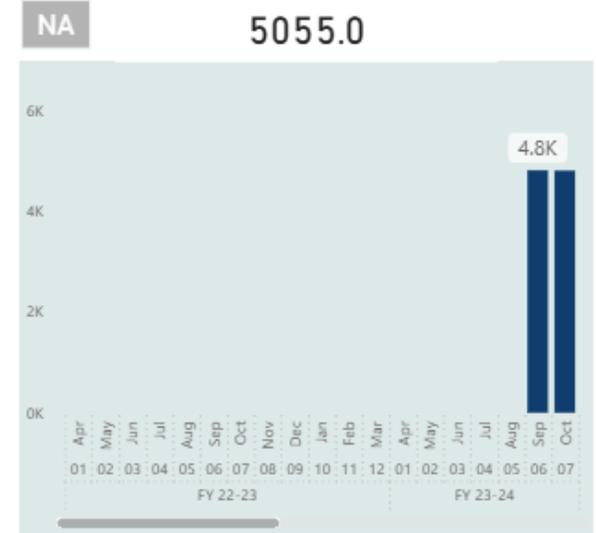
Job Density - The numbers of jobs per resident aged 16-64

NA



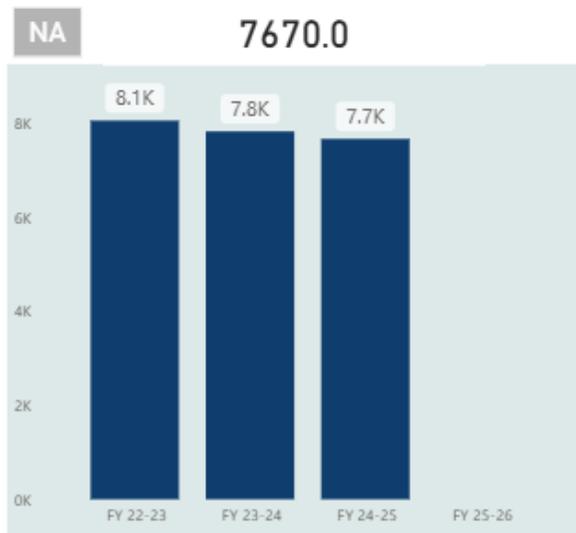
NOMIS Claimant Count

Low is good



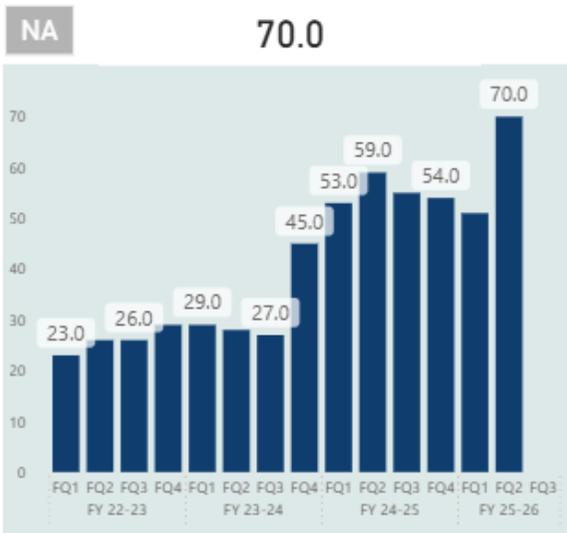
UK Business Count

High is good



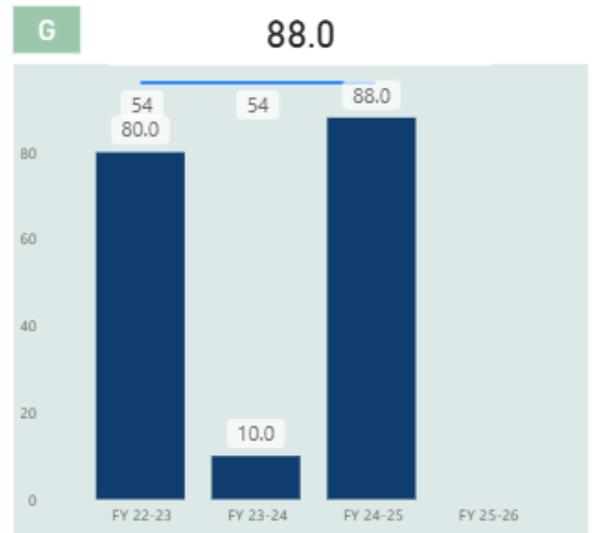
Number of EV Charge Points

High is good



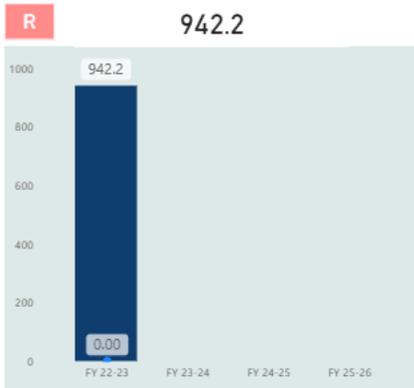
Number of housing units completed in the borough which are affordable

High is good



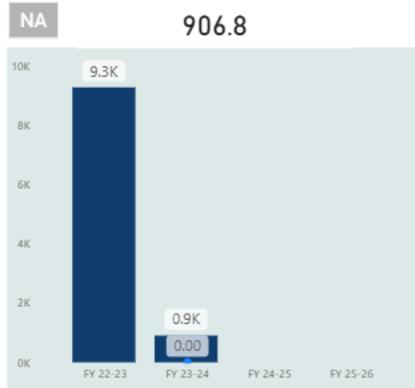
Total CO2 emissions produced within our borough

Low is good



Total CO2 emissions produced within our borough

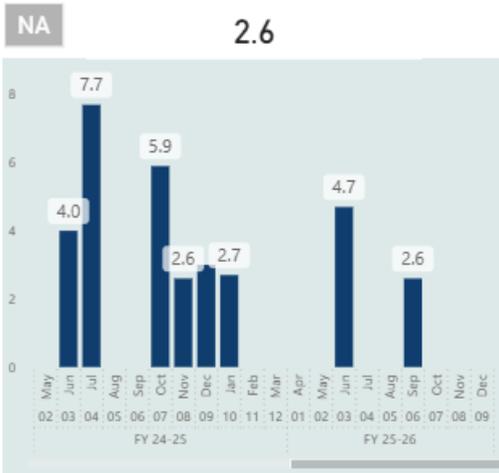
Low is good



Priority: Improving Children's Lives - Corporate Performance - Power BI

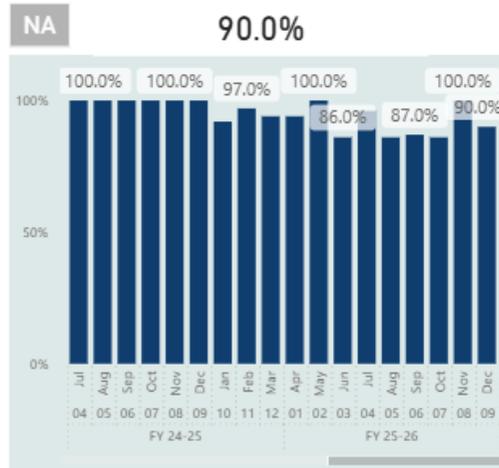
Refusal rate for new EHCP's

Low is good



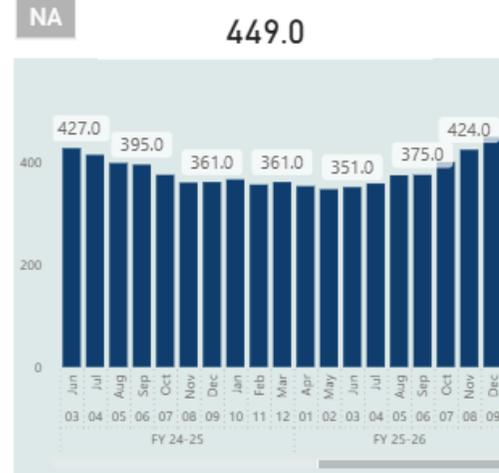
EHCP: Percent of Plans issued on time, compliance at 20 weeks

High is good



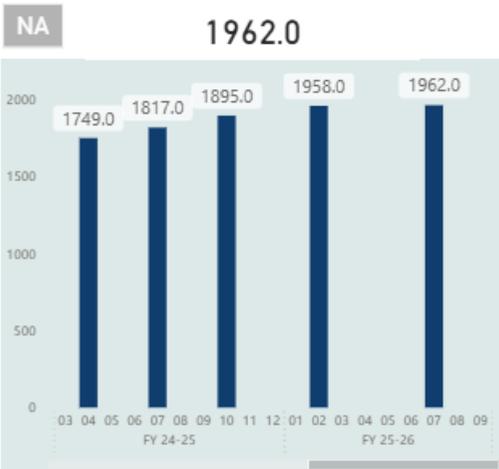
New EHCP's issued in the last 12 months

NA



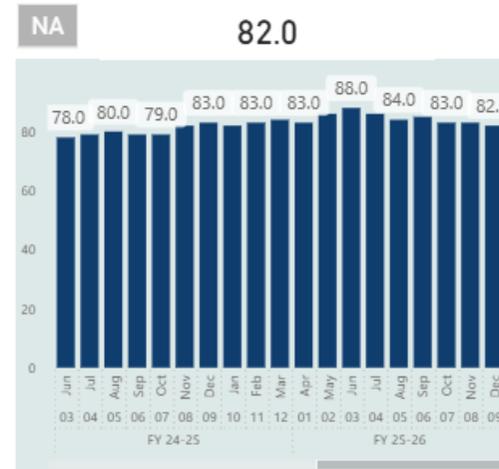
Number of Children in Bury Schools with an EHCP

Low is good



Rate of CLA per 10,000 children (snapshot)

NA



Rate of CPP per 10,000 children aged 0-17 (latest)

NA



Rate of open CIN per 10,000 children aged 0-17 (latest)

NA

NA 276.0



Rate of referrals per 10,000 children aged 0-17 over the last 6 months

NA

NA 378.0



Rate of School Permanent Exclusions

Low is good

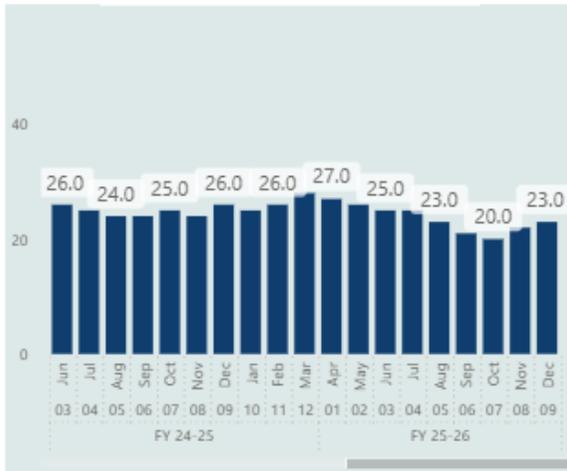
NA 0.1



Re-referrals: children with a previous referral within 12 months of their latest referral (last 6 months)

Low is good

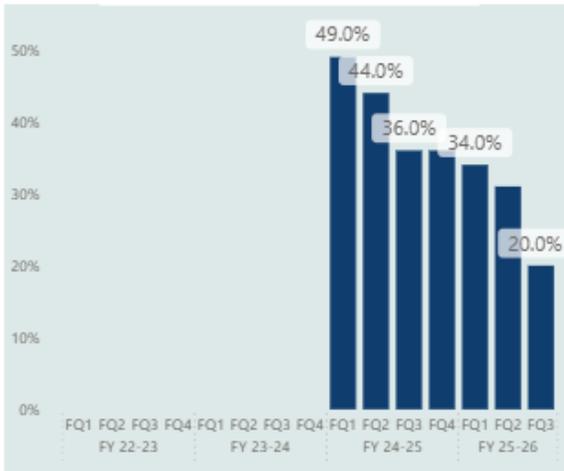
NA 23.0



% current frontline social workers who are agency workers (Children's)

NA

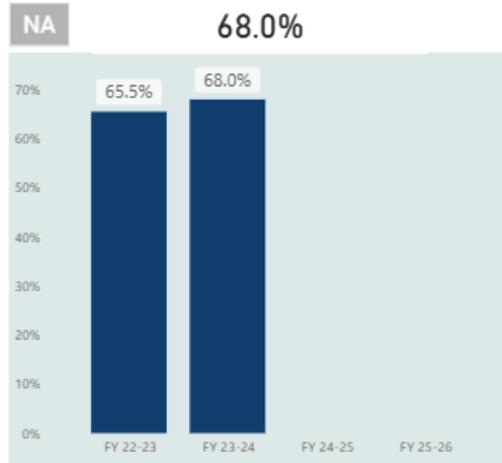
NA 20.0%



Priority: Tackling Inequalities - Corporate Performance - Power BI

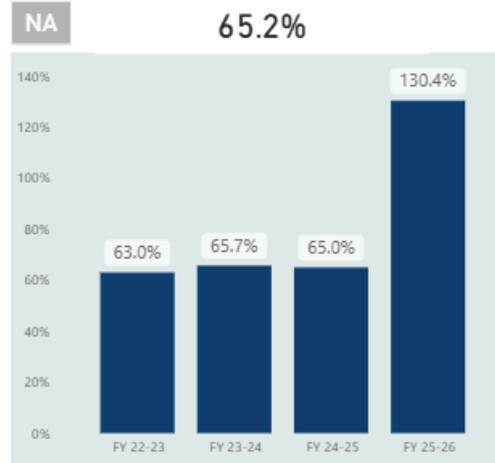
% of physically active adults

High is good



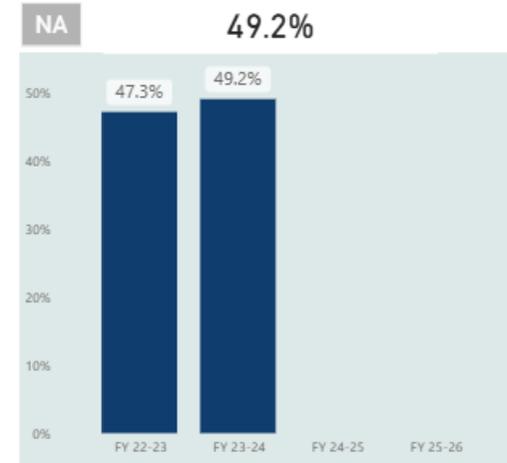
% of children defined as ready for school

High is good



% of physically active children and young people

High is good

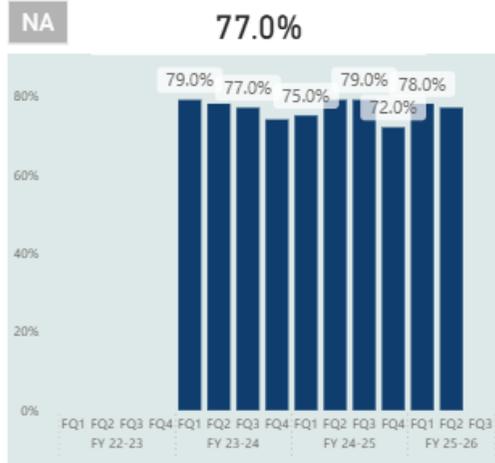


GM Crime Survey - % of residents who are confident that they could get help from GMP in an emergency

High is good

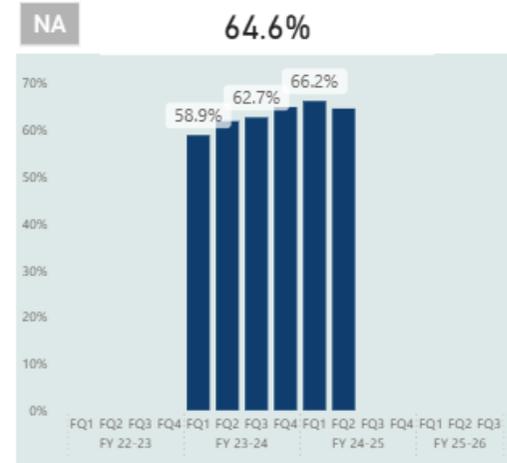


GM Crime Survey - % of residents who feel their community is a place where people from multiple backgrounds get along



Health Visitor: percentage of children aged 2.5 years who received a 2 - 2.5 year review

High is good



Number of people on waiting list for ASC needs assessment (snapshot last day of the month)

Low is good

NA

89.0

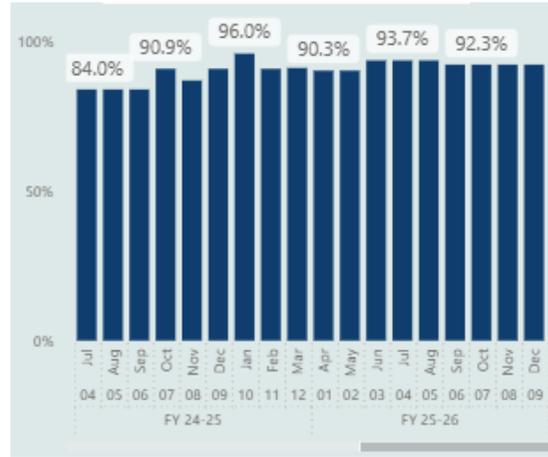


The percentage of adult social care providers rated good or outstanding by CQC

High is good

NA

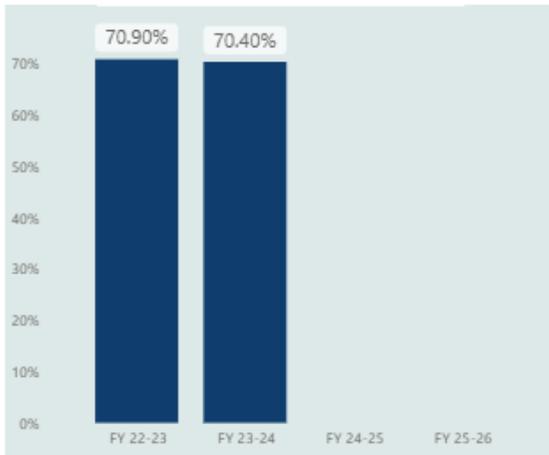
92.3%



Cancer screening coverage: bowel cancer (%)

High is good

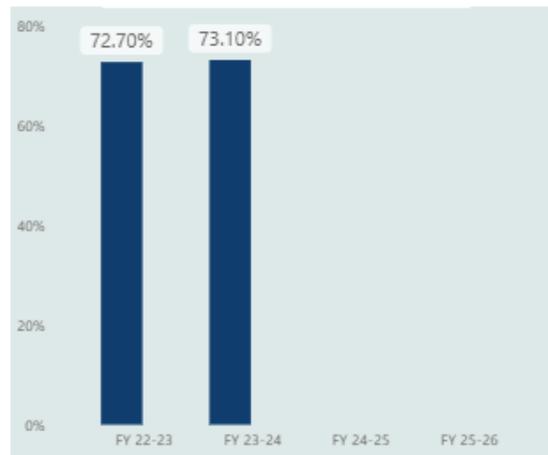
70.4%



Cancer screening coverage: cervical cancer (aged 50-64) (%)

High is good

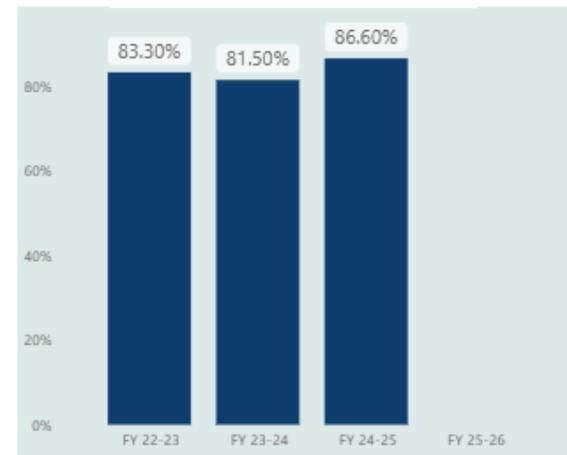
73.1%



MMR for two doses - 5 years old (%)

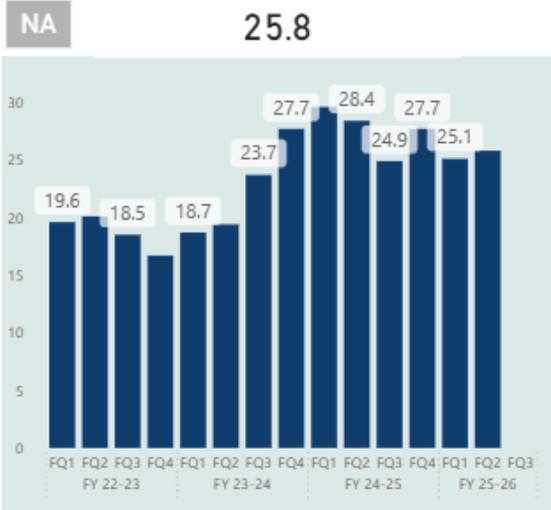
High is good

86.6%



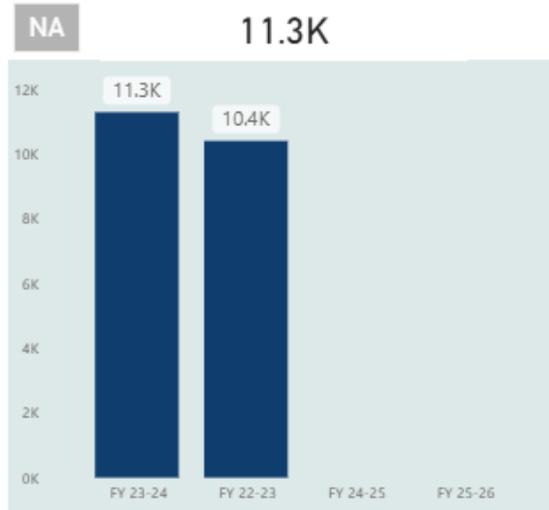
Economic Inactivity

Low is good



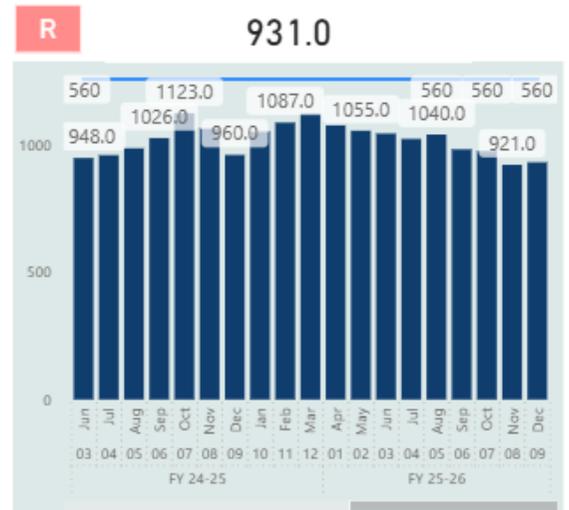
Number of children in relative low income families (under 16s)

Low is good



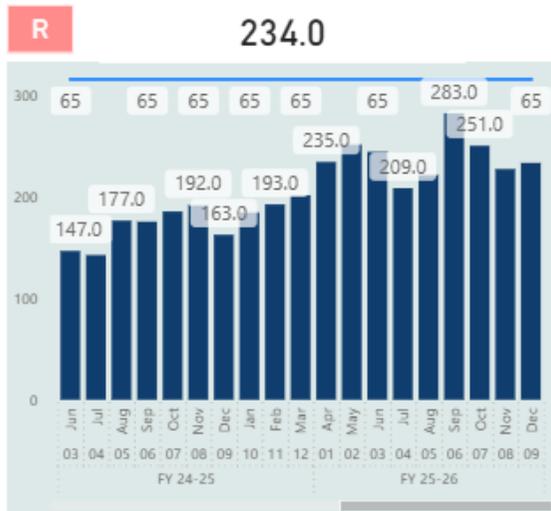
Number of statutory homeless cases open on the last day of the month

Low is good



Number of households in temporary accommodation on last day of the month

Low is good



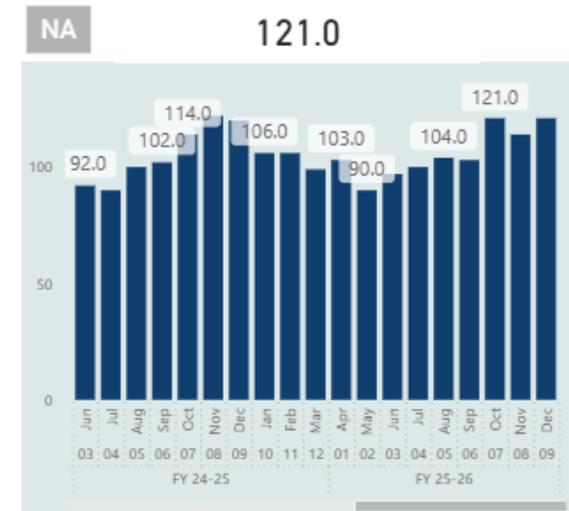
Average waiting time on housing register (all applications) (snapshot)

Low is good



Number of rough sleepers currently being supported

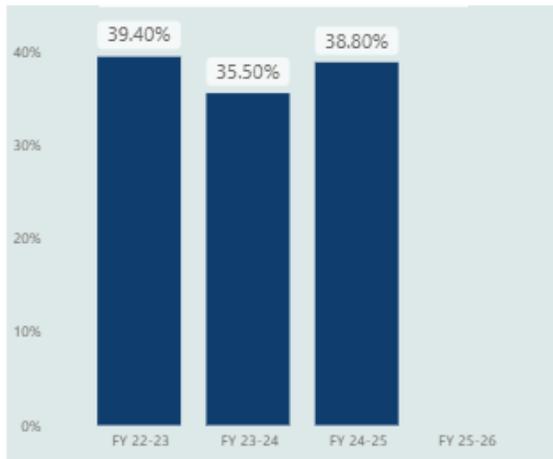
High is good



Year 6: Prevalence of overweight (including obesity) (%)

Low is good

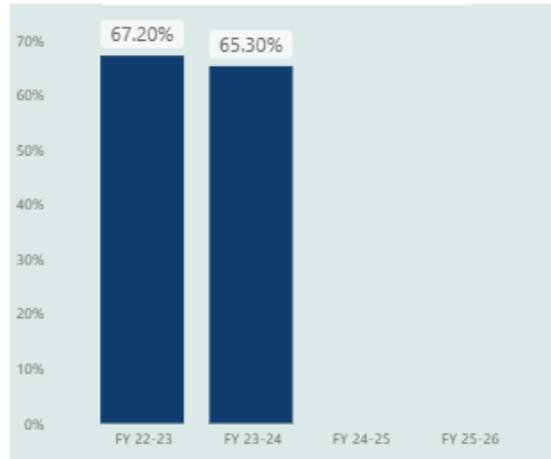
38.8%



Overweight (including obesity) prevalence in adults (18+ yrs) (%)

Low is good

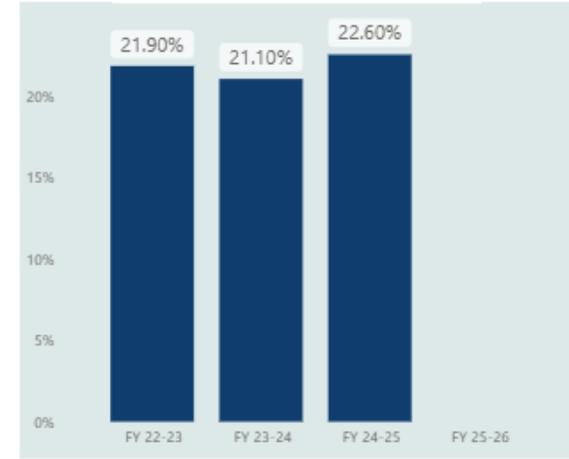
65.3%



Reception: Prevalence of overweight (including obesity) (%)

Low is good

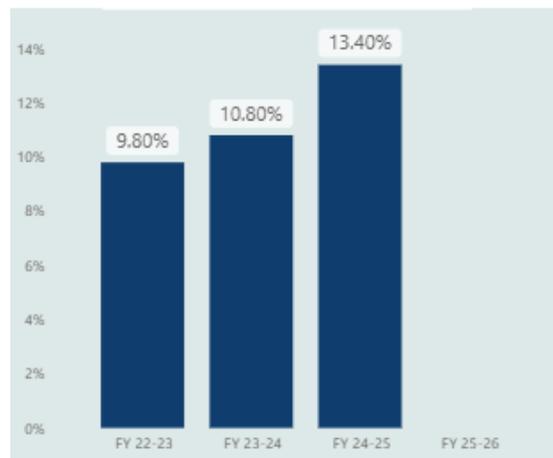
22.6%



Smoking prevalence in adults (18+) - Current Smokers (APS) (%)

Low is good

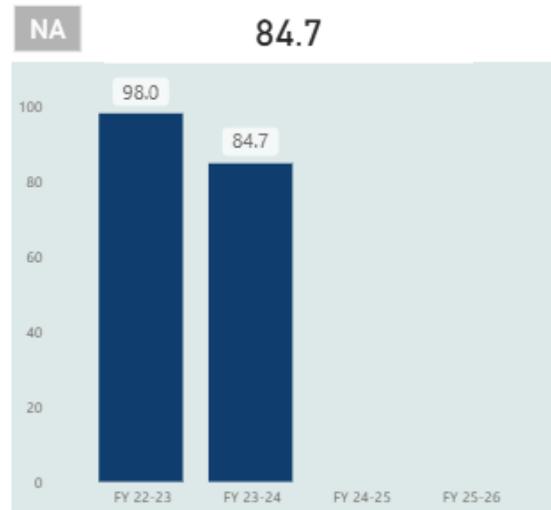
13.4%



Under 75 mortality rate from all cardiovascular diseases (rate per 100,000, includes heart disease and stroke)

Low is good

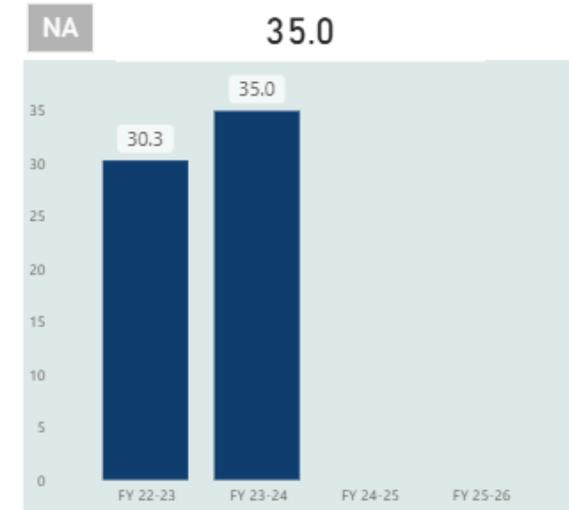
84.7



Under 75 mortality rate from liver disease (rate per 100,000 residents)

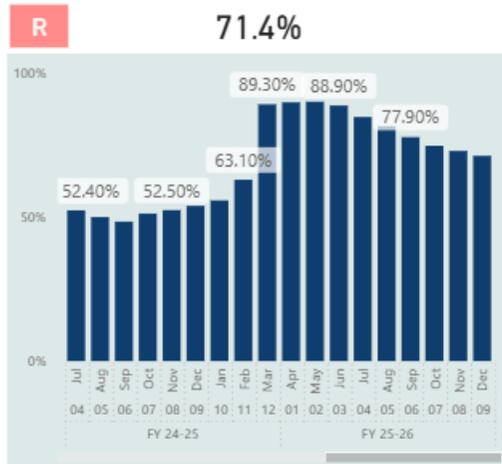
Low is good

35.0

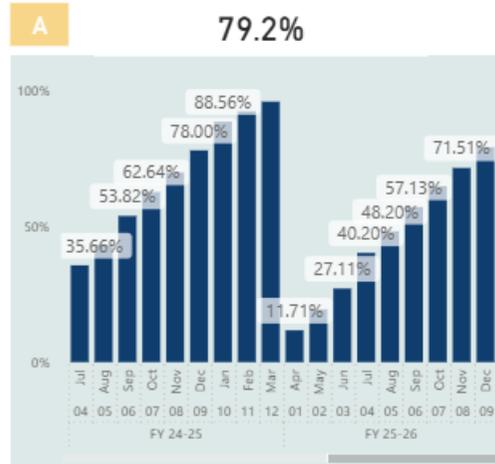


Priority: Enablers - Corporate Performance - Power BI

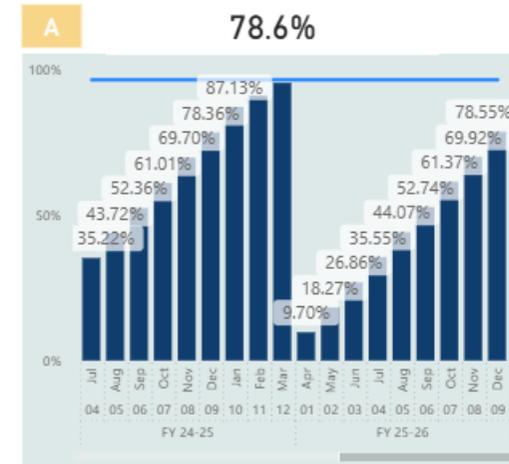
% annual PDRs completed in previous 12 months (Bury Council)
High is good



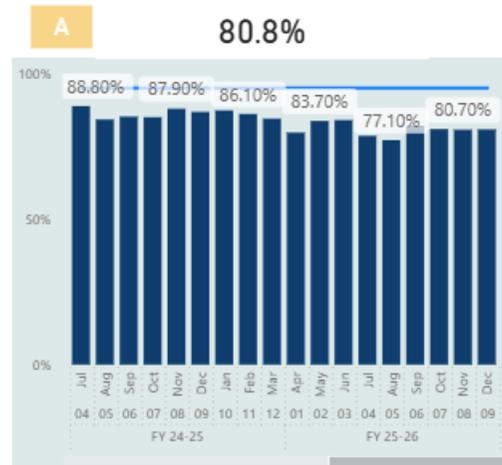
% Business rates collected
High is good



% Council Tax collected
High is good



Percentage of staff in scope who've completed mandatory training module: GDPR (in past 12 months)
High is good



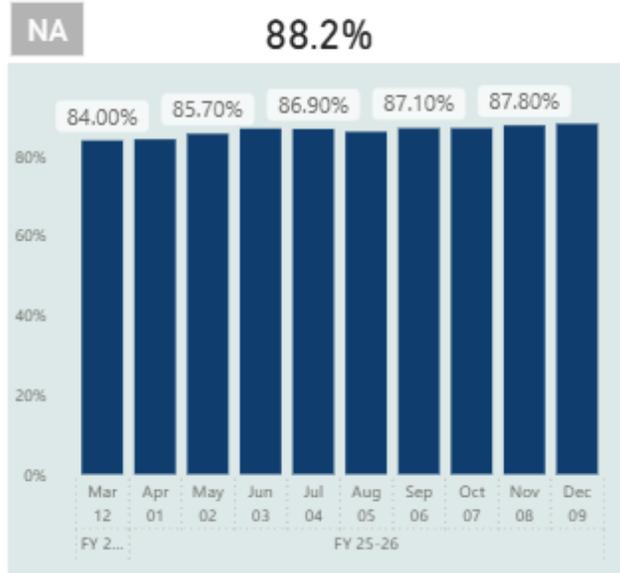
Sickness absence: average number of days lost per FTE per year (Bury Council)
Low is good



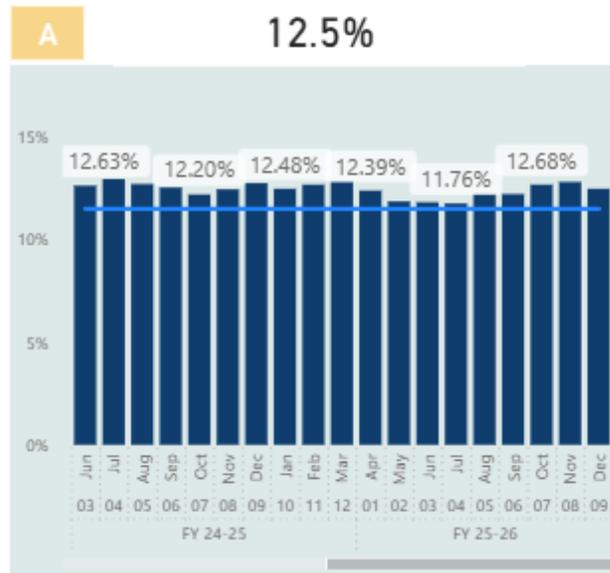
Number of new registrations on VCFA Volunteering Bank
High is good



Health and Safety Assessment - % compliance with e-learning
High is good



% Staff turnover (Bury Council)
Low is good





Classification: Open	Decision Type: Non-Key
--------------------------------	----------------------------------

Report to:	Cabinet	Date: 11 March 2026
Subject:	2025-26 Q3 Finance Position	
Report of	Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation	

Summary

1. To present to members the 2025/26 forecast revenue outturn position as at 31 December 2025.
2. To present to members the 2025/26 forecast savings position as at 31 December 2025.
3. To present to members the 2025/26 forecast capital outturn position as at 31 December 2025.
4. To present to members the 2025/26 forecast Collection Fund position as at 31 December 2025.
5. To present to members the updated 2025/26 forecast for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) position as at 31 December 2025.

Recommendation(s)

6. Cabinet is asked to:
 - Note the 2025/26 forecast revenue outturn position as at 31 December 2025 of a £7.932m overspend (3.32%) against a net budget of £238.988m.
 - Note the 2025/26 forecast savings position as at 31 December 2025 of a forecast underachievement of £2.511m (-22.15%) against an agreed target of £11.344m.
 - Approve the in-year updates to the capital programme, revising the capital delivery programme for 2025/26 to £119.614m which will form the basis for future in-year monitoring and reporting of performance.
 - Note the 2025/26 forecast Collection Fund Position as at 31 December 2025 of a surplus of £3.924m of which £3.746m relates to Bury's share.
 - Note the 2025/26 forecast HRA revenue outturn position as at 31 December 2025 of a £1.638m underspend against a net budget underspend of £3.790m.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

7. To update members on the Council's budgetary position and actions taken or being taken to ensure budgetary targets are achieved.
8. This report is in accordance with the Council's financial procedure regulations.

Alternative options considered and rejected

9. N/A

Report Author and Contact Details:

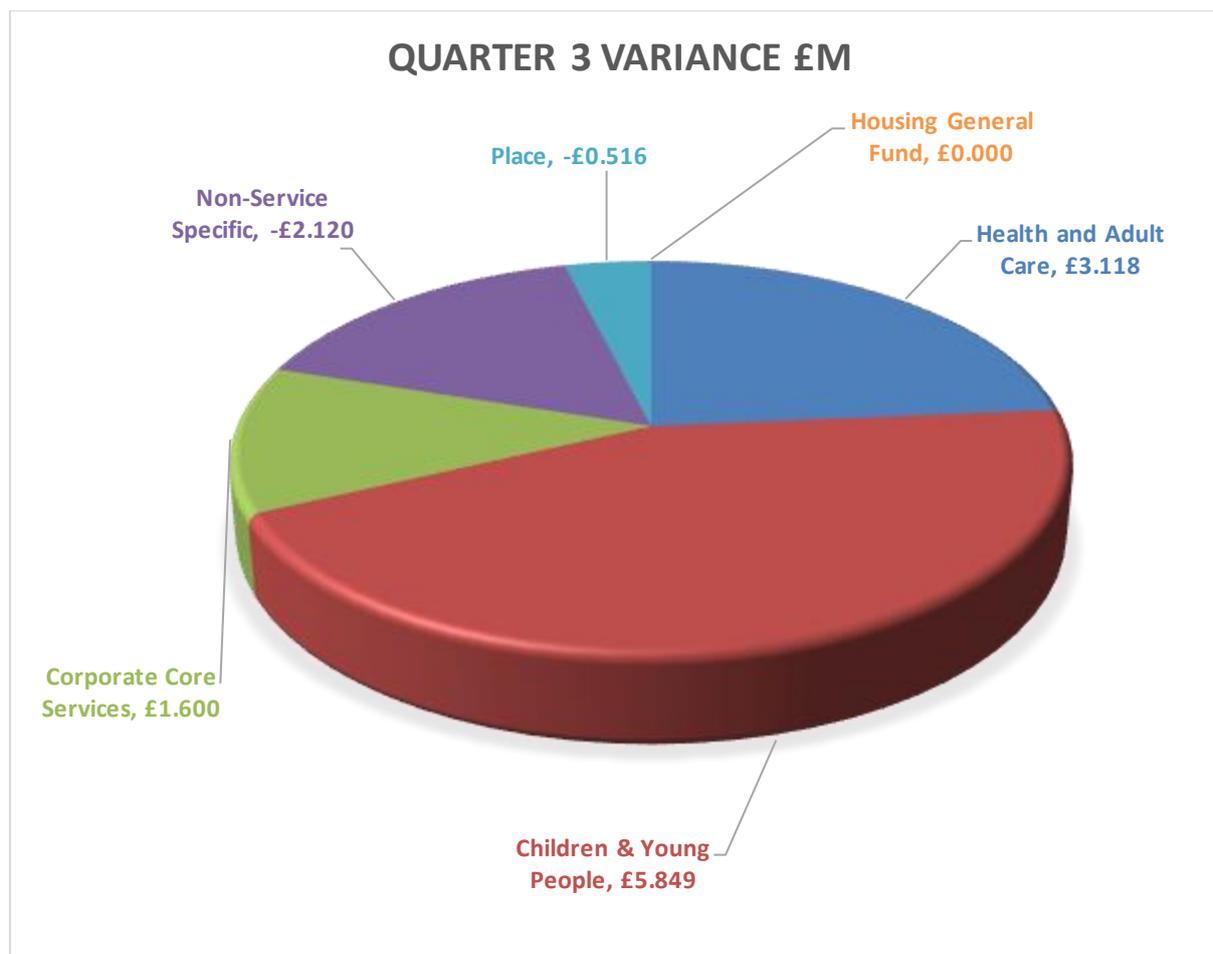
Name: Neil Kissock
Position: Director of Finance
Department: Corporate Core
E-mail: n.kissock@bury.gov.uk

Background

2025/26 Quarter 3 Forecast Outturn Position

10. The 2025/26 general fund revenue quarter 3 (month 9) forecast outturn position is currently projecting an overspend of £7.932m which represents a variance of 3.32% compared to the overall net revenue budget of £238.988m and a £2.071m increase in the forecast overspend compared to the position reported at quarter 2. The forecast is based on expenditure and activity levels at quarter 3, with assumptions made with regard to forecast changes over the rest of the year with the future demand and cost of adult and children's social care services being inherently difficult to predict.
11. The variance is in addition to an approved contribution from reserves of £5.858m to address the structural funding gap in the current year revenue budget set at February 2025 Council. Whilst the forecast variance remains a relatively small proportion of the budget, officers are currently prioritising work on cost reduction measures targeted at reducing the current forecast overspend position as far as possible over the remaining months of the financial year. Any overspend at year-end would necessarily become an additional call on reserves, which in turn impacts on the reserves available for use to stabilise the budget.

2025/26 Quarter 3 Forecast Outturn	Revised Budget £m	Quarter 3 Forecast Outturn £m	Quarter 3 Forecast Variance £m	Quarter 2 Forecast Variance £m	Movement £m
<u>Directorate:</u>					
Health and Adult Care	£98.542	£101.660	£3.118	£1.706	£1.412
Children & Young People	£65.195	£71.044	£5.849	£2.181	£3.668
Corporate Core Services	£30.087	£31.687	£1.600	£3.094	(£1.494)
Non-Service Specific	£29.944	£27.824	(£2.120)	(£1.886)	(£0.234)
Place	£15.299	£14.783	(£0.516)	£0.766	(£1.282)
Housing General Fund	(£0.079)	(£0.079)	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
NET REVENUE BUDGET	£238.988	£246.920	£7.932	£5.861	£2.071
<u>Funding:</u>					
Council Tax	(£119.350)	(£119.350)	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
Business Rates	(£74.276)	(£74.276)	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
Government Funding Grants	(£39.503)	(£39.503)	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
FUNDING	(£233.129)	(£233.129)	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
<u>Use of Reserves:</u>					
Budget Stabilisation Reserve	(£5.858)	(£5.858)	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
USE OF RESERVES	(£5.858)	(£5.858)	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
BUDGET POSITION	£0.001	£7.933	£7.932	£5.861	£2.071



12. Details of the significant variances include:

Health and Adult Care:

The 2025/26 Health and Adult Care (HAC) Directorate budget is forecast to overspend by £3.118m (3.16%) at quarter 3.

- The Care in the Community budget is forecast to overspend by £4.751m (7.7%), an increase of £0.841m compared to the position reported at quarter 2 and is largely driven by the £0.967m net new demand for the 3-month period of September to December.

To partially mitigate the position, a total of £0.800m of related service reserves have been applied in line with the intended use of the reserves. This has the result of reducing the overspend reflected in the Care in the Community budget.

The service settings driving the overspend are Supported Living, Direct payments and Home Care.

Consultancy from Impower had set initial in year saving expectations however, while savings from Impower will be delivered, they will not be realised until 2026/27 financial year. This area will remain under detailed review and progress updates

provided to future Cabinet meetings in the quarterly reports.

To compensate for this, a further £2.517m of mitigation initiatives have been identified and are built into the quarter 3 forecast. However, the net increase in demand for the first 9 months of the year is c.£3.078m and consequently the additional savings have been offset through the additional commissioning of care packages.

- The Adult Social Care Operations budget is forecast to underspend by £1.112m (11.97%) which is broadly in line with the underspend reported at quarter 2. The main drivers of the underspend are staffing vacancies within the following teams:
 - Choices for Living Well
 - Community Mental Health Team
 - Integrated Neighbourhood Teams
 - Assessment and Care Management Team
 - Older People Mental health team
 - Technology Enabled Care (TEC) Team

The ASC workforce retention strategy continues to recruit Social Workers in Operational teams thereby strengthening focus on delivery of care package savings. However, recruiting to vacant posts remains a challenge and therefore affects the ability to deliver services to their full capacity.

- The Commissioning and Procurement budget is forecast to overspend by £0.073m (0.73%) and is largely driven by increased Carers Payment Activity and Mental Health Assessments in hospitals and care homes.
- The Departmental Support Services budget is forecast to underspend by £0.047m (1.92%) which is in line with the position reported at quarter 2, due to a staffing budget underspend within the Adult Social Care Financial Support team.
- The Public Health budget is forecast to underspend by £0.257m (2.24%) which is a £0.035m improvement on the quarter 2 reported position due to staff vacancies and reduced activity on the NHS Health checks and GM Sexual Health contracts.
- The Wellness budget is forecast to underspend by £0.217m (8.18%) which is broadly in line with the underspend reported at quarter 2. The underspend is the net impact of the closure of the Radcliffe Leisure centre and staffing vacancies across the Leisure budget portfolio.
- Arts and Museums are forecast to underspend by £0.072m (12.29%) due to the closure of the Tourist Information Centre.

Children and Young People:

The Children and Young People Directorate is forecast to overspend by £5.849m

(9.8%)

- The Safeguarding and Social Care service is forecast to overspend by £5.619m (11%), up by £1.704 from the £4.492m reported at quarter 2. External Placements represent £4.880m of this overspend due to an increase of 9 children in placements 3 of which are within the residential setting with the highest costs. The placements and unit costs continue to exceed the despite demand growth being built into the 2025/26 budget. This is due to the mix of support required, increased numbers and also in part due to the savings approved in relation to the stepping down of 7 placements not yet being achieved. The service is progressing work on a number of fronts targeting delivery of a net reduction in residential placements that would reduce the costs and potentially deliver better outcomes for a number of children, but it is likely that the financial impact of the planned reduction will largely impact in 2026/27. Given the inherent financial risks in this service area, which is a national issue affecting all local authorities with social care responsibilities, it will remain under detailed review overseen by the Finance Board and updates will continue to be provided to Cabinet as part of the quarterly reporting cycle. Safeguarding services are forecasting an overspend of £0.948k due to increased cases rising from 31 to 61 within the year. These pressures are partially being offset by a reduction in the Children with Disabilities residential placements and vacancy savings.
- Within Education and Inclusion, Home to School Transport is forecast to overspend by £0.490m due to increased pupil numbers (£0.310m) and increased costs of the provision (£0.180m).
- There are offsetting underspends of £0.048m on Children's Services Management, reduced by £0.25m from the reported position at quarter 2 relating to staffing costs.
- Overall increases in staffing and agency forecasts have worsened the quarter 3 position.

Corporate Core Directorate

The Corporate Core Directorate is forecast to overspend by £1.600m (5.32%)

- People and Inclusion (HR) are forecasting an overspend of £0.391m (15.65%). This is primarily due to a historic shortfall in the 'education buy-back' budget totalling £0.285m (35.22%), which has widened as more maintained schools convert to academy status. Staffing is forecast to underspend by £0.133m offset by £247k relating to agency staff.
- Finance is forecasting an overspend of £1.393m (13.41%) mainly due to the increased costs of insurance premiums. The procurement and resulting contract award wasn't finalised until after the 2025/26 budget was set and this has been reflected in the revised MTFs. There are also net staffing overspends, including severance costs offset by over-achievement of income

- Legal & Democratic Services is forecast to underspend by £0.496m (8.51%) mainly driven by a fallow year in Municipal Elections (£0.307m) and small forecast underspends under £0.100m on staffing and member expenses.
- Housing Needs and Options have a forecast overspend of £0.646m, largely in relation to pressures in relation to temporary accommodation costs.
- Overall reductions in staffing and agency forecasts of £1.515m have been included in the quarter 3 position.

Non-Service Specific

The Non-Service Specific Department is forecast to underspend by £2.120m (7.1%) mainly in relation to higher than budgeted income from treasury investments alongside reduced borrowing costs reflecting the reprofiled capital programme.

Place Directorate

The Place Directorate is forecast to underspend by £0.516 in quarter 3.

- Waste, Transport and Stores are forecast to overspend by £0.522m (8.5%).
 - Waste is forecast to overspend by £0.305m which is due to a net overspend on staffing and agency costs of £0.328m, a daily hire vehicle forecast overspend of £0.111m and offset by underspends on Derv and income.
 - Transport is forecast to overspend by £0.217m, an increase of £0.102m from quarter 2 due to the refurbishments of refuse collection vehicles, partially offset by an underspend in staffing and other minor variances under £0.100m
 - Stores is forecast to be on budget.
- Facilities Management is forecast to underspend by £0.270m, which is due to an underspend on utilities of £0.299m and increased rental income for 3 Knowsley place of £0.103m, offset by an under-recovery of rents for Humphrey House of £0.215m, with various minor variances under £0.100m
- Engineers is forecast to underspend by £0.240m in quarter 3, a movement of £0.157m from quarter 2. This is due to an overachievement of car parking income of £0.361m offset by net additional staffing costs in consultancy of £0.185m with various minor variances under £0.100m
- Commercial Services is forecast to underspend by £0.151m,
 - Catering is forecasting a net underspend of £0.100m including overachievement of income of £0.300m, staffing underspend of £0.228m offset by overspends on food costs of £399m.
 - Caretaking and Cleaning additional relief income of £0.050m

- Street Scene Maintenance is forecast to underspend by £0.164m in relation to £0.300m underspend on street lighting costs offset by various overspends under £0.100m.
- Housing Strategy underspend £0.049m in minor variances under £0.100m.
- Various minor variances under £0.100m
- Overall decreases in staffing and agency forecasts of £0.951m have been included in the quarter 3 position.

Staffing costs

13. Included within the Departmental forecast positions are variances in relation to staffing and agency costs as seen in the table below. Within the net staffing / agency underspend is the achievement of the vacancy factor, 3 days unpaid leave and purchase of annual leave schemes totalling £3.521m.

2025/26 Quarter 3 Forecast	Staffing/Agency Budget	Staffing/Agency forecast	Staffing/ Agency Variance	Vacancy / leave savings target achieved
	£m	£m	£m	£m
<u>Directorate:</u>	-	-	-	
Health and Adult Care	£29.871	£27.915	-£1.957	-£1.001
Children & Young People	£28.573	£27.624	-£0.948	-£0.511
Corporate Core Services	£28.305	£29.551	£1.246	-£1.148
Non-Service Specific	£0.210	-£0.090	-£0.300	£0.000
Place	£23.388	£22.395	-£0.994	-£0.859
Housing General Fund	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
NET REVENUE BUDGET	£110.347	£107.394	-£2.953	-£3.519

The net forecast underspend relating to staffing after agency costs and the achievement of the agreed savings in relation to the vacancy factor and additional leave schemes is £2.953m.

Savings position

14. The table below show the forecast position for the savings proposals which have been approved at February 2025 along with the pre-approved February 2023 savings which come into force during 2025/26. The forecast is an underachievement of £2.511m (22.15%). The main reason for the underachievement is delayed implementation of restructures and other activities required to enable delivery of the agreed savings. Work is being

undertaken, overseen by the Finance Board, to identify ways that the current estimated delays in savings delivery can be reduced and to identify mitigations to reduce the in-year financial impact. With the exception of the CYP Directorate placement savings, services are mitigating the delay in savings delivery within their existing budgets and are not forecasting significant overspends in their areas. The proportion of savings currently achieved or mitigated within service is therefore 77.85%. It is currently anticipated that delayed savings will be fully achieved in full by 2026/27.

2025/26 Budget Proposals	Directorate	Feb 2025 Target	Quarter 3 Forecast	Quarter 3 Forecast Variance (over)/underachievement
		2025/26 £m	£m	£m
Draft Budget Proposals (Operational Decision):				
HAC Strategic Workforce Review	HAC	(£0.010)	(£0.010)	£0.000
CYP Strategic Workforce Review	CYP	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
CCS Strategic Workforce Review	CCS	(£0.186)	(£0.186)	£0.000
BGI Strategic Workforce Review	BGI	(£0.062)	(£0.062)	£0.000
OPS Strategic Workforce Review	OPS	(£0.145)	(£0.145)	£0.000
Adults Commissioning Review	HAC	(£1.000)	(£1.371)	(£0.371)
Single Handed Care Trial	HAC	(£0.200)	(£0.100)	£0.100
Personal Budget Review	HAC	(£0.250)	(£0.250)	£0.000
Direct Payment Reassessment to Include Therapy	HAC	(£0.050)	(£0.050)	£0.000
Discharge to Assess Reviews by Therapy	HAC	(£0.050)	(£0.050)	£0.000
Neighbourhood Housing Support	HAC	(£0.050)	(£0.050)	£0.000
ASC Community Care budget realignment	HAC	(£1.680)	(£1.328)	£0.352
Dividend income from Persona - one-off in 25/26	HAC	(£0.350)	(£0.350)	£0.000
Persona - remodel of supported living hours	HAC	(£0.330)	(£0.325)	£0.005
Persona - employability	HAC	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
Persona - Willow Street (6 flats for decant from dispersed accommodation)	HAC	£0.000	(£0.070)	(£0.070)
Maximising charges for Deferred Payments	HAC	(£0.005)	(£0.005)	£0.000
Foster Carers	CYP	(£0.250)	£0.000	£0.250
Family Safeguarding Model	CYP	(£0.100)	£0.000	£0.100
Edge of Care	CYP	(£0.494)	£0.000	£0.494
Creation of Council-Owned Residential Children's Homes	CYP	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
Therapeutic support team for Children in Care	CYP	(£0.195)	£0.000	£0.196
Reconnect - step down from residential care	CYP	(£0.571)	(£0.157)	£0.414
IT Supplier Review [Digital]	CCS	(£0.065)	(£0.065)	£0.000
IT licence Review [Digital]	CCS	(£0.050)	(£0.050)	£0.000
Unit 4 Reimplementation & Transformation Review	CCS	(£0.100)	(£0.100)	£0.000
Revenues and Benefits Structure Review	CCS	(£0.317)	(£0.181)	£0.136
Contact Centre Review [Digital]	CCS	(£0.100)	£0.000	£0.100

2025/26 Budget Proposals	Directorate	Feb 2025 Target	Quarter 3 Forecast	Quarter 3 Forecast Variance (over)/underachievement
		2025/26 £m	£m	£m
Corporate Core Structures including homelessness and housing options review and integration of communities	CCS	(£0.328)	(£0.328)	£0.000
Private Sector Housing - Capitalise salaries	CCS	(£0.100)	(£0.100)	£0.000
Public Protection / Licensing Budget Realignment	CCS	(£0.016)	(£0.016)	£0.000
Private Sector Rented - Enforcement HMO Licensing	CCS	(£0.005)	(£0.005)	£0.000
Stores Function Review	OPS	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
Explore Advertising opportunities on highway network	OPS	(£0.050)	£0.000	£0.050
Salary Sacrifice Review	NSS	(£0.050)	(£0.050)	£0.000
Organisation Delivery Model Review	NSS	(£0.257)	(£0.257)	£0.000
Contract Efficiencies	NSS	(£0.500)	(£0.500)	£0.000
Total Budget Proposals (Operational Decision)		(£8.060)	(£6.198)	£1.862
Budget Proposals (Policy Decision):				
Car Park Charges Review	OPS	(£0.055)	(£0.055)	£0.000
Light Reduction - Trim and Dim	OPS	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
Review Residents Permits pricing structure	OPS	(£0.145)	(£0.002)	£0.143
Total Budget Proposals (Policy Decision)		(£0.200)	(£0.057)	£0.1443
TOTAL FEB 2025 APPROVED BUDGET PROPOSALS		(£8.260)	(£6.255)	£2.005
Saving Already Agreed - Development of Wider Learning Disabilities Strategy for Age 14-25 Cohort	HAC	(£0.180)	(£0.180)	£0.000
Progressing the Edge of Care Service Review	CYP	(£0.506)	£0.000	£0.506
Service Reviews within the Corporate Core	CCS	(£0.388)	(£0.388)	£0.000
TOTAL FEB 2023 APPROVED PROPOSALS		(£1.074)	(£0.568)	£0.5062
Integration of Housing	NSS	(£2.000)	(£2.000)	£0.000
TOTAL FEB 2024 APPROVED PROPOSALS		(£2.000)	(£2.000)	£0.000
TOTAL APPROVED PROPOSALS		(£11.334)	(£8.823)	£2.511

2025/26 Forecast Capital Outturn

15. The Capital Programme is set on a three-year rolling basis and the programme for 2025/2026 to 2027/2028 was approved by Budget Council in February 2025, as follows:

2025/26	£133.255m
2026/27	£49.223m
2027/28	£25.538m

16. At the 9 July 2025 Cabinet meeting, a further £19.360m of slippage from 2024/25 was added to the 2025/26 programme, to increase the 2025/26 Capital Programme to £152.615m, with an overall borrowing requirement of £72.570m.

Capital Programme	2025/26		
	Approved Programme £m	Slippage from 2024/25 £m	Revised Programme £m
Capital Expenditure by Theme			
Regeneration and Economic Growth	£46.640	£9.724	£56.364
Highways	£28.395	£3.982	£32.377
Open Spaces / Sports and Leisure	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
Children and Young People	£9.787	£4.067	£13.854
Property	£2.697	£0.070	£2.767
Housing General Fund	£3.652	£1.490	£5.142
Climate Change	£0.043	£0.019	£0.062
ICT	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
Sub-total GF In-Progress	£91.214	£19.352	£110.566
Approved In-Principle	£12.149	£0.000	£12.149
New Capital Bids	£0.370	£0.000	£0.370
Sub-total GF Approved In-Principle	£12.519	£0.000	£12.519
TOTAL GF	£103.733	£19.352	£123.085
TOTAL HRA	£29.522	£0.008	£29.530
TOTAL COUNCIL EXPENDITURE	£133.255	£19.360	£152.615
Financing the Capital Programme			
Prudential Borrowing	£50.296	£11.014	£61.310
External Funding	£49.427	£8.307	£57.734
Capital Receipts	£3.971	£0.006	£3.977
General Fund RCCO	£0.039	£0.025	£0.064
TOTAL GF	£103.733	£19.352	£123.085
Prudential Borrowing	£11.252	£0.008	£11.260
External Funding	£3.092	£0.000	£3.092
Capital Receipts	£7.848	£0.000	£7.848
Housing Revenue Account DRF/MRR	£7.330	£0.000	£7.330
TOTAL HRA	£29.522	£0.008	£29.530
TOTAL COUNCIL FINANCING	£133.255	£19.360	£152.615

17. In the budget report there was a total of £12.149m of Approved in Principle schemes was included in the General Fund Capital Programme. These were effectively 'pipeline' projects to be formally incorporated into the programme on receipt of detailed delivery plans and evaluation, through the Council's agreed policies for incepting additional schemes into the capital programme, which is overseen by the Finance Board. Services have identified schemes that are now included within the 'themes' in the programme and expected to spend during

this financial year. Some 'supported' schemes included in this total, such as commitments for match funding for external grants and contributions, may be required to slip at year end into 2026-27, to match the receipt of the grant approvals from external partners.

18. As a result of in year reviews undertaken, it is proposed that the 2025/26 Capital Programme is revised down by £4.920m from the rephased total of £124.354m at Quarter 2 to £119.614m. This is a total of £33.001m which has been rephased since the quarter 1 figure of £152.615m. The total revised programme figure is higher than the value of the capital programme delivered in previous years but reflects the accelerated progression of projects and anticipated spend on the key regeneration schemes during this financial year.

Capital Programme Proposed changes at Q3	Revised Programme at Qtr 1 £m	Proposed In-Year Programme Updates £m	Revised Programme at Qtr 3 £m
Regeneration and Economic Growth	56.364	(£2.693)	53.671
Highways	32.377	(£16.331)	16.046
Children and Young People	13.854	(£5.112)	8.742
Property	2.767	£3.361	6.128
Open Spaces / Sports and Leisure	0.000	£3.230	3.230
Housing GF	5.142	(£1.809)	3.333
Climate Change	0.062	£0.000	0.062
ICT and Digital	0.000	£3.402	3.402
APPROVED IN PRINCIPLE TOTAL GF	12.149	(£12.149)	0.000
NEW BIDS TOTAL	0.370	(£0.370)	0.000
GF EXPENDITURE TOTAL	123.085	(£28.471)	94.614
HRA EXPENDITURE TOTAL	29.530	(£4.530)	25.000
TOTAL COUNCIL EXPENDITURE	152.615	(£33.001)	119.614

19. The overall revised programme includes:

- updates in line with Cabinet approved new schemes (£2.886m),
- proposed in-year programme updates of £11.758m to adjust for funding announcements which were received after the February 2025 Council budget meeting for which approval is sought,
- proposed reprofiling of schemes from 2025/26 into 2026/27, (£47.644m) for which approval is sought.
- Approved in principle schemes have now been fully included in the capital programme (£10.709m) in addition to the £1.810m reported at quarter 2

for which approval is sought.

20. The majority of the programme increase relates to Children and Young People – an increase of £8.017m to reflect the government's (Department for Education) grant funded Basic and High Need Capital allocations and the School Condition allocation, additional Highways Maintenance and Road Safety grant from CRSTS of £2.542m received in December 2025 and the first tranche of the GMCA contribution for the Travel Hub from the reprioritised CRSTS funding for district schemes.
21. The proposed reprofiling of £47.644m is in line with the revised best forecasts of planned timeframes for expenditure to occur over the life of the approved Capital Programme.
 - Regeneration: the revised forecast for Radcliffe Enterprise centre and the Prestwich Travel Hub has resulted in less re-phasing required.
 - Highways: Lower forecasts for the Mayoral Capacity Fund, Active Travel, Milltown Street Footbridge and additional allocation received through CRTSTS for the maintenance have resulted in increased re-phasing into 2026/27 and 2027/28.
 - CYP: Increased expenditure forecast for the year on Millwood extension, New Radcliffe school contribution, PRU phase 2 feasibility and options appraisals have lowered the re-phasing for the year.
 - Open Spaces / Sports and Leisure: Electric vehicle infrastructure and Close Park changing rooms projects have been deferred to 2026/27 and 2027/28 respectively in line with current plans.
 - The revised spending plan for the HRA replacement of stock has resulted in further rephasing into 2026/27.
22. The additional proposed scale down of the proposed General Fund Capital Programme to £94.614m from the previously reported £98.147m (£92.745m plus £12.519m approved in principal schemes) at quarter 2 reduces the in-year borrowing requirement by £0.271m, from £55.757m at quarter 2 to £55.487m.
23. The proposed changes can be seen on the table at Appendix A.
24. This revised capital programme will be the base of the Outturn report and performance monitoring during the remaining quarter of 2025.26.
25. The table below shows expenditure of £65.065m (54%) of the revised programme of £119.614m has been expended at 31 December 2025. The forecast at quarter 3 was reviewed by budget managers and their indications at this time in the financial year suggest the budget will be achieved by the end of March 2026. Whilst the expectation is best on the best available information at the time of this report, the delivery of capital works can be affected by difficult to control factors, such as external stakeholders, delays or for some schemes, the elements.

26. Work will continue to establish any schemes that cannot be progressed by year-end and to assess required timeframes to complete these and whether a request for deferral to a future year for delivery should be made, in accordance with the Council's governance and agreed procedures.

27. The figures set out in the table represent the project managers' reviewed forecast of expenditure to be achieved by the end of the financial year.

Capital Programme at Q3	2025/26	In-Year Performance			
Capital Expenditure by Theme	Revised Programme Q3 £m	Actual Spend at 31-Dec 25 £m	Actual Spend at 31-Dec 25 %	Forecast Spend for Year at Quarter 3 £m	Forecast (Under) / Over Spend £m
Regeneration and Economic Growth	£53.671	£37.699	70%	£53.671	£0.000
Highways	£16.046	£9.182	57%	£16.046	£0.000
Children and Young People	£8.742	£4.422	51%	£8.742	£0.000
Property	£6.128	£2.566	42%	£6.128	£0.000
Open Spaces / Sports and Leisure	£3.230	£1.054	33%	£3.230	£0.000
Housing GF	£3.333	£0.967	29%	£3.333	£0.000
Climate Change	£0.062	£0.016	25%	£0.062	£0.000
ICT and Digital	£3.402	£1.742	51%	£3.402	£0.000
SUBTOTAL GF IN PROGRESS	£94.614	£57.648	61%	£94.614	£0.000
SUBTOTAL HRA EXPENDITURE TOTAL	£25.000	£7.417	30%	£25.000	£0.000
TOTAL COUNCIL EXPENDITURE	£119.614	£65.065	54%	£119.614	£0.000

Financing the Capital Programme					
Prudential Borrowing	£55.487			£55.487	£0.000
External Funding	£36.291			£36.291	£0.000
Capital Receipts	£2.747			£2.747	£0.000
General Fund RCCO	£0.089			£0.089	£0.000
SUBTOTAL GF FINANCING	£94.614			£94.614	£0.000
Prudential Borrowing HRA	£10.715			£10.715	£0.000
External Funding /Capital Receipts HRA	£2.330			£2.330	£0.000
Capital Receipts HRA	£2.967			£2.967	£0.000
Housing Revenue Account DRF/MRR	£8.988			£8.988	£0.000
TOTAL FINANCING	£25.000			£25.000	£0.000
TOTAL FINANCING	£119.614			£119.614	£0.000

28. As mentioned, the nature of capital expenditure, dependent of many factors often outside the Council's control, cumulated with several large, complex schemes in the programme require close scrutiny on the level of spend that can be achieved during the current year. The overall progress on schemes that are taking place over several years such as the large regeneration schemes in the programme, due to complete by the end of 2026-27 will continue to be closely observed. Slippage at outturn is a normal feature of the programme and the budgets affected will be report to and approval sought from Cabinet.

29. The Council's Finance Team will continue to meet with project managers to assist with the monitoring of the programme as well as envisaged spend, during the last quarter of the year.
30. Any additional amendments to the programme that will become apparent by year end will be presented to Cabinet for approval at the time of the Outturn report.

Prudential Indicators

31. The affordability, sustainability and prudence of the capital programme is measured through Council's Prudential Indicators (PI). The quarter three forecasts show that we remain without our prescribed limits.

2025/26 Collection Fund Forecast

32. The increasing prominence of council tax and business rates funding council services means that the collection fund is closely monitored on an ongoing basis. The current forecast position on the collection fund is an in-year surplus of £3.240m, with a residual surplus brought forward from 2024/25 of £0.684m. (This is the difference between the statutory estimated deficit as at 15 January 2024 and the outturn position.) This brings the overall forecast to a surplus of £3.924m. The Council's share of the surplus is £3.746m and Greater Manchester Combined Authority's share is £0.179m (for police and fire and rescue services).
33. The proportionate shares for Business Rates and Council Tax mean that Greater Manchester Combined Authority have a 1% share of Business Rates and a 16% share of Council Tax, whereas the Council have a 99% share of the Business Rates and 84% share of Council Tax
34. The main movements during the year which are resulting in a forecast surplus position of £3.924m (Bury share £3.746m) are shown below.

2025/26 Surplus/(Deficit) on Collection Fund	Council Tax £m	NNDR £m	TOTAL £m
2024/25 Surplus/(Deficit) Balance b/f	£0.918	(£0.233)	£0.684
2025/26			
Income	£142.709	£52.250	£194.959
Contributions towards Previous Year's Deficit:			
Bury MBC	£0.000	£0.268	£0.268
Police and Crime Commissioner	£0.000		£0.000
General Mayoral - Fire and Rescue Service	£0.000	£0.003	£0.003
Total Income	£142.709	£52.521	£195.230
Precepts and Demands on Collection Fund:			
Bury MBC	(£118.296)	(£49.803)	(£168.098)
Police and Crime Commissioner	(£15.866)		(£15.866)
General Mayoral - Fire and Rescue Service	(£7.569)	(£0.503)	(£8.072)
Disregards: Renewable Energy		£0.000	£0.000
Cost of Collection		(£0.235)	(£0.235)
Transitional Protection Payments		£0.335	£0.335
Impairment of Debts/Appeals:			
Write-offs of Uncollectable Amounts	(£0.002)	£0.000	(£0.002)
(Increase)/Decrease in the Allowance for Impairment of Arrears	£0.285	£0.818	£1.103
(Increase)/Decrease in the Allowance for Impairment of Appeals		£0.103	£0.103
Contributions towards Previous Year's Surplus:			
Bury MBC	(£1.054)	£0.000	(£1.054)
Police and Crime Commissioner	(£0.141)		(£0.141)
General Mayoral - Fire and Rescue Service	(£0.062)	£0.000	(£0.062)
Total Expenditure	(£142.704)	(£49.286)	(£191.989)
2025-26 In-Year Surplus/(Deficit)	£0.005	£3.235	£3.240
Surplus/(Deficit) as at 31.12.2025	£0.923	£3.002	£3.924

Share of the 2025/26 Surplus/(Deficit)	Council Tax £m	NNDR £m	TOTAL £m
Bury MBC	£0.774	£2.972	£3.746
Police and Crime Commissioner	£0.103		£0.103
General Mayoral - Fire and Rescue Service	£0.046	£0.030	£0.076
Surplus/(Deficit) as at 31.12.2025	£0.923	£3.002	£3.924

35. The prior year outturn position was less than the forecast and as such this has had an impact on the in-year surplus figure, reducing it by £0.302m.

36. Work is ongoing to reduce arrears for both Council Tax and Business Rates which will result in reduced requirements for allowance for impairment of debt.

37. Alongside improving collection of arrears, the aim is to improve the collection rate for in year debt. The trend of collection rates over the past 8 years can be seen below. It is important to note that collection was impacted during and in the period after the COVID pandemic due to the prevailing economic conditions.

Collection Rates	Council Tax	NNDR
	%	%
2025/26 Target collection rate	97.50	97.00
2024/25	95.59	96.55
2023/24	95.25	93.88
2022/23	94.99	92.73
2021/22	95.77	93.73
2020/21	96.01	87.63
2019/20	96.39	95.37
2018/19	96.49	96.23
2017/18	96.62	96.04

38. Both the reducing arrears and improved forecast collection in year have resulted in a reduction in the required contribution to the allowance for impairment.

Housing Revenue Account Position

39. The HRA is forecasting to underspend by £1.638m as at quarter 3, an decrease of £1.061m from the quarter 2 reported position. This variance to budget relates mainly to depreciation costs, restructure costs, increased repair costs, reduced service charge income and reduced anticipated interest on balances and will be subject to further review throughout the year. The table below demonstrates the variances.

HRA INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT	2025/26 Original Budget	2025/26 Forecast Outturn	Variance
	£m	£m	£m
INCOME			
Dwelling Rents	(£36.731)	(£37.103)	(£0.372)
Non-dwelling Rents	(£0.209)	(£0.181)	£0.028
Other Charges for Services and Facilities	(£1.276)	(£1.067)	£0.209
Contributions Towards Expenditure	(£0.100)	(£0.005)	£0.095
Total Income	(£38.316)	(£38.356)	(£0.040)
EXPENDITURE			
Repairs and Maintenance	£8.648	£9.157	£0.510
Supervision and Management	£11.921	£12.271	£0.350
Special Services	£1.444	£1.660	£0.216
Rents, Rates, Taxes, and Other Charges	£0.200	£0.200	£0.000
Depreciation of Non-Current Assets	£7.330	£8.988	£1.658
Debt Management Expenses	£0.045	£0.045	£0.000
Movement in Provision for Bad Debts	£0.584	£0.567	(£0.017)
Total Expenditure	£30.171	£32.889	£2.717
HRA Services' Share of Corporate and Democratic Core	£0.400	£0.400	£0.000
Net Income or Expenditure of HRA Services	(£7.745)	(£5.067)	£2.677
Interest Payable and Similar Charges	£4.695	£4.134	(£0.561)
Interest and investment income	(£0.950)	(£0.810)	£0.140
(Surplus) or Deficit for the Year on HRA Services	(£3.999)	(£1.743)	£2.256
APPROPRIATIONS			
Reversal of Depreciation	(£7.330)	(£8.988)	(£1.658)
Transfer to the Major Repairs Reserve	£7.330	£8.988	£1.658
Repayment of Arranged Loans	£0.209	£0.105	(£0.104)
Capital Expenditure Funded by the HRA	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
Total Appropriations	£0.209	£0.105	(£0.104)

40. The main change is a variance of £1.658m related to the depreciation of Council dwellings and Land. The council's assets have been revalued following the appointment of new valuers. This has resulted in a significant change to the value of the assets attributed to the HRA, in the region of a 20% increase in those values. This has an immediate impact on the bottom-line position for the HRA, as the Depreciation charge has to be transferred to the Major Repairs Reserve in-year to fund the Capital Investment Plan for the HRA, this does then result in a reduced requirement for borrowing initially.

41. The Repairs and Maintenance variance of £0.510m (5.89%) relates to the Repairs and Maintenance service which includes the Housing Property Services Restructure and significant overspends in repair costs which is partly due to use of special contractors for voids. The cost of the restructure has been factored into future years budgets from 2026/27 onwards as part of the overall 30-year HRA business plan.

42. Service charge income relating to Leaseholder Services is forecast to under-recover by £0.208m (16.3%). The budget has been revised and factored into future years budgets from 2026/27 onwards as part of the overall 30-year HRA business plan.
43. Interest and Investment Income is forecast to under achieve the income target by £0.140m (14.7%) and is likely due to both the budget being increased for 25/26 by £0.150m but also due to national and global economic factors. The situation continues to be monitored closely.
44. Special services is forecast to overspend by £0.216m due to underachievement of income, particularly for Peachment Place.
45. Supervision and Management and Special Services is forecast to overspend by £0.350m through a combination of various overspends, with the most significant being the additional costs for subscriptions now having to be paid for both the Ombudsman's service, and the Social Housing Regulator
46. The HRA Capital Programme revised budget for 2025/26 was £26.414m, during quarter 3 £1.414m has been re-phased into 2026/27, as shown in the table below, with proposed revised capital programme of £25.000m against which performance will be measured.
47. The expenditure to date at quarter 3 is £7.417m which is 29.6% of the forecast outturn. A significant percentage of the works are expected to take place during January and February 2026 with delivery forecast to be complete by the end of the financial year.
48. 2 properties in relation to the HRA New Build project completed during December 2025. It is not expected that there will be further completions before the end of the financial year. It is expected that 10 Hive properties being purchased will be due to complete between September 2026 and February 2027. This project is funded from right to buy receipts and as such, any re-profiling or slippage will not impact on the need for borrowing during 2025/26.

CAPITAL PROGRAMME	Revised Budget approved Q2	Proposed Re-Phasing to 26/27	Proposed Revised Programme	2025/26 Forecast Outturn	Variance	
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	%
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE						
Major Works & Imps	£25.314	(£0.874)	£24.440	£24.440	£0.000	0.00%
Other Capital Spend	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	0.00%
New Build Development Costs	£1.100	(£0.540)	£0.560	£0.560	£0.000	0.00%
Demolition Costs	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	0.00%
Other Fixed Assets	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	0.00%
Total Capital Expenditure	£26.414	(£1.414)	£25.000	£25.000	£0.000	0.00%
CAPITAL FINANCING						
Prudential Borrowing	(£10.044)	(£0.671)	(£10.715)	(£10.715)	£0.000	0.00%
External Funding	(£3.092)	£0.202	(£2.890)	(£2.890)	£0.000	0.00%
Capital Receipts	(£5.948)	£3.541	(£2.407)	(£2.407)	£0.000	0.00%
HRA Direct Revenue Financing	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	0.00%
HRA Major Repairs Reserve	(£7.330)	(£1.658)	(£8.988)	(£8.988)	£0.000	0.00%
Total Capital Financing	(£26.414)	£1.414	(£25.000)	(£25.000)	£0.000	0.00%
Total Capital Programme	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	

49. The HRA Reserve movements are detailed in the table below.

MOVEMENT on the HRA RESERVE	2025/26 Original Budget	2025/26 Forecast Outturn	Variance
	£m	£m	£m
Balance on the HRA at the End of the Previous Reporting Period	(£15.867)	(£16.747)	(£0.880)
(Surplus) or Deficit for the Year on the HRA Income and Expenditure Statement	(£3.999)	(£1.743)	£2.256
Appropriations	£0.209	£0.105	(£0.104)
Net (Increase) or Decrease before Transfers to or from Reserves	(£3.790)	(£1.638)	£2.152
Transfers to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
(Increase) or Decrease in Year on the HRA	(£3.790)	(£1.638)	£2.152
Balance on the HRA at the End of the Current Reporting Period	(£19.657)	(£18.385)	£1.272

Links with the Corporate Priorities:

1. Financial management is a key part of the council's overall governance and control arrangements and the close monitoring of agreed income and expenditure; revised forecasts of future budget pressures and opportunities; and regular reporting of these issues underpin the council's three clear corporate priorities as set out in the Let's Do It Strategy that will deliver financial sustainability for the Council.

Equality Impact and Considerations:

2. 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.
3. 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:

4. This is a finance update report as such there are no environmental impacts associated with this report.

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
The Council has insufficient funds to support its expenditure.	Regular reporting and tight budgetary control by budget holders support the Council in managing the overall financial risks and financial planning for the Council.

Legal Implications:

5. This report is an updating report to Cabinet on the financial position at the end of Quarter 3.

Financial Implications:

6. The financial implications are set out within the Report.

Appendices:

- A. Capital Proposed Revised Programme table

Background papers:

[The Council's Revenue Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan 2025/26](#)

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

Term	Meaning
HRA	Housing Revenue Account
NNDR	National Non-Domestic Rates

Appendix A – Capital proposed Revised Programme

Capital Programme at Q2	2025/26					
	Revised Programme (Incl. Slippage) £m	2025/26 Cabinet Approved New Schemes £m	Proposed In-Year Programme Updates £m	Proposed Re-Phasing to 2026/27 £m	Proposed Re-Phasing to 2027/28 £m	Proposed Revised Programme £m
Capital Expenditure by Theme						
Regeneration and Economic Growth	£56.364	£0.148	£5.938	(£8.778)	£0.000	£53.671
Highways	£31.174	£0.000	(£1.047)	(£5.765)	(£9.519)	£14.843
Open Spaces / Sports and Leisure	£0.000	£0.000	£4.730	(£1.300)	(£0.200)	£3.230
Children and Young People	£13.855	£0.000	£8.094	(£8.206)	(£5.000)	£8.743
Property	£2.767	£0.856	£3.355	(£0.849)	£0.000	£6.129
Housing General Fund	£5.696	£0.000	£0.808	(£2.617)	£0.000	£3.887
Climate Change	£0.710	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.710
ICT	£0.000	£1.882	£1.520	£0.000	£0.000	£3.402
Sub-total GF In-Progress	£110.566	£2.886	£23.397	(£27.515)	(£14.719)	£94.614
Approved In-Principle	£12.149	£0.000	(£12.149)	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
New Capital Bids	£0.370	£0.000	(£0.370)	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
Sub-total GF Approved In-Principle	£12.519	£0.000	(£12.519)	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
TOTAL GF	£123.085	£2.886	£10.878	(£27.515)	(£14.719)	£94.614
TOTAL HRA	£29.530	£0.000	£0.880	(£5.410)	£0.000	£25.000
TOTAL COUNCIL EXPENDITURE	£152.615	£2.886	£11.758	(£32.925)	(£14.719)	£119.614
Financing the Capital Programme						
Prudential Borrowing	£61.310	£0.241	£1.470	(£7.534)	£0.000	£55.487
External Funding	£57.734	£0.738	£12.519	(£19.981)	(£14.719)	£36.291
Capital Receipts	£3.977	£1.882	(£3.112)	£0.000	£0.000	£2.747
General Fund RCCO	£0.064	£0.025	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.089
TOTAL GF	£123.085	£2.886	£10.877	(£27.515)	(£14.719)	£94.614
Prudential Borrowing	£11.260	£0.000	(£0.545)	£0.000	£0.000	£10.715
External Funding	£3.092	£0.000	(£0.762)	£0.000	£0.000	£2.330
Capital Receipts	£7.848	£0.000	(£2.441)	(£2.440)	£0.000	£2.967
Housing Revenue Account DRF/MRR	£7.330	£0.000	£4.628	(£2.970)	£0.000	£8.988
TOTAL HRA	£29.530	£0.000	£0.880	(£5.410)	£0.000	£25.000
TOTAL COUNCIL FINANCING	£152.615	£2.886	£11.757	(£32.925)	(£14.719)	£119.614

2026/27				
Approved Programme £m	2025/26 Cabinet Approved New Schemes £m	Proposed Re-Phasing from 2025/26 £m	Proposed New Schemes £m	Proposed Revised Programme £m
£3.400	£0.000	£8.778	£1.700	£13.878
£11.802	£0.543	£5.765	£8.085	£26.195
£0.360	£0.000	£1.300	£0.700	£2.360
£10.300	£0.000	£8.206	£0.150	£18.656
£0.000	£0.000	£0.849	£5.608	£6.457
£2.800	£0.000	£2.617	£0.000	£5.417
£0.648	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.648
£1.500	£1.240	£0.000	£2.600	£5.340
£30.810	£1.783	£27.515	£18.843	£78.951
£1.950	£0.000	£0.000	(£1.950)	£0.000
£0.395	£0.000	£0.000	(£0.395)	£0.000
£2.345	£0.000	£0.000	(£2.345)	£0.000
£33.155	£1.783	£27.515	£16.498	£78.951
£15.858	£0.000	£5.410	£9.993	£31.261
£49.013	£1.783	£32.925	£26.491	£110.212
£7.735	£1.240	£7.534	£14.182	£30.691
£24.020	£0.543	£19.981	£3.816	£48.360
£1.500	£0.000	£0.000	(£1.500)	£0.000
£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
£33.255	£1.783	£27.515	£16.498	£79.051
£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£10.474	£10.474
£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
£2.032	£0.000	£2.440	£0.622	£5.094
£13.826	£0.000	£2.970	(£1.103)	£15.693
£15.858	£0.000	£5.410	£9.993	£31.261
£49.113	£1.783	£32.925	£26.491	£110.312

2027/28			
Approved Programme £m	Proposed Re-Phasing from 2025/26 £m	Proposed New Schemes £m	Approved Programme £m
£0.000	£0.000	£1.700	£1.700
£0.000	£9.519	£0.000	£9.519
£0.000	£0.200	£1.000	£1.200
£0.000	£5.000	£0.000	£5.000
£0.000	£0.000	£2.500	£2.500
£2.500	£0.000	£0.300	£2.800
£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
£0.000	£0.000	£3.000	£3.000
£2.500	£14.719	£8.500	£25.719
£4.100	£0.000	(£4.100)	£0.000
£0.300	£0.000	(£0.300)	£0.000
£4.400	£0.000	(£4.400)	£0.000
£6.900	£14.719	£4.100	£25.719
£18.638	£0.000	£4.418	£23.056
£25.538	£14.719	£8.518	£48.775
£2.900	£0.000	£5.600	£8.500
£2.500	£14.719	£0.000	£17.219
£1.500	£0.000	(£1.500)	£0.000
£0.000	£0.000	£0.000	£0.000
£6.900	£14.719	£4.100	£25.719
£0.000	£0.000	£6.606	£6.606
£0.000	£0.000	£2.240	£2.240
£0.000	£0.000	£1.192	£1.192
£18.638	£0.000	(£5.620)	£13.018
£18.638	£0.000	£4.418	£23.056
£25.538	£14.719	£8.518	£48.775

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Classification: Open	Decision Type: Key
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Report to:	Cabinet	Date: 11 March 2026
Subject:	Adult Social Care Provider Fees	
Report of	Cabinet Member for Adult Care, Health and Public Service Reform	

Summary

1. This report details the fee engagement process including timelines and proposed recommendations for the standard fee proposal to contracted providers of adult social care services for the period 2026/27.
2. For each provider sector, the Council has uplifted the staffing element of the fee by 5% in line with the increase in the Real Living Wage and 6.73% for those paying the National Living Wage. The % impact of the changes to National Insurance contributions for Employers has also been included in the uplifts provided for the coming financial year. Uplifts are also included on non-staffing costs to support providers with other cost pressures advised by providers in the engagement process.

Recommendation(s)

3. To note the outcome of the fee engagement process detailed below.
4. To approve the uplifted 2026/2027 Hourly Fee Rate, with effect from 1st April 2026, as follows:
5. **Residential Care 2026/27 Fee Proposal**

To increase the weekly fees paid per person to providers for the provision of Older Adults Residential Care as shown below:

Older Adults Residential

Rate type	Weekly Fee Rate 2025/26	% Uplift	Weekly Fee Rate 2026/27
Real Living Wage	£725.21	5.34%	£763.95
Standard	£707.12	4.84%	£741.33

Older Adults Residential Dementia

Rate type	Weekly Fee Rate 2025/26	% Uplift	Weekly Fee Rate 2026/27
Real Living Wage	£760.83	5.37%	£801.66
Standard	£741.75	4.86%	£777.81

Older Adults General Nursing

Rate type	Weekly Fee Rate 2025/26	% Uplift	Weekly Fee Rate 2026/27
Real Living Wage	£806.81	5.36%	£850.09
Standard	£787.73	4.86%	£826.04

Older Adults Nursing Dementia

Rate type	Weekly Fee Rate 2025/26	% Uplift	Weekly Fee Rate 2026/27
Real Living Wage	£869.55	5.46%	£917.00
Standard	£850.33	4.95%	£892.45

Adults Residential Care MH/LD/PD

Rate type	Weekly Fee Rate 2025/26	% Uplift	Weekly Fee Rate 2026/27
Real Living Wage	£725.58	5.34%	£763.95
Standard	£707.51	4.84%	£741.33

- 5.1 There are several providers who receive fee rates over and above those standard rates outlined above. These are often due to historical arrangements or emergency placements. To ensure fairness and consistency across the provider market, the Council will only be offering uplifts to those providers in receipt of their standard fee rates.

6 Care at Home 2026/27 Fee Proposal

- 6.1 In 2022/23 the implementation of the Controcc system enabled the Council to introduce payment based on actual contact time, aligning with the Care at Home contract. This resulted in in-year uplifts for providers who met specific Key Performance Indicators relating to our Electronic Call Monitoring Service Specification. Currently, all framework Care at Home Providers receive this enhanced payment rate.
- 6.2 All bidders for the October 2026 Care at Home Contract will be obliged to comply with the Electronic Call Monitoring Service Specification and will therefore be paid at the enhanced rate from the commencement of the Contract.
- 6.3 The rate received by framework Care at Home Providers is based on actual contact time e.g. if an hour care call is completed in 80% of the time, the provider receives 80% of the hourly rate.

- 6.4 The standard rate is paid to providers whose commissioned arrangement does not include payment based on actual service delivery.
- 6.5 The Council proposes to increase the hourly fees paid per person to providers for the provision of Care at Home as shown below:

Care at Home (Framework)

Rate type	Hourly Fee Rate 2025/26	% Uplift	Hourly Fee Rate 2026/27
Standard	£23.45	3.60%	£24.30
Enhanced	£27.69	3.05%	£28.53

7 Supported Living and Community Outreach 2026/27 Fee Proposal

- 7.1 The Council proposes that where we pay an hourly rate for Supported Living and Community Outreach services, it will be no more than the uplifted rate outlined below. Please note this rate will not be applicable where services have been commissioned on block arrangement/via a competitive tender:

Supported Living Waking Hours

Rate type	Hourly Fee Rate 2025/26	% Uplift	Hourly Fee Rate 2026/27
Real Living Wage	£22.54	5.30%	£23.73
Standard	£22.14	3.73%	£22.97

Supported Living Sleep-in rate

Rate type	Hourly Fee Rate 2025/26	% Uplift	Hourly Fee Rate 2026/27
Real Living Wage	£14.13	6.26%	£15.01
Standard	£13.75	3.79%	£14.27

8 Direct Payments 2026/27 Fees Proposal

- 8.1 The Council proposes to increase the hourly rate paid per person to a Personal Assistant for those in receipt of Direct Payments as shown below. The Direct Payment rate already allowed the payment of the Real Living Wage:

Direct Payments (Personal Assistants)

Rate type	Hourly Fee Rate 2025/26	% Uplift	Hourly Fee Rate 2026/27
Real Living Wage	£14.97	6.29%	£15.91

- 8.2 Where a Direct Payment is used to employ a Care at Home agency, the payment rate will align with the standard Care at Home rate, as shown below

Rate type	Hourly Fee Rate 2025/26	% Uplift	Hourly Fee Rate 2026/27
Standard Care at home	£23.45	3.60%	£24.30

- 8.3 For Personal Assistants or Care at Home Providers with an agreed hourly fee rate above the proposed 26/27 rate due to historical arrangements, the existing fee rate will remain unchanged. However, Personal Assistants or Care at Home Providers with fees above the 25/26 rate but below the proposed 26/27 fee rate, will be uplifted to the standard 26/27 fee rate.

9 Shared Lives

- 9.1 Shared Lives provision is an area of development and focus for the Council over the coming 12 months and last year resulted in a redesign of the funding bands. The current proposal is:

Rate type	Session Fee Rate 2025/26	% Uplift	Hourly Fee Rate 2026/27
Day Support	£24.72	4.84%	£25.92
Current respite carers	£64.60	4.84%	£67.73
Respite -Band 1 new carers	£53.81	4.84%	£56.41
Respite -Band 2 new carers	£74.43	4.84%	£78.03
Respite -Band 3 new carers	£91.60	4.84%	£96.03
Current long term carers	£452.24	4.84%	£474.13
Long Term (Band 1 new customers)	£400.52	4.84%	£419.91
Long Term (Band 2 new customers)	£458.01	4.84%	£480.18
Long Term (Band 3 new customers)	£515.26	4.84%	£540.20

10 Residential Dementia Plus

- 10.1 Fees are one of the levers available to the Council to help steer the market to meet the needs of residents now and in the future. We are conducting an analysis of out of borough Residential Dementia placements, and those Residential Dementia placements in borough that require additional one to one hours to meet the resident's needs.
- 10.2 The aim is for this to determine the average spend on these placements and help inform a new, Residential Dementia Plus rate. This would be for those people whose needs cannot be met in a standard Residential Dementia placement, requiring support from specially trained staff and with an increased staffing ratio.
- 10.3 This would mirror the approach by many Great Manchester Authorities and encourage providers to offer services in borough to meet the needs of these residents, reducing the need for costly out of borough placements.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

- 11 The Council is required to carry out a provider fee engagement process and has done so for year 26/27. The uplifts are within budget and look to drive the provider market to meet needs now and going forward, while ensuring provider sustainability in light of current pressures. The recommended fee rates also support providers to pay their staff the Real Living Wage and continue the move towards the Cost of Care.

Alternative options considered and rejected

- 12 Alternatives were not considered as we are required to issue fee uplifts within allocated budget.

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Department: Health and Adult Care
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Background

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council is undertaking a fee engagement process with contracted providers of adult social care services in order to define both the fee proposals for 2026/27 and determine the final fee recommendations.
- 1.2 The Community Commissioning Team usually reviews fee rates on an annual basis. It is recommended that the fee arrangements proposed this year are also for one year only 1st April 2026 – 31st March 2027. This report provides recommendations for the payment of fees in relation to the following service areas:
- Older Adults Residential Care

- Adults Mental Health (MH)/Learning Disabilities (LD)/Physical Disabilities (PD) Residential Care
- Care at Home
- Supported Living
- Direct Payment
- Shared Lives

Not covered by this report:

- Out of Borough Services where we pay the host authority agreed annual rate.

2. Real Living Wage

- 2.1 The Council is a proud Real Living Wage paying Local Authority and supports its Adult Social Care Providers to also pay their staff the Real Living Wage by offering rates that enable staffing costs to meet the requirements of the Real Living Wage. The increase in the Real Living Wage and National Living Wage is considerable but the Council is happy to maintain its commitment to its providers by ensuring this increase is covered in the staffing element of the providers' fees.

3. Fee Proposal

- 3.1 In response to the above, and feedback from providers the following option is proposed:
- 3.2 Continue with the development of a tiered fee model specifically within Care Homes in order to support the strategic direction of Bury and future market development. Four years ago, a dementia premium was introduced in Bury for the first time and three years a nursing dementia premium. This year those premiums will be increased further.
- 3.3 This will continue to form the basis of care home fee setting in the future with areas of development such as Dementia, complex needs and nursing care receiving higher level increases. It is a common complaint that there is little reason for Providers to expand into those areas where we are seeing and continue to expect increased demand when there is little differentiation between the fee levels.
- 3.4 The fee proposals are detailed in the Summary section above.

4 Fee Engagement Process 2026-27

- 4.1 The Council undertakes an annual fee engagement process with contracted providers, in line with good practice and statutory legislation, which states that when setting and reviewing fee costs, Councils should have due regard to the actual costs of providing care and other local factors, along with a responsibility for managing the local care market.
- 4.2 Following feedback from Providers on previous years engagement, a new costing workbook was shared which allowed providers to provide greater detail on the cost and pressures they are facing. This was reviewed and duly considered when developing the suite of fee uplifts for 26/27.

- 4.3 Fee Engagement Groups were run for each service area, and this allowed the opportunity to discuss the fee proposals and outline cost and operational pressures impacting on their service delivery. Further details are outlined below in section 14.

5 Cost Pressures

- 5.1 It is acknowledged that all providers of social care are facing the following national cost pressures over the next 12 months:

- National Living Wage/Real Living Wage
- Inflation
- CQC Registration
- Energy Prices
- Known and un-known pressures including insurance increases/PPE costs etc

- 5.2 As shown above one of the cost pressures facing providers is the increase in the National Living Wage and Real Living Wage rates in 2026/27. This increase has been captured for all care providers in the staffing element of their fee uplift.

- 5.3 It is evident that many providers of social care pay the majority of employees, at or near to the minimum wage and as employee costs equate to a large proportion of expenditure for social care providers, the mandatory requirement to increase pay to those employees that are paid the minimum wage will result in a cost pressure.

- 5.4 There will also be an expectation from those employees that are paid close to the minimum wage that the differential will continue to be maintained or there will be a real risk that the profession will become less attractive to existing or potential employees and providers will struggle to recruit either sufficient numbers or caliber of people.

- 5.5 The UK's main inflation measure as of November 2025, was 3.2%. This, alongside the rising energy prices is putting more pressure on the ongoing viability of all Adult Social Care Providers.

6 Benchmarking AGMA Council Fee Rates

- 6.1 Another issue to consider when setting fee rates is that of fee rates paid in neighbouring authorities, to ensure that the Council pays comparable rates to others, which creates an element of stability to the wider market across Greater Manchester (GM). We have not received our partners 2026/27 rates at this time for comparison but from discussions we are in line with neighbouring authorities.

7 Consultation – Provider Feedback

- 7.1 Provider responses to the cost and operational pressure forms have been collated. Pressures were broadly similar across providers with the main themes being:

- Energy costs
- Inflation
- Retention and recruitment concerns
- Potential increasing PPE/cleaning costs

- Increased in Insurance costs
- NLW and RLW uplifts
- Increased CQC costs
- Reduced occupancy and capacity with care homes and care at home providers.

Links with the Corporate Priorities:

- 1 The uplifts will support providers of Adult Social Care; working and based locally to remain sustainable. It also encourages enterprise within the provider market by encouraging development of services to meet the growing needs of the people of Bury.

Equality Impact and Considerations:

- 2 Full EIA has been completed which has identified potential impacts across several characteristics and circumstances, this activity seeks to address these impacts. All impacts are mitigated and are therefore likely to be neutral.

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

- 3 An environmental impact assessment has not been undertaken for the scheme, as there are no implications or carbon impact of this decision.

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Uplifts are insufficient to maintain the sustainability and viability of care providers.	Fee proposals were established as part of engagement exercise with providers. Council Commissioning team allocate each care provider their own contract manager who will continue to work with, support and monitor risk to individual provider sustainability.

Legal Implications:

The Care Act 2014 places a statutory duty to shape and promote a sustainable market for care and support services. An annual fee setting process enables the Council to work with providers to provide an efficient, diverse and high-quality service which aims to ensure that legislative and regulatory requirements are met.

Financial Implications:

The total cost of providing the required 2026/27 budget provision for the Provider fee uplifts set out in this report is £6.366m which includes the 6.7% increase in the Real Living Wage

As part of the monthly budget monitoring cycle, Finance and Budget holders will track the expenditure regarding contracted providers of adult social care services ensuring that all expenditure aligns to the funding provided.

Any financial risks/pressures identified will be highlighted to the Director of Adult Social Services as part of the monthly budget monitoring cycle whereby an action plan will be deployed to mitigate any financial risks/ pressures.

Background papers:

None.

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

Term	Meaning

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Classification: Open	Decision Type: Non-Key
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Report to:	Cabinet	Date: 11 March 2026
Subject:	Annual Review of Adult Social Care Fees and Charges for the Financial Year 2026/27	
Report of	Cabinet Member for Adult Care, Health and Public Service Reform	

Summary

1. The Health and Adult Care Directorate (HAC) raises a number of Adult Social Care (ASC) fees and charges.
2. This report details the proposed 2026/27 ASC fees and charges across the HAC directorate to take effect in April 2026

Recommendation(s)

3. It is recommended that the proposed Adult Social Care Fees & Charges for 2026/27 detailed in Appendix A of this report are approved.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

4. In accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations, there is a requirement to review fees and charges on an annual basis.

Alternative options considered and rejected

5. No alternatives were considered. The uplift to 2026/27 Adult Social Care fees are in line with the 2026/27 Adult Social Care Provider Fee Uplifts or in line with the November 2025 Autumn Statement which announced that Department of Works and Pensions benefits will increase by 3.8% and the Universal Credit amount will rise by 6.2%

Report Author and Contact Details:

Name: Richard Berry

Position: Service Manager – Financial Support Services

Department: Adult Social Care

E-mail: r.berry@bury.gov.uk

Background

6. The Health and Adult Care Directorate raises a number of Adult Social Care fees and charges and in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations, there is a requirement to review fees and charges on an annual basis.

2026/27 Fee Proposal

7. The 2026/27 proposed increases to Adult Care Service discretionary fees and charges are detailed in Appendix A.
8. To ensure that the 2026/27 ASC fees and charges are aligned with the 2026/27 fees paid to commissioned providers it is proposed that the service setting fees are uplifted by the same percentage rates (apart from Domiciliary Care) employed to uplift the 2026/27 fees paid to commissioned providers.
9. Domiciliary care providers are paid at two different rates:
 - A standard rate for those providers being paid on actual contact time or not under the framework care at home contract.
 - An enhanced rate for those providers paid on actual contact time who also meet the following key performance indicators¹.
10. Whilst the Council has chosen to increase fees **paid to Domiciliary Care providers** which recognise Real Living Wage and minute billing commitments from Providers the Council cannot uplift Domiciliary care fees **paid by residents** at a similar rate.
11. Care Act Statutory Guidance states that Domiciliary care charges are made at one rate irrespective of how or by whom the care is delivered therefore only one rate can be charged for Domiciliary Care. The intention is to align Domiciliary fees with the enhanced rate paid to Providers, but this can only be achieved when the new care at home contract goes live following a procurement exercise.
12. The 2026/27 fees and charges proposal also recommends that the charges listed in Table 1 below are increased by 3.8% which is in line with the November 2025 Autumn Statement confirming that Department of Works and Pensions benefits will increase by 3.8%, with the exception of Universal Credit, which will increase by 6.2%.

Table 1

Charge Description	Description
Weekly Charge for Homecare	The maximum charge a person who receives care and support at home will be charged per week
Transport to Day Centres	The standard rate of charge for a single or return trip to a day centre.
Carelink/Telecare	Weekly charge for the provision of the 24/7 Carelink Assistive Technology Service.
Day Centre Attendance	Daily charge for attending a day centre

¹ -Zero overlaps (i.e. Carer must log in/log out for each visit)
 -Less than 5% manual overrides on Electronic Call Monitoring System (ECMS)
 -Contractually compliant ECMS

Charge Description	Description
Appointeeship – Community based	Weekly charge for a Money Management Service of Appointeeship for those living at home.
Appointeeship – Residential based	Weekly charge for a Money Management Service of Appointeeship for those living in a Care Home.
Deferred Payments – Set-up fee	Fee for setting up the Legal Agreements and process for the Deferred Payments Scheme where people entering a Care Home require access to council funding until their property is sold.
Deferred Payments - Annual fee	An annual fee for those on the Deferred Payment Scheme receiving Council funding until their property is sold.
Deferred Payments – Termination fee	A final fee to close accounts and legal agreements for those on the Deferred Payment Scheme who have repaid the Council the funding provided whilst their property was being sold.

Financial Assessments

13. Any changes to an individual's financial circumstances will be considered as part of the normal review process, and a new financial assessment carried out where appropriate to ensure the charges levied remain fair and affordable in line with the Council's Client Charging policy.
14. Whilst the rates set out in Appendix A will be used to calculate the cost of care, a financial assessment is carried out for each service user, and the service user will only contribute the value deemed affordable to them in that assessment.

Impact on Client Contributions

15. The Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) prescribed by Government will also increase for 2026/27. The MIG ensures service users have enough financial resource to cover day to day living expenses, therefore, any increase in charges levied to service users as a result of the fee increases set out in this report would be negligible due to the 'offsetting impact' that the Government's increase to the MIG will have.

Links with the Corporate Priorities:

16. Enterprise – For those service users whose financial assessment result in a partial or full contribution the annual review of Adult Social Care fees and charges for the Financial Year 2026/27 ensures that the Council can partially/fully offset the cost of delivering care and therefore reducing the cost to the Council.

Equality Impact and Considerations:

17. A full EIA has been completed which has identified no adverse impacts based on current available information, as verified by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Manager. The EIA is provided as an appendix to this report.

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

18. An environmental impact assessment has not been undertaken as there are no implications or carbon impact of this decision

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
The fees and charges set lower than the cost that the Council pays for services that are 'chargeable', resulting in a cost pressure to the council.	-Fees are aligned to Commissioned Care Provider Fee Uplifts. -Non-Commissioned Care provider charges uplifted in line with the November 2025 Autumn Statement which announced that DWP benefits will increase by 3.8%.

Legal Implications:

19. The power of a Local Authority to make a charge for meeting eligible needs is contained within the Care Act 2014 (section 14(1)(a)), which provides a single legal framework for charging for care and support to meet needs under sections 18 to 20, Care Act 2014. Charges may only cover the cost that the local authority incurs in meeting the needs to which the charge applies (section 14(4) CA 2014). The Council has a duty to market shape, so it has duty to facilitate the whole market in its areas for care and support related services and ensure a diverse range of high-quality services to the population. The Council must understand supply and demand in terms of care and support related care and market shape accordingly. Failure to increase fees in line with 2026/27 Adult Social Care Provider Fee Uplifts is potentially a failure of the Council to comply with the Statutory Guidance. The charging of service users is appropriate and in line with statute.

Financial Implications:

20. It is important to recognise that Bury is one of the highest performing Metropolitan Boroughs in England with regards to collecting income from client contributions as a proportion of revised gross expenditure on Adult Social Care.

21. To maintain the high levels of client income collection the ASC Finance Support service provide several service offers to maximise/increase income:

- Welfare benefits claim support service
- Debt prevention service
- Enhanced direct payment auditing support
- An 8-week check after the financial assessment for all new care service recipients to ensure welfare benefits are in place and client contribution invoices are being paid.
- A named Financial Assessment officer to be allocated to transitions cases.
- Reintroduction of home visits or office contact
- Ambitious growth to the Deputy and Appointeeship service
- Introduction of a Commissioning function within the team to formalize the quality assurance and management of contracts for managed accounts companies and pre-payment card companies

22. As part of the monthly budget monitoring cycle Finance will also track the client contributions received into the Community Care budget ensuring that client income aligns to income budget expectations. Any financial risks/pressures identified will be highlighted to the Director of Adult Social Services as part of the monthly budget monitoring cycle whereby an action plan will be deployed to mitigate any financial risks/ pressures.

Background papers:

None.

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

Term	Meaning
HAC	Health and Adult Care Directorate
ASC	Adult Social Care

Appendix A

Service Setting/Charge Description			Unit	2025/26 Rate	2026/27 % Uplift	2026/27 Rate	Notes		
Domiciliary Care			Provider is KPI Contractually Compliant	Hourly	£ 27.69	3.05%	£ 28.53	1	
			Provider is not KPI Contractually Compliant	Hourly	£ 23.45	3.60%	£ 24.30	1	
Care Homes	Residential	65+ care home places without nursing	Provider is signed up to paying the RLW	Weekly	£ 725.21	5.34%	£ 763.95	2	
			Provider is not signed up to paying the RLW	Weekly	£ 707.12	4.84%	£ 741.33	2	
		65+ care home places without nursing - Dementia	Provider is signed up to paying the RLW	Weekly	£ 760.83	5.37%	£ 801.66	2	
			Provider is not signed up to paying the RLW	Weekly	£ 741.75	4.86%	£ 777.81	2	
	Adults Residential Care MH/LD/PD	Provider is signed up to paying the RLW	Weekly	£ 725.21	5.34%	£ 763.95	2		
		Provider is not signed up to paying the RLW	Weekly	£ 707.12	4.84%	£ 741.33	2		
	Nursing	65+ care home places with nursing	Provider is signed up to paying the RLW	Weekly	£ 806.81	5.36%	£ 850.09	2	
			Provider is not signed up to paying the RLW	Weekly	£ 787.73	4.86%	£ 826.04	2	
		65+ care home places with nursing - Dementia	Provider is signed up to paying the RLW	Weekly	£ 869.55	5.46%	£ 917.00	2	
			Provider is not signed up to paying the RLW	Weekly	£ 850.33	4.95%	£ 892.45	2	
Supported Living and Community Outreach			Waking Hours	Hourly	£ 22.54	5.11%	£ 23.69	2	
				Provider is signed up to paying the RLW	Hourly	£ 22.14	3.52%	£ 22.92	2
				Provider is not signed up to paying the RLW	Hourly	£ 14.13	6.26%	£ 15.01	2
Sleep In			Provider is signed up to paying the RLW	Hourly	£ 13.75	3.79%	£ 14.27	2	
Provider is not signed up to paying the RLW			Hourly	£ 14.97	6.29%	£ 15.91	2		
Direct Payments			Hourly	£ 14.97	6.29%	£ 15.91	2		
Shared Lives			Current respite carers (Cost Per Night)	Nightly	£ 64.63	4.84%	£ 67.73	2	
			Respite -Band 1 new carers (Cost Per Night)	Nightly	£ 53.83	4.84%	£ 56.41	2	
			Respite -Band 2 new carers (Cost Per Night)	Nightly	£ 74.45	4.84%	£ 78.03	2	
			Respite -Band 3 new carers (Cost Per Night)	Nightly	£ 91.64	4.84%	£ 96.03	2	
			Current long term carers	Weekly	£ 452.40	4.84%	£ 474.13	2	
			Long Term (Band 1 new customers - Cost Per Week)	Weekly	£ 400.66	4.84%	£ 419.91	2	
			Long Term (Band 2 new customers- Cost Per Week)	Weekly	£ 458.18	4.84%	£ 480.18	2	
			Long Term (Band 3 new customers- Cost Per Week)	Weekly	£ 515.45	4.84%	£ 540.20	2	
			Day Support - Band 1** Fee = 2 hour session	Fixed	£ 24.73	4.84%	£ 25.92	2	
			Maximum Weekly Charge for Homecare	Weekly	£ 514.33	3.80%	£ 533.87	3	
Transport to Day Centre (per journey)			Single	£ 3.26	3.80%	£ 3.38	3		
			Return	£ 6.02	3.80%	£ 6.25	3		
Carelink/Telecare			Level 1 - Unit without Sim Card	Weekly	£ 5.27	3.80%	£ 5.47	3	
			Level 1 - Unit with Sim Card	Weekly	£ 6.19	3.80%	£ 6.43	3	
			Level 2 - Unit without Sim Card	Weekly	£ 7.59	3.80%	£ 7.88	3	
			Level 2 - Unit with Sim Card	Weekly	£ 8.50	3.80%	£ 8.82	3	
			Installation Fee	One-Off	£ 25.43	3.80%	£ 26.40	3	
Day Centre Attendance			Daily	£ 49.18	3.80%	£ 51.05	3		
Appointeeships			Community based	Weekly	£ 13.80	3.80%	£ 14.32	3	
			Residential based	Weekly	£ 7.28	3.80%	£ 7.56	3	
Deferred Payments			Set-up fee	One-Off	£ 737.33	3.80%	£ 765.35	3	
			Annual fee	Annual	£ 188.17	3.80%	£ 195.32	3	
			Termination fee	One-Off	£ 94.09	3.80%	£ 97.67	3	
Notes									
1	Whilst the Council pays Domiciliary Care providers at two different rates the Care Act Statutory Guidance states that Domiciliary Care charges are made at a standard rate irrespective of how or by whom the care is delivered therefore only one rate can be charged for Domiciliary Care.								
2	To ensure that the 2026/27 ASC fees and charges are aligned with the 2026/27 fees paid to commissioned providers it is proposed that these service setting fees charges are uplifted by the same percentage rates (apart from Domiciliary Care) employed to uplift the 2026/27 fees paid to commissioned providers.								
3	In the Autumn Statement, the chancellor confirmed that benefits will increase by 3.8%, which is in-line with September's Consumer Prices Index (CPI) measure of inflation. Although, the State pension increased by 4.8% and Universal Credit by 6.2%.								

Equality Impact Analysis

This equality impact analysis establishes the likely effects both positive and negative and potential unintended consequences that decisions, policies, projects and practices can have on people at risk of discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The analysis considers documentary evidence, data and information from stakeholder engagement/consultation to manage risk and to understand the actual or potential effect of activity, including both positive and adverse impacts, on those affected by the activity being considered.

To support completion of this analysis tool, please refer to the equality impact analysis guidance.

Section 1 – Analysis Details (Page 5 of the guidance document)

Name of Policy/Project/Decision	Policy - Charging and Financial Assessment Decision - Annual Review of Adult Social Care Fees and Charges 2026/27
Lead Officer (SRO or Assistant Director/Director)	Adrian Crook - Director of Adult Social Services and Community Commissioning
Department/Team	ASC Financial Support Service (FSS)
Proposed Implementation Date	06/04/2026
Author of the EqIA	Richard Berry – Service Manager ASC FSS
Date of the EqIA	11/02/20226

1.1 What is the main purpose of the proposed policy/project/decision and intended outcomes?

The Council’s Charging and Financial Assessment policy details how Bury will charge people who receive care and support services ensuring this is in accordance with the wellbeing and charging principles covered within the Care Act 2014 and associated Care and Support Statutory Guidance.

The Annual Review of Adult Social Care Fees and Charges 2026-27 Cabinet Paper requests that the Health and Adult Care Directorate approves the annual increase for the rate charged for a number of Adult Social Care Fees and Charges and gives permission to implement revised charges in April 2026.

The intended outcome is to ensure that 2026/27 Adult Social Care fee rates are:

- Broadly, in-line with the 2026/27 Adult Social Care Provider Fee uplifts
- In line with the November 2025 Autumn Statement which announced that Department of Works and Pensions inflation linked benefits and tax credits will increase by 3.8% ([Benefits Uprating 2026/27 - House of Commons Library](#))

People will continue to be entitled to claim financial support based on their personal circumstances and some will be entitled to free care

Section 2 – Impact Assessment (Pages 6 to 10 of the guidance document)

2.1 Who could the proposed policy/project/decision likely have an impact on?

Employees: **No** – fees and charge increases affect the people paying a contribution towards the cost of their care services

Community/Residents: **Yes**

Third parties such as suppliers, providers and voluntary organisations: **No** – fees and charge increases affect the people paying a contribution towards the cost of their care services

2.2 Evidence to support the analysis. Include documentary evidence, data and stakeholder information/consultation

Documentary Evidence:

The following evidence has been considered

- [Charging and Financial Assessment 2025](#)
- [Annual Review of Adult Social Care Fees and Charges 2026-27.docx](#)
- [Benefits Uprating 2026/27 - House of Commons Library](#)

Each year government releases the Social Care – Charging for Care and Support Local authority circular. This circular prescribes the minimum amounts of allowances to be given in Charging and Financial Assessment policies and advises of the increases for the following year.

[Social care - charging for care and support 2026 to 2027: local authority circular - GOV.UK](#)

Data:

Around 2,500 adults per year on average are eligible to receive a social care service.

All adults who are assessed under the Care Act 2014 as eligible to receive an adult social care service will undertake a financial assessment. This assessment will establish whether they need to pay for their service, pay for some of their service or if they have a nil-contribution. This is based on their income including pensions, benefits, salary and savings and further information is provided per the Bury Council ASC [Charging and Financial Assessment 2025](#) policy.

The annual uplift in social care fees is set in line with the government uplift in pensions/benefits etc. For 2026/27 this is 3.8%. Information on the government uplifts of benefits and pensions can be found at [Benefit and pension rates 2026 to 2027 - GOV.UK](#)

Stakeholder information/consultation:

Workplace teams/Colleagues

2.3 Consider the following questions in terms of who the policy/project/decision could potentially have an impact on. Detail these in the impact assessment table (2.4) and the potential impact this could have.

- Could the proposal prevent the promotion of equality of opportunity or good relations between different equality groups? - No
- Could the proposal create barriers to accessing a service or obtaining employment because of a protected characteristic? - No
- Could the proposal affect the usage or experience of a service because of a protected characteristic? - No
- Could a protected characteristic be disproportionately advantaged or disadvantaged by the proposal? - No
- Could the proposal make it more or less likely that a protected characteristic will be at risk of harassment or victimisation? No
- Could the proposal affect public attitudes towards a protected characteristic (e.g. by increasing or reducing their presence in the community)? - No
- Could the proposal prevent or limit a protected characteristic contributing to the democratic running of the council? - No

2.4 Characteristic	Potential Impacts	Evidence (from 2.2) to demonstrate this impact	Mitigations to reduce negative impact	Impact level with mitigations Positive, Neutral, Negative
Age	Disproportionate financial disadvantage due to fixed income (e.g. pension age)	1) Social Care – Charging for Care and Support Local authority circular – Minimum Income Guarantee	1) Age related allowances are prescribed to mitigate the risk of a negative impact and will also increase in April '26.	Neutral
Disability	Disproportionate financial disadvantage due to fixed income (disability related benefits)	1) Social Care – Charging for Care and Support Local authority circular – Minimum Income Guarantee 2) Charging and Financial assessment Policy – Chapter 13 Disability Related Allowances	1) Disability related premiums are prescribed to mitigate the risk of a negative impact and will also increase in April '26. 2) Additional allowances can be applied for if the person has any disability related expenses mitigating	Neutral

			the risk of a negative impact.	
Gender Reassignment	No Impact			
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Disproportionate financial disadvantage due to marital status	1) Social Care – Charging for Care and Support Local authority circular – Minimum Income Guarantee 2) Charging and Financial assessment Policy – Chapter 7 How charges will be financially assessed	1) Allowances for couples are prescribed to mitigate the risk of negative impact and will also increase in April '26. 2)The policy allows for a 'better off' assessment to ensure each member of the couple are left with sufficient resources.	Neutral
Pregnancy and Maternity	No Impact			
Race	No Impact			
Religion and Belief	No Impact			
Sex	No Impact			
Sexual Orientation	No Impact			
Carers	Disproportionate financial disadvantage due to carers status – Unpaid carers likely to be on lower incomes	1) Social Care – Charging for Care and Support Local authority circular – Minimum Income Guarantee 2) Charging and Financial assessment Policy – Chapter 13 Disability Related Allowances	1) Disability related premiums are prescribed to mitigate the risk of a negative impact and will also increase in April '26. 2) Additional allowances can be applied for if the person has any disability related expenses mitigating	

			<p>the risk of a negative impact.</p> <p>Carers benefit from the same income protection rules (MIG/various disregards) and councils have an underlying requirements to support carers (eg carers allowance and direct payments)</p>	
Looked After Children and Care Leavers	No Impact			
Socio-economically vulnerable	Disproportionate financial disadvantage due to Socio-economic & vulnerability factors.	1) Charging and Financial Assessment Policy	<p>All people receiving care services have the opportunity to request a revised financial assessment to consider their personal situation. The financial assessment is based on a person's income so their eligibility for free care or their contribution level can change in line with their change in circumstances. This calculation ensure safeguard for the individual</p>	Neutral

			for example Disability Related Expenditure (DRE) and Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG)	
Veterans	No Impact			

Actions required to mitigate/reduce/eliminate negative impacts or to complete the analysis

2.5 Characteristics	Action	Action Owner	Completion Date
All Groups	Ensure automated financial reassessments are carried out to include new allowances and give opportunity for people to request a revised financial assessment to consider their personal situation	Paula Ward Scott Gildea <i>(Team Leaders - ASC FSS – Financial Assessment Team)</i>	23/04/26

Section 3 - Impact Risk

Establish the level of risk to people and organisations arising from identified impacts, with additional actions completed to mitigate/reduce/eliminate negative impacts.

3.1 Identifying risk level (Pages 10 - 12 of the guidance document)

Impact x Likelihood = Score			Likelihood			
			1	2	3	4
			Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Very likely
Impact	4	Very High	4	8	12	16
	3	High	3	6	9	12
	2	Medium	2	4	6	8
	1	Low	1	2	3	4
	0	Positive / No impact	0	0	0	0

Risk Level	No Risk = 0	Low Risk = 1 - 4	Medium Risk = 5 – 7	High Risk = 8 - 16
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3.2 Level of risk identified	Low Risk = 1- 4
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3.3 Reasons for risk level calculation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is possible there will be complaint or challenge that can be easily resolved about charge increases across all groups
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Section 4 - Analysis Decision (Page 11 of the guidance document)

4.1 Analysis Decision	X	Reasons for This Decision
There is no negative impact therefore the activity will proceed		
There are low impacts or risks identified which can be mitigated or managed to reduce the risks and activity will proceed	X	<p>Charges are not set at a higher rate than it costs the Council to commission services, where there are differing hourly rates, the lower rate has been applied to ensure consistency for all service recipients.</p> <p>The financial assessment review and inflationary increases in minimum income allowances will mitigate and reduce risk</p>
There are medium to high risks identified which cannot be mitigated following careful and thorough consideration. The activity will proceed with caution and this risk recorded on the risk register, ensuring continual review		

Section 5 – Sign Off and Revisions (Page 11 of the guidance document)

5.1 Sign Off	Name	Date	Comments
Lead Officer/SRO/Project Manager			
Responsible Asst. Director/Director			

<p>EDI</p>	<p>L. Cawley</p>	<p>03/03/26</p>	<p>QA Complete: The analysis has identified the characteristics and circumstances where there is likely impact from the annual fees uplift which is in line with inflation and is lower and equal to the planned uplifts in national minimum wage, state pension and other welfare payments. Therefore all impacts resulting from this activity are expected to be neutral</p>
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EqIA Revision Log

5.2 Revision Date	Revision By	Revision Details

Classification: Open	Decision Type: Non-Key
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Report to:	Cabinet	Date: 11 March 2026
Subject:	Adult Social Care Performance Quarter Three Report 2025/26	
Report of	Cabinet Member for Adult Care, Health and Public Service Reform	

Summary

1. This is the Adult Social Care Department Quarter 3 Report for 2025-26. The report outlines delivery of the Adult Social Care Strategic Plan, preparation for the new CQC Assessment regime for local authorities and provides an illustration and report on the department's performance framework.

Recommendation(s)

2. To note the report.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

3. N/A.

Alternative options considered and rejected.

4. N/A.

Report Author and Contact Details:

Name: Adrian Crook

Position: Director of Adult Social Services and Community Commissioning

Department: Health and Adult Care

E-mail: a.crook@bury.gov.uk

Background

5. This is the Adult Social Care Department Performance Report covering Quarter 3 of 2025-26.

Links with the Corporate Priorities:

6. The Adult Social Care is Department is committed to delivering the Bury 'LETS' (Local, Enterprising, Together, Strengths) strategy for our citizens and our workforce.

Our mission is to work in the heart of our communities providing high-quality, person-centred advice and information to prevent, reduce and delay the need for reliance on

local council support by connecting people with universal services in their local communities.

For those eligible to access social care services, we provide assessment and support planning and where required provide services close to home delivered by local care providers.

We aim to have effective and innovative services and are enterprising in the commissioning and delivery of care and support services.

We work together with our partners but most importantly together with our residents where our intervention emphasises building on individual's strengths and promoting independence.

We ensure that local people have choice and control over the care and support they receive, and that they are encouraged to consider creative and innovative ways to meet their needs. We also undertake our statutory duties to safeguard the most vulnerable members of our communities and minimise the risks of abuse and exploitation.

Equality Impact and Considerations:

7. In delivering their Care Act functions, local authorities should take action to achieve equity of experience and outcomes for all individuals, groups and communities in their areas; they are required to have regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (Equalities Act 2010) in the way they do carry out their work. The Directorate intends to drive forward its approach to equality, diversity and inclusion, ensuring that equality monitoring information is routinely gathered, and consider how a realistic set of S/M/L-term objectives may help to focus effort and capacity.

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

8. N/A

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
N/A.	N/A.

Legal Implications:

9. This report demonstrates the Council's adherence to the law, its preparation for the new CQC inspection regime, its Care Act 2014 statutory duties and the strategic plan for Adult Social Care.

Financial Implications:

10. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Appendices:

Data sources and what good looks like.

Background papers:

Adult Social Care Strategic Plan 2023-2026

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

Term	Meaning	
CQC	Care Quality Commission	

Adult Social Care Performance Report for Quarter Three, 2025/26

1.0 Executive Summary

Welcome to our third report of 2025/26. This quarter spans the period we had our CQC assessment visit and the following 2 months. At the time of writing this report we remain waiting for the outcome of our assessment and have been told it might be as late as March.

The CQC inspectors visited our borough the week commencing 6th October bringing 6 of their staff. 2 arrived on Monday and conducted several interviews with the remaining 4 arriving Tuesday and having full days of interviews on Tuesday and Wednesday leaving 2 to finalise the assessment visit on Thursday. By lunch time they were all gone and we were back to normal.

During their time with us in Bury they conducted 125 individual and group interviews, spoke to over 200 people and a further 75 staff joined drop in sessions. This means in effect they almost spoke to everyone in the department involved in delivering our adult social care functions that relate to the Care Act. Only care staff in our other services were not included as they are subject to a different CQC assessment regime.

To say the process was rigorous, probing and deep would be an understatement and whilst it left the staff involved elated, emerging from their interviews literally buzzing

at being able to tell their story it left the management team exhausted and feeling like they had gone 10 rounds in a boxing match.

And despite us having our onsite inspection for Care Act functions they didn't let us rest, as they also chose to visit and inspect Falcon and Griffin Extra Care Housing Service and later in November our Intermediate Care Unit, Killelea.

The result for Falcon and Griffin was received in October and can be seen here [Bury Council - Falcon & Griffin Extra Care Scheme - Care Quality Commission](#) with us achieving **GOOD** in all domains and in fact a very good, **GOOD**, with 75 out of 100 being scored in the majority of the domains.

The report stated amongst many other comments.

- "We were told, "[Manager] is very approachable and if we have any problems she sorts it for us. It is well run here, nothing to improve," and "It's well organised."
- "The staff know me and understand my needs" and "I find them to be friendly and respectful to [person] and were there at the times they were expected."
- The provider always treated people with kindness, empathy, and compassion and respected their privacy and dignity. Staff treated colleagues from other organisations with kindness and respect.
- Staff knew people well, and interactions with people were seen to be warm and friendly. People said their privacy and dignity were respected. We were told, "They [staff] treat me with respect and dignity," "I can't fault them [staff], they are definitely kind and good."
- People's relatives were also complimentary of the staff and the kindness shown to their family member. One relative told us, "[Person] received truly outstanding care that upheld his dignity at every stage. The staff consistently treated him with respect and patience, ensuring he felt valued and comfortable."

Which I think you will agree is exactly how we want our vulnerable residents to feel.

A huge thanks goes to the registered manager Naomi Smith and the management team Dill Hawley and Andy Crawford for achieving this.

We await the final publication of our report on Killelea at the time of writing this report but hope to have some outstanding news to share with you soon on this result.

Regarding other performance whilst we saw continued achievements of milestones in the business plan there was a noticeable drop off in some indicators relating to the throughput of work through our department. The number of social work assessments dropped in November along with the number of people benefiting from some of our

intermediate care services, this did see waiting lists and outstanding reviews rise slightly along with waiting times for an assessment. This can only be explained by the department taking a breath after a grueling inspection process but now warrants ongoing attention to restore performance to previous levels and this can be seen to be taking effect in December where these indicators begin to return to more normal levels, further work though will be required during Q4.

You may notice some of the illustrations of our charts have changed from what you are used to, this is because the Greater Manchester system we use for comparing ourselves has been updated.

This report also contains an update on the delivery of our new carers strategy for you and the annual report of our Principal Social Worker is also appended.

2.0 Delivery of the Adult Social Care Strategic Plan

- 2.1 Adult Social Care are committed to delivering the Bury 'LETS' (Local, Enterprising, Together, Strengths) strategy for our citizens and our workforce. Our mission is to work in the heart of our communities providing high-quality, person-centred advice and information to prevent, reduce and delay the need for reliance on local council support.
- 2.2 The Adult Social Care Strategic Plan 2023-26 sets out the Department's roles and responsibilities on behalf of Bury Council. It explains who we are, what we do, how we work as an equal partner in our integrated health and social care system and identifies our priorities:



- 2.3 The 2023-26 Strategic Plan was refreshed in April 2025 supported by an updated annual improvement delivery plan which is monitored on a quarterly basis. 2025/26 delivery highlights include:

Priority 1 – Transforming Learning Disabilities

- We have commissioned a charity, “Respect for All” to work with us to develop an autism coproduction network for Bury autistic adults and people who know them well.
- Our draft autism strategy 2025-2028 has been delivered.
- 41 Social Care Operations staff have been trained in Autism awareness (Oliver McGowan).

Priority 2 – Excellent Social Work

- The workforce plan is being implemented, including a review of ‘All Routes into Social Work’ and the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE). Exit interviews process in place and vacancy tracker for managerial oversight. The Social work mandatory training dashboard is now available to all managers to support attendance and supervision of all staff.
- Managers and Heads of Service continue to conduct audits and moderation, with reports provided to the Quality Board. Thematic areas identified for improvement include Mental Capacity, Support Planning, and Case Recording, with corresponding action plans developed collaboratively with managers.
- A legal gateway has been established to manage adult social care legal casework, with a review scheduled for January 2026.
- Safeguarding teams are streamlining pathways and aim to implement a new pathway by January 2026. They also participate in forums with VCFA colleagues to communicate safeguarding information.
- Mental health social work teams are collaborating with Impower on strength-based reviews and hold weekly meetings to share practice and monitor outcomes for oversight of progress.
- The user-led group for mental health continues to expand with support from GADAM, focusing on reviewing the referral pathway for social care mental health over the next three months.
- Older people’s mental health teams have initiated collaborative work to enhance the intermediate care offer, involving IMC, Pennine Care, and the Older People Mental Health Team.
- Within the neighbourhoods, the East Team is participating in a hoarding project and conducting quality assurance work in Prestwich related to high intensity users, aiming to bring these individuals into Active Case Management to reduce demand on health and public services.
- Social work managers meet regularly to improve oversight and quality of support planning through peer verification.

Priority 3 – Superb Intermediate Care

- Training and implementation of the electronic care record system in Falcon and Griffin has been completed. We are now progressing with the work for the broader Intermediate Tier aiming to commence with Killelea House following upgrade of the WIFI system.
- Commencement of Reablement and IMC@Home MDTs to improve the customer journey has started. These meetings are designed to enhance the customer journey by providing more comprehensive and coordinated care.
- Service planning, team engagement and dashboard preliminary work for the Disability Service to reduce occupational therapy waiting times is underway. The team have made significant progress in reducing waiting list times to provide a better service to our customers.
- The Intermediate Tier workforce strategy has been refreshed for 2025-27. The strategy will play a crucial role in shaping the workforce ensuring the team are well-equipped to meet the increasing challenges and create opportunities.
- We continue to prepare for likely CQC inspection of our care services

Priority 4– Making Safeguarding Everybody’s Business

- We continue to move forward with reforming our safeguarding pathway and process. All documentation is now complete and uploaded for staff. We now have all safeguarding referrals coming through the new system except for the Hospital Social Team which is planned for February 2026
- Work has commenced on implementation of a new learning review electronic system. The process has been drafted and signed off by senior leadership team and the electronic system is being tested to ensure it is fit for purpose.
- We are close to completing our renewed safeguarding awareness offer for council staff and third sector/voluntary sector which should give a more coherent message around safeguarding under the Care Act 2014.
- We now have direct digital channels with many of our partner and internal colleagues, including Greater Manchester Police, Achieve, Housing, Mental Health services and Learning Disability services. This has been a real success story as it is showing much better (and faster) communication to support people with safeguarding.

Priority 5– A Local and Enterprising Care Market

- Our Independent Provider Workforce Support Programme has been launched and is being delivered by the Bury Care Academy; supporting providers with their recruitment and retention challenges as well as learning, development, succession planning and career progression.
- Together Towards Outstanding Care Strategy has been launched. This encompasses all the Council approaches and programmes of support available to providers. These all work together to drive improvements and deliver outstanding care in the borough.
- Prevention and Wellbeing, Extra Care, Dementia and Ageing Well strategies were approved and published.

- The Young People Supported Accommodation tender has been approved.

Priority 6 – Connect Unpaid Carers to Quality Support Services

- The new Carers service went live in June 2025 following tender assessment and approval.
- A Carers Co-production Network service specification and budget is in development.
- Training programme established by Carers to develop skills, helping them in their role. This will be delivered by the Carers Hub over the next 12 months.
- Carers Emergency Card now introduced to reassure Carers that there is a plan in place to support them and their loved ones. There have been 19 Carers registered during this period.
- The Carers Hub delivered 38 in person coffee and chat sessions. Two sessions were held for Carers from ethnic minority communities in the borough.

3.0 Update on Care Quality Commission (CQC) Assessment of Local Authorities

- 3.1 Bury Council is awaiting receipt of its draft Assessment Report from the Care Quality Commission following the site visit in October 2025.

4.0 Highlight Report for Quarter 3, 2025/26

Adult Social Care - Quarterly Highlight Report - Quarter 3									
Obsessions	Performance Measures	Frequency	Polarity	Sparkline	Latest Data	Direction of Travel	Rank (higher is better)		
							Peers (16) 24/25	NW (22) Q2 25/26	GM (10) M9 25/26
<i>Reduce the number of people waiting for a social work needs assessment</i>	Number of people on waiting list for ASC needs assessment	Q	L		83 ❌	-	-	5th	
	Median number of days waiting for an ASC needs assessment	Q	L		42 ✅	-	-	6th	
<i>Increase the number of people who have their safeguarding outcomes partially or fully met</i>	Proportion of people that were asked about their outcomes	Q	H		89% ✅	-	13th	-	
	Of those who expressed outcomes the proportion of people who have their safeguarding outcomes fully or partially met	Q	H		100% ✅	-	12th	-	
<i>Increase the number of people leaving intermediate care services independently</i>	The proportion of people who received short-term services during the year where no further request was made for ongoing support	Q	H		92% ⚠️	3rd	5th	-	
	The proportion of older people (65+) who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital	A	H		92% ✅	7th	-	-	
<i>Increase the number of people with a learning disability who are provided with the opportunity to live more independently</i>	Number of people trained in the progression model	A	H		58	-	-	-	
	Number of customers who have had an assessment or review using the progression model	A	H		275	-	-	-	
<i>Increase the number of people accessing care and support information and advice that promotes people's wellbeing and independence.</i>	The proportion of people and carers who use services who have found it easy to find information about services and/or support	A	H		65% ❌	10th	-	-	
	The proportion of people who use services, who reported that they had as much social contact as they would like	A	H		47% ✅	5th	-	-	
<i>Increase the number of people with lived experience who provide feedback</i>	Number of feedback provided	Q	H		243 ✅	-	-	-	
<i>Increase the number of unpaid carers identified</i>	Total number of new carers registered with Bury Carers' Hub	Q	H		101 ✅	-	-	-	

Annual Measures: ASCOF 24/25
Quarterly Measures: updated Q3 25/26

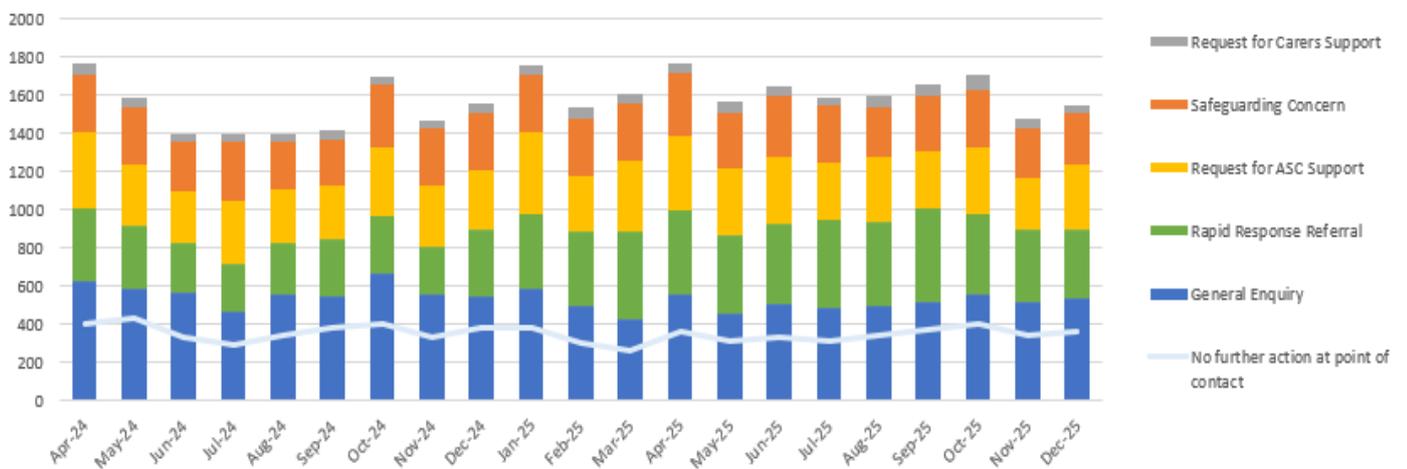
The Department has adopted an outcome-based accountability framework to monitor performance and drive improvement. Several outcomes have been chosen that will change if the objectives of our strategic plan are met, we call these our obsessions. An obsession is a key part of an outcome-based accountability framework where focus on these areas have positive knock-on effects right across our areas of work.

Most outcomes show a positive direction of travel but the latest adult social care survey does indicate we have more to do on providing information and advice, this will require more work on our website and digital channels, much has been improved recently in this area but we have much much more to do still.

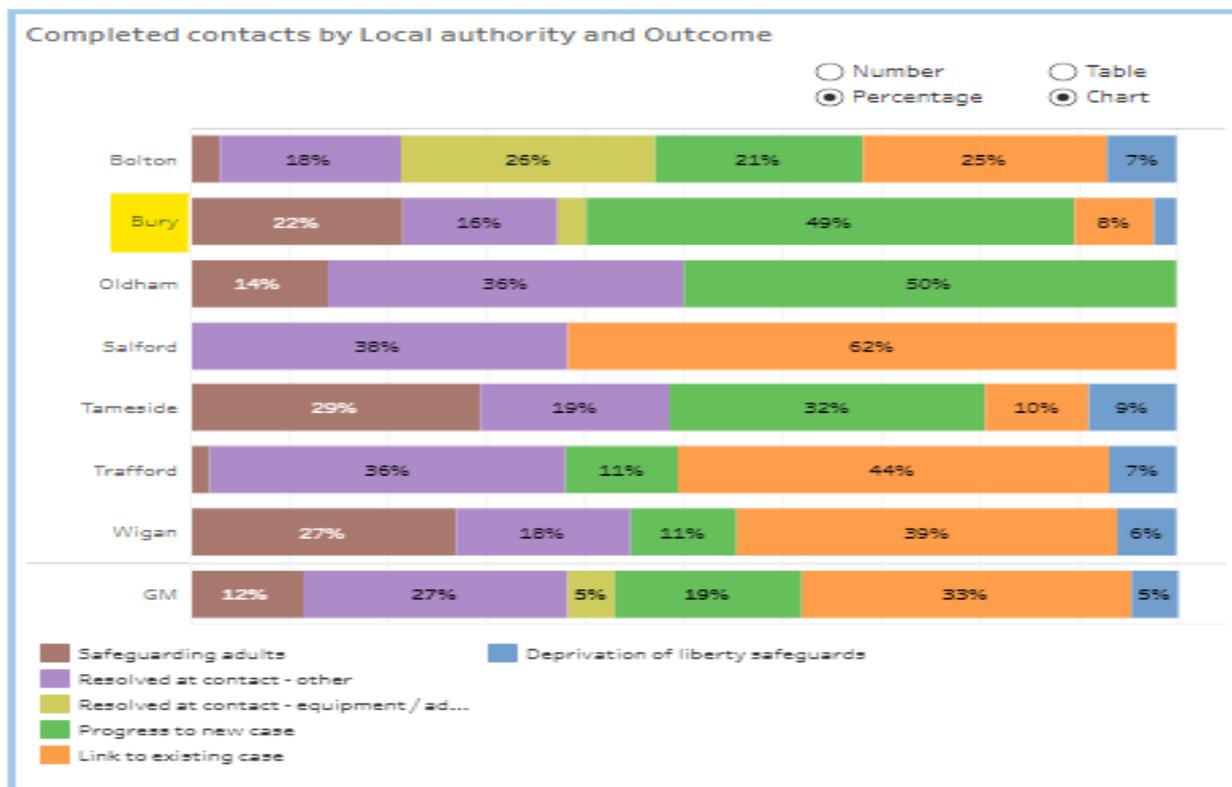
4.1 Contacts

The primary means of public contact to request support, information and advice is through our care, connect and direct office (CAD). A higher proportion of contacts resolved by CAD means that people’s enquiries are being dealt with straightaway and not passed on to other teams.

Number of Adult Social Care (ASC) Contact Forms recorded each month.



Contacts by outcome - how does Bury Compare?



Contacts – Q3 commentary

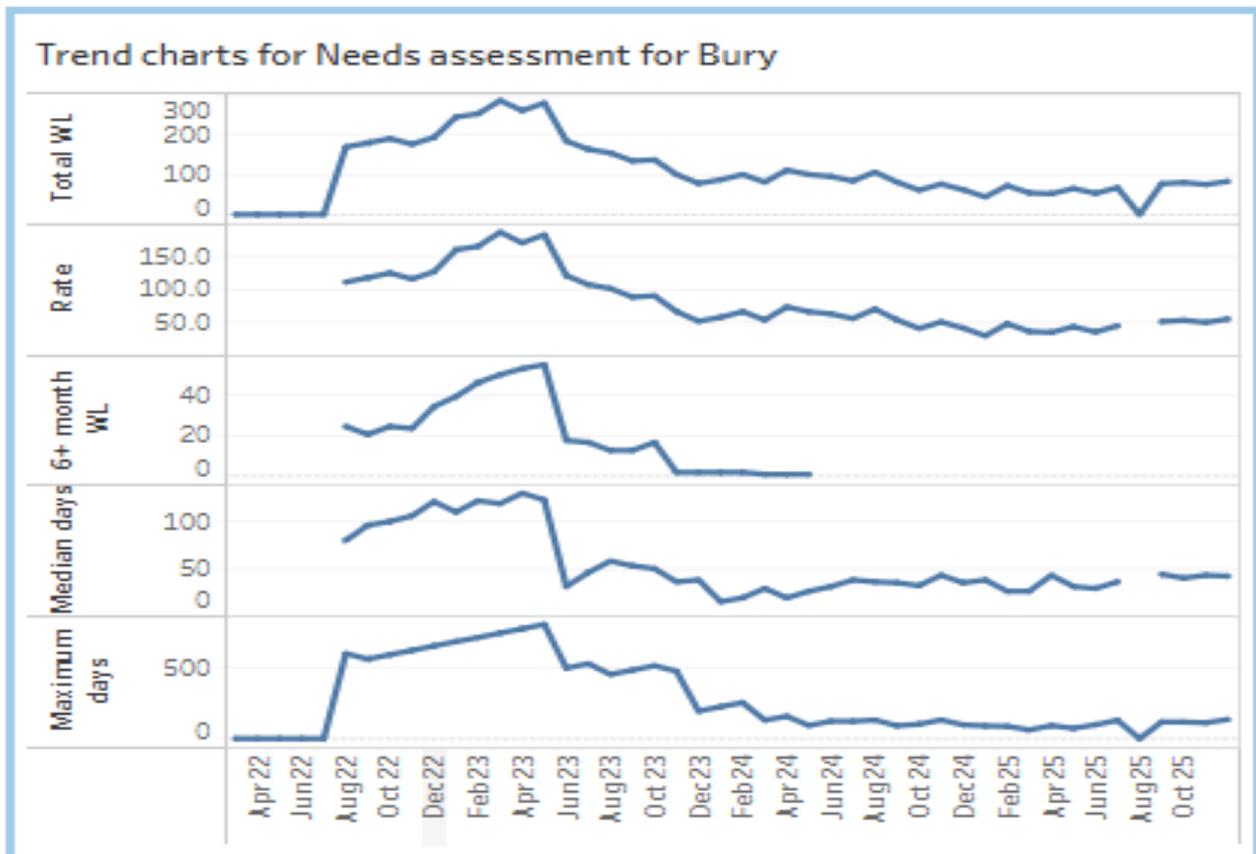
This section outlines the monthly contact volumes received by the department, including the reasons for contact and the proportion resolved by the Contact Centre.

Contact volumes in Q3 were consistent with expected seasonal patterns. The number of referrals and enquiries handled across October, November, and December closely aligned with the same period last year. As anticipated, volumes dipped in November and December in the lead- up to and during the Christmas holiday period. Overall, the Contact Centre maintained stable performance levels, successfully resolving a significant proportion of incoming queries throughout the quarter.

4.2 Assessments - Waiting

People awaiting an assessment (needs and carers assessments) by social workers, occupational therapists, or deprivation of liberty safeguards assessors. Reduced waiting times lead to improved outcomes for people because they are receiving a timelier intervention.

Number of people awaiting an Adult Social Care assessment each month.



How does Bury Compare – Needs Assessments?

Waiting lists - December 2025

	Total Waiting	Rate per 100,000	6+months	% 6+ months	December 2025		Last 12 months	
					Median Days	Maximum Days	Median Days	Maximum Days
GM total	923	404.4	32	3.5%	24	594	38	2,505
Bolton	74	31.6	1	1.4%	16	200	13	323
Bury	83	53.8			42	134	36	134
Manchester	274	59.8	23	8.4%	19	594	14	2,505
Oldham	0	0.0				0	67	706
Rochdale	19	10.7	0	0.0%	10	17	11	56
Salford	184	79.7	0	0.0%	27	152	22	675
Stockport	166	69.5	0	0.0%	18	125	22	198
Tameside	0	0.0				0	71	311
Trafford	95	51.5	8	8.4%	24	274	71	516
Wigan	28	10.2	0	0.0%	38	115	62	526

Assessments waiting – Q3 commentary

During Quarter 3 Adult Social Care continued to experience significant demand for Adult Social Care assessments, contributing to increased waiting lists with a slight increase of 83 people from 77 in the previous quarter. This aligns with wider GM trends in demand and system pressures. Targeted interventions under the oversight of ASC Performance Board have been put in place focussing on median and maximum days waiting time for assessment alongside monitoring of caseload throughput to ensure prompt allocation and completion of assessments to ensure waiting times can be reduced.

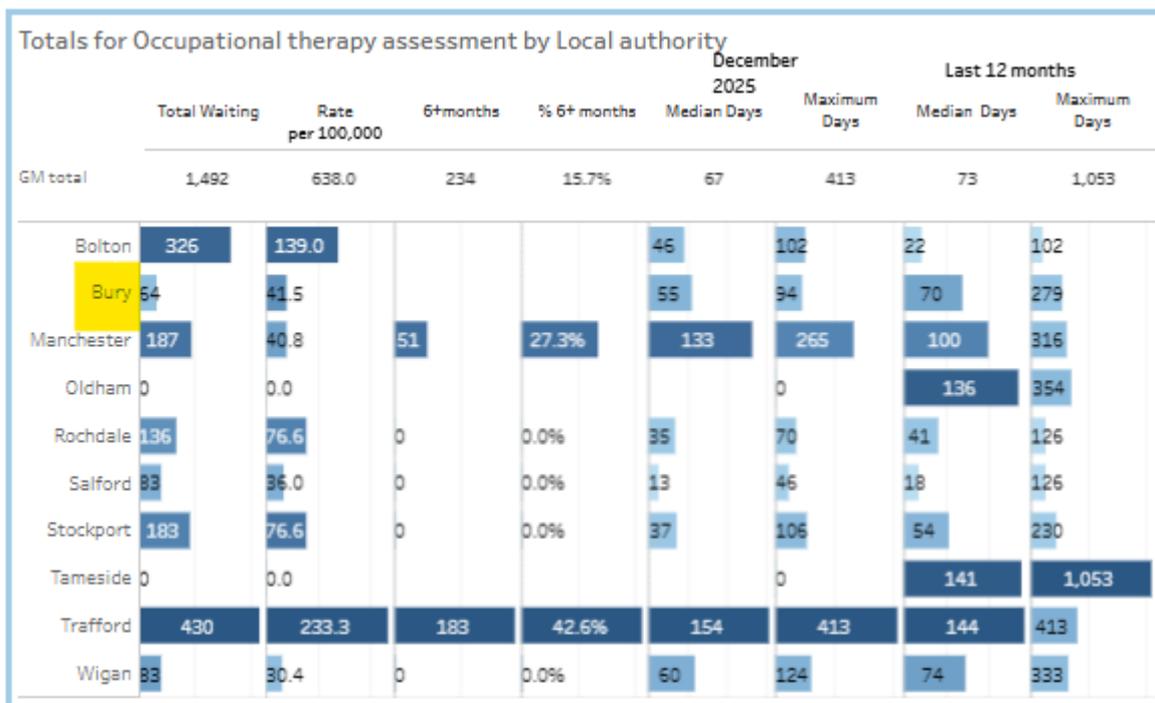
Waiting Well protocol is adhered to ensuring those awaiting allocation are regular reviewed and risks mitigated. The current position will also have been impacted by the onsite CQC inspection which involved a large proportion of our operational staff and seasonal reductions in activity in December which are consistent with annual trends due to leave and sickness at this time of year. A Performance Workshop to review progress and activity is scheduled for early 2026 with all operational managers with the aim of reducing the number of people waiting and increase the number of assessments completed in the next quarter.

Reducing waiting times for an Occupational Therapy assessment remains a key area of focus, with work ongoing to maintain timely access to support with a focus

on people maintaining independence and wellbeing. As of the end of December 2025, the number of people waiting has risen to 41.5 per 100,000 of our population, following an improved position in the previous quarter.

This change is being monitored closely, and the OT service continues its focus on strengthening its triage and prioritisation processes, to ensure that those with the most urgent needs are seen first, while others are supported through waiting well approaches. Alongside this, work remains ongoing to improve performance oversight and inform resource planning to support further improvement into Quarter 4.

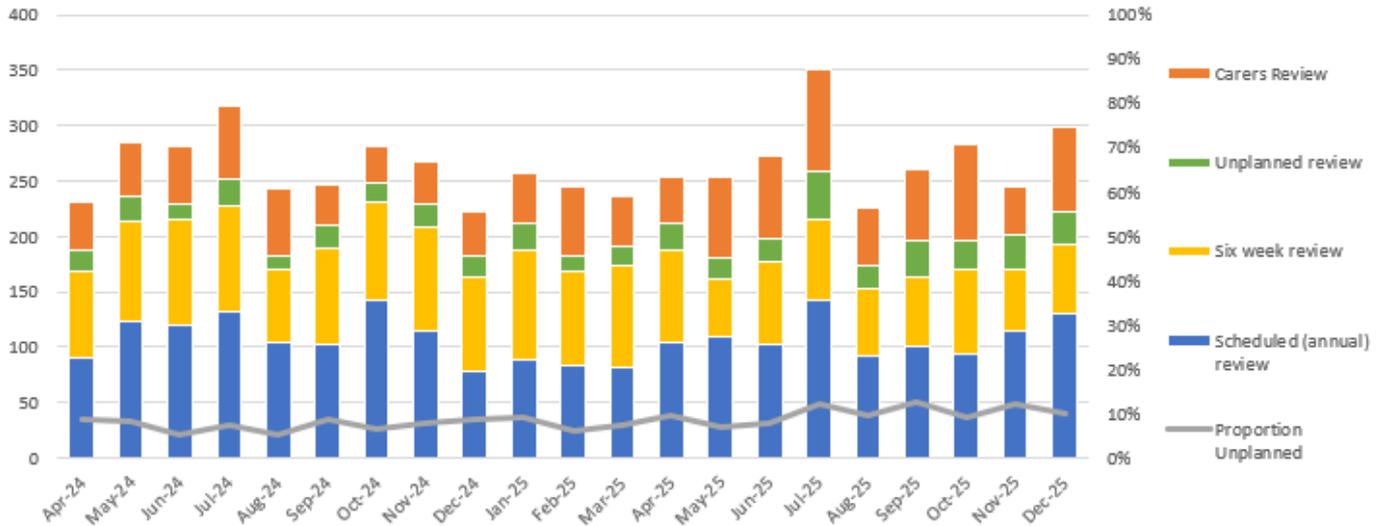
OT assessment - how does Bury Compare?



4.3 Reviews

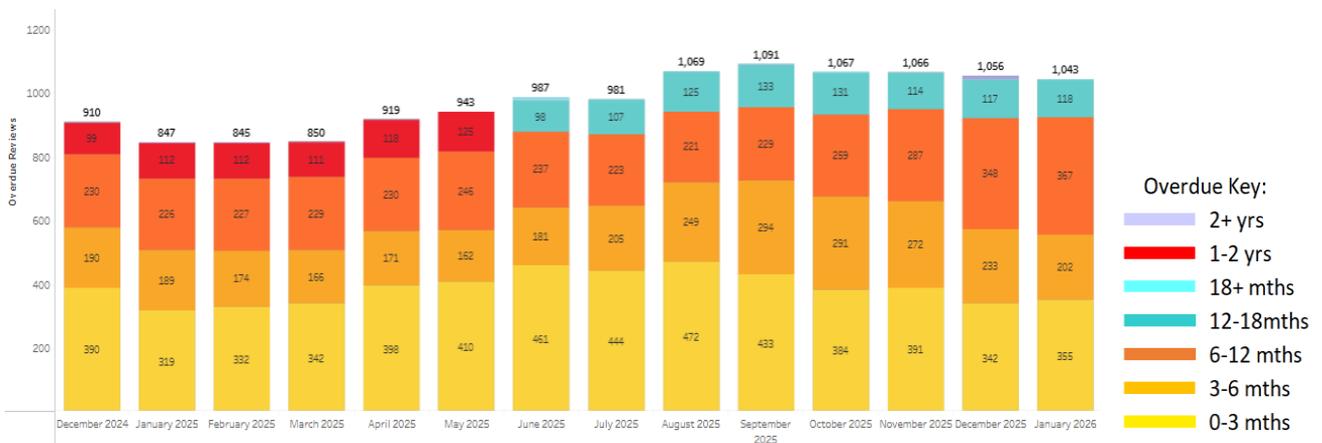
Adult Social Care reviews are a re-assessment of a person’s support needs to make sure that they are getting the right support to meet their needs. Needs may change over time, and new services and technology may give someone more independence and improve their wellbeing. A lower proportion of unplanned reviews means that people are supported through scheduled reviews of their support needs rather than when a significant event has occurred requiring a change in support. Support packages should be reviewed every 12 months. It is important to note that it is not just the adult social care reviewing team who undertake reviews, however, most of the planned review activity is completed by this team.

Number of Adult Social Care Reviews Completed each month.



Note - the % axis references the grey line which is the proportion of unplanned reviews.

Number of Overdue Adult Social Care Reviews on the last day of each month



Reviews – Q3 commentary

At the end of November 2025, 1,066 people were overdue their Adult Social Care review across the department and this figure comprises both annual reviews as well as initial reviews. This figure has decreased by a small margin (25) since Q2. Whilst it is positive that this figure has not increased and there has been a decrease, across the department, efforts will be made to target overdue reviews and ensure that these are given the appropriate focus.

Now that the CQC visit has finished, this is an area which has been subject to heightened improvement and will also be subject to scrutiny by managers across Adult Social Care. Measures include:

- Continued monthly reminder to all staff on the importance of data quality, as some of the 1065 reviews will have had their review, however, this has not been recorded on the system, therefore incorrectly showing as an overdue review.
- An increased push across the department on reminding practitioners to progress the administrative side of the role and reassigning cases quicker, once the intervention has been concluded.
- Increased use of data, and increased onus on management to identify cases which have been held on individual workers caseloads for some time and having targeted discussions on these cases, thus freeing up capacity within social work teams.
- Adult Social Care reviewing team to have undertaken a targeted piece of work in January 2026 to look at the overdue reviews currently allocated within their team and ensuring that each case has a clear plan of action with regards to the overdue review.
- Adult Social Care Reviewing Team ensuring that at least the 20 most overdue annual reviews are allocated across the team at the end of each week.

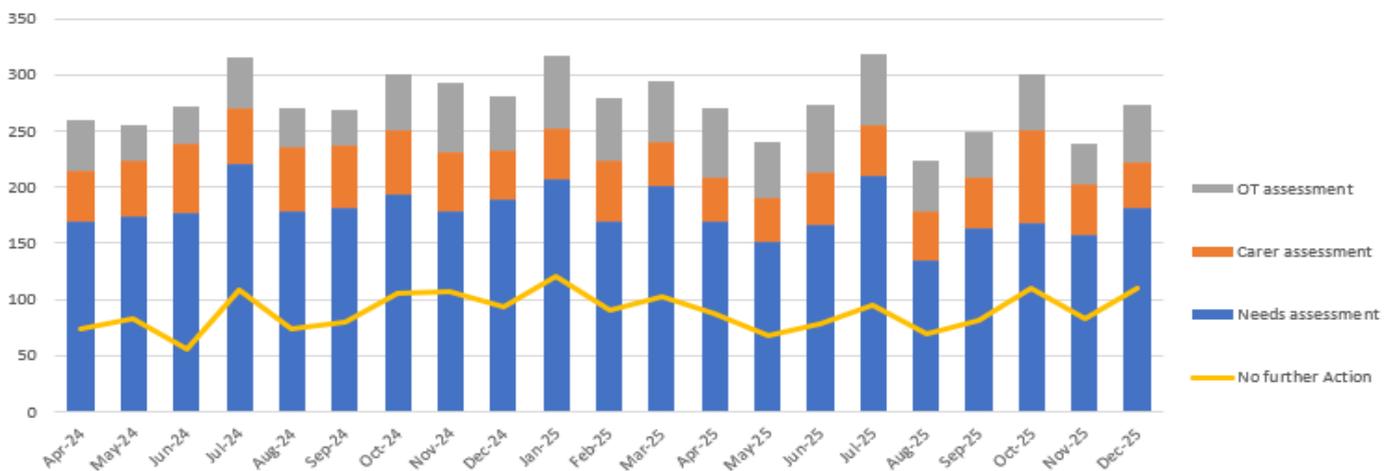
At time of writing, there are no reviews more than 2 years overdue and there is only 1 review which is 18+ months overdue, and this annual review is booked in.

Reviews across the department continue to be strengths based and outcome focussed which require an investment of additional time from practitioners, however, these reviews yield much better outcomes for the customer and the department.

4.4 Assessments - Completion

Local Authorities have a duty to assess anyone who appears to have needs for care and support, regardless of whether those needs are likely to be eligible. The focus of the assessment is on the person’s needs, how they impact on their wellbeing, and the outcomes they want to achieve. Assessments where there was no further action are where there were no eligible needs identified or a person with eligible needs declined services. A lower number means that operation teams can focus their time on those people with identified needs.

Number of Adult Social Care (ASC) Assessments Completed each month.



Assessments – Q3 commentary

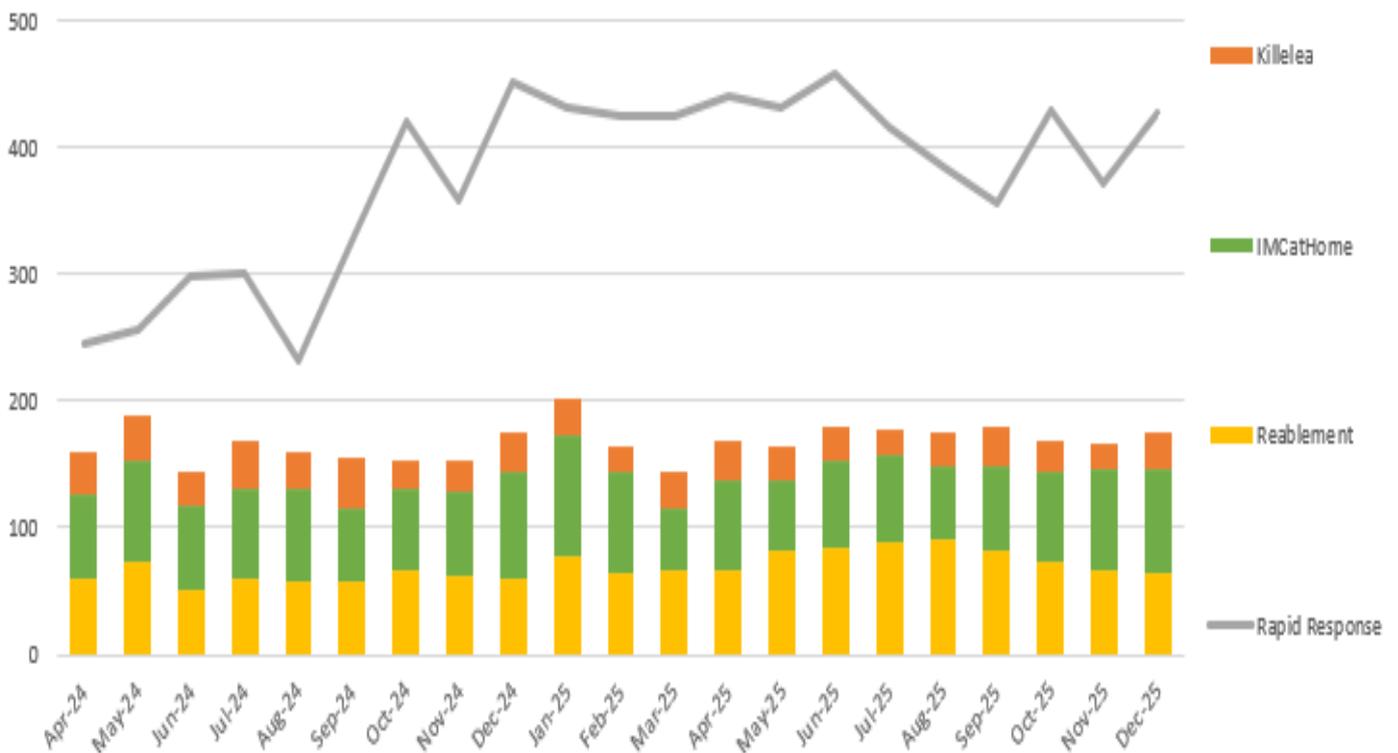
In Quarter 3 the number of assessments completed has dropped. This will be in part due to the summer holiday effect but is greater than last year's drop at the same time. We believe this is because of the time being dedicated to preparation for our forthcoming CQC inspection. This drop in assessments is the cause of the corresponding increase in the waiting list and overdue reviews.

This has been subject to a performance improvement plan delivered in our performance board throughout Q3 following the departure of CQC in the middle of October and some increases in performance are noted towards the end of this quarter.

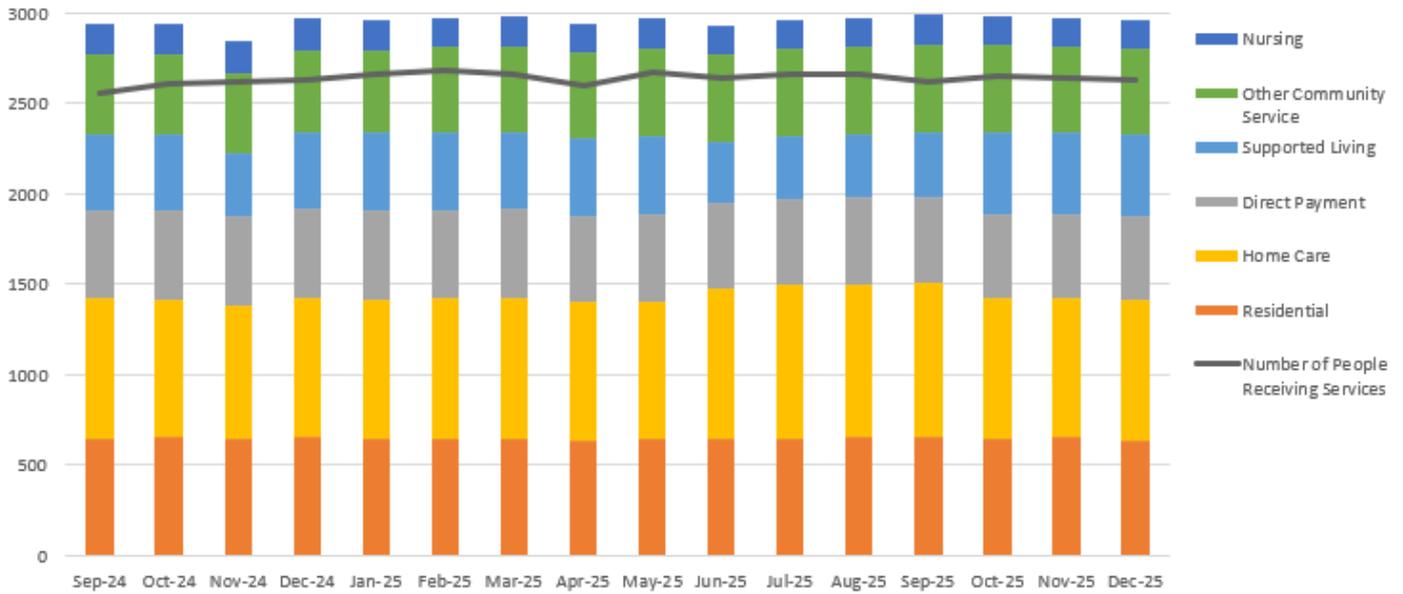
4.5 Services

Adult Social Care services may be short-term or long-term. Short-term care refers to support that is time-limited with the intention of regaining or maximising the independence of the individual so there is no need for ongoing support. Long-term care is provided for people with complex and ongoing needs either in the community or accommodation such as a nursing home. It is preferable to support people in their own homes for as long as it is safe to do so.

Number of Intermediate Care (short-term) services completed each month.



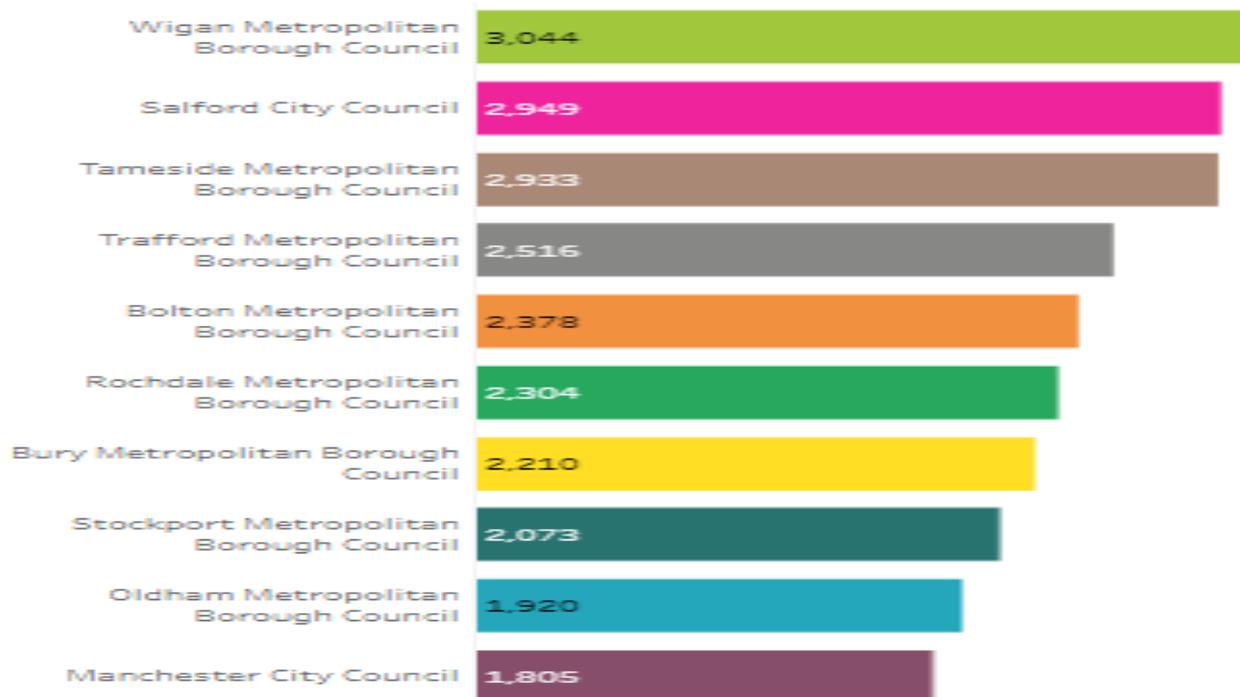
Number of Long-term Adult Social Care services open on the 1st of each month.



	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25
Residential	644	658	650	656	649	648	648	640	645	647	651	654	656	650	652	641
Nursing	169	172	174	173	166	161	163	161	160	163	159	158	165	162	161	161
Home Care	779	760	737	769	766	776	775	762	761	831	844	850	855	775	774	777
Direct Payment	488	488	495	491	490	489	492	475	485	471	479	476	474	467	463	459
Supported Living	419	424	341	429	432	431	428	433	432	343	345	355	359	448	450	448
Other Community Service	438	440	444	451	453	468	471	470	485	476	482	478	479	482	474	478
Residential Placement	644	658	650	656	649	648	648	640	645	647	651	654	656	650	652	641
Supported at Home	1745	1774	1800	1799	1844	1876	1847	1794	1872	1835	1852	1849	1796	1838	1827	1823
Number of People Receiving Services	2558	2604	2624	2628	2659	2685	2658	2595	2677	2645	2662	2661	2617	2650	2640	2625

People receiving services - how does Bury Compare?

People receiving services per 100,000 population
November 2025 - All



Services – Q3 commentary

This shows the number of people we support in our various service types.

The first chart shows the number of people supported in our intermediate care services. These services aim to prevent, reduce, and delay the need for long term care and support so the busier they are the better.

For intermediate Care after Q1 performance not being as strong as expected Q2 returned to normal but dropped again in Q3 during October and November recovering in December.

It continues to be a focus of our attention and work is underway to optimise length of stay, including a Geriatrician joining the board round 2-3 times per week, this has shown a some improvement in Q3, however, Quality Improvement methodology has now commenced to improve this further. There is ongoing work on risk management, for people to return home earlier and continue therapy within their own environment, this is dependent on the reablement service having capacity to accommodate these people. The transformation work surrounding reablement commences in Q4 and this aims to improve flow by fully understanding the capacity and demand.

Our Rapid Response and Hospital at Home service continues to perform beyond all our expectations. The Falcon and Griffin, extra care service, underwent a CQC inspection and have received a good rating, which shows the good work carried out by the team and the commitment to ensure Bury people can live well in a safe environment. The bed-based service, Killelea House, also underwent a CQC inspection, and the team await the outcome.

6 Adult Safeguarding

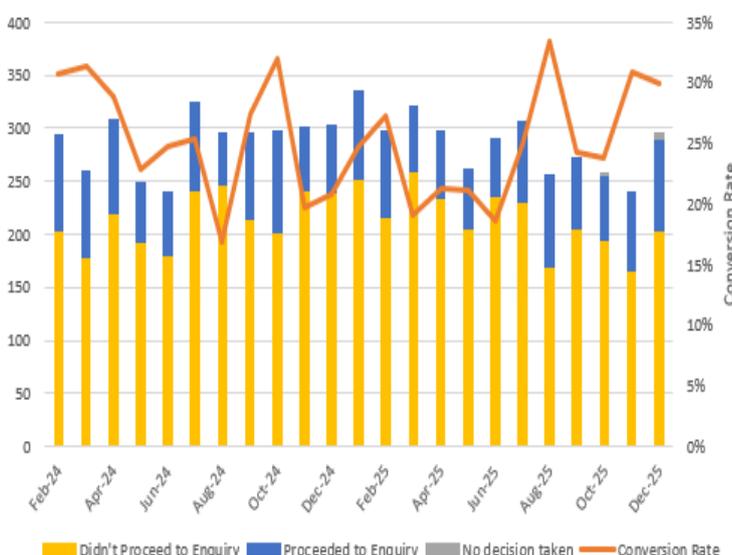
Safeguarding means protecting an adult’s right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working **together** to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult’s wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action.

Safeguarding and DoLS Activity Summary

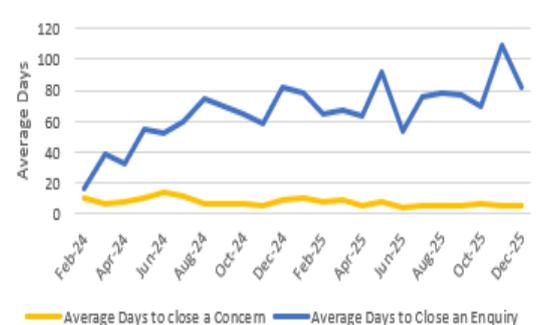
Increase the number of people who have their safeguarding outcomes met		Dec-25
Outcome	Percentage of people who were asked what outcome they would like	89%
	Of the people that expressed outcomes, were the outcomes achieved?	Not Achieved
		Partially Achieved
	Fully Achieved	72%

Open Safeguarding Enquiries			
	Number	Av. Days	Max Days
ACS Safeguarding Team	152	100	557
Hospital Social Work Team	1	13	13
Learning Disability Team	7	138	461
OPMHT	5	82	187
Community Mental Health Team			
Strategic Adults Safeguarding Team			
Total	165	99	557

Concerns Started Each Month



Av no. of days to close Concerns and Enquiries each Month



Active DoLS Requests

	Urgent	Standard	Total
Assessment in progress		95	95
Processing	2	11	13
Total	2	106	108

Standard Authorisations in Place

662

Adult Safeguarding - how does Bury Compare?

Metric	Bury	Rank in Northwest (out of 22)
Conversion Rate	30%	-
Making Safeguarding Personal – Asked	89%	-
Making Safeguarding Personal - Outcomes	100%	-

Last Updated: Q3 2025/26

Safeguarding – Q3 commentary

Regionally Bury are still performing strongly in asking people their outcomes and either partially or fully meeting those outcomes, and we have returned to our usual rate of around 89%. We expect this to continue now we are coming to the end of ensuring all safeguarding concerns are screened by the safeguarding team. The conversation rate has risen from 24% to 30% which remains a good rate of conversion to S.42 as we are receiving enough safeguarding concerns that it is felt people are raising appropriate but not so many concerns that do not convert as to overwhelm the system. However, we continue to review this at the Safeguarding Operational Group and check against the appropriateness of referrals coming through our front door.

We continue to see good practice in most safeguarding concerns, enquiries within the safeguarding service. We continue to work with the frontline on the importance of education and giving referrers feedback when they raise safeguarding and whilst this has been improved it continues to be picked up in supervision on an individual level. We will continue to monitor this in Safeguarding Operations Group to inform future practice.

We will be committing in our new service plan to reduce the number of days a s.42 enquiry is open to <85 days. Although there is no duty or statutory time-frame under the Care Act to complete a S.42 enquiry it is important that we progress the outcomes of safeguarding in a timely manner.

Key Achievements this quarter:

We have now embedded the learning disability service safeguarding referrals into our safeguarding team. This has gone well with no major impact on staff or services.

Our safeguarding service is now fully staffed with permanent members of staff, and they are reporting that they are enjoying their work. Our audit work shows that they are performing well, and asking the right questions, focusing on outcomes and the person being at the centre of their safeguarding.

We are continuing to develop and hold continuing professional development sessions and peer supervision sessions that are open to the whole adult care system. We are promoting these through our share point site.

Our Head of Safeguarding has been completing safeguarding awareness sessions over the last quarter with the voluntary, community and faith alliance, drug and alcohol services and housing colleagues. It has been reported that all attendees have found these useful.

4.7 Complaints and Compliments

Complaints

Period 2025/26	Number of complaints received	Decision			20 working day timescale	
		Upheld	Partially Upheld	Not Upheld	Within	Outside
Q3	13	0	9	3	4	9

1 complaint ongoing

Compliments

Period 2024/25	Number of compliments received	Source		
		Person receiving or had received services	Relative of person receiving or had received services	Other (incl. various survey responses/thank you cards)
Q3	238	9	14	215

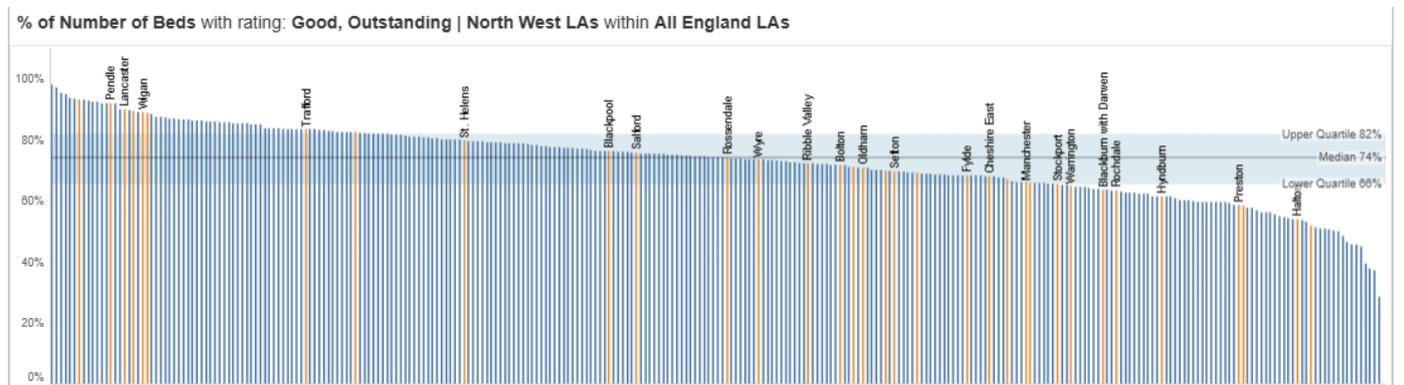
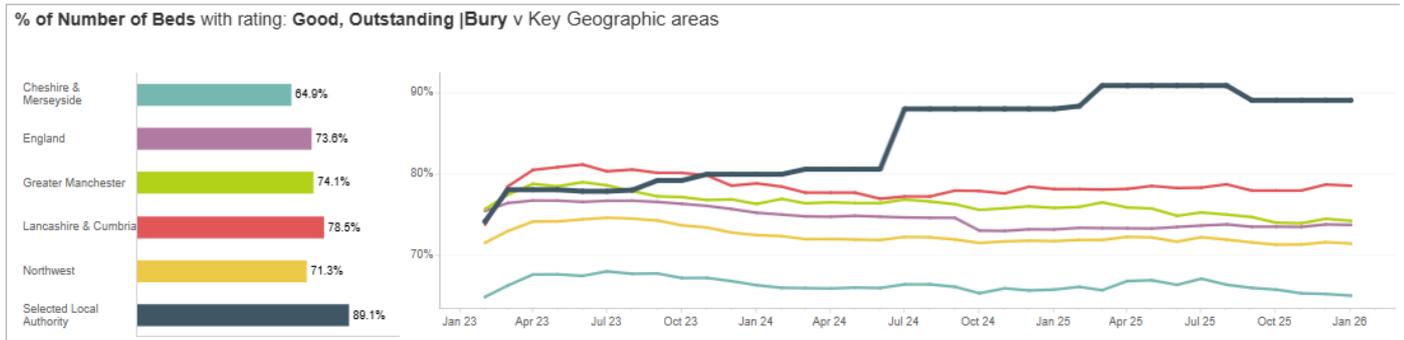
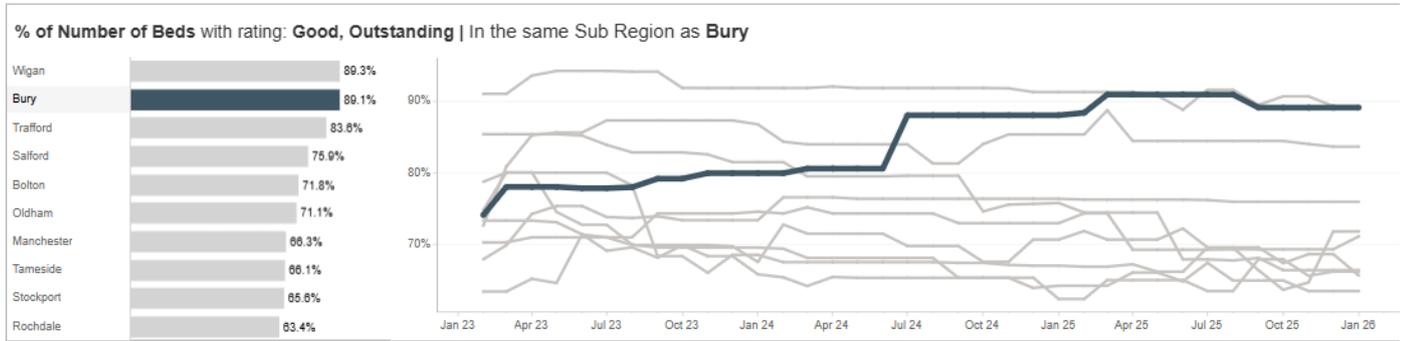
Complaints and Compliments – Q3 Commentary

The 13 complaints received in Q3 shows a reduction from the previous year when 19 complaints were received in Q3 2024-25.

However, Q3 has highlighted an increase in complaints receiving a response outside of timescales. 69% of complaints were responded outside of timescale compared with 42% in Q3 2024-25.

4.8 State of the Care Market

Number of care home beds rated good or outstanding.



Quality Ratings of Bury's Home Care Agencies



Last Updated: Q3 2025/26

State of the Care Market – Q3 commentary

The top charts show the quality ratings of care homes in Bury compared to the rest of Greater Manchester showing the % of beds rated good or outstanding. The second chart shows Bury, and in turn Great Manchester compared to the other regions in England and the Northwest.

The final chart shows the rating of home care agencies operating in Bury. For both charts the nearer to 100% the better.

Bury is ranked 1st in GM for learning disability supported living as well as 1st in GM for care at home, outperforming the Northwest and England averages.

Bury remains 2nd amongst its GM Neighbours for care homes and continues to perform well above the England average and the average of all Northwest regions. Bury is ranked in the top 20 in England for the quality of its care home beds. The annual review of our quality assurance review process and implementation of an Outstanding Provider Program is all designed to continue to push for improvements in the quality of care and support provided to the people of Bury.

4.9 Workforce Development Q3

Vacancies Tracker					Staffing			
Total Vacancies	Social Workers	SCO	Others	Vacancy Rate	Current Agency Staff	Current Students		
14	10	1	3	3%	8	6		
Progression Tracker					Apprenticeship Route Progression Q1 2025			
Required Vacancies					Apprentices on the Programme			
Apr-25	Apr-26	Jul-26	Sep-26	Apr-27	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Graduated
0	1	4	5	1	4	1	2	5
Other Routes								
Apprenticeship (PGDip)	Think Ahead							
1	4							

The chart above illustrates the favourable workforce position. Currently, we have a low level of vacancies within the operational department, which enhances team performance, practice consistency, and overall service stability.

We continue to provide support for our eight social work apprentices and four 'Think Ahead' trainees as they advance through their respective programs. Currently, half of our operational teams host a social work student, and we have practice educators available to

mentor additional students from the four Greater Manchester universities. We are committed to fostering a learning culture by actively supporting the development of future social workers.

The pilot of Magic Notes, an AI-driven tool designed to enhance social work practice and supervision documentation, is underway within two teams and has received positive preliminary feedback. Efforts are ongoing to refine our mandatory Training Dashboard, ensuring that all practitioners possess the requisite skills to empower Bury residents to live independently.

Team managers have undertaken a review of staff well-being plans, and peer supervision (Intervision) has been introduced across all teams. Additionally, the social work job description is being updated to promote consistency. Preparations are progressing for the upcoming Skills for Care quality assurance visit associated with the Assisted Support Year in Employment programme, which provides structured support to newly qualified social workers.

ASC Users Survey 2024/25

The ASC Users survey was conducted in January to March 2025 and Published on 30th October 2025. The Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) metrics from the survey show that 4 out of 7 are above or the same as the England Average. There has been a very slight decrease to 5 of the 7 metrics from the 23/24 survey, but 3 of these are still above the England average.

	2024/25			2023/2024
	Bury	Eng Avg.	DoT	Bury
(1A) Social care-related quality of life	19.1	19.0	↓ -0.57%	19.1
(3A) The proportion of people who use services who have control over their daily life	77.3%	77.3%	↓ -2.3%	79.6%
(5A1) The proportion of people who use services who reported that they had as much social contact as they would like	46.9%	45.4%	↑ 0.7%	46.2%
(1B) Adjusted Social care-related quality of life – impact of Adult Social Care services	0.392	0.419	↓ -0.009	0.401
(1D) Overall satisfaction of people who use service with their care and support	64.3%	65.1%	↑ 0.5%	63.8%
(3C1) The proportion of people who use services who find it easy to find information about services	64.8%	67.8%	↓ -1.0%	65.8%
(4A) The proportion of people who use services who feel safe	70.7%	70.1%	↓ -2.0%	72.7%

Key Findings

Below are the Key Findings for England. Select a council on the right (by scrolling through the councils) to see the comparative figures for the selected council.



65.1% of service users were very or extremely satisfied with the care and support they received. 2.1% of service users were very or extremely dissatisfied. The percentages were not statistically different to 2023-24.



11.4% of service users reported that they often or always felt lonely. A question on loneliness was first added to the survey in 2022-23, when 12.3% of service users reported feeling lonely often or always. 18.4% of service users reported never feeling lonely



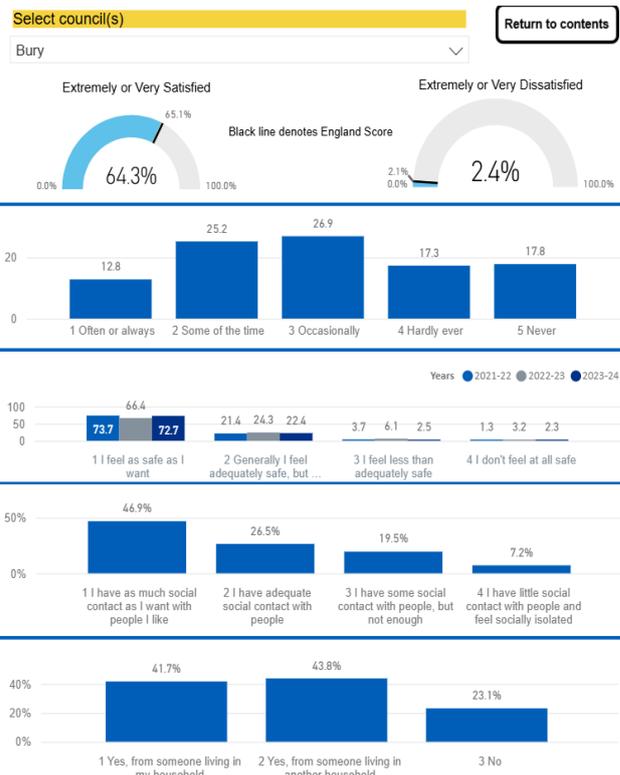
The percentage of service users that felt as safe as they wanted decreased to 70.1% in 2024-25 from 71.7% in 2023-24. 3.9% of service users reported that they felt less than adequately safe, a slight increase from 3.7% in 2023-24.



45.4% of service users report that they have as much social contact as they would like, a slight decrease from 45.6% in 2023-24.



When asked if they received any practical help on a regular basis from their husband/wife, partner, friends, neighbours or family members, 39.6% of service users reported receiving help from someone living in their household. Service users that report that they receive help from someone living in another household has decreased to 46.7%, from 47.5% in 2023-24.



Progress Report on Bury Carers Strategy

This Progress Report provides the first six-month update on key areas of progress against the Bury Carers Strategy and Action Plan 2025-2029. It also highlights examples of how the Bury Carers Strategy group is working towards the commitments set out in the Strategy.

Introduction

The Adult Bury Carers Strategy reflects carers experiences, recommendations and feedback and was approved by Cabinet on 12TH February 2025. Oversight is provided by the Bury Carers Strategy Group which includes representatives from health, social care, public health, council colleagues, carers, Bury VCFA, the Bury Carers' Hub, Healthwatch and providers. The group meets bi-monthly and is chaired by the Strategic Lead for Carers.

This report provides the first six-month update; highlights progress against the year-one strategic themes identified in the Bury Carers Strategy.

Our Commitments:

- ✓ To identify and support carers as soon as possible.
- ✓ Carers can access the right support and information when they need it, in the way that works best for them.
- ✓ To raise the profile of carers. Carers will be encouraged to recognise their role and have their rights championed and protected.
- ✓ To reduce inequalities by improving identification and support to carers from under-represented groups.

The Universal Carer Support Service

- The adult carers support service was recommissioned and the existing provider, N-Compass, (locally branded as the Bury Carers Hub) successfully secured the contract to deliver the new specification from 1st June 2025.
- The new contract specification was shaped by the key priorities identified in the Adult Bury Carers Strategy. An overview of the service is available on SharePoint [SERVICE-OVERVIEW-BCH-AUG-2025-AMENDED-.pptx](#)
- The service aims to provide a blended offer of face-to-face support across the Bury neighbourhoods and a digital online option, ensuring carers receive a tailored package of support that meets their needs at the right time.
- Performance monitoring is outcome focused, incorporating case studies that demonstrate alignment to the Strategy commitments, alongside detailed

quantitative data. The demographic information will help identify which groups are providing care and highlight trends across Bury.

What is the offer to carers?

- Specialist 1-2-1 and group support, including information.
- Magazines twice a year detailing local groups, activities and useful contacts.
- Carers holistic assessment and outcome tools.
- A closed Carers Facebook page for registered carers offering tools, information and peer support.
- Coffee & Chat /drop-in sessions for carers and former carers boroughwide, 2-3 each week.
- Weekly coffee morning for carers and their cared for and as requested by carers, held in the centre of Bury on a market day.
- Wellbeing activities – in person and on-line.
- A monthly events calendar.
- Access to Carers UK Digital Resource
- Refer and signpost carers to relevant services.
- Support for former carers, including volunteering opportunities.
- Support to access community and health and wellbeing services.
- The Carers Community Network Platform.
- A Penpal scheme.
- Training for carers.
- Carers Emergency Card.
- Outgoing Chatline.
- Bespoke support for young adult carers and carers from ethnic minority communities.
- Informal advocacy for working carers.

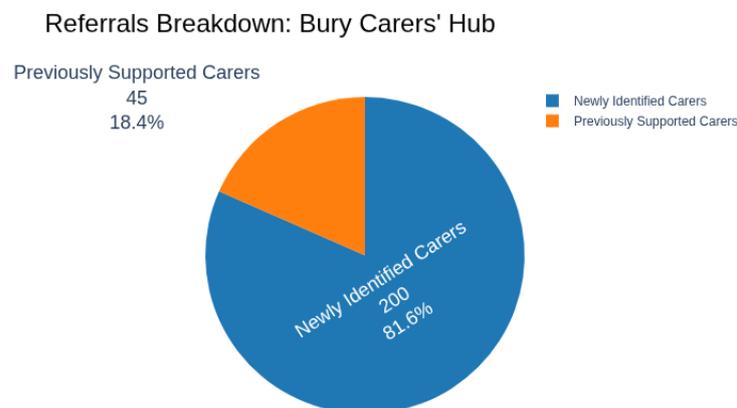
Relates to the Bury Carers Strategy Commitments:

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Identification - Key Activity

New Referrals

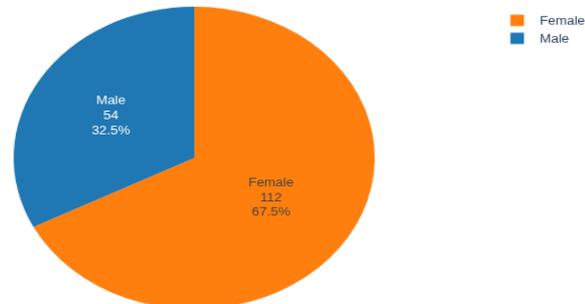
During the period June to November 2025, the Bury Carers' Hub received 245 referrals, of these 200 were newly identified carers and 45 carers were supported by the hub previously.



Gender Distribution of Newly Identified Carers

This chart shows the gender distribution among newly identified carers: approximately 32.5% are male and 67.5% are female, highlighting a significantly higher proportion of female carers. This gender disparity aligns with patterns reported in the 2021 Census Across the UK.

Proportion of Newly Identified Carers by Gender



Of the 200 newly identified carers:

- 29 were working carers
- 4 were young carers in education
- 64 carers had a new assessment to assess the impact of their caring role.
- 4 young carers completed a transition review between the Young Carers Team and the Bury Carers' Hub
- Of those carers whose support plan came to a planned end, 100% of carers improved their Get the Most Out of Life and Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale Outcome scores.

Relates to the Bury Carers Strategy Commitments:

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Wellbeing, Training, and Social Connection

Carers have told us that one of their priorities is to be able to take a break from their caring role and reduce the impact caring can have on their own health and wellbeing.

A monthly calendar of events is available, featuring activities such as:

- Weekly online **Reiki and yoga sessions**
- **Wellness Walks and Talk** with Manchester & Salford Ramblers, including lunch and free transport for carers.
- Carer-led **Art sessions**.

- **Drop-ins/coffee & chat sessions.**

Alongside this, a new initiative developed in collaboration with carers introduces a fresh calendar of activities designed to support carers in a more holistic way. This program strikes a balance between learning, wellbeing, mental resilience and social connection. It goes beyond our regular monthly events for carers and offers broader learning opportunities based on collective, emerging, and diverse needs.

Carers and professionals can download a copy of the calendars from the Bury Directory. [Carers Information and Support in Bury | Bury Directory](#)

Monthly calendar of events:

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
December 2025	1	2 RADCLIFFE DROP IN UNITED REFORMED CHURCH 10.30AM - 12.00PM	3 WEEKLY COFFEE MORNING BURY MASONIC HALL 10.30AM - 12.00PM	4 ART GROUP COSALEA CAFE, WALSHAW 11.00AM - 2.00PM	5
	8 WHITEFIELD DROP-IN SIR ROBERT PEEL 1.00PM - 2.30PM	9 PRESTWICH DROP-IN CHURCH LANE COMMUNITY CENTRE 1.00PM - 2.30PM JINNAH WOMEN'S WELLBEING GROUP 10.30AM-11.30AM JINNAH CENTRE, BURY	10 WEEKLY COFFEE MORNING BURY MASONIC HALL CANCELLED FOR STAFF TRAINING	11 ART GROUP COSALEA CAFE, WALSHAW 11.00AM - 2.00PM	12
	15	16 RADCLIFFE DROP IN UNITED REFORMED CHURCH 10.30AM - 12.00PM	17 WEEKLY COFFEE MORNING BURY MASONIC HALL 10.30AM - 1.00PM	18 ART GROUP COSALEA CAFE, WALSHAW 11.00AM - 2.00PM	19 Bury Carers' HUB
	22 No session	23 No session	24 No session	25 No session	26 No session
	29 No sessions closed for the holidays	31 No sessions closed for the holidays	31 No sessions closed for the holidays		
WEEKLY ONLINE LINKS ON FB	Please note the last online session will be 18 th December with all online sessions returning 7th January		REIKI 2.00PM - 3.00PM YOGA FLOW 6.15pm - 7.30PM	YOGA NIDRA 7.00pm (Guided meditation)	

Training Calendar - December 2025-April 2026					
	DATE & TIME	TRAINING	VENUE	TRAINER	OTHER
Bury Carers' HUB ncompass <small>improving a brighter future</small>	Thursday 4th December 10.30am-12.30pm	Art for Wellness	Radcliffe Reform Church	Jacqui Byron/Angela Halliwell	Refreshments Provided jacqui.byron@burycarershub.org.uk
	Monday 8th December 11.00am-1.00pm	Understanding Reflexology	Sir Robert Peel, Sunnybank Road	Christopher Jones	Refreshments Provided jayne.harrison@burycarershub.org.uk
	Thursday 11th December 10.45am-1.30pm	Mindful Miles	Manchester City Centre	BCH/ Stepping Out/ Salford and Manchester Ramblers	Booking Required and Lunch Provided jacqui.byron@burycarershub.org.uk
	Wednesday 17 th December 10.30am-1.00pm	Music to Lift the Mood	Bury Masonic Hall	Team/Pams People	Booking Required and Lunch Provided jayne.harrison@burycarershub.org.uk jacqui.byron@burycarershub.org.uk
	Friday 23 rd January 1.00pm-3.00pm	First Aid for Carers	Bury Adult Learning	Sarah Tumock	Booking Required jayne.harrison@burycarershub.org.uk
	Tuesday 10th February 12.30am-1.30pm	Carers Emergency Card	Radcliffe Reform Church	Team	Booking Required and Lunch Provided jayne.harrison@burycarershub.org.uk
	Thursday 26th February 10.45am-1.30pm	Pathways to Wellbeing	Heaton Park	BCH/ Stepping Out/ Salford and Manchester Ramblers	Booking Required and Lunch Provided jacqui.byron@burycarershub.org.uk
	Thursday 12th March 10.30am-12.30pm	Art as Medicine	Sir Robert Peel, Sunnybank Road	Team	Booking Required, Refreshments Provided jacqui.byron@burycarershub.org.uk
	Friday 17 th April 10.00am-12.00noon	First Aid for Carers	Bury Adult Learning	Sarah Tumock	Booking Required jayne.harrison@burycarershub.org.uk

N-Compass have a partnership with [Carefree](#) an organisation who offer **an annual one or two-night short break away for unpaid carers** registered with the Bury Carers Hub. The breaks are in hotels throughout the UK. The total cost for the break to carers is £33.

30 carers were referred to Carefree and supported to take a break from their caring role. Below are testimonials we received from two of our carers:

'This helped me to relax and take care of myself a little bit more. I enjoyed the walk around the golf course and stunning environment. The hotel was amazing, very clean and hospitable staff. The room was cosy, comfortable, all I could have asked for. One of the best hotels I have stayed in''

"I was at breaking point, and this break give me some space to myself to rest and reset. The hotel was good the views were amazing just what I needed"

The Carers Help and Talk (CHAT) Line the CHAT Line gives carers the opportunity to speak with an understanding and supportive volunteer about their caring role, feelings, interests, or everyday events. Carers are matched with trained volunteers who listen and offer reassurance. Volunteers are drawn from the local community, receive specialist training, and have access to information about local groups and wider support.

Carers Coffee and Chat sessions and drop-in sessions Carers Coffee and Chat sessions, along with drop-in sessions, provide opportunities for carers and former carers to meet, share experiences, and enjoy brief respite over a free tea or coffee. Carers can also speak to a Carer Information and Support Officer for advice or to discuss concerns.

The Carers Community Network is an online social platform for carers, offering 24/7 peer and professional support, social activities and information. Hosts share updates and reminders, while moderators ensure safety and provide additional support.

The **Pen Pals Project** is a monthly letter exchange project for those carers who enjoy traditional correspondence.

The **Carers Emergency Card**: provides peace of mind if carers are unable to provide care due to an unforeseen circumstance or emergency. **36 carers** registered for a Carers Emergency Card during the 6-month period.

The **Carers UK Digital Resource**. The Carers UK Digital Resource is a suite of online tools, including e-learning modules, factsheets, carers rights information, interactive guides and personalised support.

Jigsaw Club is a new initiative started following a conversation at a coffee morning. A Blog on the club from the founder can be found within the appendices.

June–November 2025 Highlights:

- Delivered **104 carer activities** to **1301 individuals**, including **4 sessions for ethnic minority communities** (175 attendees).

- Members of the Bury Carers Strategy Group regularly attend the weekly coffee morning to share information and guidance.
- Some sessions co-hosted with Social Prescribers.
- Drop-ins delivered by Citizens Advice Bureau.
- **26 online evening sessions** provided.
- **1 training course** delivered with **13 carers attending**.
- Additional activities during Carers Week and Carers Rights Day.

Tailored Support for Under-Represented Groups

We are focusing on under-represented carer groups to expand equitable access. The new contract includes:

- A Young Adult Carer Transition Carer Lead.
- A Carer Lead for Ethnic Minority backgrounds.

June - November Highlights:

- Two Hub staff interviewed by That's TV Manchester about under-represented groups, as part of our Carers Week celebrations.
- Four joint sessions with the Jinnah Centre (175 attendees).
- Supported Jinnah Centre's funding bid for Carers Awareness Wellbeing sessions.
- Women's crochet/knitting sessions.
- Monthly visits and promotional opportunities with the Jinnah Centre.
- Carer Lead invited to Pakistani Independence Day celebrations.
- Building partnerships with BAME, ADAB, Care Your Way, and BAWC.
- Worked with Pakistani Resource Centre on a PIP application.
- Launch of the Bury Young Carers Strategy 2025-28.
- All young carers will receive tailored assessments by the Young Carers Team.
- Partnership working with the Bury Young Carers team to ensure smooth transition to adults.
- 4 young carers completed a transition review between the Young Carers Team and the Bury Carers Hub.
- 11 carers were supported to access/maintain employment or education.

Relates to the Bury Carers Strategy Commitments:

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Carers Week 2025 & Carers Rights Day 2025

National events are ways to raise the profile of carers and promote carer rights. Carers Week and Carers Rights Day was supported by the Council's inclusion events calendar and the Council's Comms Team played a significant role in delivering a campaign, both internally and externally.

Carers Week – 9th – 15th June 2025

The following activities were delivered during Carers Week.

Event	Number of carers attending	Number of professionals attending	Key outcomes
Information Session	18	SWT x 2 + BCH staff	Information Sharing, break from caring
Human Factor Event	Professional Information MH specific	BCH x2	Networking with 20 + organisations
Carers drop in	5	Social prescribers Prestwich & Whitefield. BCH x1	Information Sharing, break from caring, socialising with others.
Carers coffee morning and lunch	38	Scope, Achieve, SWT x2, Bury Lions x2 BCH x4	Celebration of all carers. Information provided. Peer support
Carers Walk & Talk	11	BCH x3, Manchester & Salford ramblers x5	Improved wellbeing, reducing isolation, improving wellbeing
Primary Care visits to GP practices	Professional	2x BCH	Garden City, Green mount, Huntley Mount, Moorgate Medical, The Elms, Greylands. Information shared,

			Carer boards updated, training offered.
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Working alongside hospital volunteers at Fairfield Hospital, a range of activities ran to celebrate and support carers. An estimated 200 participants took part across the hospital.

- Information stands
- AMU Wards 6 & 7 – coffee morning
- Ward 24 – hosted an informal afternoon tea for carers
- Ward 18 – delivered a music dance session
- Wards 1 & 2 – wellness activities



Carers Rights Day – 20th November 2025

Our Carers Rights Day event was a collaboration with several services in Bury. The theme was 'Know your Rights, Use your Rights'. The day was celebrated with pastries and cake, not forgetting our vegan, gluten free and kosher carers. A flyer was developed outlining Carer Rights and these were available for all carers to take away. One of the team created a serious but fun quiz and both carers and professionals participated working in teams. A narrative of the event from the Bury Carers' Hub can be found within the appendices.

The following day the Bury Carers Hub team targeted several GP practices and created links within their teams and provided updated information for their carer boards.



Winning Team



Relates to the Bury Carers Strategy Commitments:

- **To raise the profile of carers. Carers will be encouraged to recognise their role and have their rights championed and protected.**

Information and Advice

The Bury Carers Strategy Group agreed the group needed dedicated time and space outside of the core meetings to plan partnership approaches on the Strategy Action Plan. A workshop took place in July 2025 which was led by a carer representative who wanted to focus on information and advice.

Work to date:

Printed & Digital Materials

- Twice-yearly carer newsletters, posters, leaflets. The materials represent hidden carers in the materials, to support marginalised groups in self-identifying and engaging.
- 1791 newsletters distributed (email and hard copy).
- Key information is available on the Adult Carers Channel (Bury Directory).
- The Young Carer Team leaflet and the Young Carers Strategy published on the Adult Carers Channel.
- Testing of the Adult Carers Channel by new carers for feedback and suggested improvements.

- Downloadable newsletter, activities and training timetables (Adult Carers Channel).

Online & Social Media

- Two Facebook pages: the main BCH page (managed by N-Compass) and private group for registered carers.
- Weekly social media updates & campaigns.
- Carers UK Digital Resource & Carers Community Network platforms.

Community Engagement

- Drop-in sessions in Ramsbottom, Prestwich, Radcliffe & Whitefield, along with monthly visits to the Jinnah Centre.
- Weekly carers' coffee morning updates.
- Worked with partners on targeted campaigns, Carers Week, Carers Rights Day, Information stands and sessions.

Professional

- Carer information hosted on PCN & Adult Social Care SharePoint.
- Carers Service leaflets and posters distributed to GP practices and community settings.
- Working with the Bury Young Carers with a focus on the need for young adult carers to have an awareness of support available as they move into adulthood.
- 16 system-wide carer awareness training delivered, attended by 80 people - key to not only providing information and advice, but to identifying carers, and facilitating referrals.

Media & Outreach

- Interview with That's T.V. Manchester.
- Radio interview on Crescent Radio on the Hospital Discharge Project.

Relates to the Bury Carers Strategy Commitments:

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Carers Champions

The Bury Carer's Hub offer free Carer Champions training to equip people with the knowledge and skills to identify and effectively support carers, promote the rights and entitlements of carers and to create more carer-friendly environments.

Key Highlights:

- During June – November 2025, **38 individuals** completed the Carers Champions training.
- The Bury Carers Hub supported Cygnet in achieving Carers UK 'Triangle of Care',

Relates to the Bury Carers Strategy Commitments:

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enhancing staff awareness of carers' essential role/needs.

Accelerating Reform Fund (ARF)

National investment for carers by the Department of Health and Social Care through the Accelerated Reform Fund has enabled Bury to work alongside Rochdale and Oldham Councils across the Northern Care Alliance hospital footprint on a project to identify and support unpaid carers not only at the point of discharge from hospital, but also within the departments where carers attend appointments with the person they are caring for.

Key Highlights:

- **40** newly identified Bury carers, along with several referrals across Fairfield, Royal Oldham and Rochdale hospitals.
- A range of activities delivered across Fairfield Hospital to celebrate Carers Week and Carer Rights Day. Approximately **200 participants** took part.
- Bury KPI's – April to September 2025:
 - Number of public-facing outreach and engagement events/sessions delivered: **86**
 - Number of conversations with members of the public about being a carer/carer support services as part of outreach and engagement activity (not discharge conversations): **837**
 - Number of staff/volunteers trained/upskilled in carer awareness: **125**
- Radio Interview – Accelerated Reform Fund, Rochdale Carers Hub, and Bury Carers Hub -The team had the exciting opportunity to join Crescent Radio, a Rochdale-based station representing the Accelerated Reform Fund, they took to

the airwaves to share their experiences working in hospitals, the challenges carers face every day, and why it's so vital to identify and support all carers.



Relates to the Bury Carers Strategy Commitments:

- **To identify and support carers as soon as possible.**
- **Carers can access the right support and information when they need it, in the way that works best for them.**
- **To raise the profile of carers. Carers will be encouraged to recognise their role and have their rights championed and protected.**

Carer Voice and Representation

One of the key priorities is to strengthen and formalise our commitment to co-production. To support this, we will be creating a carers network and a process for consolidating carer feedback into one place. This will provide a valuable resource to scrutinise policies and inform policy considerations from a carers perspective and ensuring all aspects of Bury's carers delivery will be co-produce. Recruitment for a

Relates to the Bury Carers Strategy Commitments:

- **To identify and support carers as soon as possible.**
- **Carers can access the right support and information when they need it, in the way that works best for them.**
- **To raise the profile of carers. Carers will be encouraged to recognise their role and have their rights championed and protected.**
- **To reduce inequalities by improving identification and support to carers from under-represented groups.**

dedicated staff member is currently underway.

Piece by Piece: The Joy of Jigsaws at Bury Carers Hub

When the rain pours down in Bury and the chill sets in, many of us swap our gardening gloves for puzzle pieces. At Bury Carers Hub, we've embraced this seasonal shift by launching our very own **Jigsaw Swap**—and the response has been nothing short of amazing!

It all began with a simple idea. I spend most of my warmer months outdoors tending to my vegetable garden, but when winter arrives, jigsaws become my go-to pastime. I knew that Rita, one of our regular volunteers, shared this love, and soon discovered that many of our carers did too. So, at the end of November, we introduced the **Official Bury Carers Hub Jigsaw Swap**.

The rules are simple: you don't have to contribute a puzzle to take one home, but when you've completed it, we ask that you bring it back. There's no time limit—whether you're a member of the 500-piece club or a dedicated 1,000-piece puzzler, the joy is in the journey.

What started as a small initiative has sparked countless conversations. Carers and volunteers chat about the images and locations featured on the puzzles, share tips for tricky sections, and bond over the satisfaction of finding that elusive missing piece. But beyond the fun, jigsaws offer real benefits for wellbeing:

- **Physical Health:** Working on puzzles can lower heart rate, blood pressure, and breathing rate. They also improve fine motor skills, which are vital for everyday tasks.
- **Cognitive Function:** Jigsaws challenge memory, problem-solving, and visual perception, helping to keep the mind active and resilient.
- **Mental Sharpness:** By engaging multiple areas of the brain, puzzles help maintain mental agility, especially as we age.
- **Stress Reduction:** The focus required creates a meditative state, easing stress and promoting relaxation.
- **Emotional Well-being:** Completing a puzzle brings a sense of accomplishment and fulfilment, lifting mood and reducing anxiety.

At Bury Carers Hub, the Jigsaw Swap is more than just a pastime—it's an additional way to connect, unwind, and nurture both body and mind. Piece by piece, we're building not just puzzles, but stronger bonds within our Carer's community

Carers Rights Day – Working Together Case Study – The Bury Carers Hub

As part of our Carers Rights Day event, the Bury Carers Hub team invited partner agencies who are committed to ensuring carers are identified, referred to and supported. They understand the impact caring can have on a carer's health and wellbeing and how timely interventions can be crucial.

The theme for Carers Rights Day 2025 '**Know your rights, use your rights**'

Those that joined us on the day:

Bury Hospice - Amy works in the Hospice outreach team and Rachel on the inpatient unit. We refer to Bury Hospice as they offer several services that carers can access including:

- Complimentary therapies
- Group support
- Outreach for cared for person
- Bathing Service for cared for if a carer is struggling with this.

Bury Council Commissioner - Caroline Malvern joined our Carers event and this is appreciated by carers and the team.

Healthwatch - Bury Carers Hub and Healthwatch work together on campaigns and surveys that can potentially influence and guide services. Beverley joined us and spoke with carers about what matters to them

Staying Well Team - Austin joined us. We frequently refer to each other's service. The SWT can often help with the cared for person which helps the carer.

Achieve - Bury Carers Hub & Ross Derbyshire from Achieve have strong collaborative relationship supporting and championing each service. Ross offers group support for carers who are caring for anyone (or themselves) affected by alcohol or drug use.

Older Peoples Mental Health Team - We were joined on Carers Rights Day by a representative from The Older Peoples Mental Health Team. Rahima Khatun is a student Occupational Therapist on placement and doing a piece of work around supporting carers.

GP Federation - Diane and Alison joined us. Diane is attached to the Learning Disability Team and Alison is a breast cancer coordinator. They found the group supportive and left service information for our carers.

Stroke Association Tracey joined our Carers Rights Day event. Tracey and her colleague offer specific support to carers if there is a stroke related condition. They have access to small grants etc. Bury Carers Hub

**Bury Adult Carers Strategy:
Bi-Yearly Action Plan Progress Report
June – December 2025 Summary for Year One Commitments**

**Delivery against the plan
- status definitions**

-  Action not started
-  Action on track
-  Action on track with some minor issues*
-  Action not on track with key issues*
-  Action complete

* Mitigating activities identified below.

Commitment 1: To identify and support carers as soon as possible.		
'We Will'	Progress	Status
Provide Carer Awareness briefings	16 system-wide carer awareness training delivered, attended by 80 people. Feedback positive.	
Use communication and marketing to raise awareness and promote the role of the commissioned carers service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council's Comms Team delivered marketing campaigns during Carers Week & Carers Rights Day • Updated materials delivered to GP Practices for carer boards. • Printed & digital materials, including 1791 newsletters distributed. • Weekly social media updates & campaigns. • Information stands and sessions. • Interview with That's T.V. Manchester. • Radio interview with Crescent Radio. • Carer information hosted on PCN & ASC SharePoint. • ASC weekly briefing spotlight on carers and support available. • Safeguarding Roadshow. • Key information is available on the Adult Carers Channel (Bury Directory). • A host of activities delivered during Carers Week at Fairfield Hospital. 	

<p>Closer working with Primary Care to increase GP recognition of carers and improve signposting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visits to 6 GP Practices, information shared, carer boards updated to improve visibility in GP settings, training offered. • 2 service overview sessions delivered to Radcliffe Primary Care & Garden City practice. • Carer information hosted on PCN SharePoint. • Hosting carer drop-in sessions with Prestwich Social Prescribers. • N-Compass contributed to the NHS 9th annual Commitment to Carers Conference. • 2 colleagues from the GP Federation attending the Carers Rights Day. 	
<p>Further develop and strengthen the Bury Carers Strategy Group.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members refresh undertaken. 	
<p>Commitment 2: Carers can access the right support & information when they need it, in the way that works best for them.</p>		
<p>'We Will'</p>	<p>Progress</p>	<p>Status</p>
<p>Ensure carers service is available in all Bury neighbourhoods.</p>	<p>Carer support embedded in Ramsbottom, Radcliffe, West, Prestwich and Whitefield. Calendar published monthly, downloadable copy available on the Carers Information Channel, hosted on the Bury Directory.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 drop-in's /coffee & chats delivered in Ramsbottom. • 12 drop-in's/coffee & chats delivered in Radcliffe. • 25 drop-in's/coffee & chats delivered in West. • 12 drop-in's/coffee & chats delivered in Prestwich. • 13 drop-in's/coffee & chats delivered in Whitefield 	
<p>The commissioned carers services will be the gateway for carers to access information, advice, signposting and lower-level needs of support.</p>	<p>Over the last two quarters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 200 new carers supported. • 45 re referrals into the Bury Carers Hub • 104 carer activities to 1301 individuals • 64 carers had a new holistic assessment, resulting in information/referral for a statutory carers assessment/care assessment. • 70 carers had a new support plan put in place. • 36 carers registered for an Emergency Card. • 4 young adult carers transition assessments/reviews conducted. • 854 carer 1:2:1 sessions (over and above a new assessment). • 43 outgoing referrals made. • 26 online evening sessions delivered. • 1791 newsletters distributed. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A closed Carers Facebook page for registered carers, offering information and peer support. 	
Ensure that a wellbeing proposal is part of the carer offer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carers can undertake a holistic assessment to evaluate their well-being. (64 undertaken). • Of those carers whose support plan came to a planned end, 100% of carers improved their Get the Most Out of Life and Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale Outcome scores. • A monthly calendar of events available to download. • Support to formal carers, including volunteering opportunities. • A PenPal scheme – a monthly letter exchange. • Weekly evening online Reiki & yoga sessions (26 sessions delivered). • Carefree short break for carers (30 carers referred to access a break). • Wellness Walks & Talk, including lunch and free transport. • Carer-led art sessions. • Drop-ins/coffee & chats sessions. • A closed Carers Facebook page for registered carers, offering information and peer support. • Wellness activities. • Crochet/knitting activity at the Jinnah. • Jigsaw club established. • The Carers Community Network platform. (73 Bury Carers registered). • The Carers ChatLine. (18 Bury carers supported). • The Carers Emergency Card (36 carers registered). 	
Encourage registration with GP practices.	<p>Data on the number of carers registered with GP practices in Bury as of 31/12/25:</p> <p>Carers Register: 6085 Carers 18+: 6029 Carers under 18: 56</p>	
Add carers training to contract.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 training session delivered (13 carers attending). • A calendar of activities has been designed alongside carers to support carers in a more holistic way. This program strikes a balance between learning, wellbeing, mental resilience, and social connection. It goes beyond our regular monthly events for carers and offers broader learning opportunities based on what carers wanted. 	
Develop respite provider framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being developed by the Provider Development, Contract Monitoring and Complaints team. 	

Commitment 3:		
We will raise the profile of carers across Bury. Carers will be encouraged to recognise their role and have their rights championed and promoted.		
'We Will'	Progress	Status
Ensure carers remain a priority in ASC objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ASC Strategy Plan runs until 2026 and identifies carers as a priority. 	
Promote rights under Care Act 2014.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 125 staff/volunteers at Fairfield Hospital trained/upskilled in Carer Awareness. 38 individuals completed Carers Champions Training Carers Rights Day – the theme 'Know Your Rights, Use your Rights' event and flyer developed outlining carers rights. The Bury Carers Hub supported Cygnet in achieving Carers UK 'Triangle of Care,' enhancing staff awareness of carers' essential role/needs. 	
Continue carer engagement to improve services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waves Suites Carers Dementia group. Supported carer representation for Bury Dementia Symposium. Carers testimonials & feedback collected. Bury Carers Hub annual carer survey undertaken. Testing of the Adult Carers Information channel by new carers for feedback and suggested improvements. A calendar of activities has been designed alongside carers. We will be creating a carers network and a process for consolidating carer feedback into one place. Recruitment for a dedicated staff member is currently underway. 	
Review the carers pathway, carer assessments support plan; co-produce improvements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not yet started. 	
Commitment 4:		
To reduce inequalities by improving identification of and support to Carers from under-represented groups		
'We Will'	Progress	Status
Use VCFA insight to understand gaps.	Working together/networked: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Jinnah Centre BAME, ADAB, 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care Your Way, • BAWC • The Pakistani Resource Centre, • Bury Active Asian Women's centre. • D-CaFF, • Bury Hospice, • Healthwatch, • Staying Well Team, • Achieve. • Stroke association • Bury VCFA 	
Use demographics for targeted support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 sessions for carers from ethnic minorities. • 4 targeted intervention/campaign to identify young adult carers – 7 young adult carers identified. • 4 young adult carers completed a transition review. 	
Continue to develop data collection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bury Carers Hub performance monitoring is outcome focused, incorporating case studies that demonstrate alignment to the Strategy commitments, alongside detailed quantitative data. • The demographic information will help identify which groups are providing care and highlight trends across Bury. 	
Promote the rights of working carers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 29 new working carers. • Free access to the Carers UK Digital Resource • 11 carers were supported to access/maintain employment or education. • Carers Rights Day/Carers Week activities incl. carers awareness across Bury Council & Fairfield Hospital employees. • N-Compass attended the annual Equality & Work Conference with Carers UK, focusing on supporting working carers and the practical steps employers can take. 	

Action on track with some minor issues/ Action not on track with key issues		
'We Will'	Risk/Issue	Mitigating actions
Further develop and strengthen the Bury Carers Strategy Group.	<p>Difficulty maintaining carer representatives.</p> <p>Continuity of attendance among members.</p>	<p>Partner with members and use networks to identify carer reps. Establish a wider pool of carers who can rotate attendance.</p> <p>Continue to offer hybrid or virtual attendance options. Track attendance and flag early signs of disengagement. Follow up with individuals who miss multiple meetings.</p>
Closer working with Primary Care to increase GP recognition of carers and improve signposting	<p>Low of Carer referrals from practices, reducing identification and early support.</p> <p>Pressure on GP capacity reduces ability to priorities referrals into carer support.</p>	<p>Continue to deliver practice-facing comms and materials and offer of brief training sessions. Monitor over the next 6-months.</p> <p>Encourage referrals by social prescribers, practice nurses, and staff.</p>

Appendix - Data sources and what good looks like

Section	Chart	Data Source	What does good look like?		
Contacts	Number of Adult Social Care (ASC) Contact Forms recorded each month.	Contact Records in LiquidLogic: Contact Type Contact Outcome	Six Steps to Managing Demand in Adult Social Care: ≈ 25% of contacts go on to receive a full social care assessment.		
	GM Comparison				
Waiting Lists	Waiting List Summary	Professional Involvement in LiquidLogic: Awaiting allocation work trays Brokerage Work trays Overdue Review Tasks DoLS data from the database.	Lower is better		
	Needs and Carers Assessments: No of Cases Waiting for Allocation				
	GM Regional Comparison				
Assessments	Number of Adult Social Care (ASC) Assessments Completed each month	Assessment forms in LiquidLogic			
	GM Regional Comparison	Av. number of days from the contact start date to the assessment end date	Lower is better		
Services	Number of Intermediate Care (short-term) services completed each month	All IMC Service data from four data sources			
	Number of Long-term Adult Social Care services open on the 1 st of each month.				
	Proportion of Home Care vs Nursing and Residential Care Services compared against 2 years ago			Service data from Controcc Grouped by Service Type Count of service types, not people	Lower Residential & Nursing Care is better
	Northwest Regional Comparison				
Reviews	Number of Adult Social Care Reviews Completed each month	Review forms completed in LiquidLogic	Higher number of completed reviews. Lower proportion of Unplanned reviews.		
	Number of Overdue Adult Social Care Reviews on the last day of each month	Review Tasks in LiquidLogic past the due date	Lower is better		

	Regional Comparison	As above	
Safeguarding	Percentage of people who have their safeguarding outcomes met	Completed safeguarding enquiries: Making Safeguarding Personal questions	Higher is better
	Outcomes were achieved		
	Open Safeguarding Enquiries	Safeguarding enquiry forms on LiquidLogic and CMHT/EIT spreadsheets	Target: Enquiries closed in 56 days or less
	Concerns Started Each Month	Contact Forms on LiquidLogic: form type safeguarding concerns	
	Average number of days to close Concerns and Enquiries each month	As above	Targets: Concerns closed in 3 days or less. Enquiries closed in 56 days or less
	Regional Comparison	As above	Higher is better



Classification: Open	Decision Type: Key
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Report to:	Cabinet	Date: 11 March 2026
Subject:	Step Forward Foster Carers	
Report of	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children and Young People	

Summary

We are seeking approval to recruitment a specialist foster carer group of Step Forward Carers who can care for children with more complex needs. The cohort of children who would be cared for by Step Forward carers are those who would be otherwise cared for in residential care or likely to need a residential care placement.

As of January 2026, Bury has 367 children in care. This is slightly above the average when compared with statistical comparator authorities. Of these, 249 children (68%) are placed in foster care arrangements, including kinship carers. A further 50 children (13.6%) reside in children's homes, and 30 (8.1%) are accommodated in supported living arrangements. The remaining children are primarily placed with parents or have been matched for adoption.

Children are supported to live in foster care when they cannot be cared for within their own families or family and friend network. Residential Children's Home placements are only considered when foster care options are unavailable or unsuitable, or for children presenting with complex emotional, behavioural, or mental health needs which cannot be matched with foster carers skills. The age range of children in residential care is between 7 and 17 years.

Step Forward Foster Carers will be required to have specific qualifications and experience:

- Have experience of working with children and young people in a professional capacity i.e., Youth Workers, Social Workers, Teachers, Allied Health Professionals, Emergency Services personnel, Therapeutic practitioners etc.
- Experience of working with children and young people with complex needs.
- Understanding of how trauma, attachment, and neglect affect children and adolescents.
- Understanding of child development and effects of life experience.

The Specialist Step Forward Foster Carer Scheme ("Scheme") will offer solo placements and enable children and young people to step down from residential care and move to a family environment which can meet their needs. This initiative offers those skilled and selected carers enhanced support and payments, helping them build confidence and capacity whilst reducing the local authority's reliance and high spend on residential placements.

Our current spend on residential placements for our children and young people is projected to be £18.5m for 2025/26 financial year.

In the early stages we would plan to recruit six Step Forward foster carer households to support 6 children who are currently in residential settings or with a plan of residential care. The total cost including a dedicated assessing and supervising social worker would be **£369,324** for the 12-month pilot period.

Recruiting Step Forward Foster Carers (self-employed as per the existing Mainstream Foster carers) and paying them an annual fee of £53,554 per year (£1029.90 per week) will incur a cost of £321,324 for x 6 fostering households. This includes the normal maintenance allowance and professional fee every other foster carer receives, plus additional allowances for this specialist carer category. This recognises additional skills of a Step Forward Carer, a 'Hard to Place' element currently within our current funding structure and a solo fee for the young person to be the carers only child.

This needs to be considered alongside the average per child per week residential placement cost of approximately £7,418 per week; the forecasted minimum cost savings per Step Forward fostering household over a three-year period would be **£626,115** (this has not factored in further year on year inflation uplifts). For 6 children to step down to a Step Forward fostering household, over 3 years the savings would be £3.757 million.

Additionally Step Forward Foster carers will receive:

- 50% council tax exemption (£6690 per annum for 6 households)
- Children in Care will continue to receive birthday/Christmas/holiday allowances as per Fostering Allowance Guide. This should not be seen as an allowance for the carer. (£5991 per annum for 6 children/young people)
- There will be in place wrap around support from internal/external sources i.e. dedicated SSW, Family Support worker, access to an in-house psychologist via our emotional health and well-being team being recruited to, Foster Carer mentoring and training.

Recommendation(s)

Cabinet

1. Approves a twelve-month pilot of the Step Forward Foster Carers Scheme, at a total cost to the Council of £369,324 for the term of the pilot.
2. Notes that the estimated time for mobilisation of the Scheme is 6-9 months from decision to fund (this allows time for safe recruitment, assessment, approval, training, matching and placing).

Reasons for recommendation(s)

The Scheme offers a strategic, cost-effective way to grow a specialist fostering model and reduce reliance on residential care for our children. It supports better outcomes for children by ensuring they can become part of a stable fostering family environment,

reduces the current high spend on residential care and aligns with national priorities for children's social care reform.

The Scheme will also focus on improving health, promoting wellbeing, and fostering independence through specialist foster care by:

- Training foster carers to support children with specific health or emotional needs, such as those with disabilities, trauma, or complex medical conditions.
- Providing therapeutic support to help children develop resilience and emotional stability, whilst having a greater understanding of their journey.
- Encouraging independence by equipping young people with life skills, confidence, and support networks to transition successfully into adulthood.
- Collaborating with healthcare professionals to ensure the best possible physical and mental health outcomes for our children.

Alternative options considered and rejected

Option 1: Do Nothing / Rely on short-long term impact of the Sufficiency Strategy, Foster Carer Recruitment and Marketing Strategy and development of GM Fostering Hub.

We could rely solely on the medium to long term sufficiency plan, further embedding and development of the Greater Manchester Fostering Hub; our internal Recruitment and Marketing Strategy, alongside our continued incentives already in place including;

- Continued weekly scrutiny, tracking and monitoring of placement and support package requests via Residential Panel.
- Close scrutiny of foster placements showing signs of disruption and implementation of early intervention strategies to reduce risk of break down.
- Development and design of an internal residential estate between now and 2028.
- Edge of Care services diverting children and young people from entering care.
- Continued reviews of those young people appropriate for step down into supported accommodations (age 16+) and successful registration of our Supported Lodgings providers

There is no doubt cost savings will be achieved via our current initiatives. However, doing nothing at this stage is not an option. The Scheme will complement the above initiatives already in progress and provide the Local Authority with more ways to improve the lives of children in care whilst significantly reducing current forecasted overspend on placements. This option builds on the already agreed cost-saving initiatives and strengthens the Local Authorities range of options available to them when placing children with complex needs in care settings. Often these decisions are made in times of crisis and when 'placement choices' are either nil or limited due to national sufficiency challenges.

Report Author and Contact Details:

Name: Linda Evans

Position: Director of Children's Social Care and Early Help
Department: Children and Young People's Services
E-mail: l.evans@bury.gov.uk

Background

1. Current Challenges:

In Bury we have children and young people who are currently living in residential children's homes who would be best placed in a family environment with foster carers. This new scheme will focus on recruiting Step Forward foster carers for these specific children and young people. The children and young people needing a foster family are aged from 7 to 15 years at the time of writing this report.

We know that most children and young people benefit more from living in a family environment as opposed to a residential home. We also know that caring for children who have transitioned from residential homes to foster care can bring challenges, therefore we have included in our offer an enhanced support package to help foster carers care for these children and young people

High costs and limited availability of Independent Fostering Agency ("IFA") placements and residential placements alongside low in house foster care sufficiency and difficulty recruiting and retaining foster carers (not just in Bury but England wide) means we are facing significant challenges when trying to identify homes for our children and young people whom cannot live with their own families.

Despite fostering recruitment preparation and training, many new foster carers feel unprepared for high-complexity placements. Equally new carers are reluctant to take children stepping down from residential care because they carry misconceptions about why the children are in residential homes. This impacts upon their confidence and ability to confidently provide care for these children, often leading to Children's services managing:

- An increased use of expensive residential placements
- Placement breakdowns and poor outcomes for our children
- Inefficient use of recruitment resources

High costs and limited availability of IFA placements and residential placements alongside low in house foster care sufficiency and difficulty recruiting and retaining foster carers (not just in Bury but England wide) mean we are facing significant challenges when trying to identify homes for our children and young people whom cannot live with their own families.

Despite fostering recruitment preparation and training, many new foster carers feel unprepared for high-complexity placements. Equally new carers are reluctant to take children stepping down from residential care because they carry misconceptions about why the children are in residential homes. This impacts upon their confidence and ability to confidently provide care for these children, often leading to Children's services managing:

- An increased use of expensive residential placements
- Placement breakdowns and poor outcomes for our children
- Inefficient use of recruitment resources

2. Opportunity:

Many potential carers are willing but hesitant due to commit full time to fostering due; to the risk of financial instability; the intensity of full-time fostering without the right support; and misconceptions about what fostering older children can entail.

A targeted recruitment campaign for specialist step down foster carers will provide specialist foster carers with structured support, training and financial incentives to ease new carers into the role and move children from Residential homes into foster families.

Support Package

Dedicated supervising social worker

Weekly reflective supervision

Access to trauma-informed training

Peer mentoring from experienced carers

6 weekly consultations with our internal emotional health and well-being service once established

Family Support Worker

Financial Analysis and Pilot

We are proposing a weekly carer payment of £1029.90 per week from the point of placement. This is calculated as a double current professional fee and double current maintenance fee we would pay for an 11 - 15-year-old, plus £100 'hard to place' fee.

A retention incentive of £1000 after 12 months active fostering that young person.

Pilot Model (6 Step Forward households, 12 months, 1 child each)

Cost of Specialist Foster Carer payments for x6 Specialist Family First' Foster Carer households:

£1029.90 per week for one household x 52 weeks = £53,554.80

£1029.90 per week x6 households = £6179.40per week x 52 weeks = £321,324

Support services: x1 additional Supervising Social Worker for this scheme = **£42,000**

£1000 x 6 end of 12m incentive fee = £6,000

Total pilot cost: **£369,324**

3. Potential savings if 6 children step down from residential into foster care:

Residential care costs average at approximately £7,418 per week per child with the highest placement cost being £18,892 per week, creating unsustainable financial pressure. However, the children likely to step down to foster care are not in the highest cost placements, so if we assume an average weekly cost for their current residential

placement of £6,000 per week, this would give a potential full year saving for each child of £312,000, x 6 children = **£1.872 million**.

Allowing for the gradual step down of children through the year, the savings in the first year would be half the projected annual amount minus half the cost of the follow-on placements: **£751,338**. Savings in year 2 (full year savings), compared to the cost of their current residential placements would be **£1.503m**. Over a three-year period, the projected savings, compared to the same children remaining in residential care would be £3.75m

4. Implementation timelines

Phase	Activity	Timeline
Pre Mobilisation phase	Pilot design framework	1 month
	Roll out the recruitment campaign	3 - 4 months
Phase 1	Application, onboarding, assessment and approval	Months 1- 5
Phase 2	Begin pre matching and support planning	Month 3 - 4
Phase 3	Matching meetings and placement planning/ commencement (<i>immediately following FC panel approval</i>)	Month 5 - 6
Phase 4	Midway Review at 3 months of placement and support	Month 9 - 10
Phase 6	Evaluate outcomes	Month 12
Phase 7	Seek approval to scale up by at least x 6 more households	Year 2

5. Placement Strategy

Professionals pre matching discussions via children and carers profiles whilst carers are progressing through assessment
Preparation work completed with both the child and the foster carers separately. Information sharing, trauma and attachment training g, consultation with Psychologist, identify support needs and action plan - all to ensure suitability and readiness on both sides
Match presented too and agreed by Senior Manager in matching meeting. Specialist SSW and Child's allocated SW commence with pre-placement planning for introductions. Develop full transition plan. Formulate baseline goals and outcomes
Placement day and wrap around 12-week support. Child Looked after Review takes place within the first 28 days.
Midway review of placement at 3-month point - quarterly placement reviews thereafter until 12 month point where all goals and outcomes will be evaluated.

6. Outcomes and Impact

For Children:

More stable, nurturing environments
Reduced time in residential care
Improved emotional wellbeing and stability
Greater sense of belonging and continuity
Better educational and health outcomes

For Carers:

Clear pathway into fostering
Increased confidence and retention
Clear pathway to long-term fostering
Stronger relationships with support networks
Same SW assessing and supporting post approval.
Enhanced payment structure allowing them to feel financially stable

For Children's Service's

Improved placement stability and outcomes
Reduced residential spend and cost savings overall
Improved sufficiency and placement stability
Enhanced reputation and Ofsted outcomes

Evaluation Metrics

- Number of carers retained after 12 months
- Number of children stepped down from residential
- Placement stability rates
- Cost savings achieved
- Carer feedback evaluation of scheme

Conclusion

This Step Forward fostering model offers a strategic, cost-effective way to grow the fostering workforce and reduce reliance on costly residential care placements. It supports better outcomes for children, reduces the current high spend on residential care, and aligns with national priorities for children's social care reform.

Links with the Corporate Priorities:

Developing in-house fostering increases local placement sufficiency, reduces disruption and enables children to remain closer to their families, schools and communities. This improves stability, educational attainment, emotional well-being and long-term positive outcomes.

This proposal supports the Let's do it strategy principles in the following way:

Prevention and early intervention - in-house fostering supports earlier permanence planning, reduces placement breakdown, and allows resources to shift from crisis spend to preventative family support.

Strengths-based practice - Local foster carers are community assets. Expanding in-house fostering reflects a commitment to “doing with” families and communities rather than relying on external markets.

Locality and place-based working - children remaining within their home borough Bury maintain important relationships and access to local services, strengthening place-based delivery.

Collaboration and System Leadership - developing increased in-house fostering capacity demonstrates proactive system leadership and strengthens local authority sufficiency and reducing dependency on expensive residential placements.

Equality Impact and Considerations:

A full EIA has been completed for this activity. The analysis has identified impacts for several characteristics and circumstances which the activity seeks to address. As such all overall impacts are neutral or positive with no outstanding equalities concerns at this stage.

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

There are minimal adverse environmental impacts of the proposal to develop an in-house Step Forward foster carers locally. Children being supported to live in the Bury community will reduce the need to travel out of area for families, carers, Social Workers and other professionals.

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Level	Mitigation
Carers not progressing	Low	Regular reviews and tailored support
Budget constraints	Low	Pilot program with limited cohort
Placement breakdowns	Medium	Enhanced matching and wraparound support
Recruitment shortfall	Medium	Targeted campaigns, incentives
Budget overspend	Low	Pilot phase, phased rollout

We have also considered the recent national announcements regarding the Department for Education’s (DfE) ambition to increase the number of new foster carers across England. As part of this ambition, the DfE is exploring a more regionalised approach to fostering recruitment, assessment, and approval, including consideration of an end- to- end role for regional hubs. Bury are working with colleagues across Greater Manchester to consider these requirements and following consultation on this

proposal with key professionals involved the view is that there is no impact of these changes as the expansion of the Greater Manchester Fostering hub regional hub is in the very early stages of development.

Legal Implications:

Local Authorities have a general duty under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their area who are in need.

Accommodation may be provided under section 17, but if the circumstances trigger a duty under section 20, the authority must treat the accommodation as section 20 accommodation and the children becomes "looked after".

In addition, it is the statutory duty of every Local Authority looking after a child to safeguard and promote their welfare including the child's educational achievement and to provide the child with accommodation and maintenance (Sections 22A and B Children Act 1989). If a child cannot live with their parent or family members, a Local Authority must place a child in 'the most appropriate placement available' (Section 22C(5) Children Act 1989).

The Local Authority must ensure the placement is such that it allows the child to live near their home, it does not disrupt the child's education or training and allows the child to be placed within their area (Section 22C(8) - (9)). Whilst Section 22G of the Children Act, imposes a duty upon an authority to ensure that they have sufficient accommodation available to meet the needs of the children they are looking after, as well as children in need who are at risk of care or custody. This sufficiency duty extends to ensuring access to specialist and appropriate placements, particularly for children with complex or multiple needs.

The Statutory Guidance 'The Children Act 1989: Guidance and Regulations: Volume 4: Fostering Services' and 'Applying Corporate Parenting Principles to looked after children and care leavers' and corporate parenting principles set out in the Children and Social Work Act 2017, Section 1 make it clear that Local Authorities must act in the best interests of children in care in their area promoting their emotional and physical wellbeing.

The proposals made align closely with these statutory duties on Bury Council, and an example of the implementation of these principles moving towards specialist foster care, and adherence to the duties outlined above

Financial Implications:

The proposal to recruit 6 specialist foster carers is anticipated to be self-financing and essentially an invest-to-save proposal with the increase in staffing costs of the 6 specialist foster carers being offset from savings generated through reducing the residential care costs.

Item	Estimated Cost	Notes
Fixed Payments	£1,029.90 pw per carer	From the point of placement
Support Services	£59,718 per annum, for x1 SSW	Includes training and support
Incentive payment after 12m	£1,000 per Foster Carer	£6,000 for 6 foster carers
Savings from reduced residential use for six children	£1.933 million	Based on average cost full year differential

Appendices:

None.

Background papers:

Let's do it Strategy 2030

Policy paper: Renewing fostering: homes for 10,000 more children [Renewing fostering: homes for 10,000 more children - GOV.UK](#)

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

Term	Meaning

Classification: Open	Decision Type: Key
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Report to:	Cabinet	Date: 11 th March 2026
Subject:	Housing IT and Systems – QL improvements and upgrade	
Report of	Cabinet Member for Housing Services	

1.0 Summary

The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet approval that an additional £1.2m of Housing Revenue Account monies be used to fund necessary improvements to the Housing IT software infrastructure used to enable the Council to provide its housing management service.

The £1.2m is split into two components – professional services, and annual subscription costs – and covers a three-year contract period ending 31/03/29. Contract Year 1 runs 01/04/26 to 31/03/27; Contract Year 2 runs 01/04/27 to 31/03/28; Contract Year 3 runs 01/04/28 to 31/03/29.

It should be noted that an existing Contract is in place at an annual cost of £141,634 coterminous with the above Contract Period. The requested £1.2m is over and above the existing Contract in place i.e. over and above the annual £141,634 currently paid.

The improvements are necessary to ensure the provision of an effective and efficient housing management service, following bringing back in-house the housing management function, from the ALMO structure Six Town Housing Ltd.

It has become clear over the past year, that the current housing IT software landscape is out-of-date, inefficient, and risks serious and imminent non-compliance with legislative, regulatory, and good practice requirements.

A full-time Programme Manager has been appointed (September 2025) to oversee and implement a Housing IT and Systems Programme, with this financial ask being the first democratic step in programme implementation.

The figure of £1.2m is the figure our current software provider – Aareon Ltd – has provided to cover the cost of the necessary IT improvements and upgrade (including moving to a cloud-based system moving forward).

Procurement issues have been explored – with compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Procurement Act 2023 being primary drivers.

With this financial ask exceeding £500k, Cabinet approval is required.

2.0 Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to approve:

- **£383,800** in the 2026/27 financial year relating to a one-off professional services cost of improving/upgrading the current housing IT software; plus
- **£243,333** in the 2026/27 financial year relating to a Year 1 annual subscription cost; plus
- **£33,333** in the 2026/27 financial year relating to full-time (i.e. office hours 52 weeks per year) IT support in the form of an Aareon employee dedicated solely and exclusively to Bury Council; plus
- **£243,333** in the 2027/28 financial year relating to a Year 1 annual subscription cost; plus
- **£33,333** in the 2027/28 financial year relating to full-time (i.e. office hours 52 weeks per year) IT support in the form of an Aareon employee dedicated solely and exclusively to Bury Council; plus
- **£243,333** in the 2028/29 financial year relating to a Year 1 annual subscription cost; plus
- **£33,333** in the 2028/29 financial year relating to full-time (i.e. office hours 52 weeks per year) IT support in the form of an Aareon employee dedicated solely and exclusively to Bury Council.

3.0 Background

In the late 1990's and 2000's all Local Authorities faced tough decisions regarding the management of, and investment in, their Council housing stocks. Central Govt. introduced the Decent Homes Standard in 2000 – requiring it (i.e. the 'Standard') to be met by 2010. All 270 LA's in England subsequently carried out a Stock Options Appraisal considering four basic options: 1. Stock to remain owned/managed by the Council. 2. Set up an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO). 3. Secure investment via the Private Finance Initiative (PFI). 4. Stock Transfer (generally to a Housing Association / Registered Social Landlord).

Bury Council chose the ALMO route in 2003 – with the resultant management structure 'Six Town Housing Ltd' being set up. Six Town Housing Ltd operated successfully for many years, but a rigorous and robust re-review exercise took place in 2023, resulting in the housing management function transferring back to Bury Council (with associated TUPE arrangements etc.). This significant management change has, since 2023, highlighted clear and present housing IT issues. A robust and independent consultancy report was produced in June 2025 entitled 'Housing Applications Review' – which recommended in summary that:

“Based on the findings from this review, the primary recommendation is to not replace QL, but to continue work with the QL system that is in place, upgrade it and optimise it, improve it and run a programme of work to reimplement correctly the Aareon QL suite of products making this the master repository for all housing data and processes”.

The Housing IT and Systems Programme is the resulting manifestation of this recommendation. The Senior Responsible Officer is the Director of Housing. The Programme’s objectives are to:

- Formulate a standalone Programme, managed by a full-time Programme Manager, with full and robust governance and accountability arrangements in place, that seeks to achieve tangible housing IT systems improvements, initially over a 12-month timeframe.
- Analyse current usage patterns/behaviours/opportunities/constraints of the QL IT system architecture.
- Realise increased efficiency and effectiveness in the current usage of QL by reviewing existing functionality.
- Realise increased efficiency and effectiveness in the future usage of QL by expanding this usage into areas of functionality currently enabled by other software applications.
- Achieve increased automation of housing management tasks.
- Root-and-branch review system user training, achieving much greater information-sharing, knowledge transfer, and collaboration.

The first of these objectives has been met, with full governance arrangements now firmly in place, and an SRO appointed.

In furtherance of the second of the objectives, several meetings and considerable information exchange has taken place – with the result being a costed proposal from Aareon received by the Council on 21/11/25.

The remaining four objectives are the raison-d’etre of the Housing IT and Systems Programme throughout 2026, and are dependent on cabinet approval of £1.2m of Housing Revenue Account expenditure.

The financial summary of Aareon’s 21/11/25 proposal can be found below. A more detailed breakdown can be found at section 2.0 above.

Professional Services Costs	Cost (exc. VAT)
Stage 1: Part 1: QL efficiency audit	£7,500
Stage 1: Part 2: QL Tech Audit	£1,950
Stage 2: Move to hosted	£80,000
Stage 3: TBC as part of the QL efficiency audit but based on knowledge we assume; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer self service – app and portal • Contractor portal • Mobile working app (PS) stock and estate, voids, repairs, compliance, tenancy services • DRS migration to hosted and associated configuration 	£192,400

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data migration from Lifespan/ 3rd party data migration • Hazards • Legionella form and workflow 	
Day to day: professional services pack of days	£52,000
Stage 4: Part 2: QL Housing Overview Training – 1 x training session. Remote via Team, Max 6 participants	£2,250
Stage 5: Part 1; QL Comp upgrade – Live OOH	£11,850
Stage 5: Part 2: Versa Comp upgrade – Live))H	£11,850
Day to day: Part 2: Rent debit – month end support	£24,000
Estimated professional total	£383,800

Software and annual subscription cost	Cost (exc. VAT)
Move to hosted	£317,000
Customer self service portal	£77,000
System admin	£100,000
Contractor portal	£47,000
Mobile working app: stock and estates, voids, repairs, compliance, tenancy management	£235,000
DRS hosting charge	£25,000
Hazards module (ARR)	£63,000
Estimated software subscription costs	£864,000

The Programme Board recommends immediate pursuit of the Aareon proposal.

4.0 Social Value

Upgrading the Housing Department's IT system set-up will deliver Social Value by:

- Enhancing service quality, digital inclusion, and tenant experience
- Supporting Council staff skills development
- Improving staff productivity and wellbeing
- Enabling data driven decisions that reduce cost and improve service provision
- Contributing to carbon neutral objectives and environmental sustainability – primarily by zero reliance on physical server infrastructure
- Increasing through improved service quality transparency, trust, and accountability in public service provision.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

There are two:

1. Do nothing:

Whilst 'do nothing' is technically a viable option in that the Local Authority is currently able to provide a housing management service to its tenants and

leaseholders, the current housing IT software landscape is out-of-date, inefficient, and risks serious and imminent non-compliance with legislative, regulatory, and good practice requirements.

2. Decommission current IT software provider and tender:

Aareon is a long-standing software provider with a satisfactory track record both nationally and with Bury Council. That said, the option of a full and open competitive tendering exercise has been fully considered. The cost of this 'start afresh' approach however, is estimated to be in the region of £6m-£12m. (The reason for such a sizeable variance is that Aareon have estimated a figure of £6m-£9m, and an independent consultancy report suggested a figure of £12m in June 2025).

Business Case:

It has not been possible to collate like-for-like benchmarking data comparing and contrasting the financial ask being made in this Cabinet Report, with that of other Local Authority housing departments. The reason for this is that there is not another Local Authority housing department in England in the same predicament as Bury Council housing department.

That is to say, that there is not another LA housing department in England that:

- i) currently uses Aareon as its IT systems provider; AND
- ii) wishes to upgrade its current system to a cloud-based set-up; AND
- iii) provides a housing management service to approximately 7,800 tenants on an in-house basis.

Furthermore, informal liaison with neighbouring LA colleagues has revealed that a) some HRA expenditure is regarded as commercially sensitive, and b) Bury Council's funding of its housing IT system from its Housing Revenue Account is unusual (i.e. IT as a function is generally funded from centralised Capital budgets).

Some financial efficiency and return-on-investment projections can be arrived at however:

- The cost of 'doing nothing' could be very significant. The status quo poses clear and present non-compliance concerns – with the 'burning platform' analogy possibly being appropriate. Were non-compliance to become a reality, the annual legal cost alone of this might be in the order of £433,446. This excludes Officer time, the higher nature of emergency remedial Works costs, and Ombudsman and/or Regulator of Social Housing fines (the latter, as of 2025, being uncapped).
 - By way of a theoretical example, if 1% of Bury's Council housing stock pursued a non-compliance case against the Council per year, the annual cost of this might be £433,446. The financial logic for this is as follows:
 - 1% of Bury's 7,800 social housing stock is 78;
 - A 2025 Inside Housing survey sample of 70 English Council's suggests a national repairs and safety non-compliance legal cost-per-property range of £1,972 - £9,142, which would produce a median value of £5,557;

- $78 \times £5,557 = £433,446$.
 - By way of an actual regional Local Authority example, Sheffield City Council's published 2022/23 total (i.e. legal costs plus associated repair obligation costs) non-compliance expenditure was £2,986,269.
- The cost – and importantly the timescales involved – of procuring a completely new housing IT system would certainly run into the millions of pounds. The Council commissioned Co-Stratify (an independent private sector Consultancy) to review Bury Council housing department's IT infrastructure in the Spring of 2025 – with the resulting Final Report in June 2025 suggested that this cost would be in the region of £12m. Aareon Ltd has also recently (December 2025) estimated the cost of providing a completely new housing IT system to Bury Council, at “£6m-£9m”.
- Upgrading the current housing IT system (QL) at a cost of £1.2m therefore appears to be the most prudent option at this point in time. In terms of potential return on investment projections, the following considerations are pertinent:
 - £433,446 per annum might logically be saved relating to non-compliance costs (see above for calculus detail);
 - £123,258 per annum might be saved in not having to pay for third party software – although it is important to note that not 100% of this outlay should be expected to be able to be offset. The current housing IT set-up comprises nine software interfaces (including QL). Aside from this set-up posing challenges in terms of the various software applications needing to communicate with one another, it also means that a plethora of contract/subscription costs are involved. If the five most expensive of these annual costs (DRS at a cost of £46,114, TCW at a cost of £23,496, Lifespan at a cost of £21,294, Versaa at a cost of £17,389, and Mobile App at a cost of £14,965) could be saved, this would equate to £123,258;
 - £122,500 per annum might be saved in staff system user time under an upgraded cloud-based version of QL. This is a conservative estimate and is premised on a 10% user time efficiency saving. Assuming an FTE of 35 staff using QL, on a mean salary of £35,000 (inclusive of on-costs), a 10% saving would equate to $10\% \times £1,225,000$, which is £122,500; and
 - £21,778 might be saved as a one-off cost in the 2026/27 financial year due to not needing to train/retrain housing management service personnel in learning to operate a replacement housing IT system – which would need to be the case should the upgraded QL route not be pursued. Whilst a training/retraining cost element will apply to the upgraded QL route, this will be a fraction compared to that required should a new system be installed. The upgraded QL route will clearly be based on the current QL infrastructure – so a significant degree of familiarisation will apply as the same (or similar) front end functionality will feature. The calculation of £21,778 is a product of the difference between system users needing 1 day's training and 1 week's training – which notionally is the difference between £27,222 and £5,444.

The three potential annual savings added together equate to £679,204; whilst the one-off potential £21,778 would apply only to 2026/27 i.e. the financial year in which the upgrade (or otherwise) will take place.

In conclusion, it is the consensus view of the Housing IT and Systems Programme Board, that the expenditure of an additional £1.2m over three financial years on an upgraded version of the current housing IT system (QL), is the most prudent way forward at this juncture. In very crude financial terms, spending £400k per annum (i.e. £1.2m divided by 3) over three years might save a potential expenditure of £679k (see above) per annum. Moreover, the pressing priority is to have in place a regulatory compliant, cloud-based IT system architecture – which an upgraded QL would ensure.

This option would then afford three year's 'breathing space' – in which the longer term solution procured via a full and open competitive procurement exercise can be explored.

Links with the Corporate Priorities:

The Let's Do It Strategy sets out the Council's corporate priorities.

The Housing IT and Systems Programme will support delivery of the Let's Do It Strategy in three of the seven core outcome measures:

Improved Quality of Life:

The programme contributes towards ensuring improved modernised homes that meet the Social Housing Regulators Decent Homes Standard.

Carbon neutrality by 2038:

The programme contributes towards carbon neutrality by increasing and improving digital processes and reducing reliance on out-of-date inefficient (and often manual) ways of working.

Improved digital connectivity:

The programme contributes towards digital connectivity in a very significant way – in that the IT infrastructure that will result will be cloud-based. The number of software applications used to enable the provision of the housing management service will also reduce.

Equality Impact and Considerations:

Many of the Council's social housing tenants suffer from socio-economic disadvantage.

An improved IT landscape will contribute towards enabling the delivery of a more efficient and effective housing management service to Council housing tenants.

Tenants and leaseholders will also benefit from enhanced digital processes and improved reporting and analysis capabilities.

The Housing IT and Systems Programme does not bring about any changes that would impact on one protected characteristic over and above another, it does not result in increased/decrease access to services or provision for any group of the population or cause any disadvantage to a community of interest.

Indirectly the Programme will also contribute towards improved energy efficiency, the reduction of fuel poverty, and general health and well-being.

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

The Housing IT and Systems Programme also contributes – by virtue of the fact that it enables the housing management service to be provided – towards ensuring an improved built environment for all Council housing, enabling an efficient repairs and maintenance service, and effectively managing Contractors and subcontractors. It also contributes to carbon reduction efforts.

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

A full Housing IT and Systems programme Risk Register has been produced and ratified by the programme Board – with the three primary risks outlined below:

Risk:			Unmitigated Risk Rating			Controls and Mitigation:	Mitigated Risk Rating		
Risk Ref.	Risk Description	Risk Owner	Likelihood (1 to 5)	Impact (1 to 5)	Score		Likelihood (1 to 5)	Impact (1 to 5)	Score
HITS1	Statutory Duty failure (e.g. falling foul of statutory homelessness legislation, non-compliance with Decent Homes Standard, Regulator for Social Housing non-compliance) due to IT system improvements.	SRO	3	5	15	Senior and experienced Officers on Programme Board to offer preparatory knowledge.	3	4	12

HITS2	IT system improvements incompatible with existing systems in place.	SRO	3	5	15	Proposed improvement an extension of what has gone before, as opposed to a clean sweep.	3	4	12
HITS3	Interoperability issues increase as IT system improvements become live.	SRO	3	4	12	Ensure intensive monitoring as improvement 'go live'.	2	4	8

Legal Implications:

This Cabinet Report relates to a financial request of £1.2m for the award of a contract to Aareon, for necessary improvements to the Housing departments current IT software infrastructure. This amount exceeds £500,000 and therefore has important procurement implications relating to public sector financial probity.

It is noted that the appointment of Aeron and updates/upgrade to the Housing department's IT software that they will undertake, will enable the Council to better meet its legislative and regulatory requirements.

Due consideration has been given to procurement legislation and good practice – with compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (and the February 2025 update) and the Procurement act 2023 being paramount.

Financial Implications:

This Cabinet Report seeks Cabinet approval of an additional £1.2m of Housing Revenue Account monies to be used to fund, over three financial years, necessary improvements to the Housing departments IT software infrastructure.

The £1.2m is split into two components – professional services, and annual subscription costs – and covers a three-year contract period ending 31/03/29.

(It should be noted that an existing Contract is in place at an annual cost of £141,634 coterminous with the above Contract Period. The requested £1.2m is over and above the existing Contract in place.)

The £1.2m breaks down as:

- **£383,800** in the 2026/27 financial year relating to a one-off professional services cost relating to improving/upgrading the current housing IT software; plus
- **£243,333** in the 2026/27 financial year relating to a Year 1 annual subscription cost; plus
- **£33,333** in the 2026/27 financial year relating to full-time (i.e. office hours 52 weeks per year) IT support in the form of an Aareon employee dedicated solely and exclusively to Bury Council; plus

- **£243,333** in the 2027/28 financial year relating to a Year 1 annual subscription cost; plus
- **£33,333** in the 2027/28 financial year relating to full-time (i.e. office hours 52 weeks per year) IT support in the form of an Aareon employee dedicated solely and exclusively to Bury Council; plus

- **£243,333** in the 2028/29 financial year relating to a Year 1 annual subscription cost; plus
- **£33,333** in the 2028/29 financial year relating to full-time (i.e. office hours 52 weeks per year) IT support in the form of an Aareon employee dedicated solely and exclusively to Bury Council.

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Appendices:

None

Background papers:

None.



Classification: Open	Decision Type: Key
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Report to:	Cabinet	Date: 11 March 2026
Subject:	Approval to proceed with Bury's Integrated Transport Block (ITB) Minor Works Road Safety programme of works for financial year 2026/27	
Report of	Cabinet Member for Environment, Climate Change and Operations	

Summary

1. This report seeks formal approval to proceed with the Integrated Transport Block (ITB) Minor Works Road Safety programme of works for financial year 2026/27.
2. These schemes support Bury's Road Safety strategy and Transport for Greater Manchester's (Tfgm) Vision Zero strategy of improving road safety and reducing road danger on the roads of Bury.
3. The total funding allocation for Bury Council for the Integrated Transport Block (ITB) Minor Works Road Safety programme is £543,000 , with the ITB funding provided by Tfgm
 - The full breakdown of schemes proposed for the financial year can be seen in **Appendix A**
4. No Business case is required for this work.
5. The procurement of the works and subsequent award decisions, for each of the schemes set out in Appendix A shall be subject to a separate report to the Executive Director of Place in consultation with the Director of Regeneration, which will ensure that delivery timescales are met.
6. Approval of the receipt of the funding from Tfgm and the programme will enable works to commence in **April 2026** and be complete by **March 2027**, ensuring compliance with funding conditions.

Recommendation(s)

7. Cabinet approves the receipt of the funding allocation from Transport for Greater Manchester (Tfgm), in respect of the Integrated Transport Block (ITB) Minor Works Road Safety programme for 2026/27, in the sum of £543,000.
8. Cabinet approves the proposed ITB programme of works for 2026-27, as set out in Appendix A, which will fully utilise the £543,000 funding allocation from Tfgm.

9. Cabinet delegates all decisions in respect of the procurement of the works set out in Appendix A, to the Executive Director of Place in consultation with the Director of Regeneration, which will ensure that delivery timescales are met.
10. Cabinet delegates all tender award decisions in respect of the works set out in Appendix A, to the Executive Director of Place in consultation with the Director of Regeneration, which will ensure that delivery timescales are met.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

11. To meet the commitments to spend ITB monies on behalf of Tfgm.
12. Delays to the progression of the schemes may risk funding being withdrawn by Tfgm and impact the council's reputation with TfGM and the Department for Transport (DfT).

Alternative options considered and rejected

13. Selection of other safety schemes lower down the priority list.
14. Costs. ITB is provided for the introduction of more moderate sized road safety schemes which it is hoped will provide good returns in improving road safety and reducing road danger reduction. The funding is not to be used on one large project.
15. Not proceeding with the schemes could result in funding withdrawal by Tfgm.

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Background

16. The ITB funding provided for road safety schemes in Bury is provided by Tfgm. ITB monies are distributed to all 10 Local Authorities in Greater Manchester as part of Tfgm's City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) initiative. This money is provided to Tfgm by the Department of Transport (DfT) for it to spend on a variety of Transport initiatives throughout Greater Manchester of which ITB is one such programme of works. The ITB money provided for each of the 10 Local Authorities is allocated and distributed to the 10 Greater Manchester authorities. The amount received by each Local Authority depends on its size.

17. The total funding provision for Integrated Transport Block (ITB) Minor Works Road Safety programme at Bury for the financial year 2026/27 is £543,000. This money comes with the proviso that the funding is spent on modest safety schemes which target recognised existing injury collision 'hotspot' locations, schemes which help to reduce speeds, safety schemes in the vicinity of schools and schemes which assist vulnerable road users (ie pedestrians and cyclists) on the highway such as the provision of new or upgraded crossing points.
18. The selection of schemes for progression is based around several key factors. Primarily this is existing injury collision information but also evidence of regular speeding being recorded, rat running traffic, volume of traffic, costs of the schemes proposed and evidence of significant footfall for pedestrian schemes.
19. Schemes selected for inclusion in the programme also need to tie in with Tfgm's 'Vision Zero' policy and 'Road Danger Reduction' targets regarding injury collision reduction throughout Greater Manchester.
20. 'Vision Zero' is a global movement which has been adopted by Tfgm and the 10 Greater Manchester Local Authorities. The goal is to eventually eliminate all traffic related fatalities and injuries. Bury's Road Safety plan links in to this strategy.
21. The purpose of the ITB funding provision to Local Authorities by Tfgm is to provide funding for relatively modest road safety schemes which can provide high value for money with the finite resources provided.
22. As noted previously, the ITB schemes proposed for financial year 2026/27 are listed in **Appendix A**.

Social Value Considerations

23. The schemes proposed will improve road safety, reduce road danger for all road users and help to contribute to Bury Council's corporate priorities.
24. The schemes will also help promote healthier lifestyles, reduce carbon emissions, improve permeability and improve safer travel for all throughout the borough.

Links with the Corporate Priorities:

25. These schemes directly support the priorities outlined in Bury's Let's Do It Strategy, including:
 - Local Neighbourhoods: Enhancing access to safe, active travel infrastructure fosters healthier, more independent, and cohesive communities.

- Delivering Together: Collaboration with TfGM, community stakeholders, The Police, Greater Manchester Urban Traffic Control (GMUTC) and contractors demonstrates a commitment to co-design and shared accountability.
- Strength-Based Approach: Utilising local assets to amplify community strengths while advancing carbon neutrality goals.
- Economic Growth and Inclusion: Improved connectivity and safety of transit boosts local commerce, attracts investment, and supports inclusive growth within the borough.
- Climate Agenda: Promoting walking and cycling directly aligns with Bury’s target of carbon neutrality by 2038.
- The measures proposed also support Bury’s corporate plan which feeds in to the ‘Let’s do it Strategy’

Equality Impact and Considerations:

26. A full EQIA has been completed for the whole programme. Impacts have been identified for some characteristics which are positive or neutral with mitigations. There are no further equalities considerations at this stage.

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

27. The scheme proposals will improve road safety, reduce road danger reduction on the roads of Bury, promote sustainable travel and contribute towards Bury’s ‘Zero Vision’ targets of injury collision reduction and Bury’s target of Carbon neutrality by 2038.
28. Biodiversity impacts will be assessed and mitigated during the design phase.

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Failure to approve progression of the schemes could result in delays to the delivery of the scheme improvements proposed or them not being progressed at all.	Approval of scheme proposals will ensure compliance with funding spend and delivery timescales.

Legal Implications:

29. Local Authorities have a legal duty to maintain the highways under their control. The Integrated Transport Block (ITB) Minor Works Road Safety programme will assist the Council in complying with its requirement under section 41 of the Highways Act 1980.
30. The Council is required to ensure that, in identifying a suitable contractor to undertake the works for each of the schemes outlined in Appendix A, it complies with the relevant procurement law, and its own Contract Procedure Rules.
31. The decisions in respect of the procurement route and subsequent awards are not decisions that Cabinet can reasonably be expected to make at this juncture, as this report does not contain this information. Therefore, these are decisions that should be subject to separate reports and Cabinet can delegate the procurement route decision/s and/or contract award decision/s under the Council's Constitution and Scheme of Delegations.
32. Approving the recommendations for delegations would enable the procurement and award decisions to be made by the delegated decision maker within the parameters already agreed by Cabinet, and in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. The delegated officer must ensure that the procurement has been conducted lawfully and in accordance with the published evaluation criteria. Delegation avoids the need to return to Cabinet and does not present additional risk, provided that the award is within the scope of the approvals already given.

Financial Implications:

33. The cost of the ITB Minor Works Road Safety programme for 2026/27, as set out in Appendix 1, is £0.543m. This is fully funded from the confirmed ITB Minor Work/Road Safety allocation of the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) received from Transport for Greater Manchester.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – ITB5 Scheme programme 2026/27

Background papers:

None.

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

Term	Meaning
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ITB	Integrated Transport Block
TfGM	Transport for Greater Manchester
CRSTS	City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlement
DfT	Department for Transport
GMUTC	Greater Manchester Urban Traffic Control

Appendix 1. ITB5 Schemes 2026-2027

Location	Scheme Proposed
B6196 Ainsworth Road near Watling Street	Proposed new Puffin crossing near Watling Street
B6213 Market Street – Tottington – Zebra Crossing upgrade to Puffin	Proposed replacement of Zebra crossing with new Puffin crossing
A665 Bury Old Road near Kenilworth Avenue - Whitefield	Upgrade of old Pelican Crossing to modern Puffin Crossing
A56 Bury Old Road near Cuckoo Lane – Prestwich -	Upgrade of old Pelican Crossing to modern Puffin Crossing
Cecil Street area – Bury	Proposed 20mph Zone School scheme featuring traffic calming
Chapel Street - Tottington	New interactive safety sign
A665 Bury Old Road near St Monicas - Prestwich	New interactive safety sign
B6215 Holcombe Road - Greenmount	Replacement of life expired interactive safety signs
A665 Radcliffe New Road - Radcliffe	Replacement of life expired interactive safety signs
A56 Manchester Road near Wellington Road - Bury	Replacement of life expired interactive safety signs
A58 Rochdale Road - Bury	Replacement of life expired interactive safety signs
Remedial Traffic Calming measures – various locations	Small allocation of funds for remedial safety lining and signing measures throughout the borough.
Fees @ 18%	
TOTAL FUNDING AVAILABLE	£543k

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Classification: Open	Decision Type: Key
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Report to:	Cabinet	Date: 11 March 2026
Subject:	Bury Town Centre Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO)- REVIEW	
Report of:	Cabinet Member for Communities & Inclusion	

Summary

1. This report presents the findings of the statutory review of the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) currently in force within Bury Town Centre. The Council, in partnership with Greater Manchester Police (GMP) and Bury Business Improvement District (Bury BID), has undertaken a comprehensive review to determine whether the existing restrictions remain necessary, proportionate and effective.
2. The review concludes that, whilst the general public were not in favour of an extension, the weighting of responses submitted by those representing affected businesses in Bury supports retaining the condition prohibiting the use of amplified equipment, alongside the existing condition prohibiting the consumption of alcohol in a public place. Both elements of the PSPO continue to deliver clear community-safety benefits and should therefore be extended for a further three years.

Report Recommendations

3. Cabinet is asked to approve the proposed extension of the Town Centre PSPO with conditions prohibiting the consumption of alcohol and the use of amplified equipment for a period of three years, provided that Cabinet:
 - Is satisfied that the criteria for an extension and a variation has been met;
 - Is satisfied that the necessary public consultation has been undertaken;
 - Agrees to the conditions of the Order.

Previous PSPO Recommendation(s)

4. Continuation of the existing restriction on alcohol consumption in public spaces within Bury Town Centre.
 - Prohibition on the use of amplified equipment, including speakers and microphones.
 - Provision for exemptions where the Council grants permission for organised events or festivals.
 - Delegation of authority for future PSPO approvals to the Executive Director for Strategy & Transformation in consultation with the Director of Law & Governance and the Cabinet Member for Communities & Inclusion.

5. BACKGROUND

- 5.1 Under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, the Council is required to review each PSPO prior to its three-year expiry, which is 19th April 2026. The

review must consider whether the behaviours addressed by the original order continue to have a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality, are persistent or continuing, and are unreasonable in nature.

- 5.2 The Council previously introduced restrictions relating to alcohol consumption and amplified equipment following reports from residents, businesses, GMP and Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM). These concerns included alcohol-related disorder, intimidation, noise disturbance and the impact of using amplified equipment. Evidence was gathered, analysed and consulted upon to determine the most proportionate response.

6 PUBLIC CONSULTATION 2026

- 6.1 The statutory public consultation ran throughout December 2025 and closed on 5 January 2026. As with the previous exercise, the consultation targeted businesses within The Millgate and The Rock shopping centres, residents of surrounding apartment complexes, and the wider public through digital channels. The consultation received 88 responses.

- 6.2 Headline findings include:

- 38% considered amplified equipment to be a problem; 56% did not.
- 37% supported stopping the use of amplification; 53% did not.
- 54% considered street drinking to be a problem.
- 83% supported continuation of restrictions on alcohol consumption.

7 ALCOHOL USE IN PUBLIC SPACES

- 7.1 Public concern regarding alcohol consumption in public areas remains significant. Respondents highlighted continued issues relating to intoxication, disorder, noise, and intimidation. Both GMP and TfGM have confirmed that the existing condition remains a valuable tool in preventing escalation of anti-social behaviour.

- 7.2 The PSPO allows authorised officers to request individuals to cease drinking and surrender any open containers of alcohol. Importantly, failure to comply with such a request constitutes the offence, ensuring the restriction is proportionate and not automatically punitive.

- 7.3 The consultation findings provide continued strong public support and the ongoing requirement for early intervention powers, the Council considers it both necessary and proportionate to extend this condition namely the restriction on alcohol consumption in public spaces within Bury Town Centre for a further three years. The applicable geographical area for the proposed PSPO is defined in Appendix 1 as outlined.

8 USE OF AMPLIFIED EQUIPMENT

- 8.1 The original PSPO restriction on amplified equipment was introduced on 19 April 2023 to address concerns about persistent noise disturbance. Evidence gathered as part of this review indicates that complaints have since reduced significantly. There have, however, been instances during the duration of the PSPO where the restriction has been used effectively, including to remove people using amplified equipment, and in one case to address protest songs being played in a way that aggravated community

tensions. Greater Manchester Police also exercised their own powers in relation to a busker who refused to comply with the requirements of the PSPO. Statistics have been evidenced, see Appendix 3. PLEASE NOTE – Data only available from Bury council ASB Team. GMP have confirmed that they are unable to provide data on this subject due to the way the “Crime Codes” are recorded by call handlers.

- 8.2 The consultation findings indicate that, although the majority of respondents did not consider amplification to be a significant problem, representatives from Bury BID and The Rock who collectively represent a substantial number of businesses, submitted responses in support of extending the PSPO. Their feedback highlighted the detrimental impact that amplified equipment had on businesses prior to the introduction of the PSPO, and expressed concern that these issues would likely reoccur if the order were not extended.
- 8.3 However, an operational assessment shows that enforcing this condition is resource-intensive. It is also noted that the Council retains alternative enforcement powers, including Community Protection Notices and environmental health legislation, which can be used to address noise-related nuisance. These powers can be strengthened and more efficiently applied when a PSPO is in place, providing a clearer and more immediate framework for managing such issues.
- 8.4 Conversely, representation from partners at Greater Manchester Police indicated that alternative enforcement powers, outside of those provided by the PSPO, were considered sufficient to manage issues of this nature. As such, GMP did not view an extension of the PSPO as necessary.
- 8.5 On this basis, and taking into account the original concerns that led to the implementation of the current PSPO, which has proved effective in managing the use of amplified equipment, the Council considers that retaining this condition continues to meet the statutory tests of necessity and proportionality. Accordingly, it is recommended that the prohibition on amplified equipment be extended for a further three-year period.

9 Alternative options that were considered and rejected

- 9.1 When dealing with any anti-social behaviour it is important to consider all the tools and powers that are available to the Council to ensure appropriate action is taken. The alternative options that were considered but rejected were:
 - 9.2 Civil Injunction
 - 9.3 A Civil Injunction which is an order that could be considered to deal with a certain individual that is causing harassment, alarm, or distress. This is a highly effective tool in most instances and if applied to this situation it could be useful to remove a prolific offender. However, this would only apply to a single individual in question, meaning anyone other person(s) allegedly causing any issues would be dealt with separately. Consequently any enforcement would have to be repeated for each individual.
 - 9.4 Community Protection Notice (CPN)
 - 9.5 A Community Protection Notice is an enforcement tool under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 which enables the Council to deal with issues that cause harassment, alarm, and distress within the community. This option remains a viable

alternative enforcement option however, as with the Civil Injunction this is an action that can only be used towards an individual and not to tackle a collective problem.

9.6 Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC)

9.7 An ABC is a low-level intervention that can be used alongside a PSPO. This is a proportionate enforcement option for low level offending and is a non-enforceable contract between Bury Council and an individual which is voluntarily agreed. ABCs facilitate collaborative early intervention and working with the Council to avoid any further actions and escalating behaviour taking place. This can be a useful technique and tool to deal with early intervention with youth offending.

9.8 During the consultation process, the option to ban busking altogether was considered as this had been requested by some residents and businesses, however after assessing the situation and looking at the impact this would have it was agreed that this was not a viable option and for the members of the public who are socially and economically struggling, it would possibly have a detrimental effect on them.

10 PSPO Reviews

10.1 The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 provides a framework for reviews of PSPOs. There is a mandatory requirement for Councils to review a PSPO before its three-year expiry to determine if the restrictions are still needed.

10.2 The PSPO Extension Process:

10.3 If the review finds the order is still necessary to prevent ongoing anti-social behaviour, it can be extended for up to another three years. The order can be extended with all conditions or partial conditions. Conditions can be added or removed during this process.

10.4 There is a requirement for a public consultation to assist decision making on the effectiveness of the PSPO and whether (or not) it should continue. There are no limits on extensions and a PSPO can be reviewed and renewed multiple times, as long as the need for it is demonstrated and justified.

11 BACKGROUND

11.1 Under The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 Bury Council previously applied for a variation to the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) 19/04/2026 that was currently in place in Bury Town Centre.

11.2 From June 2021 to September 2022 opinions were gathered from various members of the public outlining, at the time, the issues that they experienced regarding the effect amplified equipment had on the quality of their life. This information was analysed by the ASB Team to determine the most appropriate course of action. There were no previous complaints regarding excessive noise from amplified equipment prior to the PSPO being implemented. It was added after members of the public raised this as part of the previous consultation questionnaire.

11.3 In response to the initial evidence gathered from April 2022 – April 2023 it was agreed that a review would be initiated of the current PSPO for Bury Town Centre which at the

time only prohibited the consumption of alcohol in a public place. After consulting with partners on this matter a public consultation was undertaken, covering the area of Bury Town Centre only. A 4 week public consultation commenced on the 20th of September 2022 including all the commercial properties within The Millgate Shopping Centre, and The Rock Shopping Complex. The Consultation also extended to town centre residents who occupy the apartments with The Rock, and also the residents who occupy the flats based on The Old Rock and the wider public were invited via Bury Council's wider communication channels.

12 PUBLIC CONSULTATION 2026 (Review of current PSPO's)

12.1 The PSPO review consultation commenced in December 2025, ending on 5th January 2026. The audience targeted for this was replicated from the previous consultation as outlined above. There were several questions on the questionnaire covering different subjects in order to remain impartiality and not to lead respondents to focus solely on the conditions currently prohibited. 88 completed responses were received. The results attached in APPENDIX 1.0 – 1.4

13 ANSWERS IN BRIEF

Q1. *Do you consider busking to be a problem in the public areas shown on the PSPO restricted area map?*

- YES 38%
- **NO 56%**
- Don't Know 6%

Q2. *Has this type of behaviour (busking) had a negative impact on you enjoying the public areas shown on the PSPO restricted area map?*

- YES 40%
- **NO 56%**
- Don't Know 4%

Q4. *Do you think busking, over the past 3 years has...?*

- Improved 14%
- Worsened 27%
- **Stayed the same 38%**
- Don't Know 21%

Q5. *Do you think it is necessary to stop busking in the public areas as shown on the PSPO restricted map?*

- YES 37%
- **NO 53%**
- Don't Know 10%

Q7. *Do you consider drinking alcohol in the street, other than at licenced premises, to be a problem in the public areas shown on the PSPO restricted area map?*

- **YES 54%**
- NO 23%

- Don't Know 23%

Q8. *Has drinking alcohol in the street, other than at licensed premises had a negative impact on you enjoying the public areas shown on the PSPO restricted area map?*

- **YES 48%**
- NO 31%
- Don't Know 21%

Q10. *Has drinking alcohol in the street, other than at licenced premises improved or worsened over the past 3 years?*

- Improved 5%
- Worsened 29%
- Stayed the same 29%
- **Don't Know 37%**

Q11. *Do you agree we should stop people drinking alcohol in the street, other than at licensed premises in the public areas as shown on the PSPO restricted map?*

- **YES 83%**
- NO 6%
- Don't Know 11%

14 Alcohol Use in Public Spaces

- 14.1 The current PSPO condition provides Bury Council and Greater Manchester Police the power to approach and request the confiscation of any open canister containing alcohol. It is intended to prevent members of the public becoming highly intoxicated whilst in a public area and to improve community safety for those living, working and visiting Bury Town Centre.
- 14.2 The PSPO also assists other partners working within Bury Town Centre to deal with alcohol related issues consistently. Examples include instances where TfGM have experienced alcohol related anti-social behaviour.
- 14.3 The consultation findings demonstrate the majority of respondents, 54%, felt that drinking alcohol in the street remains an issue/concern in the town centre and has a negative impact on their enjoyment. Significantly, 83% of respondents stated they felt that it was important for the PSPO restriction to be extended.
- 14.4 The evidence from consultation supports the recommendation to extend the restriction of drinking alcohol in the street for another 3 years.

15 The use of “Amplification”

- 15.1 Currently the PSPO relating to the use of amplification was implemented to help members of the public enjoy Bury Town Centre and to assist residents and business owners with reducing the amount of excessive noise they were experiencing.
- 15.2 The recent public consultation showed that only a minority of respondents considered amplified equipment to be a problem or felt it adversely affected their experience and enjoyment of Bury Town Centre. However, responses from the two town centre business groups, The Rock and Bury BID, who together represent more than 400 businesses, supported an extension of the PSPO. Both organisations highlighted the benefits of restricting amplified equipment noting that such activity has previously had a detrimental impact on the town centre environment.
- 15.3 Interestingly, the public consultation findings showed that when asked whether Bury Council should continue to prohibit the use of amplified equipment, 53% of respondents answered No, with only 37% supporting the continuation of this restriction. The sample size must, however, be considered alongside the feedback received from representatives of The Rock and Bury BID.
- 15.4 As part of the consultation process, further discussions were held with the Council's ASB Team and Greater Manchester Police (GMP). GMP advised that the prohibition on amplified equipment should not be renewed and should be removed from the PSPO. They acknowledged recent positive enforcement action, including the arrest of an individual for breaching the condition and failing to provide details. However, they also highlighted that the resulting negative impacts raised concerns about the proportionality and overall effectiveness of this condition.
- 15.5 This underscores the ongoing challenges associated with enforcing the restriction and the consequent demand it places on already constrained resources within both the

Council and GMP. While the Council does not have the capacity to offer an immediate response service, there is potential to utilise the Town Centre Wardens to support PSPO monitoring, enable more strategic deployment of resources, and ensure continued oversight of emerging issues.

16 CONCLUSION

16.1 PSPO Condition: Prohibition on the Use of Speakers or Amplifiers

16.2 Following the review of the condition prohibiting the use of amplified equipment within Bury Town Centre, the Council has concluded that this restriction remains justified, proportionate, and necessary within the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) to support continued town centre economic growth. Since the implementation of the current PSPO, several incidents of reported noise disturbance have occurred, and ongoing representations from town centre businesses continue to demonstrate a clear rationale for maintaining this condition, highlighting its meaningful and achievable benefits.

16.3 Although public complaints relating specifically to amplified sound have been minimal and sporadic, the removal of the PSPO provision concerning the use of amplification is likely to result in renewed instances of persistent or unreasonable behaviour. Such behaviour would meet the statutory threshold for inclusion within a PSPO and could undermine the progress achieved since the current order was introduced. Retaining the condition therefore provides a preventative and proportionate measure to avoid the recurrence of issues previously experienced in the town centre.

16.4 It is recognised that the operational assessment has identified several enforcement challenges. Effective enforcement of this condition requires substantial officer time, regular monitoring, and repeated interventions, an approach that is difficult to sustain given current resource pressures across both the Council and GMP. While the Council does have alternative statutory tools available, such as Community Protection Notices, these powers have limitations when addressing daytime noise disturbance in the town centre, particularly where such activity impacts businesses and visitors. Retaining the PSPO condition therefore provides a clearer and more immediate mechanism to manage noise-related issues in this specific context.

16.5 Concerns that extending the PSPO prohibition on the use of amplification may inhibit the town centre's cultural offer are mitigated by the fact that busking without amplification is not restricted under the proposed extension. In addition, the ongoing strategic planning developments within Bury Town Centre will create new community spaces with the potential to support and nurture residents' musical aspirations. There are also existing mechanisms for performers to seek approval through the Bury Events Safety Advisory Group, which enables the controlled use of amplified equipment in designated settings, most recently demonstrated through the successful coordination of Christmas Choir performances in the town centre.

16.6 Consequently, following an objective evaluation of all evidence and submissions, and having carefully considered issues of proportionality, impact, and enforceability, the Council concludes that the current PSPO condition prohibiting the use of speakers and amplified equipment should be extended for a further three-year period. This condition

remains a focused and evidence-led tool for addressing anti-social behaviour associated with the use of amplification.

16.7 PSPO Condition: Prohibition on Consuming Alcohol in a Public Space

- 16.8 The Council's review of the condition prohibiting the consumption of alcohol in public spaces concludes that this restriction remains necessary, proportionate, and justified. Evidence continues to show that the condition plays a critical role in supporting public safety, community wellbeing, and the effective management of both daytime and night-time activity within Bury Town Centre.
- 16.9 Although public drinking is not inherently harmful, alcohol-related anti-social behaviour remains a recurring issue. Residents, businesses, and frontline partners, including GMP and TfGM, continue to report incidents involving intoxication, disorderly conduct, noise, littering, and concerns for personal safety. The condition provides an essential preventative tool, enabling officers to intervene early and de-escalate behaviour before harm occurs. Without this provision, responses would be limited to post-incident intervention, reducing effectiveness and public confidence.
- 16.10 From a community perspective, the continuation of this condition helps maintain safe and welcoming public spaces, particularly in high-footfall areas. It reduces the likelihood of residents, workers, and visitors being exposed to intimidation or nuisance linked to street drinking.
- 16.11 The condition also supports the regulated management of the night-time economy. By directing alcohol consumption into licensed premises, where trained staff and safeguarding measures are in place, the restriction helps minimise environmental impacts such as litter and broken glass, while supporting partnership work aimed at reducing vulnerability and violence.
- 16.12 While acknowledging that enforcement requires ongoing officer presence and may raise perceptions of disproportionate action in isolated cases, these issues can be effectively mitigated through clear guidance, officer discretion, and an engagement-first approach. Importantly, the offence only applies where an individual fails to comply with a request to stop drinking or surrender alcohol, ensuring the restriction remains fair, proportionate, and focused on preventing escalation.
- 16.13 Alternative legal powers exist but do not offer the same level of early-intervention capability or clarity for officers and the public. The PSPO therefore continues to provide an appropriate and effective tool.
- 16.14 Based on the sustained evidence of alcohol-related harm, strong community sentiment, and the operational value demonstrated by frontline services, the Council concludes that the condition prohibiting the consumption of alcohol in public spaces should be retained and extended for a further three years. Maintaining this restriction will continue to support community safety, protect residents and visitors, and promote a well-managed town centre environment.
-

Links with the Corporate Priorities:

This report primarily supports the LET'S principle of Local and pursues the outcome for improved quality of life. Continuing to ban the consumption of alcohol will address issues of anti-social behaviour, harassment, and intimidation, and allow residents to use their local public spaces freely.

Equality Impact and Considerations:

A full EIA has been completed (Separate document) which has identified only positive and neutral impacts across all characteristics and circumstances. The effects of the PSPO on the different characteristics in the future are expected to be limited but will be continually observed. There are no equalities concerns arising from the continuation of this PSPO.

Legal Implications:

The legal test for making a PSPO is detailed in section 59 the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, which states that a local authority may make a public spaces protection order if satisfied on reasonable grounds that activities in a public place have had, or are likely to have, an unreasonable and persistent detrimental effect on the quality of life of people in the area, such that imposing restrictions is justified.

The legislation provides for restrictions to be placed on behaviour that apply to everyone in that locality, provided it is reasonable to impose them to prevent the detrimental effect from continuing, occurring or recurring, or reduce the detrimental impact or the risk of its continuance, occurrence or recurrence. The restriction proposed must be proportionate to the specific harm or nuisance that is being caused. Breach of a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) without a reasonable excuse is an offence.

These provisions also apply to extension and variation of orders.

A local authority must also have regard to the rights of freedom of expression and freedom of assembly set out in articles 10 and 11 of the Convention – as detailed in section 21(1) of the Human Rights Act 1998.

Section 66 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (ASBCPA) allows for PSPOs to be challenged via a statutory appeal by an 'interested person'; a person living in, working in or regularly visiting the area.

The grounds for such a challenge can be: (a) that the local authority did not have power to make the order, or to include particular prohibitions or requirements imposed by the order; or (b) that a requirement under the statute was not complied with in relation to the order.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial consequences of implementing/extending a public spaces protection order as the enforcement of it be within existing resources.

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

Term	Meaning
ABC	Acceptable Behaviour Contract
ASB	Anti-Social Behaviour
CPN	Community Protection Notice
GMP	Greater Manchester Police
PSPO	Public Spaces Protection Order
TfGM	Transport for Greater Manchester

APPENDIX 1

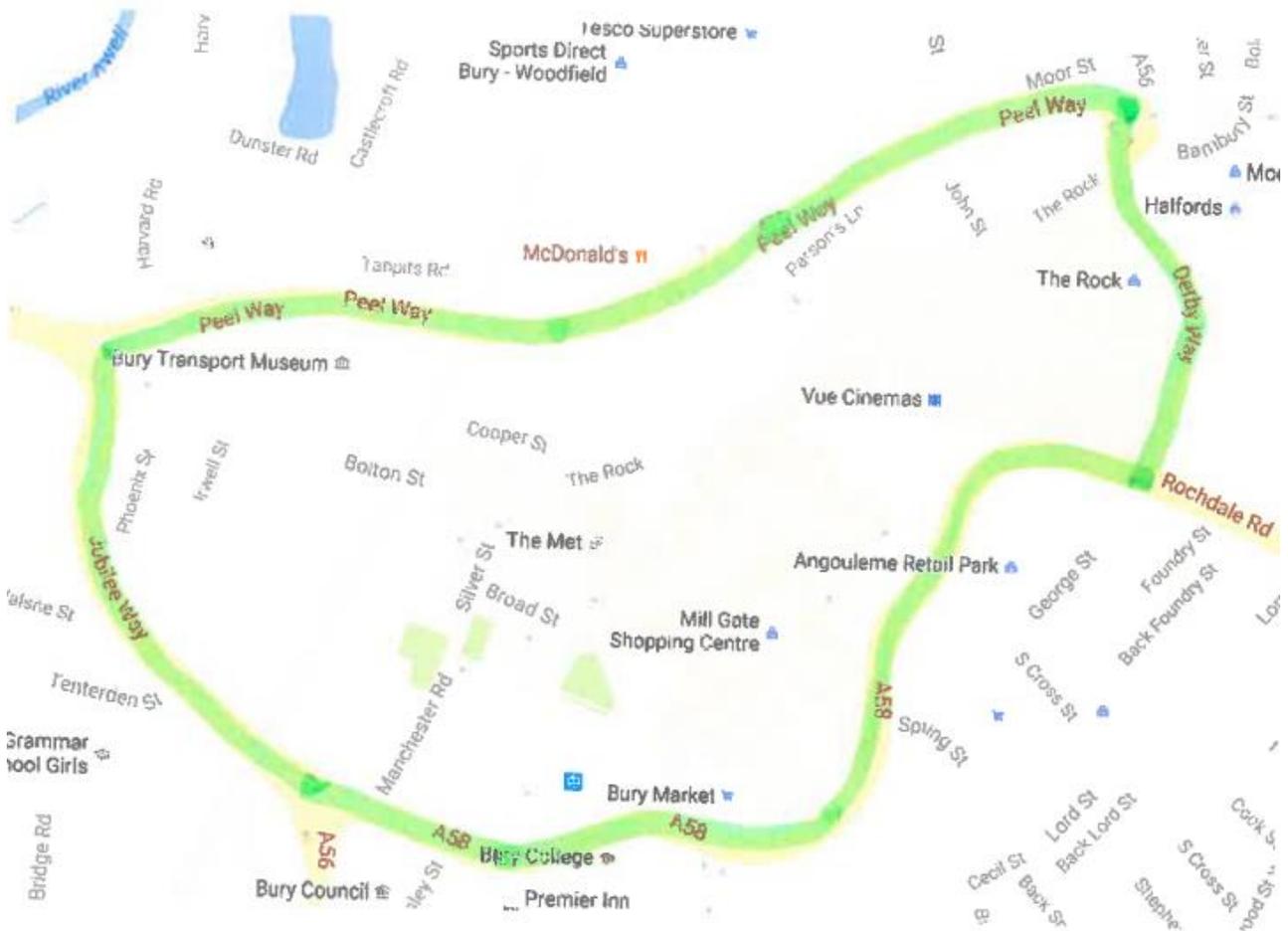
PSPO Public Consultation Questions

OVERVIEW

Please complete the following survey to give your views about the proposed variation and extension to the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) in Bury Town Centre as shown below in the *public areas on the PSPO restricted area map*.

Before you start

❖ Please see the Restrictive Area Map below which the proposed PSPO will Cover.



This survey should take you no longer than 15 minutes to complete.

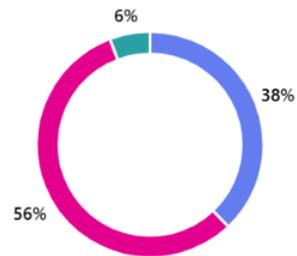
If you require this survey in any other format, please contact us via 0161 253 5353, requesting to speak to Damian Miller, ASB Officer, Bury Council, or email: d.r.miller@bury.gov.uk.

APPENDIX 1.1

1. Do you consider busking to be a problem in the public areas shown on the PSPO restricted area map?

[More details](#)

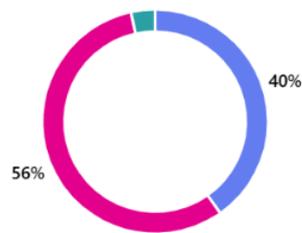
● Yes	33
● No	49
● Don't Know	5



2. Has this type of behaviour (busking) had a negative impact on you enjoying the public areas shown on the PSPO restricted area map?

[More details](#)

● Yes	35
● No	49
● Don't Know	3



3. If yes, please give details of how this has affected you...

[More details](#)

31 Responses

Latest Responses

"Scares little babies and ruins the whole vibe of the town"

...

8 respondents (26%) answered buskers for this question.

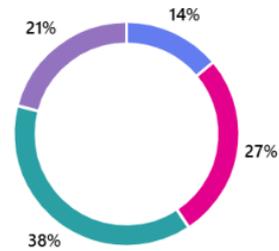


APPENDIX 1.2

4. Do you think this busking, over the past 3 years has:

[More details](#)

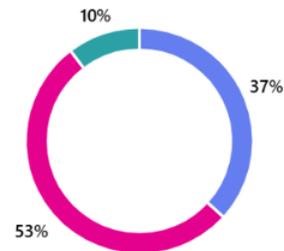
● Improved	12
● Worsened	23
● Stayed the same	33
● Don't Know	18



5. Do you think it is necessary to stop busking in the public areas as shown on the PSPO restricted area map?

[More details](#)

● Yes	32
● No	46
● Don't Know	9



6. If you have any additional comments about this subject, please let us know.

[More details](#)

31

Responses

Latest Responses



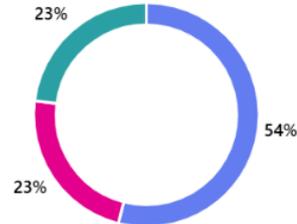
8 respondents (26%) answered Busking for this question.



APPENDIX 1.3

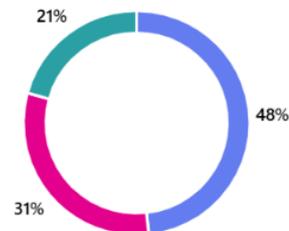
7. Do you consider drinking alcohol in the street, other than at licensed premises, to be a problem in the public areas shown in the PSPO restricted area map? [More details](#)

● Yes	47
● No	20
● Don't Know	20



8. Has drinking alcohol in the street, other than at licensed premises, had a negative impact on you enjoying the public areas shown on the PSPO restricted area map? [More details](#)

● Yes	42
● No	27
● Don't Know	18



9. If yes, please give details of how this has affected you... [More details](#)

30 Responses

Latest Responses

"Feeling frightened to walk past the drinkers, so making detours to avoid the..."

...

6 respondents (20%) answered behaviour for this question.

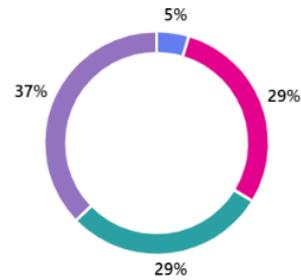


APPENDIX 1.4

10. Has drinking alcohol in the street, other than at licensed premises, improved or worsened over the past 3 years?

[More details](#)

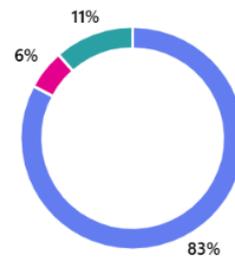
● Improved	4
● Worsened	25
● Stayed the same	25
● Don't Know	32



11. Do you agree we should stop people drinking alcohol in the street, other than at licenced premises in the public areas shown on the PSPO restricted area map?

[More details](#)

● Yes	72
● No	5
● Don't Know	10



12. If you have any additional comments about this subject, please let us know...

[More details](#)

12
Responses

Latest Responses

...

3 respondents (25%) answered town for this question.



APPENDIX 2 – CURRENT SIGNAGE

PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER



CONSUMING ALCOHOL IN THIS AREA IS PROHIBITED. THE USE OF SPEAKERS OR AMPLIFIERS IS PROHIBITED.

MAXIMUM FINE £1000

**FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THIS ORDER COULD LEAD TO A
£100 FIXED PENALTY NOTICE OR PROSECUTION AND A
FINE OF UP TO £1000 ON CONVICTION.**

This area is subject to a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) pursuant to Part 4, Chapter 2 of the Anti-Social behaviour, Crime and Policing act 2014.

Pubs, restaurants, and off-licences do not form part of the PSPO. Areas covered by a 'Temporary Event Notice' or a 'local authority premises licence' are only exempted from the PSPO whilst speakers or amplifiers are being used.



APPENDIX 3

PSPO Statistics – 2023 – 2026 (Bury Council ASB Team ONLY)

Stats 2021 & 2022 Amplified Noise

DATES - BEFORE PSPO	
YEARS	No. of Incidents
2021	119
2022	38
Total	157

Stats 2023 - 2026 Amplified Noise

DATES - ACTIVE PSPO	
YEARS	No. of Incidents
2023	11
2024	6
2025	13
2026	0
Total	30

LOCATION	
Location	No. of Incidents
Barclays	1
Barista Café	5
Bob & Berts	2
Central Street	1
James Frith Office	1
JD Sports	5
Kaspas	2
Kay Gardens	5
Racconto Lounge	1
The Rock	6
Union Street	1
Total	30

PERPETRATORS	
Perpetrators:	No. of Incidents
North West Cancer Research	3
Busker General	17
Bongo Man	8
Protests	2
Total	30

Stats 2023 - 2026 Drinking Alcohol in Public

Year - ASB TEAM STATS	
Perpetrators:	No. of Incidents
2023	18
2024	0
2025	0
2026	0
Total	18

PERPETRATOR Location	
Perpetrators:	No. of Incidents
Kay Gardens	16
Parish Church	2
Total	18



Classification: Open	Decision Type: Key
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Report to:	Cabinet	Date: 11 March 2026
Subject:	Supporting Bury's Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise Sector through the GM VCFSE Accord and investment in Local Infrastructure Organisation provision	
Report of	Cabinet Member for Communities and Inclusion	

Summary

- 1.1 The Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector is integral to the fabric of the Borough of Bury. Our *LET'S Do It!* strategy sets out the vital importance of the sector as a core component in delivering improved outcomes for local people.
- 1.2 The importance of the sector is recognised at a regional level through the Greater Manchester VCFSE Accord ("Accord"), which in recent months has been reviewed in light of the refreshed Greater Manchester Strategy. Bury Council, along with all Districts in the region signed up to the existing Accord agreement, and at the meeting of the Combined Authority in February restated this commitment by signing the refreshed GM VCFSE Accord 2026-2035.
- 1.3 This report reaffirms Bury's commitment to the Accord, building on a recently signed Memorandum of Understanding with the VCFSE sector in Bury to deliver on Accord principles.
- 1.4 Central to a strong local voluntary sector is a high quality, connected and well led local infrastructure organisation (LIO). Local Infrastructure provision is the beating heart of a district's voluntary sector and this specification sets out the requirements for infrastructure provision for the Borough of Bury.
- 1.5 Infrastructure provision is currently provided in the Borough through the Bury Voluntary and Community Faith Alliance, which provides quality assured support, accredited by the National Association for Voluntary and Community Action. In recent years there has been significant progress against the pillars of leadership and advocacy; partnerships and collaboration; capacity building; and volunteering
- 1.6 Examples of delivery and impact include:
 - Joint leadership of GM Live Well implementation in Bury, including flagship centre in Whitefield, building on increased community voice within neighbourhood working, with VCFA representation in each neighbourhood Public Service Leadership Team
 - Funding leveraged into Bury by VCFA in 2023-2026 comes to over £1.1m including GM Moving; Community Led Violence Reduction Unit; UK Shared

Prosperity funding on capacity building and social economy and LGBTQI Forum. This includes £250k National Lottery Community Fund investment within the last six months to strengthen the voice, capacity and influence of voluntary sector organisations working with children and young people across Bury

- In the last year 339 VCSE groups and organisations (up from 183 in 2024) have received bespoke development support
- Growth of the VCFSE Leadership Network and increase in total number of member organisations from 83 to 173.
- Facilitation of collaboration between Bury Council, GMCA, Fair Futures, ADAB and New Lew Life church as part of GM Live Well Refugee Welcome programme.
- Work with 10GM and GM Moving including Wellness Investment Programme and tackling barriers to movement in Whitefield.
- Active involvement and influence in over 30 local authority, health and wider public sector partnerships advocating for the role of the sector in shaping and delivering services.- from Locality Board and Safeguarding Partnerships to Social Value.
- Working alongside Pennine Care and connecting to multi-disciplinary teams, facilitation of a link Worker specialising in housing and welfare support based within the Irwell Unit of Fairfield Hospital.
- Co-produced and launched the delivery of LET's Value Volunteering grants to support volunteer thanks and recognition. This scheme has now had a second round with over 120 successful applications

1.7 To reflect the ongoing delivery of *LET'S Do It!*, the refreshed GMVCFSE Accord and local Memorandum of Understanding, the specification for VCFSE local infrastructure provision has been updated and tailored to reflect the latest regional and local context and priorities. It is proposed that the funding agreement with the Bury VCFA continues to increase the resilience of the LIO as a core partner for the Council and broader Team Bury Partnership. This provision is to support the Bury deliver vital community capacity, inspiration and opportunity for greater participation – to improve outcomes for local people, tackle inequality and raise life chances – whilst ensuring effective use of ever scarce resource.

Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 To confirm Bury's commitment to the Accord and champion through the Team Bury network through the local Memorandum of Understanding with the sector.
- 2.2 It is recommended that the revised Service Level Agreement with Bury Voluntary and Community Faith Alliance, as the local infrastructure organisation for Bury, is agreed and funded from 1st April 2026 on a 2+1 year basis.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

- 3.1 Bury has committed to the refreshed Accord through the Greater Manchester Combined Authority governance given the value the Borough places on developing the VCFSE sector, as set out in *LET's Do It!*
- 3.2 The funding of infrastructure provision in the Borough provides a clear commitment to the importance of the voluntary and community sector. The agreement allows for a clear focus of activity to develop Bury's VCFSE ecosystem in a tailored manner to best meet local needs, in turn delivering on *LET'S Do It!* and GM VCFSE Accord commitments.
- 3.3 By refreshing the Service Level Agreement the report seeks to strengthen the recognition of the sector as key partner in improving outcomes for local people and the role infrastructure support plays in ensuring this is robust, recognised and representative.

Alternative options considered and rejected

- 4.1 To not fund, or make a reduction in funding would significantly risk the loss of infrastructure support in the Borough, destabilising the wider VCFSE sector and jeopardise the positive progress made in recent years. Whilst recognising the financial pressures that the Council itself is under, investment in the infrastructure support to the VCFSE sector supports steps to increase the resilience of the sector itself, including supporting groups to attract inward investment into the Borough and diversity income generation streams.
- 4.2 To not update the specification would fail to capitalise on progress made in recent years but more importantly miss the opportunity to further tailor and target the focus of infrastructure support provision to be an enabler and facilitator of a sector contributing in a pivotal way to realising the Borough's LETS vision. As such to not update the specification would have risked there not been the appropriate local focus on ensuring a sustainable VCFSE ecosystem, best positioned and supported to enhance and enable local outcomes at place.

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Background

- 5.1 The Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector is the cornerstone of daily life across the country. From welfare and wellbeing support to grassroot sports groups, places of worship to peer support networks, the sector connects people and those people to place.

- 5.2 Bury's *LET'S Do It!* strategy and approach set out the importance of the role and impact of the sector on local communities, with the ecosystem of different VCFSE organisations spanning across communities of place, identity and experience.
- 5.3 Within the local sector there are wealth of groups of different size, reach and focus, as the most recent State of the Sector survey demonstrates, which outlines that Bury's VCFSE sector has:
- 1,249 voluntary organisations, community groups and social enterprises making a difference in Bury, ranging from local arms of national charities, to hyper-local mutual aid networks supporting specific communities of interest, and experience.
 - 71% of these organisations are micro-organisations with an annual income of under £10k
 - 13% of the sector as being a social enterprise
 - 91% of organisations have some direct dealings with other VCFSE organisations
 - ONS data outlines a paid employee workforce of 4,019 in Bury's VCFSE sector, equivalent to 2,452 FTE, a contribution of £44m per annum to the local economy. 44% of organisational responses indicated they paid the living wage.
 - The survey estimates that there are 26,229 volunteers supporting the VCFSE sector in Bury, proving approximately 131,145 hours of time each week; making an economic contribution of £65m per annum.

Greater Manchester VCFSE Accord

- 6.1 The Greater Manchester VCFSE Accord is a collaboration agreement which aims to put in place working relationships between the public and voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) sector that will improve outcomes for Greater Manchester's communities and residents. It is based on a relationship of mutual trust, honesty, ambition and accountability and is jointly owned by the public and VCFSE sectors in Greater Manchester – including NHS GM, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA), Transport for Greater Manchester, Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service, 10 local authorities, and the VCFSE sector (represented by the GM VCFSE Leadership Group).
- 6.2 The Accord recognises that The VCFSE sector holds a unique power: the trust, relationships, credibility, and insight that come from being rooted in communities. By ensuring the sector can lead boldly, strengthen its own capacity, and work on an equal footing alongside public sector partners, we will unlock the potential of community-led change.
- 6.3 In November 2021 Bury Council committed to the inaugural GM VCFSE Accord during which time Council colleagues have strengthened working relationships with the VCFSE sector in Bury, and with regional colleagues as part of regional bodies and partnerships.

6.4 During 2025 work has taken place with the VCFSE sector across the region to refresh the Accord – taking account of further devolution agreements to Greater Manchester, wider work on reforms across different topics and the development of the new Greater Manchester Strategy. As such the GM Accord has been updated, with the key components detailed below:

GM VCFSE Accord 2026-2035	
<i>Vision:</i> A thriving Greater Manchester where everyone can live a good life: a place of equality, opportunity, and belonging.	
<i>Mission:</i> A thriving VCFSE ecosystem that can play its full role in driving change for Greater Manchester’s people, communities and places in trusting collaboration with public sector partners.	
<p><i>Shared Beliefs:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We achieve more together than alone. • An integrated, connected, and well-resourced VCFSE ecosystem benefits everyone. • The rich diversity of our local communities is where we will find the expertise to drive change and justice in society. • Decision-making in partnership enables outcomes to be more inclusive and effective. • Values must be lived, not just stated. 	<p><i>Shared Values:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust – We commit to create conditions of mutual trust and understanding. • Honesty - We commit to creating spaces where honesty is encouraged alongside reciprocal care and respect. • Ambition - We commit to continuously strive for better outcomes, resilient through our shared purpose and ambition. • Accountability - We commit to accountability founded on transparency, integrity and positive impact.
<p><i>Shared Commitments:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve and Devolve: We commit to deepening collaboration across sectors by working together to involve the VCFSE sector and devolving power to our communities • Resource and Enable: We commit to increasing investment in, and ensuring fair, transparent and sustainable resourcing of VCFSE organisations 	

- Recognise and Value: We commit to recognise and value the contribution of VCFSE organisations through efforts to improve understanding, involvement, practical support and investment.

- 6.5 The refreshed Accord was tabled at the meeting of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority in February 2026 and unanimously agreed. It was agreed that each District would reaffirm their commitment to the Accord by supporting the GMCA sign off with acknowledgement within local governance processes. Locally, the Accord refresh has been informed by the Council, public services and VCFSE leads, and dovetails with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by leads across the sectors in the late summer of last year. The MOU is a multi-agency collaboration agreement between the Bury Health & Public Sector represented by the members of the Bury Integrated Delivery Collaborative and Bury Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Sector represented by the Bury VCSE Leaders Group.
- 6.6 Bury's MOU was cognisant of the refresh of the GM Accord and is therefore well placed to be the means by which the GM Accord will be delivered locally. The document sets out shared principles and commitments to work together more effectively, recognising the vital role of the voluntary sector in delivering services, tackling inequality, and enhancing the wellbeing of Bury's residents. The MoU was developed as the result of an co-design process between Bury VCFA, local voluntary organisations, and public sector leaders. It localises the Government's Civil Society Covenant. It aligns with the Greater Manchester VCSE Accord as well as the borough's *Let's Do It!* strategy, ensuring that community voices are central to decision-making and service delivery. The key pillars of the MOU are:
- Embedding the importance of the VCFSE sector to support co-design and co-production
 - Ensuring that the voice of the VCFSE sector and local communities is heard and valued in strategic governance
 - Ensuring a financially resilient VCFSE sector
 - Shared ambition for One Workforce
 - Embedding social value
- 6.7 This reflects the growing work between different teams within the Council and the Bury VCFSE ecosystem on both project based initiatives, as outlined in section 8.5, alongside enabling activity to strengthen relationships with, and opportunities for the sector. The latter element of this includes work with workforce development leads on shared access to learning resources and mutual (reciprocal) coaching; through procurement to strengthen opportunities through Bury's Contract Procedure rules; and increased involvement in social value approaches.

Investment in Bury's Local Infrastructure Organisation

7.1 The National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA) notes that, *“An active voluntary and community sector needs consistent, high quality support from local VCFSE infrastructure support organisations (LIOs). LIOs act as both convenor and connector at place between different statutory bodies, local authorities, charities and VCS organisations that, when working together in partnership, drive and accelerate action, and contribute to positive change.”*

<https://www.navca.org.uk/news/the-power-of-local-infrastructure-how-a-new-government-can-work-with-navca-members>

7.2 A Local Infrastructure Organisation is a voluntary/community group in its own right (with respective governance and charitable objectives set out as required by the Charities Commission) but whose principal purpose is to co-ordinate, facilitate and support the broader ecosystem of VCFSE groups in a given area. Typically, this is through:

- Building strategic relationships and bringing together community knowledge and skills.
- Developing partnerships with key organisations and enabling collaboration.
- Acting as a trusted partner, effectively communicating with and representing communities.
- Building the capacity of VCFSE organisations.
- Supporting early intervention and providing rapid response in crises.
- Contributing to local economic development through employment and volunteering

7.3 Local Infrastructure Organisations advocate and champion for the sector, nurture the conditions of the ecosystem to allow it to flourish. They provide insight to/from the ecosystem and ensure that is appropriately and fully represented in partnership activity (planning, delivery and evaluation). They act as convenors and facilitators as much as direct delivery vehicles of services and are not regulatory bodies or inspectorates but provide support to ensure organisations and networks on meeting such regulations.

7.4 Nationally, NAVCA have set out the key components of what would enable LIO's to fulfil their role in improving outcomes for local people, which has informed this report and set in the context of *LET's Do It!*

- Work with the VCFSE sector as an equal strategic partner
- Work with the VCFSE sector at an early stage to help define problems, hear the voice of lived experience, and co-design services to meet need.
- Deliver long term stable and sustainable commissioning and funding arrangements
- Invest in local infrastructure as the convenor, partnership enabler and capacity builder to enable communities and the VCFSE to thrive

LIO Provision in Bury - progress

- 8.1 In Bury, infrastructure support to the VCFSE is provided by Bury Voluntary and Community Faith Alliance (Bury VCFA). In comparison to many other Boroughs in Greater Manchester (particularly Manchester, Salford and Bolton), Bury VCFA is a relatively new LIO - Salford CVS for instance has been in existence in its current form since 1973 and has connections back to the start of the 20th century.
- 8.2 Formed in 2017, the Bury VCFA is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, registered with the Charity Commission, and has developed into an integral partner in Team Bury through the development and delivery of the *LET'S Do It!* strategy.
- 8.3 As referenced, the VCFA is a VCFSE organisation its own right, and therefore is required to set out their purpose through the Charity Commission for England and Wales: *To promote and strengthen the Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise sector for the benefit of the community in the Borough of Bury. To coordinate, organise and enable partnership working to enable positive change in communities.*
- 8.4 In 2023, Bury VCFA become the first LIO in Greater Manchester to be successfully achieve the Local Infrastructure Quality Accreditation from NAVCA, the national membership body for local infrastructure organisations, whose quality assurance framework is used to benchmark LIO activity in order to best support the voluntary and community sector in England. This was followed up within the last year with the award of the Volunteer Centre Quality Award (VCQA) following an independent assessment.
- 8.5 NAVCA outline 4 functions for thriving communities, where people belong and can take action on things that matter to them.
 - Leadership and Advocacy
 - Partnerships and Collaborations
 - Capacity Building
 - Volunteering

These functions have formed the framework for the specification with Bury VCFA, to which specifics in relation to the *LET'S Do it!* delivery and local priorities have been highlighted. This builds on the existing delivery by the VCFA against these 4 functions, with examples provided in the table below.

<p>Leadership and advocacy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Led the co-production across VCFSE sector and with public sector partners on the MoU (as 6.6) as localised delivery of GM VCFSE Accord • Represented Bury and local VCFSE sector at GM VCFSE networks to ensure local voices shaped regional Accord. • Growth of the VCFSE Leadership Network and increase in total number of member organisations from 83 to 173.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactive input through facilitating appropriate representation at Team Bury partnership meetings including quarterly leadership groups and refresh of <i>LET's Do It!</i> strategy. • Active involvement in over 30 local authority, health and wider public sector partnerships advocating for the role of the sector in shaping and delivering services.- from Locality Board and Safeguarding Partnerships to Social Value. • Championing workforce development and voice, including as a new Supporter of the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter; leadership of the Community Cohesion workstream of the Community Safety Partnership and Be A Good Neighbour This Winter campaign. • System leadership on response to Heaton Park synagogue attack in October 2025 and subsequent local and regional recovery and cohesion workstreams.
Partnerships and collaborations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint leadership of GM Live Well implementation in Bury, including flagship centre in Whitefield, building on increased community voice within neighbourhood working, with VCFA representation in each neighbourhood Public Service Leadership Team. • Development of the Sustain Project focusing on food aid to food trade and shaping of a Food Pantry Toolkit • Facilitation of community safety related activity through the Bury Community Led Violence Reduction Programme working with young people and their families to address the underlying causes of violence and build aspiration and opportunity. • Work with 10GM and GM Moving including Wellness Investment Programme and tackling barriers to movement in Whitefield. • Facilitation of collaboration between Bury Council, GMCA, Fair Futures, ADAB and New Lew Life church as part of GM Live Well Refugee Welcome programme. • Working alongside Pennine Care and connecting to multi-disciplinary teams, facilitation of a link Worker specialising in housing and welfare support based within the Irwell Unit of Fairfield Hospital. • Facilitating Right to Grow campaign and supporting new group to become established to become the first site.

Capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the last year 339 VCSE groups and organisations (up from 183 in 2024) have received bespoke development support including funding searches; bid checks; support with governance and legal structures; start-up guidance for completely new groups; setting aims and objectives; development of constitutions and registration with the Charity Commission; and support on recruiting volunteers. This support included the delivery of training to organisations on adult safeguarding; governance; bid writing (including storytelling); Connect 5 Mental Health training and trauma informed practice. • Over the last twelve months over £326k of funding and investment has been distributed by the VCFA in investment into the sector, relating to community safety, anti-poverty provision, culture grants, volunteer recognition and physical wellbeing interventions with a Local Grants Celebration Event held in July 2025. Funding leveraged into Bury by VCFA in 2023-2026 comes to over £1.1m including GM Moving; Community Led Violence Reduction Unit; UK Shared Prosperity funding on capacity building and social economy and LGBTQI Forum. Over 400 funding opportunities have been promoted in adding to an expansion of 'Meet the Funder' events to support local groups in accessing external funding including sessions with Forever Manchester, National Lottery and Easy Fundraising. • Successful application for £250k National Lottery Community Fund investment to strengthen the voice, capacity and influence of voluntary sector organisations working with children and young people across Bury. • Trading for Good promotion and facilitation of the Bury Social Enterprise Network • Introducing the Royal Horticultural Society into Neighbourhood Connections meetings leading to 13 groups succeeding at North West in Bloom in turn helping groups to attract new volunteers and funding opportunities.
Volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Volunteer Centre Quality Award Recognition, with assessor noting commitment to making volunteering accessible, rewarding, and impactful • Promoting good practice in volunteer management through training for VCSE volunteer-involving groups and providing a 'Volunteer Bank' facility for individuals to register for opportunities. Over 285 volunteers have been directly recruited and supported through the volunteer bank.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued delivery of Bury Volunteering Strategy which contains system-wide commitments to ensuring Bury is a great place to volunteer and recognising the benefits that volunteering brings to individuals and community wealth building. • Facilitation of a volunteer development forum to provide learning opportunities, networking and peer support. This has included a focus on volunteer retention and supported the development of new support factsheet. • Activity to enhance Employee Supported Volunteering including through Bury Council for the LET's Local litter picks; AECOM who supported Milton Field environmental works; HSBC branch activity with Bury Hospice; and youth volunteering at Woodhey High. • Working alongside Bury Council, Bury VCFA co-produced and launched the delivery of LET's Value Volunteering grants to support volunteer thanks and recognition. This scheme has now had a second round with over 120 successful applications.
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LIO Provision in Bury – proposal

- 9.1 Through the continued delivery of Bury's *LET'S Do It!* strategy and commitment the regional VCFSE Accord and local MoU, the importance of the voluntary and community sector in enabling improved outcomes for local communities is as high as ever. In this context it is recognise that a strong and forward-looking local infrastructure provision is vital.
- 9.2 Based on ongoing conversations, both formally through networks such as Team Bury and the Public Service Reform Steering Group; through conversations with sector leads, and through insight gathered through organic discussions across sectors, an updated specification has been tailored to evolve from previous provision. This builds is anchored in both the pillars of local infrastructure provision as set out by NAVCA, but crucially these have been set against the principles set out in *LET's Do It!* and are detailed in Appendix A. This recognises the ongoing maturity evidenced by the LIO over recent years and deepening of relationships across sectors.
- 9.3 Where possible the specification sets the outcomes to be achieved rather than overly 'prescribing' a set of tasks, recognising the LIO will be able to craft delivery with and through the sector through 'working with' colleagues and partners.
- 9.4 Examples of the key areas of amplification and revised focus in the updated specification are:
- Updated reference to the national and regional policy landscape and the opportunities these present for leadership, advocacy and

collaboration, including the GM Live Well Model and Prevention Demonstrator.

- More explicit reference to the role the LIO can play in championing and support system leadership on safeguarding arrangements, particularly in the context of Working Together.
- Emphasis on VCFSE impact in place-based activity – building on the latest report from NAVA on the value and importance of neighbourhoods for the sector: [1763568881-The value and importance of neighbourhoods - Nov 2025.pdf](#)
- Reiteration of the role of local infrastructure in connecting communities through common bonds to further cohesion, as set out in: [Connecting communities, enabling common ground: the role of local infrastructure](#)
- Specific focus on identification and foundational support to new and emerging communities and networks, taking an early help approach. Escalating the insight into commission discussions whilst coalescing individuals/ networks with fundamental infrastructure support.
- Responding to 2024-2026 Pulse Survey feedback from the sector including top identified support needs, namely funding (particularly volunteer expenses); support around vetting and DBS checks; how to market / promote volunteer opportunities Working with businesses (Employer Supported Volunteering) and increasing the number of young volunteers
- Greater emphasis on the role of volunteering as a route into (re-) employment and skills development, building on the achievement of NAVCA Volunteer Centre Quality Accreditation in the context of contributing to tackling economic inactivity, a core Team Bury priority.

9.5 The current Service Level Agreement with the Bury VCFA, at an investment level of £170k per annum, comes to an end on 31st March 2026. This specification has been developed at a time of significant socio-economic pressures, as the sector and wider system recovers from the legacies of Covid pandemic (including the stepping back of emergency funding and capacity) and deepening economic constraints which directly impact on VCFSE organisations in terms of expenditure and funding, as public services face significant budgetary pressures. Bury is not immune to such challenges but is keen to strengthen collaboration with the VCFSE sector to best support local people and communities. There is the ever-present challenge of seeking to manage financial pressures that take effect of reducing Council budgets, seeking a diversification of income sources, increased organisational running costs and providing fair funding in keeping with the VCSE Accord.

9.6 In light of this, this report seeks to approve a multi-year funding agreement to provide a clear commitment to VCFSE through LIO investment to enable greater forward planning and resilience. To align with the Medium Term Financial Strategy it is proposed that agreement is a 2+1 year agreement from 1st April 2026.

9.7 Funding has been identified from within Council and partnership resource (for which the Council is accountable body) with a base being the current level of investment (£170k pa) but will now include an annual inflationary uplift. This

allows for the core components of a Local Infrastructure Organisation to be delivered and provides the resource from which to attract further match investment to deliver increased contributions to local outcomes, such as the aforementioned National Lottery Community Fund investment secured in November 2025.

- 9.8 Oversight of the activity of the Local Infrastructure Organisation will be through the Strategic Partnerships function of the Council and primarily Communities portfolio, though connectivity across all portfolios will be increased during 2026. This will include reporting to demonstrate the direct, and facilitated, delivery against each of the *LET's Do It!* outcomes to demonstrate the impact of strong LIO provision.

Links with the Corporate Priorities:

Bury's *LET'S Do It!* strategy repeatedly demonstrates the crucial role community, voluntary and faith-based groups and social enterprises play in our local neighbourhoods and the opportunities for the sector to be central to delivering our collective vision for the future. Through the Team Bury partnership, there is a pivotal role for the VCFSE infrastructure provider to assure, enable and exploit the exciting opportunities set out in both the plan and crucially the principles for delivery – to ensure the VCFSE in Bury is integral to developing resilient neighbourhoods, where local people are inspired and enabled to come together to improve local outcomes.

VCFSE activity plays a key role in delivering against each priority of the Council's Corporate Plan – most fundamentally in tackling inequalities (be that across communities of place, identity or experience). Across every pledge and pillar of the plan the voluntary and community sector will continue to drive collaborative activity in our communities to strengthen community capacity and assets and increasingly connect people to these, to drive self-help, self-care and wellbeing. By working at a neighbourhood level the sector will increasingly connect the most vulnerable with resources and support that best meets their needs and to play a more active role in their communities and take control of their own lives.

Equality Impact and Considerations:

Bury VCFA lead a number of inclusion related groups, bringing together voluntary and community organisations to co-ordinate and collaborate activity in relation to inclusion in Bury.

Inclusion is specifically referenced within the SLA specification, in terms of increasing seldom heard voices across the sector, increasing representation within and across the sector, and Bury's Inclusion Strategy referenced in relation to accessibility of provision. As such the refreshed agreement strengthens system leadership within the VCFSE on inclusion.

Increased reference to Safeguarding, including Working Together is included and there is a specific Children and Young People Voluntary Sector Forum which is facilitated through the Local Infrastructure Organisation and chaired by one of the Bury VCFA trustees.

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

Bury VCFA work with a number of climate action related groups and networks, from links place based Climate Action Partnerships to 'Friends of' Groups with local parks and green spaces to increase public guardianship. This includes provided group/network development support, promotion of funding opportunities and opportunities for collaboration.

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Sufficiency of funding	Previous risk of funding availability addressed through clarification on specific budget lines across different sources, aggregated to provide the funding. Although funding base remains unchanged, there is inflationary uplift added to support cost recovery. Bury VCFA increasingly demonstrating ability to attract inward investment and this will strengthened through longer term LIO agreement.
Opportunity for local VCFSE groups to be best positioned for local commissioning organisations	VCFA provision allows for group development, to strengthen governance and maturity of elements of the sector to be aware of, and best structured (in terms of finance and governance) to be in a position to be commissioned by health providers in particular, reducing demand and cost on statutory provision whilst increasing resilience within elements of VCFSE system locally.

Legal Implications:

1. Whilst there is no statutory obligation on the Council to provide the funding and/or enter into a service level agreement, in considering whether to approve the recommendations that are set out in the report, Cabinet may have regard to the evidence as to the effect that withdrawing and/or reducing funding might have. Specifically, in terms of destabilising the local VCFSE infrastructure and/or undermining recent progress.
2. Continued investment supports sector resilience, inward investment and is in line with the Council's strategic objectives. The proposed approach and recommendations sought for approval are therefore within the Council's powers, and represent a lawful exercise of discretion supported by clear operational jurisdiction.

Financial Implications:

3. The Service Level Agreement with Bury Voluntary and Community Faith Alliance, will be funded from within existing general fund revenue budget.

Appendices:

Appendix A: Bury VCFSE Infrastructure Support specification from 2026

Background papers:

None.

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

Term	Meaning
LIO	Local Infrastructure Organisation
NAVCA	National Association for Voluntary and Community Action
VCFA	Voluntary and Community Faith Alliance
VCFSE	Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise sector

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Appendix A: VCFSE Local Infrastructure Provision for Bury : April 2026 – March 2030

NAVCA identify four pillars of focus for LIOs – the first table below sets out the key characteristics of these pillars and associated outcomes desired in Bury; with the tables following considering each pillar through the LETS principles.

NAVCA Pillar	Key characteristic	Outcome sought*	Metrics
Leadership & Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LIOs are leaders in, and advocates for, the VCFSE sector and the communities they work within. • Through participation in local strategic groups, forums and partnerships, LIOs ensure the VCFSE sector's voice is heard and used to inform and influence and affect key decisions locally on funding and policy. • Participation in local strategic groups often means leadership of strategic partnerships, membership of groups, or representative roles on behalf of the VCFSE sector. • Leadership and advocacy contribute to strategic leadership for the VCFSE sector at place, advocacy for the VCSE with statutory partners, and contributions to problem-solving with the sector and statutory partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A nurtured VCFSE ecosystem in Bury that is vibrant, thriving, diverse, sustainable and resilient. • A representative leadership group visibly demonstrating system leadership within the sector and advocating for the sector across all Team Bury Partnerships • The VCFSE sector in Bury has a strong, influential voice • Local VCFSE partners are informed and supported to actively participate in local policy development and decision making – in particular organisations representing those with lived experience and who are otherwise under-represented • VCFSE organisations are hardwired into Bury's neighbourhood working approach and supported to deliver their contribution to <i>LET's Do It!</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation across all protected characteristics in community fora; VCFSE networks and engagement activity • Resilience of infrastructure ecosystem provision
Partnership & Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Places and communities are strengthened when organisations work collaboratively, through building networks and partnerships between VCSE organisations and strategic partners. • The strength of relationships with external stakeholders is the building block for partnerships and collaborations that provide direct support for communities and specific groups in need, as well as collaborations to deliver contracts and services and lever in grant and other funding. • The LIO may also act as the accountable body, bringing a partnership of local VCFSE organisations together to collaborate on a project or service • VCFSEs influence and deliver services more effectively by working collaboratively through networks, formal partnerships and consortia. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VCFSE organisations are valued strategic and operational partners in the Borough, meaningfully involved in decision making and working effectively with public sector partners, in line with the MoU. • A connected and well led VCFSE sector in Bury that brings together individual volunteers, Bury voluntary and community organisations, national voluntary organisations operating in Bury and mutual aid organisations • Enhanced two-way flow of insight between the sector, promoting greater shared understanding and respect, and consequentially collaboration • VCFSE organisations are regularly updated and have opportunities to shape and support the safeguarding of local people, including in the response to major incidents, drawing on the sector's cultural proficiency and connections to ensure a tailored and accessible response. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of co-design and VCFSE led alliances / partnerships bidding for (and successful in) commissioning opportunities where such opportunities arise

<p>Capacity building & development support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LIOs help voluntary and community organisations to fulfil their potential through providing practical support, information, advice, and training • This capacity building work is both strategic and developmental. It helps VCFSE organisations to have the strong foundations needed so that they can deliver their goals, become more resilient and contribute to flourishing communities • The most critical work of LIOs is the specific practical guidance and support provided to local VCFSEs, tailored to need which can take the form of governance, strategic planning, sourcing and completing funding applications; regulatory information and organisational health checks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more informed and confident sector, with access to and promoting their own best practice in supporting and empowering communities • A capacity building support offer is in place that is fully inclusive, accessible, flexible, proactive, informed by the sector and has a free to access offer. This support is responsive to a diverse range of organisations, and reflects the demographic, cultural and ethnic diversity of the borough. • Enterprising voluntary and community groups, seeking new opportunities are well placed to adapt to new challenges in a way best meeting (emerging) local needs; and encouraging growth of new organisations to address unmet/new need. • VCFSE organisations are connected into emerging procurement and commissioning pipelines, with brokering of support to connect local groups into local opportunities • Resilient community capacity which doesn't just enable but empowers residents to live well at home and in their communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of inward investment in the VCFSE in Bury • Social enterprise capacity and value in Bury to increase the local supply available to retain local wealth
<p>Enabling, encouraging & championing volunteering</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteering, both formal and informal, is at the heart of thriving communities. LIOs encourage and nurture volunteering opportunities, so that people can build connections and work together on things they care about, driving positive change locally. • The value of local volunteering support is that it offers a trusted brokerage or connecting service, based on local needs and knowledge of the VCFSE. This support for volunteers is then linked to other LIO support services and networks as an integrated whole, eg other support includes providing advice or promoting good practice in volunteer management. • LIOs also coordinate volunteers as part of emergency responses locally or nationally – a role that was an essential part of volunteer recruitment and support during the Covid-19 pandemic and remains in place through participation in local resilience forums. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAVCA accredited volunteer centre offer is in place that supports residents and VCSE organisations. • To catalyse and corral a social movement for volunteering in the Borough • Increased access to volunteering opportunities for all residents, developing the skills, aspirations and confidence of individuals • Volunteering is embedded within Live Well, Prevention Demonstrator and Work & Skills Trailblazer activity in Bury • Increase in Employee Supported Volunteering across all sectors within Bury. • The contribution of volunteering is increasingly recognised and valued; and volunteer activity is flourishing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation through volunteering reflective of the Borough's population (across protected characteristics and neighbourhoods).

*it is recognised that realisation of these outcomes is not solely dependent upon the LIO, with dependency on system change and investment, with the MoU with the sector a key enabler of this

Local VCFSE Infrastructure provision for Bury to realise the ambitions of LETS and deliver Bury's neighbourhood model April 2026 – March 2030



	LOCAL	ENTERPRISING	TOGETHER	STRENGTHS
<p>Leadership & Advocacy –</p> <p><i>Mobilising and encouraging community action; strengthening the sector's voice and influence on decision-making and funding (investment)</i></p>	<p>Place leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitating full and active contribution of the VCFSE sector within Bury's neighbourhood model, as anchor for the sector Delivery of an annual Team Bury development session on the State of the Voluntary Sector in Bury, including opportunities to enhance the sector Lead the identification, engagement and advocacy of new and emerging communities in Bury and the linkages of these to place-based opportunities Facilitate system leadership from the VCFSE sector in each of the Public Service Leadership Teams in each of the five neighbourhoods and play a leading role in community asset mapping. A catalyst and conduit for community action and social movements around local priorities across communities of place/ identity/ experience. 	<p>Financial resilience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Represent the VCFSE system in dialogue with commissioners to promote the value and contribution of the sector and encourage funding models which secure investment into the sector in keeping with the VCSE Accord and local MoU Support, and lead by example, in the diversification of income streams, specifically including social investment Be a catalyst for innovation and agile reform amongst and between community groups in the Borough. Seek innovative approaches to support core investment as part of a sustainable financial model of infrastructure provision. 	<p>Leadership in partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide visible, active leadership for and advocacy of the VCFSE at key system Boards, such as those listed in the table below To lead borough-wide inclusion and cohesion activity including ensuring inclusive representation and participation in VCFSE networks and Boards. To lead by example in promoting safeguarding practices; to increase system safeguarding knowledge and practice, including through training, information and guidance, particularly for specialist and grassroots groups working with young people, in delivering on Working Together. Advocate for, and champion the contribution of, VCFSE partners in local delivery of regional and national innovation, eg GM Moving/ GM Live Well model/ Prevention Demonstrator; DWP Trailblazer; Families First; VALOUR 	<p>Strengthening sector voice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To amplify the voice of residents (though their lived experience) across protected characteristics as a conduit in co-design. Note this is to add to, rather than duplicate or undermine any statutory resident engagement duties from partner organisations. To promote and facilitate connections between the Bury VCFSE system and activity of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, the GM Youth Combined Authority CA and NHS Greater Manchester (GM Health and Social Care Partnership), and Greater Manchester Equality Boards to ensure Bury is connected into regional opportunities To develop two-way feedback mechanisms from Bury VCFSE's involvement in GM, regional and national activity for the wider benefit of the Bury system

Local governance	Leadership and Advocacy opportunity for a Local Infrastructure Organisation
Team Bury Partnership Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System leadership beyond organisational boundaries; secure representative presence from, and cascade through VCFSE leadership group and wider breadth of sector. • Advocate for totality of VCFSE sector, identifying particular opportunities for and from the sector to deliver on LETS vision and outcomes. • Bring collective insight from communities and champion lived experience of communities of place, identity and experience
Bury Health and Wellbeing Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate role of, and facilitate VCFSE in addressing health inequalities faced by specific communities of interest, experience and place • Amplify voice of sector in Population Health delivery.
Locality Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shape commissioning intentions and readiness of sector for such intentions on prevention, early intervention and community-based activity.
Families First and Family Safeguarding Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on leadership of Voluntary Sector Children and Young People's Forum and co-produce role of VCFSE within Family Hub / Family Help approach. • Facilitate VCFSE linkages to Family Safeguarding and Mockingbird models • Work to develop VCFSE leadership in relation to improving Good Level of Development Rates and increased focus on care leavers.
Community Safety Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership of Resilient Communities and Safeguarding Against Hate priority, including convening community partners on cohesion and inclusion matters • Catalyst for community-led place based solutions to reduce vulnerabilities and increase resilience against place-based ASB and criminality
Bury Safeguarding Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissemination of and targeting of specific safeguarding support, such as that set out in NCVO guidance (https://www.ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance/safeguarding/specialist-guides/specific-activities/supporting-others/leading-example/making-priority/ and Paragraphs 82, 83, 226, 310-316 of Working Together statutory guidance: Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk)). • Identification and embedding sectoral learning opportunities from safeguarding reviews through proactive LIO input within Safeguarding Partnership meetings.
Bury Business Leadership Group/ Bury Health Economy and Skills Taskforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximising economic impact and reach of VCFSE sector including through optimising use of private sector skills, investment and connections. • Further connect volunteering strategy and social enterprise activity to inclusive economic growth agenda and tackling economic inactivity
Bury Climate Action Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Championing opportunities for green social enterprises and impact sector can have in reaching carbon reduction targets as a financial and environmental benefit. •
Bury Public Service Reform Steering Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for totality of VCFSE sector, identifying particular opportunities for and from the sector to deliver on LETS vision and outcomes, in particular through neighbourhood working and LETS behaviours.
<p><i>Recognition leadership and advocacy extends beyond this list. There are broader boards/ partnerships including subgroups of the above that the LIO attend through strategic alignment rather than as a direct result of SLA investment; and there are those which will be attended by exception for specific insight</i></p>	

	LOCAL	ENTERPRISING	TOGETHER	STRENGTHS
Partnership & Collaboration <i>Creating opportunities and driving effective joint working, by building and facilitating networks of local people, local organisations; strategic partners</i>	Strengthening partnership and collaboration in neighbourhoods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitating, brokering and enabling people to come together around a common bond, issue or opportunity in neighbourhoods – particularly through <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family Hub and Family Help approach Living Well Mental Health Model Further develop relationships with Health and Care Integrated Neighbourhood Teams, to grow community capacity against neighbourhood priorities and integrated community-led solutions To support the co-design engagement frameworks across protected characteristics to identify unheard or under-represented voices and integrate these into local organisations, groups and networks (supporting the establishment of new ones if/as required). Ensure robust partnership arrangements and networks within the sector that are representative of the communities of place, identity and experience they support. 	Strengthening collaboration through inclusive economies equitable growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broker and nurture connections and relationships between local VCFSE organisations and those leading physical place-making activity, eg regeneration; new housing Act as lead provider for consortia and collaborative bids to attract (grant) investment and commissioning opportunities into the Borough. To be first point of contact for engagement (providing information, guidance and signposting) for businesses that wish to engage with Bury’s VCFSE sector Champion local wealth building and retention, including system leadership on brokering social value, through developing compelling initiatives to encourage participation through LIO involvement in co-design of Social Value Action Plan. To seek enterprising expertise from Bury’s business community to assist inclusive growth of Bury’s VCFSE ecosystem 	Strengthening partnership and collaboration within the sector <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop and strengthen peer support approaches across the Bury VCFSE for mutual support, information sharing, knowledge transfer, to maximise resources and reduce duplication, eg build on peer-Led Alliance approach shown in project with Healthwatch Bury and NHS England on on experiences for individuals with neurological conditions To foster relationships between mutual communities of experiences to drive collaboration whilst valuing difference To encourage and enable collaborative financial models including develop pioneering approach to grants which promotes collaboration rather than competition, eg Standing Together Partnership Problem Solving Innovation Circles To support the delivery of locality based inclusion and equality panels, equivalent of GM Panels regionally to further collaboration across protected characteristics and intersectionality locally. 	Strategic partnership and leadership in recovery and resilience planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead liaison with, and co-ordinate expertise and experience within, the VCFSE sector locally within civil contingency planning and response arrangements as an active member of Bury Resilience Forum Disseminate and collate key messaging to/ from local community groups and networks to stand up warn, inform and direct emergency information and support Provide support on developing business continuity arrangements amongst local VCFSE organisations.

	LOCAL	ENTERPRISING	TOGETHER	STRENGTHS
<p>Capacity building & development support</p> <p><i>Providing practical support and development for local people and organisations, to nurture skills and build community resilience.</i></p>	<p>Harness and grow community capacity, particularly pro-prevention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify gaps within Bury's VCFSE ecosystem at a neighbourhood level and nurture the co-production of provision. Identification and foundational support to new & emerging communities and networks; escalating the insight into commissioning discussions whilst providing fundamental infrastructure support. Identify and promote funding and commissioning opportunities for Bury organisations and communities, supporting applications and providing guidance to those unsuccessful with applications. Support the development and constitution of new groups/services with a particular focus on local, asset based and inclusive services. Provide a renewed focus on community-led enterprise, including social enterprise, co-operatives and mutuals as outlined in the State of the Sector report. 	<p>Activating dormant and under-utilised resource</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design and manage a Bury VCFSE Investment Fund to target investment into the sector to address capacity requirements that would most drive improvement in LETS outcomes where greatest gaps/inequalities exist, to support assessing impact of collective investment within the sector. To explore opportunities to activate dormant funds and assets to increase the resilience of local community provision. Proactively engage with Bury's One Public Estate on policy, systems and processes of Community Asset Transfer to increase community capacity and social infrastructure as Live Well spaces in the Borough. 	<p>Develop and maximise opportunities for participation in community-led activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use insight of commissioning activity and act as conduit between Team Bury partnerships and VCFSE system to identify gaps in community-led provision (and seek opportunities to collaborative address); to link smaller organisations into opportunities generated by larger commissions; to foster collaboration between providers for joint submissions. To broker opportunities for residents to engage with their local community assets including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills provision (academic, technical and vocational) to raise aspiration and opportunity, linked to the DWP Trailblazer Sports and culture groups to promote active lifestyles and increased participation including through GM Live Well and GM Moving and engagement with the Bury Physical Activity Strategy and GM Moving Mobilising community action to build on existing VCSE activity and supporting development of new VCSE offers which strengthen Bury's Family Help model and implementation of the GM Live Well approach. 	<p>Training including Workforce development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of advice, guidance, best practice and training to assist organisational development, in line with the VCFSE Sector Training Needs Assessments, including but limited to financial management and income generation models; outcomes and impact measurement; governance and effective trusteeship; strategic planning; and safeguarding Training to be inclusive to take account of different learning styles, protected characteristics and nature of organisations Iterative development support based on programme of Pulse checks, eg <u>Bury VCFA Pulse Check – Finance and Funding – Bury VCFA</u> to ensure tailored and targeted support to the sector. Ensure full involvement within GM wide VCFSE Workforce development programme, including local focus on trauma informed practice.

	LOCAL	ENTERPRISING	TOGETHER	STRENGTHS
<p>Enabling, encouraging & championing volunteering</p> <p><i>Building an environment in which volunteers and their communities thrive, by encouraging and nurturing volunteering opportunities</i></p>	<p>Improve access to volunteering opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a refreshed Bury Volunteering Strategy with a focus on removing barriers to volunteering; recognising the diversity of the sector; new volunteering opportunities and volunteers themselves • To lead the recruitment of volunteers and drive a volunteer management network to support people in such opportunities. • To broker opportunities for local people to volunteer matching those will skills, interests and availability to local groups seeking capacity. • To propose innovative ways of addressing the challenge that more people are volunteering but each for a shorter period of time which in turn creates additional co-ordination pressures. • To co-produce bespoke provision to encourage and enable volunteering from under-represented groups across the Borough. 	<p>Increasing volunteer retention and progression opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support volunteering pathways into education, employment and training • Secure access to training programmes from across public sector organisations, including eLearning sessions. • To develop and share volunteer management support and guidance, including volunteer welfare and reflecting any changes to national regulations. • To collaborate with skills providers and employers to support volunteers with opportunities for further training and development as a social return for their time investment. • Facilitate reframing employer supported volunteering from traditional team building or event activities into potentially more frequent or longer term relationships 	<p>Increase system resilience through volunteering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To collaborate with public service colleagues to develop capacity options to address peaks in system demand, and ultimately reduce acute demand through prevention and earlier intervention • To work with GM Resilience colleagues and Bury Resilience Forum to support the mobilisation and support of volunteers to provide capacity and connectivity in future humanitarian and civil emergencies • The conduit to the voluntary sector and front door for residents to seek help or get involved with their community in a voluntary capacity • To facilitate the further identification and support co-ordination of connectors with communities (providing connection to VCFSE activity through promotion and linking of volunteers) 	<p>Promote recognition and value of volunteers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To champion the role and value of volunteers to drive recognition and celebrate this community capacity in the Borough • To promote and encourage increase in promotion of King's Award for Voluntary Services • Developing innovative ways to showcase benefits of volunteering to in turn sustain commitments. • To showcase examples of volunteering from different communities and settings as inspiration for others • Identification and delivery of activities to mark Volunteering Week and Trustees week in the Borough. • To build upon the first two rounds of LET's Value Volunteering grants programme to establish a rolling programme, showcased throughout the year

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION OF GREATER MANCHESTER
AUTHORITIES EXECUTIVE BOARD HELD ON 28 NOVEMBER 2025**

PRESENT:

GMCA Mayor	Andy Burnham (in the Chair)
GMCA	Deputy Mayor Kate Green
Bolton	Councillor Nicholas Peel
Bury	Councillor Lucy Smith
Manchester	Councillor Bev Craig
Oldham	Councillor Arooj Shah
Rochdale	Councillor Neil Emmott
Salford	City Mayor Paul Dennett
Stockport	Councillor Mark Roberts
Tameside	Councillor Eleanor Wills
Trafford	Councillor Tom Ross
Wigan	Councillor David Molyneux

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Group Chief Executive Officer	Caroline Simpson
Group Deputy Chief Executive	Andrew Lightfoot
Group Solicitor & Monitoring Officer	Gill Duckworth
Group Chief Finance Officer	Steve Wilson
Group Secretary	Sarah Horsman
Bolton	Sue Johnson
Bury	Lynne Ridsdale
Manchester	Tom Stannard
Oldham	Shelley Kipling
Rochdale	Kiama Thompson
Salford	Stephen Young
Stockport	Paul Richards
Tameside	Emma Alexander
Trafford	Sara Todd
Wigan	Alison McKenzie-Folan
Office of the GM Mayor	Kevin Lee

TfGM

Steve Warrener

TfGM

Martin Lax

GMCA

Sylvia Welsh

GMCA

Lee Teasdale

AGMA 22/25 APOLOGIES

RESOLVED /-

That apologies be received from Councillor Eamonn O'Brien (Bury), James Binks (Rochdale) & Michael Cullen (Stockport).

AGMA 23/25 CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

There were none.

AGMA 24/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

AGMA 25/25 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 AUGUST 2025

RESOLVED /-

That the minutes of the AGMA Executive Board held on 22 August 2025 be approved.

AGMA 26/25 GREATER MANCHESTER PLANNING ADVISORY UNITS – PROPOSED REFORMS

Deputy Mayor Paul Dennett, Portfolio Leader for Housing First provided an update on the funding arrangements for the 3 Planning Advisory Units and Flood Risk Co-ordinator post to feed into the budget setting process for April 2026 and the strengthening of monitoring and reporting arrangements for the units.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the preferred options for hosting and funding the units as set out in the report be endorsed.
2. That it be recommended to the GMCA that it assumes responsibility for funding the post of Flood Risk Co-ordinator as set out in para 2.4 of the report.
3. That it be agreed that responsibility for management of the Service Level Agreements for the Waste and Minerals Unit, Greater Manchester Archaeology Service and Greater Manchester Ecology Unit be delegated to the GMCA Director for Sustainable Growth and Infrastructure, subject to GMCA approval.
4. That it be agreed that a proportion of Biodiversity Net Gain new burdens funding awarded to the GM Local Planning Authorities by Defra for the 2025/26 financial year be allocated to the GMEU as set out in para 3.6 of the report.
5. That it be agreed in principle that any future Biodiversity Net Gain new burdens funding provided by Defra will be committed to GMEU by the GMCA and 9 of the GM Local Planning Authorities (excluding Stockport) for the financial year 2026/27 subject to allocations and budget approvals.
6. That it be recommended to the GMCA that it funds the Waste and Minerals Unit from the start of the next financial year, such funding being subject to successful budget submission for Housing First priorities through the retained business rates process as set out in para 2.5 of the report.

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED
AUTHORITY HELD ON FRIDAY 12th DECEMBER 2025 AT MANCHESTER CITY
COUNCIL CHAMBER**

PRESENT

GMCA Mayor	Andy Burnham (In the Chair)
GMCA	Deputy Mayor Kate Green
Bolton	Councillor Nicholas Peel
Bury	Councillor Eamonn O'Brien
Manchester	Councillor Bev Craig
Oldham	Councillor Arooj Shah
Rochdale	Councillor Neil Emmott
Salford	City Mayor Paul Dennett
Stockport	Councillor Mark Roberts
Tameside	Councillor Andrew McLaren
Trafford	Councillor Tom Ross
Wigan	Councillor David Molyneux

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Chair of GM Overview & Scrutiny	Councillor John Walsh
Chair of Task and Finish Group	Councillor Helen Hibbert
GM Disabled Peoples Panel	Jas Taylor
GM Disabled Peoples Panel	David Neilbig

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Group Chief Executive Officer	Caroline Simpson
Group Deputy Chief Executive	Andrew Lightfoot
Deputy Monitoring Officer	Sarah Bennett
Group Chief Finance Officer	Steve Wilson
Bolton	Sue Johnson
Bury	Lynne Ridsdale
Manchester	Tom Stannard

Oldham	Shelley Kipling
Rochdale	Julie Murphy
Salford	Stephen Young
Stockport	Michael Cullen
Tameside	Emma Alexander
Trafford	Sara Todd
Wigan	Alison McKenzie-Folan
Office of the GM Mayor	Kevin Lee
TfGM	Martin Lax
TfGM	Steve Warrener
TfGM	Kate Green
GMCA	Sylvia Welsh
GMCA	Lee Teasdale

GMCA 170/25 APOLOGIES

That apologies be received and noted from Councillor Eleanor Wills (Tameside), Gill Duckworth (GMCA) and Sarah Horseman (GMCA).

GMCA 171/25 CHAIRS ANNOUCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, opened by welcoming the positive news, that following the budget, the GMCA received a letter detailing the final version of the outcome of the task and finish process led by the Group Chief Executive with colleagues from the GMCA and government departments. The letter had been signed jointly by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of State for Housing and Local Government, and laid out the next stage for GM devolution including strong backing for the Manchester Baccalaureate as well as the GM Good Growth Fund.

Group Chief Executive Caroline Simpson provided further detail, stating that significant increased investment was being made available to the region. Notably this included a £300m extension to the Housing Loans Investment Fund, a substantial growth flexibility fund that had been put into the growth investment pot for the Good Growth Fund. Also, it would allow for further shaping of the work being done as part

of the national 'Prevention Demonstrator', particularly for departments across Health, Education, Work & Skills and the Treasury.

Tributes were paid following the recent losses of two significant figures in Greater Manchester culture. Ike Alderman, a survivor of Auschwitz who used his experience to embody the best of humanity and inform young people throughout the region of how hate was a disease and must never be allowed to win, and Gary "Mani" Mountfield who as a member of The Stone Roses had spread the music and culture of the region throughout the world.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the update on the Task & Finish Group letter received from government be noted.
2. That the GMCA celebrated the impact of the huge contributions made by Ike Alderman and Gary Mountfield "Mani" to the Greater Manchester region following their recent passing and expresses sincere condolences to their family and friends.

GMCA 172/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED /-

There were none.

GMCA 173/25 GMCA MINUTES 28 NOVEMBER 2025

RESOLVED /-

That the minutes of the GMCA held on 28 November 2025 be approved.

**GMCA 174/25 GMCA RESOURCES COMMITTEE MINUTES 28 NOVEMBER
2025**

RESOLVED /-

That the proceedings of the meeting of the GMCA Resources Committee held on 28 November 2025 be approved.

**GMCA 175/25 MINUTES OF THE GMCA OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON 26 NOVEMBER 2025**

RESOLVED /-

That the proceedings of the meeting of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 26 November 2025 be noted.

**GMCA 176/25 MINUTES OF THE GMCA AUDIT COMMITTEE HELD ON 24
NOVEMBER 2025**

RESOLVED /-

That the proceedings of the meeting of the GMCA Audit Committee meeting held on 24 November 2025 be noted.

**GMCA 177/25 MINUTES OF THE BEE NETWORK COMMITTEE HELD ON 27
NOVEMBER 2025**

RESOLVED /-

That the proceedings of the meeting of the Bee Network Committee meeting held on 27 November 2025 be noted.

**GMCA 178/25 APPOINTMENTS AND NOMINATIONS TO GREATER
MANCHESTER BODIES**

Sarah Bennett, Deputy Monitoring Officer, presented a report setting out further appointments to various Committees and other bodies within the Greater Manchester system of governance

RESOLVED /-

1. That 15 substitute members (11 Labour, 2 Lib Dem, 2 Conservative) be appointed to the GMCA Waste and Re-cycling Committee as follows:

Local Authority	Substitute Member
------------------------	--------------------------

Bolton	Nadeem Ayub (Labour)
Bury	TBC
Rochdale	Mohammed Arshad (Labour)
Manchester	TBC
Oldham	Pamela Byrne (Conservative)
Salford	Arnold Saunders (Conservative)
Stockport	Grace Baynham (Lib Dem)
Tameside	Andrew McLaren (Labour)
Trafford	Simon Lepori (Lib Dem)
Labour GM	Peter Davis (Oldham)
Labour GM	Gina Reynolds (Salford)
Labour GM	David Lancaster (Salford)
Labour GM	Deena Ryness (Stockport)
Labour GM	Hugh Roderick (Tameside)
Labour GM	Olly Baskerville (Trafford)

2. That the appointment of Councillor Gary Lloyd (Wigan, Labour) to the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee, replacing Councillor Joanne Marshall (Wigan, Labour) be approved.
3. That the re-appointment of Grenville Page and Susan Webster as Independent Members to the GMCA Audit Committee, for a period of one year be approved.

GMCA 179/25 UPDATE TO THE CONSTITUTION TO ALLOW ELECTRONIC SEALING

Sarah Bennett, Deputy Monitoring Officer, presented a report seeking agreement for an amendment to the Constitution to enable the GMCA to apply its Common Seal electronically.

RESOLVED /-

That the amendment to the Constitution as detailed in this report, to enable to the GMCA to affix its Common Seal electronically, be approved.

**GMCA 180/25 ON THE RIGHT TRACK FOR GROWTH: THE GREATER
MANCHESTER RAIL VISION TO 2050**

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, presented a report setting out the “On the Right Track for Growth: The Greater Manchester Rail Vision to 2050” – a bold strategy for transforming rail in the city region and underpinning the region’s next decade of growth.

The report set out a bold, long-term strategy for transforming rail in Greater Manchester. It aimed to deliver a modern, integrated, and high-capacity rail network by 2050, positioning Manchester Piccadilly at the heart of growth for the North. The vision was structured around phased improvements to 2030, expansion to 2040, and full transformation by 2050, supporting economic growth, decarbonisation, and improved quality of life. The plan was underpinned by deeper devolution, partnership with government and industry, and a focus on integrating rail into the Bee Network. Key highlights included the following:

- Greater Manchester’s 2050 Rail Vision was a 30-year plan to create a fully integrated, high-frequency, carbon-neutral rail network, supporting 75,000 new homes and £90bn in economic uplift across the North West.
- **Manchester Piccadilly as the Hub:** The strategy placed Manchester Piccadilly at the centre of regional and national connectivity, with plans for new underground infrastructure and expanded services to drive growth and regeneration.
- **Phased Delivery:**
 - By 2030: Integrate local rail into the Bee Network, deliver five new stations, and upgrade all existing stations.
 - By 2040: Expand Metrolink to all boroughs, introduce metro-style services, and regenerate key hubs.
 - By 2050: Achieve a fully integrated, decarbonised, and high-capacity network, including new lines and underground stations.

- **Devolution and Reform:** The vision called for a statutory role for GMCA in rail service specification, fares, and customer standards, working closely with government and the new Great British Railways (GBR) to secure local commissioning powers. This would be pursued through the Railways Bill which was currently going through parliament.
- **Bee Network Rail Integration:** By 2030, eight priority corridors would be integrated, with pilots for enhanced services and accessibility improvements already underway. The Bee Network would deliver multi-modal ticketing and capping, improved customer experience, and regeneration around stations.
- **Fares Reform:** From December 2025, ticketing would be simplified, reducing average fares by 5.6% and paving the way for contactless payments and full integration with the Bee Network.
- **Regeneration and Development:** The programme would unlock land for new housing and regeneration around key stations, supporting inclusive growth and increased rail ridership.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the 'On the Right Track for Growth - Greater Manchester Rail Vision', which has been developed in partnership with GM Local Authorities, the Greater Manchester business community (CBI, BTAC & Chamber of Commerce) and rail industry partners; and the subsequent next steps to develop a joint investment and delivery plan be noted and endorsed.
2. That the update on the Railways Bill legislation be noted.
3. That the ongoing work to deliver Bee Network Rail Integration by 2030 including development work underway with Northern Trains Ltd to assess and scope the case for Greater Manchester part-funding additional rail services in Greater Manchester as part of a Bee Network Rail Integration pilot for the 24-month trial period between December 2027 and December 2029 (i.e. from 2027/28 onwards) be noted.
4. That a future update, to include details of the service enhancements and a proposed funding mechanism, including any implications on the GMCA Transport Revenue Budget be submitted to the GMCA.

GMCA 181/25 FREE ALL DAY BUS TRAVEL FOR OLDER AND DISABLED PEOPLE

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, introduced a report setting out the findings of the Free All Day Bus Travel trials, noting that any decision to remove the 9.30am travel restriction would be subject to finalisation and approval of the GMCA Transport Revenue and Mayoral Budgets; the legal process required to amend the Greater Manchester Local Concessionary Scheme; and approval by the Mayor.

Following the first trial over August 2025, a November trial had been put in place purposefully as one of the busiest months of the year. The headlines findings were similar to those from the August trial, with the majority of older and disabled people using the ability to travel between 9 and 9.30 to avoid the most pressured points of the morning peak, but there was some level of usage during the whole early morning period, with no overcrowding being reported, with drivers having seen no negative effects, and instead avoiding the potential 9.30am bump in demand for services. There would of course be a significant financial aspect to measure in as part of the final decision and this would need to be considered as part of the budget setting process.

The Mayor then invited Jas Taylor to address the GMCA with comments on behalf of the GM Disabled Persons Panel. Jas stated that the bus pass trial had been received with incredible excitement by the members of the Panel and had coincided with their own co-production work on accessibility of city transport. The co-production work had found that there was a stark increase in satisfaction when people were able to use their passes without restriction. One of the focus groups had found that six of the seven attendees had used their bus pass before 9.30am to attend on that morning, something that had not previously been possible. It helped lived engagement, it helped with work opportunities and with securing health appointments, the potential positive knock-on effects of this decision could not be overstated.

Comments and Questions

Councillor Eamonn O'Brien advised that members of the Bee Network Committee regularly commented on the importance of accessibility for all across the GM

transport network, and that if this decision could be taken it would mark a very positive step towards this.

It was noted that proposals around the lifting of such restrictions had been tabled before to the government at the national level. It was felt that GM should use its position to lobby the government to truly consider implementation of this at the national level. The Mayor agreed and asked that the results of the trial be sent on to the Secretary of State for Transport.

Members emphasised the importance of establishing that true growth could not take place without that growth supporting all residents, and it was vital not to look at this through a lens of cost implications over social value.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the findings of the trials be noted.
2. That it be noted that any decision to remove the 9.30am travel restriction would be subject to finalisation and approval of the GMCA Transport Revenue and Mayoral Budgets; the legal process required to amend the Greater Manchester Local Concessionary Scheme; and approval by the Mayor.
3. That the comments made by Jas Taylor on behalf of the GM Disabled Persons Panel be received.
4. That the results of the all day bus travel trial will be sent on to the Secretary of State for Transport.

**GMCA 182/25 IN HER SHOES: REVIEW OF SAFETY FOR WOMEN & GIRLS
ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

Councillor Helen Hibbert, Chair of the Task & Finish Group, was invited to present the final task and finish review of 'In Her Shoes', which has been endorsed by members of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee, GM Joint Health Scrutiny Committee and GM Police, Fire and Crime Panel on the safety of women and girls on public transport and the wider public realm.

It was decided given the time that could be given to such a wide-ranging topic that the focus in this instance would be given to the transport network. However, this was

a significant area and covered many of the portfolios of work undertaken within the Combined Authority. A woman was killed by a man every three days in the UK, 200 rapes were recorded every single day, and it was known that this was significantly underreported. All women had examples of lived experience around normalised abuse towards women. It was important face this head on and fully recognise, understand address these issues, and part of this was a prevention first approach.

The report contained a number of key recommendations, including ensuring strong political and organisational leadership so that the safety of women and girls becomes embedded across all GM portfolios and authorities; the importance of realising it was not just the transport journey itself that was important but equally the journey to and from – and designing the public realm accordingly; and ensuring that data is available to the required level of granularity to inform decision making.

The Mayor welcomed the report, reflecting on work that was taking place to address these issues and how this needed to scale up further. He advised that a detailed report would be prepared on how the recommendations would be addressed.

Kate Green (TfGM) was then invited to make a short presentation to the GMCA on the early findings of the GM TravelSafe Live Chat function and how this could change experiences on public transport.

Deputy Mayor for Safer and Stronger Communities Kate Green was then invited to comment on the involvement of her team and Greater Manchester Police. She stated that the results of the review were stark, and that a situation where over half of the public of the region did not feel absolutely safe when making use of the network was not acceptable. The full context of safety for women & girls, including the broader picture around travelling to and from the network formed a central tenet within the 10-year Gender Based Violence Strategy. Further detail was also provided on a number of safety initiatives and preventative/educational work running across the region.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the final review be endorsed.
2. That the update on the review made by the Chair, Councillor Helen Hibbert, be received.

3. That the presentation highlighting the early impact of TravelSafe Live Chat be received.
4. That a detailed response to the Task & Finish Group recommendations be submitted to the GMCA.

GMCA 183/25 A NEW MODEL OF PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY: LIVE WELL, PREVENTION DEMONSTRATOR & ECONOMIC INACTIVITY TRAILBLAZER DEEP DIVE

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester and Caroline Simpson, Group Chief Executive, presented a report setting out an update on the delivery of Live Well as the driving force of a new model of public service delivery across the city region.

Greater Manchester faced deepening inequalities and rising demand on services. Achieving a new model of public service requires rebuilding trust and embedding participation from communities. Live Well was a unique opportunity for democratic renewal, combining grassroots participation and representative democracy to transform public services. The Participation Playbook signalled this step-change—kickstarting a process that would strengthen the relationship between communities, public services, and the local state.

The Participation Playbook demonstrated Greater Manchester’s commitment to making participation central to achieving GMS aims—reducing inequalities, prevention, trust, community power, and better outcomes. It provided shared language, practical methods, and starting points for councils, VCFSE organisations, universities, and national partners, showing that the system was ready to take participation forward.

The 11 November Participation Playbook launch had marked a significant milestone in Greater Manchester’s journey towards becoming a truly participatory city-region. It brought together over 250 people from every part of the system, demonstrating both the scale of interest and the collective readiness to embed participation as core to how GM works. The event showcased practical participatory methods, generated collective commitments, and demonstrated the passion and readiness across the system to embed participation as a defining feature of how GM works.

There were some immediate behaviour change and follow-on Actions already underway including:

- Manchester Metropolitan University embedding Playbook principles into equitable research practices and aligning work with the GM Respectful Research Charter.
- Manchester City Council exploring use of the Playbook in adult social care transformation.
- Odd Arts convening a community-led proposal for Hulme's community centre the same week.
- CAMHS teams beginning to use Playbook tools in children and young people's participation.
- VCFSE organisations including Bolton Together, Trafford networks and GM System Shifters beginning to use Playbook materials for training and development.
- Health Innovation Manchester, GM Mental Health Network and several housing partners exploring how the Playbook can support service design.

Mayor Burnham invited Cllr John Walsh, as the Chair of the GM Overview & Scrutiny Committee to provide the Committee's feedback following a recent discussion. He stated that this included a wish to see prioritisation of integration with primary care; the welcoming of 50% of Live Well funding being allocated to the VCSFE sector; the importance of developing collaborative approaches to data sharing & evaluation frameworks; and ensuring that Live Well remained accessible, flexible and appropriately resourced to avoid overload and maintain high quality levels.

RESOLVED /-

1. That support be given to taking Live Well to the next level throughout 2026 by making it a visible, practical offer for residents. This would include embedding Live Well in each locality and harnessing the power of local partnerships to deliver integrated, accessible support.

2. That it be noted that this next step is vital to strengthen and accelerate prevention in practice, ensuring Live Well continues to be a driving force for better outcomes for residents across Greater Manchester.
3. That the comments highlighted on behalf of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee be received.

GMCA 184/25 COMMISSIONING BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN IN GREATER MANCHESTER

Councillor Tom Ross, Portfolio Leader for Green City Region, provided an update report on the progress made on outlining a proposal for the GMCA to establish an Off-Site Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Responsible Body Service for the Greater Manchester local authorities. The service was designed to help the GM local authorities meet the Environment Act 2021 requirement for a 10% biodiversity uplift in new developments, particularly when this could not be achieved on-site.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the background to the Responsible Body Service be noted.
2. That the commissioning of the Responsible Body Service be approved.
3. That the authority be delegated to the Managing Director of GMCA, in consultation with the Group Chief Finance Officer and Group Solicitor and Monitoring Officer, to enter into agreements with the Local Authorities as described in Clause 5.2.

GMCA 185/25 REVENUE BUDGET UPDATE – QUARTER 2

Councillor David Molyneux, Portfolio Lead for Resources & Investment, presented a report informing members of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority financial position at the end of September 2025 (Quarter 2) and forecast revenue outturn position for the 2025/26 financial year.

RESOLVED /-

That the forecast position at 30th September 2025 be noted.

GMCA 186/25 CAPITAL BUDGET UPDATE – QUARTER 2

Councillor David Molyneux, Portfolio Lead for Resources & Investment, presented a report providing an update in relation to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority's 2025/26 capital expenditure programme.

RESOLVED /-

That the current 2025/26 forecast of £620.4m compared to the previous forecast of £652.9m be noted.

**GMCA 187/25 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT AND
ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY MID-YEAR REVIEW
REPORT 2025/26**

Councillor David Molyneux, Portfolio Lead for Resources & Investment, presented a report containing the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy Mid-Year Review Report 2025/26.

RESOLVED /-

That the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy Mid-Year Review Report 2025/26 be approved.

**GMCA 188/25 GREATER MANCHESTER INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK
REQUESTS**

Councillor David Molyneux, Portfolio Lead for Resources & Investment, presented a report seeking approval for an equity investment of up to £500,000 to C3 Biotechnologies Limited.

RESOLVED /-

1. That an equity investment of up to £500,000 to C3 Biotechnologies Limited be approved.
2. That authority be delegated to the GMCA Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the GMCA Solicitor and Monitoring Officer, to review the due diligence information in respect of the above investments, and, subject to their

satisfactory review and agreement of the due diligence information and the overall detailed commercial terms of the investments, to sign off any outstanding conditions, issue final approvals and complete any necessary related documentation in respect of the investments noted above.

GMCA 189/25 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

That, under section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public should be excluded from the meeting for the following items on business on the grounds that this involved the likely disclosure of exempt information, as set out in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

**GMCA 190/25 GREATER MANCHESTER INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK
REQUESTS**

Councillor David Molyneux, Portfolio Lead for Resources & Investment, presented a report seeking approval for an equity investment of up to £500,000 to C3 Biotechnologies Limited.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the contents of the report be noted.

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED
AUTHORITY HELD ON FRIDAY 30th JANUARY 2026 AT STOCKPORT TOWN
HALL**

PRESENT

GMCA Mayor	Andy Burnham (In the Chair)
GMCA	Deputy Mayor Kate Green
Bolton	Councillor Nicholas Peel
Bury	Councillor Lucy Smith
Manchester	Councillor Bev Craig
Oldham	Councillor Arooj Shah
Rochdale	Councillor Neil Emmott
Salford	City Mayor Paul Dennett
Stockport	Councillor Mark Roberts
Tameside	Councillor Eleanor Wills
Trafford	Councillor Tom Ross
Wigan	Councillor Nazia Rehman

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Chair of GM Overview & Scrutiny	Councillor John Walsh
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OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Group Chief Executive Officer	Caroline Simpson
Group Deputy Chief Executive	Andrew Lightfoot
Group Monitoring Officer	Gill Duckworth
Group Chief Finance Officer	Steve Wilson
GMCA Secretary	Sarah Horseman
Bolton	Sue Johnson
Bury	Lynne Ridsdale
Manchester	Tom Stannard
Oldham	Shelley Kipling
Rochdale	Julie Murphy

Salford	Stephen Young
Stockport	Michael Cullen
Tameside	Emma Alexander
Trafford	Sara Todd
Wigan	Lewis Greenwood
Office of the GM Mayor	Kevin Lee
TfGM	Martin Lax
TfGM	Danny Vaughan
GMFRS	DCFO Carlos Meakin
GMCA	Nicola Ward
GMCA	Lee Teasdale

GMCA 01/26 APOLOGIES

That apologies be received and noted from Councillor Eamonn O'Brien (Bury), Councillor David Molyneux (Wigan) Alison McKenzie-Folan (Wigan) & Steve Warrener (TfGM).

GMCA 02/26 CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, opened by expressing congratulations to Councillor Bev Craig, and Transport Commissioner Vernon Everitt, who had been awarded an OBE and a CBE respectively in the King's New Years Honours list.

An update was provided on the government announcement around Northern Powerhouse Rail. This was a significant achievement for the city region to receive this firm commitment to a new line to the west of the Pennines, which Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) and partners had worked hard to secure through a team effort. An underground station was now a possibility at Piccadilly Station and the Transport Commissioner together with TfGM officers was working on a feasibility study to take this to the next stage. This all underpins the growth work taking place throughout the region.

An update was provided on the work taking place to support hackney carriages and private hire vehicle operators in the region transition to cleaner vehicles. The £8m hackney funding provided by government had opened up to applications before Christmas, 190 applications had been received to date with 150 of these approved to date. However, there was still a challenge around private hire vehicles in the region, particularly around vehicles licensed outside of the region. With this in mind, Leaders had agreed an additional £4.45m, subject to approval within the budget, to provide an extra fund for transition to cleaner vehicles, exclusively to private hire vehicle operators licensed within GM. The funding would come either via a £5000 interest free loan or a £1000 grant to support the necessary upgrades.

RESOLVED /-

1. That GMCA representatives awarded in the King's New Years Honours be congratulated, including Cllr Bev Craig (OBE) and Transport Commissioner Vernon Everitt (CBE).
2. That the update on the Northern Powerhouse Rail bill and the associated growth opportunities be received.
3. That the update on the £4.45m fund to support Greater Manchester registered private hire vehicle operators in bringing their vehicles to compliance be received, and it be noted that the fund will be subject to approval within the budget process.

GMCA 03/26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED /-

There were none.

GMCA 04/26 GMCA MINUTES 12 DECEMBER 2025

RESOLVED /-

That the minutes of the GMCA held on 12 December 2025 be approved.

GMCA 05/26 BEE NETWORK COMMITTEE MINUTES 11 DECEMBER 2025

RESOLVED /-

That the proceedings of the meeting of the Bee Network Committee held on 11 December 2025 be noted.

**GMCA 06/26 MINUTES OF THE GMCA OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON 10 DECEMBER 2025**

RESOLVED /-

That the proceedings of the meeting of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 10 December 2025 be noted.

**GMCA 07/26 MAYORAL GENERAL BUDGET AND PRECEPT PROPOSALS
– 2026/27**

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester presented a report setting out the proposals for the Mayoral General Budget and precept for 2026-27 for consideration by the members of the GMCA. The proposals being made included the budget for the Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service which was a mayoral responsibility in Greater Manchester.

The ask for 2026-27 was to increase the Mayoral General Precept by £25 a year to £153.95 for a Band D property, less for lower bands, under which the vast majority of GM housing fell. This would comprise a £6 increase in the precept for Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Services (GMFRS), and a £19 increase for other Mayoral general functions.

The Mayor highlighted the achievements of GMFRS in recent years and how the service had improved over his tenure. A wholesale culture change had been seen in GMFRS, and this had recently been demonstrated on 2nd October 2025, where Operation Plato had been called upon in response to the Heaton Park Synagogue Attack. GMFRS was one of only two Fire & Rescue Services in the country fully trained to respond to a marauding terrorist attack and a crew at that time on the way to another job took the decision to divert to Heaton Park synagogue and had supported the utterly critical situation. It was vital to sustain the progress that had been made to date, in what was the only fire service in the country currently adding

fire pumps with operation capability to its fleet, and the highest number of firefighters seen in the last decade.

Deputy Mayor for Safer & Stronger Communities Kate Green added that GMFRS was now in a stronger position after a considerable effort by Fire Service leads and staff following a difficult funding settlement the previous year. The multi-year funding settlement for the coming year was more encouraging and would provide the service with a more stable base. Allowing them to plan over the longer term and providing scope for more investment into an aging fire estate.

Mayor Andy Burnham highlighted the progress of the Bee Network to date, which had seen all developments so far delivered on time and to budget. Reference was made to the contribution of local authorities and the deferment of these contributions in recent years due to difficult financial constraints. It was advised that this precept, if passed, based on individual circumstances, could allow scope for them to be released from these obligations in a way that was also manageable for the Bee Network. Reference was also made to plans around removing the time restrictions on concessionary passes, retaining the £2 fare cap for the remainder of 2026 and the further embedding and enhancement of TravelSafe Live Chat and other safety measures ensuring that the transport network becomes the '11th district' of GM.

Councillor John Walsh, Chair of the GM Overview & Scrutiny Committee was then invited to feedback following the Committee's recent consideration of the Mayor's budget proposals. The Committee made a number of observations and recommendations including the warm welcoming of the fire budgetary proposals, the continuation of the Bed Every Night scheme and the removal of the current 9.30am concessionary cap. The Committee also fully welcomed the work being undertaken to enhance TravelSafe and the aspiration to go further with night bus services was encouraged, with the suggestion that a dynamic pricing model might make a wider roll out more financially viable. The Committee would also welcome the unfreezing of the reserve transitional cost monies currently committed to the Bee Network to help local authorities to meet some of their budgetary shortfalls.

The Mayor welcomed the comments of the Committee and stated that further consideration would be given to the prospect of a dynamic pricing model or a more demand led service on night buses. In relation to the Bee Network transitional costs

and the releasing of some of these funds, the Mayor would ask that the Group Chief Executive and Group Treasurer liaise with GM Local Authority leads on the best use of earmarked reserves following the Fair Funding Review.

Comments and Questions

Members welcomed the funding being invested into the Bee Network stating that residents felt real tangible benefits from the enhancements being put in place, particularly people in the region with fewer financial resources.

Reference was made to the Bed Every Night scheme, with it being highlighted that the current government had made significant changes with regards to tackling the housing and homelessness crisis, with the introduction of the Renters Rights Act and the significant reduction of discounts in the Right to Buy model which had taken a lot of social housing out of the system. 60% of the Affordable Homes Programme would also be used to fund social housing. The Bed Every Night scheme within GM had invested £33m over the past five years and rough sleeper numbers had significantly reduced as a consequence.

RESOLVED /-

1. That consideration be given to Mayor's proposal to increase the Mayoral General Precept by £25 to £153.95 (for a Band D property), comprising of:
 - i) Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Services - precept of £92.20 (**£6 increase**);
 - ii) Other Mayoral General functions - precept of £61.75 (**£19 increase**).

2. That the following be noted:
 - i) the overall budget proposed for the Fire and Rescue Service,
 - ii) the use of the reserves to support the revenue and capital budgets, and the assessment by the Treasurer that the reserves as at March 2026 are adequate,
 - iii) the proposed Fire Service capital programme and proposals for funding,
 - iv) the medium-term financial position for the Fire and Rescue Service covered by the Mayoral precept

3. That the detailed budget proposals for other Mayoral general functions be noted.
4. That the use of reserves as set out in Paragraph 3.3 of the report be noted.
5. That consideration be given to the submission of any written comments to the Mayor in line with the legal process and timetable described in this report.
6. That it be noted that at its meeting at its meeting on 13th February 2026 there will be an updated budget submitted, consistent with the precept proposals, to reflect final tax base and collection fund calculations and the final baseline funding settlement.
7. That the comments raised through the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee be received and noted.
8. That the Mayor would ask the Group Chief Executive and Group Treasurer to liaise with GM Local Authorities on the best use of earmarked reserves following the Fair Funding Review.

GMCA 08/26 CREATION OF OLDHAM MAYORAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION: IN PRINCIPLE DECISION

Councillor Bev Craig, Portfolio Lead for Economy, Business and Inclusive Growth, presented a report seeking approval in principle to the creation of a Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) for Oldham, with further details and decisions to follow as set out in this paper.

Councillor Arooj Shah, as Leader of Oldham Council, was invited to provide her thoughts on the MDC. It was stated that there was huge positivity and excitement around the proposals, which had been clear at the launch of SportsTown Oldham earlier that week. There had been a perception in recent years that Oldham had been ‘on its knees’ and had needed to go cap in hand for investment, but the MDC felt like a true partnership.

The MDC would see the development of SportsTown, Northern Roots green space and the town centre regeneration plans. All were driven by a singular ambition to make a difference to the lives of the residents of Oldham borough. Together these projects would shape a new Oldham that would regenerate the area and in the case of SportsTown, put Oldham firmly on the sporting map.

The Mayor welcomed the comments and referenced Frank Rothwell the Chairman of Oldham Athletic and the work he had done to regenerate the club and act as a driving force behind SportsTown.

RESOLVED /-

1. That agreement be given in principle to the creation of a Mayoral Development Corporation for Oldham.
2. That it be agreed that GMCA officers can explore with Oldham Council detailed options for a Mayoral Development Corporation to be created for Oldham, with these matters to be decided upon by GMCA and the Council in due course.

**GMCA 09/26 CREATION OF BOLTON TOWN CENTRE MAYORAL
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION: IN PRINCIPLE DECISION**

Councillor Bev Craig, Portfolio Lead for Economy, Business and Inclusive Growth, presented a report seeking approval in principle to the creation of a Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) for Bolton Town Centre, with further details and decisions to follow as set out in this paper.

Councillor Nicholas Peel, as Leader of Bolton Council, was invited to provide his thoughts on the MDC. He stated that this was part of the wider Bolton to Wigan growth corridor strategy known as NorthFold. Transformational changes were now developing at pace within Bolton Town Centre and a new major development partner was due to be announced on the following Monday with a £200m redevelopment scheme, which the MDC would wrap around with additional stability and focus.

The Mayor welcomed the comments, reflecting on how Bolton had been a major shopping destination in previous years, with grand architecture. However, given the national economy moving away from a town centre retail focus, Bolton had been hit particularly hard, and the developments pointed the way to a brighter future.

Councillor John Walsh was invited to comment. Stating the vital importance of ensuring an appropriate scrutiny function was put in place to ensure that the Mayoral Development Corporations had appropriate checks and balances in place. The Mayor agreed with the importance of this, and stated that the Group Monitoring

Officer would be asked to establish a best way forward on this as the constitutions for the MDCs were developed.

RESOLVED /-

1. That agreement be given in principle to the creation of a Mayoral Development Corporation for Bolton Town Centre.
2. That it be agreed that GMCA officers can explore with Bolton Council detailed options for a Mayoral Development Corporation to be created for Bolton Town Centre, with these matters to be decided upon by GMCA and the Council in due course.
3. That the Group Monitoring Officer will establish the best approach for the future scrutiny of Mayoral Development Corporations.

**GMCA 10/26 CREATION OF ASHTON & STALYBRIDGE MAYORAL
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION: IN PRINCIPLE DECISION**

Councillor Bev Craig, Portfolio Lead for Economy, Business and Inclusive Growth, presented a report seeking approval in principle to the creation of a Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) for Ashton & Stalybridge, with further details and decisions to follow as set out in this paper.

Councillor Eleanor Wills, as Leader of Tameside Council, was invited to provide her thoughts on the MDC. This was an important moment in Tameside's ambition to deliver transport led regeneration. Major progressive change was being seen through Levelling Up investment and the transport led MDC would drive the vision of rail connectivity as a key driver in this regeneration.

The Mayor welcomed the comments, noting that the Ashton line would be the first rail line to move to GM Rail and enter the Bee Network in 2027.

RESOLVED /-

1. That agreement be given in principle to the creation of a Mayoral Development Corporation for Ashton and Stalybridge.
2. That it be agreed that GMCA officers can explore with Tameside Council detailed options to set up a Mayoral Development Corporation for Ashton

and Stalybridge, with these matters to be decided upon by GMCA and the Council in due course.

GMCA 11/26 GREATER MANCHESTER HOUSING INVESTMENT – GRANT VARIATIONS

City Mayor Paul Dennett, Portfolio Lead for Housing First, presented a report seeks GMCA approval to vary the amount of or other terms of various grants being provided from the GM Brownfield Housing Fund.

The Mayor welcomed the report stating that this tied into the work taking place around the Good Growth Fund.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the increased grants and/or change to grant recipient for the schemes previously approved by GMCA for funding set out in the table below be approved:

SCHEME	GRANT RECIPIENT	DISTRICT	GRANT
Grant increases			
Adelphi - Farmer Norton Phase 1	English Cities Fund	Salford	£2.370 m
Adelphi - Willohaus 2	Legal & General Affordable Homes	Salford	£4.420 m
Adelphi - Plot A1 New Bailey	English Cities Fund / a Registered Provider	Salford	£5.670 m
Change in Grant Recipient			
Prince's Gate Phase 1	Legal & General Affordable Homes	Oldham	£9.930 m

2. That authority be delegated to the Combined Authority Group Chief Finance Officer and GMCA Monitoring Officer to review the due diligence information in respect of the above investments, and, subject to their satisfactory review and agreement of the due diligence information and the overall detailed

commercial terms of the investments, to sign off any outstanding conditions, issue final approvals and complete any necessary related documentation in respect of these.

GMCA 12/26 GREATER MANCHESTER DIGITAL BLUEPRINT

Councillor Nicholas Peel, Portfolio Lead for Digital, presented a report seeking support for the overall approach to refreshing the GM Digital Blueprint 2023-2026, including endorsement for the proposed co-design of an updated Blueprint with localities and other public sector partners, reflecting the ambitions set out in the Greater Manchester Strategy.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the progress made against the GM Digital Blueprint 2023-26 ambitions be noted.
2. That the changes in local and national context that have implications for the Blueprint refresh be noted
3. That support be given to the proposal for the Blueprint refresh and its scope and approach.
4. That support be given to the Digital Portfolio Lead Chief Executive acting as Senior Responsible Owner, and the Digital Portfolio Leader, acting as Sponsor.
5. That support be given to the refresh process to ensure the Digital Blueprint remains reflective of locality, partner and portfolio priorities.

**GMCA 13/26 GREATER MANCHESTER INTERIM RECYCLING AND
WASTE PLAN**

Councillor Tom Ross, Portfolio Leader for Green City Region, provided an overview of English waste policy and the Greater Manchester Interim Recycling and Waste Plan that set out actions to be taken to enable GMCA to develop a long-term waste strategy in the future.

Councillor John Walsh was invited to feedback on comments raised by the GM Overview & Scrutiny Committee. Members had expressed some concerns around the

viability of the deposit return scheme; concerns were also expressed around the cost of the emissions training scheme and the lack of funding currently available; and green waste being dealt with in differing ways across the region. Cross boundary pressures due to closure of waste facilities were also highlighted as a concern for residents – and that a resident check policy could help in addressing these issues.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the contents of the report be noted.
2. That the Greater Manchester Interim Recycling and Waste Plan 2026 – 2030 be approved.
3. That the comments of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee be received and noted.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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