AGENDA FOR

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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To: All Members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillors : J Southworth, M Rahimov, T Pilkington, L Ryder, A Chaudhry, N Bayley, S Haroon, C Birchmore, J Sheppard, J Rydeheard and J Roith

Dear Member/Colleague

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee which will be held as follows:-

Date:	Thursday, 16 July 2026
Place:	Council Chamber, Bury Town Hall
Time:	7.00 pm
Briefing Facilities:	If Opposition Members and Co-opted Members require briefing on any particular item on the Agenda, the appropriate Director/Senior Officer originating the related report should be contacted.
Notes:	

AGENDA

1 APOLOGIES

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to consider whether they have an interest in any matters on the agenda and, if so, to formally declare that interest.

3 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A period of 30 minutes has been set aside for members of the public to ask questions on matters considered at the last meeting and set out in the minutes or on the agenda for tonight's meeting.

4 MEMBER QUESTION TIME

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

5 MINUTES *(Pages 3 - 16)*

Minutes from the meeting held on 29th June 2026 are attached.

6 HOUSING SERVICES UPDATE *(Pages 17 - 44)*

Report attached to be supported by Cllr Arif Cabinet Member for Housing Services

7 CORPORATE PLAN QUARTER FOUR 2025-26 PERFORMANCE & DELIVERY *(Pages 45 - 66)*

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

8 FINANCE UPDATE REPORT - 2025/26 OUTTURN POSITION *(Pages 67 - 96)*

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

9 URGENT BUSINESS

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

Agenda Item 5

Minutes of: **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Date of Meeting: 29 June 2026

Present: Councillor C Birchmore
Councillors J Southworth, M Rahimov, T Pilkington, L Ryder, A Chaudhry, N Bayley, S Haroon, J Sheppard and J Rydeheard

Also in attendance: Councillor E O'Brien Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth
Crispian Logue Assistant Director of Strategy, Planning & Development
David Wiggins Service Manager - Strategic Planning & Infrastructure
Frances Smith Planning Officer
Jacqui Dennis Monitoring Officer
Josh Ashworth Democratic Services

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

Apologies for Absence: Councillor J Roith

OSC.97 APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIR

The monitoring officer briefed the committee around the situation of the chair standing down therefore the committee would have to vote for the chair of the committee for this meeting only.

Councillor Rydeheard was put forward to chair the meeting and a vote commenced, all members present voted for Councillor Rydeheard to be the chair for the meeting, these being Cllr Bayley, Cllr Birchmore, Cllr Rahimov, Cllr Pilkington, Cllr Ryder, Cllr Chaudhry, Cllr Sheppard and Cllr Southworth

Cllr Roith sent his apologies for the meeting and Cllr Haroon was absent for the vote.

OSC.98 APOLOGIES

Apologies are noted above

OSC.99 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declaration(s) of interest were made…

Councillor Birchmore declared an interest as being on the committee for Bury Folk Keep it Green in relation to the Local Plan, Elton Reservoir Development Framework and the Walshaw Development Framework.

Councillor Sheppard declared an interest as being a member of Bury Folk Keep it Green

OSC.100 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The following questions were received by three members of the public attending

Danielle Davis asked Before adopting the Simister Bowlee Development Framework, can officers confirm whether any strategic assessment has been undertaken demonstrating that the proposed development can be accommodated within existing highway and drainage networks during the first five years of delivery? If such an assessment exists, where is it published within the evidence base; if not, why is the Council satisfied that the SPD provides a robust framework for development?

Councillor O'Brien responded In terms of evidence to date, the frameworks are largely reliant on the evidence documents that were produced at the Public Examination stage, which sought to assess the cumulative impact of all of the site allocations over the nine Greater Manchester districts. This included strategic evidence relating to highways and other infrastructure, with the Inspectors concluding that existing or new infrastructure could accommodate the level of growth proposed

This conclusion did not just relate to the first five years of the plan, but the full proposed development within the plan period.

The evidence produced for that plan was strategic and the Inspectors concluded that all of the proposed development in the employment and housing supply could be accommodated within the geographical area. This included highways and other infrastructure. The strategic evidence supporting the PfE can be found on the Combined Authority's web pages.

The Council is satisfied that this evidence is proportionate to where the sites are in the planning process, given the fact the frameworks are largely providing clarity on policy requirements and setting out the future evidence that will be needed to address detailed issues. It is a robust document because adopting it will give the local planning authorities greater control to shape and influence development across the sites.

For example, future planning applications will need to be accompanied by site wide Transport Assessments that will assess the impact of the development on the highway network and to identify appropriate mitigation measures are put in place. Likewise, appropriate measures will need to be put in place to deal with flood or drainage issues.

James Tierney asked The councils own consultation report acknowledges there is no public foul sewer capacity serving the area. Can the cabinet confirm whether united utilities has identified costed and funded a foul drainage solution capable of serving All 1550 proposed homes

Councillor O'Brien replied Wastewater network reinforcement for large development sites is assessed in stages, with clear responsibilities for funding.

Broadly, on-site foul drainage infrastructure (such as pipes within the development and connections to the network) is the responsibility of the developer. Off-site reinforcement to the public sewer network, where required to accommodate additional flows, may be delivered by United Utilities and is funded through the infrastructure charging regime paid by developers when connecting to the water and wastewater network.

For allocations such as Simister and Bowlee, a fully costed and defined foul drainage solution is not established at this stage; instead, this is progressed once a foul drainage strategy is prepared.

It is understood that engagement between the site promoter and United Utilities is underway, in preparation for future planning applications – and in accordance with the requirements set out in the Development Framework.
This engagement will enable United Utilities to assess the impact on the existing network and determine whether any off-site reinforcement is necessary, alongside consideration of how any such requirements would be prioritised and aligned with the timing of development.

Lindsay Bothwell asked for the record, the Council is currently including approximately 90 dwellings from the Simister Bowlee allocation (JPA1.2) within its five-year housing land supply.

Can officers identify the specific strategic evidence or assessments that were relied upon to conclude that this level of delivery is deliverable within five years in infrastructure terms, particularly in relation to highways and drainage constraints, and confirm where this assessment is recorded within the evidence base supporting the Development Framework/SPD?

In addition, can officers confirm how the material considerations arising from known infrastructure constraints, and the revision of the assumed capacity from approximately 170 dwellings to approximately 90 dwellings, were assessed through the plan-making process, and where that assessment is documented?

For clarity, this question relates to the strategic evidence base for deliverability assumptions at plan-making stage, not detailed design or planning application matters.

Councillor O'Brien responded the reference to 90 homes has been taken from the Council's Five Year Supply Statement 2025 which provides an assessment of the amount of housing that is expected to be delivered on identified sites across the Borough over the next five years. This figure represents an indicative snapshot in time based on the information available at the point the assessment was undertaken. The figure is subject to change and does not form part of the Simister Bowlee Development Framework.

The 2025 five year supply position was based on indications from the site promoters that the first housing completions will be within 5 years, and is therefore in accordance with the NPPF definition of "deliverable". To be considered deliverable, sites for housing should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within 5 years.

There is no requirement for the five year supply to be backed up by the full level of evidence on highways and drainage constraints that may be expected to accompany a planning application, and as a result there is no such evidence sitting behind the 90 dwelling figure.

For this site, the assumption is based on progress being made towards the submission of a planning application, the developers' delivery intentions and anticipated start and build-out rates. The figure of 90 units is simply an indicative scenario and is subject to change.

The infrastructure on the site will be developed before or alongside housing on this site. The type and nature of that infrastructure will relate to a phasing strategy that will reflect update evidence on the site.

The 2025 five year supply has been updated from previous versions to reflect the updated position at the time it was published. The amount of development from the site within the five year supply has been reduced down as more information has come forward to indicate that less development would be delivered from previous assessments.

The assessment now reflects the fact that the site does not have an adopted SPD as yet, nor a planning application submitted and also builds in sufficient time for such an application to be developed, submitted and determined by the planning authorities. There would then be a period of time (assuming permission was granted) before units would actually be completed once the site commences development on infrastructure and ground works.

The next five year supply update will be the 2026 version, and this will take account of the most recent information on the site and the trajectory for that five year period may change again. Assuming the frameworks get approved, a new housing trajectory may be appropriate within that five year period.

Five year supply considerations did not form part of the PfE examination, but it was the wider supply that was considered in terms of ensuring that sufficient land for housing was identified to meet the Government's housing targets.

OSC.101 MEMBER QUESTION TIME

The following question was submitted in advance of the meeting by **Councillor D Vernon**

Given that the adopted Places for Everyone Plan and the emerging Bury Local Plan are intended to provide a comprehensive and plan-led approach to meeting the borough's housing needs, what is the Council's position on speculative development proposals and pre-application discussions on Green Belt land outside the sites allocated through PfE, particularly concerning land off Starling Road, bordering my ward.

Response from Councillor O'Brien The Places for Everyone Plan does provide a plan led approach that has released land to meet the Borough's long term housing needs.

By working with the other 8 districts in PfE, we were able to minimise the amount of land that was needed and, as a result, a have a lower housing target than would otherwise have been the case if we were not part of the plan. Nearly 25% of our housing targets are now being met elsewhere in the conurbation.

Nevertheless, we still need to demonstrate that sufficient land and development is coming forward in the Borough and if we are unable to bring sites forward as envisaged in trajectories, then this does put other land at threat of development.

That is why it is critical to get these strategic sites moving, with the Development Frameworks paving the way forward for future planning applications and delivery of housing.

Councillor Vernon asked furthermore, can the Cabinet Member confirm whether the Council will robustly resist any attempts to secure additional Green Belt releases through speculative applications, where those sites are not allocated within the adopted development plan and where no evidence has been presented demonstrating an unmet housing requirement beyond that already provided for through PfE?"

We cannot stop planning applications being submitted on land that is not identified as development land. This includes applications that may come forward as Green Belt land.

Each planning application will be considered on its merits, against national, regional and local policy.

Unfortunately, we cannot comment on speculative applications, which will need to go through the statutory planning process.

However, it can be said that the Council stands a much greater change of resisting such proposals if it can demonstrate that housing sites are coming forward and meeting the short term and longer-term housing needs of the Borough.
This is why we want to get these Development Frameworks in place, to allow these sites to come forward but to come forward in a manner that we want.

OSC.102 MINUTES

That the minutes of the meeting held on 10th February 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

To note it was raised around a request from the previous meeting that there should have been an additional meeting to scrutinize the development frameworks which was missed from the minutes, this was noted and explained this did not happen due to pre-election periods. The minutes will not be altered but it was noted that this was missed off the actions.

OSC.103 APPOINTMENT OF CORPORATE PARENTING CHAMPION

Councillor Pilkington agreed to be the corporate parrenting champion for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

OSC.104 BURY WEST TRANSPORT FRAMEWORK

The item was included for information following the request from the previous chair, the report was taken as read and wasn't presented.

Cllr Southworth asked about the timescales for the Travel Plan and whether a phased approach would be adopted, recognising that some elements may be easier to deliver in the early stages whilst others, particularly those relating to schools, may need to come forward later. He suggested that flexibility would be required as the proposals develop.

Cllr Bayley welcomed the additional transport capacity proposed and sought clarification on how many tram services could ultimately operate between Bury and Manchester. He noted that limitations in the electricity supply and overhead line infrastructure had previously been identified as barriers to increasing service frequencies and asked how these issues would be addressed. He also queried whether frequencies could be increased to four-minute intervals and asked about TfGM's investigation of underground options and how the growing communities along the route were being considered. Cllr Birchmore commented that infrastructure improvements had already been undertaken in some locations to accommodate double-tram operation.

In response, the Leader stated that both the necessary infrastructure and electricity supply would need to be considered as part of future capacity improvements. He added that the Council should be proud of the work being undertaken in relation to renewable energy, which would support future transport ambitions.

Cllr Pilkington, as Corporate Parenting Champion, asked what opportunities the proposals would create for looked-after children and care leavers. The Leader responded that TfGM would be exploring funding opportunities and increasing the number of placements and employment opportunities associated with major projects. He stressed the importance of ensuring that looked-after children benefit from these opportunities and suggested this could form a stronger part of the Council's Social Value Strategy.

Cllr Rydeheard highlighted the importance of ensuring that policies were aligned with the build-out of developments and argued that overarching policy commitments should be agreed before, or at least concurrently with, development taking place. He expressed concern that commitments should not be allowed to fall away once development had progressed.

Referring to page 49 of the report, Cllr Rydeheard asked for further detail on the proposed fully accessible walking and cycling route and specifically where it would connect in relation to Darlington Street. The Leader responded that further details would emerge through the preparation of draft plans and future public consultation exercises. He emphasised the need to maintain a balance between the requirements of pedestrians, cyclists and motorists, and committed to considering the detail in an open and transparent way. Cris Logue added that work was taking place between the Council's Highways Team, TfGM and wider city-region transport partners.
Cllr Rahimov asked whether the proposed Metrolink stop at Elton Reservoir would operate as a park-and-ride facility and whether that position could change. The Leader advised that a park-and-ride facility reflected TfGM's current intentions for the site and had therefore been included within the plan.

However, he emphasised that the proposal remained indicative and was not fixed. While views differed, with some residents concerned that it could encourage additional car journeys, there was also recognised demand for such a facility, and it remained part of the current proposals.

Returning to cycling provision, Cllr Bayley expressed disappointment with the projected cycling mode share figures and suggested that measures such as 20mph speed limits could help encourage greater uptake. He asked whether new development areas would provide wider roads and sufficient infrastructure for cyclists. It was explained that the proposals would enable the development of cycling infrastructure, with cycling provision forming an integral part of future transport schemes. The importance of creating a connected network and providing safe, segregated cycling routes wherever possible was emphasised.

It Was Agreed:

- The report be noted

OSC.105 BURY LOCAL PLAN

The Chair invited Councillor E. O'Brien, Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth, to present a brief overview of the report that had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Councillor O'Brien outlined the next steps in progressing the Local Plan site allocations and the associated Development Frameworks, emphasising their role in bringing forward strategic housing sites and supporting the delivery of the borough's housing requirements.

Councillor Southworth raised concerns regarding a number of outline planning applications in Bury North on land currently designated as Green Belt, where applicants were seeking to classify sites as "grey belt". He asked whether one of the aims of the PfE strategy was to reduce infilling within existing communities and ease pressure on local infrastructure, and what incentives existed for developers to prioritise allocated PfE sites.

In response, Councillor O'Brien stated that every planning application must be determined on its own merits against national, regional and local planning policy. He explained that the Council must demonstrate delivery of housing sites to meet both short-term housing supply requirements and longer-term housing needs. Progressing the Development Frameworks would help bring forward strategic housing sites and strengthen the Council's ability to resist development on unallocated sites.

Councillor Birchmore queried the Council's approach to "grey belt" land and whether there were any adopted criteria for identifying such sites. It was explained that the National Planning Policy Framework defines grey belt land as Green Belt land that is either previously developed or does not strongly contribute to the purposes of preventing unrestricted urban sprawl, preventing neighbouring towns from merging, or preserving the setting of historic towns. The Council had not conducted a specific assessment to identify potential grey belt sites, but this could be considered in the future.

Discussion then moved to monitoring arrangements within the Local Plan. Members heard that a comprehensive suite of key performance indicators would be used throughout the life of the Plan, covering a wide range of measures including housing delivery, climate change and biodiversity. Officers advised that the monitoring framework would provide early indications where policies or approaches may require adjustment, although significant changes were not anticipated.

Councillor Sheppard asked several questions relating to housing delivery targets within the Local Plan. Officers confirmed that the housing requirement of 452 dwellings per year between 2025 and 2030 was not linked to any specific dwelling type, although both PfE Policy JP-H3 and emerging Local Plan Policy LP-H3 promote a suitable mix of housing sizes and types.

Members were advised that there had been 836 housing completions between 2022 and 2025, exceeding the PfE requirement of 738 dwellings over the same period, meaning there was no housing shortfall. It was further confirmed that the housing land supply includes sites identified within the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), including major brownfield opportunities such as East Lancs Paper Mill.

In response to a question regarding the make-up of the 836 housing completions, officers highlighted that the largest contributors included developments at Mountheath in Prestwich, the former Andrews Textiles site in Bury, Bevis Green, York Street in Radcliffe, the former Cussons site at Kersal Vale Road, Bury Magistrates Court and a range of additional schemes across Radcliffe, Whitefield and Bury.

Questions were also raised regarding windfall housing development. Officers confirmed that the SHLAA is reviewed annually to identify potential residential opportunities and that windfall developments can contribute towards meeting both short-term and long-term housing requirements. Windfall sites may either supplement existing supply or replace allocated sites that fail to come forward. It was also noted that some sites with planning permission may not ultimately be delivered and annual reviews help maintain an accurate assessment of housing land availability.

Further discussion took place regarding housing for older people. Officers explained that leasehold sheltered or retirement housing generally relates to owner-occupied accommodation provided by the private sector, whereas conventional sheltered housing is typically rented accommodation provided by local authorities or housing associations. Suitable locations are assessed through planning judgement, with key considerations including access to public transport, services, health facilities and town centres. Whilst the Local Plan does not allocate specific sites for older persons' accommodation, provision is expected within the PfE allocations at Elton, Walshaw and Simister Bowlee. Members also noted current and proposed schemes including the former Millwood School site at Fletcher Fold and opportunities at The Elms in Whitefield.

Councillor Birchmore sought clarification on affordable housing requirements, noting that developments within Bury, Radcliffe and Prestwich town centres are required to provide 15% affordable housing compared with 25% elsewhere. Officers explained that independent viability evidence demonstrated greater delivery challenges within town centres, leading to the lower requirement. Councillor Pilkington questioned the definition of affordable housing. The Leader advised that planning policy definitions are applied, including housing delivered at a percentage below market value, although the Council continually seeks opportunities to exceed minimum requirements wherever possible.

The Committee also discussed Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). Councillor Birchmore asked how the Local Plan would assess whether a proposal would have an unacceptable impact on residential character. Officers advised that guidance contained within SPD13: Houses in Multiple Occupation provides detailed criteria and that assessments would consider planning submissions, consultation responses and other material planning considerations, including impacts relating to noise, parking and waste management.

In relation to renewable energy, Councillor Birchmore asked whether all new homes could be required to incorporate solar panels. Officers explained that changes to Building Regulations through the Future Homes Standard, expected from March 2027, will introduce requirements for renewable electricity generation within most new homes. Given the national regulatory framework, it was not considered necessary to duplicate these requirements within Local Plan policy.

Members also discussed biodiversity net gain requirements and ecological mitigation. Officers advised that biodiversity enhancement would continue to be delivered through appropriate mitigation measures and receptor sites where required. During discussion, the potential role of habitat creation and species reintroduction was raised, although no commitment was made regarding specific initiatives.

Questions were raised regarding the Housing Needs and Demand Assessment (HDNA). Officers confirmed that the 2024/25 HDNA forms part of the evidence base for the Local Plan. Members discussed historic proposals for a commuter rail service on the East Lancashire Railway (ELR) corridor. It was noted that the Council would not support any proposal that could undermine the operation or heritage value of the ELR and that previous proposals had not progressed following assessment.

Discussion also considered housing affordability across the borough, particularly in more northern communities. Members acknowledged ongoing challenges in providing affordable housing and noted the importance of working with housing associations and registered providers to expand affordable housing supply.

Councillor Sheppard raised several questions regarding climate change and the Council's commitment to supporting Greater Manchester's ambition to become carbon neutral by 2038. Officers explained that progress is monitored through Greater Manchester environmental reporting, Places for Everyone monitoring arrangements and Authority Monitoring Reports. Strategic Policy JP-S2 within PfE already requires development to minimise carbon emissions, improve energy efficiency and maximise renewable energy generation. Viability implications had been considered through the PfE evidence base and whole-plan viability assessments.

Questions were also asked regarding air quality, noise pollution and contaminated land. Officers reported that Bury currently has no designated air quality management areas exceeding statutory pollution limits, reflecting improvements in vehicle technology and the transition towards low-emission public transport. Nevertheless, major developments are required to consider air quality impacts and planning conditions may be imposed where necessary. Policies also exist to address risks associated with noise, contamination and other environmental hazards.

Councillor Rydeheard asked about the examination process and potential consequences if the Local Plan were found unsound. Officers explained that the examination process would identify any necessary modifications and expressed confidence that the submitted plan represented a sound and robust framework.

Finally, Members discussed the proportion of development taking place on brownfield land, with officers indicating that almost 90% of recent housing delivery had been on brownfield sites. A request was made for the exact figure to be provided following the meeting. Further discussion took place regarding viability challenges affecting affordable housing delivery and the importance of securing the right mix of housing, including specialist accommodation for older people, through future development frameworks and site allocations.

It Was Agreed:

- Support the local plan submission going to cabinet
- The update be noted
- Receive further updates at a future meeting after consultation

OSC.106 THE ADOPTION OF THE ELTON DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK SPD

The Chair advised that the Committee would consider the Simister and Bowlee, Elton Reservoir and Walshaw Development Frameworks as a continuation of the same item, given the common themes arising from the consultation responses, including transport, infrastructure, ecology, public engagement and planning policy considerations.

A report from Councillor Eamonn O'Brien, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth, had been circulated in advance of the meeting and Councillor O'Brien was invited to provide an overview of the report and the proposed amendments following consultation.

Councillor O'Brien outlined the purpose of the Development Frameworks and explained that the proposed amendments sought to strengthen existing positions, respond to consultation feedback and provide greater clarity for future planning applications. He advised that many of the changes reflected concerns raised by residents and stakeholders, whilst remaining consistent with the Places for Everyone strategy and wider planning policy requirements.

The Committee considered issues relating to access arrangements at Simister. Members heard that access through Simister village would be carefully managed and that Simister Lane was not considered suitable for significant construction traffic or as a primary access route. Councillor O'Brien explained that access arrangements would be developed in greater detail through subsequent planning stages but that the intention was to protect the village from inappropriate through traffic. Improvements would be required elsewhere, including around Bluebell Lane, and the Framework made clear that Simister Lane would not operate as a principal route into and out of the development.

Councillor Bayley questioned what measures would prevent motorists from using any future bus gate and suggested that enforcement measures and fines should be referenced. Councillor O'Brien acknowledged that while bus gates could be considered, a range of options remained available, including physical measures such as bollards. It was noted that detailed access arrangements would be further explored through subsequent design work, with an emphasis on balancing accessibility and protection of local communities.

Discussion took place regarding the differences in affordable housing percentages across the strategic allocations. Councillor O'Brien explained that these differences reflected existing and emerging planning policies together with viability considerations and did not represent different approaches to affordable housing provision.

Councillor Rydeheard raised concerns regarding the protection of Grade II listed assets and heritage features located within or close to development sites. In response, Councillor O'Brien advised that heritage considerations had been reflected throughout the revised documents and that the consultation process had strengthened several policy areas. He noted that the Development Frameworks reinforced the planning principles already established through Places for Everyone and would assist in ensuring that future planning applications appropriately considered heritage impacts.
Members discussed consultation responses relating to biodiversity and ecology. Councillor O'Brien acknowledged that development proposals could impact biodiversity and that the Council's role was to ensure impacts were avoided where possible and otherwise mitigated or compensated in accordance with planning policy. It was noted that several consultation responses had sought stronger protection for ecological assets and that revisions had been made where appropriate. Officers explained that ecological considerations would continue to be assessed through detailed planning applications supported by up-to-date survey information.

Questions were raised regarding infrastructure delivery and how future developer contributions would be managed. Councillor O'Brien advised that Development Frameworks provided a strategic mechanism for coordinating infrastructure requirements where multiple developers may be involved. This was intended to ensure fairness and proportionality, avoiding circumstances whereby one development carried an unreasonable burden or where infrastructure requirements were not adequately delivered. Members were advised that infrastructure contributions would ultimately be secured through planning obligations and legal agreements.

Councillor Rydeheard sought clarification regarding transport assessments and how the transport impacts of development would be monitored and enforced. Councillor O'Brien advised that planning applications would be required to assess both existing infrastructure capacity and the impact of development throughout its lifespan. Chris Logue added that the revised transport framework strengthened requirements around strategic transport planning and provided greater clarity regarding future expectations at the planning application stage.

The Committee then considered the consultation responses received in relation to Elton Reservoir. Members noted that 172 responses had been submitted and that the principal concerns raised related to Green Belt development, the evidence base supporting the proposals, consultation arrangements, ecology, transport and highways, Metrolink proposals, flood risk and drainage, heritage, healthcare provision, infrastructure pressures and the prioritisation of brownfield land.

In response to questions from Councillor Sheppard regarding consultation arrangements, officers advised that posters and leaflets had been distributed across a range of public locations throughout the borough, including libraries, leisure facilities, public parks, Tottington Centre and Bury Town Hall.

Consultation materials had also been available at drop-in sessions. Officers stated that the Council believed the consultation programme had been proportionate, accessible and compliant with the Statement of Community Involvement and relevant legislative requirements, whilst recognising that opportunities always exist to enhance engagement processes. Members considered comments relating to ecology and the protection of important habitats and species. Officers advised that consultation feedback had resulted in updates to ecological information contained within the Framework, including strengthened references to priority habitats and ecological assets. Future planning applications would be required to be supported by detailed ecological assessments and demonstrate compliance with Biodiversity Net Gain requirements. Where impacts on habitats could not be avoided, appropriate mitigation or compensation measures would be required. Protected species, including great crested newts, bats, barn owls and other priority species, would be subject to detailed consideration during the planning process.

The Committee discussed consultation responses concerning the proposed Metrolink stop and associated park and ride facilities. Members referred to suggestions that alternative locations should be explored and concerns regarding impacts on nearby residents. Officers advised that the currently identified location was the most appropriate based on available information due to its relationship with the proposed site access arrangements. However, it was emphasised that the location remained indicative and would continue to be reviewed as proposals developed in conjunction with Transport for Greater Manchester.

Officers further explained that the wider transport hub was intended to encourage modal shift and integrate tram, bus, walking and cycling infrastructure. The park and ride element was intended to support reduced longer-distance car journeys and reflected existing provision elsewhere across the Metrolink network. Should the proposed location proceed, appropriate mitigation measures would be incorporated into the design to address concerns raised by residents.

Members also discussed brownfield land delivery and housing supply. Officers outlined the Council's commitment to a brownfield preference approach and highlighted the extensive work undertaken with developers, registered providers, Homes England and Greater Manchester partners to bring forward difficult brownfield sites. Members were informed that approximately 88% of housing development delivered within the borough over the previous five years had been completed on brownfield land.

Questions were asked regarding progress at the East Lancashire Paper Mill site. Officers advised that the Council had worked closely with Homes England and the appointed developer, Morris Homes, to facilitate delivery of the site. Recent planning applications seeking amendments to existing permissions had been submitted and the Council understood that development was expected to commence shortly. The site formed part of the Council's housing land supply and was expected to contribute approximately 125 dwellings during the period 2025 to 2030.

During discussion, Members raised concerns regarding surface water flooding, climate change and drainage impacts, particularly in parts of Radcliffe. Officers advised that such matters would require detailed assessment through future planning applications and would be considered alongside technical evidence provided by applicants and statutory consultees.

The Committee subsequently considered the Walshaw Development Framework consultation responses. Members noted that 176 responses had been received and that many of the issues raised mirrored those identified in relation to the other strategic allocations. Principal concerns included Green Belt development, the evidence base, consultation processes, transport and highways, ecology, flood risk and drainage, schools, healthcare facilities, open space provision, wellbeing, impacts on existing residents and businesses, and compliance with national and strategic planning policy.

Questions were raised regarding consultation activity specific to Walshaw and whether information had been distributed directly to affected residents. Officers confirmed that while posters and leaflets had been distributed through public locations and consultation events, no house-to-house leaflet distribution had taken place. It was noted that neighbouring residents would be formally consulted as part of any future planning application process.

Members discussed the overall effectiveness of the consultation exercises. Councillor O'Brien acknowledged that consultation processes can always be improved and highlighted the importance of maintaining constructive engagement with local communities. In response, members suggested that the Committee establish a task and finish group to review public consultation, communication and community involvement arrangements for future planning matters. There was broad support for exploring opportunities to improve engagement methods and ensure residents felt fully involved in decision-making processes.

Councillor Sheppard also sought clarification regarding how consultation responses had been assessed and whether any independent organisations had influenced amendments to the Frameworks. Officers advised that all representations had been reviewed and that some respondents had objected to the principle of development itself while others had proposed specific amendments. The revisions before the Committee reflected consideration of the issues raised and engagement with relevant stakeholders and consultees.

During consideration of responses relating to infrastructure and utilities, members referred to comments from United Utilities and concerns recorded within the consultation documentation. Chris Logue advised that United Utilities remained a key stakeholder in the process and that ongoing engagement had informed the updating of evidence and the refinement of infrastructure requirements within the Frameworks.

In concluding the item, members recognised the challenge of balancing housing delivery, infrastructure provision, environmental protection and community expectations. The Committee expressed support for further work to strengthen public engagement and communication in planning matters and requested that officers explore proposals for a task and finish group focused on consultation and community involvement.

Action

- The Committee agreed to explore the establishment of a Task and Finish Group to review and improve the Council's consultation and community engagement processes in relation to strategic planning matters.

Recommendations

The Committee resolved to recommend to Cabinet that:

1. The post-consultation revisions to the Development Frameworks be endorsed.

2. Overview and Scrutiny:
    - Notes the responses to the public consultation and the proposed post-consultation revisions set out in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 of the report.
    - Notes the recommendations contained within the reports presented in the agenda pack.

OSC.107 THE ADOPTION OF THE SIMISTER BOWLEE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK SPD

This item was covered during discussions on the previous item and it was agreed to;

Recommendations

The Committee resolved to recommend to Cabinet that:

1. The post-consultation revisions to the Development Frameworks be endorsed.

2. Overview and Scrutiny:
    - Notes the responses to the public consultation and the proposed post-consultation revisions set out in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 of the report.
    - Notes the recommendations contained within the reports presented in the agenda pack.

OSC.108 THE ADOPTION OF THE WALSHAW DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK SPD

This item was covered during discussions on the previous item and it was agreed to;

Recommendations

The Committee resolved to recommend to Cabinet that:

1. The post-consultation revisions to the Development Frameworks be endorsed.

2. Overview and Scrutiny:
    - Notes the responses to the public consultation and the proposed post-consultation revisions set out in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 of the report.
    - Notes the recommendations contained within the reports presented in the agenda pack.

OSC.109 URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

COUNCILLOR C BIRCHMORE
Chair

(Note: The meeting started at 7.00 pm and ended at 11.10 pm)

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Bury Council

SCRUTINY REPORT

MEETING:	**Overview and Scrutiny**
DATE:	**16th July 2026**
SUBJECT:	**Housing Services Update**
REPORT FROM:	**Sian Grant, Director of Housing**
CONTACT OFFICER:	**Sian Grant, Director of Housing**

1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 This report provides members with a 12 month update on housing services and the improvements that are being made to the service to ensure we deliver excellent services to tenants and meet the requirements of the Regulator for Social Housing's consumer standards.

1.2 The RSH consumer standards are designed to ensure that social housing providers deliver high quality services tenants and ensure homes are maintained to a high standard. The consumer standards are split into four standards;

- **Safety and Quality Standard** - This standard ensures that landlords provide safe and good-quality homes. It includes requirements for regular stock condition surveys, accurate record-keeping, and effective communication with tenants about repairs and maintenance.

- **Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard** - This standard promotes transparency and accountability in landlord operations. It expects landlords to engage with tenants, understand their diverse needs, and involve them in decision-making processes.

- **Neighbourhood and Community Standard** - This standard focuses on the role of landlords in supporting the well-being of the communities they serve. It includes maintaining clean and safe neighbourhoods and addressing anti-social behaviour.

- **Tenancy Standard** - This standard ensures that landlords provide fair and efficient services related to tenancy management, including allocations and mutual exchanges.

1.3 A number of reports have made over the last year to Overview and Scrutiny sub group – Housing and Performance on the progress that has been made. The last report in February 2026 reported final progress against the Altair mock inspection feedback and clarified that all ongoing improvement actions would be included with the Housing Services action plan.

1.4 The report provides overview and scrutiny committee an update on the housing service including our key achievements and year end performance for 2025/26. The report also sets out details of the Housing Service Vison and objectives and the service action plan for 2026/27.

2.0 Key achievements for 2025/26

2.1 Bury Council's Housing Services division has been on a improvement journey since bringing Six Town Housing back in house in February 2024. Whilst we are still very much in the middle of this journey, we are making progress to improve services and homes for tenants, and provide a stable and empowering place to work for our housing staff. We have made a number of improvements over the last year.

2.2 We have completed restructures and recruited to the Property Investment Team, Housing Compliance Team and Repairs Team. This has included the recruitment of a permanent Head of Housing Compliance and Head of Repairs and Maintenance. This has ensured we have the leadership capacity and capability within the service to stabilise and improve services. The full housing leadership team has been in place since December 2025.

2.3 2025/26 saw a significant shift in our approach to health, safety and compliance. We have introduced and recruited to a Housing Compliance team which has brought in the necessary expertise and capability to this area – something that had been missing in the previous structure. As a result of this the team have fully reviewed our compliance data and processes and this has identified a number of areas where we need to improve our approach to compliance. This has included moving away from spreadsheets to specialist systems such as RiskBase and TCW, supported by external audit. This has improved our data accuracy and our oversight across gas, electrical and fire safety.

2.4 As part of this shift we have reviewed the data held on our EICR programme to ensure it is as accurate and update to date as possible and used this information to inform the programme going forward so we can transition all properties to a 5 year EICR programme. We have also reviewed the data held on our Fire Risk Assessments and remedial actions to ensure it was accurate and up to date. This information has been used to inform our fire safety work.

2.5 We have carried out a full review of the repairs service to improve tenant satisfaction and deliver a more efficient and effective service. This has led to a wide-ranging transformation programme which includes streamlining workflows, improving how jobs are diagnosed, clarifying roles and responsibilities, and strengthening performance management. We have also improved how we communicate with tenants about repairs, introducing clearer scripts, templates and service expectations, alongside text messaging for repair appointments, reminders and cancellations.

2.6 The 2025/26 capital investment programme was mobilised with improved governance and regular monitoring ensuring that investment in homes is better planned and controlled. We've continued to make progress on retrofit and EPC works, including securing £2.2m of Wave 3 funding. During 2025/16 we increased the number of homes meeting EPC C by just over 11% to 69.13%.

2.7 Tenant engagement and scrutiny has been another important area of focus. Over the last year we've started to develop formal tenant scrutiny arrangements with the Tenant Voice Forum, strengthened governance to support meaningful tenant influence, and involved tenants directly in shaping our approach to complaints and the repairs review. This is helping move engagement beyond consultation and towards shared learning and improvement. But we also recognised that there is a lot more to do in this area and as a result we have engaged TPAS (Tenant Participation Advisory service) to work with us during 2026/27 to further strengthen our approach to tenant influence.

2.8 We have reviewed our housing management operating model and as a result added more leadership capacity and capability in this area to support the Head of Housing and Neighbourhoods to improve areas where tenant satisfaction is low. This has included introducing an ASB Manager to support the delivery of our ASB improvement plan and a Caretaking and Cleaning Manager to improve the delivery of these services to tenants.

2.9 From tenant feedback and complaints we identified that we had issues with our management of ASB, particularly low level neighbour nuisance and noise. As a result we commissioned Housemark to carry out a review of our ASB service against their ASB accreditation standard. The review identified a number of areas for improvement and we have strengthened our ASB improvement plan as a result and are in the process of delivering this.

2.10 We also worked to increase the visibility of housing services within our communities, with tenancy visits increasing by 45%. We also held a series of estate action days and estate walkabouts across the year engaging with tenants across a number of our estates. This has significantly improved our understanding of tenant circumstances and enabled earlier intervention when issues arise.

2.11 During the year we have made progress on knowing our tenants. We analysed the data we hold on our tenants to understand where we had gaps and needed more data. We have started to make progress in filling these gaps through our tenancy visits, a large scale data cleansing exercise and increased engagement activity. More than 1000 tenants responded to our Getting to Know You Survey and we have completed over 500 tenancy visits in the first quarter of 2026 giving us more accurate and meaningful data about who lives in our homes and the support they may need. As a result, our data is becoming more robust, enabling us to identify underrepresented groups more quickly, better understand communication and accessibility needs, and target support and engagement activity where it is needed most. This includes strengthening our understanding of vulnerability, improving digital inclusion, broadening tenant involvement opportunities and ensuring services are more accessible and responsive to the diverse needs of our communities. Our work on this will continue into the next year.

2.12 During 2025/26 we have reviewed our approach to complaints and complaint handling including recruiting two Complaints Investigators. This has helped us to develop and begin to implement a positive complaint handling and learning culture. We also commissioned Housemark to carry out a review of our complaint handling against their accreditation standard. We are now working through a clear action plan to address the gaps the review identified.

2.13 Despite rising homelessness demand, we have continued to provide a strong and effective Housing Options and Homelessness service, supporting thousands of households with advice, prevention and accommodation. We have expanded our Asylum, Immigration and Rough Sleeping services enabling us to help more people off the streets and into safe accommodation. We have strengthened our partnership working to increase access to housing including bringing new properties into use through developments such as Huntley House and Silver Street, alongside plans for future family temporary accommodation and our lease and repair schemes which are helping to reduce the use of costly B&B placements and deliver better outcomes for residents.

2.14 Behind all of this, we've laid much stronger financial, business planning and digital foundations. A refreshed 30-year HRA Business Plan has been completed and reported to Cabinet, monthly HRA management accounts are now embedded, procurement and contract management arrangements have been strengthened, and we have begun our journey to improve both data quality and digital systems, including the upgrade of QL starting this spring. We have also been given greater funding certainty for our homelessness prevention and rough sleeping service with the three year grant settlement and have robust plans in place to reduce the cost of temporary accommodation.

3.0 2025/26 year end performance

3.1 Our year end performance scorecard for 2025/26 is attached at appendix one. The score card sets out our performance against a range of key performance indicators including the tenant satisfaction measures for 2025/26. The scorecard compares 2025/26 performance against our performance in 2024/25 to identify trends. It also compares our performance outturn for 2025/26 with the benchmark for Local Authorities in England with a housing stock between 5,000 and 10,000 (excluding London). It also benchmarks our performance against all social housing landlords in Greater Manchester.

Tenant satisfaction

3.3 Tenant satisfaction with the overall service provided by Bury Housing Services has improved by 3.32% from 2024/25. This places Bury in quartile 2 compared to other English local authorities with a similar stock size but in Q3 when compared to other Greater Manchester social landlords. However, key service areas including repairs, our approach to handling ASB, making a positive contribution to neighbourhoods, maintaining communal areas and property condition remain in the bottom quartiles compare to other similar landlords.

3.5 Satisfaction with complaints handling has improved significantly and is now in the top quartile compared to other landlords. Satisfaction with safety and condition of home are improving, though still below sector average.

3.6 As mentioned in the section above, we have implemented a number of service improvements during the year to improve and strengthen our services in key areas. We have carried out review of the repairs service and are currently working through a detailed transformation plan. During 2025/26 we put in place dedicated compliance team to address capacity and capability gaps in this area.

3.7 We commissioned Housemark to carry out service reviews of our anti social behaviour and complaints services. These reviews identified a number of areas for improvement and we have improvement plans in place for both service areas to address the findings. We have also started working with the Institute of Customer Service which will provide a clear and consistent framework for communication with tenants, managing expectation, handling dissatisfaction and complaints and supporting staff to deliver high quality customer service.

Asset management performance

3.8 At year end we had 58 properties that did not meet the Decent homes standard (DHS), this figure includes 4 HHSRS fails. Within the 58 properties we had 1 property being omitted from improvement work at the tenant's request. Any properties deemed to be failing the DHS are closely monitored through to the satisfactory completion of remedial or renewal work.

3.9 From April 2026, our approach to reporting how many of our homes meet the decent homes standard will move to a more predictive and forward-looking model. This will give us a clearer view of properties that are likely to fall into non-decency during the year, enabling earlier planning of inspections and the timely scheduling of capital works where appropriate. This shift will support more proactive asset management and better prioritisation of investment.

3.10 82.95% of our properties have had a stock condition survey in the last 5 years and we have put in place a programme to survey 20% of all homes every year over a five year cycle to ensure the information we hold on the condition of our homes remains up to date.

3.10 We continue to work to ensure out homes meet a minimum of EPC C by 2030. During 2025/26 EPC ratings have increased with 69.13% of properties with an EPC rating of EPC C or above – an 11.47% increase on the previous year.

3.11 A number of factors influenced delivery of the capital programme during 2025/26, including a carry-over of schemes from 2024/25 and delays in procurement which affected the timing of the capital programme. In addition, there were significant delays during Q4 in the legal approval of contracts (December–March), as well resource pressures arising from recruitment challenges.

3.12 To strengthen future delivery, the service is working more closely with the procurement team to mitigate anticipated delays and ensure earlier engagement. Future investment works are being scoped and prioritised more robustly, ensuring alignment with the Decent Homes Standard and strategic asset priorities. There is also a clear commitment to reducing the scale of annual programme carry-overs, providing a stronger delivery position year on year.

3.13 To support improved planning, oversight and assurance, the service has introduced Scanmaster, a new contract management reporting system that enables earlier visibility of contract performance and renewal planning. In addition, Verto, a new project management system for capital investment, is being implemented to support more efficient monitoring, reporting, and control of investment programmes across the lifecycle of delivery.

Compliance performance

3.14 100% of Fire Risk Assessments were completed and all remedial actions are being addressed by priority. During late 2025 we made a self-referral to the Regulator for Social Housing after uncovering issues with the data held on our outstanding fire remedial actions. The regulator has closed down further monitoring following the self-referral**,** having been satisfied that appropriate controls and governance are now in place including monthly reporting to the portfolio holder for housing**.**

3.15 Following the completion of the latest round of Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs), all identified actions and recommendations have been uploaded into our new fire safety management system, RiskBase. This has resulted in a significant increase in the number of recorded fire safety actions. However, this does not mean our buildings are becoming less safe. Rather, we now have a much clearer and more complete picture of the actions required across our housing stock. Instead of simply responding to individual repairs, we are taking a whole-building and whole-system approach to reducing fire risk. Our priorities are to:

- Prioritise buildings with vulnerable residents, particularly sheltered housing schemes.
- Address the highest-risk issues first.
- Identify recurring issues across multiple buildings and fix the root causes.
- Improve fire safety management processes so that the same issues do not repeatedly appear in future inspections.
- Ensure all actions are fully evidenced and recorded, creating a strong "golden thread" of information.

3.16 The table below sets out our current position in relation to fire remedial actions;

	Number of actions identified	**Number of actions as at 3rd July 2026**	**Comments**
High risk remedial actions	120	87	The fire safety team is carrying out weekly reviews to understand common themes, which include: • Fire alarm system settings and operation • Staff training and record keeping • Fire door inspections • Fire safety procedures and management controls
Medium risk remedial actions	1112	1059	Many of these actions may already have been addressed through maintenance or investment works but have not yet been formally recorded and closed within RiskBase.

			Work is underway to gather evidence and ensure completed works are properly captured and auditable.
Low risk remedial actions	2083	1580	These will be addressed alongside higher-priority works where possible, enabling multiple issues within the same building to be resolved at the same time.
Recommendations	1119	1119	These do not usually have a completion deadline. They will be considered alongside other works and future investment programmes where appropriate.

3.17 The introduction of RiskBase has significantly improved our understanding of fire safety across our housing stock. While the number of recorded actions has increased, this is largely because we now have better visibility and more accurate data than previously available. Overall, this represents a move from a reactive approach towards a more proactive, risk-based and evidence-led fire safety management system. The increase in recorded actions should be viewed as a sign of improved oversight and governance, providing a stronger basis for managing risk and demonstrating compliance.

3.18 Currently 86% of homes have an electrical safety check less than 5 years old. 1043 electrical safety checks are currently non-compliant out of a total of 7250 on the current programme. 94 are due to being over 5 years old, 758 are without satisfactory documentation and 191 where additional remedial works are required. These are currently being prioritised by our contractor AB Electrical.

3.19 At the 31st March 2026 water safety checks were below target with a small number of outstanding assessments due to access issues. Since the end of March all assessments have been completed and performance on water safety checks is at 100%.

3.20 Gas safety performance remains high at 99.97%. There are a small number of short-dated certificates outstanding which are progressing and supported by TCW software and access processes.

Repairs and maintenance

3.21 During 2025/26 we completed 68.98% of non-emergency repairs within timescales. Performance was affected by a combination of factors, the most significant being the legacy backlog of routine repairs. This created sustained pressure on available resources and reduced the capacity to respond to new routine repair requests within target timescales. The service also experienced capacity constraints during the year. Recruitment and retention challenges within key trade areas, together with the time required to mobilise and train new employees, meant that the workforce was not operating at full establishment for parts of the year. Capacity was further impacted by higher than anticipated levels of sickness absence, particularly within core frontline trades such as Joiners, reducing the number of available operative days and limiting the service's ability to respond to routine repair demand within target timescales.

To address capacity pressures, the service continues to recruit into vacant posts and is currently onboarding five agency operatives to provide cover for long-term sickness absence. These additional resources will help increase workforce capacity, reduce the backlog of outstanding repairs and support improvements in the timely completion of non-emergency repairs.

3.22 We completed 97.18% of emergency repairs within target timescales. A small number of cases did not hit target due to access issues and increased repair complexity.

3.23 Repairs right first-time performance ended the year at 75.29%**.** Factors impacting performance included the need for repeat visits driven by incomplete initial diagnoses, parts availability, and cross-trade dependencies.

3.24 The average time to complete appointment repairs exceeded target at 26.16 days. This was due to high outstanding volumes and constrained appointment capacity.

3.25 During the year, we undertook a full review of the repairs service including looking at staffing and repairs data**.** The review included benchmarking the service against regulatory expectations and sector best practice. This process surfaced historic under-reporting and ageing repairs, resulting in a short-term dip in reported performance but establishing a far more accurate and reliable baseline**.** Recruitment has since taken place to better align resource with demand, informed by improved data quality.

3.26 An improvement plan is in place and is focused on backlog clearance, tighter job triage, improved diagnostics, enhanced scheduling and strengthened management oversight. Whilst these measures have helped establish improved controls and ways of working, the anticipated improvements in KPI performance have not yet been realised due to ongoing capacity constraints and the existing backlog of repairs. To address this, the service continues to recruit into vacant posts and is currently onboarding five agency operatives to provide cover for long-term sickness absence and support backlog reduction. The agency resource is expected to be fully onboarded and operational by the end of July, at which point the service anticipates increased capacity to accelerate backlog clearance and support improvements in repair completion times during the remainder of 2026/27.

3.27 Since Awaab's Law came into force in October 2025, we recognised that Bury Council's Housing Repairs service was not fully prepared to meet the new statutory requirements. At go-live, processes were underdeveloped, and staff roles and responsibilities in relation to compliance were not clearly defined. During the final quarter of the year, significant progress has been made, including the recruitment of appropriate roles and the establishment of dedicated resource to oversee and manage compliance with the legislation. While overall performance is not yet at the required standard, the service is now on a stronger footing, with improving performance trends and assurance levels being maintained as compliance arrangements continue to mature.

Complaint Handling

3.28 Complaint handling performance has improved with a corresponding increase in tenant satisfaction with complaint handling. Tenant satisfaction with complaint handling has improved from 37.6% in 2024/25 to 47.78% in 2025/26, an increase of 10.18% year on year. During the year, the organisation has recruited two Complaints Investigation Officers, increasing capacity and resilience within the service. The focus now is to refresh, improve and relaunch the complaints processes in line with Housemark recommendations, while continuing to embed learning, strengthen ownership, and support cultural change across services.

3.29 Housing Ombudsman data, including the number of determinations and maladministration findings, continues to provide an important source of external insight. We have had 8 Housing Ombudsman cases during 2025/26 which included 21 findings. Of these 14 were findings of severe maladministration, maladministration or service failure which included 2 findings of severe maladministration's associated to a damp and mould case. As a result we have introduced a damp and mould inspection as part of our void process to ensure we identify any damp and mould issues whilst the property is void and rectify them before the property is let.

3.30 The Housing Ombudsman determinations identify ASB complaints and case management as a theme. A deep dive has been carried out into the determinations to ensure we have identified all the learning and that there are no systemic issues. The deep dive showed that the Housemark review of the ASB service picked up similar themes and issues and that all of these were included in the ASB improvement plan.

Anti Social Behaviour and Tenancy Management

3.31 Anti social behaviour cases relative to the size of the landlord have declined slight compared to the previous year and Bury remain in the lower quartile on this performance indicator (a lower number is not an indication of good performance for this PI), particularly when coupled with low levels of tenants satisfaction with our approach to ASB (52.59%).

3.32 Over the past year, and particularly in the last quarter, the Housing Team has increased its focus on early intervention, addressing concerns through tenancy support before they escalate into Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) cases. This shift is reflected in our tenancy support figures. Tenancy support case management has more than doubled since Q3, reflecting a more robust and proactive approach to performance management. This increase demonstrates improved recording, review, and reporting of tenancy support activity, rather than a rise in underlying need, and provides stronger assurance that support is being targeted and tracked effectively.

3.33 Low-level nuisance issues, such as noise, neighbour disputes, and lifestyle differences, are now more frequently recorded and managed as tenancy support cases rather than formal ASB. Improved partnership working with the police, social care, and health services has also contributed to this change. Through joint case management, some issues are being appropriately managed outside of Housing ASB systems. As a result, reported ASB figures have reduced, although overall demand has not decreased but instead been redistributed across services.

3.34 We have continued to encourage accurate reporting, particularly in relation to crime-related incidents. This has led to an increase in reporting during Q4, and we aim to sustain this progress into the coming year.

3.35 Insight from complaints data and tenant satisfaction feedback has informed a full review of the ASB service and the development of a clear ASB improvement action plan. This work has been strengthened by an external Housemark review**,** which provided clear recommendations to further improve the ASB offer. In response, we have delivered targeted ASB training internally and with external partners, increased partnership working, reviewed ASB processes and ways of working across housing and enforcement and recruited an additional enforcement officer. More intensive performance management arrangements have also been introduced to ensure ASB cases are handled in line with policy and consistently monitored. Delivery against the ASB action plan will continue throughout 2026/27.

Relet times

3.36 During 2025/26 the average time to relet our homes was 45 days compared to a target of 39 days. Both internal repairs pressures and contractor performance issues have had significant impact on re-let times this year. Additionally, property condition at termination has been a key contributing factor, with poorer condition homes requiring additional time to bring up to a lettable standard, extending void turnaround periods.

3.37 In response, pre-termination visits have been introduced to better manage expectations with tenants and identify required works earlier. We have also increased the frequency of tenancy condition visits, enabling a more proactive approach to managing property condition ahead of termination. These visits are now subject to active performance management to ensure consistency and effectiveness.

3.38 Reletting within sheltered and extra-care schemes continues to present challenges, driven by the size of properties and the overall condition of the schemes. These schemes are currently under review to determine their long-term use and future investment needs, ensuring decisions are aligned with demand, sustainability and value for money.

Income management

3.39 Rent collection and the level of rent arrears remain above target during 2025/26 and arrears continued to increase. The proportion of rent collected fell to 98.11% from 100.73% the previous year. Rent arrears as a percentage of rent roll ended the year at 5.47% up from 5.01% the previous and much higher than the sector benchmark of 2.5%. The value of current tenant arrears ended the year at £1,997,518 and increase of £160,972 on the previous year.

3.40 This position reflects the combined impact of ongoing cost of living pressures affecting tenants, alongside operational challenges within the service as it undergoes a period of transformation.

3.41 An improvement action plan is in place, overseen by the Head of Revenues and Benefits, which sets out key areas of focus for the year ahead. This includes a structured and incremental approach to reducing rent arrears from the current year-end position towards the sector benchmark of approximately 2.5% over the next three to four years.

Call centre performance

3.42 During 2025/26 the call centre answered 59.34% of the housing calls presented to them. 85% of the call answered were answered within 10 minutes. The 2025/26 year-end position for the Call Centre has been significantly impacted by ongoing resourcing challenges, including difficulties with recruitment and staff retention. These pressures have affected service capacity and consistency throughout the year, contributing to performance falling below expected levels.

3.43 Mitigating actions have been implemented during the year to reduce pressure on frontline staff. These include the introduction of a dedicated complaints inbox, enabling complaints to be sent directly for triage and reducing demand on Call Centre resource. In addition, Repairs Planners have provided cross-service support by assisting with the triage of repairs during peak and critical periods, helping to maintain service continuity.

3.44 The call centre also started a review and instigation of improvement measures in March including team and management engagement, resource planning, system issues, and review and rationalisation of processes.

3.44 As a result 2026/27 has seen a demonstrable improvement in performance, with a 25% improvement in calls answered and 35% improvement in those answered within 10 minutes from April to June. Further work in the short term on the telephony system is expected to bring additional stability and upturn across these metrics, with ongoing work around the Housing Management System upgrade and deployment of automation software anticipated to bring significant enhancements to the contact centre's delivery model.

Housing Service's vision, objectives and 26/27 service plan

4.1 During 2025/26 we worked with tenants and staff to develop a vision and objectives for the service so that everyone understood the improvements we want to make to the service and we had clear outcome of what that would look like when we achieved it. This is set out on our plan on page which is attached at appendix two.

4.2 Our vision is 'Satisfied tenants, quality homes and united communities' and we have identified 8 objectives to deliver this vision with a number of high level actions for 2026/27. These are set out in the table below;

Objective	Key service actions for 2026/27	Date by	Owner
Improve customer service and increase customers influence in our service delivery	Improve our anti social behaviour service increasing tenant satisfaction	March 2027	Head of Housing and Neighbourhoods
	Improve the repairs service increasing efficiency effectiveness and tenant satisfaction	March 2027	Head of Repairs and Maintenance
	Improve our complaint handling culture	March 2027	Head of Performance, Assurance and Improvement
	Develop and implement a vulnerable customer policy	July 2026	Head of Performance, Assurance and Improvement
	Develop a customer service strategy based on feedback from the Institute of Customer Service	December 2026	Head of Performance, Assurance and Improvement
	Develop and deliver a programme of tenancy visits	March 2027	Head of Housing and Neighbourhoods
	Review our tenant engagement strategy	March 2027	Head of Performance, Assurance and Improvement
	Develop and deliver a communications strategy	July 2026	Director of Housing
Improve data governance	Upgrade our housing management system to ensure it is fit for purpose	March 2027	Director of Housing
	Establish a robust data management framework grounded in knowledge and information management (KIM) principles.	March 2027	Head of Performance, Assurance and Improvement
	Improve the quality of the data we hold on our tenants and use this data in service delivery and decision making	March 2027	Head of Performance, Assurance and Improvement
	Improve data quality and reporting in the homelessness and housing options service	March 2027	Head of Homelessness Prevention
Ensure we have a sustainable business plan	Continue to develop and deliver a viable 30 year business plan	Feb 2027	Director of Housing/ Finance
	Identify and deliver efficiency savings in both the housing revenue account and the housing general fund	March 2027	Director of Housing
	Review service charges	March 2027	Finance
	Increase rent collection and promote a positive payment culture	March 2027	Head of Revenues and Benefits

	Develop and deliver a procurement pipeline	March 2027	Head of Property/ Head of Repairs and Maintenance
Improve the quality of our homes	Develop an asset management strategy	Dec 2026	Head of Property
	Carry out a rolling programme of stock condition and retrofit surveys to ensure we fully understand the condition of our homes	March 2027	Head of Property
	Develop a three year capital investment programme	March 2027	Head of Property
	Improve our access to homes across repairs, assets and compliance	March 2027	Head of Housing Compliance
	Deliver the plan to reduce the number of outstanding EICRs brining all homes within the 5 year programme	March 2027	Head of Housing Compliance
	Deliver the plan to reduce the number of outstanding fire remedial actions	March 2027	Head of Housing Compliance
Improve staff satisfaction	Improve staff satisfaction for 'this is a place I feel valued' and 'managers discuss training needs'	March 2027	Housing Leadership Team
	Build a consistent value led service culture where staff at all levels are aligned around shared behaviours, accountability and a strong customer focus.	March 2027	Housing Leadership Team
Prevent and reduce homelessness and rough sleeping	Develop new Homelessness Prevention Strategy and action plan	Oct 2026	Head of Homelessness Prevention
	Review and refocus service to align with early prevention work and outcomes from the service	March 2027	Head of Homelessness Prevention
	Work with private rented sector team to embed renters right act	March 2027	Head of Homelessness Prevention
	Commission our rough sleepers support services	March 2027	Head of Homelessness Prevention
Provide safe and decent temporary accommodation	Increase access to suitable and adequate temporary accommodation	March 2027	Head of Homelessness Prevention
	Deliver the bed and breakfast elimination plan	March 2027	Head of Homelessness Prevention
	Deliver Local Authority Housing Fund rounds 3 and 4	March 2027	Head of Homelessness Prevention
	Increase support for sustainable move on from temporary accommodation	March 2027	Head of Homelessness Prevention
Review housing allocations and housing register	Reduce backlog of housing applications	March 2027	Head of Homelessness Prevention

	Working in partnership review the allocations policy and make sure it is fit for purpose	March 2027	Head of Homelessness Prevention

4.3 We have also put in place some key outcome measures for the service so we are able to measure the impact of the improvements we are making over time. These are;

- Increase in the percentage of tenants satisfied with Bury Council as their landlord – increase from 70% to 85% by 2029.
- Increase in staff satisfaction with 'this is a place I feel valued' – increase from 53% to 75% by 2029.
- Increase in satisfaction with home is well maintained – increase from 67% to 85% by 2029.
- Increase in satisfaction that home is safe – increase from 70% to 85%
- Eliminated the use of bed and breakfast accommodation as temporary accommodation – no families in bed and breakfast accommodation by 2029.
- Increase in homelessness prevention outcomes.
- Data on tenants and services and feedback from tenants being used to inform service improvements – all decisions and service improvement information by data and feedback.

5.0 Regulatory Inspection

5.1 As the committee are aware the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 introduced a stronger inspection regime for housing following lessons from Grenfell Tower and the death of Awaab Ishak. This included the introduction of a proactive inspection regime for local authorities. Landlords with more than 1,000 homes are subject to regular programmed inspections, typically within a four-year cycle.

5.2 The regulator assesses compliance against the Consumer Standards, particularly:

- Safety and Quality – Are homes safe, well-maintained and compliant?
- Neighbourhood and Community – How effectively are ASB and neighbourhood issues managed?
- Tenancy – Are homes allocated fairly and tenancies managed appropriately?
- Transparency, Influence and Accountability – Are tenants listened to and involved in decision-making?

5.3 Bury Council received notice of inspection on 3rd June 2026 including the scope of the inspection. The regulator is looking for us to provide evidence and assurance that council homes are safe, well-managed, tenant-focused and compliant with the standards expected by the Regulator of Social Housing. They will be looking for clear evidence that;

- Outcomes for tenants are being achieved.
- Members and senior officers understand risks.
- Governance arrangements provide effective challenge and scrutiny.
- The council can demonstrate continuous improvement and self-awareness.

5.4 The first stage of the inspection was to submit documents providing evidence we are meeting the standards to the regulator. This was completed on 18th June 2026. The regulator will be on site on 20th July – 22nd July and will interview senior leadership and key members of the housing team. They will also observe a tenants meetings and speak to tenants about their experience of the service. They will also observe a meeting of the Housing Advisory Board.

5.6 Following the inspection we will be graded with one of the following grades;

Grade	Meaning
C1	Delivering the outcomes of the consumer standards
C2	Some weaknesses; improvement needed
C3	Serious failings; significant improvement needed
C4	Very serious failings requiring fundamental change

5.7 We are not expected to receive the outcome of the inspection until November 2026.

List of Background Papers:-

RSH Consumer standards

Contact Details:-

Sian Grant, Director of Housing

Executive Director sign off Date:______________

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Bury Council

Year End Scorecard

2025-26

Version : Final
Updated 28/05/26
Data as 31st March 2026
Produced by. S. Farnworth / C.Rogan

Code	Tenant Satisfaction Measures	2024/25 Value	2025/26 Value	2025/26 target	Year on year trend	Annual variance (Percentage points)	Benchmark HouseMark English LAs (excl. London) 5k-10k stock	Benchmarking GMHP[1]
TP01	**Percentage of tenants satisfied with the overall service their landlord provides**	70.59%	73.91%	74%	↑	+3.32%	Q2	Q3
TP02	**Satisfaction with repairs**	74.55%	72.87%	80%	↓	-1.68%	Q4	Q4
TP03	**Satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair**	72.76%	71.19%	75.5%	↓	-1.57%	Q3	Q4
TP04	**Satisfaction that the home is well maintained**	66.78%	71.19%	69.4%	↑	+4.41%	Q4	Q4
TP05	**Satisfaction that the home is safe**	69.94%	75.03%	76%	↑	+5.09%	Q4	Q4
TP06	**Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them**	58.08%	58.43%	58.9%	↑	+0.35%	Q3	Q4
TP07	**Satisfaction that the landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them**	64.98%	68.12%	76%	↑	+3.14%	Q3	Q4
TP08	**Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect**	74.94%	75.95%	76.3%	↑	+1.01%	Q2	Q4
TP09	**Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling complaints**	37.6%	47.78%	50%	↑	+10.18%	Q1	Q1

Code	Tenant Satisfaction Measures	2024/25 Value	2025/26 Value	2025/26 target	Year on year trend	Annual variance (Percentage points)	Benchmark HouseMark English LAs (excl. London) 5k-10k stock	Benchmarking GMHP[1]
TP10	Satisfaction that the landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained	55.16%	49.3%	65.5%	↓	-5.86%	Q4	Q4
TP11	Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods	56.06%	58.12%	62.5%	↑	+2.06%	Q4	Q4
TP12	Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour	50.8%	52.59%	60.4%	↑	+1.79%	Q3	Q4

Code	Asset Management	2024/25 Value	2025/26 Value	2025/26 target	Year on year trend	Annual variance (Percentage points)	Benchmark HouseMark English LAs (excl. London) 5k-10k stock	GMHP
AM01	Homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard	0.58%	0.01%	0%	↑	-0.57%	Q1	Q4
AM01a	Homes (dwelling units) that have had a stock condition survey in the last 2 years	N/A	13.83%	Info Only	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
AM01b	Homes (dwelling units) that have had a stock condition survey in the last 5 years	N/A	82.95%	Info Only	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
AM01c	Homes (dwelling units) that have had a stock condition survey in the last 10 years	N/A	87.07%	Info Only	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
AM01d	Homes (dwelling units) that have had a stock condition survey over 10 years ago	13.97%[2]	13.63%	Info Only	↑	-0.33%	N/A	N/A
AM08	% of homes with an EPC rating of C or above.	57.66%	69.13%	60%	↑	+11.47%	Q1	Q3[3]
AM09	Delivery of capital programme (percentage measure)	N/A	28.45%	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
AM09a	Capital programme - forecast spend versus resources	N/A	54.27%	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
ADAP04	Cumulative monthly % of spend against the budget (Adaptations)	N/A	48.5%	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Code	Complaints	2024/25 Value	2025/26 Value	2025/26 target	Year on year trend	Annual variance (Percentage points)	Benchmark HouseMark English LAs (excl. London) 5k-10k stock	GMHP
CH01a	Complaints relative to the size of the landlord - Stage 1	8.09	25.17	27.4	↑	+17.08	Q1	Q1
CH01b	Complaints relative to the size of the landlord Stage 2	0.37	0.58	Info Only	↑	+0.21	Q1	Q1
CH02a	Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales - Stage 1	100%	100%	100%	–	0%	Q1	Q1
CH02b	Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales - Stage2	100%	100%	100%	–	0%	Q1	Q1
CH03a	Stage 1 complaints Figures	60	190	Info Only	↑	+130	N/A	N/A
CH03b	Stage 2 complaints Figures	31	54	Info Only	↑	+23	N/A	N/A
CH06	Number of Housing Ombudsman maladministration determinations received	4	19	Info Only	↑	+15	N/A	N/A

Code	Compliance	2024/25 Value	2025/26 Value	2025/26 target	Year on year trend	Annual variance (Percentage points)	Benchmark HouseMark English LAs (excl. London) 5k-10k stock	GMHP
BS02	Fire Safety Checks	100%	100%	100%	↓	0	Q1	Q1
BS03	Asbestos safety checks	100%	100%	100%	–	0	Q1	Q1
BS04	Water safety checks - Legionella	95.89%	72.22%	100%	↓	-23.67%	Q4	Q4
BS05	Lift safety checks	100%	100%	100%	–	0.00%	Q1	Q1
CM06	Percentage of Tenanted Properties with Valid Electrical Safety Certificate	95.97%	94.47%	100%	↓	-1.5%	N/A	N/A
CM12	Outstanding fire-safety follow-up actions	1145[4]	893	Info Only	↑	-252	N/A	N/A
BS01	Gas Safety Checks	99.98%	99.77%	100%	–	-0.13%	Q4	Q4
CM06a	Percentage of Tenanted Properties with Valid 10-Year Electrical Safety Certificate	N/A	87.2%	100%	↓	N/A	N/A	N/A
CM06b	Percentage of Tenanted Properties with Valid 5 Year Electrical Safety Certificate	N/A	94.91%	100%	↓	N/A	N/A	N/A

Code	Finance (Rents)	2024/25 Value	2025/26 Value	2025/26 target	Year on year trend	Annual variance (Percentage points)	Benchmark HouseMark English LAs (excl. London) 5k-10k stock	GMHP
FM1	Total rent arrears (Bury Council Stock) Current and former tenants	£2,607,307	£2,892,656	Info Only	⇩	+£285,349	N/A	N/A
FM2	Total rent arrears (Bury Council Stock)	£1,836,546	£1,997,518	Info Only	⇩	+£160,972	N/A	N/A
FM3	Rents - Cash Collection (Cumulative Year to Date)	99.53%	99.01%	100%	⇩	-0.52%	99.97%-100% (typical)	N/A
FM4	Percentage of rent arrears of current tenants	5.01%	5.47%	4.5%	⇩	+0.46%	2.5%	N/A
FM5	Proportion of rent collected (BURY properties only)	100.73%	98.11%	99.5%	⇩	-2.62%	99.7%-100% (typical)	N/A
FM6	Proportion of True rent arrears (Bury Council stock)	101.12%	98.17%	98.15%	⇩	-2.95%	N/A	N/A
FM7	Cumulative rent loss from vacant LA homes	1.17%	1.35%	1.07%	⇩	-0.18%	N/A	N/A
FM7a	Rent loss from vacant LA homes	£407,360	£507,339	Info Only	⇩	+£99,979	N/A	N/A

Code	Repairs & Maintenance	2024/25 Value	2025/26 Value	2025/26 target	Year on year trend	Annual variance (Percentage points)	Benchmark HouseMark English LAs (excl. London) 5k-10k stock	GMHP
RM01	Work in Progress figures	N/A	1,838	Info Only	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
RM02	Number of all repairs completed in month	12,098	14,854	Info Only	↑	+2,756	N/A	N/A
RM02a	Percentage of non emergency repairs completed within the landlord's target timescale	78.73%	68.98%	100%	↓	-9.75%	Q4	Q4
RM02b	Percentage of emergency repairs completed within the landlord's target timescale	98.37%	97.18%	100%	↓	-1.19%	Q3	Q4
RM03	Repairs completed right first time	-16.24	75.29%	95%	↓	-14.6%	N/A	N/A
RM04a	Average time taken to complete appointment repairs	N/A	26.16	20	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
RM04b	Average time taken to complete planned repairs	N/A	41.21	50	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
RM04c	Average time taken to complete urgent repairs	N/A	6.32	5	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
RM04d	Average time taken to complete subcontracted repairs	N/A	13.34	20	↑	N/A	N/A	N/A
RM01a	Average age of backlog appointment repairs	N/A	19.38	20	N/A	-18.33%	N/A	N/A
RM05	Repairs - proportion of responsive to planned	93.47%	88.41%	85%	↑	-5.06%	N/A	N/A
RM05a	Repairs - proportion of emergency to responsive	27.2%	28.04%	Info Only	↓	+0.84	N/A	N/A
CM09	Number of Active Disrepair Claims Received Relating to Damp	144	165	Info Only	↓	+21	N/A	N/A
CM10	Number of properties where damp identified	179	237	Info Only	↑	+58	N/A	N/A
CM13	Outstanding damp and mould actions excluding mould washes	268	199	Info Only	↓	-69	N/A	N/A
CM13a	Number of open Damp & Mould cases	N/A	205	Info Only	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
CM13b	Cases overdue by < 1month Damp & Mould	N/A	12	Info Only	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Code	Repairs & Maintenance	2024/25 Value	2025/26 Value	2025/26 target	Year on year trend	Annual variance (Percentage points)	Benchmark HouseMark English LAs (excl. London) 5k-10k stock	GMHP
CM13c	Cases overdue by 1 - 3 months Damp & Mould	N/A	14	Info Only	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
CM13d	Cases overdue by 3 - 6 months Damp & Mould	N/A	0	Info Only	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
CM13e	Cases overdue by 6+ months Damp & Mould	N/A	0	Info Only	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Code	Tenancy Management	2024/25 Value	2025/26 Value	2025/26 target	Year on year trend	Annual variance	Benchmark HouseMark English LAs (excl. London) 5k-10k stock	GMHP
NM01a	Anti-social behaviour cases relative to the size of the landlord	17.57	15.85	2.58	↓	-1.72	Q1	Q1
NM01b	Anti-social behaviour cases relative to the size of the landlord that involve hate incidents	3	1	Info Only	↓	-2	Q1	Q1
NM03	ASB Track numbers per month - cumulative	129	116	Info Only	↓	-13	N/A	N/A
NM04	Tenancy Support cases overall. (includes DV, hoarded properties, neglect)	N/A	189	Info Only	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
TM1	Number of Tenancies Failing within the first 6 months	0	1	Info Only	↓	+1	N/A	N/A
TM2	Number of tenancies failing in first 12mths	0	3	Info Only	↓	+3	N/A	N/A
TM3	Average time taken to re-let local authority housing	45	45	39	–	0	N/A	N/A
TM4	Average time taken to re-let local authority housing in days (General Needs properties only)	31	38	24	↓	+7	N/A	N/A
TM5	Average time taken to re-let local authority housing in days (Adapted properties only)	38	47	40	↓	+11	N/A	N/A
TM6	Average time taken to re-let local authority housing in days (Sheltered properties only)	77	68	50	↑	-9	N/A	N/A
TM7	No. of Evictions carried out (all reasons)	4	7	Info Only	↑	+3	N/A	N/A
TM7a	No. of Evictions carried out due to Rent Arrears	N/A	7	Info Only	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
TM7b	No. of Evictions carried out due to ASB	N/A	0	Info Only	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
TM7c	No. of Evictions carried out (other)	N/A	0	Info Only	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
TM8	Number of hard to let properties	19	7	Info Only	↑	-12	N/A	N/A

Code	Call Centre	2025/26 Value	2025/26 target	
CC01	85% of calls answered	59.34%		
CC02	85% of calls answered in 10 mins	100%	85%	

Note: Benchmarking data has been added from Housemark and GMHP with the updated quartile shown in the next column.
NA – represents New PI's

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Bury Council

OUR VISION

Satisfied Tenants - Quality Homes - United Communities

WHAT WE WILL DO

Improve customer service and increase customer influence in our service delivery

- Improve our anti social behaviour service increasing tenant satisfaction.
- Improve the repairs service increasing efficiency, effectiveness and tenant satisfaction.
- Improve our complaint handling culture.
- Develop and implement a vulnerable customer policy.
- Develop a customer service strategy based on feedback from the institute of customer service.
- Develop and deliver a programme of tenancy visits.
- Review our tenant engagement strategy.
- Develop and deliver our communications strategy.

Improve data governance

- Upgrade our housing management system to ensure it is fit for purpose.
- Establish a robust Data Management Framework gounded in knowledge and information management (KIM) principles.
- Improve the quality of the data we hold on our tenants and use this data in service delviery and decsion making.
- Improve data quality and reporting in the homelessness and housing options service.

Ensure we have a sustainable Business Plan

- Contiue to develop and deliver a viable 30 year business plan.
- Identify and deliver efficiency savings in both the Housing Revenue Account and the housing general fund.
- Review service charges.
- Increase rent collection and promote a positive payment culture.
- Develop and deliver a procurement pipeline.

Improve the quality of our homes

- Develop an asset management strategy.
- Carry out a rolling programme of stock condition and retrofit properties to ensure we fully understand the condition of our homes .
- Develop and deliver 3 year capital investment programme.
- Improve our access to homes across repairs, assets and compliance.
- Deliver the plan to reduce number of outstanding EICRs bringing all homes within the 5 year programme.
- Deliver the plan to reduce number of outstanding fire remedial actions.

Improve staff satisfaction

- Improve staff satisfaction for "this is a place I feel valued" and "managers discuss training needs".
- Build a consistent value- led service culture where staff at all levels are aligned around shared behaviours, accountability and a strong customer focus.

Prevent and reduce homelessness and rough sleeping

- Develop new Homelessness Prevention Strategy and action plan.
- Review and refocus servce to align with early prevention work and outcomes from the service.
- Work with the private rented sector team to embed the renters right act
- Commission our rough sleeper support services.

Provide safe and decent temporary accommodation

- Increase access to suitable and adequate temporary accommodation.
- Deliver the bed and breakfast elimination plan.
- Deliver Local Authority Housing Fund rounds 3 and 4.
- Increase move on from temporary accommodation.

Review housing allocations and housing register

- Reduce backlog of housing applications.
- Working in partnership review the allocations policy and make sure it is fit for purpose.

HOW WE WILL KNOW WE HAVE ACHEIVED IT?

- Increase in percentage of tenants satisfied with Bury Council as their landlord - Increase from 70% to 85% by 2029.
- Increase in staff satisfaction with this is a place i feel valued - Increase from 53% to 75% by 2029.
- Increase in satisfaction that home is well maintained - Increase from 67% to 85% to 2029.
- Increase in satisfaction that home is safe - Increase from 70% to 85%.
- Eliminated the use of Bed and Breakfast as temporary accommodation - No families in bed and breakfast by 2029.
- Increase in homelessness prevention outcomes.
- Data on tenants and services and feedback from tenants being used to inform service improvements - All decisions and service improvements informed by data and feedback.

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Agenda Item 7

Classification: Open	Decision Type: Non-Key

Report to:	Cabinet	**Date:** 08 July 2026
Subject:	Corporate Plan Quarter Four 2025/26 Performance & Delivery	
Report of	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services	

Summary

1. In June 2025, Cabinet approved the Council's Corporate Plan for 2025/26, setting out the strategic priorities and delivery objectives for the year in support of the LET'S Do It! vision.

This report provides an overview of progress during Quarter Four (January to March 2026) and the overall position at year end. Despite the scale and complexity of delivery, including the impact of external dependencies and the pre-election period, the majority of objectives have been delivered or remain on track, with risks managed where required. Progress has continued across all three priorities supported by delivery of the Council's enabling programmes.

Despite the scale of ambition contained with the 2025/26 Corporate Plan, and alongside those other unforeseen activities that required additional capacity, the majority of the plan has been delivered. However, as the Council's three priorities are multi-year programmes of work, there is still more to do which is reflected in the performance against outcomes. Focus will need to continue to be sustained to improve outcomes:

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

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.

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 priorities are repeated for 2025/26. Key objectives have been described against each of these priorities, together with a clear set of quarterly delivery milestones.

Recommendation(s)

2. Cabinet is asked to:
   - Note the Quarter Four position on progress against the Corporate Plan 2025/26

Reasons for recommendation(s)

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

Alternative options considered and rejected

4. Not applicable

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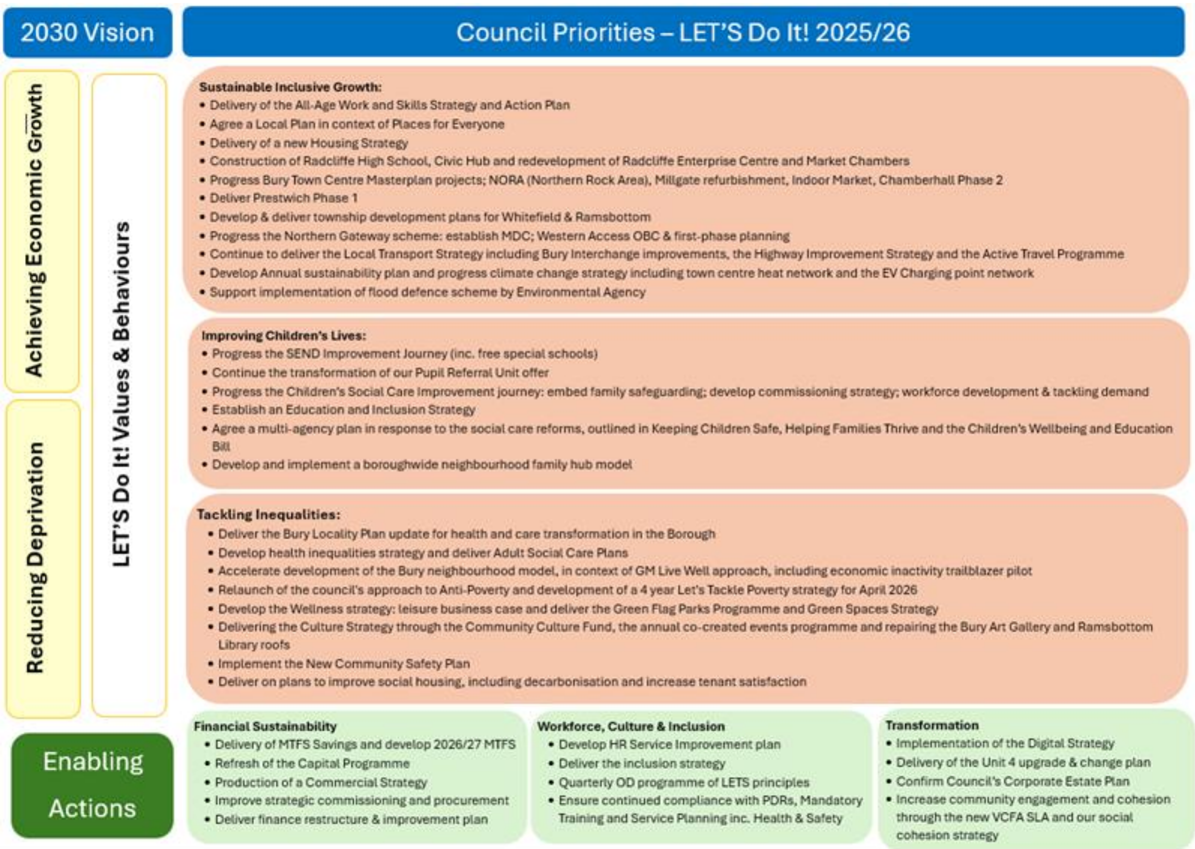
Background

5. 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:

6. 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:

7. 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:

8. 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	

Procurement Implications:

9. Procurement continue to support the corporate plan ensuring compliance and support to delivery of the objectives.

Legal Implications:

10. There are no specific legal considerations however regular updating reports to Cabinet form part of our Council governance assurance process.

Financial Implications:

11. This report is reporting on the delivery of performance against the Council priorities set out in the Corporate Plan. The Corporate Plan is reviewed and produced annually in line with the budget setting process and the budget is developed to deliver the Council's priorities. There are no direct financial implications of this report as the budget to deliver the priorities is approved through Full Council.

Appendices:

Appendix One: Corporate Plan 2025-26
Appendix Two: Corporate Plan Performance Dashboards
Appendix Three: Corporate Plan Q4 2025-26 Delivery Summary (available upon request)

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
Corporate Plan	The Council's agreed annual plan setting out priorities, key objectives and delivery milestones.
LET'S Do It!	The Council's long-term vision for the borough to 2030, underpinning all priorities.
Quarter 4 (Q4)	Final reporting period of the financial year (Jan–Mar 2026), providing year-end position.
KPI (Key Performance Indicator)	Measures used to assess progress and performance against objectives.
RAG Rating	Delivery status: Green (on track), Amber (not on track – risk addressed), Red (not on track – risk identified).
FTE (Full-Time Equivalent)	Standard measure of staffing capacity.
EHCP	Statutory plan setting out support for children with special educational needs and disabilities.
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities service area.
PRU	Pupil Referral Unit for children unable to attend mainstream education.
MTFS	Medium-Term Financial Strategy setting out the Council's financial plans over multiple years.
Unit 4	The Council's core finance and enterprise system supporting financial management.
GMCA	Greater Manchester Combined Authority, regional strategic body.
GM Pledge	Social care commitment within GM to ensure skilled, stable and better social work practice
Places for Everyone	Regional development framework guiding housing and infrastructure planning.
VCFA / VCSE	Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise sector partners.
Live Well	Greater Manchester approach to prevention, wellbeing, and community-based support.
CQC / Ofsted	National regulators for health/social care (CQC) and children's services/education (Ofsted).
SHDF	Government funding programme supporting energy efficiency in social housing.
EIA	Equality Impact Assessment to ensure decisions consider equality and inclusion.
CO_2e	Measure of carbon emissions used to track environmental impact.

Corporate Plan Quarter four 2025-26 Performance and Delivery

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

Performance against the Corporate Plan continues to be supported by both delivery milestones and a suite of aligned Key Performance Indicators. At Quarter Four, the overall position remains positive, with the majority of objectives on track or complete at year end.

A number of indicators demonstrate improved performance across the year, particularly in economic participation, safeguarding outcomes and workforce stability. At the same time, there remain areas of pressure, most notably within housing demand, health inequalities and aspects of organisational compliance. These pressures reflect wider national and regional trends and continue to be actively managed.

2. Sustainable Inclusive Growth

2.1 Key Achievements

Overall delivery against this priority is on track, with the majority of objectives progressing in line with planned milestones. A number of objectives are recorded as not on track but with any associated risks addressed, reflecting dependencies on funding, procurement timelines and the impact of the pre-election period. Mitigations to reduce the impact of these risks remain in place. One objective is flagged with a risk identified due to the impact of an external provider delaying the flood defences at Hardy’s Gate bridge.

During Quarter Four, delivery has continued across a wide-ranging programme of regeneration, infrastructure and strategic planning activity, with a clear shift from consultation into implementation. Labour market performance remains strong, with 95.7% of 16–17-year-olds in education, employment or training, reflecting continued engagement in education and skills pathways.

Significant progress has been made across regeneration programmes. In Bury town centre, works to deliver the market canopy improvements and Flexi Hall substructure have been completed, alongside procurement activity to appoint an operator and progress the next phase of development. In parallel, activity across the quarter has included public engagement on town centre improvements and the continued promotion of Bury as a destination, reflecting a coordinated approach to growth and place-making. The borough continues to support a stable business base, with 7,800 businesses recorded.

In Prestwich, delivery has moved into a more visible phase, with construction activity progressing on the Travel Hub and enabling works across the Longfield Centre site. This has included the closure and relocation of the library and continued engagement with residents on Phase 2 proposals, including consultation and myth-busting activity to address concerns. Milestones around planning submission and site preparation have been achieved, positioning the scheme for progression into the next phase. Housing delivery also reflects strategic priorities, with 96% of completions on brownfield land.

Across Radcliffe and other township programmes, delivery has focused on both physical improvements and community-led investment. This has included progression of the Radcliffe Hub and the launch of the Pride in Place programme. Outputs include the delivery of 312 homes and an increase in affordable housing provision to 88 units.

A key area of focus in Quarter Four has been strategic planning, including extensive engagement with residents on Places for Everyone sites at Elton Reservoir, Walshaw and Simister/Bowlee. This consultation activity represents a major milestone in shaping future growth and has been supported by significant communication and engagement activity. Although formal progression of the Local Plan has been delayed due to the pre-election period, the evidence base has been strengthened, and the Council is well placed to progress in 2026/27.

Infrastructure delivery has continued throughout the quarter, including active travel schemes, highways maintenance and winter service activity. This has included management of disruption associated with major schemes and ongoing communication with residents. Environmental performance shows progress, with 77.0% of street lighting converted to LED and 102 EV charge points installed.

Overall, Quarter Four demonstrates sustained delivery across growth programmes, combining major infrastructure, regeneration and planning activity with ongoing resident and stakeholder engagement.

3. Improving Children’s Lives

3.1 Key Achievements

Overall delivery against this priority is on track, with objectives either complete or progressing in line with plan. Two objectives are recorded as not on track, but with associated risks addressed, reflecting delays relating to estate constraints and site availability as well as recruitment issues and the impact of the SEND inspection on capacity.

During Quarter Four, activity has continued to focus on improving outcomes for children and young people, with sustained delivery across SEND, safeguarding and early help. Performance remains stable, with 93% of EHCPs issued within statutory timescales, demonstrating strong compliance despite increasing demand.

SEND has remained a key area of focus throughout the quarter, with continued work to expand provision and improve the system. This includes development of additional resource provision, improvements to the Local Offer and ongoing engagement with parents and carers. Demand remains high, with 456 EHCPs issued in the last 12 months, and 2,094 children supported, reflecting both need and improved identification.

Progress has also continued in alternative provision, including the relocation of the Pupil Referral Unit to an interim site. While challenges remain in identifying a permanent location, alternative solutions have been developed and delivery continues. Safeguarding outcomes have improved, with the rate of child protection plans reducing to 33 per 10,000, reflecting the impact of early intervention.

Children's social care improvement has continued, with further embedding of the Family Safeguarding model and improved workforce stability. Agency reliance has reduced to 14.0% due to the GM pledge, national agency guidance and Bury CSC improvement in reputation for job satisfaction. Referrals have reduced to 451 per 10,000 and we've seen a downward trend in the number of children in or entering care and with a CPP. This is due to the impact of the family safeguarding model ensuring a more consistent, skilled and stable workforce delivering better practice.

A key milestone during the quarter has been the opening of the Chesham Family Hub, supporting delivery of neighbourhood-based early help. This forms part of a wider programme to localise services and improve access for families. Delivery of holiday provision, including the HAF programme, has also continued, providing support outside of term time.

Education activity has included coordination of secondary school places and support for transitions, alongside wider engagement with schools through the Education and Inclusion Strategy. School readiness has increased to 65.2%, showing gradual improvement towards the target of 74% set by the DfE.

Overall, delivery reflects continued strengthening of the system, with improved outcomes in key areas alongside sustained demand.

4. Tackling Inequalities

4.1 Key Achievements

Overall delivery against this priority is on track, with the majority of objectives progressing in line with planned milestones. One objective is recorded as not on track but with associated risks addressed, reflecting continued demand pressures, particularly within housing and cost-of-living services.

During Quarter Four, delivery has focused on supporting residents through a combination of preventative activity, targeted interventions and community engagement. A significant programme of work has been delivered to support health and wellbeing, including winter health support, smoking cessation campaigns and mental health engagement activity. This has been delivered alongside broader behaviour change campaigns and preventative programmes aimed at improving long-term outcomes. Screening rates remain strong, including 73.1% cervical and 70.4% bowel cancer screening coverage.

However, wider health inequalities remain evident, including 10.8% smoking prevalence and 22.6% excess weight in children.

Housing and neighbourhood activity has been a major focus throughout the quarter, with continued delivery of damp and mould interventions, tenant engagement and neighbourhood walkabouts. This has been supported by increased visibility of services within communities and a focus on responding to resident concerns. Despite this, demand pressures remain significant, with 281 households in temporary accommodation, 565-day waiting times for accommodation, and over 1,060 homelessness presentations. A thorough data cleanse and good maintenance of the housing waiting list have sustained a reduction in average waiting time on the housing register over the past 6 months.

There are also positive outcomes from targeted interventions, with 89 households prevented from becoming homeless or supported, alongside delivery of employment and skills programmes which have contributed to reductions in economic inactivity.

Alongside this, the Council has continued to deliver support to residents through cost-of-living programmes, including warm spaces, advice and targeted financial support. This has been complemented by community engagement activity, events and partnership working across the voluntary sector.

A broad programme of inclusion and cohesion activity has also been delivered during the quarter, including cultural and faith-based events, equality campaigns and community safety initiatives. Community safety activity has included joint work with partners to address antisocial behaviour and support safer town centres. Perception indicators remain stable, with 65% of residents feeling safe and 64.4% reporting good community cohesion.

Overall, activity in Quarter Four reflects a coordinated and neighbourhood-based approach, combining service delivery, prevention and engagement to address inequalities.

5. Enablers

5.1 Key Achievements

Overall delivery across the enabling programme is on track, with a number of objectives complete. A small number are recorded as not on track, reflecting delivery complexity within major transformation programmes.

During Quarter Four, a key milestone has been the agreement of the 2026/27 budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy, following consultation and scrutiny activity. This provides a clear financial framework for delivery and reflects a significant organisational achievement.

Work has also continued to strengthen procurement, commissioning and financial management processes through the Finance Transformation Programme.

Transformation activity has progressed, including progression of the finance restructure and continued work on the Unit 4 system. While delivery timelines have been revised due to system complexity, progress continues with a clear recovery plan in place.

Workforce and organisational development activity has continued, including delivery of the LET'S programme, staff engagement activity and internal communications. Workforce stability has improved, with staff turnover reducing to 11.4%, a sign of good retention especially during the current testing climate.

This testing climate is reflected in our staff sickness which has increased over the year to 14.1 average days lost per FTE per year, a third of which is due to mental health and could be attributed to the reduction in agency staff.

However, there are areas requiring improvement, including 74.4% training compliance, which is below target and subject to ongoing action to address and improve.

Governance and partnership activity has continued, including delivery of audit improvement actions, democratic processes and engagement with the voluntary sector.

Community participation has increased, with 142 new VCFA registrations, strengthening partnership delivery.

Overall, enabling activity has continued to support delivery across all priorities, with strong financial performance and continued organisational improvement.

6. Conclusion

Following Quarter Four, the overall position against delivery of the Corporate Plan for 2025/26 remains positive. The majority of objectives have been delivered or are on track, with a small number subject to managed risks where delivery is influenced by external dependencies or system pressures.

Progress has been sustained across key areas, including regeneration, children's services and targeted action to address inequalities. This has been supported by delivery of enabling programmes, particularly in relation to financial sustainability and organisational stability.

Performance trends broadly align with delivery, with improvement in a number of indicators, alongside continued pressures in housing, health inequalities and organisational compliance.

Overall, the year-end position reflects a stable and improving picture of delivery, with a strong foundation for continued progress in 2026/27.

Appendix One: Corporate Plan 2025-26

2030 Vision

- Achieving Economic Growth
- Reducing Deprivation

LET'S Do It! Values & Behaviours

Council Priorities – LET'S Do It! 2025/26

Sustainable Inclusive Growth:

- Delivery of the All-Age Work and Skills Strategy and Action Plan
- Agree a Local Plan in context of Places for Everyone
- Delivery of a new Housing Strategy
- Construction of Radcliffe High School, Civic Hub and redevelopment of Radcliffe Enterprise Centre and Market Chambers
- Progress Bury Town Centre Masterplan projects; NORA (Northern Rock Area), Millgate refurbishment, Indoor Market, Chamberhall Phase 2
- Deliver Prestwich Phase 1
- Develop & deliver township development plans for Whitefield & Ramsbottom
- Progress the Northern Gateway scheme: establish MDC; Western Access OBC & first-phase planning
- Continue to deliver the Local Transport Strategy including Bury Interchange improvements, the Highway Improvement Strategy and the Active Travel Programme
- Develop Annual sustainability plan and progress climate change strategy including town centre heat network and the EV Charging point network
- Support implementation of flood defence scheme by Environmental Agency

Improving Children's Lives:

- Progress the SEND Improvement Journey (inc. free special schools)
- Continue the transformation of our Pupil Referral Unit offer
- Progress the Children's Social Care Improvement journey: embed family safeguarding; develop commissioning strategy; workforce development & tackling demand
- Establish an Education and Inclusion Strategy
- 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
- Develop and implement a boroughwide neighbourhood family hub model

Tackling Inequalities:

- Deliver the Bury Locality Plan update for health and care transformation in the Borough
- Develop health inequalities strategy and deliver Adult Social Care Plans
- Accelerate development of the Bury neighbourhood model, in context of GM Live Well approach, including economic inactivity trailblazer pilot
- Relaunch of the council's approach to Anti-Poverty and development of a 4 year Let's Tackle Poverty strategy for April 2026
- Develop the Wellness strategy: leisure business case and deliver the Green Flag Parks Programme and Green Spaces Strategy
- 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
- Implement the New Community Safety Plan
- Deliver on plans to improve social housing, including decarbonisation and increase tenant satisfaction

Enabling Actions

Financial Sustainability

- Delivery of MTFS Savings and develop 2026/27 MTFS
- Refresh of the Capital Programme
- Production of a Commercial Strategy
- Improve strategic commissioning and procurement
- Deliver finance restructure & improvement plan

Workforce, Culture & Inclusion

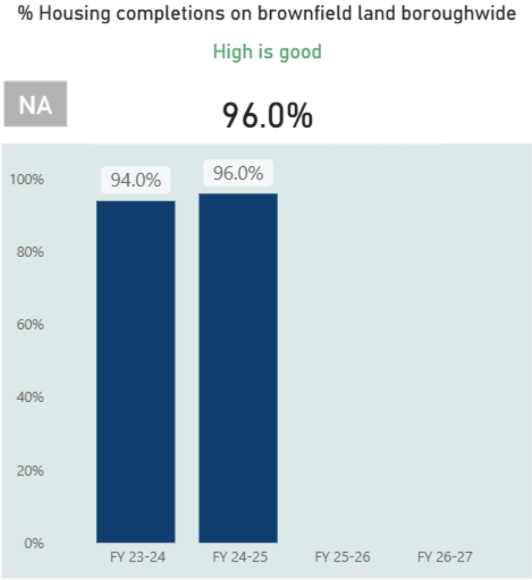
- Develop HR Service Improvement plan
- Deliver the inclusion strategy
- Quarterly OD programme of LETS principles
- Ensure continued compliance with PDRs, Mandatory Training and Service Planning inc. Health & Safety

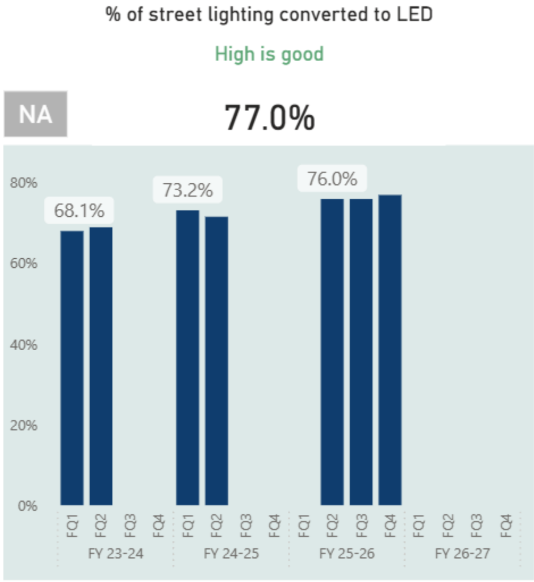
Transformation

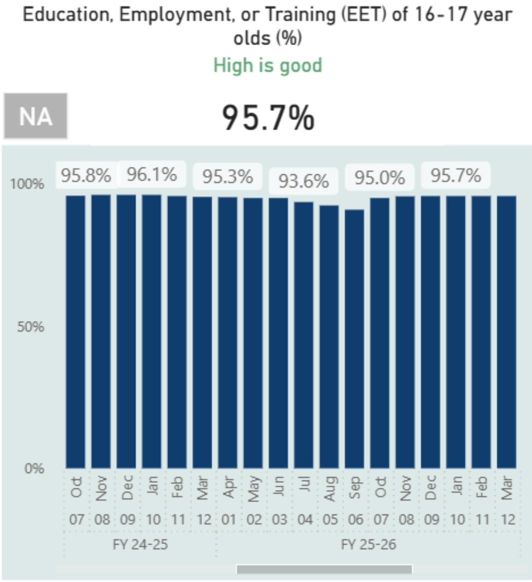
- Implementation of the Digital Strategy
- Delivery of the Unit 4 upgrade & change plan
- Confirm Council's Corporate Estate Plan
- Increase community engagement and cohesion through the new VCFA SLA and our social cohesion strategy

Appendix Two: Corporate Plan Performance Dashboards

Sustainable Inclusive Growth





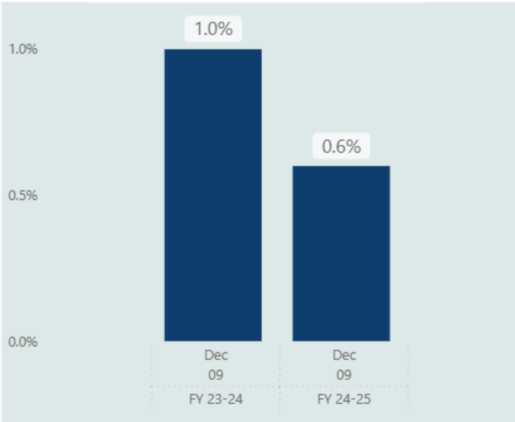


GM Neighbourhood Floor Target - % of premises unable to access download speeds of at least 30 mbits/s

Low is good

NA

0.6%

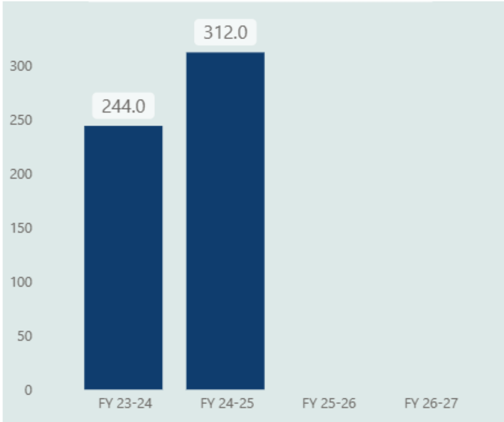


Annual housing completions boroughwide

NA

NA

312.0

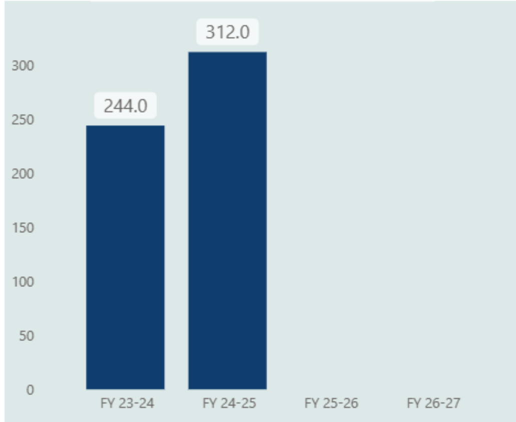


Annual housing completions boroughwide

NA

NA

312.0

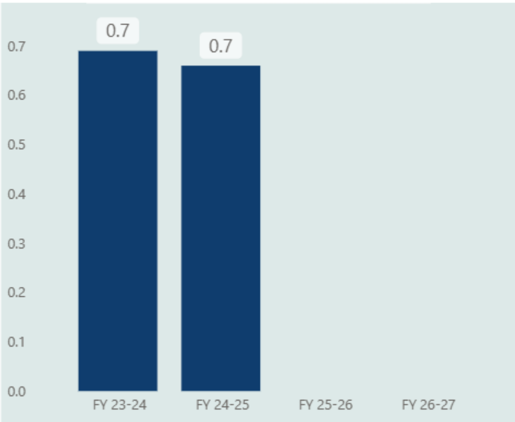


Job Density - The numbers of jobs per resident aged 16-64

NA

NA

0.7

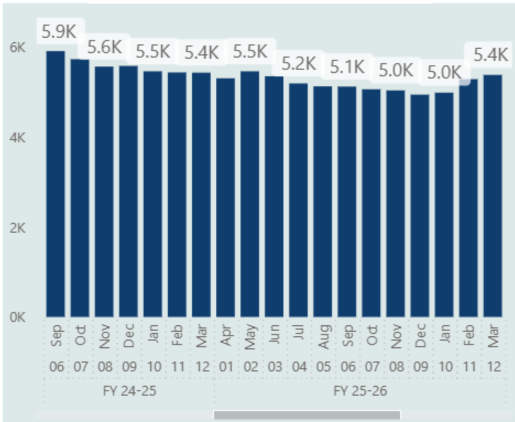


NOMIS Claimant Count

Low is good

NA

5390.0

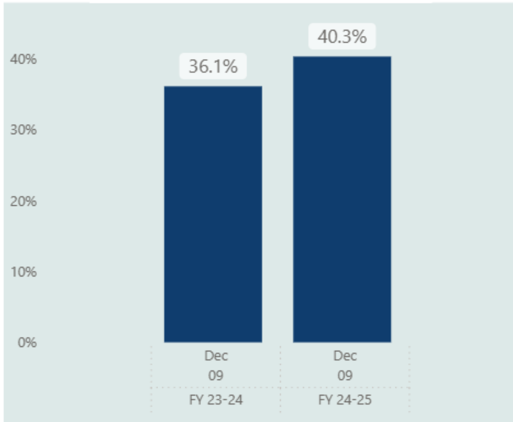


Energy efficiency of housing in the borough (% Band A-C)

High is good

NA

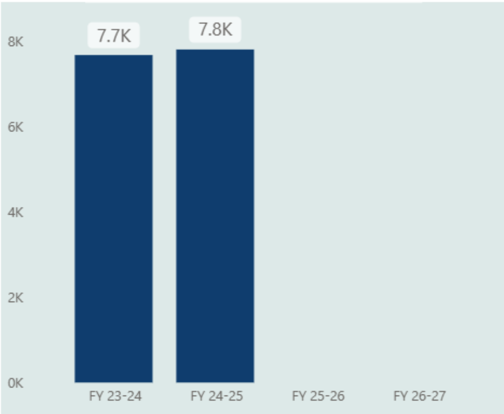
40.3%



UK Business Count

High is good

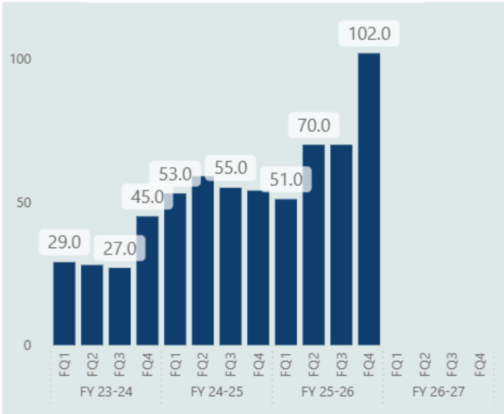
NA 7800.0



Number of EV Charge Points

High is good

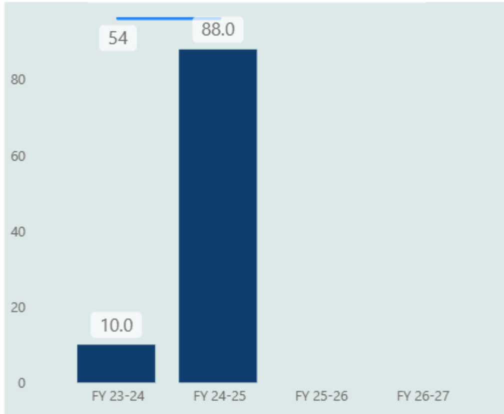
NA 102.0



Number of housing units completed in the borough which are affordable

High is good

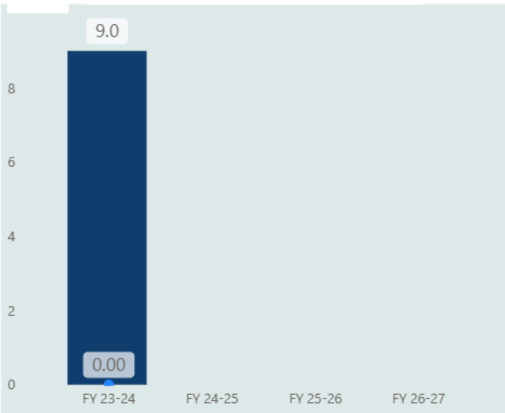
G 88.0



Total CO2 emissions resulting from council operations (KtCO2e)

Low is good

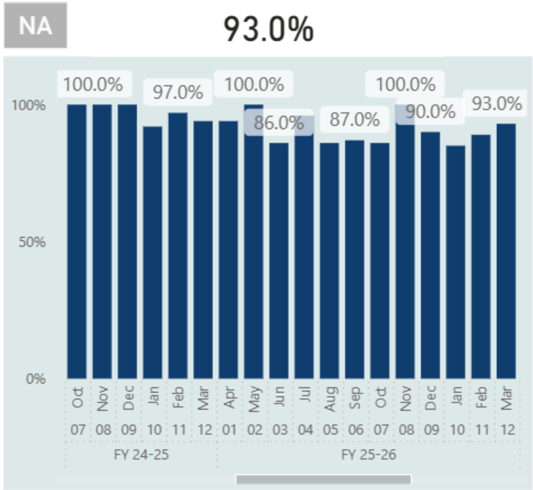
R 9.0



Improving Children's Lives

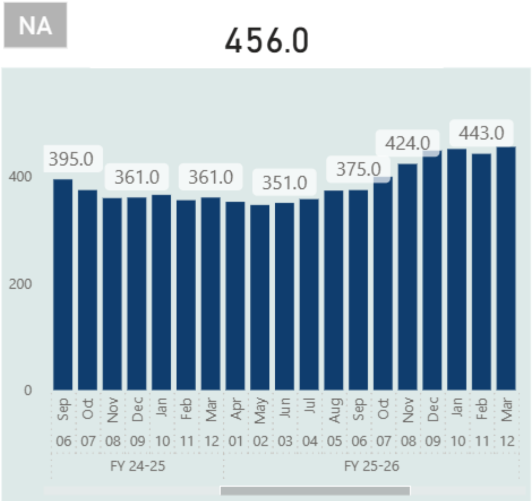
EHCP: Percent of Plans issued on time, compliance at 20 weeks

High is good



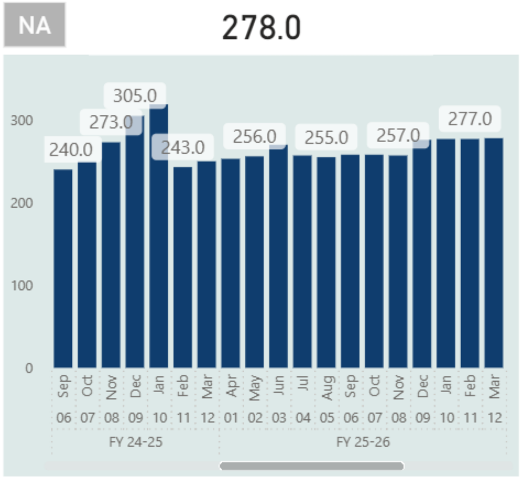
New EHCP's issued in the last 12 months

NA



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

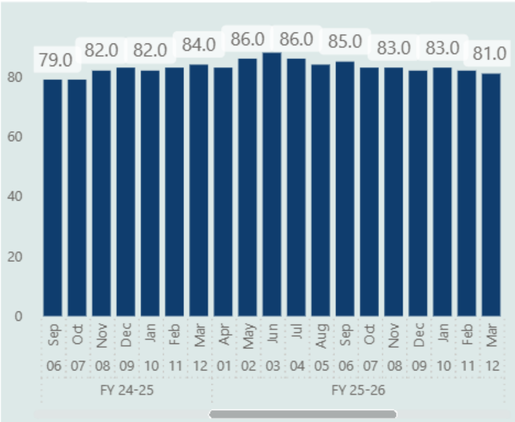
NA



Rate of CLA per 10,000 children (snapshot)

NA

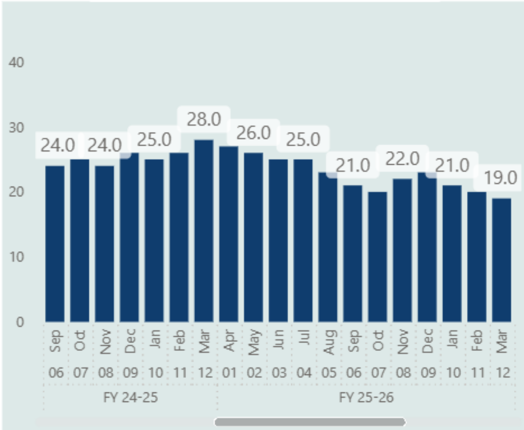
NA 81.0



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

Low is good

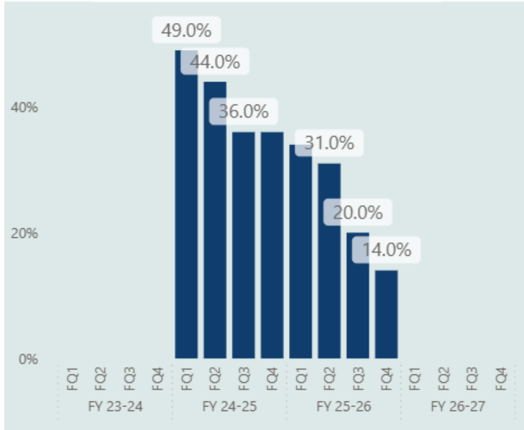
NA 19.0



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

NA

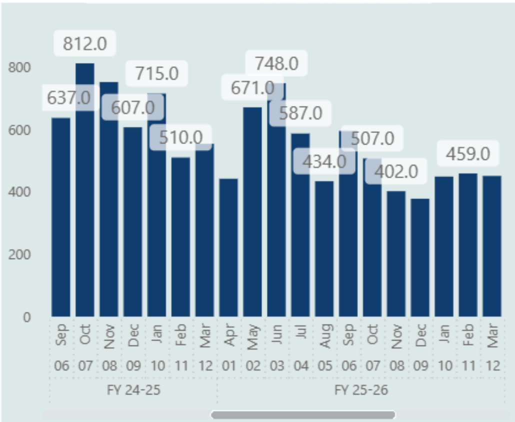
NA 14.0%



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

NA

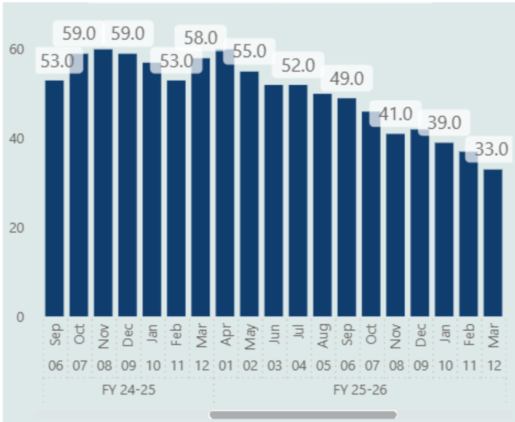
NA 451.0



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

NA

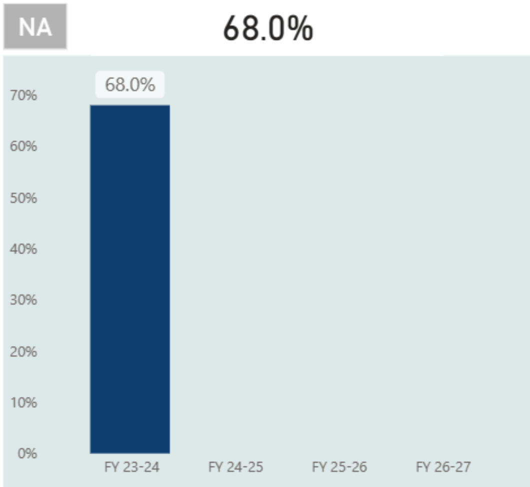
NA 33.0



Tackling Inequalities

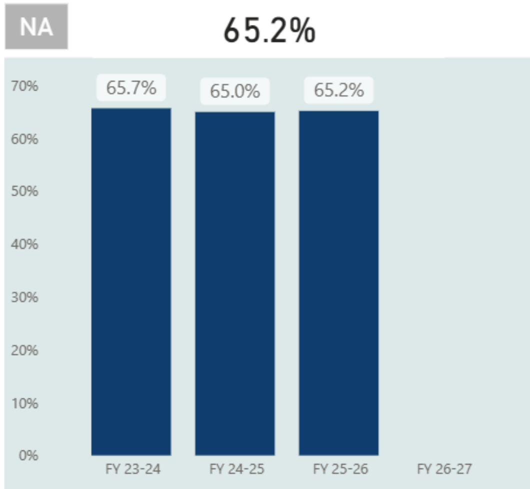
% of physically active adults

High is good



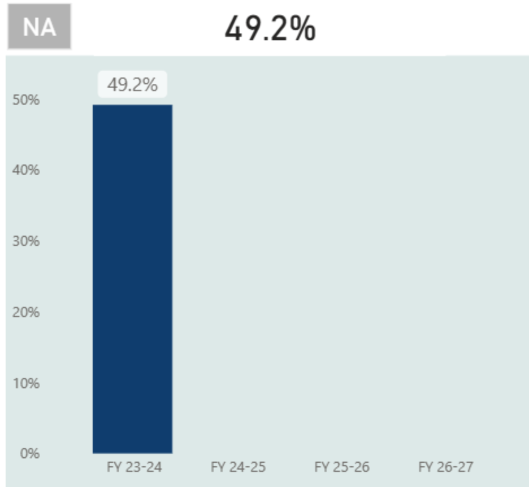
% of children defined as ready for school

High is good



% of physically active children and young people (5-16 years)

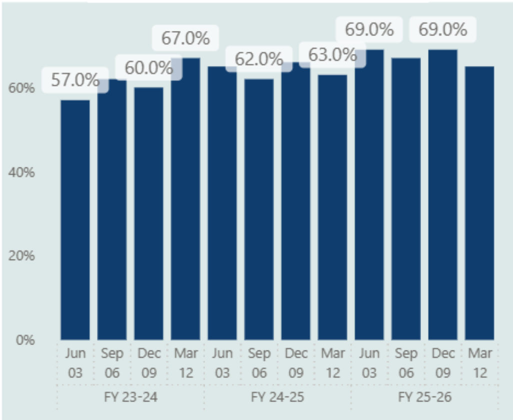
High is good



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

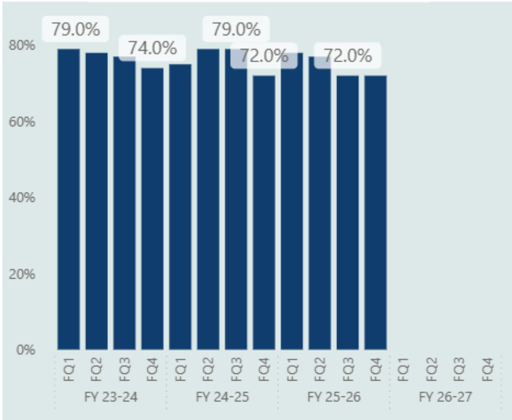
High is good

NA 65.0%



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

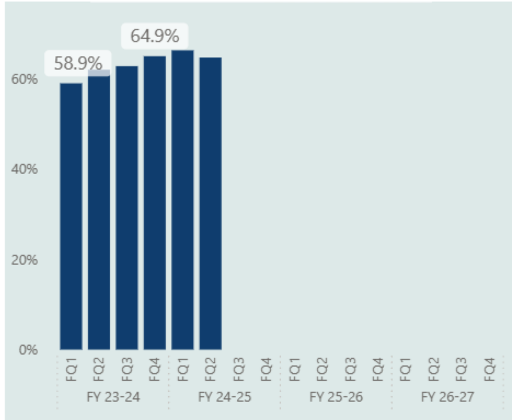
NA 72.0%



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

High is good

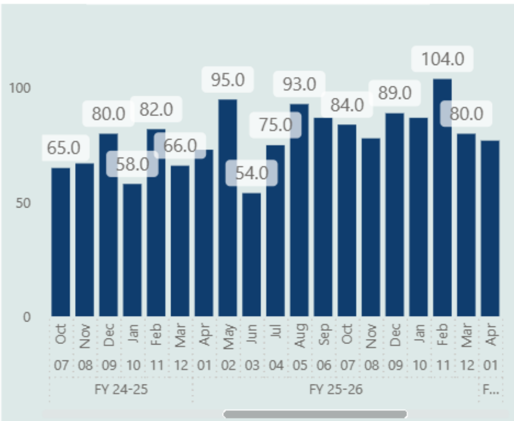
NA 64.6%



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

Low is good

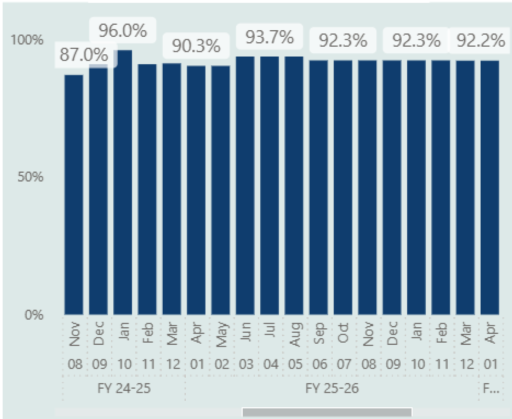
NA 77.0



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

High is good

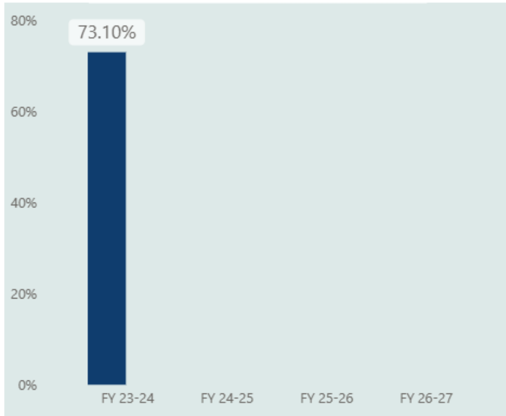
NA 92.2%



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

High is good

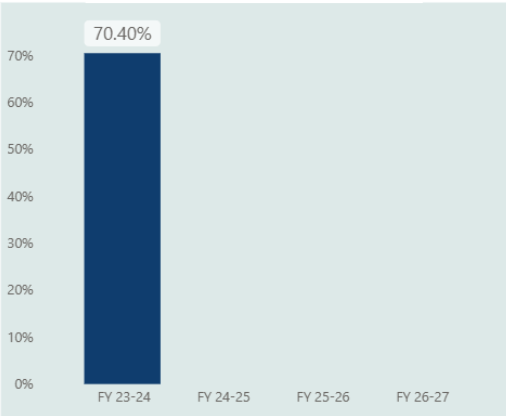
73.1%



Cancer screening coverage: bowel cancer (%)

High is good

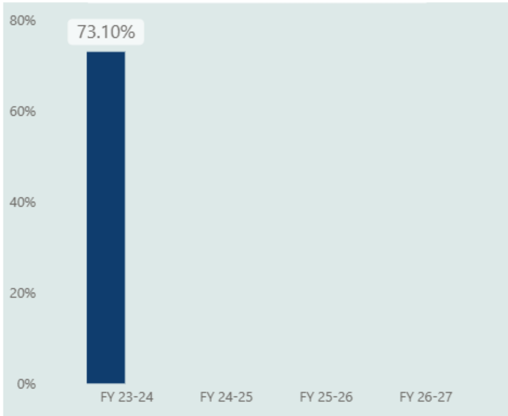
70.4%



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

High is good

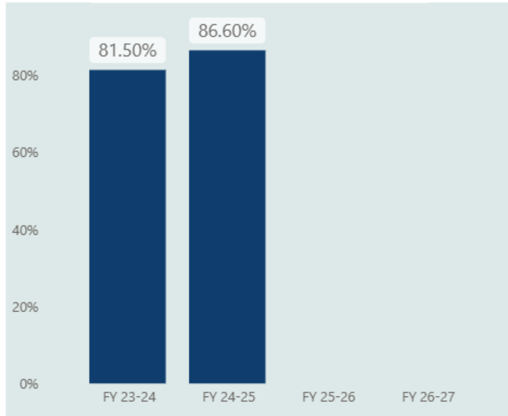
73.1%



MMR for two doses - 5 years old (%)

High is good

86.6%

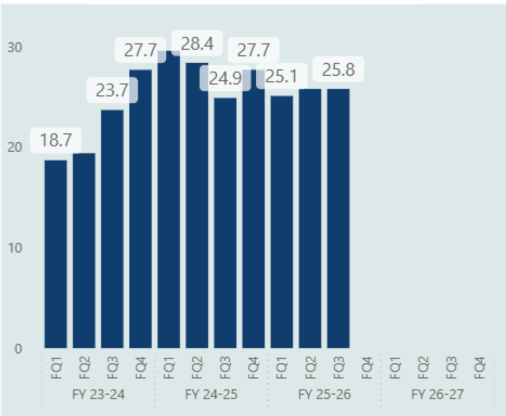


Economic Inactivity

Low is good

NA

25.8

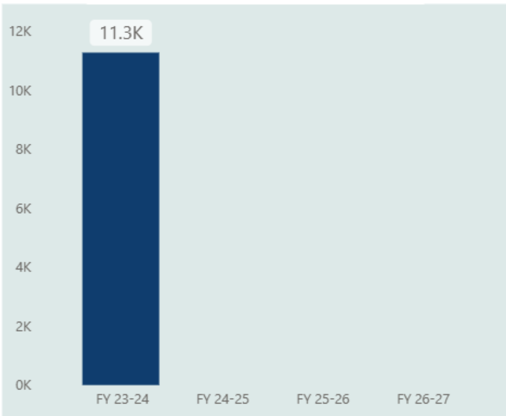


Number of children in relative low income families (under 16s)

Low is good

NA

11.3K

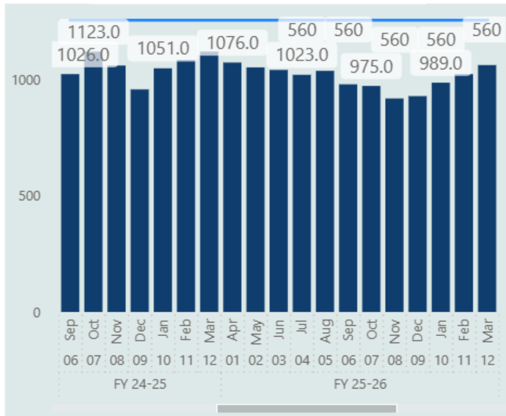


Number of statutory homeless cases open on the last day of the month

Low is good

R

1065.0

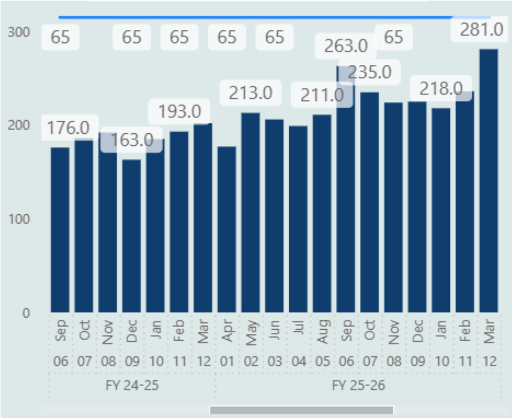


Number of households in temporary accommodation on last day of the month

Low is good

R

281.0

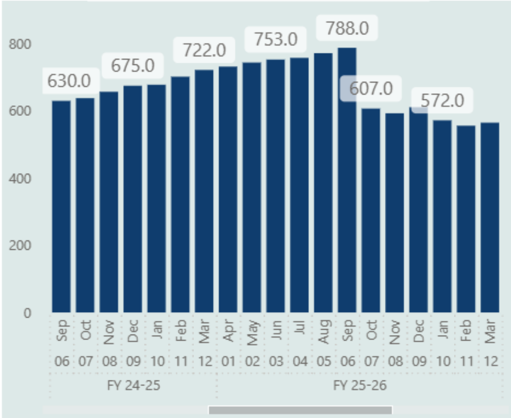


Average waiting time on housing register (all applications) (snapshot)

Low is good

NA

565.0

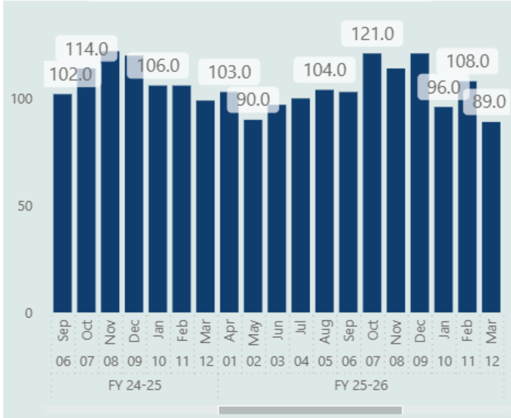


Number of rough sleepers currently being supported

High is good

NA

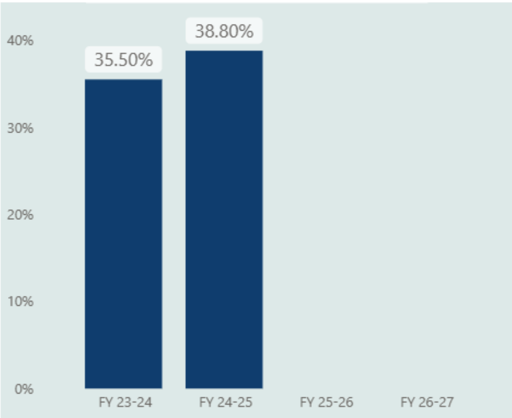
89.0



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

Low is good

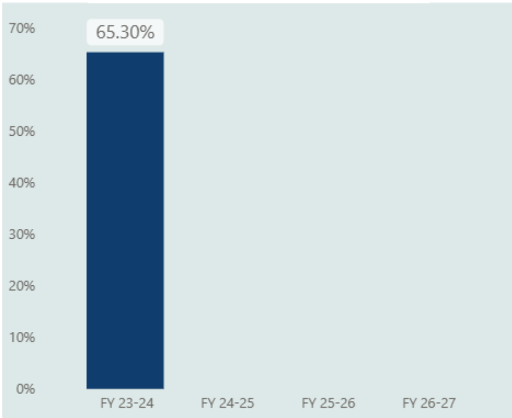
38.8%



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

Low is good

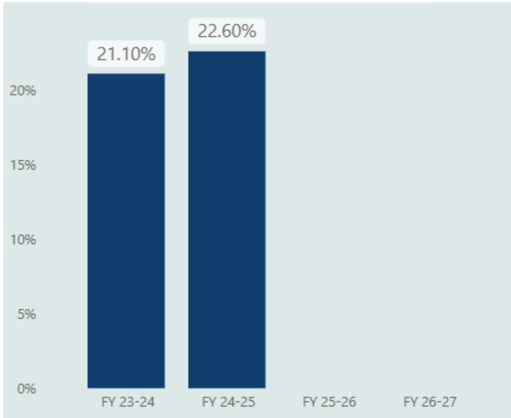
65.3%



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

Low is good

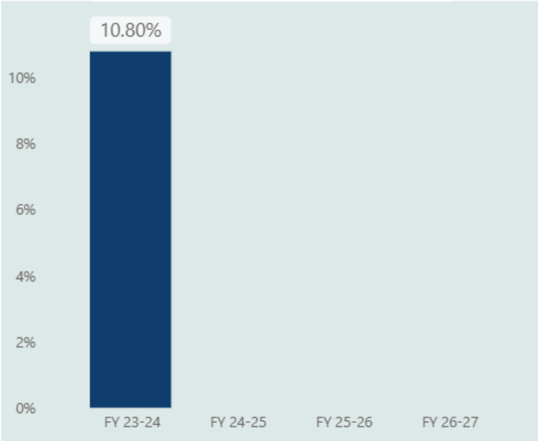
22.6%



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

Low is good

10.8%

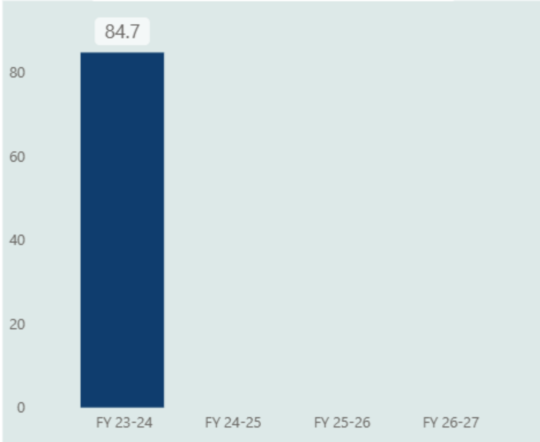


Under 75 mortality rate from cardiovascular disease (rate per 100,000)

Low is good

NA

84.7

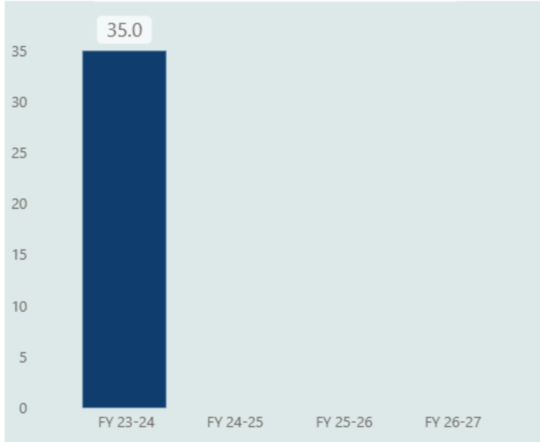


Under 75 mortality rate from liver disease (rate per 100,000 residents)

Low is good

NA

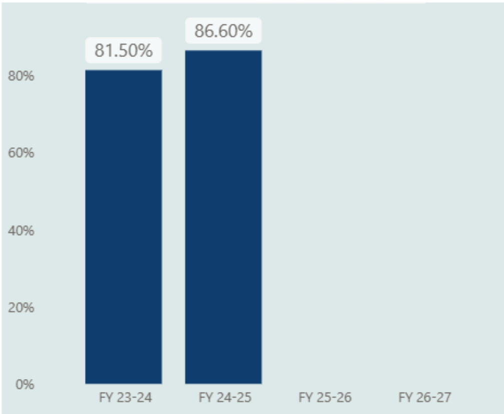
35.0



MMR for two doses - 5 years old (%)

High is good

86.6%

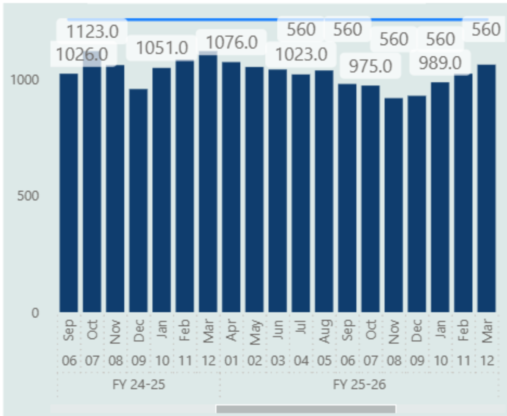


Number of statutory homeless cases open on the last day of the month

Low is good

R

1065.0

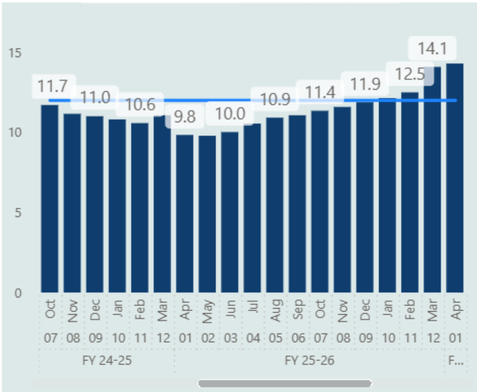


Enablers

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

Low is good

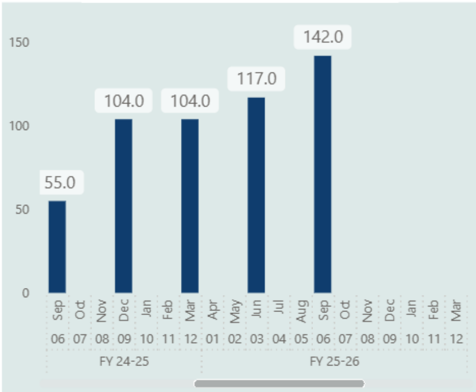
G 14.3



Number of new registrations on VCFA Volunteering Bank

High is good

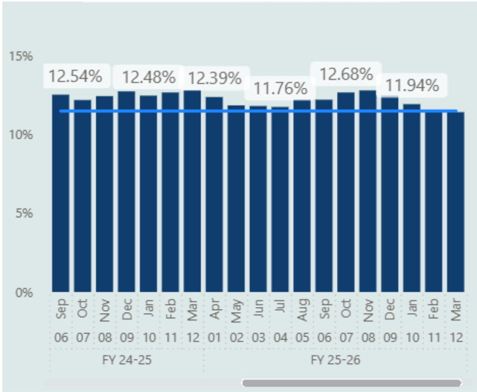
NA 142.0



% Staff turnover (Bury Council)

Low is good

A 11.9%



Classification: Open	Decision Type: Non-Key

Report to:	Cabinet	Date: 08 July 2026
Subject:	Finance Update Report – 2025/26 Outturn Position	
Report of	Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services	

Summary

This report provides an update to Cabinet on the council's final outturn position across the General Fund revenue and capital budgets, Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and DSG (Dedicated Schools Grant).

The 2025/26 General Fund outturn position is an overspend of £7.266m, equivalent to 3.04% of the net revenue budget. This represents a favourable movement of £0.673m from the Quarter 3 forecast overspend of £7.932m. Further detail on the revenue outturn position and movements since Quarter 3 is set out in Section 1. The 2025/26 budget included approved savings of £11.334m, of which £7.729m (68.19%) have been delivered. Further detail on savings delivery is provided in Section 2.

To offset the overspend, a drawdown of £7.266m from the budget stabilisation reserve has been required. This has further reduced already low levels of reserves and is not sustainable in the long term. As a result, the reserve is no longer sufficient to support the forecast funding gap beyond 2027/28, however, work continues through the budget review of all services to identify saving proposals which will reduce the funding gap and reliance on reserves in future years. Further detail on the reserves position is provided in Section 3.

The outturn position on the capital programme is slippage of £17.336m against the £119.614m approved delivery programme. The slippage will initially be carried forward for delivery in 2026/27, but the intention is to carry out a fundamental review of the deliverability of the 2026/27 capital programme and make recommendations to Cabinet regarding re-profiling in the first (Q1) financial performance update of the current financial year to Cabinet in September. Further detail on the capital programme performance is provided in Section 4.

The outturn position on the Collection Fund (Section 5), Housing Revenue Account (HRA) (Section 6) and Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) (Section 7) are also provided in the body of the report.

Recommendation(s)

Cabinet is asked to:

- Note the 2025/26 revenue outturn position of a £7.266m overspend (3.04%) against a net budget of £238.987m.

- Note the in-year reduction in General Fund and Earmarked Reserves of £19.509m (30.67%) and closing balance at 31 March 2026 of £44.106m.

- Note the 2025/26 achievement of savings of £7.729m (68%) against a target of £11.334m.

- Note the overall 2025/26 capital programme outturn position of £100.413m, (84%) compared to the overall 2025/26 capital programme budget of £119.614m. This results in a £19.201m variance, mainly driven by £17.336m of rephased schemes into 2026/27, alongside £0.993m from schemes not progressed and £0.872m of savings across housing projects.

- Approve the in-year capital slippage of £17.336m being initially transferred into 2026/27 to enable an in-year review of the deliverability of the capital programme to be undertaken and the programme re-profiled accordingly.

- Note the 2025/26 outturn position for the Collection Fund.

- Note the 2025/26 outturn position for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

- Note the 2025/26 outturn position for the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).

Reasons for recommendation(s)

To note the final financial outturn position for 2025/26 subject to external audit.

Alternative options considered and rejected
N/A

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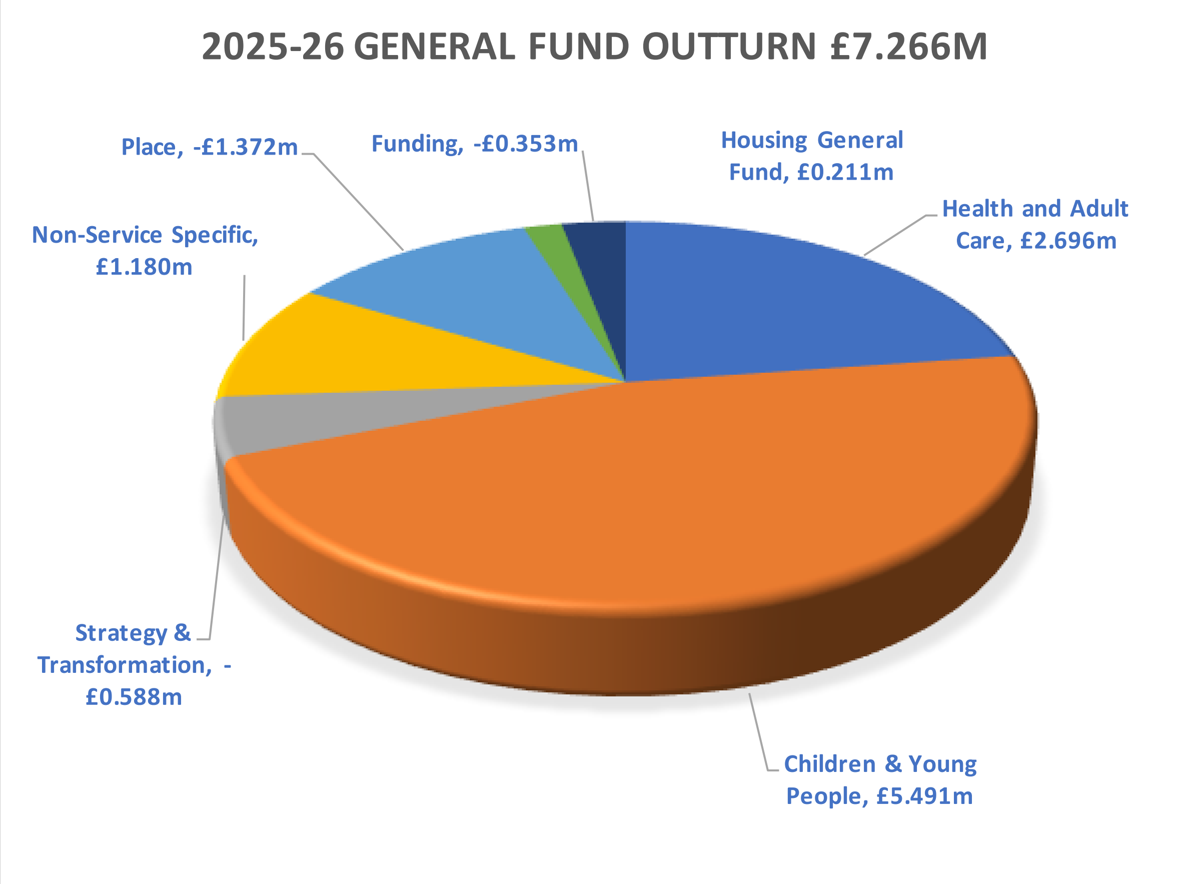
Background

1. 2025/26 Revenue Outturn

1.1. The 2025/26 general fund revenue outturn position is an overspend of £7.266m, equivalent to 3.04% of the net revenue budget of £238.987m. This represents a favourable movement of £0.667m from the forecast at Quarter 3 reported to March Cabinet. The improvement reflects the impact of a number of cost control measures, and overseen by the Finance Board, to reduce the forecast overspend. To neutralise the overspend an additional drawdown from reserves of £7.266m is required which is on top of the £5.858m funding from reserves originally agreed when setting the 2025/26 budget. This further reduces reserve levels and is not sustainable in the long term, however the drawdown is lower than had been factored into the projected reserves position reported in February which was based on the Q3 forecast overspend position.

Table 1: 2025/26 Revenue Outturn	**Revised Budget £m**	**Actual £m**	**Variance £m**
Directorate:			
Health and Adult Care	£98.892	£101.588	£2.696
Children & Young People	£65.494	£70.985	£5.491
Strategy & Transformation*	£30.082	£29.494	(£0.588)
Non-Service Specific	£29.294	£30.474	£1.180
Place	£15.304	£13.932	(£1.372)
Housing General Fund	(£0.079)	£0.132	£0.211
NET REVENUE BUDGET	**£238.987**	**£246.606**	**£7.618**
Funding:			
Council Tax	(£119.350)	(£119.350)	-
Business Rates	(£74.489)	(£74.027)	£0.462
Government Funding Grants	(£39.290)	(£40.105)	(£0.815)
FUNDING	**(£233.129)**	**(£233.482)**	**(£0.353)**
Use of Reserves:			
Budget Stabilisation Reserve	(£5.858)	(£5.858)	-
USE OF RESERVES	**(£5.858)**	**(£5.858)**	**-**
BUDGET POSITION	**-**	**£7.266**	**£7.266**

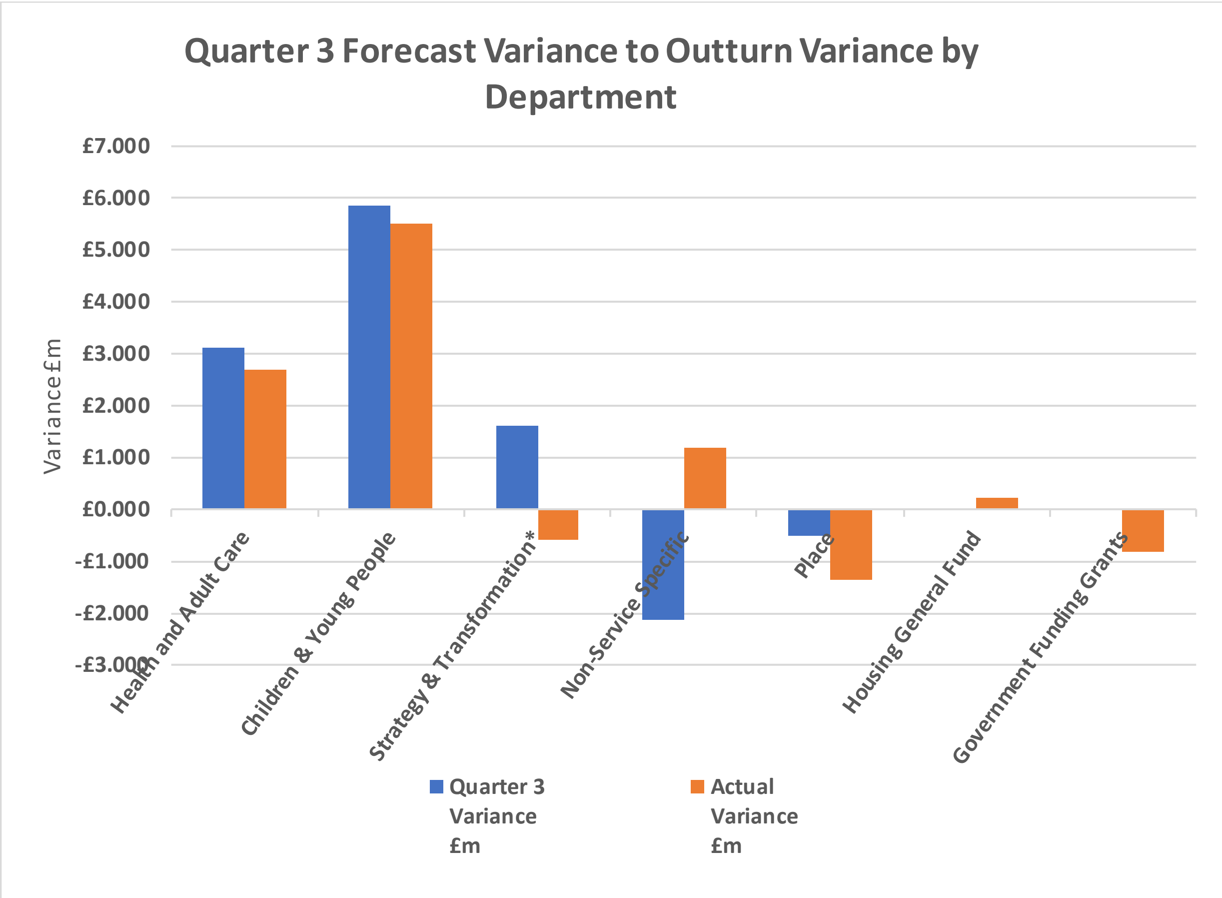
*per Leadership structure approved at Cabinet 9 July 2025, previously reported as Corporate Core Services



1.2. The quarterly forecast positions and the actual outturn position can be seen in Table 2 below:

Table 2: 2025-26 Quarterly Movements	**Revised Budget £m**	**Quarter 1 Variance £m**	**Quarter 2 Variance £m**	**Quarter 3 Variance £m**	**Actual Variance £m**	**Movement from Quarter 3 £m**
Department:						
Health and Adult Care	£98.892	£1.942	£1.706	£3.118	£2.696	(£0.422)
Children & Young People	£65.494	£3.017	£2.181	£5.849	£5.491	(£0.358)
Strategy & Transformation	£30.082	£0.747	£3.094	£1.600	(£0.588)	(£2.188)
Non-Service Specific	£29.294	(£1.557)	(£1.886)	(£2.120)	£1.180	£3.299
Place	£15.304	-	£0.766	(£0.516)	(£1.372)	(£0.856)
Housing General Fund	(£0.079)	-	-	-	£0.211	£0.211
Directorate Total	**£238.987**	**£4.148**	**£5.861**	**£7.932**	**£7.618**	**(£0.314)**
Funding:						
Council Tax	(£119.350)	-	-	-	-	-
Business Rates	(£74.489)	-	-	-	£0.462	£0.462

Government Funding Grants	(£39.290)	-	-	-	(£0.815)	(£0.815)
Funding	**(£233.129)**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**(£0.353)**	**(£0.353)**
Use of Reserves:						
Budget Stabilisation Reserve	(£5.858)	-	-	-	-	-
Reserves	**(£5.858)**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**
Total over / (under)spend	**-**	**£4.148**	**£5.861**	**£7.932**	**£7.266**	**(£0.667)**



Details of the significant variances include:

1.3. **Health and Adult Care: £2.696m overspend, £0.422m favourable movement from Quarter 3**

1.3.1. The 2025/26 outturn position for the Health and Adult Care (HAC) Directorate is an overspend of £2.696m (2.7%).

1.3.2. The **Care in the Community** budget overspent by £5.186m (8%), which is a £0.423m adverse movement from quarter 3. This movement is due to lower than forecast income for shared care package costs with the NHS. The process for identifying and agreeing shared care package costs with the NHS will be reviewed during 2026/27.

1.3.3. The reported Care in the Community overspend includes mitigation totalling £0.800m through the one-off use of service-related reserves. Although this has reduced the overall overspend reported within this budget, this reliance on one-off funding does not address the underlying cost pressures.

1.3.4. The service settings driving the overspend are Supported Living, £4.367m, a favourable movement of £0.353m from quarter 3, Residential Nursing Care (£1.388m), an adverse movement of £0.537m from quarter 3 and Home Care (£1.345m) a favourable movement of £0.215m from quarter 3.

The service delivered £4.236m of savings in 2025/26, exceeding the approved savings target by £81k and mitigating against a larger overspend position.

1.3.5. The Impower review of Adults services identified £5m of potential savings across the adults social care services, which are reflected in the MTFS over the next 3 years 2026/27 to 2028/29. The work identified four main workstreams for strengthening our front doors, maximising independence, embedding strengths-based practice and driving outcomes. Work has taken place throughout the second half of 2025/26 to identify the specific projects which will enable delivery of the Impower savings.

1.3.6. The scale of this overspend, together with the recurring nature of care costs, presents a significant risk to the service's 2026/27 opening budget position. This will need to be mitigated in 2026/27, alongside ensuring the delivery of new savings.

1.3.7. The **Adult Social Care Operations** budget is underspent by £1.171m (12.7%) which is broadly in line with the underspend reported at quarter 3. The main drivers of the underspend are staffing vacancies withing 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

1.3.8. 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.

1.3.9. The **Commissioning and Procurement** budget is underspent by £0.080m (0.8%), which is a £0.153m favourable movement from quarter 3. This is largely driven by staffing vacancies and additional recovery of underutilised client personal budgets offset by increased Carers Payment Activity and Mental Health Assessments in hospitals and care homes.

1.3.10. The **Departmental Support Services** budget is overspent by £0.038m (1.6%) which is an adverse movement from quarter 3 linked to higher than forecast recharges for areas such as, legal and systems costs.

1.3.11. The **Public Health** budget is underspent by £0.387m (3.4%), a favourable movement from quarter 3. This underspend is mainly due to staff vacancies and reduced demand activity on the NHS Health checks and GM Sexual Health contracts and one-off lower than budgeted inflation for 2025/26. The inflationary uplift will be required within the next financial year.

1.3.12. The **Wellness** budget is underspent by £0.812m (30.6%) which is a favourable movement of £0.595m from quarter 3. The underspend is the net impact of the closure of the Radcliffe Leisure centre and staffing vacancies across the Leisure budget portfolio. This underspend will not continue into 2026/27 once the new Radcliffe Hub opens in 2026/27.

1.3.13. **Arts and Museums** are underspent by £0.078m (13.2%) due to the closure of the Tourist Information Centre

1.4. Children and Young People: £5.491m overspend, £0.358m favourable movement from Quarter 3

1.4.1. The 2025/26 outturn position for the Children's and Young People Directorate is an overspend of £5.491m (8.4%).

1.4.2. **Children's residential placements** including Children with Disabilities overspent by £4.897m (33.7%). This was predominantly in relation to both demand increases and price and inflationary increases on average costs budgeted for 2025/26.

1.4.3. During the latter half of the year, there have been clear signs of the Family Safeguarding model beginning to embed with a reduction in the number of child protection plans and a sustained low number of children entering care. The impact of Keeping Families Together (Edge of Care), enhanced therapeutic support for children in care and investment in the Children's Commissioning team has also been felt, with fewer teenagers entering care, a significant slow down in the number of children entering residential care, strong long-term stability in the homes for children in long-term care and a reducing average cost of homes for children new to residential care. The cumulative impact of these budget initiatives, stronger social work planning and practice, and wider options for step down, such as the Reconnect, reduced the number of children in residential care by 10% in the final quarter of 2025/26, avoiding costs of £1.5m in this financial year. This trend is planned to continue into 2026/27, with a forecast further £1m reduction in costs in quarter 1 of financial year 2026/27.

1.4.4. A total of £5.984m has been included in the 2026/27 budget to meet increases in demand and inflation, offset by new savings targets of £4.711m. It is anticipated that it will be a challenge to achieve the total savings target in year due to some of the savings related projects not fully in place, however the directorate are aiming to get the spends in this area and other placements in line with budget. The service acknowledges the risk and the area will be subject to detailed intensive oversight as part of the monthly monitoring process overseen by the Finance Board in line with the materiality, complexity and volatility along with unpredictability at times mixed with the external market pressures inherent in this budget area.

1.4.5. The service will continue to mitigate wherever possible these risks with rigorous monitoring frameworks with proactive placement reviews and planning supported by the agreed increase in commissioning resource as it recognises it as being one of the continuing highest revenue risks to the council.

1.4.6. **Independent Fostering Agency placements** overspent by £0.478m (11.3%). This is due to the average number of placements being around 9 higher, 87, than the 78 budgeted for in 2025/26 as a consequence of placements moving from residential placement settings. While this has resulted in an overspend against the IFA budget, it represents a positive outcome overall as it has helped mitigate greater cost pressures within residential placements.

1.4.7. The budget hasn't increased significantly for 2026/27 due to historic savings so the service will look to manage this alongside the Residential placement reviews and monitoring and align budgets alongside their sufficiency and modelling projections.

1.4.8. **In-house fostering, friends & family and Staying Put** placements have reported a pressure of £0.410m (10.8%). Overall, this is due to price increases and one-off costs over and above budgeted levels.

1.4.9. The 2026/27 budget includes an additional £0.372m for contractual inflation to support coming in on budget in 2026/27 whilst monitoring regional and national fostering developments and potential budget implications.

1.4.10. **Legal services** required for children and young people and their families have reported significant growth in demand during 2025/26 and this has led to a reported pressure of £0.844m (106.4%).

1.4.11. The 2026/27 budget includes growth of £0.404m. Legacy and current demands are being worked through coupled with increased scrutiny of the type and number of legal services required through joint working across directorates to enable this area to come back in on budget for 2026/27.

1.4.12. **The Education and Inclusion service** has reported an underspend of £0.491m (3.9%) predominantly from vacant posts and optimisation of grants and fees and charges.

1.4.13. **The Adoption service** is reporting a £0.337m underspend (25.7%) due to a reduction in the number of placements which follows the national trend of reducing adoptions placements, and respective allowances paid out. This includes the financial contribution to our lead partner authority, Bolton. This budget is being reviewed in 2026/27 with a view to adjusting in line with the forecast position.

1.4.14. **The Home to School transport** service reported a £0.094m (1.8%) overspend, a £0.396m favourable movement from quarter 3. There is a trend of increasing demand for the service, however the position has improved as the demand increase was lower than previously forecast.

1.5. **Strategy & Transformation (previously reported as Corporate Core Services) : £0.588m underspend, £2.188m favourable movement from Quarter 3**

1.5.1. The Strategy and Transformation Directorate is reporting an underspend of £0.588m (1.9%), which is a £2.188m favourable movement from quarter 3.

1.5.2. **Legal & Democratic Services** has an underspend of £0.515m (8.8%) a £0.018m favourable movement quarter 3. This is due to:

- The Elections & Governance service underspent by £0.291m due to 2025/26 being a fallow year with no local elections other than by-elections.

- Legal Services Coroners underspent by £0.250m in part due to the pathological scanning service coming online and showing cost reductions.

1.5.3. **The Strategy & Transformation Executive Director** service has underspent by £0.474m (6.2%) a £0.393m favourable movement from quarter 3 due to:

- Data Digital and Technology service have underspent by £0.354m (£0.346m favourable movement from quarter 3) mainly due to staffing underspends.
- Emergency Response and Resilience underspent by £0.109m as a result of additional income generation, a favourable movement of £0.040m from quarter 3.

1.5.4. The **People and Inclusion service** have overspent by £0.388m, broadly in line with the quarter 3 position due to:

- £0.210m overspend on staffing costs
- £0.149m underachievement of income, of which £0.181m is in relation to a reduction in education buy back as more schools becoming academies.

1.5.5. The **Housing Needs and Options** service has overspent by £0.184m, a £0.462m favourable movement from quarter 3. The overspend is in relation to additional overnight accommodation costs, offset by increased grant receipts of £0.531m. Whilst overnight accommodation has experienced and overspend due to rising demand, (increased from 200 in April to 236) the overspend would have been greater without proactive management by the service. The position has been partially mitigated through successful move on activity with 18 clients transitioning into Huntley House following its opening in October, helping to reduce ongoing cost pressures.

1.5.6. The **Health & Environment** service have underspent by £0.181m, a £0.182m adverse movement from quarter 3. The underspend mainly relates to staffing.

1.5.7. The **Finance** budget has underspent by £0.043m, a £1.436m favourable movement from quarter 3. The positive movement is a result of several large offsetting variances, these are:

- Revenue and Benefits service have overspent by £0.603m, a favourable movement of £0.013m from quarter 3. The overspend is in relation to £0.354m one-off severance costs as a result of implementation of the approved restructure, £0.281m in relation to postage costs and other minor offsetting variances.

- Insurance costs have a one-off underspend of £0.633m, a favourable movement of £1.996m from quarter 3. The favourable movement is a result of changes to levels of insurance reserves and provisions following the actuarial report. The procurement and contract award for insurance premiums was not finalised until after the 2025/26 budget was set and this has been reflected in the 2026/27 budget.
- The Finance (accountancy) service is overspending due to the reliance on agency staff; however, the restructure is in the process of being populated and is beginning to reduce the reliance on agency staff. This is offset by additional general fund receipts in relation to the Collection Fund.

1.6. **Non-Service Specific: £1.180m overspend, £3.299m adverse movement from Quarter 3**

1.6.1. A total of £2.160m of unachieved service wide savings are sat within NSS, the largest being £1.610m relating to Integration of Housing services which will remain a pressure in 2026/27 if no actions are taken. The Integration of Housing saving is the balance remaining from a total £3m savings target which was agreed as £1m in February 2023 and a further £2m in February 2025. This saving has been partially achieved by reviewing and increasing the legitimate costs chargeable to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). Work will continue to look at wider integration efficiencies to deliver the unachieved £1.610m.

1.6.2. Work on contract savings has seen significant progress, with the part year effect in 2025/26 being £0.100m, however it is anticipated that this will rise to £1.000m in 2026/27. The remaining balance of savings have been distributed to departments for 2026/27 financial year

1.6.3. There is an underspend of £1.602m in relation to cost of borrowing primarily related to lower than anticipated borrowing being undertaken through the re-phasing of, and subsequent slippage on, the capital programme alongside increased returns on investments.

1.6.4. Banking charges linked to income collection along with other minor variances have resulted in an overspend of £0.432m.

1.7. **Place: £1.372m underspend, £0.856m favourable movement from Quarter 3**

1.7.1. The Place Directorate has an overall budget of £15.304m for 2025/26 and is reporting an underspend of £1.372m (8.9%), a £0.856m favourable movement from quarter 3.

Significant items to note:

1.7.2. Most services are reporting a favourable variance to budget; this is despite rising costs especially in construction and fuel and reflects the fact that several services are reporting more income than budgeted.

1.7.3. In contrast some capital recharges are lower than expected due to slippage in the programme and external resource being used directly on the projects in place of internal staff where vacancies couldn't be filled expediently.

1.7.4. The services which are reporting over budget are:

- Strategic Planning & Development Management has a net overspend of £0.185m in relation to increased recharges from other departments offset by increased income from planning fees.
- Senior Management is £0.143m overspent due to the previous AD of Operations remaining in post longer than originally anticipated.
- Waste, Transport services and Stores is £0.449m overspent due to higher than budgeted employee costs which will be addressed where possible in 2026/27.

1.7.5. Savings targets relating to vacancy factors have not been achieved in some of the services due to the nature of the services and the demographic of the staffing cohort, the savings have been met by other operational efficiencies within each service and the increased income generated.

Outlook

1.8. Whilst demand and inflationary pressures across council services have been built into the MTFS and 2026/27 budget, they were based on the information available at the time. As such there are both potential risks, and opportunities, relating to income and demand fluctuations varying from the current assumptions. Work is being undertaken over the summer to carry out a review of all budgets, in part informed by the outturn position, to identify savings to address the current c£21m forecast funding gap over the life of the current MTFS through to 2028/29. This process will assess and identify areas of opportunity to reduce budgets alongside linking budgets to the strategic aims, objective and priorities of the Council.

2. Savings

2.1. The Council's savings programme for 2026/27 totalled £11.334m, of which £7.729 (68.19%) has been delivered, a £1.094m adverse movement from quarter 3. The main reason for the underachievement is delayed implementation of restructures and other activities required to enable delivery of the agreed savings. Work has been undertaken by the Finance Board to reduce and mitigate the in-year financial impact.

2.2. There is a shortfall in delivery of £3.605m, comprising £1.651m within Children and Young People services and £2.160m within Non-Service Specific budgets. It is currently anticipated that the majority of these savings will be delivered in 2026/27. The primary area of concern is the £1.610m under-delivery of the approved Housing Integration saving which is being reviewed to determine what can be delivered in 2026/27 to offset the resulting budget pressure.

Table 3: 2025/26 Budget Proposals	**Directorate**	**Feb 2025 Target**	**Outturn**	**Variance**
		£m	**£m**	**£m**
HAC Strategic Workforce Review	HAC	(£0.010)	(£0.010)	-
Adults Commissioning Review	HAC	(£1.000)	(£1.213)	(£0.213)
Single Handed Care Trial	HAC	(£0.200)	(£0.100)	£0.100
Personal Budget Review	HAC	(£0.250)	(£0.448)	(£0.198)
Direct Payment Reassessment to Include Therapy	HAC	(£0.050)	(£0.050)	-
Discharge to Assess Reviews by Therapy	HAC	(£0.050)	(£0.050)	-
Neighbourhood Housing Support	HAC	(£0.050)	(£0.050)	-
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)	-
Persona - remodel of supported living hours	HAC	(£0.330)	(£0.325)	£0.005
Maximising charges for Deferred Payments	HAC	(£0.005)	(£0.001)	£0.004
Saving Already Agreed - Development of Wider Learning Disabilities Strategy for Age 14-25 Cohort	HAC	(£0.180)	(£0.311)	(£0.131)
Subtotal Health and Adult Care		**(£4.155)**	**(£4.236)**	**(£0.081)**
Foster Carers	CYP	(£0.250)	(£0.070)	£0.180
Family Safeguarding Model	CYP	(£0.100)	-	£0.100
Edge of Care	CYP	(£0.494)	-	£0.494
Therapeutic support team for Children in Care	CYP	(£0.195)	-	£0.195
Reconnect - step down from residential care	CYP	(£0.571)	(£0.395)	£0.176
Progressing the Edge of Care Service Review	CYP	(£0.506)	-	£0.506
Subtotal Children and Young People		**(£2.116)**	**(£0.465)**	**£1.651**
CCS Strategic Workforce Review	CCS	(£0.186)	(£0.186)	-
IT Supplier Review [Digital]	CCS	(£0.065)	(£0.065)	-
IT licence Review [Digital]	CCS	(£0.050)	(£0.050)	-
Unit 4 Reimplementation & Transformation Review	CCS	(£0.100)	-	£0.100
Revenues and Benefits Structure Review	CCS	(£0.317)	(£0.317)	-
Contact Centre Review [Digital]	CCS	(£0.100)	(£0.100)	-

Corporate Core Structures including homelessness and housing options review and integration of communities	CCS	(£0.328)	(£0.328)	-
Private Sector Housing - Capitalise salaries	CCS	(£0.100)	(£0.100)	-
Public Protection / Licensing Budget Realignment	CCS	(£0.016)	(£0.016)	-
Private Sector Rented - Enforcement HMO Licensing	CCS	(£0.005)	(£0.005)	-
Service Reviews within the Corporate Core	CCS	(£0.388)	(£0.388)	-
Subtotal Strategy & Transformation		**(£1.655)**	**(£1.555)**	**£0.100**
BGI Strategic Workforce Review	PLACE	(£0.062)	(£0.062)	-
OPS Strategic Workforce Review	PLACE	(£0.145)	(£0.145)	-
Fleet Function Review	PLACE	(£0.070)	-	£0.070
Car Park Tariff Review	PLACE	(£0.074)	(£0.218)	(£0.144)
Explore Advertising opportunities on highway network	PLACE	(£0.050)	(£0.050)	-
Car Park Charges Review	PLACE	(£0.055)	(£0.053)	£0.002
Review Residents Permits pricing structure	PLACE	(£0.145)	(£0.148)	(£0.003)
Subtotal Place		**(£0.601)**	**(£0.676)**	**(£0.075)**
Salary Sacrifice Review	NSS	(£0.050)	(£0.050)	£0.000
Organisation Delivery Model Review	NSS	(£0.257)	(£0.257)	-
Contract Efficiencies	NSS	(£0.500)	(£0.100)	£0.400
Integration of Housing	NSS	(£2.000)	(£0.390)	£1.610
Subtotal Non-Service Specific		**(£2.807)**	**(£0.796)**	**£2.010**
TOTAL APPROVED PROPOSALS		**(£11.334)**	**(£7.729)**	**£3.605**

3. Reserves

3.1. The table below shows the balance on reserves as at 31 March 2025 of £63.615m compared to the year-end balance as at 31 March 2026 of £44.106m. This represents a decrease of £19.509m, equating to a 30.7% reduction in reserves.

3.2. This level of reduction presents a significant financial risk and is not sustainable. The significant use of reserves to support the revenue budget over recent years reflects the underlying and ongoing budget pressures which need to be addressed through the identification and delivery of additional savings that will enable a balanced budget. If this trend were to continue, it would reduce the level of reserves available to manage future financial risks and uncertainties. It is therefore important that future budget gaps are addressed through sustainable measures, to reduce reliance on further drawdown of reserves and maintain an appropriate level of financial resilience.

3.3. The significant movements include:

- Budget Stabilisation which includes the budgeted use of £5.858m to balance the 2025/26 budget and the unplanned use of £7.266m to neutralise the in-year overspend.

- Insurance Reserve reduced by £2.920m in relation to a combination of settlement of claims and rebalancing the position on reserves and provisions as advised by the actuary.
- DSG Risk Reserve utilisation in line with Project Safety Valve agreement.
- Directorate Reserves have reduced by £1.238m for planned activities and to mitigate pressures in services.

Table 4: General Fund Reserves			**Balance at 31 March 2025 £m**	**Balance at 31 March 2026 £m**	**Variance £m**
General Fund			**(£10.000)**	**(£10.000)**	**-**
Directorate Reserves			**(£4.013)**	**(£2.775)**	**£1.238**
Corporate Reserves	Investment	Invest to Save	(£1.958)	(£1.974)	(£0.016)
Corporate Reserves	Investment	Regeneration	(£0.020)	(£0.001)	£0.019
Corporate Reserves	Investment	Transformation	(£0.838)	(£0.838)	-
Corporate Reserves	Risk	Insurance	(£4.905)	(£1.985)	£2.920
Corporate Reserves	Risk	DSG	(£6.000)	(£4.000)	£2.000
Corporate Reserves	Stabilisation	Net Budget	(£25.638)	(£15.599)	£10.039
Corporate Reserves	Stabilisation	Funding	(£1.542)	(£1.542)	-
Corporate Reserves			**(£40.901)**	**(£25.939)**	**£14.962**
External Funding			**(£8.701)**	**(£5.392)**	**£3.309**
Total General Fund Reserves			**(£63.615)**	**(£44.106)**	**£19.509**

3.4. In accordance with statutory regulations and CIPFA Guidance, the levels of balances and reserves were reviewed during the 2026/27 budget process to ensure that they are currently sufficient, and that they will remain adequate over the medium-term. However, the continuing use of reserves to balance the budget presents an unsustainable position and, as such, the Council continues to work to reduce the reliance on the use of reserves and to stabilise the Council's finances over the medium-term. A detailed review of reserves was presented to Council in February 2026.

3.5. As part of the 2026/27 budget setting process, £3.977m will be drawn from the Budget Stabilisation Reserve, resulting in a projected balance of £11.622m as at 31 March 2027. While this supports the 2026/27 position, the remaining balance is low when set against the forecast funding gap of £13.898m for 2027/28. This reinforces the need to deliver planned savings in full and to identify additional savings to mitigate the budget gap. Additionally, this position is based on the assumption that the 2026/27 financial year is delivered within budget with no further draw on reserves and that no additional demand or inflationary pressures arise as Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) assumptions are refreshed.

4. 2025/26 Capital Outturn

4.1. The Council approved a three-year capital programme for 2025/26 to 2027/28 in February 2025, as follows:

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

4.2. Following the addition of £19.360m of slippage from 2024/25, the revised capital programme for 2025/26 increased to £152.615m. As part of the Council's regular budget monitoring, the programme was updated and reported to Cabinet during the year to reflect an assessment of deliverability. By Quarter 3, the programme had been revised to £119.614m.

4.3. Table 5 below shows that total expenditure at outturn to be £100.413m which equates to 84% of the revised capital programme total of £119.615m. This results in an overall underspend of £19.201m.

Of this:

- £17.336m is proposed to initially be carried forward (slippage) into 2026/27 to support ongoing schemes subject to a review of the assessment of what can be delivered in 2026/27.
- £0.993m relates primarily to schemes approved in principle that have not progressed and will not be carried forward.
- £0.872m of Housing HRA schemes that will not be carried forward, reflecting savings and changes in programme delivery.

Table 5	**2025/26 Revised Programme £m**	**Actual Spend at Outturn £m**	**Actual Spend at Outturn %**	**(Under) / Over spend at Outturn £m**	**Proposed Slippage to 2026/27 £m**
Capital Expenditure by Theme					
Regeneration and Economic Growth	**£53.671**	£48.616	91%	(£5.055)	£5.098 *
Highways	**£16.046**	£13.539	84%	(£2.507)	£2.507
Open Spaces / Sports and Leisure	**£3.175**	£1.553	49%	(£1.622)	£0.346
Children and Young People	**£8.742**	£6.936	79%	(£1.807)	£1.807
Property	**£5.524**	£2.656	48%	(£2.868)	£1.310
Housing GF	**£3.281**	£2.351	72%	(£0.929)	£0.822
Climate Change	**£0.062**	£0.016	25%	(£0.047)	£0.047

ICT and Digital	**£3.394**	£2.573	76%	(£0.821)	£0.409
New Bids	**£0.270**	-	0%	(£0.270)	-
Approved in Principle	**£0.450**	-	0%	(£0.450)	£0.037
Capital Receipts Flexibility	**-**	£3.000	n/a	£3.000	-
TOTAL GF EXPENDITURE	**£94.614**	**£81.240**	**86%**	**(£13.375)**	**£12.382**
Housing HRA	**£25.000**	£19.174	77%	(£5.826)	£4.954
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	**£119.614**	**£100.413**	**84%**	**(£19.201)**	**£17.336**
Financing the Capital Programme:					
Prudential Borrowing	**£55.487**	£43.130	78%	(£13.457)	£7.770
External Funding	**£36.291**	£32.020	88%	(£4.271)	£3.855
Capital Receipts	**£2.747**	£5.880	214%	£4.233	£0.708
General Fund Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay	**£0.089**	£0.210	235%	£0.120	£0.050
Subtotal GF Financing	**£94.614**	**£81.240**	**86%**	**(£13.375)**	**£12.382**
Prudential Borrowing HRA	**£10.715**	£6.119	79%	(£4.596	£4.596
External Funding HRA	**£2.330**	£1.308	42%	(£1.022)	£0.150
Capital Receipts HRA	**£2.967**	£3.674	62%	£0.708	(£0.707)
Housing Revenue Account DRF/MRR	**£8.988**	£8.072	98%	(£0.916)	£0.916
Subtotal for HRA Financing	**£25.000**	**£19.174**	**77%**	**(£5.826)**	**£4.955**
Total Financing Employed	**£119.614**	**£100.413**	**84%**	**(£19.201)**	**£17.336**

**£5.098m of proposed slippage into 2026/27 contains £0.043m of UKSPF (shared prosperity fund) grant for which the grants conditions were not fully met at the end of the year meaning the grant could not be claimed in-year. This amount will be received in the new year, upon submission of achieved outputs.*

4.4. The Council's capital expenditure for the year totals £100.413m and has delivered the following:

- £48.616m of ongoing Regeneration projects; the three major projects contributing directly to the regeneration of the borough are at a near- completion stage: Radcliffe Hub, Bury Flexi Hall and the Prestwich Travel Hub.
- £21.525m on Housing, including £19.174m on the Council Housing Stock, £0.235m on new housing development planning, and £2.117m for Disabled Facilities Grants.
- £13.539m of which £10.743m for Highways maintenance on carriage, pavements, structures, street lighting, traffic management and road safety and £2.796m of grant supported Active Travel Schemes and Streets for All.
- £1.553m on Sports and Leisure, new 3G football pitches, improvements to open spaces and cemeteries.
- £6.936m on Schools, condition, modernisation, basic need provision as well as high needs provision.
- £2.656m of Property schemes, including contributions to our partners toward shared services to reduce Council expenditure in the long-term and Outwood Viaduct restoration, Town Hall redevelopment, replacement of waste disposal vehicles and refurbishment of Ramsbottom Library.

- £2.573m improving and renewing Digital Communication technologies the Council employs to deliver its services and transformation of the main financial enterprise resource planning system.
- £3.000m of capital receipts from disposal of assets supported the revenue budget for the year, by employing the Government's direction on the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts starting from April 2025 and applicable to the financial years to March 2030.

4.5. The capital expenditure programme reported an underspend of £19.201m, of which the main variances are:

- £5.826m on the HRA Capital Programme – see Section 6 for further detail.
- £1.807m from Schools grant allocations.
- £0.479m on Radcliffe Regeneration, the Hub and Enterprise Centre.
- £0.643m on Bury Regeneration, the Flexi Hall.
- £3.933m on Prestwich Village Regeneration including the Travel Hub scheme.
- £2.507m on Highways Planned Maintenance Programme, including Structures, Street Lighting and Traffic Management schemes, Active Travel schemes. This variance is due to the limitations of several major infrastructure improvements currently being undertaken which impacts on the ability to carry out the scheduled resurfacing operations, and restricted capacity within the team. A restructure is being undertaken to address the resource issue, and this should see improved capacity in 2026/27 (part year) and 2027/28.
- £0.822m on the Housing private sector for Disabled Facilities Grants.
- £0.214m on Leisure, Open Spaces and other regeneration schemes.
- £0.239m on Property, Bury Art Gallery and Museum.

4.6. The majority of the variances relate to committed schemes and are reporting an underspend due to timing delays and programme reprofiling, rather than savings. As such, funding is required to be carried forward into 2026/27 to ensure successful delivery in the following financial year. It is proposed that £17.336m of the underspend in 2025/26 is approved as slippage and carried forward into 2026/27.

4.7. The slippage has been caused by several factors, mostly outside the Council's control, including delays in procurement and contract awards. Additionally, unexpected issues being identified during both design and construction phases which have delayed the delivery of some schemes and recruitment challenges which impacted on capacity to deliver.

4.8. The remainder of the resources that will not be carried forward relate to 'Approved in Principle' schemes for 2025/26, that during the year have not managed to secure an approved business case or are included in the 2026/27 capital programme as new schemes.

4.9. The slippage of £17.336m will increase the 2026/27 Capital Programme from £110.212m approved by Council in February 2026, to a proposed £127.548m.

This budget will include an overall borrowing requirement for general fund and HRA of £53.201m.

4.10. The deliverability of the 2026/27 capital programme will be assessed early in the new financial year and reported throughout the year to Cabinet in the Quarterly Corporate reports. The initial impact of the carry forward is set out in table 6 below.

Table 6			
Capital Expenditure by Theme	**2026/27 Capital Programme approved Feb 26 £m**	**2025/26 proposed slippage to 2026/27 £m**	**2026/27 Revised Capital Programme £m**
Regeneration and Housing	£19.295	£5.920	£25.215
Schools	£18.656	£1.807	£20.463
Highways	£26.195	£2.507	£28.702
Environmental & Communities Projects	£3.007	£0.430	£3.437
Corporate Property & Estates	£5.957	£1.310	£7.267
Transport Fleet Management	£0.500	-	£0.500
ICT & Digital Transformation	£1.500	-	£1.500
Organisation Redesign & Transformation	£3.840	£0.409	£4.249
Subtotal GF Expenditure	**£78.951**	**£12.382**	**£91.333**
Subtotal Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Expenditure	**£31.261**	**£4.954**	**£36.915**
Total Council Expenditure	**£110.212**	**£17.336**	**£127.548**
Financing the Capital Programme			
Prudential Borrowing	£30.361	£7.770	£38.131
External Funding	£48.590	£3.855	£52.444
Capital Receipts	-	£0.708	£0.708
General Fund RCCO	-	£0.050	£0.050
Subtotal GF financing	**£78.951**	**£12.382**	**£91.334**
Prudential Borrowing HRA	£10.474	£4.596	£15.070
External Funding HRA	-	£0.150	£0.150
Capital Receipts HRA	£3.120	(£0.708)	£2.412
Housing Revenue Account DRF/MRR	£17.667	£0.916	£18.583
Subtotal HRA Financing	**£31.261**	**£4.954**	**£36.215**
Total Financing	**£110.212**	**£17.336**	**£127.548**

5. 2025/26 Collection Fund Outturn

5.1. 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 outturn position on the collection fund is an in-year deficit of £2.908m, 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 2025 and the outturn position). This brings the overall forecast to a net deficit of £2.223m. The Council's share of the deficit is £1.793m and Greater Manchester Combined Authority's share is £0.430m (for police and fire and rescue services).

5.2. The proportionate shares for Business Rates and Council Tax mean that Greater Manchester Combined Authority have a 1% share of Business Rates and a 16.5% share of Council Tax, whereas the Council have a 99% share of Business Rates and 83.5% share of Council Tax.

5.3. The main movements which are resulting in the deficit position of £2.223m (Bury share £1.793m) are shown below.

Table 7: 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	£142.549	£51.041	**£193.590**
Contributions towards Previous Year's Deficit:			
Bury MBC	-	£0.268	**£0.268**
Police and Crime Commissioner	-		**-**
General Mayoral - Fire and Rescue Service	-	£0.003	**£0.003**
Total Income	**£142.549**	**£51.312**	**£193.861**
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		-	**-**
Cost of Collection		(£0.235)	**(£0.235)**
Transitional Protection Payments		£0.040	**£0.040**
Impairment of Debts/Appeals:			
Write-offs of Uncollectable Amounts	(£0.034)	(£0.226)	**(£0.259)**
(Increase)/Decrease in the Allowance for Impairment of Arrears	(£2.928)	(£0.431)	**(£3.359)**
(Increase)/Decrease in the Allowance for Impairment of Appeals		£0.338	**£0.338**

Contributions towards Previous Year's Surplus:			
Bury MBC	(£1.054)	-	**(£1.054)**
Police and Crime Commissioner	(£0.141)		**(£0.141)**
General Mayoral - Fire and Rescue Service	(£0.062)	-	**(£0.062)**
Total Expenditure	**(£145.949)**	**(£50.819)**	**(£196.769)**
2025/26 In-Year Surplus/(Deficit)	**(£3.401)**	**£0.493**	**(£2.908)**
Surplus/(Deficit) as at 31.03.2026	**(£2.483)**	**£0.260**	**(£2.223)**

Share of the 2025/26 Surplus/(Deficit)	**Council Tax £m**	**NNDR £m**	**TOTAL £m**
Bury MBC	(£2.050)	£0.257	**(£1.793)**
Police and Crime Commissioner	(£0.277)		**(£0.277)**
General Mayoral - Fire and Rescue Service	(£0.156)	£0.003	**(£0.153)**
Surplus/(Deficit) as at 31.03.2026	**(£2.483)**	**£0.260**	**(£2.223)**

5.4. The £2.223m deficit on the collection fund mainly reflects an increased contribution to the bad debt provision, driven by an increase in Council Tax arrears. The Council is continuing to take action to reduce arrears across both Council Tax and Business Rates.

5.5. Alongside the increase in arrears, the in-year collection rate for Council Tax (95.26%) was below the budgeted collection rate (97.50%), a shortfall of 2.24%. This is largely due to the cost-of-living pressures affecting residents. The trend for collection 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.

Table 8: Collection Rates	**Council Tax %**	**NNDR %**
2025/26 Actual collection rate	95.26	96.87
2025/26 Target collection rate	97.50	96.00
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

5.6. Despite the in-year collection rate being below the budgeted rate, the Council's recent performance compares favourably with regional trend, with a net improvement in Council Tax collection rates over the last three years and a strong increase in Business Rates over the same period.

6. Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Outturn position

6.1. The table below illustrates the 2025/26 outturn position on the HRA. An in-year contribution to the HRA reserve of £3.790m had been budgeted; however, due to in-year pressures, the final contribution was £3.114m, resulting in a shortfall of £0.676m. This represents a favourable movement of £1.476m from quarter 3.

Table 9: HRA Income and Expenditure Statement	**2025/26**	**2025/26**		
	Revised Budget (Q04)	**Outturn**		
		Actual	**Variance**	
HRA INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT	**£m**	**£m**	**£m**	**%**
INCOME				
Dwelling Rents	(£36.731)	(£37.055)	(£0.324)	1%
Non-dwelling Rents	(£0.209)	(£0.192)	£0.017	8%
Other Charges for Services and Facilities	(£1.276)	(£1.074)	£0.202	16%
Contributions Towards Expenditure	(£0.100)	(£0.025)	£0.075	75%
Total Income	**(£38.316)**	**(£38.346)**	**(£0.030)**	**0.1%**
EXPENDITURE				
Repairs and Maintenance	£8.648	£10.440	£1.792	21%
Supervision and Management	£11.921	£10.966	(£0.955)	8%
Special Services	£1.444	£1.312	(£0.132)	9%
Rents, Rates, Taxes, and Other Charges	£0.200	£0.106	(£0.094)	47%
Depreciation of Non-Current Assets	£7.330	£8.072	£0.742	10%
Debt Management Expenses	£0.045	£0.012	(£0.033)	73%
Movement in Provision for Bad Debts	£0.584	£0.098	(£0.486)	83%
Total Expenditure	**£30.172**	**£31.006**	**£0.834**	**3%**
HRA Services' Share of Corporate and Democratic Core	£0.400	£0.384	£0.016	4%
Net Income or Expenditure of HRA Services	**(£7.744)**	**(£6.956)**	**£0.788**	**90%**
Interest Payable and Similar Charges	£4.695	£4.633	(£0.062)	1%
Interest and investment income	(£0.950)	(£0.896)	£0.054	6%

(Surplus) or Deficit for the Year on HRA Services	**(£3.999)**	**(£3.219)**	**£0.780**	**20%**
Appropriations				
Reversal of Depreciation	(£7.330)	(£8.072)	(£0.084)	
Transfer to the Major Repairs Reserve	£7.330	£8.072	£0.084	
Repayment of Arranged Loans	£0.209	£0.105	(£0.104)	50%
Capital Expenditure Funded by the HRA	-	-	-	0%
Total Appropriations	**£0.209**	**£0.105**	**(£0.104)**	**50%**
Total HRA	**(£3.790)**	**(£3.114)**	**£0.676**	**18%**

6.2. The overall shortfall of £0.676m arises from a range of variances, including:

6.2.1. Service Charge Income reported a £0.202m (15.8%) under-recovery, which is broadly in line with previous forecasts. The main reason for the pressure is that the budget for service charges, particularly those related to Sheltered Accommodation, was found to be over-stated. This has been reflected within Housing Services Improvement and Service Plans, acknowledging the need to gain more confidence in existing service charges, and then to move on to assess whether we are raising charges for all of the areas that we could or should.

6.2.2. Dwelling Rents Income has overachieved by £0.324m (0.88%), which is a slight reduction from the reported quarter 3 position. Very small changes in timings of Right to Buy sales could have impacted on income, however overall improvement against £36.731m budget was just 0.88%, so within a reasonable tolerance.

6.2.3. Repairs and Maintenance has an overspend of £1.792m (20.72%), an adverse movement £1.282m from quarter 3. This reflects both increased service demands and rising costs. The main reasons for the increased overspend are:

- Disrepairs – there has been a national trend of increasing numbers of disrepair claims being made. The final overspend increased to £0.399m (349%), from a previously reported position at quarter 3 of broadly on budget. This reflects a combination of increased legal costs, compensation payments and professional fees.
- There was a net overspend of £0.288m (14.87%) across staffing and agency budgets, after recharges to capital. Agency costs were incurred to cover a significant level of vacancies across the establishment in a number of different trade specialisms.
- The major additional costs related to the significant increased usage of specialist sub-contractors across the service, which resulted in a £2.466m (79.10%) overspend, again often the additional resources were used to cover gaps in resources, or the need for specialist provision.

- Stores and Material Costs – across all aspects of Repairs, total expenditure on stores and materials costs was £0.962m (44.62%) below budget, undoubtedly a factor of the reduced levels of established staff, and the increased use of specialist sub-contractors.

6.2.4. Supervision and Management underspent by £0.955m (8.01%), a significant favourable movement of £1.300m from the reported quarter 3 position. The main variances are:

- Consultancy costs underspent £0.219m (85.88%), a significant increase from the quarter 3 reported position of on budget.
- Agency Costs - £0.075m underspend.
- Central Support Recharges – following a major review and revision of existing charges, which was completed at the latter part of the financial year, a significant in-year underspend of £0.543m (7.65%) was realised.

6.2.5. Special Services have underspent by £0.131m, (9.11%) a £0.347m favourable movement from quarter 3, made up of several minor variances and an underspend in agency costs totalling £0.105m.

6.2.6. The Allowance for Bad debts recorded an underspend of £0.486m (83.21%). This largely reflects a one-off in-year benefit, linked to a review of the calculation methodology, alongside a lower than anticipated increase in arrears and reduced levels of debt written off during the year, totalling just over £0.100m.

6.2.7. Interest and Investment Income underachieved by £0.054m (5.68%), although this represents a £0.194m favourable movement from quarter 3. The improved position reflects a higher than anticipated level of interest earned. Earlier forecasts assumed reductions in the Bank of England base rate which would have reduced returns on cash balances. However, due to a number of world economic events, anticipated cuts did not materialise during the remainder of the year, which had a positive impact on the interest earned on cash balances.

6.2.8. Depreciation/Contribution to Major Repairs Reserve (MRR)– Following the appointment of new valuers, a review of the depreciation calculation methodology was undertaken. This resulted in an increased charge and an overspend of £0.742m (10.12%). Under the HRA statutory accounting requirements, depreciation charges are appropriated to the MRR. As a result, while the increased depreciation charge impacts the reported revenue position, it is transferred to the MRR to support capital investment in housing assets. This increases the resources available to fund the Capital Investment Programme and can reduce the need for alternative financing sources, such as borrowing.

Table 10: Capital Programme	2025/26 Revised Budget	2025/26 Outturn Actual	Variance	
	£m	£m	£m	%
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE				
Major Works & Improvements	£17.085	£13.045	(£4.040)	24%
Other Capital Spend	£4.915	£5.567	£0.652	13%
New Build Development Costs	£3.000	£0.562	(£2.438)	81%
Total Capital Expenditure	**£25.000**	**£19.174**	**(£5.826)**	**77%**
CAPITAL FINANCING				
Prudential Borrowing	(£10.715)	(£6.119)	£4.596	43%
External Funding	(£2.330)	(£1.308)	£1.022	44%
Capital Receipts	(£2.967)	(£3.675)	(£0.708)	24%
HRA Major Repairs Reserve	(£8.988)	(£8.072)	£0.916	10%
Total Capital Financing	**(£25.000)**	**(£19.174)**	**£5.826**	**77%**

6.3. Table 10 details the revised HRA Capital Programme for 2025/26 totalling £25.000m. Actual expenditure for the year was £19.174m, resulting in a variance of £5.826m. Of this variance, £4.954m relates to slippage, which has been reprofiled into the 2026/27 capital programme. The remaining £0.872m represents an underspend, reflecting savings and changes in programme delivery.

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

Table 11: Movement on the HRA Reserve	2025/26 Revised Budget	2025/26 Actual (Outturn)	2025/26 Variance
	£m	£m	£m
Opening Balance on the HRA	**(£16.546)**	**(£16.747)**	**(£0.201)**
(Surplus) or Deficit for the Year on the HRA Income and Expenditure Statement	(£3.999)	(£3.219)	£0.780
Appropriations	£0.209	£0.104	(£0.105)
Net (Increase) or Decrease before Transfers to or from Reserves	**(£3.790)**	**(£3.115)**	**£0.675**
(Increase) or Decrease in Year on the HRA	**(£3.790)**	**(£3.115)**	**£0.675**

Closing Balance on the HRA	(£20.336)	(£19.862)	£0.474

7. Dedicated Schools Grant Outturn position

7.1. The DSG is broken down into 4 components and Bury's allocations for 2025/26 are as follows:

Table 12: DSG Allocations	Allocation £m	Outturn £m	Outturn Variance
Schools Block	£169.600	£169.579	(£0.021)
Central Services Block	£1.124	£0.968	(£0.156)
Early Years Block	£35.260	£33.463	(£1.797)
High Needs Block	£50.590	£54.053	£3.463
Total	**£256.574**	**£258.063**	**£1.489**
Early Years Block 2024-25 clawback	-	£0.460	£0.460
Project Safety Valve	£1.000	£0.295	(£0.705)
Total net increase of DSG 2025/26	**£257.574**	**£258.818**	**£1.244**

7.2. The Schools Block and Early Years Block are almost entirely passported to schools and early years providers. The Central Schools Services Block is funding for Bury Council to deliver its schools and related statutory duties for Education. There is little variance in this area. The major risk to the Council is the High Needs Block (HNB).

7.3. The HNB spending and allocations are subject to numerous funding regulations. These regulations are described in full within the DFE High Needs Funding Guidance and the link is given below:
High needs funding: 2025 to 2026 operational guide - GOV.UK

7.4. The HNB covers Special Educational Needs (SEN) funding for pupils aged 0 to 25 irrespective of which setting they attend. The broad headings for the HNB 2025/26 budget and outturn position are shown below:

Table 13: High Needs Block (HNB)	2025/26 Budget £m	2025/26 Outturn £m	2025/26 Variance £m
Specials Schools and Pupil Referral Unit (PRU)	£20.426	£20.814	£0.388
Resourced Provision within Mainstream Schools (RP)	£2.790	£2.429	(£0.361)
Early Years Funding	£0.275	£0.290	£0.015
SEN Funding within Mainstream Funding (EHCP's)	£9.934	£10.640	£0.706
Independent (Out Borough) Special Schools	£13.593	£15.100	£1.507
Post 16 Commissioned Places	£1.868	£2.067	£0.199

Alternative Provision	£2.797	£3.786	£0.989
SEN Support Services	£1.127	£0.992	(£0.135)
Total HNB Expenditure	**£52.810**	**£56.118**	**£3.308**
High Needs Block Allocation	(£48.835)	(£49.344)	(£0.509)
Recoupment from other LA's Bury Project Safety Valve commitment	(£2.000)	(£2.000)	-
School Block Transfer	(£0.313)	(£0.313)	-
Health Service Contribution	(£1.000)	(£1.000)	-
DfE Safety Valve Income	(£0.663)	(£0.705)	(£0.042)
Total HNB Income (including safety valve income)	**(£52.811)**	**(£53.362)**	**(£0.551)**
Total High Needs Block 2025/26		**£2.757**	**£2.757**
Other DSG Blocks 2025/26		(£1.513)	(£1.513)
Total DSG Deficit 2025/26		**£1.244**	**£1.244**
Deficit b/fwd from 2024/25		**£19.041**	
Deficit c/fwd to 2026/27		**£20.285**	
Total net increase in DSG Deficit 2025/26		**£1.244**	**£1.244**

7.5. The DSG overall deficit at the beginning of the 2025/26 financial year was £19.041m, during the year, the service has worked on making savings where possible, whilst continuing to face increasing demand which is a national pressure. The 2025/26 DSG deficit position is £20.285m, an overall increase of £1.244m, including Bury's agreed £2m contribution as part of Project Safety Valve (PSV).

7.6. Bury Council operated under the Dedicated School Grant Safety Valve Intervention Programme during 2025/26 to address historic special education needs and disabilities (SEND) demand and cost pressures which has meant the council working closely with the Department of Education (DfE) particularly around how the deficit position is managed alongside the drivers of those financial pressures. Bury Council was due funding to support this work but this will now cease after 2025/26 and be replaced with the terms and conditions on the new transitional period grant funding under High Needs Stability grant for 2026/2028.

7.7. Bury council acknowledges the government's commitment, following a successful submitted SEND reform plan (deadline 19th June 2026) and subsequent approval, to resolve the 90% of the Local Authorities DSG balance accrued up to the end of March 2026. It also acknowledges the commitment that the council won't be affected by their participation in the Safety Valve Programme and any local contributions will count towards the remaining 10% balance. The remaining accumulated deficit will need to be met from the Council's DSG reserve.

7.8. Bury Council remain committed towards working with our Education partners whilst managing the pressures across SEND services in line with our SEND reform plans and to continue to monitor and challenge progress towards the delivery of the structural changes outlined in line with Government and aiming for sustainability of the SEND model once changes have time to make forecast longer term impacts

7.9. The majority of local authorities continue to face serious budgetary pressures and deficits which have been building over a number of years due to:

- The HNB allocations not increased for the rises in pupil numbers.
- The percentage of pupils with SEN needs has significantly increased but has not been reflected within allocations.
- The HNB becoming responsible for 19 to 25-year-olds without any additional funding.
- Local authorities' own provision being at full capacity meaning there is more reliance on expensive independent special school's fees.
- Inflationary pressures being greater than the increase's in HNB funding.

7.10. **School Balances**

7.11. Schools Balances brought forward from 2024/25 totalled £2.484m. At the end of the 2025/26 financial year, Schools Balances totalled £2.290m, a total reduction of £0.194m. These numbers do not include academies as local authorities not required to report on academies.

7.12. The outturn position is split as follows:

Table 14: School Balances	**2025/26 Closing School Balances £m**
Nursery	£0.114
Primary	£0.079
Secondary	£1.168
Special	£0.929
Total	**£2.290**

7.13. The number of schools which are in a deficit position has reduced from 12 at the end of 2024/25 to 9 at the end of the 2025/26 financial year.

7.14. Schools are required to adhere to their budget limits, but in the event of an unplanned deficit occurring this will be deducted from the following year's budget share. Schools that aren't able to produce a balanced budget for 2026/27 can request approval to set a deficit budget by submitting a deficit recovery management plan to the Executive Director of Children and Young People. The deficit should normally be recovered within two to three years.

7.15. Of the 9 schools ending 2025/26 with a deficit:
- 7 already have an approved deficit recovery plan, 2 of which are subject to review;
- 1 plan is currently being prepared before submission for approval;
- 1 is converting to academy status during the summer term.

7.16. The Director of Education has introduced a Finance Improvement Group meetings with schools facing challenges in setting a balanced budget.

Links with the Corporate Priorities:

8. 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:

9. This is a finance update report, as such there are no impacts arising from this report.

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

10. 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:

11. This report provides Members with details of the outturn position, there are no specific legal considerations in this report.

Financial Implications:

12. The financial implications are included within the Report.

Appendices:

None.

Background papers:

The Council's 2025/26 Revenue Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy

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

Term	Meaning
MTFF	Medium Term Financial Forecast
MTFS	Medium Term Financial Strategy
LGFS	Local Government Finance Settlement
CIPFA	Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy
PSV	Project Safety Valve
DfE	Department for Education