

Minutes of: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 8 September 2026

Present: Councillor J Rydeheard (in the Chair)
Councillors J Southworth, M Rahimov, T Pilkington, L Ryder,
A Chaudhry, N Bayley, C Birchmore, J Sheppard and J Roith

Also in attendance: Councillor Thorpe Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation
Councillor Smith Cabinet Member for Environment, Climate Change and Operations
Neil Kisson Director of Finance
Kate Waterhouse Executive Director (Strategy and Transformation)
Ben Thomson Assistant Director for Public Protection
Jacqui Dennis Director of Law and Democratic Services – Monitoring Officer

Public Attendance: One member of the public was in attendance at the meeting

Apologies for Absence: Councillor S Haroon

OSC.119 APOLOGIES

Apologies are noted above.

OSC.120 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

OSC.121 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

OSC.122 MEMBER QUESTION TIME

There were no Member questions.

OSC.123 MINUTES

That the minutes of the meeting held on 8th September 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

OSC.124 PRE SUBMITTED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (Pages 7 - 18)

OSC.125 FINANCE Q1

The Committee considered the Quarter 1 Finance Monitoring Report and accompanying appendix. Councillor Thorpe Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services, presented an overview of the report, explaining that it outlined the Council's financial

position at the end of Quarter 1, performance against budget assumptions, and the forecast outturn position. Members were advised that the report represented an early indication of financial performance and that forecasts would continue to be refined throughout the year.

Discussion took place regarding the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) deficit and the Government's SEND reform programme. Members heard that significant financial pressures continued to arise from independent and out-of-borough SEND placements, with work ongoing to increase local provision and reduce reliance on higher-cost placements.

Councillor Birchmore sought clarification on the Council's plans to increase SEND provision within mainstream schools and whether academies would be expected to support this approach. In response, it was explained that additional funding was being used to build capacity across schools, enabling them to accommodate a wider range of needs and support more pupils locally.

Further discussion focused on the increasing demand for SEND support and the associated costs. Members were advised that the Council's strategy aimed to provide appropriate provision across the full spectrum of need whilst reducing expenditure on expensive external placements. It was noted that improved diagnostics, earlier intervention and increased local capacity would contribute to a more sustainable model over time.

In response to a supplementary question regarding anticipated savings and the location of new SEND provision, Members were informed that a new 60-place provision was intended to reduce out-of-borough placements and would deliver significant savings. Further details would be provided outside the meeting.

Members also considered expenditure relating to children's residential placements. Councillor Rahimov asked whether the Council was exploring the development of its own residential provision. The Committee heard that two projects were currently being progressed, including collaborative work across Greater Manchester, although not all children would be suited to internally provided accommodation due to the complexity of some cases. Officers advised that establishing residential provision required significant lead-in time, including Ofsted registration, but remained a key element of the Council's strategy to reduce placement costs and improve outcomes.

The Committee noted continuing financial pressures within children's services, including fostering and residential care costs. Members were informed that whilst some placement costs were beginning to stabilise, market conditions remained challenging.

Questions were also asked regarding project delays, additional costs associated with facilities within the Radcliffe Hub development, and whether the Council would benefit financially from commercial arrangements linked to those facilities.

Officers advised that project costs had been updated to reflect revised assumptions and changing market conditions. Whilst some costs were higher than originally expected, a number of these were one-off costs which would not impact long-term revenue budgets. Reference was also made to revisions within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

The Committee discussed vacancy management and staffing savings identified within the report. Councillor Rydeheard queried the level of savings being achieved through recruitment delays. In response, Members were informed that critical social care roles would continue to be prioritised, whilst recruitment to non-critical vacancies may be delayed to support financial management. It was acknowledged that challenges remained in recruiting to specialist roles, particularly within legal services and social care.

Jacqui Dennis the councils monitoring officer, emphasised that recruitment difficulties continued across a number of professional disciplines. The Committee noted that the use of agency and temporary resources remained necessary in some areas where recruitment challenges persisted.

Councillor Birchmore raised concerns regarding Housing Revenue Account procurement processes and delays in delivering repairs and maintenance work, referencing specific examples raised by residents. In response, Members were informed that procurement arrangements had improved significantly in recent years, with stronger contract management, more accurate contract registers and greater use of framework agreements to secure value for money.

Neil Kissock highlighted ongoing efforts to strengthen procurement processes and improve contract oversight, whilst continuing to recruit to key procurement posts.

Members also discussed the recruitment and retention of social workers. Councillor Pilkington asked whether work had been undertaken to improve the Council's offer in comparison with neighbouring authorities. The Committee heard that improvements to pay, conditions and workforce support had resulted in a more stable workforce and reduced reliance on temporary staff. Members noted that this had contributed positively to outcomes for children and families.

Further questions were raised regarding the Housing Revenue Account and the potential for bringing more services in-house rather than relying on external contractors. Members were advised that this remained under consideration as part of wider service reviews, and that a separate HRA report would provide further detail on the issue.

Councillor Chaudhry queried the overspend identified in relation to corporate printing and postage. Officers explained that a number of factors contributed to the pressure, including election-related activity and the continued use of physical correspondence. Members were advised that work was ongoing to increase digital communication and reduce printing and postage costs through an invest-to-save approach.

It Was Agreed

- The report be noted

OSC.126 2025/26 TREASURY OUTTURN REPORT

The Committee considered a report and appendix presented by Councillor Thorpe, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services, providing an update on Treasury Management activity during the first quarter of 2025/26.

Councillor Thorpe introduced the report, noting that Treasury Management is a highly technical area that includes monitoring prudential indicators, borrowing arrangements, investment activity and wider economic factors. He highlighted the ongoing uncertainty within global financial markets, including the potential impact of international conflicts and economic conditions on investment returns and borrowing costs.

Councillor Pilkington referred to the Council's investment activity and opportunities for revenue generation, seeking clarification on the associated challenges.

In response, Councillor Thorpe explained that national regulations surrounding borrowing to invest have been significantly tightened in recent years. Whilst local authorities had historically undertaken borrowing for commercial investment purposes, such activity is now subject to

greater restriction due to the risks involved. He advised that, given current economic conditions and the financial pressures facing councils nationally, the authority's focus remains on prudent investment activity, protecting public funds and securing appropriate returns without engaging in speculative investment. He emphasised that the Council continues to explore opportunities to improve investment returns where appropriate.

Neil Kissock added that the Council does not wish to increase its risk profile in pursuit of additional returns and therefore adopts a cautious approach to investment management.

Councillor Birchmore referred to Table 5 of the report and noted that a number of loans were due to mature during the year. She asked whether the financial implications of refinancing these loans had been factored into the Council's financial planning and whether this could create additional budgetary pressures.

Councillor Rahimov further asked whether refinancing arrangements generally maintain existing loan terms or whether repayment periods are extended where appropriate.

In response, Neil Kissock explained that the Council's borrowing portfolio is largely based on fixed interest rate loans. As loans mature, officers continually review the most advantageous options available in the market to refinance debt where necessary, taking account of prevailing interest rates and long-term affordability considerations. The timing of refinancing decisions is carefully managed to secure the best possible outcome for the authority.

Councillor Chaudhry referred to Table 8 and requested further information regarding the Council's non-financial investments, particularly the loans detailed within the table.

Councillor Thorpe advised that the Council had previously provided loan finance to Manchester Airport as part of its investment arrangements. He explained that returns are received through a combination of dividend income and loan repayments, which continue to contribute towards the Council's overall investment portfolio.

Councillor Roith sought clarification on the loan associated with Bruntwood referenced within Table 8.

Neil Kissock explained that the loan related to the acquisition of the Mill Gate Shopping Centre and formed part of the funding arrangements associated with that investment.

Councillor Rydeheard sought clarification regarding borrowing repayments and asked what measures are in place to prevent borrowing levels increasing unsustainably over time.

In response, Neil Kissock advised that the Council is currently developing its longer-term financial planning arrangements to ensure borrowing remains sustainable. He explained that financing costs are met through the Council's revenue budget, with income generated from assets contributing towards borrowing costs. This helps ensure that debt remains manageable and affordable.

Councillor Rydeheard also asked about the difference between borrowing undertaken through the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and non-HRA borrowing.

Neil Kissock explained that HRA borrowing operates under different arrangements and can often attract lower borrowing costs. Different statutory and accounting requirements apply, including provisions relating to debt repayment and the treatment of housing assets. As a result, there are distinct differences between HRA and General Fund borrowing in terms of funding arrangements and debt management.

The Chair noted that advance questions had also been received from Councillor Sheppard and Councillor Birchmore and that responses had been circulated to Members prior to the meeting.

It Was Agreed:

- The report be noted

OSC.127 AWARD OF EVCI GM CONTRACT TO INSTALL EV CHARGEPOINTS THROUGHOUT BURY PART A

Councillor Smith, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Environment, Climate Change and Operations, presented a report seeking approval for TfGM to award a 20 year concession contract for the installation of electric vehicle chargepoints across the borough, supported by significant government funding.

Councillor Birchmore asked whether the cost of charging would be comparable to charging at home and suggested consideration of shallow-footing gullet chargers for residents without off-street parking.

In response, Ben Thomson, Assistant Director of Public Protection, advised that public charging costs would be set at market rates and that the aim was to provide affordable charging options. He added that pavement charging solutions could be explored in the future as technology and infrastructure develop.

Councillor Southworth Queried what controls would be in place to prevent the provider from significantly increasing charging costs.

Officers advised that charging costs would be monitored and contractual measures would be in place to ensure any price increases remain reasonable and proportionate.

It was Agreed:

- The committee noted the report

OSC.128 EXCLUSIONS FROM PRESS AND PUBLIC

OSC.129 AWARD OF EVCI GM CONTRACT TO INSTALL EV CHARGEPOINTS THROUGHOUT BURY PART B

The committee considered the Part B report relating to the procurement process and contract award.

A question was raised regarding the composition of the assessment panel and whether appropriate due diligence had been undertaken as part of the procurement process. Officers confirmed that the procurement exercise had been managed through TfGM's procurement service and that the necessary due diligence and evaluation processes had been completed.

Councillor Rydeheard sought clarification on the number of organisations involved in the procurement process and how they had been assessed. Officers advised that the procurement exercise had been re-evaluated and that four organisations had initially been involved. Following the final evaluation process, the recommended contractor achieved the highest overall ranking and was selected as the preferred bidder.

The committee noted the information provided and supported the recommendations contained within the Part B report.

It Was Agreed:

- The update be noted

OSC.130 URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

COUNCILLOR J RYDEHEARD
Chair

(Note: The meeting started at 7.00 pm and ended at 8.30 pm)

Finance Questions		
Questioner	Question	Answer
Councillor Sheppard	1. Finance Update Report - Financial Resilience / Reserves : Given that the report describes the reserves position as “unsustainable”, what is the Council’s minimum acceptable level of usable reserves, and at what point would the council’s financial resilience be considered critical?	The minimum acceptable level of usable reserves for a council is not explicitly defined in statute. CIPFA (Chartered Institute for Public Finance and Accountancy) and the Local Authority Accounting Panel do not accept that there is a case for introducing a generally acceptable minimum level of reserves. Councils, on the advice of their Chief Finance Officers, make their own judgements on such matters considering all relevant local circumstances, and such circumstances will vary between local areas. Councils hold a general reserve (at Bury this is currently £10m which is c4% of the net revenue budget) which is required for the following purposes: • To meet forthcoming events where the precise date and amount required cannot be accurately predicted. • A contingency to cushion the impact of unexpected events or emergencies. • A reasonable amount to meet peaks and troughs in revenue and capital expenditure requirements. • A working balance to help cushion the impact of uneven cash flows and avoid unnecessary temporary borrowing. As a real example of what reserves are required for, any overspend at the end of the financial year has to be met from reserves. In terms of other earmarked reserves, the council holds a budget stabilisation reserve which has been used to support the revenue budget in recent years. This stands at £11.6m currently but would reduce to £5.977m if the current Q1 forecast overspend was the final outturn position and is therefore not sufficient to meet the forecast 2027/28 funding gap and hence why continued use of

		reserves is unsustainable and proposals need to be identified that will enable a budget to be set in future years without recourse to reserves. The level of reserves is reviewed annually for their adequacy along with the robustness of the budget estimates and the conclusions included in the February budget report
Coun cillor Shepp ard	2. Staffing and Agency Costs : The Council is forecasting £5.897m of staffing savings alongside £5.862m of additional agency expenditure. To what extent is the staffing underspend being offset by agency costs, what are the principal reasons for this position, and what action is being taken to reduce agency reliance and deliver sustainable workforce saving?	Agency spend contributes to overall workforce cost, and therefore any associated saving potential. Agency spend continues to be an area of focus across the council, particularly where agency spend is being used to routinely deliver business as usual activity. There is also legitimate use of planned interim capacity to meet a temporary peak in demand such as a transformation programme. In general agency spend is reducing, and there has been some success converting former agency workers into substantive roles across the Council. However, our use of agency in some areas reflects wider market pressures, predominantly in relation to pay where local authorities in general and Bury in particular can pay less than other sectors. The Council uses a combination of career grades, apprenticeships and traineeships, market supplements, flexible working etc. to attract and retain permanent staff.
Coun cillor Shepp ard	3. High Needs Block / SEND : The report forecasts a £10.287m in-year High Needs Block deficit and an estimated £11.416m deficit carried forward into 2027/28. What specific measures in the Council's SEND Reform Plan are expected to reduce this underlying deficit, what financial savings are they are expected to	In common with the rest of the country, Bury continues to experience and forecast increased demand for Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) services and this remains a substantial financial and operational challenge. The council continues to take a robust, multi-pronged approach to mitigate these costs whilst also meeting our statutory duties and prioritising positive outcomes for children and their families. This includes expanding our special

	deliver and over what timescale?	school provision and resourced provision capacity within Bury, as educating young people closer to home reduces our reliance on high-cost independent specialist placements which are one of the key drivers for the overspend. We also continue to seek to strengthen mainstream inclusion - equipping mainstream schools to identify and support needs earlier. To support schools in meeting need better, earlier, we will be building the local Expert at Hand service, based on work already undertaken in local Communities of Practice. Our local delivery plan for the national reforms was submitted to the DfE (June 2026). Once the plan is agreed, Bury will receive the High Needs Stability Grant which writes off 90% of historic deficit up to March 2026. Central Government takes over responsibility for funding the national SEND system from local authorities in 2028/29. The national reforms make clear that reduction in the cost of SEND support for children is expected to take place in the next decade (the 2030s), as the drivers for spend: the number of EHCPs and the number of children in independent special schools are not expected to decrease before 2030. The reason for this is three-fold: 1) the alternative to EHCPs for most children with additional needs will be introduced in September 2029; 2) the conversion of existing EHCPs will only take place at transfer points (chiefly Primary to Secondary school) beginning in September 2030; and 3) any child in a special school in September 2029 will have the option to remain in that school until the end of their education.
Coun cillor Shepp ard	4. Independent SEND Placements / Local Capacity : The forecast includes £17.818m for independent / out-of-borough special schools. What proportion of this expenditure relates to placements outside Bury, how	There are 3 independent special schools in Bury that account for £1.8m of the £17m. Most of the growth in recent years has been for schools outside of Bury's borders.

	has this changed over recent years, and what additional local SEND capacity is required and planned to reduce reliance on higher cost independent provisions?	Bury is revising its SEND Sufficiency Strategy as part of the national reform programme, in addition to continue to develop provision previously agreed with the DfE through the Safety Valve Programme. Bury is adding capacity at in-borough maintained special schools (Millwood, Elms Bank and Brookhaven), in addition to opening a 60-place special SEMH school (September 2028) to address the need for increasing SEMH secondary places. We have also worked with Bury Primary and Secondary schools and opened Resource Provisions and SEND Units; and we are working with colleges and schools to develop in-borough Post 16 provision.
Coun cillor Shepp ard	5. Capital Programme Deliverability : Given that £17.336m of capital expenditure from 2025/26 has been carried forwarded into 2026/27, what specific action is being taken to ensure these projects are delivered this year, and what will happen if they are not?	The Capital Programme is a multi-year programme and some scheme slippage is not uncommon and can be due to factors which couldn't have been foreseen or are outside our direct control. Slippage should however be minimised which starts with a realistic view of what is achievable in the financial year and the 2026/27 programme as outlined in the report is currently subject to a comprehensive review involving finance and project managers on each scheme's planned delivery and spending for the remainder of the year with any associated re-profiling of the in-year programme coming to Cabinet for approval as part of the Q2 reporting.
Agenda Item 6		
Coun cillor Birch more	6. In reference to Wellness page 18, section 1.22 states the following: <i>“Wellness has forecast a £0.781m (38.45%) adverse variance largely driven by higher</i>	<u>Radcliffe -</u> The Radcliffe forecast variance is a combination of expenditure and income impacts

	<i>than anticipated costs resulting from the opening of the Radcliffe centre and underperformance on income budget targets at the Ramsbottom centre.”</i> Can you break this down please and explain what the higher than anticipated costs were for Radcliffe. Also, what measure are being undertaken to address the underperformance at Ramsbottom?	Income Assumptions were revised following changes to the leisure centre opening timetable. Practical completion moved from July to August, so the benefit of new membership income moved from September (original go-live) to late October (current expected go-live). And with the phased ramp-up of memberships during 2026/27, the loss of September income had a disproportionate adverse impact on income forecast. Expenditure • Facilities Management estimated costs (including utilities) are higher than previously assumed and are in the process of being reviewed. • Staffing costs associated with the new "Clip n Climb" staff had not been fully recognised previously • The timing of the staffing requirement wasn't materially changed following the slippage in opening times - due to recruitment challenges and the need to have staff fully trained ready for go-live, the original recruitment timetable is being worked to. <u>Ramsbottom</u> In the short-term increasing swimming lesson capacity & a re-think of gym classes is also underway. (with a recruitment proposal in train). This is expected to provide an approx net benefit of £15k in year
Coun cillor Birch more	7. With regards to Adult Social Care Operations the report states the	The underspend against staffing budgets is attributable to a combination of planned vacancy management to deliver the budgeted vacancy factor, and difficulties in recruiting to several posts.

	following (Page 18, section 1.2.5): <i>“£1.119m (14.15%) forecast favourable variance due to staffing vacancies within:</i> <i>Assessment and Care Management team.</i> <i>Integrated Neighbourhood team.</i> <i>Community Mental Health team.”</i> Is it correct to assume that this is not sustainable long term as it is likely impacting on service delivery and therefore costs are likely to rise to predicted levels or possibly exceed them in the longer term?	Whilst measures are in place to mitigate risks, there is potential for some impact on service delivery, however, where required there are agency staff to cover vacant posts in key front-line areas. A drive is underway to recruit to all key posts
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	8. Page 21, section 1.44, People and Inclusion states the following: <i>“There is a forecast adverse variance of £0.801m (37.7%) due to a loss of income of £0.332m resulting from schools converting into academies and agency costs of £0.426m whilst the restructure is progressing.”</i> This has been highlighted in previous budget reports. Have any decisions been made about the restructuring of this service? Is the £0.426m a one-off cost or will this be a recurring cost?	The planned restructure in People, Inclusion and Culture has been partially implemented with some recruitment activity still in progress. We anticipate this will be concluded within 3 months. Comparable headcount in this area has reduced by 12.47fte since January 2024, including reductions associated with loss of income. The service has reduced chief officer capacity from 3.0fte to 1.0fte in the same period. The interim Assistant Director contract ended on 4 Sept 2026, and interim capacity has now ceased. However, there are other non-staffing factors contributing to the projected overspend, including how income, HRA support and the apprenticeship levy in schools are accounted for. These are currently being reviewed internally by the newly appointed Assistant Director. If these are not resolved, then a proportion of the projected overspend will be recurring and mitigations will need to be identified within the MTFS.
Coun cillor Birch more	9. Page 40, section 6.2.3, of the HRA reports: <i>“Sub-contractor spend – there was a significant increase in the level of sub-contractor spend over the first few months of the year. This has led to some in-depth analysis of that spend to try and understand the key drivers for the increase, and to provide a focus for getting these costs under closer control. Currently forecast to overspend in total by £0.350m.”</i>	The increase in subcontractor spend during the early part of the year was primarily driven by capacity issues within our direct labour workforce. Delays in recruiting permanent staff, combined with the later-than-planned onboarding of five agency workers, resulted in a backlog of orders that required short-term external support to maintain service delivery. Whilst recruitment activity has progressed and agency workers are now in post, it is important to consider that subcontractor expenditure is likely to remain elevated during the first half of the year while the existing backlog is addressed and workforce capacity continues to stabilise. However, as the measures being implemented begin to take effect and outstanding work volumes reduce, spend is expected to decrease during the second half of the year, with a reduction in reliance on subcontractors.

	I assume that this increase in subcontractor spend will continue, are there any indications of why this has happened and does this bring into question the idea of using subcontractors rather than providing in house services?	The recent spend pattern does not undermine the role of subcontractors within the service. Their use remains appropriate for managing peaks in demand and providing flexibility where required. However, the analysis undertaken has highlighted the need for strengthened workforce planning and tighter cost controls to ensure subcontractor use remains targeted, time-limited, and financially proportionate.
Agenda Item 7		
Coun cillor Birch more	10. Table 4, page 60 gives the interest rates for loans. Are there criteria and limits to restrict borrowing from the Public Works Loan Board and what are there? This may be obvious, but please can you explain why Lender Option Borrower Options i.e. bank fixed rate are used?	The Public Works Loan Board is the default lender to Local Authorities. There are some constraints which primarily relate to councils being barred from borrowing from the PWLB to buy assets primarily for yield (for commercial returns rather than serving a direct policy / regeneration purpose) and if they assess a council as having a more than negligible risk that they will fail to repay the debt. Borrowing is bound by the Prudential Code and councils must annually (through the Treasury Management and Capital Strategy) set an Authorised Limit (maximum external debt allowed by law) and an Operational Boundary (the expected day to day borrowing level) which we remain well within. LOBO (Lender Option Borrower Option) loans were typically taken out by councils from private banks between the 1980's and 2010's. The primary reason why they were taken out were because the initial interest rates were cheaper than the PWLB and loans were offered over a longer period than could be accessed through the PWLB. The Banks however do have the option to change the interest rate at predetermined reset dates with councils having the option to then either accept the rate or repay and refinance the loan through PWLB or other borrowing sources. The council undertook this option during the year to reduce our LOBO level down from £13m to £5m.

Coun cillor Birch more	11. Table 5 page 61 discusses fixed rate borrowing. Is it correct to say that some borrowing will need to be re-financed soon and if so, how much will the increased cost of borrowing impact on the Council?	Yes, table 5 in the report shows the maturity structure of our current borrowing with c£64m maturing in the current financial year which will need to be refinanced, in addition to the additional borrowing requirements required through the capital programme, which. We are currently working with our Treasury Managers on identifying the most cost-effective financing options in terms of transaction timing and loan length with any additional costs to be factored into the updated MTFS.
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Award of EVCI GM Contract

Award of EVCI GM Contract Questions		
Questioner	Question	Answer
Councillor Sheppard	1. Given the proposed 20-year concession, what is the Council's anticipated 'whole-life' financial benefit from the arrangement, including projected revenue income, and what financial liabilities or risks will fall to the Council if the scheme underperforms or the concession were terminated or materially changed?	The contract is being delivered through a concession model, meaning the supplier is responsible for funding, designing, installing, operating and maintaining the charging infrastructure throughout the contract term. This significantly reduces the Council's direct capital and operational exposure. The current concession arrangement provides Bury with a minimum annual concession payment of approximately £32,500, equating to a minimum contract value of around £650,000 over the 20-year period, with the potential for additional income linked to network performance and usage. The programme itself is supported by Government LEVI funding and private sector investment rather than Council borrowing or capital expenditure. The Council's principal risks relate to delays in approvals, permits or legal agreements, which could impact deployment timescales. These risks are

		mitigated through the Authority Agreement, contractual governance arrangements, performance management provisions and contractual remedies. The contract also contains provisions covering compensation events, relief events, performance management and termination arrangements. In addition, financial due diligence has been undertaken as part of the procurement process and the supplier is expected to provide either a Parent Company Guarantee or Performance Bond to protect participating authorities.
	2. How many charge points are expected to be installed in Bury, and what criteria will determine their location to ensure that provision is accessible, particularly in Radcliffe and other areas where residents have limited access to off-street parking?	Detailed deployment planning will take place following contract award, however Bury identified approximately 300 potential locations throughout the Bury district during the procurement development process and current modelling indicates that the borough could benefit from approximately 3,700 chargepoints over the five-year installation programme. The LEVI programme has specifically been designed to improve charging provision in areas where residents do not have access to driveways or off-street parking. Site selection will therefore prioritise locations lacking convenient access to existing public charging infrastructure and areas where residents cannot readily install home charging facilities. Accessibility will be a key consideration. All locations will be subject to highways review, accessibility assessments and community engagement, with the ability to amend or relocate sites where necessary. The programme follows recognised accessibility principles, including PAS 1899* guidance, and seeks to ensure equitable provision across all townships. This will include consideration of areas such as Radcliffe where there are higher concentrations of terraced housing and limited off-street parking opportunities

		<i>*PAS 1899 is the nationally recognised accessibility standard for EV charging infrastructure. It helps ensure charge points are designed and located so they can be used by as many people as possible, including disabled residents. As sites are developed, accessibility assessments will form part of the approval process to ensure charging infrastructure is inclusive and meets recognised best practice standards</i>
	3. What contractual protections does Bury have if the supplier fails to install the agreed number of charge points or if charge points are unavailable for extended periods, and how will the Council monitor charging tariffs to protect residents from excessive charging tariffs over the 20-year contract?	The procurement process placed significant emphasis on supplier capability, delivery experience, network reliability and long-term operational performance. The concession contract includes a comprehensive performance management framework, incorporating Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), network reliability standards, customer service requirements, maintenance obligations, monitoring arrangements and contractual remedies where performance falls below agreed standards. Should the supplier fail to meet contractual requirements, TfGM and participating authorities have escalation mechanisms and contractual protections available through the concession agreement, together with wider safeguards such as financial due diligence requirements, performance security arrangements and termination provisions where necessary. With regard to tariffs, charging prices form part of the commercial model evaluated through the procurement process. Whilst chargepoint operators must remain commercially viable, the Council and TfGM will continue to monitor customer experience, value for money and network performance through ongoing contract management arrangements. The long-term concession model also encourages competitive pricing because utilisation and customer satisfaction are critical to the operator's commercial success.

		<i>This programme is designed to address a genuine infrastructure gap for residents without driveways. The Council is securing external investment into Bury, receiving a guaranteed concession income, and transferring the majority of installation, maintenance and operational risk to the private sector operator whilst retaining contractual oversight through TfGM's performance management arrangements.</i>