

Minutes of:	THE CABINET
Date of Meeting:	19 October 2016
Present:	Councillor R Shori (in the Chair) Councillors K S Briggs, I Gartside, T Holt, J Lewis, T Pickstone, T Tariq and S Walmsley
Apologies:	Councillor A Quinn
Public attendance:	25 members of the public were in attendance.

CA.347 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor R Shori declared a personal interest that his partner is employed by the Council.

CA.348 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A period of thirty minutes was allocated for any members of the public present at the meeting to ask questions about the work or performance of the Council or Council services.

The meeting was attended by members of the public regarding the item of business relating to Home to School Travel Assistance Policy for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs. The Chair stated that he would allow questions to be asked at the point in agenda when the item was considered and invited questions on any other matters.

No questions were asked.

CA.349 MINUTES

Delegated decision:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2016 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

CA.350 RESULTS OF THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE KEY PRINCIPLES FOR THE BURY LIBRARY SERVICE AND NEXT STEPS

The Leader and Cabinet Member (Strategic Housing and Support Services) submitted a report providing the summary of the outcomes of the public consultation on the six principles as follows.

Principle 1

To provide a Library Service across the borough which provides all residents and those working or studying in the borough with access to libraries and to electronic services sufficient in number, range and quality to support reading for pleasure, lifelong learning, the development of new skills and the effective use of information.

Principle 2

To ensure that the needs of more vulnerable residents and groups protected by Equalities legislation are taken fully into account in the review process.

Principle 3

To ensure that the resources committed to the Library Service are used as efficiently as possible by exploring options to reduce running and maintenance costs and to share premises with Council and other services.

Principle 4

To explore options for investing in technology to improve access to the Library Service, for example by extending opening hours, increasing our digital offer and enhancing provision for those with sensory impairments.

Principle 5

To welcome the contribution that members of the community can make to the Library Service as volunteers, supporting both traditional and digital services.

Principle 6

To meet local aspirations for a network of community spaces across the borough in which the Council and local communities can work together as partners in meeting local needs.

The report also sought approval to proceed to the next stage of the consultation process using the six principles, alongside the commissioned reports, as a basis for a review of the library service. The consultation would take place during October to December 2016. A further report would be produced to identify potential models/ options for library provision in the future and would be submitted for consideration by Cabinet on 18 January 2017.

Delegated decision:

That approval be given to move to Stage 2 of the consultation process, in accordance with the revised timetable, as detailed in the report submitted.

Reason for the decision:

The Council is committed to retaining a high quality Library Service in the borough and to provide a service that meets its statutory duties and supports the aspirations of residents of all ages for development of reading skills for the youngest, lifelong learning and access to books and information.

Other options considered and rejected:

To amend or reject the recommendation.

CA.351 HOME TO SCHOOL TRAVEL ASSISTANCE POLICY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The Cabinet Member (Children and Families) submitted a report requesting adoption of a revised policy for assistance in support of home to school and college travel for children and young people with Special Educational Needs, following consultation with stakeholders.

The Council's existing policy required revision to reflect the expectations of the Children & Families Act 2014, which introduced significant reforms to the way

in which services for children and young people with Special Educational Needs or Disability are provided, commissioned or delivered. The Act seeks to provide greater flexibility and choice to families, and to enable the use of personal budgets where this is requested.

The new policy would be come into effect from 1 November 2016 and will apply to all annual reviews or new requests for transport after that date.

The Chair invited those members of the public present to speak and ask questions.

Cabinet was informed that the Bury Parents Forum had set up a Transport Steering Group and a position statement had been produced and sent to councillors. After receiving the proposed new policy from the Council the group had contacted Independent Parental Special Education Advice (IPSEA). The response received suggested that parts of the new policy were potentially unlawful. Parents did not believe it gave greater choice or flexibility to them and implementing the proposals could result in a legal challenge or judicial review. Concerns were also raised on the consultation process undertaken and the impact on families by ending the financial assistance or transport provision for respite and short break sessions.

The Executive Director (Children's Services) reported that having taken advice from the Council's Legal Services, officers were satisfied that the consultation process was done properly and the policy was correctly worded and a lawful document.

The consultation process had been ongoing for over a year and had involved the distribution of questionnaires to families of service users, the use of focus groups and had included user feedback sessions.

There is no statutory duty on the Council to provide financial assistance or transport provision for respite or short break sessions. The policy proposed to bring the current arrangements in line with legislation and address individual needs. The policy had not been produced in order to reduce the budget and was intended to prevent overspending on a service that was in very high demand. The policy criteria will be produced when the policy framework has been agreed using government guidance.

Delegated decision:

1. That the outcome of the consultation with stakeholders regarding the development of the new policy framework be noted.
2. That the revised home to school and college travel assistance policy framework for children and young people with special educational needs be adopted as detailed in the Appendix to the report submitted.

Reasons for the decision:

This decision enables the local authority to respond to the outcome of consultation, meet the requirements of the Children & Families Act 2014, and comply with its statutory duties in accordance with Section 508(B) of the 1996 Education Act, as amended by the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Other option considered and rejected:

To make no changes to the current policy framework.

(Councillors Gartside and Pickstone abstained from voting on this item.)

CA.352 DRAFT BURY GROWTH PLAN

The Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member (Business Engagement and Regeneration) submitted a report presenting the draft Bury Growth Plan which is a high level strategy document setting out how, through collaborative working, the Council can achieve its ambitions for healthy, inclusive, sustainable and managed growth and increased resilience.

The Bury Growth Plan addresses the requirement for physical development in the borough and recognises the need to support social and economic growth to help create thriving, healthy and equitable communities. It also recognises the need for infrastructure and public service changes to support growth.

The Plan stresses that growth will require interventions to mitigate against negative environmental impacts and to support a low carbon economy.

Delegated decisions:

1. That approval be given to the Draft Bury Growth Plan, subject to targeted external stakeholder consultation.
2. That authority be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council to incorporate any nonstrategic changes prior to adopting and implementing the Plan.

Reason for the decision:

The Bury Growth Plan recognises that Bury's population is growing and more jobs and homes are needed in the Borough to accommodate this growth.

Other option considered and rejected:

That Cabinet identify specific revisions to the Draft Bury Growth Plan prior to the commencement of consultation.

COUNCILLOR R SHORI
Chair

(Note: The meeting started at 6.00pm and ended at 7.05pm.)