

COUNCIL QUESTIONS – 19 APRIL 2017

1. Following the success of 'I Will if You Will', how will the Leader of Bury Council ensure that the initiative continues to have a positive impact on good health and fitness for the people of Bury? **Cllr Adams**

Reply by Cllr Preston

A significant legacy has been created from the investment from Sport England/National Lottery. The IWIYW programme will continue: -

- The 340 IWIYW sessions that are delivered by independent coaches/instructors/deliverers will continue to be delivered in community venues across Bury.
 - The Bury 10K will take place again on September 17th 2017.
 - The IWIYW brand has been provided to us on licence and we are keeping the website and social media platforms.
 - Insight and data analysis will continue to be provided by the Communities and Wellbeing's Performance Team.
 - One of the Locality Officers from the IWIYW programme has been extended until December 2017 to continue to work with partners and stakeholders, and they will oversee the roll out of new technology (all instructors will be given a device, and all participants will be issued with a key fob) to enable participants to be scanned into IWIYW sessions, therefore removing the current manual registration process, and allowing the Council to have immediate access to participation data.
 - The Sport and Physical Activity Service will continue to oversee the IWIYW programme, and will: -
 - continue to work with the stakeholders and partners that joined IWIYW
 - continue to bring new partners on board
 - continue to get more women and girls, and their families more active more often
 - run the Champions programme
 - run the Bury'd Treasure event for 2017.
2. Could the Leader confirm that the old Whitefield Town Hall site is going to be developed? **Cllr Mallon**

Reply by Cllr Shori

Planning permission has been granted for a 60 bed nursing home. The development has commenced in planning terms by the creation of a small footing in the rear corner of the site. This development required disposal of 2 small plots of public open space land currently part of the park owned by the Council adjacent to the house. Following public consultation a sale has been agreed. Paperwork for the sale prepared by the Councils' legal services team is with the buyers solicitor and we are dealing with pre contract enquiries. Once completed, the development can proceed.

3. Following the BBC File on Four investigation that revealed 20,000 allegations of abuse by care home workers against elderly and vulnerable people in the last three years, what allegations have been made within Bury (last three years, neglect, physical abuse, psychological abuse and sexual assault). **Cllr Pickstone**

Reply by Cllr Holt...

As required through national reporting we record the number of safeguarding enquiries concluded each year broken down into categories regarding location such as care home, in the person's home or hospital setting. We also report by type of risk which are the numbers given below. The numbers below relate specifically to care homes in Bury.

The numbers do not directly represent the numbers of people as each safeguarding enquiry may relate to more than one type of risk.

A Summary of findings is as follows...

2016/17: Un-validated data

Data from 2016/17 is currently being validated for year-end returns. These figures do not include concluded safeguarding enquiries initiated by the council but passed on to another organisation to investigate (e.g. CCG or Community Mental Health Team). They also don't include organisational safeguarding enquiries concluded during the year.

The types of risk, with a **source of risk of service provider** for concluded safeguarding enquiries in 2016/17, where the data is currently available were: Physical Abuse 6, Psychological Abuse 2, Financial or Material Abuse 6 and Neglect and Acts of Omission 23

2015/16: Source Safeguarding Adults Collection (SAC)

The types of risk, with a **source of risk of social care support**, for concluded safeguarding enquiries in 2015/16 were: physical 16, sexual 2, psychological 10, financial or material 12, organisation 5 and neglect and acts of omission 49.

2014/15 Source: Safeguarding Adults Return (SAR)

The Safeguarding Adults Return counted safeguarding referrals (not enquiries) because it was before the changes implemented through the Care Act. Some but not all safeguarding enquiries will have proceeded to investigation and have been counted in the SAR as a safeguarding referral.

The types of risk, with a **source of risk of social care support**, for concluded safeguarding referrals in 2014/15 were: physical 18, sexual 2, psychological and emotional 13, financial or material 6 and neglect and omission 37.

I am happy to provide this information in tabular format for Councillor Pickstone following the meeting.

4. Does the Council Leader agree with the Assistant Director - Learning and Culture - when she said at the Ramsbottom, Tottington and North Manor Township Forum on 20 March 2017 that Bury Council should have recruited volunteers into the library service several years ago? Cllr Bevan

Reply by Councillor Walmsley...

I have to start by saying that the Assistant Director disputes that she actually made the comment you are referring to about recruiting volunteers. I think it may refer to the fact that she made it clear on the night that she did not see the volunteers ever running any of the 3 or 4 main remaining libraries as we needed to ensure we addressed some of the current inefficiencies in the library service we currently offer. She was explaining that library staffing would be adequate to ensure volunteers could be involved to add variety and addition to the library service, and contribute as much or as little as they felt comfortable, not be expected to take on significant responsibilities in the new service? The library service has over 130 volunteers across all libraries and we will be working closely with all to support them in being involved in the new service.

5. Can the Leader updated the Council on the current overspend position? Cllr Kerrison

Reply by Cllr Shori

Members will recall that initial forecasts suggested an overspend of £6.4 million.

This prompted the introduction of 10 control measures, and regular meetings between Cabinet Members and Directors to analyse the situation, and consider action plans.

The latest forecast (month 11) shows a forecast overspend of £2.3 million, so clearly progress has been made, but equally pressures remain.

We also need to consider the backdrop to this – in that the Council has been forced to make cuts of £65 million since 2010, and faces a further £32 million in cuts to 2020.

Despite this, a balanced outturn has been maintained over this period.

This is largely down to the hard work and creativity of staff and portfolio holders, who I must thank for their efforts.

6. Can the Leader update Members on the outcome of the Life Chances Commission and the next steps for implementation of some of the recommendations? **Cllr O'Brien**

Reply by Councillor Shori

The report has now been published on the Council's Website and the people that were originally invited to provide input into the report will be / are in the process of being written to; they will receive a link to the report, and also have the opportunity to comment on the report.

7. Can the Leader of the Council assure the public of Bury that the Labour Group is giving serious consideration to the space currently being occupied by the Sculpture Centre being restored to the Bury Central Library - as originally intended in 1901? (**Cllr. R.Walker**)

Reply by Councillor Walmsley

We are absolutely giving consideration to developing the space in all 3 or 4 libraries remaining library buildings. We are committed to ensuring that the library service, although smaller in number of buildings, will be improved in quality of service.

8. Theresa May promised to help those "Just About Managing" when she became Prime Minister. Can the Leader tell us what Bury Council is doing to help those "Just About Managing"? **Cllr Whitby**

Reply by Councillor Walmsley

The council has a clear duty to collect income in the form of local taxation and other debts. However, we ensure we take a firm but fair approach. We recognise that there is a difference between the 'can't pay's' and 'won't pay's' and our collection strategies and processes are underpinned by this recognition.

We encourage customers to contact us at the earliest opportunity if they are struggling to pay or are in debt. This is often easier said than done due to the stigma surrounding debt as well as the tendency sometimes for people to keep their 'head in the sand' about it. To help overcome these issues, we have developed a debt strategy which aims to inform staff who have customer contact how to identify people who may be experiencing debt issues and how to signpost them to get help. This strategy which has been developed in partnership with Six Town Housing and CAB has been in place since 2015 and is currently being refreshed and will be re-rolled this year.

The Welfare Reform Board operates very much as a partnership and has jointly carried out campaigns to raise awareness of upcoming changes to

benefits and to mitigate the effects once in place: this includes maximising benefit income, signposting to work solutions and having debt advice in place. Both the Council and Six Town Housing fund in-house CAB workers who will provide specialist advice to customers and will advocate for them and signpost them to other agencies as appropriate.

In terms of offering crisis support, the Bury Support Fund can help customers who need short-term emergency help. As well as providing short term grants, part of their role is to look at the overall circumstances of each applicant for help and provide debt advice and/or signposting to other agencies with the aim of providing more long term solutions to help them break the cycle of debt.

9. Bury has had an enviable reputation in the past of having an excellent family of local schools. However, the Cross Party Public Accounts Committee last month accused the government of being "delusional" as the biggest cuts to education since the 1990's threaten to damage standards. Does the Leader agree that as well as bankrupting the Country via record borrowing, Brexit and a failed economic policy of austerity, the Conservative Government is also morally bankrupt in presiding over the ruining of a generation's education with these education cuts? **Councillor preston**

Reply by Councillor Briggs

Although the Government are providing additional amounts of money to our schools these funds are to meet the record numbers of children and young people in our local schools and colleges. What the Government has failed to recognise is the substantial increases in costs that our schools are having to meet. Nearly all of these large increases in costs are of the Government's making following the large increases in employment costs such as the Apprenticeship Levy, National Insurance contributions, National Living Wage and teacher's pay that is determined by the Secretary of State. There is no extra money for our schools to fund these large increases and therefore schools are facing the spectre of having to make significant savings.

Interestingly the Chancellor reversed his decision to increase National Insurance contributions for the self-employed in his March Budget because the Conservative Manifesto for the last General Election said there would be no tax increases during the current Parliament, yet our schools and this Council are now facing a multi-million pound tax increase in the amount of National Insurance contributions we have to make.

10. Could the Leader inform members, and residents, what the delay has been in commencing works on the A56 in Prestwich. Can we be reassured that works will be completed before the busy Christmas period for local traders? **Councillor D'Albert**

Reply by Councillor Quinn

There have been multiple issues that have delayed the commencement of works; the main contractor struggled with resources to meet the original start date; trial holes have demonstrated that some tree positions were not achievable due to underground services which has necessitated some redesign work; there were some traffic modelling inconsistencies that needed to be addressed and the business case for contributory funding from GMCA has been waiting for approval.

The last element of the works will be the resurfacing works. Whilst it is hoped that these can be undertaken before the Christmas period, a road works embargo is usually put in place across Greater Manchester at the beginning of December and Highways England have plans to undertake works to J17 & J18 around this time. If these impact negatively on the Prestwich High Street works, it may be that the resurfacing works have to be completed in the New Year.

11. Can the Leader tell me what this Council is doing to encourage and help vulnerable residents and those who are currently in receipt of housing benefits, to review their Energy supplier on a regular basis and switch where necessary to the lowest tariff? (Cllr R.Hodkinson)

Reply by Councillor Walmsley

Bury Council has encouraged all residents to participate in community switching through the GM Fair Energy campaign in order to reduce their energy tariff. There were 2 auctions in 2013 to which 2925 registered an interest with 379 householders switching energy provider / tariff. This is a 13% acceptance rate. National switching rates are between 10 to 15% therefore Bury places well within this, ensuring annual household fuel bill savings totalling £45,833. This amounts to a 9% reduction on household fuel bills. In March 2014 there was a further auction however there has not been a breakdown of results by Local Authority. For this 3rd auction there were 9926 GM residents who registered an interest, of these 1512 switched which is a 15.2% conversion rate.

At present there are no further planned Switching campaigns however we continue to encourage residents to use online switching comparison sites that are OFGEM accredited.

12. Can the Leader give the Council an update on the application by the UK for EU Solidarity Funding following the floods on Boxing Day 2015? Cllr Cathcart

Reply by Councillor Shori

After many months of asking and receiving no clear response, I am pleased to report that we recently received £2.393 million from the

Department for Transport to address the consequences of the December 2015 flooding.

Whether this is via the EU Solidarity fund, we do not know.

What we do know however is that we have only secured this funding as a result of the tireless lobbying by Labour Councillors.

We are currently assessing any conditions attached to the funding, and will continue to lobby for funding to address other flood damage, e.g. parks.

13. 2016 was officially the hottest year on record which will lead to more extreme weather events such as the floods of Boxing Day 2015 and September 13 2016 downpours. What is this Council doing to fight climate change? **Cllr James**

Reply by Councillor Quinn

We take climate change and carbon reduction very seriously here in Bury.

We work with our GM colleagues to deliver Greater Manchester's Low Emissions Strategies and we are very pleased to have been chosen by the GMCA to work on a project to show how our energy supply and use can develop as we move to a decarbonised energy supply. We will be publishing our own Bury Climate Change Plan this summer. We have also ensured that this agenda is an integral part of Bury's Health and Wellbeing Strategy under Priority 5 – Healthy Places.

As a council, we have reduced our carbon emissions by 22% since 2008/09 and in that time we have implemented over 100 energy efficiency projects.

We have installed 7055 LED streetlights throughout the borough to cut our energy usage and make savings on maintenance and bulb replacement costs.

Working with a number of partners including the Japanese Government Agency for Energy (NEDO), Wigan and Manchester city Councils we have installed 90 air source heat pumps in Six Town Housing properties. These renewable energy units are state of the art and will help to future proof these properties whilst saving our tenants money.

From 2005 to 2014 carbon emissions from the domestic sector reduce by 31%. Also from 2013 to 2015 we saw the level of fuel poverty decrease from 19% to 10% which is excellent progress.

Greater Manchester Business Growth hub works with our local businesses to improve energy efficiency and cut costs. In June this year we are holding a "Quick Wins workshop with local SMEs to raise awareness of the

work of the Low Carbon Business Growth Hub and also to identify and promote energy efficiency savings.

We continue to push towards our 60% waste recycling target and to facilitate this we were the first council in England to introduce a 3 weekly collection for residual waste.

From 2005 to 2015 transport carbon emissions decreased by 11%. Some of the local actions to reduce transport emissions and encourage walking and cycling include improving cycling and walking facilities and projects to increase uptake of walking and cycling.

We have installed 7 electric vehicle charging points in our public car parks. Use of our charging points has increased by 62% on last year with over 3000 charging sessions. The Council have 4 electric vehicles on the fleet so far.

Since the 2015 Boxing Day floods, the Council has been working closely with the Environment Agency on a number of projects. Work has begun on a new design for a flood defence scheme in Radcliffe and Redvales. Three main options have been shortlisted and will be presented at drop in events in Radcliffe and Redvales on the 25th and 27th April. A preferred option will be selected by summer 2017.

In combination with the Radcliffe and Redvales scheme, a Natural Flood Management (NFM) approach to reduce flows from the upper Irwell catchment is proposed. Funding has been allocated from government specifically for this purpose.

Hopefully you can see that we take climate change and carbon reduction very seriously. We will continue to work with our communities and partners to ensure it remains a major priority for us into the future.

14. Can the Leader confirm how many complaints have been made under the Standards procedure in the last five years, how many have been upheld and how much it has cost Bury Council for internal and external adjudication? (**Cllr M.Hankey**)

Reply by Cllr Shori

Since April 2012 the Standards Committee has considered 14 complaints against Councillors.

Five of the Complaints have been upheld.

The cost over the five year period is £13492.63

15. Could the Leader tell us what Bury Council is doing in trying to provide affordable housing? **Cllr Haroon**

Reply by Councillor Walmsley

The Council recognises the challenges of households securing affordable housing in the borough, with significant issues around affordability given average incomes and property values and also of reduced access to mortgage finance. This is why we are committed to increasing the supply of affordable housing of all forms and why this is one of my priorities.

We deliver this on a number of fronts.

In 2004, the Council introduced a planning policy where 25% of units on larger developments have to be made available at affordable levels. In most cases this means at a discounted sale price and in other cases as Shared Ownership, providing a minimum 25% discount. Over 200 affordable dwellings have been identified as completed as a result of this planning policy.

This policy also allows the affordable housing units to be sold on the open market in certain circumstances, subject to 25% of the sale proceeds being given to the Council to spend on affordable housing elsewhere. We have received around £1.5m in this way, £617k of which has been allocated for bringing private sector empty properties back into use for affordable rent.

The Council has also accessed funding from the Homes and Communities Agency directly for affordable housing. This includes funding to bring empty properties back into use, in addition to 3 small scale new build affordable housing schemes and a more significant 60 unit new extra care scheme which will be available at affordable rent.

In addition, the Council works with partners to influence their investment of new affordable housing in the borough; typically Housing Associations and usually supported by Homes and Communities Agency Funding. For instance, as part of the funding available for 2015 to 2018, funding for over 100 new affordable rent or shared ownership properties was brought into Bury. Most of these properties have been completed. Funding is secured in the HCAs new affordable housing programme for Bury and it is anticipated that this will increase in scale.

The Council also works with GMCA and the Homes and Communities Agency to secure funding for and drive additional affordable housing across the borough. As part of this for example the first Starter Home site across GM will be in Bury and additionally the largest GM Starter Home site in the pipeline will be in Bury.

The council will also utilise its own land which is suitable for residential development to deliver affordable housing where this is appropriate.

Thus over the coming years, we will see an increased number of new affordable properties being built within the borough.

16. Could the Leader update us on the progress made in producing an updated Poverty Strategy? **Cllr McKay**

Reply by Councillor Holt

The current strategy is currently being refreshed and updated, this is being done via a steering group consisting of Members with Officer assistance. Work is progressing on this and it should be completed by July 2017.

The group have agreed that the strategy needs to be all-encompassing and to be focused on outcomes. It will therefore incorporate an action plan to underpin the need to achieve progress in dealing with poverty.

The strategy will consider the causes and impacts of poverty and will focus on looking beneath the headline information and will examine issues such as stigma, reaching people in poverty, offering support and help in ways which will overcome customer reticence due to issues of trust.

Underpinning the whole strategy will be the message that poverty is everyone's problem and that the community of Bury as a whole suffers if individuals within that community are experiencing poverty.

The strategy will report on outcomes in a meaningful way and will link to other existing strategies such as the homeless strategy and the debt strategy to ensure a holistic, joined up approach.

I believe this strategy will form the basis of a very robust approach which will focus on the best use of resources and effort to achieve our clear objectives.

17. Can the Leader confirm who is the current Deputy Leader of Bury Council and cabinet member for Finance and Human Resources? (**Cllr. J.Daly**)

Reply by Councillor Shori

I can confirm that I am currently overseeing the Finance & Human Resources Portfolio.

18. Could the Leader comment on the impact in Bury following the Chancellor of the Exchequer's announcement in his budget to provide money for Social Care? **Cllr Susan Southworth**

Reply by Councillor Holt

Bury Council will receive an extra £7 million for adult social care from the Government over a 3 year period. But that is the problem – "over a 3 year period" – after that, the funding stops.

Whilst it is expected that efficiencies can be delivered through Transforming Health & Social Care in line with GM Devolution, this funding is still much less than is needed. Over the last five years local government budgets, including social care, have reduced significantly and this announcement only goes some way to addressing the shortfall.

Whilst any additional funding is welcome, it is too little, too late, and it is time limited, whereas pressures will continue way in the future.

We will of course ensure the money is spent wisely, and hopefully we can develop initiatives that deliver long lasting outcomes for residents.

Clearly after the spectacular NI U-turn, the Chancellor now has a gap in his budget; I just hope he does not look to Local Government to fill this.

19. Could the Leader please outline what the I Will If You Will Programme's key achievement have been now that the funded period has ended?
Cllr Black

Reply by Councillor Preston

IWIYW has undoubtedly been an amazing success in Bury: -

- More than 20,000 women and girls have taken part in physical activity and sport across the Borough since the programme commenced in September 2013. Bury has seen above national average levels of female participation during the duration of the programme.
 - IWIYW has had a positive life changing impact on many women and girls in Bury, and women and girls have changed their attitudes and behaviours to become more active more often, with a real sense of community ownership being developed and fostered, which has assisted in challenging the norms about women and girls being active.
 - The IWIYW programme has assisted market development, offering new sustainable sport and physical activity provision to meet the demands of women and girls in Bury, and supported a number of local businesses to establish, generating a positive economic return. Over 340 IWIYW sessions are now delivered each week.
 - The IWIYW programme has influenced organisational approaches to physical and mental wellbeing in Bury.
20. Council the Leader please inform members of any results of an audit of litter bins (including dog bins) across the Borough - how many are there in each Township area? **Councillor S Wright**

Reply by Councillor Quinn

The Council does not keep a record of bins for each township area because the operational areas for emptying do not always match the townships.

In total the Council has 235 litter bins based in parks, cemeteries and green spaces. There is also 1,154 single litter bins located in town centres and outer districts as well as 63 of the 3 compartment recycling bins and a total of 368 dog bins.

21. Can the Leader confirm that Bury Council have decided to close the toning chair suite at the Castle Leisure Centre and if so, why? (**Cllr G.Keeley**)

Councillor Holt

Yes Bury Council has decided to close the Toning Suite at Castle Leisure Centre.

The number of customers using this facility has been steadily declining over recent years and the suite is underachieving financially. Currently there is only 40% usage of the facility.

Currently Bury Council is subsidising the facility at a cost of approx £26,000 per annum.

Consideration has been given to a reduction in opening hours and an increase in price but neither would make the facility financially viable whilst make it affordable to customers.

There is a lack of referrals to the toning suite by the BEATS officers who find there are no health related outcomes associated with this facility. There is undoubtedly a feeling of well being but they feel these positive outcomes would be replicated and in most cases increased through predominately weight bearing activity.

The introduction of a wellbeing timetable will provide a varied programme of activities suitable for toning customers. Leisure staff will work closely with all customers to assist in this transition.

22. What is the Authority doing to address the increased prevalence of begging in the Town Centre? **Cllr Kelly**

Councillor Tariq

Members will be aware that nationally, Rough Sleeping has more than doubled in the past seven years and whilst Bury has avoided the levels of Rough Sleeping seen elsewhere, the number of people presenting to the Authority as homeless has increased. Whilst not all beggars are homeless and not all homeless people are beggars there has been an evidential rise in homelessness and an anecdotal increase in reports to the Police of begging in Bury Town Centre. The begging issues experienced by the Police prompted them to approach Local Authority colleagues in the Bury Neighbourhood Hub to try to address the issue.

Out of this came Bury's first begging audit where Team Bury Partners worked together to identify beggars and Rough Sleepers, engage with them and attempt to address their issues. I am pleased to advise that this resulted in 5 Rough Sleepers being accommodated and multiple referrals to various agencies being made to address the myriad issues that the beggars were experiencing. Since this intervention begging has decreased dramatically but the situation is being monitored closely and if beggars do return then it will be reviewed.

To ensure that the levels of begging we were experiencing do not return we are considering what powers the Council and Partners have to address this issue and combining this with tailored support packages for any vulnerable people caught begging, this should ensure there is a sustainable approach to the issue of begging.

23. Can the cabinet member responsible provide an update around what progress has been made around developing and strengthening our relationship with the Armed Forces (and veterans) and the Community & Voluntary Sector in Bury? **Councillor Jones**

Councillor Tariq

The last six months has seen a great relationship being built between the council and Armed Forces (including veterans) in Bury. Supported by the Social Development Team, great links have been made with members of the Covenant group and the Fusiliers in Bury.

The Armed Forces Covenant meetings have been re-established and are now being held quarterly. They are very well attended with representatives from all veteran and serving personnel from the RAF and Navy as well as the Army in Bury.

A workplan with key outcomes for this area of work has been co-produced by members of the Covenant group and a series of sub groups have been established. Cllr Tariq as the Cabinet member for Communities and Safer Neighbourhoods and Deputy Cabinet Member Cllr McKay are the named Elected Member Champions for this area of work and have been actively involved in the Covenant meetings and sub groups to date.

Significant progress has been made to date including:

- The Covenant document has been updated by the group and it will be re-signed on the 23rd April 2017, which is Gallipoli Day.
- A Funding Sub Group has been formed and its aim is to establish what the Armed Forces Covenant Group wants to achieve and to apply for funding to ensure the aims of the group can be met and sustained.
- A Bury Veterans Breakfast Club has been established and runs every Friday and is one of a network of Veterans Breakfast Clubs across the country. Staff from all of the partner agencies involved in the Armed Forces Covenant Meeting alongside the Councillor Champion for Armed Forces have visited on a number of occasions to build relations with those that are in attendance. 28 breakfast clubs have taken place so far and have supported 14 veterans.
- An Armed Forces section on the Bury Directory has been created by members of the group. A Veterans wife has been identified as a Bury Directory Champion who will support anyone needing help with how to access the directory from the forces community.

Bury has been mentioned at the launch of the British Legion GM Manifesto, highlighting the good work that is happening via the breakfast club and the Covenant group which is a great achievement.

Community and Voluntary Sector

Over the last twelve months, significant progress has been made in terms of building and strengthening relationships with the Community & Voluntary Sector in Bury.

This initially started in October 2016 with an engagement workshop that took place with partners from across the Sector, representatives from the Local Authority and the Cabinet Member for Communities & Safer Neighbourhoods. As a result of the workshop, a sub group was formed between the Council and Chief Officers of the Community and Voluntary Sector. This group meets regularly and has started to establish and develop ways forward that support a thriving, entrepreneurial sector across Bury which will then be shared with the wider CVS at the next engagement workshop scheduled on 27th April.

A number of relationship building visits have also taken place over the last 6 months with CVS groups across Bury and a specific funding page has been developed on The Bury Directory that details all funding opportunities available for the CVS and smaller community groups and organisations.

24. Can the Leader give an update on Bury Council's plan to reopen the Waterside Bridge in Summerseat for motor vehicle use and by what date does he believe the work will be completed? (Cllr D.Gunther)

Councillor Quinn to respond...

The Council's intention is and always has been, to re-open Kay Street bridge Summerseat to vehicular traffic.

The programme to enable us to undertake the necessary steps to re-open the bridge has required the Council to have permissions to enter third party land. Consent has now been granted and site investigation works are due to go out to tender at the beginning of May. Until the results of these site investigations are known it is unfortunately not possible to give a date when the construction work will be completed. Clearly we will take every opportunity to accelerate the programme wherever possible.

25. Could the Leader please inform Members of the outcome of the public consultation to the first draft of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework? Cllr McKay

Councillor Walmsley

The Draft GMSF was a very successful consultation that attracted around 25,000 responses from residents, interest groups, developers and other agencies. 90% of the responses related to specific sites rather than the wider Spatial Framework strategy and policy areas. The draft GMSF document was accessed over 50,000 times from the GMCA website and

over 80 public events were held across Greater Manchester with many recording hundreds of attendees.

Further to the Council motion of 1 February, officers will conduct a full and detailed analysis of the Draft GMSF responses. The responses are being logged and the intention is to make these available to view on the GMCA website later this month. A consultation report responding to the issues raised in the draft will be published alongside the next consultation, which is currently timetabled for this September.

26. What steps is the Council taking towards production of a Local Plan for Bury? **Councillor James**

Councillor Walmsley

A Local Development Scheme has been published on the Council's website which sets out the various stages of plan preparation and timescales involved for the Bury Local Plan and the GMSF. A 6-week public consultation has just ended which informed residents, interest groups, developers and agencies on the Council's database of the intention to prepare a new Local Plan and to invite them to comment on its scope and topics it should cover. Officers will review the responses received and will prepare an Issues and Options Paper for a further 6-week consultation starting in May or June.

27. Could the Leader inform members what will happen to the areas who are not proceeding with StreetSafe schemes in 2017/18? **Cllr Pickstone**

Councillor Quinn

Unfortunately, nothing will be happening in these areas as there is no alternate source of funding. The Council will retain a reserve list of StreetSafe schemes that have not been undertaken and should available funding streams be identified in the future, it may be possible to implement some schemes if they qualify with the various conditions usually attached to such funding.

28. Can the Leader outline the effectiveness of waste audits, how many have been carried out with residents in the last 12 months and the cost to the Council? **(Cllr. D.Silbiger)**

Councillor Quinn

Waste audits are carried out following receipt of a written application for additional grey bin capacity from a household, which would suggest that the household in question is struggling with the current level of capacity provided.

As part of the approval process a Waste Management Officer will pay a visit to the household in question to assess whether the family has the full suite of bins it is entitled to, that it knows exactly what type of waste

should be placed in each bin and consequently that the household is participating fully in the Council's kerbside recycling collection scheme.

If there is any evidence of recycling in the grey bin this would suggest that recycling is not being optimised and the application is likely to be declined at this stage. Officers will however typically arrange a follow up visit to hopefully witness how recycling performance has improved. At this stage the application may well be approved.

There is no automatic entitlement to additional grey bin capacity based on household size alone. Equally, there is no minimum household size before an application may be considered.

It costs the Council in excess of £350 per tonne to dispose of grey bin waste, £61 per tonne to compost brown bin waste and it derives an income of £25 per tonne from blue and green recycling. It is imperative therefore that every household in the borough recycles all that it possibly can.

In 2016, 209 requests for additional grey bin capacity were received, of those 168 were approved and 41 declined. Any costs associated with waste audits are absorbed within Officers' time.

29. Would the Leader please join me in congratulating our Planning Service who have been shortlisted for the prestigious Local Planning Authority team of the Year Award; and Robert Thorpe our Head of Building Control who has been presented with the 2017 Superstar Award by Local Authority Building Control **Cllr Adams**

Councillor Walmsley

We are extremely fortunate in Bury to have teams and staff across the Council delivering high quality, professional services at a standard acknowledged to be at the highest possible level of excellence. When these standards are acknowledged externally it makes me particularly proud.

We all know that Bury is one of the country's best places in which to live and this is in no small way down to the work of our Planning Service. I am therefore delighted to hear that this service has been shortlisted for the Local Authority Planning team of the year award. It is greatly deserved and I wish them well when the award results are announced in June this year.

Building Control is a crucial but often underappreciated service. I am delighted to congratulate the Council's Head of Service, Rob Thorpe who has been chosen as the North West Superstar by LABC, which represents all local authority council building control teams in England and Wales. Rob has been with the Council since 1975 and leads a team responsible for a range of vital services, such as ensuring the safety of buildings and sports grounds, and working with the emergency services at times of

crisis, such as during the Boxing Day floods in 2015. Proof once again that despite the severe financial pressures we operate under, excellence is alive and well in Bury.

30. Would the Leader please thank all our Bury Town Centre partners for the effort put in to the recent Purple Flag accreditation Assessment undertaken by the Association of Town and City Management. Cllr Bayley

Councillor Walmsley

For the past two years Purple Flags have flown proudly in Bury in official recognition of the town's highly successful night-time economy.

I certainly would wish to thank our town centre partners:

Shopping centres

Licensed trade

Street pastors

Police

TfGM

The MET

East Lancashire Railway

Art Gallery and Sculpture Gallery

Fusiliers Museum

For all their assistance in undertaking this year's rigorous assessment by the Association of Town Centre Management which manages the UK-wide scheme.

Bury is the only town centre across Greater Manchester to achieve this prestigious accreditation and we aim to continue working with our partners and town centre venues to maintain that status, while working hard to build on our evening offer to provide a safe and enjoyable night out. We want to encourage an even wider range of evening and night-time businesses to get involved, spread the word and support Purple Flag. We will know the outcome of this latest assessment in May.

31. In light of the recent horrific terrorist incident in Westminster, can the Leader reassure Bury residents that safeguarding measures are in place to protect sensitive sites in the Borough, such as places of worship, faith schools and cemeteries? **(Cllr. K.Hussain)**

Councillor Shori to

Firstly our thoughts go out to those who were affected by the terrible attack in Westminster.

We maintain close links with the Police and other Partners, and the GM Civil Contingencies Resilience Unit.

National threat levels remain at "severe", however there is no intelligence to suggest sites in the Borough are at any greater risk than elsewhere.

Residents, businesses, staff, and visitors should be vigilant, but reassured, and report any suspicious activity to the Police.

32. Can the Cabinet member for Strategic Housing and Support Services, Cllr Sandra Walmsley, give The Friends of Tottington Library her assurances that she will provide all of the previously requested information to enable them to produce a Business Plan to take over the running of Tottington Library? For example, a full breakdown of all the required repairs to the building? Furthermore, would Cllr Walmsley and senior Council officers agree to meet with the group before the Cabinet meeting on the 18th May to look at and help the group finalise it's Business Plan?" **Cllr Gartside**

Councillor Walmsley

The council are still committed to do whatever we can to support FOTL to explore their position in taking over Tottington Library. We have met with the group twice and provided all additional information as requested.

We are happy to continue meeting with this group to enable them to develop their business plan and are fully engaged in this dialogue.

We cannot, however, be in a position where this has a remaining financial implication for the library service. We must be clear that the 3/4 remaining libraries must be adequately staffed and stocked and our calculations have figured we can afford to do this with a maximum of 4 libraries.

33. Could the Leader inform members how has the exam performance of Bury's schools fared compared with other North West authorities in the last three years.**(CYP)**

Good Level of Development (Foundation Stage)

We are currently above Northwest Average in this area.

	2016	2015	2014
Bury	68.9	66	56
Northwest	66	63	57

Year 1 Phonics Check

We are currently above Northwest Average in this area.

	2016	2015	2014
Bury	82	71	66
Northwest	80	76	74

Key Stage 1 New Measures (expected standard and greater depth)

(Please note these are new measures for 2016 and not comparable with previous years results)

We are currently in line with Northwest Average in this area and 11th out of 23 local authorities.

	2016
Bury	72
Northwest	72

Key Stage 2 New Measures (Expected progress in reading, writing and maths combined)

(Please note these are new measures for 2016 and not comparable with previous years results)

We are currently above the Northwest Average in this area and 8th out of 23 local authorities.

	2016
Bury	55
Northwest	53

Key Stage 4 New Measures (Progress 8)

(Please note these are new measures for 2016 and not comparable with previous years results)

We are currently above the Northwest Average in this area and 7th out of 23 local authorities.

	2016
Bury	-0.06
Northwest	-0.2

Key Stage 4 Old Measures (% Achieving 5A*-C including English and Maths)

I have also included the comparable, old measure of 5 GCSE including English and maths score.

	2016	2015	2014
Bury	62.2	57.2	57.9
Northwest	60.5	56.7	56.9

34. The Leader has been quoted in the Bury Times as saying the Sculpture Centre is a key feature of the town's cultural economy generating £40 million of revenue to Bury's businesses each year, how is this figure arrived at? (Cllr. D.Gunther)

Councillor Walmsley

The comment quoted implies that the Sculpture Centre itself contributes £40 million. The figure of £40million refers specifically to the contribution of the cultural economy to the overall local economy. The source of the analysis is the 'Measuring Bury's Evening & Night-time Economy: 2001-2014' report by Alistair Turnham, of MAKE in March 2015. We can ensure the requesting Cllr receives a copy.

It is important to understand that the Sculpture Centre should not be viewed on its own, that it is an integral part of the Art Gallery and the Cultural Quarter; the Sculpture Centre is part of the significant cultural offer that in totality is our largest employment sector and, according to the 2013 New Economy analysis of that sector, projected to be the fastest source of employment growth over the next ten years.

35. As the Bury Life Chances Commission has now reported, what steps will the Council be taking to act on its recommendations?

Cllr Shori to respond.... – See Q6.

36. In light of recent mild weather over the winter can the Leader inform us of any savings made due to lower level gritting? **Councillor S Wright**

In 2016/17 65 grit runs were required (including 8 in April 2016). In 2015/16 53 grit runs were required and in 2014/15 70 grits were undertaken. This illustrates that the Winter just finished was not significantly more or less mild than recent previous Winters.

In 2016/17 the cost of road salt increased and the cost of fuel increased, with the same number of gritters and drivers required to deliver the service.

In 2015/16 the service operated within budget, whilst the end of year accounts for 2016/17 are being finalised currently.

There is no reason to suggest that there has been any saving this year from the Winter Service budget for the above reasons.

37. Could the Leader confirm how many community groups and voluntary organisations the Council have spoken to within the last 12 months, with the intention of encouraging residents to take over Library services presently provided by Bury Council? **Cllr I.Schofield**

Councillor Walmsley

We have held, attended and participated in many events and meetings since April 2016 at which the issue of residents taking over Library services have been discussed in general. In the last month we have offered all community groups the opportunity to meet again with the direct focus of understanding if they have any capacity to take over services in the library their group meets in. There are over 40 community groups that meet across all 14 libraries.

38. Could the Leader confirm, the Council has sufficient capital funding in its reserves to carry out all necessary structural repairs to Tottington Library (Cllr.Y.Wright)

Councillor Walmsley

I am advised that the total cost of required maintenance to Tottington Library has been estimated as £116,100 over the next 5 years lifecycle. 83% of the costs identified are for Mechanical and Electrical items that are mostly required in years 4 and 5. The remainder is for internal and external decoration, some door replacement and roofing

repairs.

The works identified have not been prioritised for capital investment at this time due to the ongoing review of libraries services.

39. Could the Leader confirm how many schools have formed multi academy trusts or are in the process of doing so? Further, what advice is being given to headteachers within the Borough who are not party to these discussions? (Cllr. R.Caserta)

Councillor Briggs

In the past 3 years, the Department for Education, using the secretary of state powers have enforced 4 Academy orders for Bury schools. These schools are now members of multi-academy trusts from outside the Council.

It is understood that 4 Community Primary schools are forming a MAT in the next 3 months and 2 faith schools are also considering establishing a MAT later this year.

We are also aware through discussion that Salford Diocese are pursuing academy status for all of their schools, with the possibility of the Roman Catholic schools in each local authority area forming a Salford Diocese multi-academy trust.

The Government's policy, although no longer enforced by 2022, is still clear that the direction of travel will see all state funded schools become academies.

We are working closely with our Head teachers in Primary, Secondary, Post 16, Alternative provision and Special schools to support them to form stronger working relationships and accountability as part of our work on System leadership and grow our own self improving, school led model. This will allow the Local Authority to support schools to grow capacity to improve as the funding is reduced at local authority level. Our key strategic priority is to see standards of education in Bury remain high and further improve for our children. Through this partnership working we will encourage an open conversation around academisation and support and challenge our schools to ensure that any formalising of partnerships through the route of multi academy trusts has the best for our children at the heart of it.

We will of course continue to provide the very high levels of educational guidance and support to Bury schools so the educational standards in our schools are maintained.

40. Does the Leader agree that a member of the opposition should chair the Council Scrutiny Committee for the next municipal year? (Cllr.J.Daly)

Councillor Shori

Effective overview and scrutiny arrangements are key to the sound governance of the Council.

Over recent years we have had different Chair's and we have always maintained effective levels of scrutiny- irrespective of party colours.

I sincerely hope this can continue, but will not be announcing any positions until the Annual Council meeting in May.

41. Could the Leader outline the Council's strategy to tackle the high levels of obesity within the Borough and what policies are in place to encourage all residents to engage in an active, healthy lifestyle? Cllr keeley

Councillor Holt

The Council through the Health and Wellbeing Board has identified tackling obesity and promoting active lifestyles as key priorities. The council is working hard with Partners to develop health promoting environments that support healthy weight and increasing levels of physical activity for example in nurseries, schools and workplaces.

In schools, catering services are making continuous efforts to provide healthy nutritious food for children some schools have reduced the amounts of sugary drinks which are available. Bury is also part of a GM Healthier Catering Award whereby schools, workplaces, cafes and restaurants are encouraged to change the way they purchase stock and produce the food on their menus.

Primary schools are beginning to implement the 'Daily Mile' whereby children and staff to run a mile a day within the school hours. This has been very successful in tackling childhood obesity in Scotland and is now being adopted by all primary schools across the UK.

All children aged 4-5 and 10-11 years are weighed and measured as part of the National Childhood Measurement Programme. This data is used to work with partners to shape service delivery and support children, young people and their families to manage their weight.

We have excellent uptake of NHS Health Checks in Bury, which help identify people with unhealthy lifestyles and signpost people to the Council's Lifestyle Service and the BEATS service for support to adopt healthier lifestyles, including weight management.

Our Physical Activity and Sport Strategy for Bury was developed following the good work created from the I Will If You Will Women and Girls Sport England programme and complements the Greater Manchester #GMMoving physical activity strategy.

As a result of the Bury strategy, we are continuing to look at new ways of engaging with communities through our leisure services offer and the council has recruited an Active Travel officer to promote walking and cycling.

Bury is proactive in supporting campaigns such as Public Health England's ONE You campaign which will be rolled out across Bury 2017. We are also currently looking at the potential of our planning levers to tackle over proliferation of unhealthy hot food takeaways in areas with highest obesity levels.

42. Could the Leader confirm that Bury Council have bid for transitional adult social care funding from the combined authority like other Greater Manchester Councils, and what level of funding does the Council expect to receive in this financial year? (Cllr S.Nuttall)

Councillor Holt

Bury Council, and key partners (such as the CCG, Pennine Care, Pennine Acute and the GP Federation), are in the process of finalising a proposal for investment from the Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Transformation Fund which is aimed at supporting the sustainability and transformation of Health and Social Care across Bury.

Bury's total investment request is expected to be significant, although the final total has not yet been finalised, with a figure expected during the week commencing 24th April 2017.

43. What plans do Bury Council have in place to tackle anti-social behaviour and under-age drinking in public places during the summer months in known trouble spots, such as Summerseat? (Cllr K.Hussain)

Councillor Tariq

Members will be glad to hear that, according to the Police, there were fewer reports of under-age drinking and associated anti-social behaviour last year, when compared with previous years and there is currently no intelligence to suggest that it will be different this year.

There were a couple of issues in 2015 in Summerseat after Woodhey finished for summer term Prom and this was investigated by GMP. On the back of this Police will contact all Secondary Schools and find out what the dates are for all leaving Proms and brief the schools on crimes and consequences.

I am pleased to advise that it seems the hard work of Officers across Team Bury seems to be finally bearing fruit. Specifically, the Safe4Summer and BSafeBCool initiatives, which work with schools throughout the year to encourage youths to be active and deter them from hanging around the streets, can be highlighted as real success stories in terms of reducing Anti-Social Behaviour.

Members should note that if there are any issues relating to ASB and under-age drinking GMP have stressed that this needs to be reported properly so that it can be fed through to the neighbourhood policing teams. This then can be raised through our JET Team who can look at the problems from a multi-agency approach.

In addition the Local Authority has tools and powers available to us through the ASB Crime and Policing act 2014, and Crime and Disorder act 1998. We can use Acceptable Behaviour Contracts and, depending on severity of the ASB, Civil Injunctions. Work can also be done through trading standards, looking at where the alcohol is bought etc.

44. Over the last three years Bury Council have paid out an average of £1.2 million for highway related claims, what percentage of these claims related to accidents linked to potholes? (Cllr.J.Harris)

Councillor Quinn

During the past 3 years 62% of successful highway claims have related to carriageway potholes. This equates to approximately 32% of the total value of successful highway claims.

The Council is investing significant funds targeted at reducing insurance costs, including the purchase of a spray injection patching machine, which will increase the speed at which potholes can be repaired.

45. Further to the Labour Group's decision to borrow £10 million, could the Leader confirm what the initial £611,000 borrowing costs are made up of? Further, what will be the annual interest liability for the loan? (Cllr J.Harris)

Councillor Shori

It is proposed that the £10 million is drawn down over the 3 year period as works are undertaken (£3m / £3m / £4m)

The basis of the business case is a 40 year annuity loan at 2.92% - via the Public Works Loans Board.

Total Loan cost is £17m - £7m interest and £10m principal

Borrowing costs will rise as each tranche is drawn down – to a maximum of £427k per annum (principal & interest).

It is intended that borrowing costs will be funded by reduced insurance claims, and reduced patching costs.

However, recognising that the works won't all be done on "day one", the business case assumes that borrowing costs will be funded from reserves for the first 2 and a half years – at a cost of £611k.

The table in the report to Cabinet last week clearly outlines this calculation.

I have to say I find the Conservative Group's stance puzzling, on the one hand they are reported as saying £10 million is not enough, and then on the other hand saying we are "mortgaging the town" – what exactly is their position ??

We have suffered years of underfunding and cuts – and this is evident now in the state of the roads for all to see.

We need to invest at scale, and borrowing is the only route available.

And, why not, when rates are at an all time low ?

Residents, businesses, and visitors are continually telling us the state of the roads is their biggest issue.

We now have an innovative business case, coupled with innovative working practices that give us a fighting chance of addressing this.

Furthermore, having an effective Highways Asset Management Plan in place will help shield us from further Government cuts in the future.

46. Bury Council has invested public funds in amongst other things, commercial property in various parts of the country. Does the Council have plans to invest in similar assets within our Borough to boost the local economy? (Cllr D.Silbiger)

Councillor Shori

Decisions to invest in property assets in other parts of the country are taken based on returns on capital employed, directed by the agreed strategy for property investments. The year on year revenue returns generated by these property investments are used to support the work of the Council in all of its priority areas. The Council has in the past and will continue, where appropriate to buy property within our Borough as pure investments' and / or to boost the local economy.