

# REPORT FOR DECISION



<b>DECISION OF:</b>	<b>The Council</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>28<sup>th</sup> July 2021</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Leaders Report</b>
<b>REPORT FROM:</b>	<b>Leader of the Council</b>
<b>TYPE OF DECISION:</b>	<b>Non key decision</b>
<b>FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/STATUS</b>	This paper is within the public domain.
<b>SUMMARY:</b>	This report provides an update on the activity of the Council against the Corporate Plan.
<b>OPTIONS &amp; RECOMMENDED OPTION</b>	That Council notes the report and agrees that further updates are provided to future Council meetings.
<b>IMPLICATIONS:</b>	
<b>Corporate Aims/Policy Framework:</b>	Do the proposals accord with the Policy Framework? Yes
<b>Equality/Diversity implications:</b>	Equality Impact considerations included on the individual Council reports.
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All Wards.
<b>Scrutiny Interest:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny

## 1 Leader's note

- 1.1 I am pleased to provide Council with my report covering the period 18 March 2021 to 14 July 2021.
- 1.2 The last month has seen our residents experiencing freedoms they have not seen for over 16 months. It has been great to see people out, safely enjoying socialising with one another in cafes, pubs, restaurants, and other public spaces. It has been fantastic to welcome residents back into

our museums, galleries, and libraries. We also must not forget the courageous effort of our national football team in lifting the spirits of the nation during such a difficult time. It was enlightening to see the England team reach their first final in 55 years. In particular, we have yet again seen the talents of one of our own here in Bury. Kieran Trippier was instrumental in the England goal during the final and was a key part of the hugely impressive squad. For this reason, I am pleased that we will be awarding Kieran the Freedom of the Borough of Bury.

- 1.3 On this point, I would also like to address the racism experienced by some of the England players in the fallout of the Euro Final. The vile racist abuse directed at some players must be strongly condemned and stamped out. The players and the management have been at the forefront of this new attitude and, despite the result, have made us proud! In reaffirming our opposition to any form of racist attitude Council & CCG leaders have engaged with BAME staff group & Task & Finish race group, led by Ian Mello (CCG Director).
- 1.4 At the time this report is published, we await the full reopening on the 19<sup>th</sup> July and we must remember that "living with Covid" can be done, but not easily and not without due regard for the threat it still poses. The number of hospitalisations and deaths is comparatively low compared to previous waves – which is fantastic – but the pressure on public services is still there. "Living with Covid" cannot be reduced to what restrictions we have in place or not, it must be a genuine commitment to a new deal for public services. One that recognises that it should not take a pandemic for there to be expressions of appreciation or investment into services.
- 1.5 With 126,720 Bury people having had one Covid-19 vaccination, and 95,619 both as at 9<sup>th</sup> July 2021, the borough is working hard to get all those unvaccinated and eligible to come forward and receive their life-saving jab. Over the past few weeks I have volunteered at our local vaccination sites and I have seen people come forward with great enthusiasm. I hope over the coming weeks and month we will see this drive continue and bolster our collective immune response to the virus.
- 1.6 As we approach the fourth stage of reopening on the 19<sup>th</sup> July the Council has worked hard to put in place measures to continue to keep our residents and businesses safe. We have provided advice, guidance, and support to businesses, educational settings, and health and care settings on Covid-19 safe practise. We have worked with public sector partners to model best practise as employers. We have used our communication channels to encourage local people to remain cautious and maintain the

basic 'hands, face, space, and air' behaviours and to be considerate of other. We have made vaccinations as accessible as possible through localised pop-ups as well as through larger sites and encouraging walk up and booked appointments.

- 1.7 Over the past few months as part of our Town of Culture status we have seen some fantastic cultural festivals, events and displays taking place. At the end of May I attended the Happy Festival at The Met and the streets of Bury with the Cabinet Member for Culture and the Economy. It was a great experience to be able to see the work of Victoria Wood, along with a quartet from the Halle performing to a live audience for the first time in 15 months. It is also great to see the first raft of Bury's micro commission creatives being unveiled and shown on @BuryCulture social channels, Josef Minta curating a poetry walking tour in Bury town centre. The lifting of lockdown restrictions has also seen cultural organisations across the Borough have reopened their doors, including the Bury Art Museum (including a new exhibition on food exploring the relationship between people, food and art) and Fusiliers Museum.
- 1.8 On the 26<sup>th</sup> of June I was proud to join veterans and civic leaders to mark national Armed Forces Day. The Cabinet Member for Communities and I attended the commemorations, as standard bearers hoisted their colours at the flagpoles outside 3 Knowsley Place opposite the Town Hall. They then marched to Gallipoli Garden in Silver Street, next to the Fusilier Museum, for a drumhead service and an act of Remembrance. We have a proud military tradition in Bury, the historic home of the Fusiliers and we are proud of the contribution that former and current serving members of our armed forces have made and continue to make. I am proud that the Council will be bringing forward proposals in September to re-sign the Armed Forces Covenant to re-affirm the Council's commitment to the Armed Forces.
- 1.9 At the beginning of July, we heard the news that Dr Jeffrey Schryer will be standing down from his role as Chair of the NHS Bury Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) after 3 years. Dr Schryer's term was extended from April until the Autumn of 2021 to ensure continued stability during what has been an unprecedented 16 months for everyone, and we cannot thank him enough for the integrity and competence he has brought to the role. Dr Schryer has played an instrumental role in ensuring that the services that we plan and put in place for local people meets their needs, are value for the taxpayers' money, offer good outcomes and reduce inequalities. Under his chairmanship, we have seen the CCG become fully integrated with Bury Council which means we can now plan care together, overcoming any organisational boundaries that

might have existed in the past. Dr Schryer's contributions have set us in good stead for the future of health and care commissioning here in Bury.

- 1.10 July 5<sup>th</sup> marked the NHS' 73<sup>rd</sup> Birthday. On this anniversary we could not forget the sacrifices NHS workers have made over the course of the pandemic, and YouGov polling reflects this support for the NHS, with those saying the NHS provides good services at an all-time high. We have seen hospitals take on an influx of patients like never before throughout the course of this pandemic, caring for around 400,000 seriously ill covid patients, including more than 100,000 admitted in January alone, and this year the world-class nature of the NHS has seen our vaccine roll-out envied across the globe. Here's to a lifetime of the NHS providing essential health and care to the nation.
- 1.11 In June the Queen announced her Birthday Honours for 2021, marking the extraordinary contributions and service of people across the United Kingdom. In Bury, we were delighted to see Tina Harrison had been awarded an MBE. At Bury Council we have been aware of Tina's brilliant work for a while. Throughout the pandemic she worked with Trinity Foodbank to distribute food hampers to those in need. Not only that, even before the pandemic Tina had been tirelessly doing the best for her community in Radcliffe. Over the past ten years Tina has been helping vulnerable people in her area through the community group Corrie Gardeners, a volunteer-run group which teaches gardening skills to young people and families, along with advice on legal matters and Universal Credit applications. The Council's Chief Executive and I wrote out to Tina to congratulate her for receiving the MBE and to thank her for her personal contribution to Radcliffe and the borough as a whole.
- 1.12 I would also like to pass on my thanks and congratulations to Nicky Parker (who has been managing the community hubs), the Council's ICT Service, and the wider Community Hubs Team for winning a national award for a digital tool used to help thousands of vulnerable Bury people during the coronavirus pandemic. The Community Hubs App, developed by Bury Council with Microsoft and Manchester-based ICT company ANS, has won the Partner Recognition Award from the Society for Innovation, Technology and Modernisation (SOCITM). The app creates tasks in the Contact Centre, passes them automatically to one of Bury's five Community Hubs where the task is picked up by the hub staff. They contact the resident to understand the nature of support required and then the task if still needed it is passed to one of the 800 residents who volunteered to support the hubs.
- 1.13 In June we saw the reopening of Summerseat Bridge, a bridge which collapsed following the Boxing Day floods five years ago. It was a great

feeling to be at the reopening of what is a key road for the Summerseat community. It has been a huge engineering project to rebuild the bridge, and one beset by difficulties including land acquisition, a tragic incident, poor ground conditions, bad weather, Covid restrictions and even the fish breeding season. The Council persisted through these unfortunate and challenging circumstances and delivered for the community.

- 1.14 In the past couple of months our cabinet members and councillors have been busy standing up for our residents. In June, members were out in force with the Communication Workers Union (CWU) standing up for employees of Capita and Tesco Mobile who could be facing an impossible choice between commuting for multiple hours per day or leaving their jobs after Capita announced their intentions to shut their Bury call centre branch. I wrote to Capita and Tesco Mobile on this matter and met with their chief executive alongside the Greater Manchester Mayor to try to come up with a solution which would work for both Capita and their employees. Unfortunately, Capita declined these proposals, but we will continue to support these employees and Bury residents, whatever the outcome.
- 1.15 In June, myself, the Deputy Leader Councillor Tariq, and other members of the administration successfully stood up for residents of the Redvales Estate who were facing rent rises of hundreds of pounds per month after a new landlord took ownership of many properties on the estate. The landlord justified the rent increases to the estate as a promise to improve the condition of the houses, however, in many cases, we found these rent rises would have simply been unaffordable and forced many residents to move out of the area. Thankfully, after pressure from Bury's ruling group, the Council and Greater Manchester Mayor, the landlord backed down on the rent increases and agreed to increase the rates in line with the Local Housing Allowance, and also agreed to give an additional month notice to residents facing the increase.
- 1.16 In March, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) announced that Greater Manchester's buses will be brought back under public control. This means Greater Manchester will become the first place outside of London to have a regulated system since the 1980s. The GMCA will coordinate and invest in the bus network – setting the routes, frequencies, fares and standards. By the end of 2025, this will allow the GMCA to fully integrate buses with the rest of the transport network, as part of a passenger-focused network with easy end-to-end journeys. Bus franchising is a major step forward in creating a joined-up and affordable system which will benefit passengers, enabling people to move around more easily and bring greater access to jobs and education. It will also

play a key role in our ambitions to have a cleaner and greener fleet and reduce harmful emissions.

1.17 An update of Cabinet decisions and urgent cabinet decisions is attached to this report in the appendix.

### **Reporting progress against stated commitments in Corporate Plan**

The following table provides a brief summary of the Council's progress against the priorities set out in our corporate plan.

<b>Our corporate plan priority...</b>	<b>The steps and decision we have taken in this reporting period...</b>
<p><b>Climate Change Strategy</b></p>	<p><b>Greening our borough for tomorrow's generation – the launch of Bury's Climate Strategy</b></p> <p>Comprehensive, long-lasting and ambitious plans to make Bury carbon neutral and tackle climate change we launched in May.</p> <p>The strategy sets out the scale of the challenge facing the borough and the need to work together if Bury is to become carbon neutral by 2038.</p> <p>The strategy began its 10-week public consultation period in early June. The Strategy breaks down the actions into 11 key areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Our energy supply</li> <li>2. Our homes, workplaces and public buildings</li> <li>3. Low-carbon travel</li> <li>4. The things we buy and throw away</li> <li>5. Food</li> <li>6. Our natural environment</li> <li>7. The green economy</li> <li>8. Environmental justice</li> <li>9. Climate resilience and adaptation</li> <li>10. Putting climate change at the heart of council action</li> <li>11. Carbon offsetting</li> </ol> <p>To tackle our climate emergency, we need to step up our actions to cut carbon emissions drastically. Failure to act will have huge costs to the health and wellbeing of our communities. The Boxing Day floods of 2015 and subsequent storms such as Ciara and Christoph and the long dry spells afterwards in our borough have shown the impacts that extreme weather events can have on residents and businesses.</p>

<p><b>Green Space Strategy</b></p>	<p><b>Green Spaces Strategy</b></p> <p>The work for the 2020/21 allocation for the Greenspaces Strategy has progressed well starting with improvement works on the parks in Bury East (Manchester Road, Hoyles and Openshaw Parks) with Grounds Maintenance picking up a lot of work, there is still more to do in these parks. Looking further afield and across the Borough the Council have partnered the National Cycle Academy to work on the south loop of the mountain bike trail at Philips Park which is nearing completion, other work there involves protective fencing around the damaged buildings in the centre of the park and support for the group based in the workshop at the barn as well as the installation S59 signs to aid GMP with off road biking. Work to the bandstand at Nuttall Park is progressing slowly, a structural engineer has been appointed and remarking the car park markings there have been completed.</p> <p>Health and safety works to play areas in Openshaw Park, Close Park, St Mary’s park, Manchester Rd Park and Whitefield park are complete or nearing completion</p> <p>Additionally, from different funding 13 tennis courts across the Borough have been renovated into the Sustainable Tennis Model with 7 more out to tender.</p> <p><b>Cash boost for new facilities at Burrs Countryside Park</b></p> <p>In March we announced plans to invest £100k in implementing the first phase of the Burrs Business plan, in addition to the £70k already allocated for the overflow car park.</p> <p>Planning applications are to be submitted shortly for the overflow carpark, public toilets, upgrading the café, accommodation and function space in the cottages and for a glamping site in the former high ropes area. Further investment will be required in the future to realise the park’s full potential.</p>
<p><b>Prestwich Village Regeneration</b></p>	<p><b>Breakthrough on regeneration plans for Prestwich</b></p> <p>Proposals to transform the heart of Prestwich took a giant step forward in March as Bury Council agreed to buy the Longfield Shopping Centre from its current owners to drive forward multi-million pound regeneration of the village.</p> <p>This will be the single biggest breakthrough in a decade, removing one of the biggest roadblocks to the regeneration of Prestwich. This will mean we can finally move from the</p>

	<p>passenger seat to the driving seat in bringing a new modern town centre to Prestwich.</p> <p>A mixed-use regeneration scheme is being developed that will see the town centre thrive, with the redevelopment looking to deliver; new homes, sustainable economic growth providing work-spaces for small businesses, a public service hub, a library, along with the creation of new civic and community spaces, as well as an improved public realm.</p> <p>The redevelopment will also provide an opportunity for the council to streamline delivery of services across the greater Prestwich area. Allowing us to better serve the community.</p> <p>An engagement plan will begin with all the current tenants of the shopping centre to best support those businesses through the regeneration process. A full public consultation with the local community will include details of the proposed development plans later in the year.</p> <p>By delivering on our vision for Prestwich, we look forward to a new and thriving town centre ready for all to work, relax and enjoy. There is a lot to be positive about for Prestwich, and we want to be part of keeping that spirit of optimism going in the years to come.</p>
<p><b>Bury Markets investment and improvement</b></p>	<p><b>New CCTV and improvements on Bury Market</b></p> <p>In March we agreed to upgrade out CCTV cameras on Bury Market to boost security and contribute to future development plans.</p> <p>The new CCTV system was ready in time for the full re-opening of the market once Covid-19 restrictions were lifted, and help to maintain a safe shopping environment for visitors.</p> <p>This helps to bring the operating system into the 21-century, giving us the ability in future to accurately count the number of people visiting the market, with a heat map to identify busy areas and shopper habits which will contribute to our strategic plans to modernise the market.</p>
<p><b>Culture Strategy</b></p>	<p><b>Writing the next chapter in Bury’s cultural story</b></p> <p>Building on Bury’s year as the first Greater Manchester Town of Culture, this is an exciting opportunity to write the next chapter in Bury’s cultural story.</p> <p>Central to the strategy is the need for strong partnership and engagement activity to develop and deliver the</p>

borough's cultural vision together. It will also explore how Town of Culture activity can be used as means for conversations with wider communities to generate future cultural initiatives.

- **Local** neighbourhoods including the role of cultural organisations as anchors within communities and the role of culture in promoting and enhancing wellbeing
- The role of cultural **enterprises** in place making, boosting our town centres as a tool in regeneration
- Coming **together** to amplify the voice of all within our neighbourhoods and celebrate our diverse communities
- Building on **strengths**, exploring culture as a way to raise aspiration and confidence through creativity for all, in addition to developing and retaining talent locally.

The strategy will link with national cultural policy and practice, such as the Arts Council's "Let's Create" framework and the Greater Manchester Cultural Recovery Plan. In March, Bury joined the GMCA as key speakers at the Local Government Association Cultural Conference to outline the importance and value of culture within the region and in particular our borough.

### **Town of Culture**

Following a competitive tender exercise Curated Place have been selected to work with the Council, partners and communities to develop a new Cultural Strategy for the Borough, recognising the role culture will play at the heart of our Let's Do It strategy for the Borough. Curated Place are a Prestwich based creative organisation.

The Happy Festival took to the stage of The Met and streets of the Borough at the end of May, around Victoria Wood's birthday – as part of 'On a Happy note...' this included a show live streamed from The Met including a quartet from the Halle performing to a live audience for the first time in 15 months and the Halle and Doolaleys entertaining residents outside care homes including Brookdale Care Home and Peachment Place. Happy is back during the first weekend of September!

The first raft of Bury's microcommission creatives have been unveiled and are being profile on @BuryCulture social channels, including John Lonsdale photographing wildlife in key heritage sites around Radcliffe, Josef Minta curating a poetry walking tour in Bury town centre and storytelling trip Harp and A Money who are developing a project 'A Song for Holly Mount Orchard with local volunteers.

	<p>Cultural organisations across the Borough have reopened their doors, including the Bury Art Museum (including a new exhibition on Food exploring the relationship between people, food and art) and Fusiliers Museum (reopened on Armed Forces Day and profiled via Town of Culture)...whilst continuing the engagement undertaken during Covid, such as Sketchbook Social (see Art Museum website for more info – also info on their life drawing film ‘ Drawn Into the Now’</p> <p>Recognised the work of Ustad Malik Manzoor who has provided 60 years of service teaching Indian Classical Music in the Borough</p> <p>Recognise Bury’s creative and cultural volunteers during national volunteer week including our friends at Macfest who were awarded the Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service</p> <p>Further announcements of activities in August-November will be being released soon via @BuryCulture on social media.</p>
<p><b>Physical Activity Strategy</b></p>	<p><b>Major investment in gyms to boost ‘digital experience’</b></p> <p>Bury Council’s three gyms have had a £500k upgrade to improve the digital experience of their thousands of visitors.</p> <p>The improvements at Castle Leisure Centre, Radcliffe Leisure Centre and Ramsbottom Pool &amp; Fitness Centre were carried out in time to welcome customers back on 12 April.</p> <p>The council partnered with Matrix Fitness to install 135 of the latest machines across the three sites, including those which focus on building strength, function fitness and cardiovascular capacity.</p> <p>Digitalisation of the leisure industry has been rapid and has been sped up by the various Covid-19 lockdowns. People now expect a wraparound, digital service to complement what they get within the four walls of a traditional leisure centre. We chose to partner with Matrix Fitness to enhance our current fitness offer but to help future-proof our business in the digital age</p>
<p><b>Waste and Transport – 3 year vehicle replacement programme –</b></p>	<p><b>Better bin rounds</b></p> <p>From 21<sup>st</sup> June we introduced new bin collection rounds to improve efficiency and provide better services to our residents.</p>

<p><b>waste collection review</b></p>	<p>The new rounds will save more than £150,000 per year and reduce mileage by at least 4,600 miles per year. Carbon emissions will also be reduced which will help towards climate change targets.</p> <p>The new routes will be complemented by a fleet of 19 new vehicles, with 12 in service by June and a further seven by the autumn.</p>
<p><b>Radcliffe SRF</b></p>	<p><b>Bury Council and Homes England to bring East Lancashire Paper Mill to market.</b></p> <p>The council and Homes England have developed a comprehensive master-plan for the site and secured outline planning consent in December 2018 for up to 400 new homes and includes the creation of a new riverside public park and sports facilities.</p> <p>Since then, various technical studies have been carried out to overcome numerous challenges on the site.</p> <p>East Lancashire Paper Mill is a key component of the council's Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) providing much needed homes for local residents. The SRF also includes proposals for the town centre and the delivery of a new Secondary School.</p>
<p><b>Bury Town Centre Masterplan and Radcliffe SRF</b></p>	<p><b>Bids to regenerate towns</b></p> <p>In May, Bury Council's Cabinet approved submission of two bids of up to £20 million to The Government's Levelling Up Fund for regeneration projects.</p> <p>If successful, the money will be used to continue the transformative regeneration programme being delivered in Radcliffe and bolster Bury town centre around our famous Bury Market. The money would contribute towards the largest regeneration in a generation for the borough.</p> <p>The bids will support our masterplan for Radcliffe, which we adopted last year, and to continue to support, protect and boost the role of our borough as a shopping destination. We look forward to working with government on any opportunity which will benefit the resident of our borough</p>
<p><b>Highways and Engineering</b></p>	<p><b>Summerseat bridge re-opens five years after Storm Eva.</b></p> <p>It was fantastic to commemorate the re-opening of Summerseat Bridge in June. The bridge all but collapsed, along with the Waterside Inn which stood on it, when</p>

	<p>Storm Eva brought devastation to the borough and forced 800 people to flee their homes.</p> <p>It has been a huge engineering project to rebuild the bridge, and one beset by difficulties including land acquisition, a tragic incident, poor ground conditions, bad weather, Covid restrictions and even the fish breeding season.</p> <p>Finally the residents of Summerseat will have a fully working second bridge to the village. Our engineers have coped admirably with the numerous challenges that faced them during the rebuild.</p>
<p><b>Highways and engineering – Highways Investment Tranche 2</b></p>	<p><b>£4 million on resurfacing the roads this year.</b></p> <p>It takes the council’s spend on resurfacing, preventative maintenance and pothole repairs over the six-year year period 2017 to 2023 to £20 million.</p>
<p><b>Housing Strategy (including review of affordable housing)</b></p>	<p><b>£1 million to bring empty homes back into use.</b></p> <p>At Bury Council’s cabinet meeting at the beginning of July it was agreed that £1m would be spent on bringing empty homes back into use as affordable housing.</p> <p>It is expected that the funding may bring 20 properties back into use, on top of the ten brought back under an earlier scheme.</p>
<p><b>Town Centre Recovery Boards</b></p>	<p><b>Town Centre Recovery Boards (TCBs) supporting the reopening of the Bury economy.</b></p> <p>The Town Centre Boards were set up in 2020 their initial focus was targeted at supporting businesses to re-open safely after the first lockdown. They provided a forum to discuss and react to the range of operational / re-opening issues that businesses themselves and wider town centres were facing ‘on the ground’. Activity has included delivering elements of the re-opening High Streets Safely Action Plan, sharing of advice on ongoing business/financial support, and responding to business requests around pavement licences, road closures and wider issues.</p> <p>The TCBs continue to meet on a regular basis and provide a forum for ongoing reopening and operational issues, business support, engagement and networking but also play a key role as stakeholder groups to feed into regeneration programmes and activity for each centre.</p>

<p><b>Ramsbottom Town Centre Development</b></p>	<p><b>Ramsbottom Place Management and Movement Plan</b></p> <p>The council is currently working on a place management and Movement Plan for Ramsbottom. The plan will look at The Ramsbottom Place Management and Movement Plan focuses on short term physical changes that will benefit all users and may include public realm, parking, pedestrian routes, and green spaces. The project is being developed by Layer.studio, who have already undertaken some early engagement with key stakeholders to help develop proposals. Wider public engagement will take place later this year.</p>
<p><b>5G Network</b></p>	<p><b>Full Fibre Project gets underway in Bury</b></p> <p>Work continues to deliver full fibre project in Bury which will enable the connection of over 1,500 public sector sites across Greater Manchester.</p> <p>The £23m investment is set to deliver over 75km of fibre across Bury and up to 2,700km of new fibre optic broadband infrastructure across the region.</p> <p>Over 130 public sector sites across Bury will benefit from this, as the full fibre network will provide ultra-fast full fibre broadband and also create opportunities for wider connectivity.</p> <p>Across the region, 97% of the network will be provided via existing ducting, which means work can take place with minimal disruption in the borough.</p> <p>The full fibre programme is co-funded by the government's local full fibre networks programme, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and existing local authority investments in digital infrastructure, making it the UK's largest local full fibre networks programme.</p> <p>Work has already started in other parts of Greater Manchester and the cables are being laid across Bury to create the fibre network.</p>

**List of Background Papers:-**

None identified

**Contact Details:-**

**James Mulvaney**

**Executive Policy and Research Advisor**

[j.mulvaney@bury.gov.uk](mailto:j.mulvaney@bury.gov.uk)

**0161 253 5105**