

	Party	Question
1	Labour Cllr Peel	<p>Our projections suggest we have to cut £19.5 million in next year's budget. Could the leader tell us what this will bring the total cut from the council's budget since 2010 to and give us some examples of the impact this has had on council services and staff?</p> <p>Supplementary: The government is consulting on a social housing rent cap of 3%, 5% or 7%. If the shortfall in monies between the cap and the actual costs of providing social housing is not fully funded by government roughly what amount of money would a cap at each level leave as a shortfall in our HRA, thereby resulting in a reduction in monies available to fund home repairs, our refurbishment programme and investment in neighbourhoods?"</p>
	Cllr O'Brien	<p>I thank the member for his question. I regret to inform the member that the latest projections are even higher than those stated. Due to rising levels of inflation and energy costs, we could be facing a gap of £25 million. This would be difficult for Bury Council, who has already had to make cuts totalling £114m since the Government enforced austerity upon us from the 2010/11 financial year onwards. We have also had to use of reserves totalling £31.5m since 2019/20.</p> <p>Savings and efficiencies have been made across the full breadth of services provided by the Council. Across some roles and departments we have been cut to minimum staffing and operational resources. In recent years, workforce initiatives have been implemented in Bury similar to those taken by other Councils eg, vacancy factors against pay budgets, staff taking unpaid leave, structure reviews that take account of management tiers and spans of control. Services have also been reviewed and innovative approaches taken to commissioning, working with other public sector partners and stakeholders to do things differently and adopt the Bury LETS strategy encouraging all four principles in order to create efficiencies and reduce the ask on the public purse.</p> <p>Supplementary: Running and building material costs will increase in 2023-24 due to a number of different inflation indices. Averaged out, these indices will potentially cost more than is to be received from the rental income uplift under the capping options. Work on the HRA model is ongoing as part of the budget process. However, to put the cost pressures into context, if inflation averages out at 8%, under a 7% cap there would a shortfall of £0.6m; under a 5% cap, a shortfall of £1.3m; and under a 3% cap, a shortfall of £1.7m.</p>
2	Labour Cllr Moss	<p>The Council launched an Anti-Poverty Strategy earlier in the summer. Since then further concerns have been raised about the increased costs of energy and the impact this may have on vulnerable residents on low incomes. Are</p>

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		the actions in the Anti-Poverty Strategy still the right ones and what more can be done?
	Cllr O'Brien	<p>The anti-poverty strategy was written at a time of increasing pressures on the cost of living, through decade high inflation rates, rising food and fuel prices, and reduced spending power as costs increases outpaced rises in wages or benefits.</p> <p>It was in this context the strategy was developed with partners to address the immediate pressures whilst recognising the need for the strategy to be flexible to adapt to ongoing and increasing challenges, in particular that our most vulnerable residents on low incomes are experiencing.</p> <p>To further inform the local approach, we held a cost-of living anti-poverty summit earlier this month, bringing together a range of front-line services including statutory organisations and over 30 voluntary and community groups, to continue to assess the actions that we're delivering together and to understand further options for collective action. This will continue to be driven and reviewed through the multi-agency Bury anti poverty steering group and through further broader engagement events to take into account any national policy changes and evolve local plans as necessary to ensure actions have the maximum possible impact.</p>
3	Conservative Cllr Jo Lancaster	Can an update be provided as to progress of the skateboard facility at Clarence Park?
	Cllr Quinn	<p>After a lengthy time of contacting the contractor using every means possible and not having a reply, we have just been informed that the contractor who we procured for the Skatepark at Clarence Park, has entered voluntary liquidation in August and Administrators have been appointed from 15th September.</p> <p>Parks & Countryside have been in consultation with the Council legal department and procurement section about our options and our legal team are dealing with the Administrators. Parks and Countryside are also liaising with the external funder.</p> <p>Due to the legal processes involved, it is too soon to say when a new contractor can be appointed but we remain committed to completing the project and will report the revised timetable as soon as possible.</p> <p>Contractors equipment and fencing will be removed from site over the next few weeks and Grounds Maintenance will tidy up the area ready for the new contractor when in place.</p>
4	Labour Cllr Thorpe	Can the Cabinet Member update on the ongoing Bury Market upgrade and improvement programme?

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	Cllr Morris	<p>The ongoing capital program is progressing positively. The external elevation of the Market Hall is in the process of being improved with external painting, repairs of walls and cleaning the windows, which requires abseilers.</p> <p>From our capital fund, the entrances to the market hall are being refurbished, the ATM has moved to a better location and withdrawals are to be free. Another £300,000 of funding over 3 years which is specific to the market hall has been secured. All lifts within the market are in the process of being replaced, which will conclude in October. The flexi hall and new roof from the levelling up project is continuing, with a market trader briefing on Wednesday 21st September.</p>
5	Labour Cllr McGill	What is the council doing to reduce health inequalities?
	Cllr Tariq	<p>As we know health inequalities are long running and deeply entrenched and have been both highlighted and exacerbated by the COVID-19 Pandemic.</p> <p>The causes of health inequalities are complex and multi-faceted and therefore require a whole system, multi-faceted approach to tackle them. Our Bury LETS Do It Strategy has tackling inequalities at it's heart and delivery of all the priorities within the strategy on the economy, housing and regeneration; education and skills, the environment and neighbourhood working will have a positive impact on health inequalities. The translation of the LETS DO IT Strategy into 'People & Community' Plans for every neighbourhood in Bury is critical to success. This is starting with Radcliffe, one of our most deprived areas.</p> <p>In the most immediate term, my priority is to support those people in our borough hit hardest by the current cost of living crisis through delivery of our new Anti-Poverty Strategy.</p> <p>In addition, through the Health and Wellbeing Board we are ensuring tackling inequalities in access, treatment and outcomes is embedded in all the Integrated Care Partnership transformation programmes and within all health improvement strategies such as physical activity, food & health, substance misuse and mental well-being. A particular emphasis is being put-on long-term condition management starting with inequalities in premature mortality from Coronary Health Disease as this is the biggest cause of ill health and premature mortality in the Borough.</p> <p>Finally, looking to longer term outcomes and breaking of intergenerational cycles, a key priority is making sure every child has the best start in life through delivery of the Family Hub model beginning in Bury East another of our most deprived areas.</p>

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6	Conservative Councillor Iain Gartside	The Cabinet at its last meeting authorised officers to request a main modification to places for everyone. Will the Leader now agree to allow a debate on the petition I handed in last autumn at the next Council meeting?
	Cllr O'Brien	<p>The decision to authorise officers to request a Main Modification to Places for Everyone reflected the emergence of new evidence which showed a significant increase in housing supply that was not foreseen at the time PfE was submitted in February.</p> <p>The newly identified supply consists of previously-developed land in sustainable town centre locations that have good access to public transport, local amenities and services. It also includes recent completions on sites already under construction within the proposed first year of the plan. As clearly set out in the Cabinet Paper, it is appropriate and indeed expected to take account of new evidence and for the Council to consider the implications of this for the Places for Everyone Plan.</p> <p>In effect, the increased housing supply would have resulted in an increased buffer against the housing target and exceptional circumstances could not be demonstrated to support all the submitted Green Belt allocations. Consequently, Officers have recommended that the housing supply could be reduced by removing the Walshaw site from the plan and the Cabinet report sets out the reasons why this was the most appropriate response to this new evidence. Cabinet have approved the recommendation to request for a Main Modification.</p> <p>In light of the benefits that the plan provides for Bury, the matter will not be brought before the Council again for a debate and a vote to reverse the decision and to not proceed with the Places for Everyone.</p> <p>However, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the fact that Planning Inspectors have now been appointed and have identified the list of matters and issues that they want to explore. The public hearings into these matters will start in November.</p>
7	Labour Cllr Arif	Last year Bury Council raised a flag to commemorate the Independence Day of Kashmir for the first time. Will the flag be raised again this year?
	Cllr Farooq	<p>Yes, I can confirm that the flag will now be raised annually, this event has been added to the flag protocol.</p> <p>I invite the members of this council to join me on the 24 October outside the Town Hall to commemorate the independence of the Kashmir by raising the flag of Azad Kashmir.</p>
8	Labour Cllr Arif	Can the Cabinet Member inform council of the increases in energy costs including fuel for Bury's transport fleet?

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		<p>Supplementary: Can the Cabinet Member update council on how many new vehicles have been purchased this year? How will these new vehicles help reduce our carbon footprint?</p>
	<p>Cllr Quinn</p>	<p><u>Energy Costs</u> The actual spend on gas and electricity in 2021/22 across the corporate estate (Excluding VAT) was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gas - £454,994 • Electricity - £2,123,342 (This figure includes street lighting) <p>Applying the usage figures for the financial year 2021/22 and the prices for 2022/23, a forecast has been created for this financial year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gas - £1,847,275 • Electricity - £4,246,684 (This figure includes street lighting) <p>An action plan is in place to reduce energy usage, which in turn will reduce cost.</p> <p>Supplementary: Since January Bury Council have ordered 94 vehicles. Of these, 13 are electric vans, and the remaining vehicles will be fitted with diesel Euro 6 engines. The 13 electric vans will save 23.5 tonnes of CO2e. Using the new diesel Euro 6 engines will result in a 14.8% reduction in the carbon emissions from the heavy good vehicles in our fleet which will have a significant impact on our carbon footprint. In addition to a reduction in carbon emissions the new vehicles will have a significant impact on our emissions of harmful air pollution. The cleaner Euro 6 engines will provide an 85.5% reduction in carbon monoxide, 95% reduction in nitrogen oxide and a 92% reduction in particulate matter compared to the previous vehicles. The Council has also run a trial of HVO (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil) fuel and found it to perform the same as diesel. The plan is to consider running all the HGV fleet on HVO as it is claimed to reduce the carbon emissions by up to a further 85%.</p>
<p>9</p>	<p>Conservative Councillor Dene Vernon</p>	<p>Several residents have recently contacted me expressing their dissatisfaction with the way the Council have failed to respond to issues they have raised. They sight not only long delays in getting any response but getting no response whatsoever. What due diligence is done to monitor complaints received and if shortcomings are identified, what action is taken to rectify them?</p>
	<p>Cllr Rafiq</p>	<p>Over the last 12 months the council has developed a digital transformation programme which aims to improve the customer experience through use of technology. It means that we are redesigning services to focus on better resolution at first point of contact. This includes a single-entry point so that contact is more customer focused and they do not need to understand the structure of the council to access the service they need – in this case</p>

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		<p>reporting issues. We have also recently launched an online customer account so that any contact can be tracked and monitored by the customer, with the intention that responses will also be provided through this route in the future. Overall, this change in both operations and mindset towards our customers will provide a more satisfying experience for them where needs are met directly and effectively.</p> <p>Complaints are logged centrally with the customer contact team onto a central system and are monitored to chase outstanding responses within the timescales. They are also reported as part of monthly performance monitoring through the corporate plan. Responses are also quality checked before sending to customers.</p> <p>The corporate complaints process can be found here Complaints procedure - Bury Council</p> <p>For formal complaints for Corporate, Adults and Childrens services, for the last 3 months from 1 June to 31 August 2022:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 97% of all complaints were acknowledged within the timescale • 74% were responded to within the 20 working day timescale • there are currently 2 corporate complaints overdue the timescale of 20 working days and 2 children's complaints overdue the timescale • Any learning points/processes resulting from complaints should be reviewed and put into practice by the service to prevent the complaint recurring again • Adults and Children's services also have a statutory requirement to produce an Annual Complaints Report submitted to Scrutiny.
10	Labour Cllr McGill	The new Community Safety Plan has now been in place for nearly six months. How is the Council monitoring progress against the priorities and is the Cabinet Member reassured that the right delivery plans are in place?
	Cllr Farooq	Bury's Community Safety Plan was launched in April with six priorities based on consultation with local residents. Each priority has a theme lead drawn from across the partnership including representation from Bury Council, Greater Manchester Police, Six Town Housing, Bury Voluntary and Community Faith Alliance and Probation. Delivery plans for each priority with quarterly milestones sit alongside a detailed data dashboard to track progress of key measures. Earlier this month good progress was reported against each priority to the quarterly Community Safety Partnership meeting and to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the Council. Deliverables within each priority are kept under review to ensure any emerging opportunities are explored and risks mitigated and i am confident the priorities are right and the delivery of these is progressing well.
11	Labour Cllr Pilkington	Would it be possible to get an update on the new equipment that is due to be installed at the Woodhill play area? Local residents were critical in

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		<p>securing the funding for this, with a very generous donation from Brandlesholme Residents Association unlocking further council funding, and they are keen to see progress made.</p> <p>Supplementary: Can you reassure the residents of Woodhill and Brandlesholme that this equipment will be installed in the coming weeks and months?</p>
	Cllr Quinn	<p>Thank you for your enquiry into the refurbishment of Woodhill Road Play area.</p> <p>An order has now been placed with a contractor for the installation of the new equipment on site and it is hoped the scheme will start in November.</p>
12	Conservative Cllr J Harris	<p>Following on from the success of the England women's football team at the UEFA women's euro 2022 would the cabinet member ask the executive director of children's services to write to all Head Teachers in the Borough with a request to ensure ladies football is included within the school's PE curriculum?</p>
	Cllr Smith	<p>We wish to join together in congratulating the England Women's Football team on their success in the Euro's. The performance of the team, and their continued success in the world cup qualifiers is an inspiration to us all, and hopefully will act as a catalyst in encouraging greater participating at youth level, including in our schools.</p> <p>PE is a compulsory subject at all four key stages in the national curriculum, but it is for schools to decide which sports and physical activities they offer their pupils. Factors influencing that decision include the spaces available for sports, along with available equipment. Schools should also take their pupils' views into account on which activities they want to be able to do, and make sure they are delivering a flexible, diverse and challenging PE curriculum that suits the needs of all their pupils.</p> <p>The success of the Lionesses in the Women's EURO 2022 will inspire a generation of girls to get involved with football. Whilst the Council cannot compel schools, it will seek to encourage all schools to reflect this increased interest in their PE offer.</p>
13	Conservative Cllr Luis McBriar	<p>Can the Cabinet Member for children's services and young people provide an update on the recruitment process in relation to the recent restructure proposals?</p>
	Cllr Smith	<p>The current restructure is currently in a formal process of consultation with employees and trade unions, which will run until the end of September.</p>

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		<p>At the end of the process, a final structure will be agreed, subject to approval, will then proceed to implementation.</p> <p>This is anticipated to be completed during October.</p> <p>In the first instance, appointments will be made where employees are ring fenced to particular roles under agreed processes, and a number of roles will be subject to internal expression of interest processes.</p> <p>This is already part of our planning in preparation for the re-structure implementation.</p> <p>Once these appointments are made, the Directorate will proceed to advertise and fill remaining vacancies.</p> <p>The Directorate is working assertively and creatively and will continue to recruit frontline social workers through its ongoing rolling recruitment programme throughout the implementation period, and will refresh this campaign to reflect the new operating structures and opportunities.</p> <p>The Directorate is also currently in the process of recruiting to existing Advanced Practitioner and Team Manager vacancies, and hope to identify candidates through that process that may be suitable for the additional roles being created.</p> <p>The Directorate is continuing to monitor the success of our recruitment programme, is actively reviewing our approaches, and is reviewing our package if incentives and approaches to ensure they are supportive of populating the new structure.</p>
14	Conservative Cllr Shahbaz Arif	Can an update be provided as to the current position of Castle Armoury?
	Cllr Farooq	<p>Following the closure of Castle Armoury in June a cross-party motion was unanimously agreed at July Council to write to Ministry of Defence urging it to provide the necessary funds to make the building safe again and to modernise it. – The maintenance of the building is the responsibility of the Ministry of Defence and the Defence Reserve Forces Cadets Association.</p> <p>The Council also committed to schedule a meeting with the Bury VCFA, the Armed Forces Champion and the Chair of Bury Castle Armoury Trust to look at what external funding may be available.</p> <p>In line with this motion, a letter, signed by all party Leaders, the Councilor Armed Forces champion and the Borough's two MP's has been shared on the Council website, with the further support of 319 Bury residents. The letter was sent to the Minister of Defence on 7 September 22 and reminded</p>

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		<p>them of their responsibilities and I have also met with the Head of the Defence Reserve Forces Cadets Association in the North West to emphasize this point.</p> <p>I have also had a number of meetings with officers, the VCFA and the Chair of Bury Castle Armoury Trust to discuss funding options which the Trust may potentially be able to access.</p> <p>In addition, the Council is also looking at how it can support the various groups who have lost their base through the closure of the building with very little notice.</p> <p>This matter is now very much in the hands of the Ministry of Defence and I look forward to receiving their response.</p>
15	Ind Cllr Y Wright	<p>As Budget “ Conversations” are presently taking place , on behalf of many of my constituents suggest funding is made available in 23/24 for thorough weed clearance as many parts of the borough have looked very neglected this summer.</p> <p>Tottington weeds are to be treated late September , this is too late and should be dealt with earlier in the season.</p> <p>If we wish residents to treat our town with respect, the Council must take the lead .</p>
	Cllr Quinn	<p>Bury Council appoints an external highway weed spraying contractor to complete an annual treatment of the entire 600km highway network. The work is normally scheduled to commence in June/July and takes around 4 weeks to complete.</p> <p>Unfortunately, our external highway weed spraying contractor has not been able to carry out this work in June as planned and has recently proposed to make a start in mid-September. This is despite the best endeavours of officers to expedite the work sooner.</p> <p>Given that we are fast approaching the colder months when weeds will naturally die back, we have decided not to carry out a weed spray treatment of the highway this season.</p> <p>It is planned for annual weed spraying to recommence in June/July 2023.</p>