

# Bury Council

## ECONOMIC STRATEGY

Fairer



Greener



More competitive



Resilient



**Bury**  
Council

# **ECONOMIC STRATEGY**

**Fairer, Greener, More  
Competitive, Resilient**

**JANUARY 2024 - JANUARY 2034**



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# Foreword

Our new Economic Strategy sets-out a clear framework and priorities to guide a collaborative 'Team Bury' approach to delivering a more sustainable, competitive, inclusive, and resilient local economy.

**An economy that fulfils its growth potential, while making a significant contribution to Greater Manchester's wider economic growth ambitions over the next decade and beyond.**

Like many areas across the UK, and particularly in the North of England, we have had to deal with the varied and challenging socio-economic headwinds arising from the UK's exit from Europe, a global pandemic, as well as a cost of living crisis which has been exacerbated by high levels of inflation and wider instability in Europe.

Through this strategy we want to ensure the borough has a strong economy in the future and offers a range of job and career opportunities for all. Key to achieving our economic objectives is to ensure we retain and can facilitate growth across the range of businesses in the borough – from start-ups, SMEs, and world leading brands and companies – and ensure these companies can provide long-term, higher-skilled, and well-paid employment.

We must ensure that we have enough employment land in the right locations to facilitate existing businesses to grow, while also attracting new businesses, particularly those in growth sectors, such as advanced manufacturing, digital services and technologies, to locate here. The Northern Gateway site, which is part of the Atom Valley Mayoral Development Zone (MDZ), offers a game-changing opportunity to exponentially expand the borough's

business base, for the benefit of Bury but also the wider region.

The expansion of economic opportunity will bring real benefits to our communities, but it will also need reform and change to the skills system.

**We need to prepare young people better for careers in key growth sectors and to support existing companies with issues which are constraining the labour force, such as health and wellbeing, and an ageing workforce.**

As part of Greater Manchester's Trailblazer Devolution deal, we need to take the opportunity of skills devolution in the region to develop a system which is much more responsive to business needs. We also need to make sure that the skills system adjusts to the profound changes to our economic

system being driven by a rapid move to a digital and zero-carbon economy.

Place is a key strand of the new Economic Strategy. We recognise that economically successful places, which embrace placemaking, offer residents higher quality of life, while also playing a key role in attracting new investment and businesses.

Vibrant town centres, which includes more residential and a diverse mix of uses, are critical to the economic health of places. We will make a range of investments to modernise and future proof our key centres. Critical to this will be the borough's housing strategy and ensuring this drives the delivery of high-quality, well-connected new communities, designed with green space, local amenity, community facilities and good connectivity at their heart.

# Foreword

We will continue to invest in our critical transport infrastructure. Our Transport Strategy for the Borough guides investment into the strategic highway network, as well as promoting better bus services and cycling options. We will work with the Department of Transport and TfGM to ensure major highways schemes are implemented that will open-up the Northern Gateway opportunity site, as well as bring forward a new transport Interchange for Bury Town Centre.

This Strategy and the accompanying Action Plan enables Team Bury to have a clear focus on the borough's economy. It has been informed and shaped by valuable consultations with residents, businesses, and key stakeholders.

**We are committed to delivering our ambitions as a unified team, ensuring we collectively advance an inclusive and sustainable economic landscape that becomes a reality for our place, people and businesses.**



**Cllr. Eamonn O'Brien**  
**Leader of Bury Council,**  
**Portfolio Lead for**  
**Technical Education,**  
**Skills and Work**



**Cllr. Charlotte Morris**  
**Cabinet Member,**  
**Culture, Economy and**  
**Skills**

**Vibrant town centres, which includes more residential and a diverse mix of uses, are critical to the economic health of places.**



# INTRODUCTION

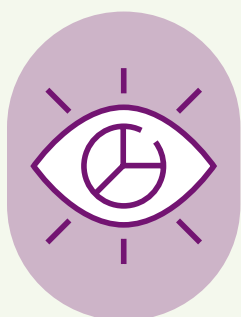






The development of a new Economic Strategy for the borough was a key outcome arising from the publication in 2020 of Bury's ***Let's Do it Strategy...!***

The 'Let's Do it Strategy' is the borough's overarching and integrated approach for achieving our vision of tackling deprivation and inequality, whilst securing economic recovery and, ultimately, securing ambitious growth by 2030.



***“To stand out as a place that is achieving faster economic growth than the national average, with lower than national average levels of deprivation”***

***Bury 2030 Let's Do It Strategy Vision***

The Let's Do It Strategy is underpinned by the guiding principles of:

**Local neighbourhoods:**

empowered residents, families and local communities within our townships at the heart of decision making to make a difference to people's lives.

**An enterprising spirit:**

We are known for our spirit of enterprise and innovation. We will harness that spirit to raise aspirations, remove barriers, and maximise opportunities to grow and develop our people and businesses.

**Delivering together:**

We want to deliver a new relationship between public services, communities and businesses which is based on co-design, accountability and shared decision making to focus on wellbeing, prevention, and early intervention.

**A strength's-based approach:**

a borough in which people are helped to make the best of themselves, by recognising and building on the strengths of all our children, families and our communities and taking an evidence-led understanding of risk and impact to ensure the right intervention at the right time.

Considering these guiding principles, particularly the focus on an Enterprising Spirit, it is timely to deliver a new Economic Strategy for the borough. We want the borough to be a place that stands out not just in Greater Manchester, but nationally as an example of what inclusive growth looks like.

While a new Economic Strategy can support the achievement of our overarching vision, the strategy will also be important in mitigating the direct and indirect impacts arising locally from:

- **The on-going impact and implications for residents and businesses from the Covid-19 pandemic since 2020**
- **The on-going and challenging economic headwinds for the UK and local economy associated with EU exit, instability in Europe, and inflation which is significantly impacting upon the cost of living for our residents and businesses.**

Our new Economic Strategy sets out a **clear framework and priorities** to guide and steer the Council and partners' ('Team Bury') collaborative approach to delivering a **sustainable, competitive, inclusive, and resilient** local economy that fulfils its growth potential, while making a significant contribution to Greater Manchester's wider economic growth ambitions over the next decade and beyond.

Whilst Bury's economy is integral to supporting Greater Manchester's growth agenda, it is recognised that there is a distinct imbalance even within the Greater Manchester economy with economic output from the north of the conurbation, including Bury, falling behind that of the central and southern areas of Greater Manchester.

Through a clear, comprehensive and ambitious strategy, we are well placed to play a key role in driving forward sustainable economic growth in the borough and in Greater Manchester. This will be achieved through the realisation of identified key opportunities. For example, the realisation of significant new and higher-skilled employment opportunities through the release of employment land at Atom Valley/ Northern Gateway, which presents a '**Game changing**' opportunity for Bury and for Greater Manchester.

In addition, increasing the supply and development of new and affordable housing in the borough, the ongoing regeneration of our town centres through a 'place-based' approach, and ensuring our residents have the training and skills to access employment opportunities within our foundational economy, as well as in growth sectors such as low carbon and advanced manufacturing.

Underpinning our strategy is a focus on **inclusive growth and community wealth building**. We want to ensure that our residents, businesses, and communities derive the maximum benefit from the growth vision and priorities identified for the borough. In addition, our strategy will also ensure our economy is **greener** through prioritising growth which is sensitive to the climate emergency imperative and facilitates sustainable lives.

## OUR APPROACH

**Our approach has been informed by extensive socio-economic analysis and stakeholder engagement. This analysis and engagement have been framed around three pillars:**

### **Bury's Place**

Understanding the spatial, social and environmental factors affecting the prosperity and vitality of Bury's places

### **Bury's People**

Understanding Bury's resident and worker population to ensure that the local economy meets their needs and aspirations and supports inclusive growth

### **Bury's Economy & Business Base**

Understanding Bury's business landscape, employment characteristics and specialisms



The socio-economic analysis also provided a summary overview of each of the six towns/key neighbourhoods in the borough – Bury, Prestwich, Whitefield, Radcliffe, Tottington and Ramsbottom. This outlined the current socio-economic baseline position of each area including who lives and works there, and identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges.

In addition to the socio-economic evidence analysis, engagement was also undertaken with 'Team Bury' stakeholders and thematic groups. As a result of the outbreak of the Omicron variant of Covid-19 in late 2021 and 2022, an online engagement tool was used to capture a wider set of residents, community, and stakeholder perspectives on key issues. This was supplemented by three in-person 'pop-up' events in Bury, Radcliffe and Ramsbottom town centres.

The overarching pillars of Bury's **Places, People, and Economy and Business Base** flow through into the Strategy, supported by identified priorities ('statements of intent' for the borough) and associated actions.

The process of informing and developing the strategy has been collaborative, drawing on expertise and insights from a wide range of stakeholders. This Economic Strategy is not owned by Bury Council - it is a living document which is owned and needs to be delivered by all Team Bury stakeholders.





# BURY'S LOCAL AND STRATEGIC CONTEXT



# 2



The borough was formed in 1974 following local government reorganisation and is now one of the ten local authority areas within the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) area.

The creation of the borough brought together a diverse mix of six towns (Bury, Prestwich, Whitefield, Radcliffe, Tottington and Ramsbottom) and rural areas.

The more rural townships and areas to the north of the borough continue to have close ties to Lancashire, whilst the more urbanised towns in the central and southern parts of the borough have closer ties to other parts of Greater Manchester including the city of Manchester, Salford, Bolton, and Rochdale.

***The borough has a significant and proud history of industry and manufacturing which played a significant role in the UK's industrial revolution as a major printing and textile centre.***

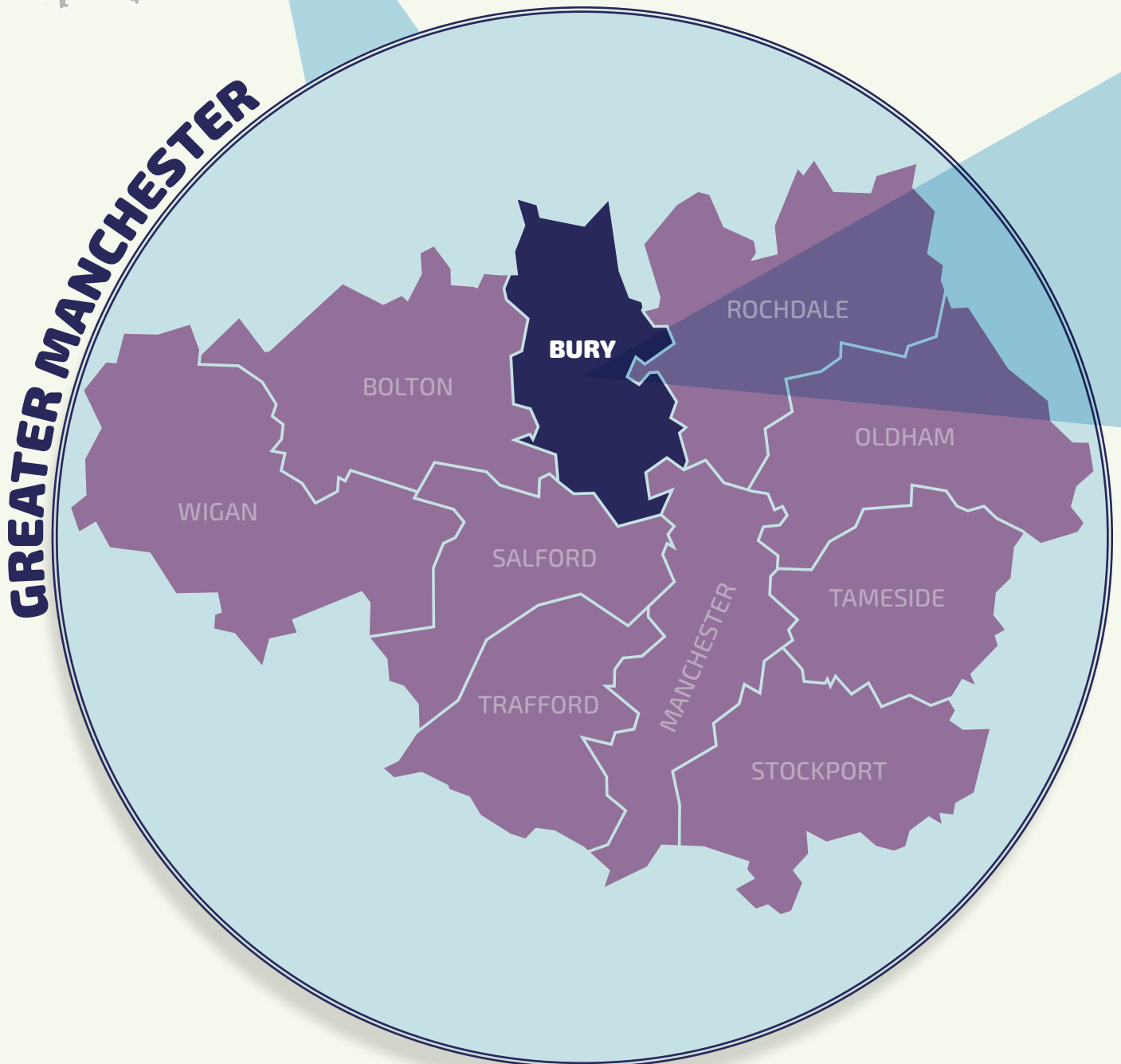
While the borough experienced significant growth and prosperity during this period, challenges emerged as industry across the borough began to decline in response to shifts in global trade and manufacturing overseas.

While the borough has had some success in re-orientating its economy over recent decades, like other Greater Manchester boroughs and post-industrial northern towns and cities, this is an on-going process and one which the new economic strategy aims to accelerate.



## BURY'S STRATEGIC POSITION WITHIN GREATER MANCHESTER

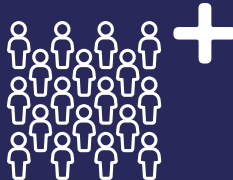
As one of the ten boroughs within the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) area, the borough has significant economic, political, social and transport infrastructure ties to the ten boroughs in Greater Manchester.







Population (2021):  
**193,800**

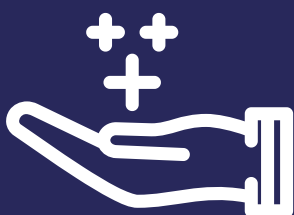


Population change (2011-2021):  
**8,700 or +4.7% (UK Avg. 6.6%)**



Area:

**99 km<sup>2</sup>**



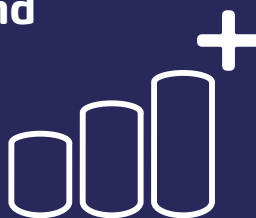
GVA (2021):  
**£3.57bn with an  
increase of 6%  
from 2020**



Employment Growth (2015-21):  
**6% vs 13% GM,  
9% NW,  
6% England**



No. of Businesses (2022):  
**8,060**



Business Base Growth:  
**20% business base  
growth between  
2016-2022**



No. of Jobs (2021):  
**71,000**



Jobs Density:  
**0.7 per working  
age adult**

## Strategically Connected

In terms of strategic transport connectivity, the borough sits on the edge of the M60 motorway with key connections at Junctions 17 and 18 adjacent to the town of Prestwich. The M66 motorway provides strategic connections north to Rawtenstall and other Lancashire towns, such as Blackburn and Burnley. Bury town centre connects into Manchester City Centre via the A56 which also passes through the areas of Whitefield and Prestwich.

The borough is also well served by the Metrolink tram network, which sustainably connects Bury, Radcliffe, Whitefield and Prestwich to Manchester City Centre and other Greater Manchester suburbs. The East Lancashire Railway, a heritage railway, also connects Bury Town Centre with key towns in the local area and provides access to areas of surrounding natural capital.

## Connecting Opportunity and Need

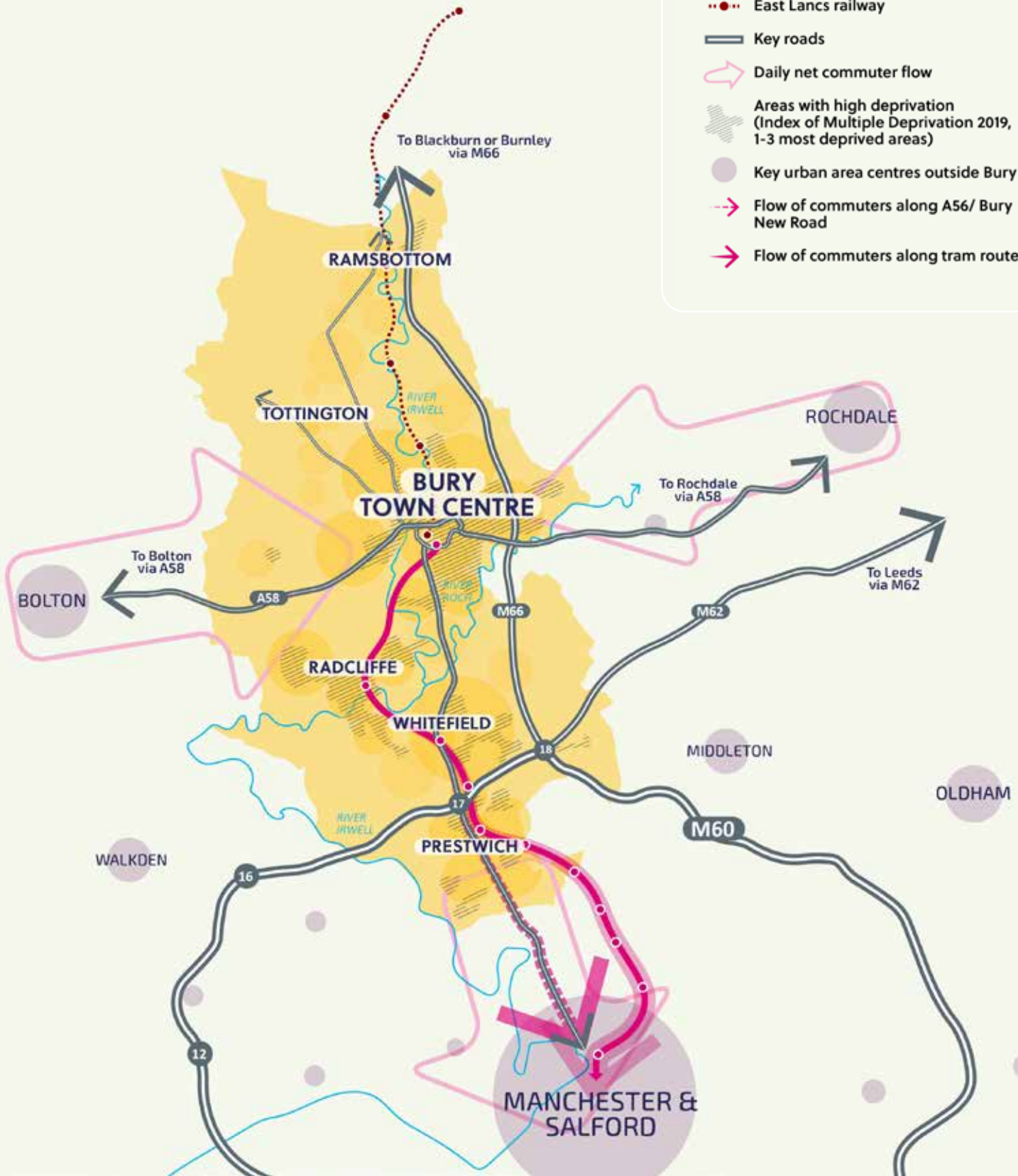
Analysis shows the greatest daily net inflow of commuters is from Bolton and Rochdale, with a net out flow of commuters to Manchester, who most likely commute along the A56 road corridor and tram routes. The sustainable and relatively efficient connectivity offered by the Metrolink means Bury, Radcliffe, Whitefield and Prestwich residents can easily access the employment and business opportunities within Manchester City Centre and the wider central Manchester/Salford core area.

The areas within the borough with higher levels of deprivation are those around the inner areas of Bury Town Centre. Radcliffe also experiences a high number of areas with deprivation, with Whitefield, Ramsbottom and Prestwich experiencing deprivation to a lesser extent. Tackling the issues associated with areas of deprivation will support the regeneration and improved economic performance of each of the centres. By doing so, areas situated around the core of local and district centres can help support and unlock economic growth.



**KEY**

- Neighbourhoods
- Bury to Victoria tram route
- East Lancs railway
- Key roads
- Daily net commuter flow
- Areas with high deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019, 1-3 most deprived areas)
- Key urban area centres outside Bury
- Flow of commuters along A56/ Bury New Road
- Flow of commuters along tram route



## Targeting Strategic Growth Opportunities

Bury plays a significant strategic role in collaborating on several cross-GM policy initiatives – most notably the recent Places for Everyone (PfE) plan for jobs, new homes, and sustainable growth. The GMCA PfE plan identifies key areas of the borough for significant new housing and employment growth. These include town centres, such as Bury and Prestwich, alongside land at Elton Reservoir and Radcliffe. These areas are located within or next to existing urban areas within the borough, creating an opportunity to increase the number of visitors and users of local and district centres.

The PfE plan also highlights the opportunity for growth along the 'North-East Growth Corridor', located 3.5km south east of Bury Town Centre. Two sites have been identified here which make up the 'Atom Valley/ Northern Gateway' with the potential to deliver significant new employment space, as well as further housing. The PfE plan also proposes investment in new public transport infrastructure and routes to connect Bury and Rochdale Town Centres with the Northern Gateway sites and to Manchester City Centre.

The North-East Growth Corridor can help to connect the eastern and central parts of the borough with economic growth and investment opportunities. The proposed new sustainable rapid mass transit corridor will provide improved accessibility and link employment opportunities within the cross-borough Northern Gateway sites.

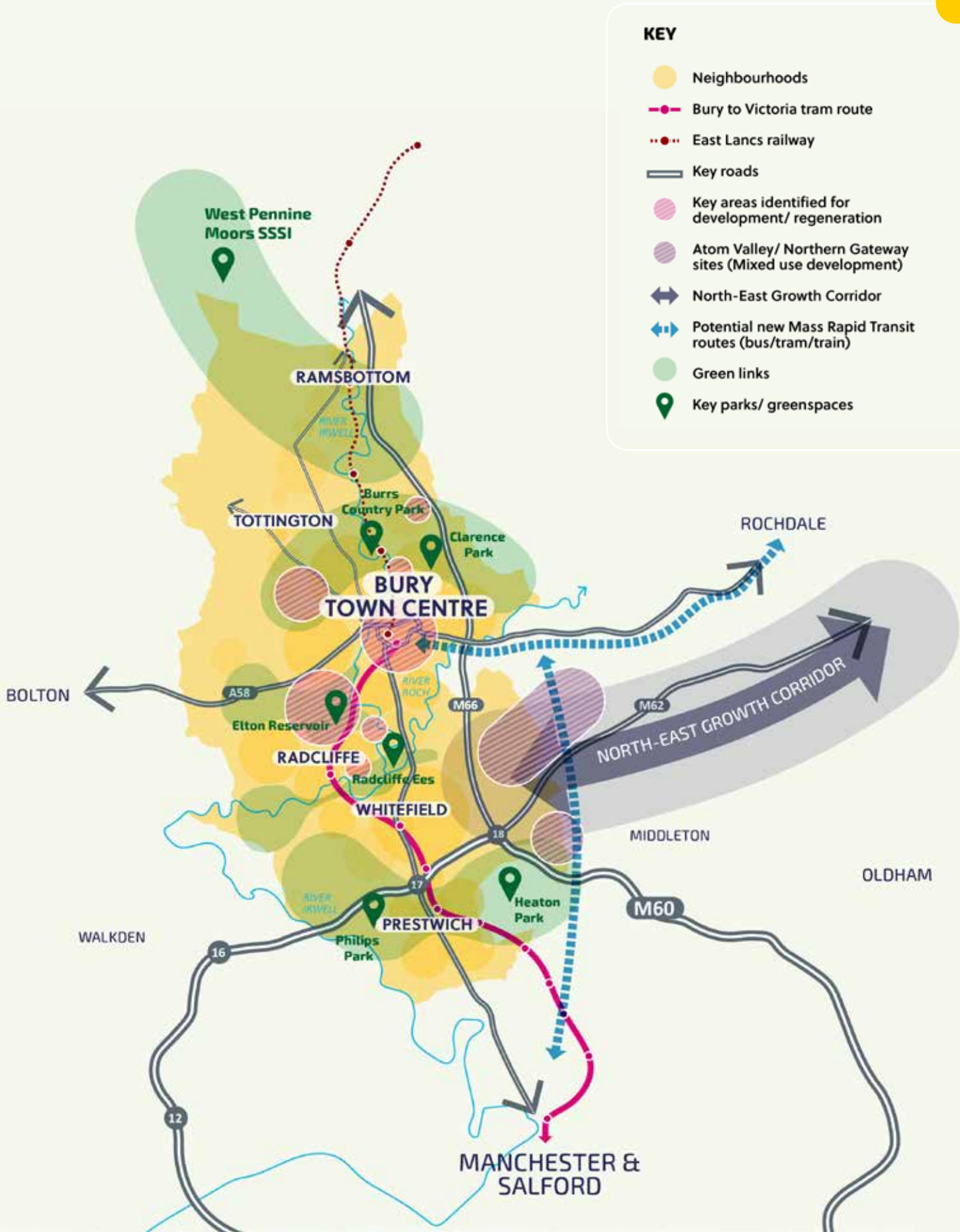
## Maximising Green and Blue Infrastructure Assets

The borough is traversed by two key river corridors, the River Irwell and the River Roch which weave through a number of key open spaces including Philip's Park and Burrs Country Park. Towards the northern parts of the borough around Tottington and Ramsbottom, the setting of the neighbourhoods becomes less urban and more rural, approaching the West Pennines Moors and its moorland geography.

The borough is also well served by a variety of parks and open spaces of differing scale and function, with spaces to the south serving a more urban setting and those to the north becoming more open and expansive. Each of the larger urban areas within the borough are within close proximity to open green space or more rural open spaces, such as West Pennine Moors Special Site of Scientific Interest (SSSI). These add to the distinctiveness and the attractiveness of living and working within the borough.







**KEY**

- Neighbourhoods
- Bury to Victoria tram route
- .-●-.- East Lancs railway
- Key roads
- Key areas identified for development/ regeneration
- Atom Valley/ Northern Gateway sites (Mixed use development)
- ↔ North-East Growth Corridor
- ↔ Potential new Mass Rapid Transit routes (bus/tram/train)
- Green links
- 📍 Key parks/ greenspaces



# A 'Game-changing' Intervention:

## Northern Gateway – Part of Atom Valley MDZ

Delivering one of the most significant proposed interventions in the Places for Everyone (PfE) Spatial Plan is critical to our ambitions of enabling and supporting employment growth and unlocking significant new economic opportunity in Bury, but also for Greater Manchester.

The Northern Gateway is focused on the M62 corridor from Junction 18 (the confluence with the M60 and M66) to Junction 21 (Milnrow), extending across parts of Bury, Rochdale and Oldham – the North-East Growth Corridor. Now designated as part of the Greater Manchester Atom Valley Mayoral Development Zone (MDZ), this area represents a transformative opportunity for inward investment on a national and international scale.

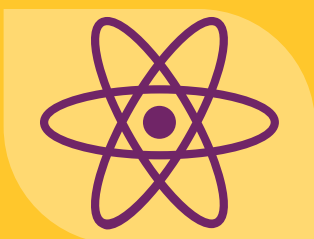
The scale of this initiative is considered necessary in order to deliver economic parity in Bury and Greater Manchester, and to transform perceptions of, and opportunities within, the north of Greater Manchester.

The Northern Gateway comprises of key strategic sites identified as GM1.1 and GM1.2 within the Growth Corridor and PfE plan. Importantly, the proposals for releasing land at GM1.1 are of a scale that has the capacity to deliver transformational change for Bury and Greater Manchester.

The development of the site has the potential to deliver c.1.2 million sqm. of industrial and warehousing floorspace and around 15,000-20,000 new jobs, depending upon the end uses (e.g. manufacturing/advanced manufacturing and warehousing/logistics uses).

To unlock the Northern Gateway, its growth potential and to maximise socio-economic benefits and GM's net-zero ambitions, significant new transport and other infrastructure investment will be required to meet future demand generated by the site, as well as ensure employment opportunities are accessible to local residents.

A strategy to maximise opportunities for local residents and businesses in the construction and operational phases will be required, particularly the opportunity to up-skill residents so they have the right skills to access new employment opportunities as they come forward.



A Growth Location with:

**1.2 million sqm** of floorspace

Up to **15-20,000 new jobs**

**NORTH EAST GROWTH CORRIDOR**



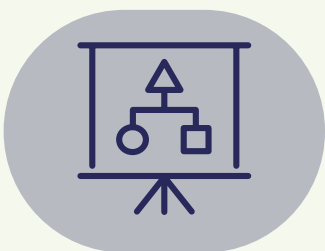
Extract from the Places for Everyone Strategy, GMCA

## STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

The development of our new Economic Strategy has been undertaken within the context of relevant local, sub-regional and national plans, policies and strategies. Ensuring Bury's new Economic Strategy compliments and aligns with existing policy, plans and strategies will drive impact and 'buy-in' from local, sub-regional and national stakeholders.

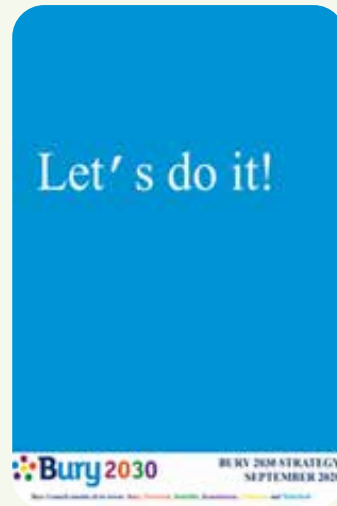
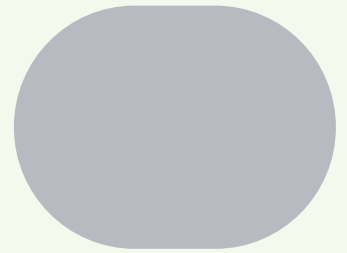
Our aligned and coordinated approach provides the opportunity to leverage wider support and interventions. For example, it has the potential to unlock our growth and development goals, such as public sector investment opportunities to redevelop our town centres, support Greater Manchester's plans for a 'Fairer, Greener, Growing Economy', while helping to secure more private sector investment in the borough through a clear and coordinated approach.

The policies and strategies most relevant to the borough's new Economic Strategy are summarised opposite. This is not a list of every strategy and policy that will likely have an impact on the borough's development. However, the policies listed provide a broad overview of the key issues at the national, sub-regional and local level.





# BURY'S ECONOMIC STRATEGY



**GREATER MANCHESTER**  
GOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY



The 2022 Levelling Up White Paper provides the immediate national level policy context for shaping this new strategy. The White Paper plays significant attention to the development of UK region's outside of the London and the South East. Bury's place within the Levelling Up agenda can be seen within two contexts: the borough and as a part of the wider Greater Manchester city region.

The borough has already been successful in securing Levelling Up Funding (LUF) to support projects at Bury Market to develop the Flexi-Hall concept and in Radcliffe with a new Civic Hub - £40m in total. However, levelling-up the borough will require significant further public and private investment and a new Economic Strategy is key to providing a clear direction on the borough's priorities.

At the sub-regional level, Bury will be impacted by existing Greater Manchester policies such as the Greater Manchester Strategy, Places for Everyone (PfE) plan, Local Industrial Strategy, Transport Strategy 2040, and the Plans for a Fairer, Greener, Growing Economy. Underpinning many policies, plans and strategies is a significant emphasis on the need to ensure development that is sustainable and creates the conditions for sustainable economic growth across Greater Manchester. It is imperative that Bury, as well as all Greater Manchester as a whole, ensures we deliver the greatest impact and benefits for our residents, communities, and businesses.

In addition, Greater Manchester continues to be at the forefront of devolution in England through the signing of a 'trailblazer' devolution deal with government in March 2023. Building further on Greater Manchester's existing devolved powers and responsibilities, this new deal marks a significant step-change for Greater Manchester and for Bury. It provides the region with an improved and less fragmented funding approach, as well as greater responsibility and powers over a range of issues to deliver regeneration and levelling-up. This includes more control and decision-making on spending priorities and approaches to support housing, regeneration, transport and, importantly, skills – this includes post 16 technical skills and adult skills.

At a local level, Bury's Let's Do It Strategy sets the borough's overarching vision and direction of travel. A new Economic Strategy is identified as one of the key enablers in supporting the achievement of our Let's Do It vision and delivering sustainable growth for the borough, alongside other key plans and strategies on planning, housing, town centre regeneration, transport, and climate change.

**Our aligned and coordinated approach provides the opportunity to leverage wider support and interventions.**



# THE CASE FOR CHANGE



An extensive evidence baseline was prepared which has underpinned the development of the Economic Strategy and supported the process of establishing the case for change in the borough.

The evidence base was wide ranging and structured around the three Pillars of **Place, People and Business & Economy**. It has informed our understanding of what the key opportunities and challenges are within the borough and across its towns and neighbourhoods.



**Drawing upon the key information and evidence from the baseline, this section of the strategy provides a high-level summary of:**

**1. The borough's 'Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats' (SWOT)**

**2. The borough's key strategic opportunities**

**3. Key issues/ Barriers to overcome under the three Pillars of Place, People, and Business & Economy**


This analysis is underpinned by a comprehensive evidence base report.





## HIGH-LEVEL SWOT ANALYSIS


The following summarises the five defining strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats shaping economic growth and prosperity in the borough.


### FIVE DEFINING STRENGTHS

- 

• **Strong road and public transport links make Bury a well-connected and accessible place to live, work and visit.** The borough's access to the M60, M66, A56 corridor and tram links within Greater Manchester offers strong connectivity to this economic powerhouse. This could be further enhanced by continued investment in public transport, improving active travel infrastructure, and encouraging people to switch to more sustainable modes of transport, helping reduce fossil fuel-based emissions and accelerating decarbonisation efforts in the borough.
- 

• **Diverse and growing business base.** Over the last ten years, the borough's business base has grown by 49% which exceeds both the national and regional averages. Supporting these businesses to survive, scale up and grow within the borough will facilitate local jobs and productivity growth. Bury has sector specialisms in high productivity sectors such as manufacturing to be nurtured, and foundation sectors such as health and social care which can help to meet the needs of the current and future population of the borough.
- 

• **Highly skilled occupations.** Compared to the national and regional averages, the borough has a higher proportion of residents working in highly skilled occupations (49%). This typically supports better paid and less precarious employment opportunities, supporting social mobility and life chances for residents. Retaining resident spend locally will support community wealth building.
- 

• **Strong technical education offer.** The alignment of apprenticeship starts to important sectors provides a level of responsiveness to meeting current and future skill needs and is equipping residents with relevant skills to gain employment in the borough.
- 

• **High quality of life,** with a diverse range of well-connected towns and villages, and a strong recreation and leisure offer including parks and open spaces. The provision of sites for new housing creates an opportunity to lever the borough's quality of life offer to retain and attract population.

## FIVE DEFINING WEAKNESSES

- **Significant COVID-19 Economic Impacts.** The borough's economy (measured by GVA) contracted by 6% as a result of COVID-19 impacts (2019-2020)), but is now recovering back to 2019 pre-covid levels. Prior to Covid-19 growth had been low, with employment only experiencing a 6% growth rate since 2015 compared to 13% in Greater Manchester. Weaker economic performance has direct implications for the prosperity of the borough and living standards of its residents.
- **Low job density resulting in high outflow commuter rates.** With a job density of 0.7 jobs per adult resident, a large proportion of residents commute out of the borough for work. This means the borough is not able to fully benefit from the talent and spend opportunities presented by these out-commuting residents.
- **Employment is concentrated in lower value sectors.** With specialisms in sectors such as health, retail and construction, the borough has a reliance on sectors which are typically lower value and are vulnerable to disruptors such as automation, EU exit and macro-economic shocks.
- **Large parts of the borough fall within the most deprived areas of England.** The borough consistently scores poorly across the indicators for deprivation which further entrenches low social mobility and limited life chances of its residents. Unemployment has risen during the pandemic and is most severe in areas of high deprivation.
- **Bury has one of the lowest proportions of residents aged 16+ earning above the national living wage in Greater Manchester.** This has a negative effect on the living standards of residents and reduces opportunity for residents to reinvest in the local economy through greater disposable income.



## FIVE DEFINING OPPORTUNITIES



- **The Northern Gateway/Atom Valley** is a site of strategic importance in Greater Manchester. It will help tackle the borough's current undersupply of commercial floorspace and support job growth. By maximising the potential of this site and unlocking its employment opportunities, this presents a chance for Bury to grow its economy and key high value sectors, such as advanced manufacturing.



- **Increasing job density and retaining talent.** The construction and operation of major projects would harness the talent of the local workforce and provide opportunities to upskill and train residents who have struggled to enter or stay in the labour market. With a large number of highly skilled residents, these opportunities could also improve Bury's ability to retain those people who currently migrate out of the borough for employment.



- **Forecast growth in high value sectors.** Forecast growth in sectors such as professional, scientific and technical employment will support the provision of high value local jobs. A focus on growing and supporting key sectors such as advanced manufacturing, low carbon and creative and digital will further support productivity growth in the borough.



- **The regeneration of town centres is crucial to improving the attractiveness of the borough as a place to live, work and visit.** Planned major investment provides an opportunity to work with local institutions and organisations to maximise the benefit to support community wealth building. Creating vibrant town centres with a range of uses will help support post-Covid recovery. This includes the provision of flexible workspaces and a housing offer which responds to hybrid working trends.



- **Bury's quality of life offer.** If the borough is to thrive and grow then it will need to leverage assets that support life satisfaction and well-being. This includes improving health outcomes by working with local partners to reduce economic inactivity, tapping into its key assets such as proximity to greenspace, and providing a range of housing opportunities to encourage people to live in the borough.

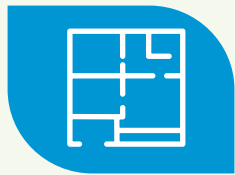


## FIVE DEFINING THREATS

- **Bury's ageing population is compounded by a slow increase in its working age population.** The borough has seen a 15% increase in its 65+ population over the last decade (2012-21), while its working age population has only grown by 1.5% compared to 3.9% in GM and 3.6% nationally. These population challenges are forecast to continue, with growth concentrated in the 65+ cohort. This will contribute to a shrinking pool of labour to fuel our economic growth.
- **Skill shortage vacancies are a barrier to business growth and productivity.** With 9% of employers reporting a skill shortage vacancy (relative to 6% in GM).
- **Enterprise and scaling up.** The borough experienced a negative business birth rate in 2020, which contrasts with the positive position experienced elsewhere. The provision of supporting infrastructure including employment sites and affordable/flexible workspace meeting a range of end-uses to support business start-up and growth is part of a supportive business environment.
- **Inequality becomes more entrenched in Bury.** Areas which face the greatest deprivation are also more likely to have faced either no change or a decrease in their employment and business count in the last 5 years. As the borough pursues major opportunities for economic growth, it will need to ensure that these opportunities are inclusive to local residents and businesses.
- **Poor digital 'cold spots' could hinder business competitiveness and undermine digital inclusion.** Slow download speeds and access to ultra fast broadband below the GM average, future businesses may choose to locate elsewhere. This threatens the borough's competitiveness and could deter investment.



# STRATEGIC GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES



**KEY**

- Neighbourhoods
- Bury to Victoria tram route
- East Lancs Railway
- Rail/ tram network
- Key roads
- Regional roads
- Key areas identified for development/ regeneration (no. of dwellings)
  1. Bury town centre (400)
  2. Elton reservoir (3,500)
  3. Walshaw (1250)
  4. Radcliffe (153)
  5. East Lancs Paper Mill (400)
  6. Seedfield (140)
  7. Tetrosyl Site (268)
- Atom Valley/ Northern Gateway: Sites identified for mixed use development (employment floorspace + no. of dwellings)
  8. Heywood and Pilsworth (500Ksqm + 200)
  9. Simister and Bowlee (1220)
  10. Stakehill
  11. AMPI/ Kingsway Business Park
- North-East Growth Corridor
- Wigan-Bolton Growth Corridor
- Potential new Mass Rapid Transit routes (bus/tram/train)
- Regional assets: Education
- Regional assets: Hospitals
- Bury employment sites
- Key urban area centres outside Bury



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# KEY ISSUES- BARRIERS TO OVERCOME

## Our Place: Where Are We Now?

### Key Issues

#### Constrained Supply of Employment Land

- For many years, the borough has suffered from an inadequate and constrained supply of employment land, in terms of both quantity and quality, which has constrained the borough's ability to retain and attract investment.
- Only 12 sites are currently available – 9.52 hectares. 8 are small-scale sites of less than 0.4 hectares in size.
- Land at Chamberhall (Phase 2) accounts for 40% (3.9 hectares) of available land and will be developed in the near future now a development partner has been secured.
- The borough has the lowest existing baseline supply in Greater Manchester's Places for Everyone (PfE) nine districts for industrial or warehousing development. (10, 231 sqm or 0.54% of PfE supply).

#### Housing Affordability

- A combination of natural population growth and net internal migration from other parts of Greater Manchester and England have created significant housing demand and affordability challenges in the borough.
- House prices have risen by 57% over the last decade (50% nationally). Acute pressures in Prestwich and suburbs around Radcliffe (100% rises in the last 5 years).
- Based on PfE between 2022 and 2039, the borough needs to create an additional 7,678 homes, equivalent to building 452 homes per year. The borough does not have enough land within the urban area or brownfield sites to accommodate its housing target

#### Need for Revitalised Towns

- The borough is made up of six distinct and unique towns each with their own economic opportunities and scope for growth and development.
- Maximising the success of our towns will ensure the whole borough is able to perform to its highest potential. Our focus on town centre regeneration and revitalisation needs to continue following our work in setting out regeneration masterplans and strategic frameworks in Bury, Radcliffe and Prestwich.
- Diversification of uses and less reliance on retail will be key, alongside tackling issues of footfall, public realm and road and transport accessibility.




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## Key Issues

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### Supporting Leisure, Culture and Tourism

- The leisure, culture, and tourism sectors contribute to local economies through visitor spend, create a vibrant and interesting place to live and help create a positive image of Bury as a culturally vibrant place.
- Supporting the leisure, cultural and tourism economy will contribute to the revitalisation of the borough and provide much needed economic diversification in the borough's town centres and beyond.

### Ageing and Inadequate Infrastructure

- The borough has some relative strengths when it comes to infrastructure – Metrolink, road links (M66/M60). However, the borough's socio-economic challenges are exacerbated by gaps in other good quality and reliable infrastructure.
  - For example, demand for Metrolink services outstrips supply at peak times, bus services across Bury (e.g. east-west) do not meet local needs, while active travel infrastructure needs significant improvement.
  - Improvements required in the scale and speed of Bury's digital infrastructure to meet business and resident demands.
  - The borough's digital infrastructure challenge is most acute in the north of the borough with lower than average download speeds.
  - Ensuring all large developments are well served by appropriate infrastructure is key, with a focus on low carbon and local energy generation.
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# KEY ISSUES- BARRIERS TO OVERCOME

## Our People: Where Are We Now?

### Key Issues

#### An Ageing Population

- The borough has a diverse demography with a younger population located around its town centres and an older demographic concentrated in the more rural parts in the north of the borough.
- An ageing population is already presenting challenges for the borough by restricting the supply of labour in the working age population and increasing demand for health and social care services.
- This challenge is anticipated to escalate into the next decade and without proactive policymaking to support this ageing population and encourage larger numbers of working age adults to move into the borough any future economic opportunities will be seriously compromised.

#### Significant Health Inequalities

- As the borough's population continues to age, further challenges around health and wellbeing are expected to increase. Some of the most significant health challenges are likely to be faced by residents who are already in some of the most deprived parts of the borough.
- While life expectancy across the borough averages at 78 for men and 82 for women, below national rates of 79 and 83 for men and women respectively, there are major disparities across the borough. For example, Radcliffe's average life expectancy for men is ten years lower than the borough average.
- Such significant health inequalities mean disparate health needs across the borough and lead to significant consequences for our labour force and health and social care services.

#### Deprivation & Social Mobility Challenges

- While there are pockets of relatively low deprivation across the borough there are large parts of the borough that are within the top 20% most deprived areas in England.
- Deprivation in the borough is most acutely concentrated around the town centres of Bury, Radcliffe, Whitefield and Prestwich while there are smaller pockets of deprivation in the north of the borough
- Over a fifth of the borough's neighbourhoods are in the 20% most deprived places in England for crime and a fifth of neighbourhoods being in the 20% most deprived places for income deprivation.



## Key Issues

Cont.

- The borough needs to improve levels of social mobility. On the Social Mobility Index, compared with all 324 English local authorities the borough ranks 213th
- The borough has particular social mobility challenges amongst the 'early years' category, ranking as the least socially mobile local authority in the country.

### Aligning Skills Supply & Demand

- The borough's connections to Greater Manchester are a significant asset and provide job opportunities for residents, with these roles tending to be oriented around higher level skills. For the borough's residents to access and benefit from these jobs there is a need to invest in higher level skills to support them
- 43% of adults in the borough hold level 4+ qualifications (GM 39%). This rate is in line with the England level of 43% however lags behind other GM boroughs of Trafford (55%), Manchester (45%) and Stockport (47%). The borough must invest in the skills base of its workforce to ensure it can maintain and further develop a competitive skills supply offer in the Greater Manchester city region.

### Low Jobs Density

- The borough has a relatively low job density level of 0.7 jobs per working age adult compared to 0.86 across Greater Manchester and an average of 0.86 nationally.
- Over 74,000 residents leave the borough for work. This contributes to a self-containment rate (the proportion of residents living and working in their place of residence) of 44%. This means that nearly two-thirds (66%) of residents leave the borough for work (mostly to other parts of GM, Lancashire).
- While outflow commuting is not inherently a challenge, it does imply a lower degree of opportunity within the borough and therefore a reliance on surrounding areas for employment and prosperity.

# KEY ISSUES- BARRIERS TO OVERCOME

## Our Economy & Businesses: Where are we now?

### Key Issues

#### GVA and Covid-19 Impacts

- The borough's economy was estimated to be worth around £3.5bn in 2019, the equivalent of around 5% of the wider Greater Manchester economy. The economy contracted by 6% between 2019 and 2020. As a result, the borough's economy was worth around £3.4bn in 2020.
  - The borough's economy has been recovering more recently, with GVA rising back to slightly above pre-pandemic levels to around £3.6bn, equivalent to 5% of Greater Manchester's economy. Geographically, the borough's townships, particularly Bury, represent hotspots of economic activity and GVA.
  - COVID-19 impacted the economy in a wide variety of ways, with some sectors experiencing significant rates of contractions. For example, the food and accommodation service sector lost 63% of its value between 2019 and 2020. This sector has not yet recovered to pre-covid levels with only a 34% increase seen in 2021

#### Small Businesses exposed to economic shocks

- The borough's businesses are predominantly in the micro businesses category, often self-employed businesses. Over 90% of the businesses in the borough employ fewer than 9 people.
- The borough has a higher-than-average business density rate of 68 businesses per 1,000 working age adults (GM business density of 59 businesses per 1,000 working age adults), highlighting the borough's entrepreneurial activity.
- However, it also indicates that the business base in the borough is typically made up of some of the most vulnerable types of businesses that may be highly exposed to economic shocks. The pandemic and high energy costs crises have highlighted this issue most recently.





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## Key Issues

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### A Reliance on Public Sector Jobs

- The borough has a significant amount of employment in the healthcare and education sectors, these sectors – while fundamental foundational sectors of the economy – are predominantly oriented around public sector employment.
- While not inherently a negative aspect of the borough's labour market composition this reliance on the public sector with over 25% of workers employed in the public sector – compared to just 22% across the wider North West region – may open the borough up to potential future risks.
- The possibility of further budgetary cuts could impact local employment in the borough and lead to significant losses in prosperity and opportunity for many residents.

### Preparing for the Future Economy

- In addition to an overdependence on public sector employment, there is a broad range of employment in the borough that is oriented around supporting the Foundational economy, including roles which can be lower skilled (e.g. retail, care sector).
  - While these roles provide crucial services for the wider economy of the borough, they are roles that are most at risk of automation and therefore redundancy. These are also roles that will tend to provide less economic opportunity for those in them.
  - The borough must consider how best to transition people in the economy away from lower skilled roles to ensure future job security. In the future, attracting and retaining higher skilled roles, for example in the advanced manufacturing sector, will allow for greater economic opportunity and enhanced life chances for residents of the borough
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# OUR VISION FOR THE BOROUGH

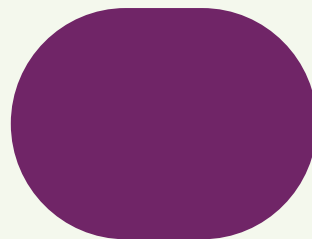
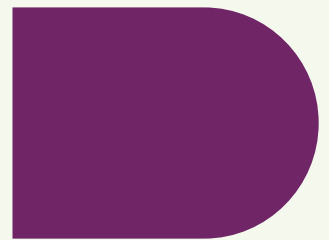


The overarching vision for the borough is outlined in our 'Let's Do It Strategy':

***“To stand out as a place that is achieving faster economic growth than the national average, with lower than national average, with lower than national levels of deprivation”***

In response, Bury's Economic Strategy will:

***“Support the development of a fairer, greener and more competitive and resilient economy that delivers successful places, people and businesses”***





## The Economic Strategy has three pillars which each establish a clear statement of ambition:

### Bury's Place

**Ambition:**

To create an inclusive, sustainable and prosperous place, where people choose to live, work, invest and visit

### Bury's People

**Ambition:**

To build the capabilities of people to find, sustain and progress in employment and achieve economic security

### Bury's Economy & Business Base

**Ambition:**

To create the conditions for business to prosper and accelerate the transition to a fairer, greener and more resilient economy



The following 'Pillar' chapters set out how the borough will achieve the ambitions. Under each Pillar a number of **Priorities** have been identified. These outline our intent for where we want the borough to be heading over the next 10-15 years, and how we will collectively get there through a set of **Priority Actions**.

In addition, the following **cross-cutting principles** underpin our approach and are central to our ambition for each Pillar:

- Building wealth across our communities to support inclusive growth and reduce inequalities.
- Diversifying and strengthening our economy to support resilience to drivers of change, including climate change.
- Strengthening our quality of life offer to underpin our investment proposition to residents, visitors and businesses and enhance life satisfaction, health and wellbeing, and pride in place.



# OUR PLACE

A large, white, stylized number '5' is centered over a blue-tinted photograph of a street scene in Bury. The street features parked cars, buildings with shopfronts, and a 'For Sale' sign. In the background, hills are visible under a clear sky. The number '5' is the largest element on the page, partially overlapping the 'OUR PLACE' text above it.

## OUR AMBITION & PRIORITIES

The baseline evidence review, analysis and stakeholder engagement activity has highlighted the importance of 'Place' in creating the conditions to support the following ambition for the borough:

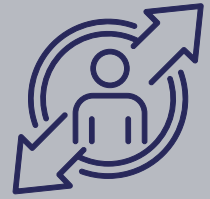
**Place  
Ambition:  
Creating an  
inclusive,  
sustainable,  
and  
prosperous  
place, where  
people  
choose to live,  
work, invest  
and visit**

To achieve this 'Place' ambition over the next 10-15 years, the borough needs to focus on the following Priorities:

1. **Enabling and supporting investment, employment and business growth and unlocking economic opportunity through an increased supply of employment land.**
2. **Creating successful, attractive and vibrant town centres which have diverse uses and create the right conditions for investment, including supporting the growth and development of Bury's wider leisure, culture, tourism and evening and night-time economy offer.**
3. **Creating great places to live through a strong, mixed and affordable housing offer in the borough.**
4. **Improving our infrastructure - transport, energy, and digital - to support sustainable growth.**
5. **Supporting a carbon neutral borough and adapting to climate change.**



## 1. Enabling and supporting investment, employment and business growth and unlocking economic opportunity through an increased supply of employment land.



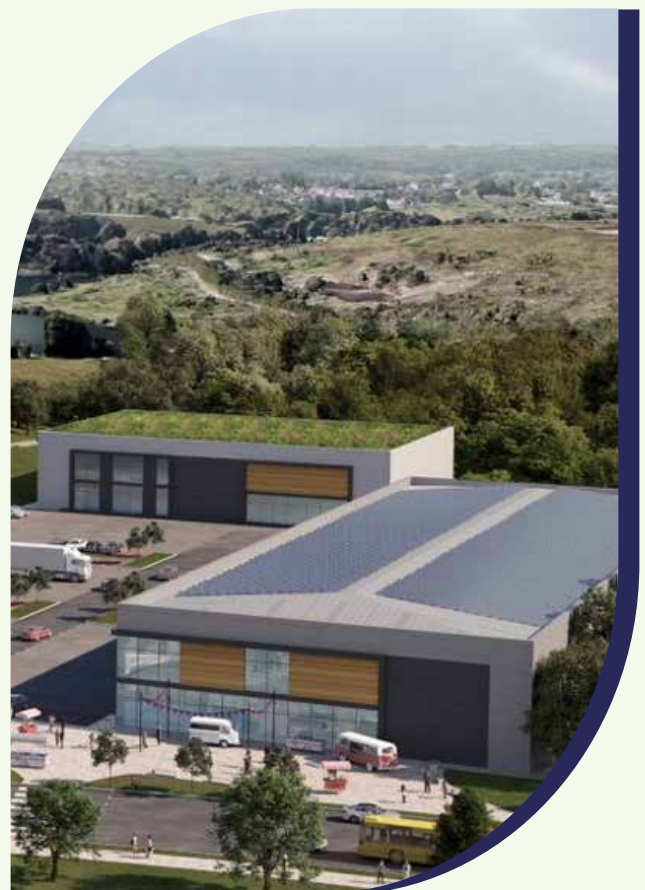
### Where do we want to be?

The borough has for too long been constrained in its ability to enable and support significant new employment and business growth by a poor supply of good quality employment land. This has undoubtedly held back the local economy due to the lack of opportunities for attracting new inward investment, while existing businesses have struggled to meet their growth needs, with some choosing to relocate out of the borough due to a lack of sites and premises to expand or relocate to. This has also had an impact on the scale and quality of jobs available within the borough and contributes to the low job density and high proportion of residents working outside of the borough.

Over the next decade and beyond, we want Bury to be a borough which:

- Has a thriving and growing business base and economy.
- Has an economy which is more competitive, productive, and resilient through supporting an on-going transition to a higher skilled, higher value, better-paid and lower carbon economy, whilst recognising the value of the Foundational Economy.
- Is on an economic growth trajectory which creates a range of employment opportunities for all our residents, delivering balanced and inclusive economic growth.

Our growth will be driven by both public and private sector investment and regeneration activity within our existing town centres and employment areas. It will also be driven by the allocation of land for employment-led development at the Northern Gateway through the emerging Places for Everyone (PfE) joint development plan. This will support **transformative growth** in Bury, will boost the competitiveness of the north of the conurbation and support Greater Manchester's wider economic growth ambitions and overarching Greater Manchester strategy.





## How do we get there?

To enable and support the unlocking of economic opportunity within the borough over the next 10-15 years, including significantly increased levels of investment, business and employment growth, an increased supply of employment land is crucial if we are to achieve transformative growth. Our key priority actions to increase employment land supply in the borough include:

### ● **Priority Action: Allocation and Successful Delivery of the Northern Gateway/Atom Valley Mayoral Development Zone**

The Northern Gateway is the most significant development proposal within the PfE joint development plan. It straddles the boundary between Bury and Rochdale and is fundamental to the sub-regional aspiration to deliver a more balanced economy within Greater Manchester by significantly boosting economic output from the north of the conurbation. This includes the proposed allocation of land at Heywood/Pilsworth for employment-led development with the potential to deliver around 1.2 million square metres of new industrial and warehousing floorspace and around 15,000-20,000 new jobs.

The Northern Gateway is also a key component of the Atom Valley Mayoral Development Zone (MDZ) which has been formally designated in recognition of the area's potential to deliver transformational change in this part of Greater Manchester. The designation of the Atom Valley MDZ provides a clear mechanism to align public and private sector investment and ensure that there is commitment to delivering inclusive and sustainable growth across the area and adjoining towns. The development of the Northern Gateway / Atom Valley MDZ will

therefore be critical to realising our ambitions of enabling and supporting employment growth and unlocking significant new economic opportunities in Bury, but also for Greater Manchester.

### ● **Priority Action: Delivery of other Key Employment Land Sites**

The successful delivery of other key employment sites in the borough – including Phase 2 of the Chamberhall development site and redevelopment of the Bradley Fold Trading Estate will also be critical to our ambitions of enabling and supporting employment growth. The development of these sites will play a key role in delivering the mix of employment sites and premises for our existing businesses to grow, as well as helping to attract new businesses, sectors and investment into the borough.

### ● **Priority Action: Protection of Existing Employment Sites**

The borough's industrial heritage means that Bury has a diverse range of existing employment sites and areas ranging from older, traditional mill buildings to modern industrial estates. Existing sites are generally individual premises in isolated locations or part of a wider concentration of employment uses. Whilst some existing employment sites and areas may not be of particularly high quality, they can fulfil an important economic role in providing affordable accommodation for local businesses that do not necessarily have the means or desire to occupy modern, high-quality accommodation. In addition, many of these sites offer the opportunity for people to work close to where they live, potentially reducing travel distances and reliance on the private car as a way of travelling to work. It is important that suitable and viable existing employment sites and areas are retained.



## 2. Creating successful, attractive and vibrant town centres which have diverse uses and create the right conditions for investment, including supporting the growth and development of Bury's wider leisure, culture, tourism and evening and night-time economy offer.



### Where do we want to be?

Our town centres play a key role in the economic, business, social and community functions of our borough. Their function and roles continue to evolve given changing trends in business, retail (e.g. from larger and out of town shopping and leisure locations to online), demographics, working trends (particularly accelerated following Covid-19), and enhanced public and private transport options resulting in more choice for where residents and visitors spend their money and time.

Given the scale of this change over the last 10-20 years, particularly in retail trends with increased competition from other centres and online, as well as the more recent implications of the Covid-19 pandemic, the importance of town centre regeneration as a driver of economic opportunity and change for the borough is clear.

This is not just an issue for our borough, this is an issue across Greater Manchester's town centres and nationally. Changes in the retail market and the way that both public and private sector services are delivered have placed pressures on town centres, for example, resulting in the closure of some shops, including both historic national and local 'anchor' stores in town centres.

It is imperative that our town centres continue to adapt and respond to changing circumstances if they are to continue to

flourish and successfully meet the needs of our communities, as well as be attractive to visitors and inward investment. Town centres which have a diverse mix of uses and functions will have greater resilience to withstand changing trends and future economic shocks, while being more attractive and vibrant local centres with greater choice for residents and visitors.

The opportunity for change is not just focussed on the retail sector. The borough's town centres need to be able to provide an attractive and successful leisure offer, as well as a thriving tourism and evening and night-time offer to meet the needs of its residents, businesses and visitors. Bury town centre currently boasts a safe destination after dark due to its Purple Flag accreditation that confirms its excellence in the evening and night-time economy.

Amongst many other heritage attractions, Bury is the main location for East Lancashire Railway – a very successful heritage railway. We want to be able to continue to support the growth of the railway so it can continue to thrive and provide a successful visitor attraction.

### How do we get there?

We are already making great strides in the borough with our approach to preparing, co-designing and now approved town centre





Masterplans or Strategic Regeneration Frameworks (SRFs) for Bury, Prestwich, Radcliffe and Ramsbottom (as well as a developing town centre plan for Whitefield). These have set a clear vision and strategy for the future sustainable and inclusive growth of these town centres. Bury and Radcliffe have already been successful in securing a total of £40 million from Round 1 of the Levelling Up Fund (LUF), and Bury Council is now in joint venture partnerships with Bruntwood to redevelop the Millgate Shopping Centre and Muse Developments to regenerate Prestwich Village.

What is clear is that diversity of uses in our town centres, including a balanced mix of retail, commercial, leisure, cultural, civic, public and community functions, alongside increased residential uses, creates multiple reasons for local residents and visitors to use our town centres.

Aligned with improvements and investments in public realm and the environment of our town centres, improvements to transport connectivity, as well as cultural and events programmes; residents and visitors will have more compelling reasons to dwell and spend time and money within our borough's town centres. We are already seeing the upsides of a strategic and planned approach to town centre regeneration through increased private sector investment and investor confidence (i.e. in Bury and Prestwich).

Our key priority actions to create successful, attractive, and vibrant town centres which have diverse uses and create the conditions for investment, include:

**Priority Action: Funding secured for regeneration plans/strategic frameworks to enable these to be prepared for our remaining towns**

Bury, Prestwich, Radcliffe and Ramsbottom all have approved regeneration plans that clearly set out our ambition, vision and identified proposals to successfully develop our town centres. There is an opportunity to do the

same for our remaining towns, ensuring that each town's maximum potential is realised to support the overall ambition of creating successful, attractive, vibrant and fit for purpose town centres.

**Priority Action: Funding secured to ensure the successful delivery of our regeneration plans/strategic frameworks**

As well as securing funding to prepare our regeneration plans, it is vital we secure the right level of funding to enable each identified proposal/project to be successfully developed and delivered so that we can meet our stated aims, objectives and overall vision for each town. It is important we develop funding strategies, create project pipelines and take full advantage of external funding opportunities both locally, regionally and nationally. Internal funding sources are fast becoming more challenging but nevertheless, we also need to be continuing to identify them to support project delivery.

**Priority Action: A new borough-wide Culture Strategy that includes a key role for our town centres to contribute towards maximising opportunities for the borough's visitor economy/cultural assets, alongside its rural offer**

Bury's town centres play a key role in engaging people both who reside in and visit the borough through their various cultural and heritage attractions, visitor assets and events. We want to build on these strengths by developing a new Culture Strategy that will facilitate culture across the borough, recognising that it has an important part to play to support place shaping and promoting health and wellbeing. The strategy needs to recognise a borough-wide approach to culture i.e., in both towns and wider rural areas/natural assets. There is a desire to also develop a community framework that all partners can work within, to enable culture to be led and delivered by the borough's communities.

# Town Centre Regeneration – Our Positive Direction of Travel

## Ramsbottom

There is an approved town centre plan that will support investment and development in the town centre. The plan sets out a series of high-level proposals and concepts to improve the future of the town for residents, businesses and visitors in the short, medium and long-term. This includes creating quality workspace in the heart of the town, as well as identifying opportunities for improvements to the built environment and public realm and active travel routes in and around the town centre.

## Radcliffe

In Radcliffe, the Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) was prepared in 2020 and provides a single integrated plan for the strategic regeneration of Radcliffe. It identifies a clear set of interventions and approaches to guide growth and to deliver the town's much-needed regeneration. £20 million of funding has been secured from the LUF towards the development of a new Civic Hub in the town centre bringing together key services and functions at the heart of the town. Other priority projects include the refurbishment of the market's basement for new uses including events space, refurbishment of the Market Chambers building, new leisure facilities, a secondary school, new housing, active travel, better links to the Metrolink and new car parking.



Proposals for a new Civic Hub in Radcliffe



Bury Market 'Flexi-Hall' Proposals

## Bury

Bury is currently furthest along in its regeneration journey, with an overarching town centre masterplan and the previously successful Rock redevelopment. Recent proposals for the redevelopment of the Mill Gate Shopping Centre have also been announced. This is through a joint venture partnership with developer Bruntwood to deliver the next step in bringing forward new uses - office, leisure and residential in the town centre. Proposals are also being developed by Bury Council and Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) for the redevelopment of the transport interchange in the town centre to offer multi-modal transport options, including active travel/ low emissions travel facilities. Bury has also received £20m in LUF investment for its Bury Market 'Flexi-Hall' project. This proposal also includes market improvement works, public realm, improved links to the town centre, transport interchange and Bury College.

## Whitefield

There is an ambition to develop a town centre plan supported by the Council but largely driven by local stakeholders and residents, which identifies opportunities for community-led regeneration, as well as potential town centre improvement proposals. Proposals are likely to include public realm, active travel, place marketing, place making and community empowerment, as well as larger-scale improvements to some Council-owned assets.

## Prestwich

Regeneration plans for Prestwich focus on the redevelopment of the Longfield Centre in Prestwich Village through a joint venture partnership with Muse Developments. This will include new and enhanced civic and health related services, new commercial units to meet modern demands and uses, increased residential development, improved active travel provision, public realm and placemaking. It also aims to maximise transport connectivity between Prestwich Village to other parts of the borough and to Manchester via bus and tram links.



Vision for regenerating the Longford Centre site, Prestwich

### 3. Creating great places to live through a strong, mixed and affordable housing offer in the borough.



#### Where do we want to be?

Our 2021 Housing Strategy sets a clear route-map for how the borough intends to work to create the right conditions so that housing, across all tenures, supports Bury's 2030 Let's Do It Strategy. It recognised that housing, in its widest sense, affects many parts of our lives. The COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns showed just how important it is to have a healthy, suitable, and secure home. It has also made us more conscious of our local neighbourhoods and of the spaces between our homes, places where we can meet, dwell, socialise and spend leisure time. There is a clear impetus to ensure that we support and help people of all ages to live well within our communities.

Housing supply, mix and offer, as well as the locations of new housing, has a significant role to play in shaping the economic success of our borough over the next 10-15 years. For example, increasing the supply of homes that are both affordable and attractive for younger people and younger professionals starting out will help to retain more of our talented young people and attract others to live in the borough.

Our strategy is to deliver a better range of housing options for households across the life-course (e.g. young people, families, older people, people with additional needs), as well as ensure we deliver quality places which will help attract people who can fill skills gaps in the borough to live and spend their money here, while also playing an important role in encouraging new businesses to locate in the borough.

The submitted draft of the Places for Everyone (PfE) Joint Development Plan identifies that Bury is required to deliver 7,228 homes to 2037 – approximately 450 homes annually (although this is subject to change pending the outcome of the PfE Examination). Our existing housing land supply consists of brownfield sites within our existing urban areas, including potential development sites within our town centres and former industrial sites. However, this supply is not sufficient to meet the requirement set out in the PfE Plan, and it has therefore been necessary for PfE to identify a number of strategic housing sites outside Bury's existing urban area.





## How do we get there?

Our intention to create great places to live through a strong, mixed and affordable housing offer in the borough can only be met by addressing our shortfall in housing land supply. Our key priority actions will achieve this through a **balanced approach** to housing site allocation and delivery which consists of a focus on residential growth within our existing town centres and urban areas, as well as the release of land for new strategic housing sites.

**Priority Action: Maximising new housing growth in our town centres and urban areas by continuing a comprehensive and holistic approach to regeneration and placemaking.**

Housing presents an opportunity to breathe new life into our town centres and help achieve our inclusive regeneration ambitions. Changes in our retail habits are forcing a reinvention of our town centres. Centres with an aspirational housing offer, which includes affordable homes, with good access to employment, transport connectivity, leisure facilities, parks, culture, art and a wide range of community facilities, is a key route to achieving sustainable development within our town centres and urban areas. We are making significant progress with residential development as part of our holistic regeneration plans. Our approach to town centre regeneration will continue and evolve to ensure sustainable and inclusive locations for new housing comes forward in our town centres. In addition, we will continue to focus on former brownfield industrial sites in our towns and urban areas for new housing, alongside the funding opportunities sites of this nature bring from Homes England and the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA)

**Priority Action: The successful allocation and delivery of strategic allocations identified within the PFE Plan to enable the borough to meet its identified housing requirement**

**Strategic housing sites:** To meet Bury's housing requirement set out in PFE, it has been necessary to identify a number of strategic housing sites within the borough in addition to those already identified within the existing housing land supply. It is important that, once formally allocated through the PFE process, the strategic housing sites identified in the Plan are successfully delivered in order to ensure that a sufficient amount and variety of housing can come forward where it is needed and that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed, including the provision of affordable homes.





## 4. Improving our infrastructure - transport, energy, and digital - to support sustainable growth.



### Where do we want to be?

Our borough's future economic success will rely on residents, visitors, businesses and potential future inward investors having access to modern and resilient infrastructure, including transport, energy and digital, to support their needs. These types of infrastructure provide the backbone to our economy. For example, they enable connections between workers and their jobs to happen more effectively and efficiently; they enable the movement of goods and services to be made within the borough and beyond; they help to enable a wide range of digital services for businesses and residents; while they can also help to unlock economic benefits and development opportunities for the borough by providing confidence to developers, businesses and investors.

We recognise the importance of transport connectivity to the social and economic success of our neighbourhoods and towns. As part of our commitments to the Greater Manchester 2040 Transport Strategy and the borough's own Local Transport Strategy, we are committed to delivering a sustainable transport infrastructure that provides a genuine alternative to private vehicle use. We are committed to delivering economic growth in a planned and managed way and putting sustainability and the right mix of transport options at the forefront of our plans. We share Greater Manchester's bold vision to deliver the Bee Network, a joined-up London-style transport system, starting with buses beginning to be integrated from 2023, trams from 2024 and commuter trains by 2030. We will work with our partners to deliver the Bee Network, including the roll-out of

the bus franchising scheme from September 2023 which will bring buses back under local control.

We also want to improve access to Metrolink for our residents, workers, students and visitors, as well as relieve local communities of congestion and poor air quality through creating cleaner and greener street initiatives. Investment in active travel and public transport connections to key opportunity sites, including Northern Gateway, as well as our town centres, will be critically important for residents to access new employment and training opportunities.

Our ambitious transition towards a carbon-neutral borough by 2038 will be supported, in part, by ensuring that we effectively plan what the energy infrastructure needs are for our key housing and employment sites. To assist with this, we have our Local Area Energy Plan as part of GM Green City. To contribute towards longer-term sustainable energy options, where opportunities arise, we will encourage the delivery of localised low carbon or renewable energy solutions and technologies. This approach can also provide local low carbon business, supply chain and employment opportunities.

Our digital infrastructure must continue to improve across the borough if we are to achieve our ambitions for a higher growth, higher value economy, and to be a place which can attract inward investment. Our residential neighbourhoods, town centres, key employment sites and major strategic sites, such as Northern Gateway, will increasingly rely on fast and reliable digital connectivity.



## How do we get there?

Our intention is to ensure that over the next 10-15 years we strive for our borough to achieve sustainable economic growth through delivering the necessary modern and resilient infrastructure our residents, visitors, businesses and inward investors will rely on to support their varying needs. The following priority actions focus upon delivering improvements across the borough's transport, energy and digital infrastructure to achieve our ambitions.

Our ambition is to have an integrated transport network, an advanced digital infrastructure, and clean energy that supports a healthy, green, connected and thriving borough. Achieving this will be a challenge and will need us to rethink how we travel, changing our behaviour so that more of us can choose to walk, cycle or use public transport more often. We will play our part by investing in new infrastructure and working with our partners to improve Metrolink and bus services.

We want to make it safer and easier for residents and visitors to walk, wheel and cycle for shorter journeys and to enjoy walking, wheeling and cycling as a healthy activity. This will help with our plans to become a carbon neutral borough by 2038 and to clean up our air. Walking, wheeling and cycling are also the cheapest and healthiest forms of travel.

### ● **Priority Action: Successful delivery of the Bury Interchange project.**

We will transform the experience of established bus and tram passengers and encourage new passengers with modern facilities, enhancing accessibility and the visitor experience. The existing Bury Interchange will be replaced with a modern, future-proofed, low carbon, safe, secure and accessible facility connecting people to place and work.

### ● **Priority Action: Deliver significant new active travel options linking residential areas to existing and future employment and growth sites ensuring residents can access employment opportunities.**

We will support sustainable, inclusive economic growth and regeneration through good transport connectivity, enabling new jobs and houses across the borough to be delivered in a sustainable manner through targeted transport investment in key growth and development locations.

### ● **Priority Action: Work with development partners and stakeholders to examine opportunities for low carbon and renewable energy solutions for key development sites.**

We have worked with Energy Systems Catapult and the GMCA to develop a Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) for the borough. The plan applies a whole system approach to the planning and design of net zero local energy systems. The plan provides an overall vision that illustrates the scale of change needed through to 2038 to achieve carbon neutrality. The plan also identifies priority areas to demonstrate and test how to roll out the necessary measures. We will use this LAEP to work with development partners to firstly test and secondly roll out low carbon and renewable energy solutions, including solar PV and heat pumps. This will help to build the capacity needed for wide scale deployment.

We will ensure the outcomes of our Climate Action Strategy and Action Plan are embedded within our Local Plan and the Atom Valley Mayoral Development Zone. This will ensure that new developments are designed and delivered with mitigation to climate change and adaptation/resilience to climate change in mind.

Where the Council has some input into new developments, we will use all available influence to ensure that these developments align with our carbon neutral target.

**Priority Action: Digital – Expand the success of the GM Full Fibre roll out by collaborative partnership work to improve the digital infrastructure across Bury, raising the average download speeds for businesses and citizens.**

Support the delivery of the GM One Network by creating a single active network infrastructure across our public sector organisations providing efficient, secure digital connectivity. This investment lays the foundations to support the principles of future 'smart cities' while also stimulating the market to support further investment in businesses and places. Enhanced digital connectivity will enable the borough's towns, as well as its strategic sites, to be attractive and lower cost locations for digital businesses and other business sectors. Businesses locating in our towns and key sites will benefit from excellent digital connectivity, as well as access to high quality town centre amenities, skilled workers and excellent transport connectivity.







## 5. Supporting a carbon neutral borough and adapting to climate change.



### Where do we want to be?

Bury is a great place to live and work, but we recognise that climate change presents a significant challenge to the health and wellbeing of our communities. We must take responsibility now to protect ourselves, our children, our grandchildren from the dangers of it. In 2019, Bury Council declared a climate emergency and set an ambitious target to be carbon neutral by 2038.

Living in a carbon neutral borough will mean that the carbon emissions we produce are matched by the carbon emissions we are able to capture or offset.

### How do we get there?

The borough's ambitious target to be carbon neutral by 2038, will require large systemic changes across the borough. We will have to transition away from fossil fuel sources of energy to low carbon alternatives, as well as generating as much renewable energy as possible.

Alongside this we will need to significantly increase the energy efficiency of our buildings to reduce their energy demand. This includes retrofitting our current residential, public, and commercial buildings and ensuring that new developments are designed with a carbon neutral future in mind.

It is also important to change the way we travel around the borough. We need to significantly increase active travel, public transport, shared mobility and support the transition to low emission vehicles, such as electric cars.

There needs to be a change in how we consume to move away from our current 'use and throw away' culture to a circular/sharing economy, where we make the most of our natural resources.

We will need to help our existing businesses to become carbon neutral and also support the creation and development of new businesses that will provide the technologies, innovations, goods and services of a carbon neutral future. These new businesses will create a new generation of jobs in the industries and infrastructure that we need to tackle the climate crisis and a workforce that will be able to contribute and benefit from a new green economy.







Unfortunately, climate change is already with us, and therefore we also need to start adapting to our new climate so that we are resilient to these effects.

**Priority Action: Ensure that our strategies, plans and programmes support those who want to make renewable and environmentally friendly energy modifications and improvements.**

We will work with the GMCA to support residents to have access to initiatives such as Your Home Better to assist with making energy efficiency improvements in their private homes. As well as exploring innovative ways to help residents fund these works.

The Council will lead by example by implementing a planned programme to energy audit and decarbonise all Bury Council’s corporate buildings and schools. We will further lead by collaborative work and support with other Public Sector organisations and Private Sector partners.

We will work with Six Town Housing to support them to decarbonise their housing stock supporting people in social housing.

**Priority Action: To adapt our borough’s buildings, infrastructure, and natural environment to the changing climate and to increase the climate resilience of our residents and organisations.**

We have made this a priority in our Climate Action Strategy and Action Plan. We will work with relevant partners and stakeholders to develop an overarching plan that outlines what action needs to happen for us to be in a better position to deal with a different climate.

We will specifically be looking at how we can prevent or adapt to flooding events as well as looking at how we change our environment to cope with increased heat. We will particularly be focussed on nature-based solutions, where possible.

**Priority Action: To help our businesses to transition to carbon neutrality and to provide a suitable and sufficient green commercial sector to future proof our local economy and to enable us to meet our 2038 target.**

We will strengthen our Business Engagement Strategy to include the ambitions of our Climate Action Plan. We will do this by developing clear support pathways for businesses through our partners to include several actions to help our businesses become carbon neutral and also to promote the Green Economy along with the necessary related skills and education.

We will pro-actively encourage green businesses to locate to Atom Valley to build our local Green Economy and to help future proof the skills of our local workforce.



# OUR PEOPLE



## OUR AMBITION & PRIORITIES

The baseline evidence review, analysis and stakeholder engagement activity has highlighted the importance of 'People' in creating the conditions to support the following ambition for the borough:

**People  
Ambition:  
To build the  
capabilities of  
people to find,  
sustain and  
progress in  
employment  
and achieve  
economic  
security**

Our 'People'  
Priorities are:

1. **Improving all age education and skills provision to support increased life chances.**
2. **Attracting and retaining talent to help fuel our growth.**
3. **Reducing economic inactivity and unemployment.**
4. **Improving health and wellbeing.**



## 1. Improving all age education and skills provision to support increased life chances.



### Where do we want to be?

We want young people and adults in the borough to thrive and leave education and training ready to succeed in the labour market and well prepared for work with a balance of technical, academic and life skills. Our young people and adults need to have the skills, mindset and support they need to achieve their potential and adapt to changing circumstances throughout their working lives. This requires a responsive education and skills system which can meet the rapidly changing nature of work, and support employers to compete effectively through highly productive work.

Building a talent pipeline of local people who can access well paid, good quality jobs will support inclusive growth objectives whilst meeting the skill needs of major investments and important sectors in Bury. By equipping young people and adults in our borough with the appropriate tools for the current and future workplaces we can ensure opportunity for them in the long term. This must be done without the exclusion of the important jobs in the foundational economy that underpin many aspects of the borough's prosperity.

The impact of unemployment for younger people and adults is proven to be a significant detriment to that person's life-long career prospects and health. As a borough we can ensure that our young people and adults have the best access to the skills they will need in the labour market that will in turn ensure longer term success for them and therefore increased prosperity for our borough.

Exciting opportunities for upskilling residents are already in place with provision from Bury College and Holy Cross College both providing a University Centre both offering higher educational opportunities and technical qualifications. Recent investment includes a new Health Innovation STEM Centre with state-of-the-art learning facilities including a laboratory, simulated hospital ward and simulated domestic home.







## How do we get there?

The following actions will support our approach to improve life chances for all our residents within our borough, over the next decade and beyond, ensuring we can deliver our ambitions for sustainable and inclusive growth.

**Priority Action: Inspire our young people to understand the world of work by planned interaction at key stages throughout their primary and secondary education.**

Low attainment rates and a lack of soft skills can have a negative impact on life chances for our young people. We will, through creative activity ensure that young people are prepared for adulthood, we will promote labour market information and pathways to employment – ensuring that they are moving towards decent quality, sustainable work.

**Priority Action: Support the expansion of an evidence based integrated Higher Education and Adult Skills in Bury**

We will support education and training providers to deliver and expand Higher Education and Adult Skills offer, enabling high quality industry-led learning environments and facilities to support upskilling and the acquisition of higher-level skills. The roll out of technical education reforms will support progression pathways to higher technical qualifications and embed routes into careers provision in Bury.

**Priority Action: Development of Employer Led Skills Plans aligned to Greater Manchester Local Skills Implementation Plans**

Develop Local Skills Implementation Plans (LSIPs) aligned to major investment opportunities and important sectors such as construction, health and social care, manufacturing, creative and digital, tourism and hospitality, and low carbon. This action will seek to facilitate community wealth-building through strengthening local skills and employment opportunities through the commissioning, procurement and planning processes associated with major development in the borough.





## 2. Attracting and retaining talent to help fuel our growth.



### Where do we want to be?

We need to harness current and future planned population growth as an economic driver and ensure we retain and attract young and working age residents to help fuel our growth. This needs to be underpinned by a compelling and quality housing, jobs, culture and leisure offer.

The borough offers a diverse range of lifestyles, from rural and spacious living to town centres that are well linked to the wider Greater Manchester city region. These inherent aspects of our borough make it a desirable place to live, work and start a business. This can be sustained and further built upon in the future and ensure our borough retains and attracts talent needed

to fuel our growth. Though this must be done in a considerate and sustainable manner that considers housing needs and amenity requirements of existing and prospective residents.

The borough has a relatively skilled population, with increasing investment in Level 4+ qualifications. However, job density is currently low, and the borough experiences a significant net outflow of commuters with key destinations including Manchester, Salford, Bolton and Rochdale. The planned major investment in the borough presents an opportunity to retain talent in high quality local jobs, helping to retain wealth and facilitating sustainable neighbourhoods.





## How do we get there?

The following actions will support our approach to attracting and retaining talent within our borough, over the next decade and beyond, to ensure that we can deliver our ambitions for sustainable and inclusive growth.

### Priority Action: Bury Investment Prospectus

The borough has an emerging strong value proposition which can be articulated in a compelling Investment Prospectus. This prospectus can be used to target potential investors, residents, and businesses by raising awareness of the breadth of the opportunities in the borough (e.g. strategic sites, investment locations, growth sectors, skilled workforce etc.). This aligns with our ambition to increase housing stock in the borough to attract economically active residents to the borough, addressing our issue of an ageing workforce.

### Priority Action: Graduate Work Placements & Apprenticeships

Our emerging Higher Education offer and increasing demand for higher level skills presents an opportunity to attract and retain graduate and apprenticeship talent. This action seeks to support graduates and young people to build experience and skills whilst raising awareness of the value of graduate talent amongst employers through facilitating graduate placements and the creation of apprenticeships.

### Priority Action: Inspirational Careers and Lifelong learning

A focus on employability and skills must support residents of all ages ability to secure good employment with pathways to upskilling, promotion and social mobility throughout their careers. This action seeks to inspire Bury's young people and adults with the breadth of opportunity for employment and progression. Targeted careers education, information, advice, and guidance (CEIAG) will support young people, transitioning education leavers through collaborative action, tailored solutions and enhanced engagement. A spotlight will be shone on important sectors and key employers to inspire young people and adults to progress into local and regional opportunities.



### 3. Reducing economic inactivity and unemployment.



#### Where do we want to be?

We have a supportive welfare system that provides access to work for those who can, support for those who could, and care for those who cannot. However, there is a pool of inactive labour in the borough which could be better utilised, although some of the barriers to work are deeply entrenched, systemic and intergenerational. We need to better understand the complexity of these issues and forge long term and integrated solutions to support and incentivise people back into work. Evidence has highlighted the increasingly tight labour market and the scale of current and future skills needs which presents opportunities for those currently inactive in the labour market to access.

There needs to be a focus on community wealth building through planned projects and investment in the borough to align opportunity and need. Sources of funding such as the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Levelling Up Funding can facilitate these objectives.







## How do we get there?

The following actions will support our approach to reducing economic inactivity, inequality and poverty, over the next decade and beyond, to ensure that we can deliver our ambitions for sustainable and inclusive growth.

**Priority Action: Coordination of multi-agency Work and Skills ecosystem activity to tackle the barriers to employment faced by Bury's out of work residents**

Greater Manchester has a well-resourced but complicated landscape of provision aimed at helping to broker those disengaged from the labour market through skills provision and back to work support. This action seeks to continue to embed and grow the integrated employment and skills eco-system which has the individual and employer at its heart, and that better responds to the needs of residents and businesses.



**Priority Action: Delivery of UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Investment Plan and further devolution of skills and employment activity through the GMCA Trailblazer devolution deal.**

The Greater Manchester UKSPF Investment Plan is built around eleven high-level interventions across three Investment Priority areas of Communities and Place, Local Businesses and People and Skills. As one of the ten constituent authorities, Bury will play an important role in delivering against the intended outputs and outcomes sought by the plan.

Bury will ensure its people, places and businesses influence and benefit from further devolved funding to Greater Manchester. Delivery across the borough will have inclusive growth and the creation of pathways to up-skilling and job opportunities at its core. We will ensure that there is a skilled pipeline of talent for all sectors of our economy at a local and regional level. Our ambition is to reduce unemployment and underemployment to levels not seen in the borough previously, thus reducing dependency on Council services and increasing economic life chances for more people.

**Priority Action: Support Community Employability Spaces**

Neighbourhood based employability spaces can provide trusted spaces which can be used by local people to develop skills, access services, and provide grassroots support for some of Bury's most vulnerable residents, including young people and adults living in deprived areas with a focus on supporting progression into employment, health services education and training. The focus will be to support delivery partners to integrate in neighbourhoods, linking to regeneration activity.



## 4. Improving health and wellbeing and reducing inequalities



### Where do we want to be?

Improved population health can support our ambitions for improving quality of life and extended life expectancy. This can be facilitated through improvements in the wider determinants of health e.g. housing environment, employment, education etc., facilitating healthy lifestyles through improving access to parks and open spaces.

In addition, we want to facilitate behaviour change support, provide access to health and well-being advice, and create healthier environments and places. We will create more cycle and walking routes and deliver integrated healthcare systems targeting those with the greatest need to change lifestyle choices.

Increasing positive health and wellbeing outcomes will have the most significant impact in some of our most deprived communities. Health inequalities are caused by differences in access to the basic building blocks of health. These include good jobs and enough money to live well, safe affordable homes, healthy food, healthy environments, and high-quality healthcare. Focused efforts to improve key building blocks in our deprived areas will improve the quality of life for some of our most disadvantaged areas and contribute to creating a borough of growth inclusivity and equality of opportunity.







## How do we get there?

The following actions will support our approach to improving health and wellbeing and reducing inequalities within our borough, over the next decade and beyond, to ensure that we can deliver our ambitions for sustainable and inclusive growth.

- **Priority Action: Embedding good health outcomes as an integral part of the employment and skills system.**

Embed good employment outcomes as a wider determinant of good health outcomes. Bury Council has a dedicated health and employment officer which provides a mechanism by which we can better promote the role of good work in supporting health and evolve existing initiatives to meet identified need in the borough. Good work offers job security, provides an income, widens social networks and gives people a purpose, contributing to improved health and well-being. This action will champion innovative approaches between health providers, DWP (Department for Work and Pensions) and Bury Council to tackle poor health as a barrier to labour market participation and build on existing programmes such as the Working Well (Work and Health) programme.

- **Priority Action: Targeting Population Health**

Improving population health and reducing health inequalities can be achieved through developing targeted initiatives to support health and wellbeing in the borough (e.g. through health and wellbeing coaches and social prescribing activities.) There is evidence that social prescribing can lead to a range of positive health and wellbeing outcomes for people, such as improved quality of life and emotional wellbeing.

- **Priority Action: Focused actions to Improve living standards**

Improving living standards is one of the most important causes of increases in life expectancy, just as health is an important driver of economic productivity. For economic growth to reduce health inequalities it must be evenly shared and benefit the least well off most. We will work across Council departments, teams, and partners, including business growth and infrastructure, planning, public health, education and skills and local businesses, to ensure all residents and communities have access to good quality and secure employment opportunities.



# OUR ECONOMY & BUSINESS



## OUR AMBITION & PRIORITIES

The baseline evidence review, analysis and stakeholder engagement activity has highlighted the importance of 'Economy & Businesses' in creating the conditions to support the following ambition for the borough:

**Economy & Business Ambition: To create the conditions for businesses to prosper and accelerate the transition to a fairer, greener and more resilient economy**

Our 'Economy & Business' Priorities are:

1. **Building the economy of the future by providing responsive infrastructure and targeted support to realise our growth potential**
2. **Supporting and inspiring a 'Bury' model of inclusive growth, community wealth building and social value**
3. **Assisting Businesses to address barriers to growth and harness opportunities**
4. **Promoting key sectors to maximise opportunity and inclusive growth**
5. **Resilient and growing SMEs supported through an integrated and connected business ecosystem**



## 1. Building the economy of the future by providing responsive infrastructure and targeted support to realise our growth potential

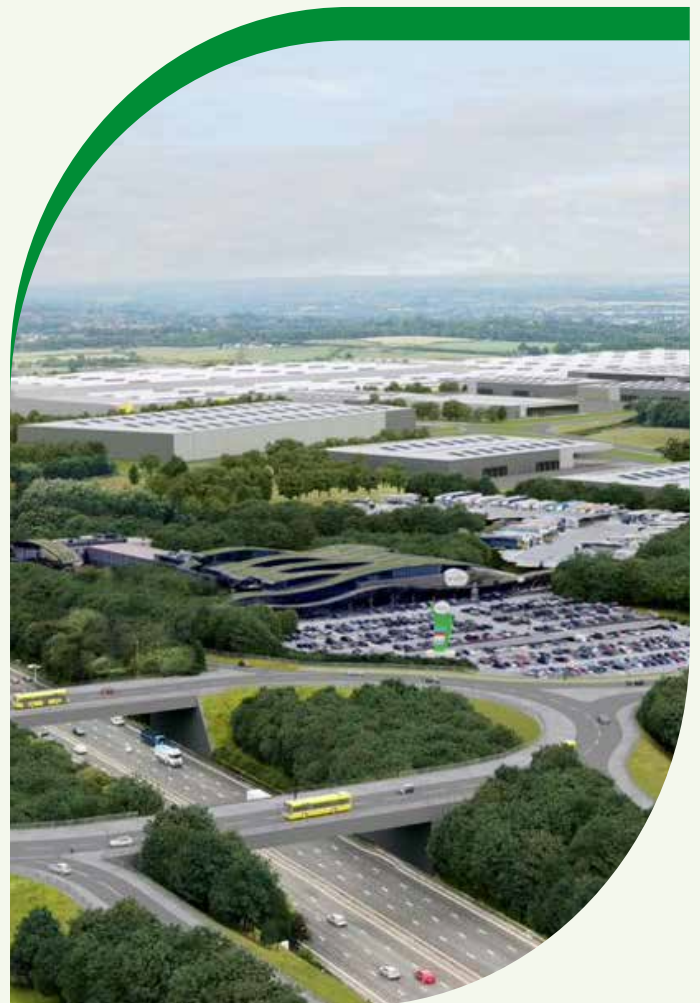


### Where do we want to be?

The borough has tremendous economic growth potential framed by the sheer scale of planned and potential major investment in employment and housing sites, town centres and within key sectors. This presents an opportunity to create a step change in the number of jobs and stem the outflow of talent seeking jobs elsewhere.

We need to leverage these opportunities to facilitate a more resilient and innovative economy characterised by increased private sector employment and a broad range of quality jobs across diverse sectors. At present one in five jobs in the borough is in the public sector, while these roles provide important foundational services, they also contribute to skills shortages in the private sector. We need to build an inclusive economy which strategically positions residents and businesses to access the resultant jobs, spend and investment.

There is scope for us to become a leading location in some of the UK's new and emerging sectors. Forecasts undertaken by the Greater Manchester Forecasting Model suggest rapid growth of over 50% in the scientific, research and development sector in the next two decades, compared to predicted growth of 17% nationally. Ensuring our future economy is one of advanced sectors will create prosperity for residents, in the form of high skilled high paid employment, investment for our businesses and overall economic development for the borough as a whole.







## How do we get there?

The following actions will support our approach to building the economy of the future in the borough through providing the responsive infrastructure and targeted support required to realise our growth potential.

### Priority Action: Development of an 'All Age' Skills Strategy

Building a talent pipeline from a young age will align future skills needs with opportunity. Developing a Bury Skills Strategy for all age groups to support progression pathways and encourage upskilling and reskilling in response to identified demand will facilitate business competitiveness and address barriers to growth. The Skills Strategy will focus on major investment (including Atom Valley and town centres) and key sectors (such as manufacturing, health and social care, creative and digital etc.) to identify future skill needs and ensure responsive supply. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic the borough had a skills shortage induced vacancy rate of 9%. Closing this gap would allow businesses to overcome growth barriers while providing opportunities for our residents. Cross cutting themes such as digital skills, green skills, and leadership and management skills will support residents and businesses to be responsive and better navigate the current drivers of change.

### Priority Action: Bury Means Business Support

Bury Means Business to act as a single point of first contact for businesses seeking support across various themes. Providing a tailored response to future trends and disruptors such as automation, decarbonisation, EU Exit, the energy crisis, and recruitment pressures through raising awareness and directing Bury businesses to access high quality business support.





## 2. Supporting and inspiring a 'Bury' model of inclusive growth, community wealth building and social value



### Where do we want to be?

All our residents are entitled to reap the benefits of a growing economy through the process of community wealth building and the encouragement of social value led programmes we will create a new Bury model of inclusive growth.

As outlined in the Let's Do It strategy, through partnerships we will leverage Bury's collective power for social and economic development as a means of improving the health and wellbeing of our residents.

The people in our borough have significant scope to benefit from emerging employment opportunities such as the kickstart initiative and Bury Works. We must ensure that there are sufficient pipelines in place that will allow for all our residents regardless of age, skill level and geographical location to benefit from the opportunity of rewarding and fulfilling work.





## How do we get there?

The following action will support our ambition to deliver a 'Bury' model of inclusive growth, community wealth building and social value. This will be critically important in ensuring that our growth ambitions are met in a way which delivers the maximum benefit for the borough's residents and businesses.

**Priority Action: Through collaboration with partners a joint programme of activity will be delivered**

A joint programme with Bury Council and Bury VCFA organisations to support the growth of a Bury network of potential co-operatives, mutuals and social community enterprises and linking into the Greater Manchester Inclusive Growth Platform engagement. A spotlight will be shone on important sectors and key employers to inspire young people and adults to progress into local and regional opportunities.



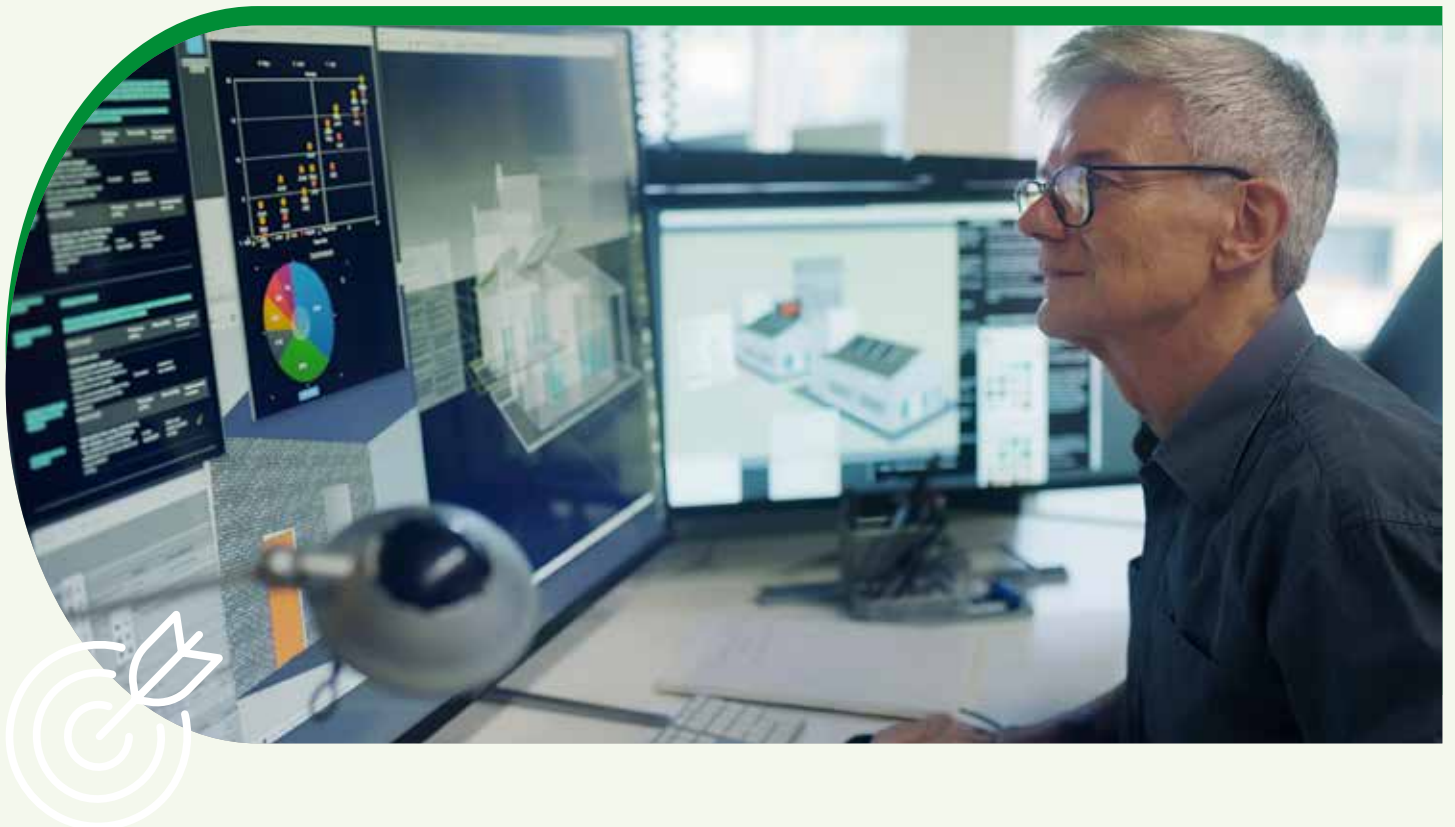
### 3. Assisting Businesses to address barriers to growth and harness opportunities



#### Where do we want to be?

The Greater Manchester Independent Prosperity Review (IPR) provided an assessment of the city-region's economy and the factors contributing to its performance, including the challenges related to productivity improvements. Amongst other things, the IPR recommended that the productivity of businesses across sectors could be improved through increasing skills utilisation, supporting the evolution of sectors to increase their capacity for innovation and transition to higher value activity, providing good and well-paid work, and more support for better health in the workforce. These recommendations resonate with identified needs and opportunities in the borough.

The borough already has a skills under-utilisation rate lower than Greater Manchester level, with a proportion of underutilised skills estimated to be 34% compared to 36% across the city region. We can further improve this and ensure our skills gaps match any underutilised skills in our economy to resolve challenges around under-employment alongside skills shortages in the borough.







## How do we get there?

The following actions will support our ambitions for growth by providing greater insights on the barriers businesses are facing, to better understand the growth opportunities which are available to businesses, while also enabling the promotion and delivery of targeted and tailored business support.

### Priority Action: Business Needs Survey

A Bury Business Needs Survey will be undertaken to explore opportunities and barriers to growth in greater depth, including skill needs, sites and premises requirements, business support needs etc. This can facilitate a tailored response to address identified issues and opportunities. This can build on the understanding gained through the Growth Company business survey undertaken across Greater Manchester and add value and insight at a local level.

### Priority Action: Promote and deliver business start-up and growth support with our partners

The borough is home to a micro-dominated and fast-growing business base. We want to capture the entrepreneurial spirit in Bury and support untapped creativity. With our partners we will promote easy to access start-up and growth support with a pipeline of wrap around provision including access to finance, mentoring, digital enablement, and post start up support. We will also actively create and promote flexible working spaces to provide a platform for expansion and co-working.

### Priority Action: Work collaboratively with our partners to build pathways to employment in those sectors that have high vacancy rates

The borough is experiencing high vacancy rates in both the frontier and foundational economy in the short-term. We will respond to skill shortages by working closely with employers to test innovate approaches to recruitment and retention and further support organisations to become members or aspire to membership of the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter.



## 4. Promoting key sectors to maximise opportunity and inclusive growth



### Where do we want to be?

The sectors of advanced manufacturing, creative and digital, hospitality and tourism, and low carbon are identified as sectors of growing importance for the Bury's economy which can play a key role in the borough's economic growth. Major development in Atom Valley and in town centres will support growth in these key sectors.

These sectors will provide a diverse range of employment activity for the borough, with high paid and high skilled employment opportunities being particularly plentiful in the advanced manufacturing, creative and digital sectors. It will be necessary to ensure home grown talent is available for this future economy if Bury's residents are to take advantage of these emerging opportunities.

While hospitality and tourism are not traditionally considered high paid employment sectors, they are nevertheless sectors that offer a wide degree of opportunity. The borough's visitor economy presents the ability to draw in visitors and expenditure from outside of the borough and, despite challenges presented by COVID-19, can be revitalised by leveraging on the diverse visitor assets that exist across the borough.







## How do we get there?

The following actions will support our approach to developing and promoting key sectors in order to maximise economic opportunities and to deliver inclusive growth for residents across the borough.

### Priority Action: Inward Investment Strategy

A borough-wide inward investment strategy which focuses on key sites such as Atom Valley and key sectors will raise the profile of Bury's investment proposition and facilitate targeted action to secure investment. A key output will include updated intelligence on the borough's investment proposition to facilitate a bespoke response to enquiries.

### Priority Action: Support high value and growth businesses to plan for future developments

Atom Valley and the Northern Gateway present a 'gamechanger' opportunity delivering economic prosperity in Bury and our neighbouring Local Authorities. Bury Council will work with our business support partners to prepare our indigenous high value and growth potential businesses to plan for future growth through innovation, digital enablement, and new models of operation to benefit from this huge investment in the North of the conurbation. We will bring our foundational economy with us recognising its importance to the economy.



## 5. Resilient and growing SMEs supported through an integrated and connected business ecosystem



### Where do we want to be?

Building on the borough's large micro business and fast-growing business base, there is a need to support the further development of entrepreneurship, the start-up and scale up of new and micro-businesses and encourage growth in social businesses.

We need to support our SMEs to be responsive and agile to drivers of change and be well positioned to access emerging opportunities presented in supply chains and major investment. This requires access to simplified, coherent and tailored business support which our businesses can easily navigate.

The current economic climate around inflation and rising costs of energy is a significant concern for many of our SMEs. Recent economic challenges have shown that many of our SME community are resilient and with the right degree of support and guidance will be able to weather these challenges. This will be best done through a collaborative process between small businesses and business support mechanisms.





## How do we get there?

The following actions will support a more integrated and connected business support ecosystem, enabling the borough's SME business base to grow and be more resilient in the face of drivers of change, as well as be better positioned to respond to business opportunities over the next decade.

### Priority Action: Enterprise Support for Start Ups and Scale Ups

Working with current providers to provide a targeted Bury support offer to nurture start-ups and scale ups in the borough. 90% of Bury businesses are small or micro-organisations with specific needs and growth barriers - supporting these businesses will provide prosperity and, importantly, resilience to the borough's economy. This also aligns with GM UKSPF (UK Shared Prosperity Fund) intentions to strengthen local entrepreneurial ecosystems and support businesses at all stages of their development to start, sustain, grow, and innovate, including through local networks.

### Priority Action: Supply Chain Development aligned to major investment

Facilitate community wealth building through strengthening supply chain opportunities associated with planned major investment through commissioning, procurement, and planning processes. Build on and extend supply chain business support programmes to tailor to the opportunities presented in Bury which local businesses can be supported to access.

### Priority Action: Bury Means Business Support Offer

A simplified and joined up business support offer will guide businesses and investors to the most appropriate support. This action will include an enhanced business database/ CRM system, an updated Bury Means Business website, and joining up activity in the different parts of Council through a single point of contact.

### Priority Action: Workspace Development

Aligned to the Place Pillar, this action will facilitate the provision of a comprehensive workspace offer to ensure that the borough has the sites and premises available to enable businesses to start up, scale up and grow within the borough. Recent data has suggested low vacancy rates in all commercial property types. Awareness of available sites and premises will be promoted through the 'Bury Means Business' portal. This action includes securing continued investment to expand and refurbish the offer to meet modern requirements.



# DELIVERING OUR VISION & STRATEGY







**Bury's Economic Strategy can only be successfully delivered through the combined efforts of our partners and stakeholders. Our borough already benefits from a strong culture of partnership working, ensuring there is a shared interest in striving for the best outcomes for our residents, businesses, and our environment.**



## GOVERNANCE - ROLE OF BURY COUNCIL & PARTNERS

We want and need to harness the collective knowledge, insight, skills and passion for delivering positive change within our borough.

The Economic Strategy and the accompanying Action Plan will be owned by Team Bury supported by the Bury Business Leadership Group.

Team Bury and the Bury Business Leadership Group is fortunate to have a diverse and committed talent pool on which we can draw relevant expertise that will support and enable the delivery of an ambitious programme of priorities and actions within the Strategy and Action Plan.

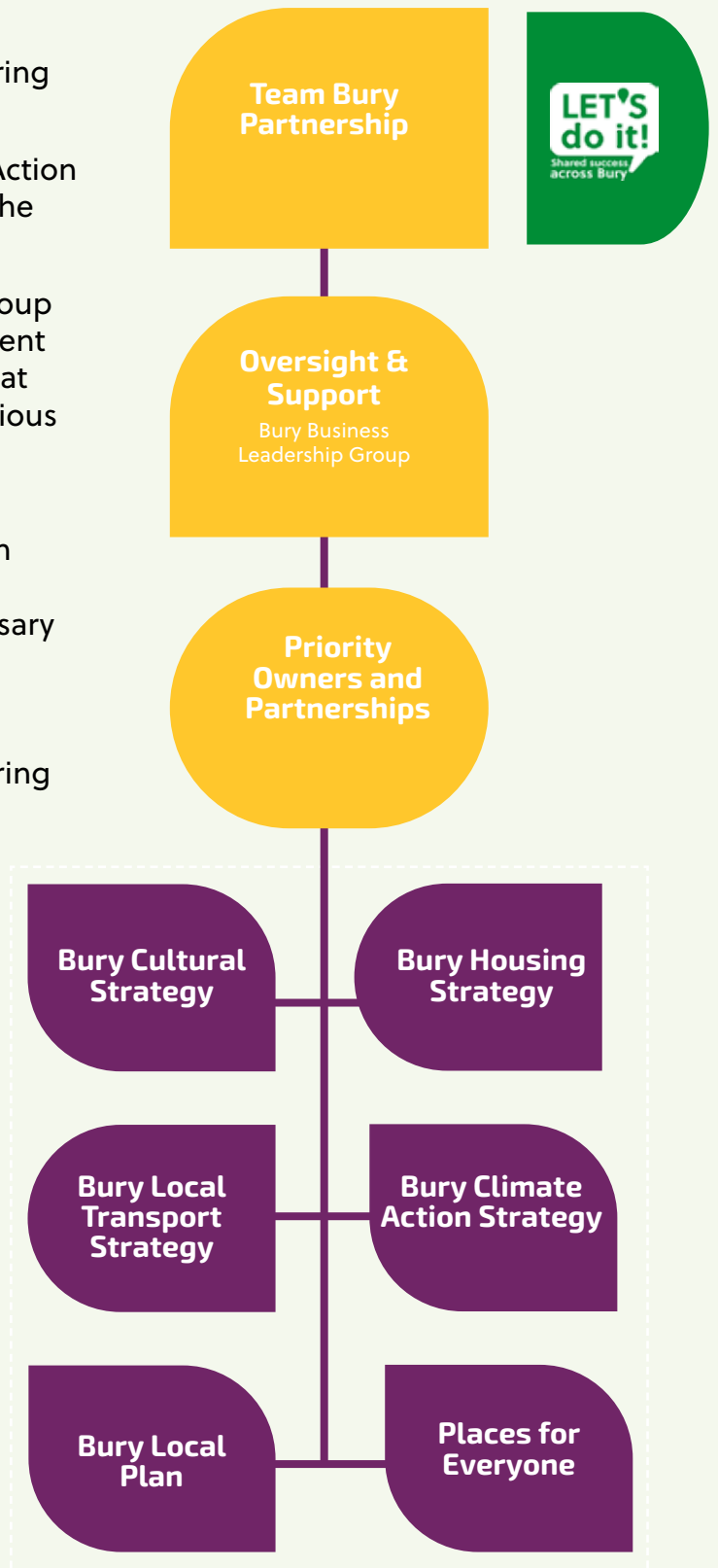
While Bury Council has a key role to play through its service delivery and functions, the role of the partnership is key to ensuring there is the necessary collective drive and influence to deliver tangible change in the borough. Collective oversight and ownership will be crucial in implementing and delivering the priority actions, as well as monitoring progress.

## ACTION PLAN & MONITORING

The Action Plan accompanying the Economic Strategy provides further detail on the priority actions, action timescales, delivery owners, as well as identifying measurable outcomes to inform our progress in future years.

Regular reporting will be shared through partnership and organisational performance reporting.

The action plan will be reviewed on an annual basis.



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our partnerships across Bury are really important to us. Working collaboratively is how we get things done.

It is this joint action that will support us to achieve our ambitions for Place, People and Business.

We have leant on our partners for feedback on our collective direction of travel and we want to acknowledge the time and support that they have given to us throughout the development of our Economic Strategy.

Together we have established a new and ambitious Economic Strategy for the Bury borough.

Bury Business  
Leadership Group

 GM Business  
Growth Hub

 **CLES**  
the national organisation  
for local economies

**HATCH**

 **open**  
optimised environments | PART OF  **SLR**

**Bury**  
Council

# **ECONOMIC STRATEGY**

**Fairer, Greener, More  
Competitive, Resilient**

**JANUARY 2024 - JANUARY 2034**

