

Minutes of: **CABINET**

Date of Meeting: 5 March 2025

Present: Councillor E O'Brien (in the Chair)
Councillors C Cummins, C Morris, A Quinn, T Rafiq, L Smith, T Tariq, S Thorpe and S Walmsley

Also in attendance: Councillors R Bernstein and M Smith.
Lynne Ridsdale, Jacqui Dennis, Julie Gallagher, Chloe Ashworth, Cris Logue, Chris Woodhouse, Simon Peet and Will Blandamer.

Public Attendance: 2 members of the public was present at the meeting.

Apologies for Absence: None.

CA.321 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies received.

CA.322 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

CA.323 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

CA.324 MEMBER QUESTION TIME

There were no Member questions.

CA.325 MINUTES

It was agreed:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 12th February be approved as a correct record.

CA.326 Q3 PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation presented the report which outlined an update on the progress for the third quarter of the financial year (October to December 2024) against the Corporate Plan priorities and objectives.

Councillor Bernstein raised a query in relation to staff turnover, members were informed by Councillor Thorpe, Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation that the staff turnover is 12 ½ % and this is expected in a large organisation. The Leader added that the areas for turnover are equally important and this detail could be considered outside the Cabinet meeting. Members held discussions regarding the 4% vacancy factor which is within our budgetary savings for this year 2025/26 and it is reflective of the current market. In addition Lynne Ridsdale, Chief Executive assured members that modelling has taken place to determine the vacancy factor and it will be monitored to review at Executive Team Level before they go out to advert.

Decision:

The Cabinet:

1. Noted the update on progress against the Corporate Plan 2024/25.

Reason for the decision:

To enable transparency and robust monitoring of performance and delivery of the Corporate Plan.

Other options considered and rejected:

Not applicable.

CA.327 Q3 FINANCE POSITION

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation presented the report which outlined an update on the forecast revenue outturn position, forecast savings position, forecast capital outturn position, forecast collection fund position and forecast for the housing revenue account as at 31st December for the third quarter of the financial year (October to December 2024).

Councillor Bernstein sought assurance the regarding the underspend and the external audit fees. In response Councillor Thorpe, Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation advised that areas that are more unpredictable such as children's and adult's social care services are currently managed but things can change. In relation to Audit fees, Cllr Thorpe did advise that he will seek a response.

Decision:

The Cabinet:

- Note the 2024/25 forecast revenue outturn position as at 31 December 2024 of a £2.660m overspend (1.19%) against a net budget of £224.480m.
- Note the 2024/25 forecast savings position as at 31 December 2024 of a forecast underachievement of £77k (-1.21%) against an agreed target of £6.345m.
- Approve the in-year updates and re-phasing of the capital programme, revising the capital delivery programme for 2024/25 to £79.174m which will form the basis for future in-year monitoring and reporting of performance.
- Note the 2024/25 forecast Collection Fund Position as at 31 December 2024 of a surplus of £0.986m of which £0.786m relates to Bury's share.
- Approve the revised Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget of a £6.239m surplus before appropriations following the work undertaken to integrate the Six Town Housing budgets and management structure into the HRA.

Reason for the decision:

- To update members on the Council's budgetary position and actions taken or being taken to ensure budgetary targets are achieved.
- This report is in accordance with the Council's financial procedure regulations.

Other options considered and rejected:

Not applicable.

CA.328 LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE ORGANISATION PROVISION FOR BURY'S VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY, FAITH AND SOCIAL ENTERPRISE SECTOR FROM APRIL 2025

Cabinet Member for Communities and Inclusion presented the report which outlined that the specification for the Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) local infrastructure provision has been updated and tailored to reflect the latest regional and local context and priorities. This provision is to support the Bury deliver vital community capacity, inspiration and opportunity for greater participation, to improve outcomes for local people, tackle inequality and raise life chances, whilst ensuring effective use of ever scarce resource.

Decision:

The Cabinet:

1. Agreed the revised delivery framework with Bury Voluntary and Community Faith Alliance for local infrastructure organisation provision and is funded for 2025/26, with intent signalled on continuation for the following years subject to confirmation of funding availability across the Council and public sector partners.

Reason for the decision:

2. The funding of infrastructure provision in the Borough provides a clear commitment to the importance of the voluntary and community sector.
3. By refreshing the Service Level Agreement the report seeks to strengthen the recognition of the sector as key partner in improving outcomes for local people and the role infrastructure support plays in ensuring this is robust, recognised and representative.
4. The agreement allows for a clear focus of activity to develop Bury's VCFSE ecosystem in a tailored manner to best meet local needs, in turn delivering on LET'S Do It! and GM VCFSE Accord commitments.

Other options considered and rejected:

To not fund, or make a reduction in funding would significantly risk the loss of infrastructure support in the Borough, destabilising the wider VCFSE sector and jeopardise the positive progress made in recent years. Whilst recognising the financial pressures that the Council itself is under, investment in the infrastructure support to the VCFSE sector supports steps to increase the resilience of the sector itself, including supporting groups to attract inward investment into the Borough and diversity income generation streams. 4

To not update the specification would fail to capitalise on progress made in recent years but more importantly miss the opportunity to further tailor and target the focus of infrastructure support provision to be an enabler and facilitator of a sector contributing in a pivotal way to realising the Borough's LETS vision. As such to not update the specification would have risked there not been the appropriate local focus on ensuring a sustainable VCFSE ecosystem, best positioned and supported to enhance and enable local outcomes at place.

CA.329 BURY COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY 2025-2028

Councillor Walmsley, Cabinet Member for Communities and Inclusion presented the report which outlined that the Bury Community Safety Partnership Strategy details the delivery in Bury of national safety missions, alongside local delivery of the Greater Manchester Police and Crime Plan, tailoring and targeting resources to address specific local priorities derived from partnership data and insight from local people.

Councillor Bernstein sought assurances regarding how the plan will consider concerns from the Jewish community. In response Councillor Walmsley advised that the Community Safety Partnership is acutely aware of sentiments within local communities, particular in the Borough's Jewish communities given the challenging international landscape and following the 7th October 2023 attack. The report to the Council's Overview & Scrutiny in November recognised some of the activity which has, and continues to take place, particularly across the Tri-Borough footprint of Bury, Salford and Manchester, and in conjunction with partners such as the Community Security Trust and Shomrim. The Strategy directly acknowledges the largest Jewish communities that form an integral part of the Borough and are a consideration throughout the priorities of the strategy. There have been a number of projects funded through Standing Together monies which are specifically focusing on support either directly to Jewish communities or working across communities to increase awareness, understanding and respect. Councillor Walmsley, Cabinet Member for Communities and Inclusion requested if any member has any community intelligence or issues to raise them directly.

Decision:

The Cabinet:

1. Approved the Bury Community Safety Partnership Strategy 2025-2028
2. Will receive regular updates on the delivery of the Strategy through input into Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Reason for the decision:

Bury Council is a statutory member of Community Safety Partnership, including Executive leadership being co-chair of the Partnership. This endorsement demonstrates the commitment of the Council to delivering against local community safety priorities and through updates to Scrutiny ensures the strategy remains live during its life course.

Other options considered and rejected:

There is a statutory requirement for each Community Safety Partnership to produce a strategy outlining how the local authority in each locality will work in partnership to identify and address local safety priorities; this report and strategy is fulfilling that requirement

CA.330 DRAFT LOCAL PLAN (CONSULTATION DRAFT PLAN)

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth presented the report which outlined the part two Local Plan. Members were informed that Places for Everyone (PfE) is a part one plan that covers nine of the ten Greater Manchester districts. Places for Everyone was adopted in March 2024 and provides the strategic framework within which the participating districts need to develop their own part two Local Plans. The part two Local Plan provides a more detailed set of locally specific planning policies to complement the strategic policies within Places for Everyone. Once adopted, Bury's Local Plan policies will replace the saved policies in the Unitary Development Plan and will sit alongside Places for Everyone and the joint Greater Manchester Minerals and Waste Plans in forming Bury's wider development plan.

Councillor Smith sought clarity regarding 'house in multiple occupation' properties and what considered to be an unacceptable concentration of these properties. In response the Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth advised this guidance will allow for more informed decisions and understandings regarding an unacceptable level of concentration. In addition Cris Logue Assistant Director of Strategy, Planning & Development confirmed that each area in the consultation will include a topic paper.

The Leader wished to place on record a thanks to Cris Logue, Dave Marno and their teams for preparing the documents which demonstrate a large piece of work that has been undertaken.

Decision:

The Cabinet:

1. Approved the draft Bury Local Plan, draft Policies Map and supporting background documents for an eight-week public consultation commencing no earlier than 17 March 2025;
2. Delegated approval to the Executive Director of Place to make minor non-material editorial amendments to the draft Local Plan before consultation commences.

Reason for the decision:

To ensure that stakeholders have an opportunity to have their say on the draft Bury Local Plan.

Other options considered and rejected:

To not approve the Local Plan for consultation - This would prevent stakeholders commenting on the draft Local Plan and would result in the future adoption of the document being contrary to planning regulations.

CA.331 ADOPTION OF SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT – HOLCROFT MOSS PLANNING OBLIGATIONS

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth presented the report which outlined the Holcroft Moss Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document which applies across the whole Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document area and has, therefore, been prepared jointly by the nine Places for Everyone Plan authorities.

Decision:

The Cabinet:

1. Agreed to adopt the Holcroft Moss Planning Obligations Joint Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), attached at Appendix 1, and the Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth in consultation with the Executive Director (Place) be given delegated authority to agree the date on which the SPD takes effect.
2. Agreed to provide Warrington Metropolitan Borough Council (as the responsible authority for implementing a mitigation strategy for Holcroft Moss) as necessary and through an appropriate mechanism, with S106 funds collected in accordance with the Holcroft Moss SPD.

3. Delegated approval to the Executive Director (Place) to make minor, non-material modifications to the Holcroft Moss Joint Supplementary Planning Document before final publication, subject to consultation and agreement with the eight other Places for Everyone authorities.

Reason for the decision:

To ensure that the Holcroft Moss Supplementary Planning Document can become a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and that developer contributions required to mitigate adverse impact(s) on the protected habitats and species of Holcroft Moss can be collected and appropriately handled.

Other options considered and rejected:

To not approve the SPD for adoption. This would prevent the SPD from becoming a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and hinder the collection of developer contributions required to mitigate adverse impact(s) on the protected habitats and species of Holcroft Moss.

CA.332 NORTHERN GATEWAY DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth presented the report which set out the results of the consultation on the draft Northern Gateway Development Framework (NGDF) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and sought approval for the final NGDF to be adopted.

Been positively received by the joint venture and really engaged and see as positive example and working well together

Decision:

The Cabinet:

1. Noted the responses to the public consultation and proposed post consultation revisions set out in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 to this report;
2. Approved the revised NGDF as the final version to be adopted and published.
3. Delegated authority to the Executive Director (Place), to make any minor non-material editorial amendments to the NGDF ahead of its final publication.

Reason for the decision:

The adoption of the document will establish a framework against which future planning applications on the Northern Gateway site will be considered, sets out high level design principles and an approach to the delivery and phasing of infrastructure on and off site.

Other options considered and rejected:

No other options were considered/were applicable.

CA.333 NORTHERN GATEWAY MDC

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth presented the report which proposed that a Mayoral Development Corporation is created to reflect the importance of the site

regionally and nationally. It is also an appropriate time to create more formal procedures for working with Rochdale Council in bringing the sites forward, until such time as the Mayoral Development Corporation is in place. As such, it is proposed that a Memorandum of Understanding is entered into between the two districts.

Decision:

The Cabinet:

1. Endorsed the principles of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which has been developed to formalise the joint working arrangements with Rochdale Council to progress work on Atom Valley and Northern Gateway.
2. Delegated authority to the Director of Law and Democratic Services in consultation with the Executive Director of Place and the Council Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth to develop the detail of the joint district MoU and formalise the agreement, or any subsequent agreement which is deemed necessary.
3. Noted the recommendations contained within Northern Gateway Delivery Vehicle Options Paper (Deloitte) and endorses the Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) as the preferred delivery vehicle for Northern Gateway.
4. Approved the boundary (Appendix A) and name of the Northern Gateway MDC, in addition to endorsement of the proposed consultees
5. Authorised the approval to consult on an MDC as the preferred delivery vehicle for Northern Gateway to facilitate the establishment of an MDC, subject to the outcome of the consultation.
6. Noted that a further report will be brought back to Cabinet before an MDC will be formally implemented, with more details on its Governance structure and operations.
7. Noted Rochdale Borough Council's intention to take a similar report to their respective Executive in respect all items detailed above.
8. That, subject to the decisions of this Council and Rochdale Council, a report will be presented to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority requesting that it endorse the proposal to consult on the establishment of a Mayoral Development Corporation as the preferred delivery vehicle for Northern Gateway.
9. That a further report will be presented to Cabinet following the outcome of the consultation before any recommendation is made to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority to request the Secretary of State to formally establish an MDC for the Northern Gateway site.

Reason for the decision:

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Further to Cabinet approval in September 2024 to endorse the development of joint working arrangements with Rochdale Council, approval of the principles of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Rochdale Council and delegation to develop and formalise the MoU will further cement alignment of our shared commitment to work together with our partners to deliver Northern Gateway.

Following Cabinet endorsement in September 2024 to allow officers to explore potential delivery options for Northern Gateway, joint advice was commissioned between the Councils

and Greater Manchester Combined Authority which concludes that a Mayoral Development Corporation is the most appropriate delivery vehicle to achieve our shared ambitions for the Northern Gateway. Approval to consult on the implementation of an MDC as the preferred delivery vehicle for Northern Gateway will allow the statutory process for implementation to progress for an MDC to be established, there is a statutory requirement for a consultation to take place.

Approval of the proposed name and boundary of the Northern Gateway MDC will provide the material required to commence the statutory consultation process

Other options considered and rejected:

That the principles of the Memorandum of Understanding are not approved, undermining the relationship that has been built up with Rochdale Council and increasing risk to the delivery of Northern Gateway.

That the MDC is not endorsed as the preferred delivery vehicle for Northern Gateway. Prior to identifying an MDC as the recommended delivery vehicle for Northern Gateway, the Northern Gateway Delivery Vehicle Options Paper (Deloitte) undertook an analysis of a range of alternative vehicles. These alternative vehicles were discounted for a range of reasons, including intensive time and resources required to set up, level of risk share with the private sector, insufficient powers, difficulties in creating cross-boundary governance and reliance on pending legislation creating threats to delivery timelines based on an untested model with no best practise basis.

That the proposed MDC boundary and name are not approved, which would result in the consultation not being able to take place.

That the approval to consult on the Northern Gateway MDC is not given, meaning further work could not progress on its implementation and increasing risk to the cohesive delivery of Northern Gateway.

CA.334 CARE AT HOME TENDER APPROVAL

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing presented the report which outlined that the current Care at Home service was commissioned in October 2021 for a period of three years and extended for a further 12-months until October 2025. Therefore, it is now necessary to seek permission to start the process which will ultimately result in the procurement of a new Care at Home contract in Bury starting in October 2025.

Decision:

The Cabinet:

1. Approval to commence the re-tender (open tender process) for a new Care at Home service to start in October 2025 for a period of 3 years with the option to extend for one year plus one year, at a cost of approximately £10m a year.
2. Delegate the authority to approve the service specification to the Director of Adult Social Services and Community Commissioning.
3. Return to Cabinet in September 2025 to request approval to contract awards.

Reason for the decision:

The Council has a legal duty to follow Procurement Law and fair purchasing processes.

Other options considered and rejected:

Alternative options are not applicable due to Procurement Law and the requirement to complete a re-tender exercise.

CA.335 SALE OF NEW SUMMERSEAT HOUSE, RAMSBOTTOM.

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth presented the report which recommended that New Summerseat House in Ramsbottom is disposed of via auction. The site is part of the Asset Transformation Programme (formerly the Accelerated Land and Property Disposal programme) and has been vacant for many years. The disposal of this site will bring forward the restoration of this listed building, end problems caused to local residents by the empty building attracting anti-social behaviour and remove ongoing liabilities to the Council for security and maintenance.

Decision:

The Cabinet:

1. Noted the intention to dispose of New Summerseat House via auction subject to the auction reaching the reserve price.
2. Delegated the agreement of the reserve price to the Director of Law and Democratic Services and the Executive Director (Place).
3. Delegated the final signing of all contracts required to complete the transaction to the Director of Law and Democratic services. It should be noted that when the gavel falls a binding legal agreement is formed with an obligation to complete usually within 20 working days.

Reason for the decision:

To bring forward the sale of New Summerseat house in a timely manner thereby reducing ongoing liabilities to the Council and to bring the site forward for redevelopment.

Other options considered and rejected:

Option 1 – Do nothing

In this scenario the property would be left vacant, its condition would further deteriorate, and the property would continue to attract anti-social behaviour. The Council would be responsible for ongoing security and maintenance costs. This option would not ensure the renovation of the listed building and possible redevelopment of the site. As such, this option has been discounted.

Option 2 – Dispose at auction

This option would see the property asset disposed of in a timely manner with a capital receipt received in the summer of 2025. The disposal will remove the ongoing liabilities to the Council for security and maintenance and bring the site and listed building forward for redevelopment.

CA.336 EXTENSION OF BURY SUBSTANCE MISUSE SERVICE

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing presented the report which requested the extension of Bury Council's current substance misuse contract with Greater Manchester Mental Health for a final twelve months, from 1st April 2025 – 31st March 2026.

Decision:

The Cabinet:

1. Extend Bury Council's current substance misuse contract with GMMH for a final twelve months, from 1st April 2025 – 31st March 2026 and not proceed with a direct award to the current provider for a longer term.
2. Agree for Public Health colleagues to explore competitive retender opportunities from 01st April 26, including partnering with other Local Authorities whose substance misuse contracts with GMMH also expire on 31st March 2026.

Reason for the decision:

Tender for new provider(s)

Pros:

- Allows direct comparison to other providers.
- Reduced management fee rates to enabling more investment in workforce and staffing
- Ensures the Council is achieving best value for money and maintains service quality for our residents.
- Supports cluster commissioning with other GM Local Authorities, ensuring a consistent service offer, whilst reducing commissioning, legal and procurement capacity demands across all four LA's.
- Enables better value for the same cost, whether through price reductions, improved service quality or added value over a long term contract.
- Would align with current / planned projects and external funding streams, such as OHID grants.
- Maintains the partnership between partnership authorities (Bolton, Salford and Trafford) who will also be ending their contract with GMMH. This currently allows for economies of scale of work, shared back-office functions and a peer support approach across all organisations involved.
- Cluster commissioning model is successfully used for Bury's Sexual Health contract, where Bury, Oldham and Rochdale Councils collaborate.
- The retender process will consider the various elements of the substance misuse service which includes adults, young people, and assertive outreach. This may mean we consider tendering for more than one provider to cover all service needs effectively.

Cons:

- Disruption to current service users and staff. Anecdotal reports from the last tender in 2018 demonstrated that implementation of a new provider can cause disruption to service users and lead to low staff morale.
- Potential disruption to performance.
- Loss of Addictions services at GMMH, with all four LA areas ending their contract with the trust as of 31/3/26.
- The council will need to procure services under the new procurement Act (2023) under the Provider Selection Regime (PSR) which will change process to procure health services and adhere to new processes and legislation.

Other options considered and rejected:

Extending the current contract for a further 12 months will ensure continuity for ongoing projects and funding streams while future options are considered.

Public Health acknowledges that a 12-month extension will provide an opportunity to explore all options for future service provision, including potential procurement alongside other GM LA's. While the service configuration and provider may change, this review will ensure that future provision delivers the highest quality and best value for money for residents.

Public Health is committed to working closely with GMMH during the 12-month extension period on develop a sustainable service that meets the needs of Bury residents and retains the local bury workforce within a future long term contract with the successful provider(s).

CA.337 UNIT 4 SYSTEM UPGRADE & TRANSFORMATION STRATEGIC PARTNER CONTRACT AWARD

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation presented the report which was a follow on from the Unit 4 Contract Award Report approved by Cabinet on 25 September 2025 and Unit 4 System Upgrade & Transformation Report approved by Cabinet on 12 February 2025.

Decision:

The Cabinet:

1. Approve the award of the Strategic Partner to the successful supplier.
2. Approve the one-off capital investment cost to be incepted into the capital programme, to be funded from a combination of earmarked reserves and/or capital receipts

Reason for the decision:

The current Financial Management System is nearing the end of its lifecycle, which limits efforts to modernise. Challenges include fragmented financial processes, reliance on manual tasks, and a lack of self-service options for staff and suppliers. There are also number of inherent risks and compliance concerns regarding the existing system alongside high reliance on manually based financial transaction activities which is affecting the efficiency of the finance service and the wider organisation.

As stated in the September Cabinet report, Unit 4 have informed clients that the current on-premises version of Unit 4, which the council operates will be unsupported after 2026 and therefore this creates a burning platform to change and modernise the Financial Management System, but also an opportunity to drive through financial transformation programme throughout the Council.

Other options considered and rejected:

None.

CA.338 APPOINTMENT OF THE DEPUTY MAYOR

Decision:

That Council be recommended to appoint Councillor Tahir Rafiq as Deputy Mayor for the Civic year 2025/26.

CA.339 MINUTES OF ASSOCIATION OF GREATER MANCHESTER AUTHORITIES / GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

It was agreed:

That the minutes of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority meeting held on 31st January 2025 be noted.

CA.340 URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

CA.341 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Decision:

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting under Section 100 (A)(4), Schedule 12(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, for the reason that the following business involves the disclosure of exempt information as detailed against the item.

CA.342 UNIT 4 SYSTEM UPGRADE & TRANSFORMATION STRATEGIC PARTNER CONTRACT AWARD - PART B

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation presented the Part B report which set out the full financial details which was a follow on from the Unit 4 Contract Award Report approved by Cabinet on 25 September 2025 and Unit 4 System Upgrade & Transformation Report approved by Cabinet on 12 February 2025.

Decision:

The Cabinet:

1. Approve the award of the Strategic Partner to the successful supplier.
2. Approve the one-off capital investment cost to be incepted into the capital programme, to be funded from a combination of earmarked reserves and/or capital receipts

Reason for the decision:

As set out for Part A.

Other options considered and rejected:

As set out for Part A.

COUNCILLOR E O'BRIEN
Chair

(Note: The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.30 pm)

