

**COUNCIL MEETING**  
**9 July 2014**  
**LEADER'S STATEMENT**

Madam Mayor, Members and Officers of the Council, there has been only one meeting of the Cabinet since the last meeting of the Council.

**Private Sector Housing Renew Assistance Policy**

This Policy focuses on vulnerable people exposed to risk and, in particular, disabled adults and disabled children. A number of the specific forms of housing assistance the Council is empowered to provide under this Policy will complement and support the wider welfare responsibilities of the Council.

In broad terms the Policy is aimed at priority areas such as preventing trips and falls, bringing empty properties back into use, improving energy efficiency etc will be taken and often these will have their own criteria and requirements.

## **Radcliffe Bus Station**

I was pleased to see the Cabinet agree the £2m project brief which bring the creation of a new state of the art bus station which a is a key part of our regeneration plans for the centre of Radcliffe. I hope with this new the doubters will have the good grace to acknowledge the work of the Council in committing significant finances to Radcliffe's future prosperity at such a challenging time financially for the Council.

## **Radcliffe Primary School**

I visited the school recently and was shocked at some of the conditions the staff and children were working in.

So I was equally pleased to see the Cabinet sign off the £2m project brief which will see major parts of the school completely rebuilt and refurbished.

## **Decent Homes – The Bury Standard**

The Cabinet agreed to adopt the new Bury Standard, which is Decent Homes + which paves the way for a huge injection of capital, up to £34m over 3 years which will see our housing stock modernised with new bathrooms; kitchens and central heating boilers.

## **Core Strategy – Suspension**

Members will be aware that the Planning Inspector has suspended his-Examination of Bury's Core Strategy.

Why has he done this? In effect he has asked us to reconsider the level of housing that is needed in the Borough, largely because of new guidance that has been issued since the plan was submitted back in December. It seems that Planning has now become a moving target because of the continuous and ambiguous changes that this Government has made to national planning guidance. It is no wonder that only 1 in 7 authorities have a Core Strategy that is fully compliant with the National Planning Policy Framework.

I feel that the National Planning Policy Framework is a front for forcing Council's like Bury to give up its green belt land based on spurious sets of statistics rather than what's best for our communities and our Environment. Concreting over the green belt to suit developers, when they already have planning permission for over 3,000 units, will see brown field sites abandoned in favour of bigger profits in developing green field sites. I know that some developers have options to build thousands of new homes in areas of Green Belt in parts of Greenmount, Holcombe Brook, Walshaw, to the west of Bury and to the west of Radcliffe if we caved in on this threat.

Let me be clear, as an Administration, we will lawfully exercise our right as Community Champions to continue to defend the Green Belt and the Government's constant meddling in national planning guidance to appease the development industry will not get our support.

## **The Met**

I was pleased to receive the news from Arts Council England that the Met have been successful in their Stage One application for £3M as part of a £4.5M refurbishment programme for The Met.

This outcome follows 2 years of work demonstrating the need for remedial works and the possible outcomes of developing The Met as an excellent venue.

This is an important step for the project which they hope to deliver in 2015. Whilst it's not a guarantee of the full project, it the Met management to continue conversations with other funders about investment in the building to reflect the value of the work are carrying out.

## **Community Cafe**

The opening of the Welly Community cafe which is Bury EST have taken over Manchester Road park bowling facility. They have refurbished the park centre through donations .

This now provides a community hub and training centre. We hope we will increase park visitor numbers, help break down barriers between the community and people who have disabilities and allow them to make community connections.

## **Carbon Reduction**

We continue with our commitment to improve our energy efficiency and to reduce our carbon footprint. Since 2008/09 we have reduced the council's carbon emissions by 9% and have implemented over 100 projects which are calculated to reduce our emissions by 3500 tonnes per year.

We are proud to say that the refurbishment of Elmhurst Residential Care Home has incorporated a whole range of state of the art energy efficiency and low carbon measures. The building has been provided with low energy LED lighting, loft and cavity wall insulation, a new boiler and energy management system, solar powered hot water and will also use sun pipes to increase natural lighting levels. These measures are calculated to save £9500 per year and also 54 tonnes of carbon per year.

This building will be a flagship example in the council's portfolio and will demonstrate what can be achieved when refurbishing existing buildings.

We have made excellent progress in the reduction of our carbon emissions and we are determined to push forward to achieve even more in the coming years.

## **Public Health**

Bury has been selected to undertake a childhood flu vaccination programme for years 7 and 8. This builds upon the success of the primary school pilot run last season which saw 10528 primary school children in Bury vaccination. The primary school programme will also continue this season.

## **Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Peer Review**

We had a three day peer review at the beginning of July and we received excellent feedback in that we are clearly safeguarding vulnerable adults.

Whilst we await the final report we should be proud of all the hard work and commitment the staff have shown to get such a positive outcome, not only for the Council but for the people we serve.

**Madam Mayor that concludes my statement.**

**End**