

Classification: Open	Decision Type: Non-Key
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Report to:	Cabinet	Date: 10 September 2025
Subject:	Implementation of Live Well in Bury	
Report of	Cabinet Member for Adult Care, Health and Public Service Reform	

Summary

1. This paper places the implementation of the GM Mayoral Live Well Programme in Bury in the context of previously agreed *LET'S Do It!* priorities for, and delivery of neighbourhood team working in the borough. While GM Live Well will frame the further development of the public service reform and transformation, the paper describes a unique opportunity to implement a Live Well Centre in Whitefield, operating as our exemplar centre in accordance with the requirements of the GM Live Well Funding received.

Recommendation(s)

2. The recommendations are
 - a. To note the principles of the GM Live Well programme and recognise the solid foundation for it to land in Bury given the work on integrated team working in 5 neighbourhoods and in strengths-based working and community capacity recognition
 - b. To support in principle the deployment of the Ark building in Whitefield as the Live Well 'flagship' live well centre in the borough by March 2026 as the first phase of delivering the GM live well commitment of a live well centre in every neighbourhood by 2030.
 - c. To note that GM Live Well transition funding of £676k is to be split 50:50 with the VCSE and to approve the £338k transfer to Bury Voluntary and Community Faith Alliance (Bury VCFA) to convene the VCFSE component of the scheme including in the first instance increasing community capacity and resilience in order to for instance take on building operation?
 - d. To agree a call on the council component of the funding will be backlog maintenance and initial refurbishment to bring the building back into use
 - e. To note a potential requirement for the Council to underwrite building management function for up to 3 years, up to £100k per annum, until the community capacity is in a position to take on the operation of the building, based on evidence and assurance of financial viability.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

3. The recommendations would allow Bury to be fully compliant with the terms of the GMCA/NHS GM grant allocation to deliver an exemplar Live Well centre in

the borough, as a first phase of the Live Well commitment to have a Live Well centre in every neighbourhood and would be a major manifestation of *LET'S Do It!* principles in Whitefield.

Alternative options considered and rejected

4. The alternative option considered was to use the Live Well funding to provide a broad level of support in each of the 5 neighbourhoods. This is rejected because it will not deliver a substantial Live Well centre as required by the terms of the grant. It is also noted that there are live programmes in each of the 4 other neighbourhoods that have potential to deliver a Live Well centre – for example in the Radcliffe hub and in the Prestwich development. There is a unique opportunity in Whitefield to bring a currently disused council building back to life.

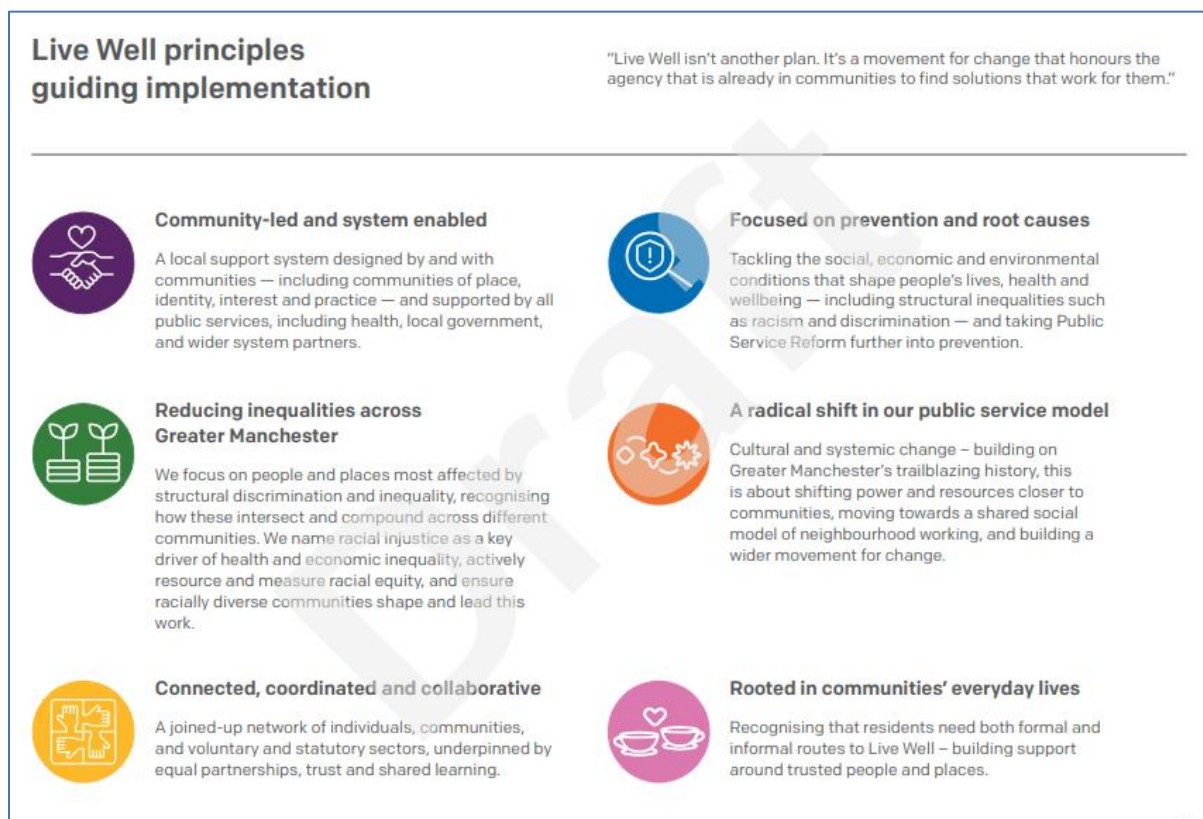
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Background

GM Live Well

5. GM Live Well is a high profile commitment from both the GM Mayor and NHS Greater Manchester to create conditions for everyone to access great everyday support in every neighbourhood.



6. To support the implementation of Live Well in each District in GM, joint funding from NHSGM and GMCA, in the form of a one-off grant from GMCA, is available from Bury, totally £676K. The terms of the grant state....

This initial Live Well Implementation Fund should be used to support the local roll-out of the Live Well programme, which includes

- *The establishment of Live Well centres, spaces and offers*
- *To establish at least one 'Live Well centre' to serve as the local flagship for developing and delivering Live Well support*
- *To enhance an existing local setting, or it may be used to accelerate the integration of a number of different points for joined up support*
- *To enable the co-location of staff to form cross-sector teams (i.e. all relevant public services and VCSFE sector)*

- *To support the integration of support through an optimum neighbourhood model by better aligning the neighbourhood model with the flagship Live Well centre*
- *To build on existing models and contribute to the development of Live Well workers or navigators operating from and between Live Well Centres and Live Well Spaces*
- *The development of a resilient VCFSE sector and an accelerated shift to a 'culture of prevention' across our system*

There is also an expectation that:

- *Your teams will work with communities on the design and development of Live Well Centres, spaces and offers with local people and based on the lived experience of those accessing support locally*
- *Each locality will nominate a specific Live Well support theme, that they would like to test out and then share the learning across the partnership.*
- *This would not be the exclusive function of the Live Well centre but would be an area of learning to support others (e.g. housing support, linking to primary care, wellbeing, support for those experiencing multiple disadvantage etc.)*
- *Each locality agrees to being part of a learning network and adopts a culture of sharing learning and innovation across the partnership*
- *Where appropriate or opportunities present, localities should connect the Live Well Implementation work to the 'Economic Inactivity' Trailblazer activity*

7. It will be noted that key outcomes from the funding are:

- At least 50% of the funding must be directed to the local VCFSE sector, with evidence of joint working with the sector to agree the proportion of investment.*
- To establish at least one 'Live Well centre' by 31st March 2026, to serve as the local flagship for developing and delivering Live Well support.*

8. Specifically, a Live Well centre is described as the following:

Live Well Centres are welcoming, walk-in spaces where people can get everyday support without stigma, judgement or long waits. Whether it's help with housing, health, mental health and wellbeing, debt, employment, food, or simply feeling connected, Live Well Centres are there for the things that matter most. They are the front door for prevention and early support — places where people can speak to someone who listens, understands and

helps. Centres bring together VCSFE-led and public sector support under one roof, with trusted people on hand to walk alongside residents and connect them to what they need. Each centre is rooted in its local community and connected to a wider network of Live Well spaces and offers.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivered from recognised locations that are easy to get to and well known by local people, building on existing venues like Family, Work and Skills, and Health and Care Hubs. • Intergenerational and universal — inclusive of all ages and backgrounds, providing a full range of support, from crisis to everyday advice and connection. • Easy to access — people can drop in, call, or reach out by email, without appointments or thresholds, with reliable and consistent opening times. • Welcoming, safe and inclusive space — think kettles, sofas, calm décor and a friendly, human atmosphere — with environment, communications and services designed to be accessible and responsive to the needs of disabled people. • Joined-up statutory and VCSFE support, with a core, consistent and trusted staff team — including Live Well workers, connectors, peer supporters, social prescribers, community organisations and public sector staff. • Seamless connection to wider Live Well offers and wraparound support for housing, health and wellbeing, debt, welfare, food, employment, training, social connection and safety. • Clear and immediate crisis support, longer-term help for those facing multiple challenges, and safety and protection when needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A diverse team that reflects the community — a recruitment strategy that focuses on equity diversity and lived experience representation. • Anti-racist and culturally responsive practice — all staff are supported with training and reflection to understand how racism shapes mental health, access to care and trust in services. • Staff trained in Live Well values and practice — using person-centred, strength-based, trauma-informed approaches that foster prevention, equity, and work in partnership with people. Training is shared and delivered between Live Well Centres and Spaces. • Community engagement, where Live Well Centres convene and support Live Well Spaces and Offers to come together, share learning, build strong relationships and foster collaborative working. • Providing proactive outreach from local venues and Live Well Spaces. • Digitally enabled and community-connected — offering free WiFi, devices and support to access online resources and services. • Live Well Centres actively shape support through participation in the wider Live Well network, alliances and place based partnerships, ensuring decisions reflect diverse voices and lived experience.
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Public Service Reform in Bury

9. In Bury the Public Service Reform Board (part of 'Team Bury') have been working for some time on a model of public service reform with two key pillars;
 - a. the establishment of neighbourhood team working in each of 5 places in the borough - Prestwich, Whitefield, Bury (East), West, and North,
 - b. a focus on the strengths and assets of individual communities and supporting community and voluntary capacity building.
10. This work and considerable progress is reflected in the slide below.

Integrated Neighbourhood Working in Bury

Joined up services across 5 identified neighbourhoods; working with communities to relentlessly focus on prevention and earlier early intervention; maximising local assets and spaces in each neighbourhood to enable people to thrive.				
Bury's model of 'integrated support' with a neighbourhood focus by default:				
North	East	West	Whitefield	Prestwich
Each neighbourhood has a Neighbourhood profile and analysis of need, identification of cohorts of risk to tailor and target integrated person-centred activity				
Co-located multidisciplinary teams in each neighbourhood, led by a Public Service Leadership Team, integrating 'integrated support' through a 'Team Around' approach. Includes housing engagement; health and care integrated leads; social prescribers; employment support; Live and Stay Well; police and fire neighbourhood leads; Family Help leads; public health; voluntary sector infrastructure representatives				
Joint delivery of strengthened Integrated Neighbourhood Team (INTs) (Adult Care and Health) model including social prescribing and increasing alignment of mental health early intervention and prevention.				
Rapidly developing model of family hubs described by neighbourhood and delivering the prevention and early intervention strategy for children and increasingly connected to schools				
Finalising the Live Well model and specifically within this the neighbourhood-based employment support model.				
Strengths based approach built on LETS Behaviours to further engagement, participation and reduce inequalities, eg co-designing interventions with lived experience groups.				
Collective insight of community assets and networks, with which to work with communities and connect people at place as examples of Live Well spaces, coordinated by Bury Voluntary, Community and Faith Alliance				

11. The work of integrated neighbourhood teams in health and adult care was recognised by the LGA peer review into adult services recently as “exemplary and enviable”. We also have public service leaderships teams in each of the 5 places, creating relationships between public services and voluntary and community capacity in the place and working to address particular cohorts of risk and harm. We also have the model of family hubs in development, predicated on the 5-neighbourhood footprint but in practice delivered at a much more local community level (for example Chesham).
12. This work – to join up public services, to create opportunities for public services to know each other and work more effectively together, and for public services to have a shared knowledge of the assets and voluntary and community capacity in the place is one of the key pillars of public service reform in Bury.
13. But this isn't just about joining public services together, it's about challenging the nature of the relationship between public services and communities – it is about shifting power and resources closer to communities, moving towards a shared social model of neighbourhood working, and building a wider movement for change. The *LET'S Do It!* strategy in Bury signals this intent. A core component of this work is the leadership provided by the Bury Voluntary Community and Faith Alliance (Bury VCFA) -creating the conditions for a movement, administering investment capacity, and challenging public services in the way they work. But it is also about the incredible array of community and voluntary groups in the borough, some large some small, and the contribution they make to people's lives.

14. For the reasons above Bury is in strong place to respond to the opportunity of the Live Well fund – strategically coherent with *LET'S Do It!* and the Locality Plan for health and care, reflective of years of development work building both integrated neighbourhood team working and recognising and strengthening voluntary and community capacity.
15. However, there is a very particular requirement of the Live Well fund – to develop one flagship 'Live Well' centre by March 2026 and to have a Live Well centre in each neighbourhood by 2030.
16. Bury does not have a history of developing 'neighbourhood hubs' (for example like the Broughton hub in Salford), where public services and community services work together in a building recognisable to the local population as accessible and inviting, and a base for community activity. While we do have some newer elements of this in place – e.g the neighbourhub in Millgate focusing on employment support, and the family hubs in Redvales and Chesham – they are not fully integrated hubs as envisaged in Live Well.
17. Work is now being undertaken to develop a neighbourhood estates strategy, to frame the response to the *LET'S Do It!* priorities and bring coherence to the alignment of Live Well, integrated neighbourhood team working, family hubs implementation, alongside the councils' estates rationalisation programme. In the meantime, a unique opportunity to develop a flagship Live Well centre has presented itself in Whitefield

Potential Flagship Live Well Centre – Whitefield.

18. The Ark is a former Pupil Referral Unit located on Albert Drive in Whitefield. It is currently disused. It has many advantages as a potential Live Well centre:
 - a. Its proximity to an area of social economic disadvantage
 - b. Its proximity to the children's centre at Ribble Drive Primary School
 - c. The scope of the accommodation, including reception area, classroom sized rooms, kitchen, sports hall, green space and parking.
19. The Bury Public Service Reform Group considered the potential location for the exemplar Live Well implementation. Whitefield was chosen for the following reasons.
 - Whitefield relatively under resourced in terms of VCFSE capacity – Bury VCFA have focused for 18 months or so in this space and there is movement and a comprehensive understanding of capacity.
 - Parts of Whitefield (Besses) has limited public service presence
 - Evidence of challenges in relation to pockets of neglect

- Community Safety challenges – see this link for evidence of partnership already in action [Whitefield: Police crackdown following 'number of violent incidents' | Bury Times](#) including partnership working as part of Operation VARDAR.
- Public Service leadership working increasingly well and maturely – see attached overview of the work.
- Coterminous Primary Care Network
- Support from Bury Housing colleagues that Whitefield is a priority area.
- In its social economic make up – areas of poverty close to areas of affluence – it is a microcosm of the borough as a whole.
- Noting the opportunity to connect reform to economic ambition through the Whitefield masterplan.

20. The Ark is currently vacant. It has been held initially as an interim solution if required in the event of a delayed implementation of the PRU elsewhere in the borough, but this is no longer required.

21. It should be noted that the GM commitment is to have a Live Well centre in each neighbourhood across GM, including the 5 in the borough of Bury, by 2030. The Ark is just a potential first phase - work must continue to develop a live well centre in each of the other 4 neighbourhoods in Bury

Vision

22. There is an opportunity to deliver a flagship Live Well Centre in the borough, in Whitefield. In the context of the characteristics of a Live Well centre described above, the Ark has the potential to be:

- a. A focal point for the local community, in the future owned and led by the local community, space for community groups and forums, and working as part of the existing and strengthening voluntary and community capacity in Whitefield
- b. A focal point for a range of public services and voluntary services coming together to work specifically on the consequences of poverty in the area, for example.
 - i. A spoke of the neighbourhood in the Millgate Centre
 - ii. A drop in provision for income maximisations as part of the reformed council welfare support offer
 - iii. Drop-in activity through Citizens Advice
 - iv. Housing Support and Advice

- c. A focal point for the family hub implementation in Whitefield – potentially operating as a two-site solution with the existing children's centre on Ribble Drive
- d. A base for the integrated neighbourhood team in health and adult care with potential clinical space to expand a range of services available.
- e. Utilisation of the sports hall by local community groups/sports clubs

23. In 5 years', time it is envisaged the Ark is

- at the heart of the community – vibrant, with a thriving programme of activities and services (both public and voluntary sector).
- Community-owned and led – via a successful asset transfer and its own staff (TUPE) / volunteer workforce.
- A mixture of paid and voluntary workforce creating a warm, welcoming space for the community to mix and mingle, as well as to access support.
- Active signposting and support from a network of other organisations and services, all accessible within the neighbourhood.
- Financially sustainable and not dependent on council financial support

24. In planning and developing the proposal we need to be true to the principles of *LET'S Do It!* and Live Well and work with the local community to understand their requirements, hopes, expectations. This is essential – to operate as a Live Well centre it needs to be 'owned' by the community and not imposed on them. This may require progress to be necessarily slower, but it will result in a more sustainable and vibrant provision than otherwise.

25. There has already been some engagement with residents on what Live Well could mean in Whitefield via insight work obtained by VCFA.

Key Issues

26. This is an exciting opportunity and the GM team administering the grant have indicated strong support for the proposition on the basis of strategic coherence, vision, track record of public service reform delivery, and the opportunity in Whitefield. The GM team acknowledge however that this is not just 'rebadging' existing provision, it is totally new initiative, and recognise timelines might be elongated compared to some other districts.

27. In order to make progress the following issues need to be addressed:

- a. Project management capacity to deliver the hub is required and in the spirit of Live Well this is best led by the VCFA working with the local community. This paper proposes the 50% allocation of the total grant is provided directly to VCFA to administer and the first call against the grant is a project manager to be embedded in the community.

- b. Estate – in the context of the work of the Strategic Estates Group, and the emergent neighbourhood estate framework, backlog maintenance costs and recurrent building management costs need to be assessed and delivered. Refurbishment will be determined by building function but will need to include as a minimum
 - i. Welcoming reception area
 - ii. Conversion of some classroom space to community rooms, and staff bases
 - iii. Digital connectivity
 - c. Community insight – VCFA will continue insight and engagement work and look to establish a shadow ‘management committee’.
 - d. Financial Sustainability – work is required to understand recurrent running costs of the building – energy, opening and closing etc, and the sources of income available. Work is required to establish contributions from supporting partners which will aid in phasing out the Council support to the building management costs and increase the stability of the financial solution for the scheme.
28. Initial programme arrangements are to be finalised including a programme group reporting to the Public Service Reform Board, joint SROs (Will Blandamer and Helen Tomlinson from VCFA), project manager employed by VCFA. Subject to approval we would wish to establish a shadow ‘management committee’ for the building led by the community. We believe, in the spirit of Live Well, that this project needs to be substantially led by the community, not done to them.

Transition

29. The work to deliver a live well centre in each of 5 places in the borough, starting with the Ark must not be seen as an additional project. It needs to be seen as an inherent part of transformed service delivery in the borough envisaged by *LET’S Do It!* – prioritising prevention and early intervention and supporting residents to be in control of the circumstances of their lives. The programme needs core funding to affect the transition envisaged and, in the end, the financial benefit intended. This has implications for, for example the corporate landlord function. It is also likely to require transition funding – for example in the Ark’s case to employ building management capacity to operate the building – opening, closing, lease management etc.
30. It is considered that this is transitional in the sense that in time the building needs to be owned, run, and made financially sustainable, by the local community. Transitional funding is available from:
- a. The Live Well grant held by the council, although the scale will depend on the backlog maintenance requirement to bring the building back into ownership

- b. Any funding associated with the implementation of the family hub
- c. The ability to reorientate public service spend from elsewhere in support of 'anchor tenants' in the Ark (for example the public service leadership team).

31. However, this paper recommends inclusion in the MTFS for a further £100k p.a. to underwrite as required the project and building management capacity in the transition phase.

Links with the Corporate Priorities:

32. This proposal responds directly to the commitment to deliver integrated team working in 5 places in the borough, and in the tone of implementation fully respond to priorities relating to Local, Strengths and Together.

Equality Impact and Considerations:

33. A full EIA has been completed. This activity is currently a concept which is envisaged to provide increased localised support and services for residents. There are no anticipated negative impacts at this stage with only neutral and positive impacts identified. The activity will be continually reviewed with the EIA updated as the activity progresses

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

34. The proposed use of the Ark in Besses o' the' Barn offers environmental opportunities and challenges. Positively, it could reduce car travel by centralising services, encourage walking and cycling, and integrate green infrastructure aligned with Bury Council's goal to be carbon neutral by 2038. However, the refurbishment of the building may temporarily disrupt local ecosystems and increase emissions. Sustainable design, use of recycled materials, and community-led stewardship will be key to minimising impact, and community use and engagement is a cornerstone of the live well proposition. There is scope for the utilisation of the green spaces for children's support and local community food growth. The centre can enhance biodiversity and promote low-carbon living if carefully planned and delivered in line with the Whitefield Town Centre Plan

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
This is a relatively straightforward scheme in term of refurbishment but is complex in terms	1) GM live well team recognise this as a brilliant but ambitious scheme,

<p>of the multiplicity of aligned services – statutory and voluntary, coming together. And in the spirit of the live well strategy this is importantly feels to be owned and led by the community. There is a risk the building will not be operational in accordance with the GM requirement of March 2025</p>	<p>effectively bringing an entirely new live well community base into being and have indicated full support even in event of relatively slow progress due to the necessity to consult and engage and in the event of delays to individual aspects of delivery</p> <p>2) The additional funding to support ‘operations’ in this building and in time others provide confidence that the management capacity from the council, working particularly with Bury VCFA who have also been funded, will be sufficient to deliver the scheme.</p>
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Legal Implications:

35. Grant Funding for this scheme is subject to the GM Live Well Principles.
36. The nature of the proposals include partnerships between the Council and aligned statutory and voluntary organisations, which may need to be governed through either contractual arrangements or under Memoranda of Understanding, either of which may require support from Legal Services.

Financial Implications:

37. The paper outlines the requirement for additional annual building management costs estimated at a maximum of £100k to be included within the revenue budget for 2026/27 and the medium term financial strategy for the next 3 financial years. As the estimated costs cannot be contained within existing budget provision, approval of the report will increase the Council’s forecast funding gap in future years with the updated medium term financial strategy scheduled to be reported to Cabinet in November or December depending on the timing of the provisional local government finance settlement, with current indications are that it is being targeted for November this year.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - EIA

Background papers:

None.