

Minutes of: CABINET

Date of Meeting: 15 October 2025

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

Also in attendance: Councillors S Arif, R Bernstein, C Birchmore and M Smith

Public Attendance: One member of the public was present at the meeting.

Apologies for Absence: Councillor C Cummins, Councillor R Gold and Councillor S Thorpe

The Leader congratulated Councillor Arif on his recent appointment as the Conservative Group Leader.

CA.48 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Clare Cummins, Richard Gold and Sean Thorpe.

CA.49 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

CA.50 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The following question was submitted in advance of the meeting by a member of the public, Alex Abbey:

What progress has been made on the article 4 direction removing permitted HMO developments of any size? And can we do anything to speed this up? Salford and Oldham and now Tameside have already implemented this, so can we work with these councils to use their expertise and/or copy across framework? I want to re-emphasise urgency with us lagging behind Salford and Oldham, leading landlords from these boroughs to look to our borough for developments that would get rejected with our neighbours. Every week taken on this, an area of our borough is further strained by another HMO popping up as landlords rush to get sub-standard conversions that wouldn't be approved done.

Responding, Councillor O'Brien thanked Mr Abbey for his question and interest and advised that the Council was aware of the work that has been done in other districts, however any proposed Article 4 Direction must be based on robust local evidence to support the decision and secure against challenge, so whilst we can learn from the experience of others we cannot simply copy their evidence base.

Work is underway to collate our own locally specific evidence base for a potential Article 4 Direction, with the aim of taking a report to Planning Control Committee (as the committee with delegated authority for Article 4 Directions) by the end of the year if justified by the evidence. We are also preparing updated Supplementary Planning

Guidance for HMOs, with the intention of bringing consultation draft to Cabinet towards the end of the year. Alongside this, our licensing team are reviewing licensing standards and guidance for HMO landlords

A further supplementary question was submitted:

How can we ensure all HMOs are captured on any register, and how short a period can we give landlords to register, so no one can claim to have been an HMO before the register was in place?

Councillor O'Brien reported that the Council is currently using our Private Sector Housing teams and Licensing teams in accordance with our planners to review those HMOs that don't require the standard guidance or licence as a result of their size. We don't have an existing record we can use, we have to build one. Some of that might be from Council Tax data, some from local intelligence; our intention is to have as full a register as possible so we can ensure things like safety, security, and fire safety, as well as finding those which require licences.

A written follow up response would be sent in term of the second part of the question around how we avoid people getting in before the new measures are in place, but we will do what we can to be as quick and as comprehensive as possible in terms of getting that new guidance and potential Article 4 Direction in place by the end of the year.

A written question regarding street trees had been received by a member of the public, Peter Liggins, who was unable to attend and as such Members agreed that a written response to his question would be sent.

CA.51 MEMBER QUESTION TIME

The following question was submitted in advance of the meeting by Councillor Carol Birchmore:

In a recent Manchester Evening News article, it is reported that Andy Burnham has admitted that setting targets for private developers to build or pay for affordable housing doesn't work. The report goes on to say that currently, the number of council homes is falling in eight of the 10 boroughs in Greater Manchester with only Salford and Trafford building more than they're losing in the last year. Will the Pyramid Park plans provide the Council with the opportunity to build some of their own genuinely affordable houses rather than relying on developers to build so called "affordable" housing and is there Government money available to do that?

Responding, Councillor O'Brien clarified the subjectivity of 'Affordable Housing', and reported that what the Council was aiming to do on as many of our directly owned sites as possible was maximise the amount of 'Affordable' (in broad terms) housing available. In some cases like Pyramid Park we will work with a registered provider who will have that ability, access to capital, and experience of building properties but we would retain the nomination rights. The Leader advised that this probably sits in-between the definition of 80% affordable and of social housing. They wouldn't be Council properties in our HRA or managed by Bury Housing Services, but would also not be an arbitrary discount on a market figure.

The Leader advised that the Council had ambitions to go further, including utilising the announcement of National funding, which wasn't available when pursuing Pyramid Park. The only government money we have been using is the GM Brownfield Housing Fund, which we have used where we can appropriately across a number of sites. This is why it's so important that the new Government has announced so much additional money for social and affordable homes, because by working with them and Homes England and the Combined Authority, it should make it easier to build truly affordable homes and social homes.

In short, we think Pyramid Park will be a great site, with the intention for it to be a mixed intergenerational scheme, offering something that the market probably wouldn't deliver if we purely sold it off to them. It won't be social housing in our stock but it will certainly be genuinely affordable for a lot of people in Bury to access, which is what we need in a sustainable location, on a Brownfield site that has been difficult to bring to market for a variety of reasons, and making contributions to the biodiversity net gain as well, within the Town Centre Masterplan.

A further supplementary question was submitted:

Today Manchester City Council has announced that it is going to build 700 homes on land they own. The way they're doing it is working with Manchester Housing Providers Partnership, which is social housing companies. From the plans they're released, about 60% of that is going to be social housing rather than affordable housing, with the remaining 40% being 80% market price (Manchester Living Rent). Is there any chance we could have a look at doing that sort of idea where we retain our land and build genuinely affordable homes?

Councillor O'Brien reported that he didn't know the detail of the Manchester scheme. Manchester benefits from a scalability of size that Bury struggles to do, even on a site like Pyramid Park. Having said that, that is exactly what we now want to explore; this type of investment could be a game-changer and, when we now look at our sites it gives us more realistic consideration of delivering our own direct social housing. So far we've really tried to work in partnership with registered providers and we're doing well with the resources and capacity we have, but we are always looking to maximise affordability balanced against viability. If we can on future sites, with the additional money, it would be our aspiration to look at a different way than we are currently operating in.

CA.52 MINUTES

It was agreed:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2025 be approved as a correct record.

CA.53 PRESTWICH VILLAGE REGENERATION SCHEME: PHASE 1A (TRAVEL HUB) – PROCUREMENT OF A THIRD-PARTY OPERATOR TO MANAGE THE TRAVEL HUB

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth presented a report regarding the recommended operating model and strategy for procurement to acquire a Travel Hub operator to manage the Prestwich Village Travel Hub. Things were progressing well on-site, with competition anticipated for summer 2026. Options for the operation of the site were set out in the paper, but cost was a key consideration and the recommendation was for an external operator. It was noted that parking would be subject to a future report.

In response to Member questions, it was noted that performance management could be undertaken in the Council's usual way using experience of the multi-storey parking in the Millgate as well as third party parking enforcement and private sector partners in other areas (e.g. housing). With regards to tariffs, it was noted that the Council would still set these and the third party operator would manage the operation.

Decision:

Cabinet:

1. Approved the recommended operations management model for the Prestwich Travel Hub. This is the use of an external, specialist travel hub operator;
2. Approved the undertaking of a two-stage procurement process for appointment of an external operator for the Travel Hub covering an initial soft market testing process followed by an external competitive procurement in-keeping with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. This will likely include the use of a relevant procurement Framework.
3. Approved the management of the Prestwich Travel Hub asset within the Bury Council Commercial Asset Portfolio by the Land & Property Service, with support from Parking Services; and
4. Approved the Director of Regeneration & Project Delivery in consultation with the Council's Procurement service to agree the preferred route to market.

Reasons for the decision:

Use of a third-party external operator for the Prestwich Travel Hub represents the best value for money for the Council for the reasons outlined in the body of the report. Procurement of a travel hub operator to be carried out under a competitive process governed by the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (PCR 2015) and Procurement Act 2023 - it is common practice to access compliant procurement frameworks to streamline the procurement process. A travel hub operator should be appointed as soon as possible in the construction delivery process to enable them to contribute to final stage design. A delay in procuring the operator risks delays to the construction delivery programme or abortive work. It is crucial that there is also influence to the final operational requirements and to avoid unnecessary additional costs. Commercial assets are currently the responsibility of the Council's Land & Property Service, and it is appropriate that the Prestwich Travel Hub be added to this management portfolio.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

Officers have considered the financial and operational implications of managing the Prestwich Travel Hub 'in-house' within the Parking Services team of the Council. This option represented a higher cost than the use of an external operator. The Parking Services team currently has no experience of managing travel hub type facilities and has limited opportunities to secure economies of scale in the supply chain/operationally compared to external parties.

CA.54 SCHOOLS FINANCE TEAM PHASED REDUCTION

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth presented a report proposing to phase down the schools finance team through accepting voluntary early retirement applications and to incorporate the statutory/residual work into the Children's and Young People Finance Team, owing to the reduction in workload and loss of SLA income following academy conversions.

Decision:

Cabinet agreed the deletions of the following posts within the schools finance team through accepting voluntary early retirement applications, and supported the payment of voluntary early retirement and capital costs associated and commend this proposal to Council for their agreement:

- Schools finance officer proposed end date 31 October 2025.
- Senior schools finance officer proposed end date 30 June 2026.

Reasons for the decision:

The proposed phase down approach of reducing the schools finance team is to ensure that the forecast schools buy back SLA income covers the cost of providing the service to maintained schools.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

None.

CA.55 APPROVAL TO AWARD THE CONTRACT FOR CLEANING AND JANITORIAL PRODUCTS

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth presented a report which sought approval to award the contract for Caretaking and Janitorial Cleaning Materials to Alliance. It was noted that a comprehensive tender process had been conducted in collaboration with Oldham Council to ensure best value.

Decision:

Cabinet approved the award of the Caretaking and Janitorial Cleaning Materials contract to Alliance at a total cost of £640,000 for a period of 2 years (with an option to extend for 2 additional years).

Reasons for the decision:

Following a comprehensive tender exercise in collaboration with Oldham Council to ensure best value through increased economies of scale, Alliance was identified as the best value supplier. Their proposal met all technical and commercial requirements and offered the most competitive pricing structure.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

Continue with the temporary contract, which would be in breach of procurement act. Use Star procurement and align with the GMCA contract, however this would have increased the cost of the materials creating financial pressure.

CA.56 APPROVAL TO AWARD THE CONTRACT FOR THE MANDATED DRUG AND ALCOHOL PREVENTION, TREATMENT AND RECOVERY SERVICES (ADULTS AND CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES LOTS) IN BURY, SALFORD,

AND TRAFFORD

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth presented a report which sought approval to award contracts for the delivery of Drug and Alcohol Treatment and Recovery services across Bury, Salford, and Trafford.

Decision:

Cabinet approved the award of two contracts for the mandated Drug and Alcohol Prevention, Treatment and Recovery services across Bury, Salford, and Trafford:

- The Children, Young People (CYP) and Families service contract to Early Break
- The Adults service contract to Greater Manchester Mental Health Foundation Trust (GMMH)

These awards follow a competitive tender process conducted under the Provider Selection Regime (PSR) regulations.

Please note, the two awards are subject to Cabinet approval by Salford and Trafford Councils.

Reasons for the decision:

This ensures the Council is achieving best value for money and maintains service quality for our residents. The successful providers, GMMH for Adults and Early Break for CYP and Families, demonstrated strong performance in the evaluation process and have a proven track record of delivering these services locally since 2019. The evaluation panel applied rigorous criteria to ensure the selected providers offer high-quality services at a competitive price on a long term contract (5+2 years). The new contracts allow for economies of scale of work, shared back-office functions and a peer support approach across all organisations involved.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

No alternative options were available in this instance. The current contract, which had already been extended, is due to expire on 31st March 2026. As such, the only viable route was to proceed with a formal tender process in line with procurement regulations and to ensure continuity of service.

CA.57 CARE AT HOME – REQUEST FOR CONTRACT EXTENSION AND RE-TENDER

The Cabinet Member for Adult Care, Health and Public Service Reform presented a report regarding the extension and re-tender of the Care at Home service, which supports the vulnerable people of Bury with their assessed needs under the Care Act 2014. The extension was for 12 months, and that the service supported around 700 vulnerable individuals daily delivering approximately 10,000 hours of care weekly, including personal care, mobility assistance, nutrition, hydration, and medication.

In response to Member questions, it was noted that a change in procurement law meant a process that was started this year was reset and will be rerun so that it can comply with the new public procurement regulations. Under the initial work discussions were held with an interested party, but the Council took the opportunity to reconsider and it was decided that re-running the tender was the best decision longer term and ensure full compliance.

Decision:

Cabinet:

1. Approved a further 12-month extension for providers that are meeting contractual obligations until 24 October 2026 (x8 Lot 1 providers covering the following zoned areas: North, East, West, Prestwich, and Whitefield. x5 Lot 2 providers covering the full borough and acting as a backup to pick up care packages when Lot 1 are unable to);
2. Delegated finalisation and sealing of the deeds of extension required to give effect to the contract extensions to the Director of Law and Democratic Services in consultation with the Executive Director of Health and Adult Care;
3. Gave approval to commence the re-tender (open tender process) for a new Care at Home service to start in October 2026 for a period of 5 years with the option to extend for one year plus one year, at a cost of approximately £11m a year;
4. Delegated the authority to approve the service specification to the Director of Adult Social Services and Community Commissioning; and
5. Agreed for this to return to Cabinet in Summer 2026 to request approval to contract awards.

Reasons for the decision:

The Council has a legal duty to follow Procurement Law and fair purchasing processes and must complete a re-tender process within the extended contract period to ensure compliance with the legislation (Procurement Act 2023). Additional benefits include a new contract and service specification with updated quality requirements enabling us to ensure high standards for the customers, clearer key performance indicators for robust contract monitoring, and a broader scope for innovation.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

Alternative options are not applicable due to Procurement Law and the requirement to complete a re-tender exercise (Procurement Act 2023). Should the Council decide to do nothing, we would risk being non-compliant with the legislation.

CA.58 POLICY AND PROCEDURE – ENFORCED SALE

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth presented a report regarding the adoption of an enforced sale combined policy and procedure as an additional tool to assist with reducing the number of empty properties in the borough. In response to Member questions as to whether this could be applied to commercial properties, it was noted that depended on the charges that had been incurred by the property, as each case was considered on an individual basis, but that the policy was not typically used for commercial properties.

Decision:

Cabinet:

1. Approved, for adoption and implementation the enforced sale policy and procedure; and
2. Delegated authority to Assistant Director – Public Protection and Resilience to authorise enforced sale of properties deemed suitable where appropriate.

Reasons for the decision:

The enforced sale policy and procedure is a tool which can be used to support returning long term empty properties back into habitable use. It has the potential to

support an area's regeneration effort, support the provision of housing while recovering outstanding Council debts. It signals the Council's commitment to addressing the issues that long empty property often present, such as area deterioration, crime and anti-social behaviour. The policy allows the Council to be open, transparent and accountable in decision making when considering a property for an enforced sale and further commits to the Council's strategic objectives.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

Not adopt the policy and procedure - In the absence of an established policy and procedure, officers are unable to appropriately assess or justify the use of enforced sale powers. This limits the Council's ability to intervene effectively, resulting in the continued accumulation of debt on affected properties. These properties are likely to deteriorate further, contributing to blight and negatively impacting the surrounding communities.

CA.59 HOUSING MAJOR WORKS PROGRAMME 2025/26 - PART A

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth presented a report which sought formal approval to appoint Liv Green Futures Limited to carry out energy works to Council properties on the Rainsough Estate Prestwich. It also requested to grant approval for a change of contractor for energy works at Stanley Close Whitefield and Freetown Estate Bury. Members welcomed the appointments and the schemes, and it was noted that officers would look into loft insulation being future-proofed to store solar energy.

Decision:

Cabinet:

1. Granted approval to enter into building contacts for energy efficiency and/or renewable energy works to Council properties on Rainsough Estate. Successful tender: LivGreen Futures Ltd. Value £1,494,494.93
2. Granted approval to a change of contractor to Live Manage Facilitate Ltd for the contract works at Stanley Close and Freetown estates. This contract was previously awarded to Eco Approach Ltd at the July Cabinet, but they are unwilling to stand by their price. Successful tender: Live Manage Facilitate Ltd. Value £2,414,071.90

Reasons for the decision:

A key regulatory requirement for Housing is to ensure all Bury Council homes are maintained, as a minimum, to the Decent Home Standard. A key expectation of the Regulator for Social Housing is that all our homes are of good quality, well maintained and safe homes for tenants and comply with the Decent Homes Standard.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

- Do nothing: These works will enhance the physical appearance, energy efficiency and security of council homes across the Borough and will be welcomed and valued by residents. Maintaining homes to at least the Decent Homes Standard is a regulatory requirement, and the Council would quickly become non-compliant with the Home Standard part of the Regulatory Requirements if these works were not brought forward.

- Deliver Inhouse: These are major contracts, and we lack the capacity by the in-house contractor.
- Open Tender: This option was considered and is a possibility. However, this would involve a significantly extended procurement process in both time and cost.

CA.60 SURESERVE COMPLIANCE NORTHWEST CONTRACT EXTENSION

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth presented a report regarding the extension of the existing Contract for the delivery of Gas Compliance, Repairs, Smoke Detector Testing and Capital Boiler works within Housing Services and a call off option within the contract being utilised by Facilities Management for the delivery of services in Corporate Buildings. It was noted that further consideration of additional compliance contracts would be forthcoming. In response to a Member request regarding heat pumps being offered to replace boilers, it was agreed that a report setting out views on longer term investments be provided at a future meeting.

Decision:

Cabinet approved the extension of the existing Sureserve Compliance Northwest Compliance Ltd Contract for twelve months until 1st January 2027.

Reasons for the decision:

The contract delivers Landlord Statutory Compliance Services on behalf of the Council. The extension is required to allow time for an options appraisal to be carried out on the future delivery of gas services.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

Re-procurement has been considered; however, due to the Building Safety, Repairs and Property restructure this was rejected as the time and capacity required are not yet in place.

CA.61 DEMOLITION OF GARAGES AT HAWK CLOSE

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth presented a report regarding the demolition of garages at Hawk Close, Bury. Members welcomed this report, as the garages have attracted anti-social behaviour and vandalism. It was noted that the future of the site was a key consideration, and the feasibility study would include views of local residents.

Decision:

Cabinet:

1. Approved the demolition of the 28 garages situated at Hawk Close, Bury;
2. Authorised the Director of Housing to procure and supervise the demolition works, including the safe removal of asbestos; and
3. Instructed officers to prepare a feasibility study for future use of the site to be presented within the next 6 months.

Reasons for the decision:

All the 28 garages have been vacant empty for a considerable time, are beyond economic repair and are subject to repeated acts of vandalism, drug taking, setting fires etc and are a constant cause of nuisance and concern for residents.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

Doing nothing is not an option as the garages are a significant health and safety risk. The garages are beyond economic repair and restoring the garages is not a viable option.

CA.62 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 26th September 2025 be noted.

CA.63 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.64 HOUSING MAJOR WORKS PROGRAMME 2025/26 - PART B

The Cabinet Member for Housing Services presented the Part B report containing the full financial information.

Decision:

Cabinet:

1. Granted approval to enter into building contracts for energy efficiency and/or renewable energy works to Council properties on Rainsough Estate:
2. Granted approval to a change of contractor to Live Manage Facilitate Ltd for the contract works at Stanley Close and Freetown estates. This contract was previously awarded to Eco Approach Ltd at the July Cabinet, but they are unwilling to stand by their price.

Reasons for the decision:

As set out for the Part A report.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

As set out for the Part A report.

COUNCILLOR E O'BRIEN
Chair

(Note: The meeting started at 6.05 pm and ended at 7.07 pm)