

Minutes of: CABINET

Date of Meeting: 15 January 2026

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

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

Public Attendance: Two members of the public were present at the meeting.

Apologies for Absence: None

CA.97 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies received.

CA.98 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

CA.99 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

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

Have the Cabinet and members been fully provided with the guidance and understanding that a scheme that has been lawfully commenced under permitted development that has full financial and contractual commitment that may not be available to be aborted that has been made at the outset of a six to seven month conversion project may be caught mid project and nonetheless be failed to secure the planning permission if an immediate article 4 direction comes into force mid-conversion. That reasoning is because the change of use has not yet been lawfully established and the scheme is then required to be assessed retrospectively and potentially against a new SPD policy document

Responding, Councillor O'Brien reported that there are two actions at once, there is a supplementary planning document out for consultation and the article 4 direction which we are hoping to have considered at the Planning Committee at the end of January 2026. With regards to the Article 4, we have all expressed our views as a Council the decision ultimately rests with the Planning Committee so there will be a recommendation submitted soon for the Planning Committee to debate and discuss. Councillor O'Brien confirmed the Council is considering the scenario presented by the public question and will therefore form part of the debate at the Planning Committee including setting out the Councils view on the scenario.

A further supplementary question was submitted:

Can Cabinet therefore confirm that when the members are briefed where a refusal may occur that unlike the focus that was on the professional design fees which was in the original report that I commented on that potential compensation may extend to wider aborted costs which may include cost of conversion works already committed to at the start of the project and undertaken and where applicable, the cost of converting.

Councillor O'Brien reported that it is not uncommon in the Planning Committee to weigh up all those risks and to balance the risk in relation to legal challenge, planning appeal and planning inspectors. The Leader advised he is confident the Committee will be able to make a decision considering all factors.

CA.100 MEMBER QUESTION TIME

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

With regards the Highway Asset Management Plan, we have recently had some re-surfacing work carried out on several Radcliffe roads. While the work itself was to a very high standard, almost immediately after Water Street resurfacing was finished the road had to be dug up again due to a gas leak. I am not sure if the work on the road contributed to the cause of the gas leak, but it is possible that it might have done. Unfortunately, the work carried out by the contractor for the company who repaired the gas leak left a lovely new road surface with a bad repair which given time would likely lead to a more rapid deterioration of the road surface. Following a submitted casework the contractor returned to perform a better repair. I wondered if inspection of work carried out by third parties is either included or could be added to the HAMP to ensure that repairs are properly carried out to avoid rapid deterioration of sections of road surfaces that have been dug up by utilities companies?

Responding, Councillor A Quinn reported that It is standard practice for all resurfacing works to be registered for protection under Section 58 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991. This statutory protection prevents utility companies from excavating newly laid surfacing for a period of up to five years. However, this restriction does not apply to emergency works required to safeguard public safety, as was the case on Water Street due to a gas leak. In addition, the Act requires inspections of utility reinstatements at prescribed intervals to ensure compliance with the standards set out in the Specification for the Reinstatement of Openings in Highways. The reinstatements on Water Street were identified as defective by our Area Highway Inspector during routine inspections, and the utility company has been instructed to return and carry out remedial works to an acceptable standard. Officers are actively pursuing the utility company to expedite these repairs.

The processes relating to the protection of new works, inspection of utility works, and standards for reinstatements are governed by primary legislation under the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 and the Specification for the Reinstatement of Openings in Highways (Fourth Edition). These documents set out the statutory methodology for fulfilling our duties as the Street and Highway Authority. Consequently, it is neither necessary nor appropriate for these requirements to be duplicated within the Highway Asset Management Plan (HAMP)

CA.101 MINUTES

It was agreed:

That the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 3 December 2025 be approved as an accurate record.

CA.102 HOT FOOD TAKEAWAY SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT-CONSULTATION DRAFT

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth presented the draft Hot Food Takeaway Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The SPD provides assessment criteria for planning applications relating to hot food takeaways, including:

- Restrictions on new takeaways within 400m of secondary schools;
- Refusal of applications in LSOAs where Year 6 obesity exceeds 25% and more than 5 takeaways already exist;
- A cap of no more than two consecutive takeaways in any frontage;
- Requirements for Health Impact Assessments, waste management, noise, odour and amenity protection.

Consultation will run for 6 weeks commencing January 2026.

Councillor Mike Smith sought assurance what this supplementary planning document would mean for areas that already contain five or more hot food takeaways in an area would mean. The Leader confirmed the document is not retrospective but allows us to empower the Planning Committee to reject change of uses and new builds of hot food takeaways.

Members of Cabinet wished to publicly acknowledge a link to public health and planning and highlighted links to childhood obesity and wider health inequalities.

Decision:

Cabinet:

1. Approved the draft Hot Food Takeaway SPD for a six-week public consultation.
2. Delegated authority to the Executive Director (Place) to make minor, non-material modifications prior to consultation.

Reasons for the decision:

To ensure that all stakeholders are given the opportunity to comment on the draft Hot Food Takeaway Supplementary Planning Document.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

To not approve the SPD for consultation. This would prevent stakeholders from commenting on the SPD and would prevent the Council from being able to proceed to adopt the SPD because it is a statutory requirement that such documents must be consulted on before adoption.

CA.103 DISPOSAL OF LAND AT CHAMBERHALL BUSINESS PARK

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth presented a report seeking approval for the disposal of two plots of land at Chamberhall Business Park to Crown Gas & Power Ltd. The proposals would enable the development of plot 1, a 40,000 sq ft headquarters office building and plot 2, a 25,000 sq ft industrial scheme.

The Cabinet was advised that the development would deliver significant economic benefits, including:

- The creation of approximately 250 new jobs;
- £310,000 per annum in business rates;
- An estimated £8 million GVA per year;
- Increased town centre expenditure of around £560,000.

It was noted that the disposal constituted a subsidy under the Subsidy Control Act 2022, but the decision was justified given the substantial economic and social benefits.

Councillor M. Smith queried whether the proposed jobs represented new employment opportunities or relocations from existing sites. In response, the Leader confirmed that the majority would be additional jobs, reflecting company growth and including construction-related employment. The development would offer a mix of office and industrial roles, many of which could be matched to local jobseekers, contributing positively to the borough's employment market.

Councillor R. Bernstein welcomed the proposals, stating that the development represented excellent news for Bury, and confirmed his support.

Councillor S. Arif expressed support for the decision and thanked officers for the detailed briefing provided prior to the meeting.

Members recognised that the proposals were the result of months of work and represented a strategic opportunity to support the continued growth of the borough. The development was regarded as a positive step aligned with long-term economic ambitions for Bury.

Decision:

Cabinet:

1. Notes previous attempts to sell the site and the alternative options, as set out below.
2. Approved the disposal of the two plots of council land at Chamberhall to Crown G&P to facilitate the delivery of a new head office facility on plot 1 and industrial development on plot 2, (shown edged red on the plan in Appendix 2) subject to the Council carrying out an assessment of the subsidy's compliance with the subsidy principles set out in Schedule 1 of the Subsidy Control Act 2022, and subject to the Council making the decision that the subsidy is consistent with those principles
3. Delegated the making of required entry on to the Subsidy Database to the Assistant Director for Corporate Assets and Facilities Management.
4. Delegated the signing of all contracts required to complete the sale of the Site to the Director of Law and Governance

Reasons for decisions:

The proposed disposal enables the Council to facilitate the delivery of a new head office on behalf of an established regional business, with the following benefits;

- bringing in the region of 250 jobs to the borough.
- The proposed scheme will generate an estimated £310,000 per annum in business rates.
- Generate £8.0 million net additional GVA annually to the local economy and an increase in footfall and spending in Bury town centre, supporting local shops, cafés, and services, with estimated gross expenditure of £560,000 per year as estimated by Amion, as more fully detailed within the body of the report.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

Dispose the whole site on the open market

a – Sale of Property by Private Treaty (via a marketing campaign). This approach would not provide the certainty of the proposed transaction and would lead to a much longer time for delivery of employment space and therefore the associated jobs.

b – Auction This approach could provide certainty on disposal timing but would lead to a much longer time for delivery of potential employment space and therefore the associated jobs. Both routes may lead to a new owner land banking the site which would not bring forward the jobs or business rates for the borough. These factors could be mitigated in a sale contract, but their inclusion could suppress the sale price achievable.

Seek a development partner via a new tender exercise.

The Council could proceed with a further tender exercise for a developer to deliver an industrial scheme, however this is unlikely to provide a larger capital receipt.

This route has been explored previously and restarting this process would also be subject to economic impact during the selection/planning period and legal review.

It should be noted however that whilst CBRE valued the site at £1.825m there is a risk that during any post-tender period any changes to external economic factors could result in changes in the valuation fundamentals (as has happened in the previous tender exercise) which could negate the potential capital receipt. The Nolan Real Estate report reporting negative land values highlight the sensitivity on land value the key development inputs. Analysis of CBRE's and Nolans' valuation's detailed in the main body of the report

Dispose of the site on plot-by-plot basis.

Selling the site as a whole provides economies of scale for delivery which would otherwise not be available if the sites were disposed of in isolation. This disposal method is also subject to the same risks as set out on a whole site disposal above.

Self-develop for industrial use

There is significant risk and cost involved in this option. Due to the council resource position (financial and staffing) this has been discounted. This option would also provide a negative return.

Self-develop for office use

Financially this would provide an even larger negative return and even if financially viable would provide significant risk and cost to the Council.

Do nothing

This option does not provide the economic growth, job opportunities or any capital receipt. There are also ongoing liabilities for holding the land.

CA.104 COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2026

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation presented the updated Council Tax Support Scheme for implementation from April 2026. Members were advised that, following public consultation, the preferred model had been refined to:

- Simplify the assessment process;

- Enhance support for low-income working households;
- Maintain cost neutrality for the Council.

The Cabinet noted that the revised scheme was designed to be more accessible, reduce administrative complexity, and support residents in financial hardship more effectively.

Councillor R. Bernstein asked for clarification on the level of consultation undertaken, specifically what had been done differently compared to previous exercises. In response, the Deputy Leader explained that the Council had invested in improved digital engagement tools, including the ability to send targeted text messages, which significantly increased reach. This was supplemented by a comprehensive consultation methodology, incorporating online engagement, face-to-face sessions, and other forms of direct communication to ensure a broad range of resident input. The approach represented a substantial enhancement on previous consultation processes.

Decision:

Cabinet:

1. approved presentation of the new Council Tax Support scheme at Full Council on 21st January in order to seek Full Council approval for adoption and implementation in April 2026.

Reasons for decision:

The proposed scheme has already been approved for consultation and must now be approved by Full Council before adoption.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

Retention of the existing scheme.

CA.105 2025-26 Q2 FINANCE POSITION

Cabinet considered the Quarter 2 Financial Monitoring Report presented by Councillor Thorpe, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation which provided an update on the Council's financial position for 2024/25. During the discussion, Cabinet noted a forecast revenue overspend of £5.861 million for the financial year. It was reported that 82% of planned savings had either been delivered or were on track, and plans were in place to address the remaining savings gap. Cabinet further noted that the capital programme had been reprofiled to a total of £124.561 million, reflecting updated delivery timescales. In addition, the Collection Fund was forecasting a surplus of £1.186 million.

Decision:

Cabinet:

1. Noted the 2025/26 forecast revenue outturn position as at 30 September 25 of a £5.861m overspend (2.45%) against a net budget of £238.988m.
2. Noted the 2025/26 forecast savings position as at 30 September 2025 of a forecast underachievement of £2.031m (-17.92%) against an agreed target of £11.344m.
3. Approved the in-year updates to the capital programme, revising the capital delivery programme for 2025/26 to £124.561m which will form the basis for future in-year monitoring and reporting of performance.

4. Noted the 2025/26 forecast Collection Fund Position as at 30 September 2025 of a surplus of £1.186m of which £1.103m relates to Bury's share.

Reasons for recommendation(s):

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.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

None.

CA.106 PROCUREMENT FUTURE OPERATING MODEL BUSINESS CASE

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation presented a report setting out the Business Case for the establishment of a Central Procurement Hub as part of the Council's Procurement Transformation Programme. Cabinet was informed that the Council currently manages around £200 million of annual third-party spend, but existing procurement arrangements are fragmented, reactive, and expose the organisation to significant financial, legal and operational risk.

The Business Case identified that procurement capacity is severely under-resourced, operating with fewer than 3 FTEs, compared with 10–15 WTE typically seen in comparable local authority and NHS organisations. Baseline assessments and stakeholder feedback highlighted substantial weaknesses in contract management, limited use of digital systems, compliance gaps, and the absence of a strategic approach to category planning and spend analysis.

To address these issues, the proposed operating model establishes a centralised procurement team aligned to the Council's four directorates, supported by modern digital systems such as Unit4 and ScanMarket. The Programme would deliver strengthened governance, improve visibility and control over expenditure, ensure compliance with the Procurement Act 2023, and increase the Council's ability to negotiate and manage contracts effectively.

It was forecast that the Programme would deliver gross savings increasing to £3m by Year 5, generating £10m cumulative efficiencies and an estimated £7.6m net financial benefit over five years. Additional benefits included strengthened compliance, improved organisational assurance, enhanced digital capability, cultural improvements to commercial practice, and readiness for future statutory reporting requirements.

Decision:

Cabinet:

1. Approved the draft Houses in Multiple Occupation SPD as the basis for a six week public consultation commencing December 2025; and
2. Delegated approval to the Executive Director of Place to undertake the public consultation and make minor non-material modifications to the draft Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document before consultation commences.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

1. The attached Business Case sets out the rationale and preferred approach for transforming procurement at Bury Council. It addresses the longstanding inefficiencies, risks, and missed opportunities in the way the Council manages its £200 million annual third-party spend on both revenue and capital procurement activity. The aim is to shift procurement from a largely reactive and transactional function to a strategic enabler of financial savings, service outcomes, and organisational assurance.
2. The budget report considered at Cabinet in December included potential third party contract savings of £1m in 2026/27 which are predicated on the need for investment in additional procurement and contract management capacity and with the potential for further savings in 2027/28 and future years. The analysis indicates there is significant scope for efficiency savings through improved procurement planning, contract management, aggregation, and compliance.

Alternative options considered and rejected

Doing nothing is not considered a viable option with investment in, and transformation of, the service considered as essential for delivering a modern, strategic procurement function that can deliver material savings, restore control, reduce risk, and reposition procurement as a key lever in the Council's financial and service reform agenda.

CA.107 PROCUREMENT FOR HIGHWAYS FRAMEWORK UNDER THE PROCUREMENT ACT 2023

The Cabinet Member for Environment, Climate Change and Operations presented a report seeking approval to proceed with the re-procurement of the Council's Highways Framework in accordance with the requirements of the Procurement Act 2023.

Cabinet was advised that the existing Highways Framework has successfully supported the delivery of a broad range of highways services, including minor civils works and highway structures, and has enabled both planned and reactive works to be delivered efficiently using established suppliers. The new framework would expand its scope to include additional Lots covering all highways-related disciplines, with multiple suppliers appointed per Lot to ensure service continuity. It would also place a stronger emphasis on social value outcomes and SME participation.

The framework is projected to represent an estimated £60 million of spend over its term, although actual expenditure will depend on the availability of budgets, capital investment programmes and any additional funding secured. A Planned Procurement Notice was issued in December 2025 to alert the market in advance of the tender. The procurement process is scheduled to conclude in June–July 2026, after which a further report will be presented to Cabinet with an Award Report providing full audit assurance before contracts are let.

Cabinet noted that the re-procurement exercise is required to ensure compliance with statutory duties under both the Procurement Act 2023 and the Highways Act 1980, and to avoid risks to service continuity. The alternative option of utilising external frameworks was rejected due to the typical application of management fees of around 1%, which would equate to an estimated £600,000 over the projected framework value.

Decision:

Cabinet:

1. Approved to precede with the re-procurement exercise

Reasons for recommendation(s):

To maintain compliance with statutory obligations of the Procurement Act 2023.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

Use Frameworks to source Bury's requirements Rejected: Framework providers typically apply a minimum 1% management fee. On a projected framework value of £60 million, this would amount to approximately £600,000, a cost the Council would avoid by delivering the framework directly.

CA.108 HIGHWAY ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Cabinet Member for Environment, Climate Change and Operations presented a report seeking approval of the Highway Asset Management Plan (HAMP) as a developing policy document. Cabinet was informed that the Government has announced that 25% of the £500m UK Local Highway Maintenance Fund for 2025/26 is contingent on authorities demonstrating adoption of best-practice asset management, supported by the publication of a local highway maintenance transparency report.

Members were advised that Bury's highway assets, valued at approximately £1.2 billion, represent the Council's most valuable infrastructure and require a structured, evidence-based approach to maintenance to ensure that investment is targeted efficiently and effectively. The HAMP formalises this approach and sets out the Council's framework for preventative, planned, and reactive maintenance, drawing on national codes of practice and data-driven assessment techniques.

The report highlighted the importance of maintaining an appropriate balance of structural, preventative, and reactive maintenance to remain eligible for incentive-based funding. Cabinet noted that the Council has already submitted the required transparency information to the Department for Transport and continues to embed asset-management principles into operational practice.

The accompanying Appendix detailed the methodology, financial context, lifecycle planning, and operational practices that underpin the HAMP, including the valuation and composition of the network, the use of UKPMS-accredited surveys, SCRIM testing, footway condition surveys, and structured inspection regimes for lighting, structures, drainage and soft-landscape assets.

It was noted that failure to approve the HAMP could jeopardise eligibility for future incentive-based capital funding, while approval would strengthen compliance with statutory duties under the Highways Act 1980 and support financial sustainability.

Decision:

Cabinet:

1. approved the Highway Asset Management Plan (HAMP) as a developing policy.

Reason for the Decision:

To formalise the Council's asset-management approach, ensure compliance with Government requirements, protect future capital funding allocations, and support the long-term, efficient management of the borough's £1.2bn highway asset base.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

To not approve the HAMP.

CA.109 EXTRA CARE HOUSING STRATEGY 2026 TO 2036

The Cabinet Member for Adult Care, Health and Public Service Reform presented a report seeking approval of the Extra Care Housing Strategy 2026–2036, which sets out the Council’s long-term approach to expanding, improving and governing extra care housing provision across the borough.

Members were advised that extra care housing provides self-contained accommodation with onsite support and care services designed to promote independence, wellbeing and ageing in place. The strategy responds to increasing demand linked to Bury’s ageing population and the consistent preference of older residents to remain in their own homes or in more appropriate housing rather than enter residential care.

The Cabinet was informed that the Strategy has been developed following extensive research and consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, including older people’s groups, housing providers, health and care partners, the voluntary sector, local councillors and the public. A four-week consultation was undertaken between 27 October and 21 November 2025. The Strategy aligns with key corporate and strategic documents including the Let’s Do It 2030 Strategy, the Housing Strategy, the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and the Market Position Statement.

The Strategy identifies ten commissioning priorities for the next decade, including: improving engagement with communities; ensuring inclusive and accessible services; strengthening the quality of existing schemes; aligning allocations with wider housing policy; establishing an extra care waiting list; raising public awareness; undertaking cost-benefit analysis; co-producing Extra Care Housing Standards; developing up to five new extra care schemes by 2035; and ensuring future sheltered housing review aligns with extra care development.

Current supply includes 169 units across three Council-owned schemes (Falcon & Griffin, Redbank and Peachment Place). Analysis of the housing register, JSNA data and market intelligence demonstrates that demand significantly exceeds current provision, with projected need for up to 330 units by 2035. The Council expects to work closely with registered housing providers to bring forward new schemes, ensuring provision is developed across at least two of Prestwich, Whitefield, Tottington and Ramsbottom, and that design meets HAPPI standards, digital infrastructure requirements and supports future care needs.

Cabinet noted that implementation will be overseen by the Extra Care Housing Delivery Group, with bi-annual highlight reporting to key governance groups including Adult Social Care SLT, Housing SLT, Housing Growth Group and the Ageing Well Partnership Board. No immediate legal or financial implications arise directly from approval of the Strategy, though specific projects will require further assessments.

Decision:

Cabinet:

1. Approved the Extra Care Housing Strategy 2026 to 2036 and agreed that the proposed arrangements for delivery and governance will sit with Bury Council’s Extra Care Housing Delivery Group.

Reasons for recommendation(s):

It is recognised that most people who have care and support needs now, or in the future, wish to be supported in their own home, or a home that can better meet their needs. Increasing the

supply of extra care housing in Bury is key to preventing and avoiding admissions to residential care and hospitals and this in turn contributes to our prevention agenda.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

Do nothing; we would risk having an insufficient supply of appropriate housing for our ageing population.

CA.110 SIX TOWN HOUSING LTD AND BURY HOUSING SERVICES SLA

The Cabinet Member for Housing Services presented the Service Level Agreement f**Decision:** Cabinet approved the SLA for 2026–27.

The Cabinet Member for Housing Services presented a report outlining the requirement to extend the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between Bury Council and Six Town Housing Ltd (STH) for a further 12 months, covering the period 1 February 2026 to 31 January 2027. Members were reminded that following the cessation of STH's role as the Council's ALMO in February 2024, STH continued as a wholly owned subsidiary and Private Registered Provider of Social Housing, responsible for its remaining housing stock. STH now owns and leases 115 social housing homes, reduced from 149 following the end of the Mosscaire St Vincent lease and hand-back of 34 properties.

The Cabinet was advised that STH no longer employs staff and is managed solely by its Board. It is therefore wholly reliant on the Council for operational support. The existing SLA, agreed in July 2024, enables Bury Housing Services to deliver all landlord functions on STH's behalf, ensuring compliance with statutory and regulatory duties. The SLA expires on 31 January 2026, and an extension is required to ensure stability and continuity of services for tenants while the longer-term dissolution of STH is progressed—an 18-month process initiated following Cabinet approval in September 2025.

Members noted that the extension includes updated charging arrangements reflecting the reduced stock numbers and the 3.4% corporate salary uplift applied to Council staff delivering the services. The annual block charge for 2025/26 was £100,850, with additional spot charges approved by the STH Chair as needed. The charging formula will be reviewed to ensure ongoing accuracy and proportionality.

The report also emphasised that the SLA forms part of the required regulatory assurance framework, with the Operational Plans and SLA potentially subject to review by the Regulator of Social Housing. The arrangement supports the Council's priorities by ensuring safe, compliant homes for local residents and facilitating continuity in housing management during organisational transition.

Decision:

Cabinet:

1. delegated to the Director of Law and Democratic Services the preparation and signing of the variation instruments to extend the provision of Council Services to Six Town Housing from 1/2/26.

Reasons for recommendation(s):

STH no longer performs the ALMO function for the Council but it continues as an active Private Registered Provider of Social Housing company now owning and leasing just 115 social housing homes which it lets and sublets to its own social housing tenants. STH no longer employs staff, is managed solely by its Board, and wholly relies on the Council for

services. Therefore, an ongoing Service Level agreement is required so STH may continue with its reduced social housing activities relying on the support of the Council.

Cabinet agreed to begin the process of dissolving STH on the 9th September 2025. This process will take at least 18 months. During this time, consistent management of the properties will ensure stability for the organisation and tenants.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

The option to “do nothing” is not appropriate since STH corporate governance arrangements must provide for and align with STHs significantly reduced role and activities post cessation of ALMO.

CA.111 YOUTH JUSTICE BUSINESS PLAN 2025 - 2026

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children and Young People presented the Youth Justice Business Plan for 2025–2026, highlighting that the requirement for an annual plan is set out in Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, which places a statutory duty on local authorities to produce and implement a Youth Justice Plan in consultation with key partners. The Business Plan has been approved by the Youth Justice Partnership Management Board and the Youth Justice Board, and must be formally approved by Full Council under Regulation 4 of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000.

Cabinet noted the context of Bury and Rochdale’s joint Youth Justice Service, which was amalgamated in 2014 and is overseen by a shared partnership board. The plan sets out the service’s vision, priorities, governance arrangements, performance, risks and operational developments for the coming year. Key issues for Cabinet to note include the need for a dedicated Bury town centre base, higher numbers of children in care and those with SEND/EHCPs in the Bury cohort, and continuing concerns about disproportionality among some ethnic groups.

Performance information within the plan highlights positive trends in first-time entrants, which have reduced from 113 to 102, and reoffending and custody rates which remain below regional and Greater Manchester averages. However, the plan also identifies emerging challenges relating to serious youth violence, rising complexity of children’s needs, differential access to specialist resources between Bury and Rochdale, and inconsistent attendance at the Partnership Board. Sub-groups focusing on Prevention and Diversion, Education, Training and Employment, and Serious Violence have been established to strengthen governance and oversight.

The Plan sets out six priority areas for 2025/26, aligned with inspection expectations:

- Governance & Leadership
- Prevention and Diversion
- Remand, Custody and Resettlement
- Victims and Restorative Justice
- Serious Violence and Harmful Sexual Behaviour
- Quality Assurance and Workforce Development

Cabinet was informed that the Youth Justice Plan also links strongly with Bury’s corporate priorities, including early intervention, improving life chances, reducing offending, and strengthening neighbourhood-level delivery. A comprehensive Equality Impact Analysis accompanies the plan and identifies mitigations to support inclusive delivery.

Decision:

Cabinet:

1. Noted the report as expected statutorily to make Cabinet aware of the priorities, performance, issues and risks for the Youth Justice Services
2. Approved the Youth Justice Business Plan 2025–2026 for submission to Full Council, in line with statutory requirements.

Reason for the Decision:

To comply with the statutory duty under Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and ensure Cabinet is aware of the service's priorities, performance, risks and resource implications for the year ahead.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

Not applicable.

CA.112 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 22 August and 28 November 2025 be noted.

Members were informed the Mayoral Precept Proposals go to the GMCA on 30th January and then final proposals will to the GMCA on the 14th February, members will be sent these once published.

CA.113 URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

COUNCILLOR E O'BRIEN
Chair

(Note: The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.57 pm)