

LET'S Develop

***Welcome to Your Members'
Development Offer 2026–
2027***

This booklet is designed to support you in your role as an elected member and help you make the biggest impact for your community. It sets out the training and development opportunities available throughout the municipal year and explains how we'll work together to strengthen local democracy.

- Councillor R Gold, Cabinet Member Customer Service, Communications and Corporate Affairs, 2025-2026

Why This Matters

Being a councillor is a rewarding role, but it comes with responsibilities. Understanding how local government works and how you can influence decisions is key to making a difference. Training isn't just a tick-box exercise, it's about giving you the tools, confidence, and knowledge to lead effectively.

Background and Context

After a fallow year in 2025–2026, all ten Greater Manchester councils—Manchester, Salford, Bolton, Bury, Tameside, Trafford, Oldham, Rochdale, Stockport and Wigan—will hold elections in 2026, 2027 and 2028. Each year, one-third of councillors will be elected. The next fallow year will be 2029, unless a by-election is required.

This development offer is here to help you develop your skills to be an effective councillor whilst navigating this changing landscape alongside playing your part in shaping the future of local democracy.

How Local Government is Organised

Local government in England can look different depending on where you are. Some areas have two tiers; county and district councils, while others have a single unitary authority responsible for all services.

In Greater Manchester, things are a little different and since 2011, Bury Council has been part of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA), which brings together the ten councils and a directly elected Mayor to make decisions on issues that matter most to our region.

What Does Devolution Mean for You?

Devolution gives Greater Manchester more control over priorities and funding, around £22 billion to better reflect the needs of 2.8 million residents. It covers areas like:

- Policing and crime
- Housing and transport
- Planning and business support
- Skills and training
- Health and social care

This means your role as a councillor is more important than ever in shaping decisions that affect people's lives.

As a councillor you may get the opportunity to sit on committees that oversee the work and strategic direction of the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities.

Our Development Plan for 2026–2027

We've designed a programme that supports every member, whether you're newly elected or an experienced councillor taking on new responsibilities. The offer is built around four key components:

1. Core - Essential training for all members to ensure statutory compliance, good governance, and alignment with the **Let's Do It! Strategy**.

2. Specialist - Targeted development for new members, portfolio holders, committee chairs, and regulatory committee members.

If you receive a special responsibility allowance, attendance at some of these sessions is expected.

3. Optional - Additional training for members who want to deepen their knowledge or prepare for future roles. *Estimated time:*

4. Leadership - Advanced leadership development for Cabinet Members, Deputy Cabinet Members, and Opposition Portfolio Holders often delivered in partnership with the Local Government Association (LGA).

Further Support: This booklet is just the starting point. You'll also find resources from:

- Local Government Association (LGA)
- Centre for Governance and Scrutiny
- The King's Fund
- Association of Democratic Services Officers (ADSO)
- North West Employers
- Bury Council

These organisations offer a wealth of training and guidance to help you succeed.

Your Journey Starts Here

Ad hoc training opportunities may, of course, emerge throughout the year and Members will be contacted with any amendments to the programme. The plan includes a mix of in person, virtual and E-learning recognising different learning styles and experiences.

Member

We're committed to supporting you every step of the way. Whether you're learning the basics or developing your leadership skills, this programme is designed to help you thrive in your role and will support you to make a real difference for the people of Bury.

New Councillors

Local councils are governed by an important regulatory framework providing powers, duties and obligations. It is important for new councillors to have the knowledge and understanding to ensure accountability and lawful decision-making.

During this time all core training programmes should be completed and will be monitored via an online dashboard either via the e-learning offer or by attending in-person training sessions available on the training programme. All this training is provided as essential training for all elected members to ensure statutory compliance, good governance, and alignment with the Let's Do It! Strategy.

Core Induction Training

This is essential training for all new members to ensure statutory compliance, good governance, and alignment with the **Let's Do It! Strategy**.

Member Induction Session (New Councillors)

There will be a Member Induction session this year 13th May 2026. This session will involve an overview of

- Support available from the Democratic Services Team
- Discretionary grants
- Development and training
- Member casework
- Code of conduct
- Register of interest

Annual Core Training

No matter how long you have been a councillor, there are key training sessions that we expect all members to attend annually, to ensure their skills and knowledge remain current.

Code of Conduct

All members are expected to attend a Code of Conduct training session, delivered by the Monitoring Officer, to advise and update Members on the Members Code of Conduct. There will be two options available during each municipal year. The sessions for the 2026/27 municipal year are 13th May 2026 and 03rd November 2026.

Corporate Planning and Performance Briefing Session

All members are encouraged to attend a session with Kate Waterhouse, Executive Director (Strategy & Transformation) on 17th June 2026, to receive an introduction and overview of the Council's Corporate Plan for 2026–2027.

LET'S Do It Training

An all-member session will provide a brief update on the continued progress of our 'LET'S Do It Strategy' throughout the 2026/27 period.

- Local: Strengthened neighbourhood working through increased resident engagement and co-designed local initiatives.
- Enterprise: Update on our regeneration plans and outcomes across our communities.
- Together: How we are continuing to embed a culture of collaboration, inclusion, and shared leadership across the borough.
- Strengths: Celebrating our success. These achievements reflect the collective efforts of our partners, communities, and council teams, all working together to turn ambition into action.

Core Functional Training

In addition to the above training, all Members are required to complete the 6 core training modules. This training should be undertaken through your online e-learning account:

- GDPR – To be completed annually
- Health and Safety – To be completed at least every 3 years
- Equality and Diversity – To be completed at least every 3 years
- Corporate Parenting – To be completed at least every 3 years
- Safeguarding against radicalisation – To be completed at least every 3 years
- Climate Change – To be completed at least every 3 years

Members can complete these modules online through the Council's e-learning portal, attend a face-to-face session scheduled throughout the year. If you complete any of these modules as part of other employment or voluntary roles please share the details with Democratic Services in order for your training record to be updated.

To access online training, you will need to log into your e-Learning account. All Councillors have been automatically enrolled on the Core training modules and can also freely access over 200 other courses through the e-learning portal here: [Me Learning](#). Where appropriate, prior and outside learning to satisfy core training requirements will be accepted. If you have undertaken accredited training elsewhere in any of the 6 core functional areas through your current jobs or voluntary roles, you can provide certification to A.J.Tomlinson@bury.gov.uk, and we will upload this on your training record.

Specialist Training

This is targeted development for new members, portfolio holders, committee chairs, and regulatory and scrutiny committee members. This training is not mandatory but is recommended if you are interested in developing your skills or sitting on a committee.

Internal Regulatory Committee Training

All Members of Council are invited to attend training given to members of the Licensing and Safety Committee, Planning Control Committee, Audit Committee, Human Resources and Appeals Panel and the Housing Advisory Board. This constitutes 'Specialist' training for committee members and 'Optional' for others.

If you are a member of a regulatory committee you must attend the relevant training session before you will be allowed to attend and vote at a meeting.

External Regulatory Training

To help you understand the key regulatory frameworks that shape our work, we offer optional briefing sessions and training for all Members. These sessions focus on the three main external regulators that oversee critical areas of the Council's responsibilities:

- Ofsted – covering Children's Social Care and SEND
- Care Quality Commission (CQC) – overseeing Adult Social Care
- Regulator of Social Housing – ensuring compliance in housing standards

Each session will be delivered by the Council's senior leadership team, providing insight into what these frameworks mean for our services and your role as a councillor.

If you are a member of a regulatory committee we recommend you attend the relevant training sessions to keep your knowledge up to date.

Committee Specific Training

To assist with members roles on committee meetings including Cabinet Members, and Shadow Cabinet Members.

Dates for these sessions can be found in the training schedule at the end of this booklet.

Members of Licensing and Safety Committee, Planning Control Committee and the Employment Panel must attend regulatory training ahead of attending the first meeting of the municipal year.

Scrutiny Committee Training

At Bury Council we have three Scrutiny Committees covering a wide range of topics. Before the first meeting of each Committee members should attend a briefing session from lead officers which will cover work over the next municipal year. Members will be invited throughout the course of the year to attend pre-committee briefings, extra support sessions for complex topics and Chairs of the Committee will be brought together to meet at a Scrutiny Chair meeting quarterly to share ideas, discuss cross cutting work programmes and support one another.

Continuing Your Journey as a Councillor (Year Two Onwards)

Congratulations on reaching this stage! By now, you may want to deepen your knowledge, take on new responsibilities, or prepare for future leadership roles. This year's programme is designed to help you do just that, with specialist and advanced training opportunities that reflect the latest policy changes and priorities for 2026/27.

All this training is provided as an opportunity to equip you with practical knowledge, strengthen your ability to scrutinise and influence decisions and help you to network with key partners across Greater Manchester.

The optional training is also recommended for Councillors who have interests in progression, taking on additional roles and those who understand the fundamentals and want to continue their professional development.

Optional Training

Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM)

TfGM coordinates transport across Greater Manchester and acts as the executive arm of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA). Its strategies are set by the GMCA and the Greater Manchester Transport Committee (GMTC), which includes 33 councillors from the ten boroughs plus the Mayor.

This session will provide insight into future transport plans, ongoing projects, and the Bee Network, including rail integration starting in December 2026. You'll also have the chance to ask questions about how these changes affect your community.

Recycle for Greater Manchester (R4GM)

R4GM works with nine Greater Manchester councils (excluding Wigan, which manages its own waste services) to help residents reduce waste and recycle responsibly. This session will cover:

- The Waste Contract
- The new Greater Manchester Waste Strategy (adopted late 2025)
- Future for sustainable waste management

National Planning and Local Framework

Government reforms announced in January 2025 require local plans to be completed within 30 months (down from an average of seven years). This session will explore:

- Local Plan production
- Our role as a planning authority
- Regeneration and housing development
- Economic development and GMCA links

Civil Contingencies Training

Led by the Assistant Director for Public Protection and Resilience, this session will cover:

- The Civil Contingencies Act
- Emergency preparedness
- Risk assessment
- Business continuity
- Public information
- Coordination with other responders

Greater Manchester Police and Community Safety

These sessions, delivered by GMP and Council officers, will update members on local operations, intelligence gathering, and safeguarding.

The first session on 3 June will focus on:

- The Community Safety Partnership
- Safeguarding Partnership Awareness

Audit and Finance Training

Following reports to Audit Committee in January 2025, external auditors issued a disclaimed opinion for the 2021/22 and 2022/23 financial years and highlighted significant weaknesses in Value for Money arrangements. A statutory recommendation called for an urgent Council-wide improvement plan with strong member oversight.

To support this, training has been arranged to give all members a clear understanding of audit requirements, financial oversight, and risk management.

Additional sessions will cover Risk Management and Treasury Management.

It is recommended that all members attend these sessions to develop their skills.

National Planning and Local Framework

In January 2025, the government confirmed an overhaul of local plans, setting a clear expectation that they must now be completed within **30 months** rather than the previous average of seven years.

This training session will cover:

- How local plans are produced
- Our role as a planning authority
- Regeneration and housing development
- Economic development and links with the GMCA

Leadership Training for Senior Councillors and Aspiring Senior Councillors

Cabinet Members and other councillors in leadership roles play a vital part in steering the council and the borough through challenges while delivering an ambitious programme for residents. These roles are complex and demanding, so ongoing development is essential.

This offer includes:

- Access to mentoring
- Specialist training
- Networking opportunities

It is targeted at Cabinet Members, Deputy Cabinet Members, and Opposition Leaders and Portfolio Holders. Group Leaders will work with the Director of Law & Governance and People & Inclusion to agree individual development plans tailored to each portfolio.

Any councillor who aspires to be a Cabinet member, or Deputy Cabinet Member should work with their Group Leader and Democratic Services to develop a training plan to support their learning and development in their role.

The Leadership Academy

The Leadership Academy, delivered by the Local Government Association (LGA), is the flagship development programme for councillors in leadership positions. It is recognised by The Institute of Leadership, the UK's leading body for leadership and management.

The programme helps councillors develop the skills needed to navigate challenges such as:

- Budget reductions
- Service transformation
- Community engagement
- Complex political environments

If you are interested in this offer, please discuss it with your Group Leader.

Councillor Development Resources

The LGA provides a wide range of resources to support councillor development. These can be accessed at your own pace and include guidance on:

- [Chairing skills](#)
- [Commissioning services](#)
- [Community leadership](#)
- [Creating a 'fit for the future' organisation](#)
- [Effective opposition in local government](#)
- [Engaging with young people](#)
- [Equality, diversity and inclusion \(EDI\)](#)
- [Facilitation and conflict resolution](#)
- [Finance for non-finance portfolio holders / cabinet members](#)
- [Handling complaints for service improvement](#)
- [Influencing skills](#)
- [The local path to net zero](#)
- [Local government finance](#)
- [Mentally healthier places](#)
- [Neighbourhood and community engagement](#)
- [Neighbourhood planning](#)
- [Planning](#)
- [Scrutiny of finance](#)
- [Stress management and personal resilience](#)
- [Supporting residents with complex issues](#)
- [Working with town and parish councils](#)

Bury Council Training for Councillors

Training	Core Training	Optional Training	Specialist Training	Leadership Training
Member Induction – Yearly offer Mandatory for New Members	Y			
Code of Conduct – Yearly	Y			
Corporate Planning and Performance Briefing Session	Y			
LET'S Do It	Y			
GDPR – To be completed annually	Y			
Health and Safety – To be completed at least every 3 years	Y			
Equality and Diversity – To be completed at least every 3 years	Y			
Corporate Parenting – To be completed at least every 3 years	Y			
Safeguarding against radicalisation – To be completed at least every 3 years	Y			
Climate Change	Y			
Licensing and Safety Committee Training			Y	
Planning Control Committee			Y	
Audit Committee			Y	
Human Resources and Appeals Panel			Y	
Housing Advisory Board.			Y	
Scrutiny Committee Training			Y	
Ofsted – covering Children's Social Care and SEND		Y		
Care Quality Commission (CQC) – overseeing Adult Social Care		Y		
Regulator of Social Housing – ensuring compliance in housing standards		Y		
Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM)		Y		
Recycle for Greater Manchester (R4GM)		Y		
Audit and Finance Training		Y		
National Planning and Local Framework		Y		
Civil Contingencies Training		Y		
Greater Manchester Police and Community Safety		Y		
The Leadership Academy				Y
Access to mentoring				Y
Networking opportunities				Y

Training Schedule 2026/27

Date/Time	Event details	Location	Category	Responsible officer
13 May 2026 9pm – 16.00pm	New Councillor Induction and drop in with Exec Directors and Incoming Mayor	Mayor's Parlour/ Council Chamber and Learning Hub	Core *for new members	Rachel Everitt Chloe Ashworth
21 st May 2026 1pm	Planning Control Committee Elected Member Training	Teams	Core *for members of planning committees and substitutes	Dave Marno
26 th May 2026 18/20:00	Licensing Committee Training	In Person – Peel Room	Core *for members of Licensing committees and substitutes	Michael Cunliffe Jacqui Dennis
27 th May 2026 18:00	Locality Board – Training	Teams – Booked In Dem Services Calendar – Chloe to add link	Core *for elected members and Cabinet Member of Locality Board and substitutes	Chloe Ashworth

Date/Time	Event details	Location	Category	Responsible officer
01 st June 2026 18.00	HMO Training (to help EM in their role representing residents at Planning meetings)	Teams	Optional	Daniel Ryan/Dave Marno/Micheal Cunliffe
24 th June 2026 18.00 - 20.00	Scrutiny Member Training	Teams	Core for all Scrutiny Members	Josh Ashworth Rachel Everitt
25 th June 2026 As part of the meeting	Employment Panel Training	TBC	Core (for members of Employment Panel committees and substitutes)	Andrea Tomlinson/ Kelly Barnett
29 th June 2026 17.00 - 19:00	Production of the Local Plan and our role as a planning authority Regeneration and Housing Development Economic Development and the GMCA links	Teams	Optional	Crispian Logue/David Wiggins/David Marno Rob Summerfield/Roz Catlow Patterson Sarah Porru/Rachel Crossland
6 July 17.30 - 18:30	Corporate Planning and Performance Briefing	In person Peel Room	Core	Exec team members (Kate Waterhouse to chair)
Date TBC	Where do you keep the Ketchup	In person	Cllrs to book on this	Mike Nichols
22 nd July 2026 18.00	Audit Committee Training	In person	Core for all Audit	Neil Kissock

Date/Time	Event details	Location	Category	Responsible officer
			Committee Members	
2 nd Sept 2026 18.30 19.30	All Member GMCA Fire and Rescue Session	Peel Room	Optional	
16 September 2026 17.30 - 18.30	Pre Council briefing or drop in Session Bee Network	Peel Room		Ben Blackburn TFGM
17 September 2026 17.00 - 18.00	GDPR – All Member in person Session			Jacqui Dennis - Confirmed
5 October 2026 17.30 - 18.30	Equality and Diversity – All Member session	In Person – Peel Room	Core	Lee Cawley - Confirmed
8 October 2026 17:30-18:30	Corporate Parenting & OfSTED	Peel Room	Core	Linda Evans
TBC	Where do you keep the Ketchup – Condensed Cllr		Optional	Mike Nichols
15 Oct 26 17.30 - 19.30	Community Safety/Safeguarding Partnership Awareness Session,	In Person – Peel Room	Optional ,	Chris Woodhouse and GMP
19 Oct 26 17.00 - 18.00	Safeguarding against Radicalisation TBC	In person		Mark Gay – Ben Dunne

Date/Time	Event details	Location	Category	Responsible officer
22 October 17:00-19:00	Guidance on how highways are delivered	Teams	Optional	Peter Stokes
28 Oct 2026 18.00 - 20.00	Civil Contingencies	Teams	Optional	Ben Thomson Paddy Norton and Kate Waterhouse
03 rd November 2026 17:00-19:00	Councillors Code of Conduct	Council Chamber	Core	Jacqui Dennis Rachel Everitt
11 th November 2026 17.30 - 19.00	Pre Council briefing or drop in Session - TBD Regulator of Social Housing	Council Chamber	Optional	Rachel Everitt Sian Grant
16 November 17.30 - 19.00pm	All Member Health & Safety in person session	Peel Room	Core	Mark Redding
25 November 5.30pm	Illicit tobacco and vape – All Member	Peel Room	Optional	Ben Thomas, Kelly Halligan
7 December 2026 – 5.30pm	All Member Briefing on the Kings Awards and Personal Honours - Lord Lieutenants Office	Peel Room	optional	David Catterall Karen Lee * Eamonn O'Neal
06 th January 2027 17:00	All Member Health and Wellbeing Focus			Tim Normanton
20 th January 2027	Pre Budget Council Finance training session	Council Chamber	Optional	Neil Kissock

Date/Time	Event details	Location	Category	Responsible officer
17.30-18.30				
1 February 2027	Climate Change – All Member in Person	Peel Room	Optional	Chris Horth & Ben Thomson
15th February 2027 17:30-19:00	Casework Training Session & Member Drop in		Optional	Christine Seymour & Racquel Dickin
24 th February 2027	Pre Council Briefing or drop in session - TBD		Optional	Rachel Everitt
15 th March 2026 18.00 - 20.00	Lets Update All Member Briefing		Optional	TBC
17 th March 2027 17:30-18.30	Pre Council briefing or drop in Session		Optional	Targeted briefing on police and fire to all elected members in our local authority

Key Contacts:

Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer	J.Dennis@bury.gov.uk
Democratic Services Rachel Everitt Chloe Ashworth Philippa Braithwaite Michael Cunliffe Josh Ashworth Andrea Tomlinson Kelly Barnett	Democratic.Services@bury.gov.uk R.Everitt@bury.gov.uk C.Ashworth@bury.gov.uk P.Braithwaite@bury.gov.uk M.Cunliffe@bury.gov.uk J.Ashworth@bury.gov.uk A.J.Tomlinson@bury.gov.uk Kelly.Barnett@bury.gov.uk
ICT Service Desk	0161 253 5050
Bury Council E-Learning	psd@bury.gov.uk 0161 253 6808
LGA	Email: info@local.gov.uk Telephone: 020 7664 3000
North West Employers	support@nwemployers.org.uk 0161 834 9362

Bury
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