

**OFFICER DELEGATION SCHEME
RECORD OF DECISION**

Date:	18 th August 2026	Ref No:	PLACE BGI279
Responsible Officer: David Marno – Head of Development Management			
Title/Subject matter: Establishment and Appointment of a graduate planner under the Pathways to Planning scheme in Development Management			
Budget/Strategy/Policy/Compliance:			
(i) Is the decision within an Approved Budget?	Yes		
(ii) Is the decision in conflict with the Council's policies, strategies or relevant service plans?	No		
(iii) Does the decision amend existing or raise new policy issues?	No		
Is publication still required? (see guidance)	Yes		
Is there any implications with 3 rd party spend?	No If yes, please contact procurement via CorporateProcurement@bury.gov.uk		
Is there any IT implications i.e. Additional hardware, new software, changes to systems	No If yes, please contact IT via servdesk@bury.gov.uk		

Item for decision:

Pathways to Planning is a Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) funded graduate recruitment programme delivered by the Local Government Association (LGA). The initiative has been developed to address the national shortage of qualified planners by attracting and developing the next generation of planning professionals within local government.

The programme provides graduates from any degree discipline with a fast-tracked route into the planning profession. Participants undertake a fully funded postgraduate planning qualification while gaining practical experience within a local authority planning team. The scheme combines academic study, workplace learning, mentoring and professional development, creating a clear pathway towards becoming a Chartered Town Planner.

The Council has successfully submitted an Expression of Interest and applied for a £40,000 bursary through the Pathways to Planning programme. As a condition of participation, councils must employ the successful graduate on a contract that spans the duration of their chosen qualification. For a part-time Master's degree, this equates to a minimum employment period of two years.

It is proposed that the graduate is appointed to the existing Career Grade Planner role at Assistant Planner level (Grade 9). This will enable the individual to develop the skills, knowledge and experience required to progress within the planning profession while making a valuable contribution to the Planning Service.

The individual is due to commence employment with us on 7 September 2026 at Grade 9, SCP 18. Based on the current pay structure, I would anticipate their salary progression, together with the associated on-costs, to be as follows:

Effective Date	SC P	Salary	Salary + On-costs
7 September 2026	18	£31,537	£41,667.11
1 April 2027	19	£32,061	£42,372.24

1 April 2028	20	£32,597	£43,092.63
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Therefore, the total employment cost is expected to increase by approximately £1,425.52 over the two-year period due to normal incremental progression.

The total cost of employment over the 2 year period will be c £85k. the costs of the course are £12,600 over the 2 year period

The Council has confirmed its commitment to meeting costs above the value of the bursary to enable participation in the programme and secure the appointment for the required two-year period. The shortfall will be covered by planning fee income.

Participation in the Pathways to Planning programme will:

- Support workforce planning by developing future planning capacity within the Council.
- Help address recruitment and retention challenges within the planning profession.
- Provide a cost-effective route to recruiting and training a qualified planner through significant external funding.
- Enable succession planning within the service and reduce reliance on external recruitment / **agency workers** in the future.
- Bring fresh perspectives, skills and knowledge into the Planning Team while supporting service delivery.

Approval is sought to appoint a Graduate Planner through the Pathways to Planning programme and commit to the Council contribution of £57.6k representing the difference between the total employment and qualification costs and the £40,000 external bursary funding received.

This investment will provide the Council with an opportunity to develop future planning expertise, strengthen workforce resilience and support the long-term sustainability of the Planning Service.

It is proposed that the costs of the Council contribution are met from income relating to the PPAs on strategic sites of which £287k has been received so far in 2026/27. This will ensure that the general planning fees received by the service remain available to meet budgeted income targets already in the service budget. This approach represents the least risk to the overall revenue budget whilst creating operational flexibility in the service and long term succession planning

Approval to recruit to newly created vacancies NB: Chief Officer graded roles require AD HR and AD Finance approval		Yes
Decision made by:	Signature:	Date:
Executive Director:		03/09/26
Assistant Director:	Crispian Logue	02/09/26
Advised by HR Business Partner	Mel Cunningham	20/8/26
Advised by Finance Business Partner	Joanne Ainsworth	2/9/26
Chief Officer graded roles: Assistant Director of HR		
Chief Officer graded roles: Advised by Assistant Director Finance / Chief Accountant		
Member Consulted (only if applicable) [see note 4 below]		

Notes

1. In most cases a single signature is required in accordance with the Table below.
2. The form must be published if expenditure is over £100K. However, this must be after all the required contract documentation has been completed. This is to avoid publishing exempt confidential information.
3. A report to Cabinet must be made if expenditure is over £500K.
4. In a small number of cases in accordance with the requirements of the Officer Delegation Scheme, consultation is required from the appropriate Cabinet Member who must sign the form to confirm that they have been consulted and that they agree with the proposed action. Please refer to the Guidance.
5. This form must not be used for urgent decisions.
6. Where there is any doubt officers should always err on side of caution and seek advice from Democratic Services, the Monitoring Officer or Corporate Procurement where applicable.

EXPENDITURE APPROVAL TABLE

Approval Limit	Approval By (in consultation with Finance & HR Business Partner)	
Over £500,000	Cabinet.	
Over£250,000 to £500,000	Chief Executive	
Over£100,000 to £250,000	Executive Director	
Over £50,000 to £100,000	Director/Assistant Director	
Over £10,000 to £50,000	Head of Service	
Up to £10,000	Service Lead	

For Chief Officer Graded Roles:

Assistant Director HR Approval
Assistant Director Finance / Chief Accountant Approval