Classification: Open	**Item No:**

Report to:	Council	**Date:** 11 November 2026
Subject:	Submission of Bury Local Plan	
Report of	Leader of the Council	

Summary

1. The Bury Local Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. It will provide the Borough's locally specific planning framework for the period 2022 to 2043 and, once adopted, will form a key part of Bury's statutory development plan alongside the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan, the Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Plan and the Greater Manchester Joint Waste Plan.

2. Following consultation on the draft Local Plan under Regulation 18 between March and May 2025, the Plan was revised to take account of representations received and was subsequently published for representations under Regulation 19 over an eight-week period ending on 11 September 2026.

3. The publication stage represents the final formal stage of plan preparation by the Council before submission to the Secretary of State for independent examination. All representations received at the publication stage will accompany the submission documents and be considered by an independent Planning Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State.

4. The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval to submit the Local Plan, supporting documentation and the representation received on the Publication Local Plan for independent examination.

Recommendation(s)

5. Council is recommended to:

   a. Note the main issues raised during the invitation to make representations on the Publication Local Plan under Regulation 19.

b. Approve the submission of the Bury Local Plan, Policies Map, relevant supporting evidence and all representations received during the Regulation 19 stage, to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government for independent examination under Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, with submission to take place in advance of the 31 December 2026 deadline.

c. Note that any decision to adopt the Local Plan will remain a matter for Full Council in accordance with the Council's Constitution and the relevant statutory requirements.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

6. Submission of the Publication Local Plan and supporting documentation will enable the independent examination process to commence and represents the next statutory stage in the preparation of Bury's Local Plan.

Alternative options considered and rejected

7. To not approve the submission of the Publication Local Plan and supporting documentation. This would prevent the Local Plan progressing to the examination stage and ultimately the adoption of an up-to-date Local Plan for Bury.

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Background

8. The Government requires local planning authorities to prepare Local Plans that provide a long-term framework for managing growth and development and addressing economic, social and environmental priorities. The legislative requirements for preparing Bury's Local Plan are contained within the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

9. The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026 came into force on 25 March 2026 and replaced the Town and Country

Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, introducing the new local plan-making system. However, transitional arrangements allow local planning authorities that are sufficiently advanced in preparing a plan under the former system to continue doing so under the 2012 Regulations.

10. Such plans can continue through examination and adoption under the ‘legacy system’, provided they are submitted for examination by 31 December 2026. After that date, authorities will need to progress plan preparation under the new 2026 Regulations. The transitional arrangements therefore provide a final opportunity for plans that have already reached an advanced stage of preparation to complete the existing plan-making process rather than having to move into the new system.

11. The Bury Local Plan is progressing under the legacy system. It sets out a framework to guide future growth and development across the Borough between 2022 and 2043. Once adopted, Bury’s Local Plan will replace the remaining saved policies in the Unitary Development Plan and will form a key part of Bury's statutory development plan alongside the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan, Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Plan and Greater Manchester Joint Waste Plan.

12. Places for Everyone (PfE) is a strategic plan that covers nine of the ten Greater Manchester districts (including Bury) and was produced collaboratively by the Mayor of Greater Manchester and the nine local authorities. PfE was adopted in March 2024 and provides the strategic framework within which the participating districts need to develop their individual Local Plans.

13. PfE sets out the overall spatial strategy for the nine Greater Manchester districts up to 2039. Some of the major strategic decisions relating to Bury’s future growth and development have already been made through the PfE Joint Plan. For example, it identifies future needs for housing and employment floorspace, allocates strategic sites to help meet these needs and identifies a revised Green Belt boundary.

14. The Local Plan sets out more locally specific planning policies to complement those in PfE. It will therefore be a key document used to determine and shape future planning applications and development proposals in the Borough. It is intended to provide a clear, consistent and up-to-date basis for planning decisions and to give greater certainty to communities, landowners, developers and infrastructure providers regarding the future pattern of development across Bury.

15. The Plan seeks to address key issues including housing delivery and affordability, employment and economic growth, town centre regeneration, transport and other infrastructure, climate change, biodiversity, green infrastructure, the Green Belt and the quality of new development.

16. Consultation on the draft Local Plan under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 took place over an eight-week period between 17 March and 12 May 2025. All representations received on the draft Local Plan were fully considered and, where necessary, amendments made to the Plan. A summary of the comments received at the draft Plan stage and how these were subsequently taken into account can be seen in the Local Plan Consultation Statement (Appendix 4).

17. The Plan then progressed to Publication stage under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The Publication Local Plan represents the Council's proposed final version of the Plan before submission for independent examination.

18. Following Cabinet approval in June 2026, representations were invited on the Publication version of the Local Plan and its supporting evidence under Regulation 19 over an eight-week period running from 17 July to 11 September 2026.

19. More detail on the Local Plan can be viewed on the Council's web site at www.bury.gov.uk/burylocalplan which includes a series of Frequently Asked Questions to give answers to common questions such as what a Local Plan is, how the Bury Local Plan relates to Places for Everyone, what it says about certain issues.

Scope and content of the Publication Local Plan

20. The full Publication Local Plan can be viewed at Appendix 1. The strategy for the Plan is underpinned by a Strategic Vision of how we think the Borough should be by the end of the plan period together with a set of Strategic Objectives designed to achieve this and a high-level spatial strategy that identifies key locations for growth and broad areas where development will be resisted.

21. The Plan then includes a series of more fine-grained policies that seek to deliver the Vision and Strategic Objectives. These policies are set out in various chapters relating to:

    - Meeting our housing needs;
    - Delivering economic growth;
    - Supporting our centres;
    - Promoting tourism and culture;
    - Creating healthy and successful communities;
    - Promoting sustainable transport;
    - Conserving the built environment and achieving high quality design;

- Protecting green and blue infrastructure;
- Open space, sport and recreation;
- Protecting the Green Belt;
- Managing water and flood risk;
- Addressing air quality, pollution and hazards;
- Delivering other infrastructure; and
- Development management.

Key Diagram and Policies Map

22. The NPPF states that the plan's spatial strategy should be illustrated on a key diagram with the boundaries of specific policy areas, land-use designations and allocations identified on a policies map.

23. The Key Diagram is shown in Figure 3 of the Local Plan (Appendix 1). This shows the key areas for growth in the Borough and, for contextual purposes, includes the strategic allocations from the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Plan. As adopted PfE allocations, these are not part of the Local Plan but are shown on the Key Diagram to reflect future key areas of housing and employment growth in the Borough. Similarly, the Key Diagram also shows the extent of the adopted Green Belt as designated under PfE Policy JP-G9.

24. The Local Plan Policies Map presents a spatial interpretation of policies and designations set out in the Local Plan. This is available on the Council's web site via an interactive online mapping tool (www.bury.gov.uk/burylocalplan). Ultimately, the Local Plan Policies Map will become part of a wider composite Policies Map that will also include adopted allocations and designations from other parts of the development plan i.e. Places for Everyone and the Greater Manchester Joint Minerals and Waste Plans. The Policies Map for the Publication Local Plan can be viewed at Appendix 2.

Integrated Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment

25. An Integrated Assessment (IA) is undertaken at each stage in the preparation of the Local Plan. The IA incorporates the statutory requirements of Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessments, together with an Equalities Impact Assessment and Health Impact Assessment. This ensures that sustainability, health and equality issues are fully taken into consideration throughout plan preparation. A Non-Technical Summary of the IA of the Local Plan is appended to this report (Appendix 3).

26. The Publication Local Plan has also been subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) to test if the Local Plan could significantly harm the designated features of a European site.

Other supporting evidence

27. The National Planning Policy Framework requires that the preparation and review of Local Plans should be underpinned by relevant, up-to-date and proportionate evidence. A comprehensive evidence base has been developed to support the Local Plan, including:

    - Integrated Assessment.
    - Habitats Regulations Assessment.
    - Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
    - Housing and employment land supply evidence.
    - Housing needs evidence.
    - Local Plan Viability Assessment.
    - Bury Open Space Assessment.
    - Bury Town Centres Study.
    - Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

28. Fourteen thematic Topic Papers have also been prepared which consolidate relevant background evidence and identify the key issues for Bury that the Local Plan has sought to address.

Consultation statement

29. The Consultation Statement (Appendix 4 to this report) sets out how the Council considers it has fulfilled its statutory duty to consult and engage with the public and key stakeholders on the preparation of the Local Plan under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 as well as Bury's Statement of Community Involvement.

30. The Consultation Statement has been updated to take account of the latest Regulation 19 consultation on the Publication Local Plan.

31. The Regulation 19 consultation on the Publication Bury Local Plan provided an opportunity for residents, businesses, landowners, developers, statutory consultees and other interested parties to comment on the Plan before its submission for independent examination.

32. As stated above, the Council invited representations on the Publication Local Plan over an eight-week period, ending on 11 September 2026. In response the Council received a total of 103 representations from 100 individuals and organisations.

33. Appendix 7 of the Consultation Statement sets out a summary of the main issues raised at the Regulation 19 stage and the Council's initial response to these.

34. All representations made at the Regulation 19 stage will be submitted to the Secretary of State alongside the Plan and supporting evidence to inform the examination process. However, at Publication Plan stage, whilst anyone could make a representation on any point, only those pertaining to 'soundness' will be considered by the examining Inspector(s).

Next steps - submission and examination

35. Once all the relevant material is collated, the Council will be in a position to formally submit the Local Plan, Policies Map, relevant supporting evidence and all representations received during the Regulation 19 stage, to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government for independent examination under Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

36. As stated previously, as the Local Plan is being prepared under the 'legacy' system, it is imperative that the Plan is submitted by no later than 31 December 2026.

37. Following submission to the Secretary of State, the Local Plan will be examined by an independent Planning Inspector(s) appointed by the Secretary of State. The purpose of the examination is to determine whether the Plan has been prepared in accordance with the relevant legal and procedural requirements and whether it is sound, having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework.

38. The examination will consider the representations received in response to consultation on the Publication Local Plan, together with the Council's evidence base and other supporting documentation.

39. The Inspector will identify the matters and issues to be examined and may hold public hearing sessions to consider these in detail, with the Council, representors and other participants invited to contribute as appropriate.

40. During the examination, the Inspector may identify matters requiring clarification or further evidence and, where necessary, invite the Council to propose modifications to address any concerns. Any proposed modifications would need to be considered in accordance with the applicable examination procedures, including consultation where required. The Inspector will ultimately determine whether the Plan can be found sound, subject to any necessary modifications.

41. Following the examination, the Inspector will issue a report setting out their conclusions and recommendations. If the Plan is found sound (or could be found sound subject to modification) and the Council resolves to adopt it, the Local Plan will become part of the statutory development plan for the borough,

providing part of the policy framework for determining planning applications and guiding future development.

Links with the Corporate Priorities:

42. Bury's Local Plan will form part of Bury's statutory development plan. It sets out statutory policies that will guide future growth and development in the Borough. The strategic objectives set out in the Local Plan closely align with the priorities set out in the 'Let's Do It' strategy which also specifically refers to the Local Plan as having a key role to play in the delivery of its objectives and priorities.

Equality Impact and Considerations:

43. A full EIA has been carried out with only positive impacts identified at this stage (see Appendix 5). These have been identified through the Integrated Assessment which ensures the plan meets Equality Act 2010 requirements. Equality impacts will continue to be assessed using the EIA through to agreement and publication.

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

44. The Publication Local Plan is supported by an Integrated Assessment (IA) that incorporates a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The role of a SA is to promote sustainable development through assessing the emerging Local Plan against economic, environmental and social objectives. A HRA has also been carried out to ensure the protection of the integrity of European protected sites is an integral part of the planning process at the local level.

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	**Mitigation**
Failure to secure an up-to-date Local Plan	Submission of the Plan is the next required statutory stage and progression

	through examination will provide the route to adoption.

Legal Implications:

45. The legislative requirements for preparing Bury's Local Plan are contained within the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

46. The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026 came into force on 25 March 2026 and replaced the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, introducing the new local plan-making system. However, transitional arrangements allow local planning authorities that are sufficiently advanced in preparing a plan under the former system to continue doing so under the 2012 Regulations.

47. Such plans can continue through examination and adoption under the legacy system, provided they are submitted for examination by 31 December 2026. After that date, authorities will need to progress plan preparation under the new 2026 Regulations. The transitional arrangements therefore provide a final opportunity for plans that have already reached an advanced stage of preparation (including Bury's) to complete the existing plan-making process rather than having to move into the new Gateway-based system.

Financial Implications:

48. The costs of the local plan are met from the Revenue budget providing into a reserve in the years of low spend to help mitigate the in-year pressure in other years, there will be additional costs related to the examination process that may exceed both this year's budget and the reserves held for this purpose, these costs will need to be met in year.

49. There may be a pressure in year, but this is lower than if we don't submit for examination by December 2026 and have to use the new regulations to create a new local plan.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Publication Bury Local Plan

Appendix 2 – Publication Local Plan Policies Map

Appendix 3 - Integrated Assessment of the Bury Local Plan (non-technical summary)

Appendix 4 - Bury Local Plan Consultation Statement

Appendix 5 - Equality Impact Assessment

Background papers:

Publication Bury Local Plan and Policies Map.

Supporting evidence for the Bury Local Plan.

Local Plan (Draft) Cabinet Report 05/03/25

Local Plan (Publication) Cabinet Report 30/06/26.

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan – adopted March 2024

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

Bury Statement of Community Involvement

Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report

Term	Meaning
Adoption	The formal process by which a Local Plan is approved by the Council and becomes part of the statutory development plan for the area.
Development Plan	The set of adopted planning documents used to determine planning applications. In Bury, this includes the Local Plan, Places for Everyone, the Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Plan and the Greater Manchester Joint Waste Plan.
Examination	The process through which a Planning Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State assesses whether a Local Plan has been prepared in accordance with legal requirements and is sound.

Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)	An assessment required under the Habitats Regulations to determine whether a plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on internationally protected habitats and species.
Integrated Assessment (IA)	A combined assessment framework used to evaluate the economic, social and environmental effects of the Local Plan.
Local Plan	A statutory planning document prepared by a local planning authority which sets out the vision, strategic objectives, policies and site allocations to guide development within its area.
Places for Everyone (PfE)	The joint development plan prepared by the nine participating Greater Manchester authorities, setting strategic planning policies and land allocations across the city region. Adopted in March 2024.
Policies Map	The map that accompanies the Local Plan and illustrates the geographic application of planning policies and designations.
Publication Local Plan	The version of the Local Plan published under Regulation 19 for representations before submission for independent examination.
Soundness	The test applied during examination to determine whether a Local Plan is positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy.