Classification: Open	Decision Type: Key

Report to:	Cabinet	**Date:** 02 December 2026
Subject:	Corporate Core Structure Review	
Report of	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services	

Summary

1. This report recommends a series of structural changes from within the Corporate Core which are designed to strengthen leadership capacity, increase focus on transformation, and support delivery of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) amid ongoing financial pressures.

2. The Council has made significant progress since the Local Government Association (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge in 2021 and follow-up review in 2023. Since then, the Council has delivered a stronger, more focused transformation programme aligned to the MTFS and Council priorities however based on the Draft Budget position for 2026/27 this paper provides for additional focus on delivering the activity required to achieve financial sustainability.

3. The Executive Director (Strategy & Transformation) is currently responsible for all Corporate Core Services including council-wide transformation and Housing Services, following the insourcing of the ALMO. It is recommended that direct management responsibilities of this post are reduced and associated management efficiencies are made in order to:

    a. maximise the capacity of the postholder to focus on core transformation, which will be central to delivery of wider corporate priorities including delivery of the MTFS and Housing services improvement;
    b. bolster leadership capacity within the Operations department as part of its improvement journey; and
    c. establish an integrated portfolio of adult skills within the Place department, which will help to facilitate the response to the recommendations of the Milburn review.

4. If approved by Cabinet, the proposals will be presented to Trade Unions, and a 30-day consultation period will take place with affected employees. Final proposals, amended where appropriate following consultation feedback, will be submitted to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services (Deputy Leader) for approval under the recommended proposal for delegation.

Recommendation(s)

5. Cabinet is recommended to agree to the commencement of formal consultation with affected staff on the proposed structural changes set out within the body of this report. Specifically, that:

   a) Authority is delegated to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services in consultation with the Executive Director (Strategy & Transformation) and the Assistant Director (People, Inclusion and Culture), Monitoring Officer and S151 Officer to consider responses received from the consultation and agree a final proposed report.

   b) Where the changes from the proposals set out below are not substantive, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services will agree implementation, where changes are substantive revised proposals will return to Cabinet for consideration and approval.

   c) The post of the Head of Customer Contact is deleted and the accountability for Customer Services is transferred from the Assistant Director (DDAT) to the Head of Corporate Collection and Support. It is recommended that this post is re-evaluated to become the Assistant Director (Customer Services).

   d) The Assistant Director (Public Protection & Resilience) and their current portfolio transfer to the leadership of the Executive Director (Place). It is recommended that this role takes on responsibility for the Waste Management and Transport Service and a new role of Assistant Director (Environment and Neighbourhood Services) is consulted on.

   e) The post of the Head of Waste Management and Transport is transferred to the Assistant Director (Environment and Neighbourhood Services).

   f) The leadership of the Adult Learning Service is transferred to the Place Directorate and that line management of the Head of Adult Learning is transferred to the Assistant Director of Regeneration (Economy & Business).

   g) The leadership of the Strategic Partnerships function is transferred to Health and Care, and that line management of the Strategic Partnerships Manager is moved to the Executive Director, Health and Adult Care.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

6. To ensure sufficient leadership capacity to deliver the Council's current and emerging priorities, including the transformation and improvement plan required for the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

Alternative options considered and rejected

7. Whilst it may be possible to maintain current arrangements it is not considered as an effective option given the increasing volume and complexity of organisational priorities.

8. Other options may be considered as a result of the consultation with staff.

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Background

9. Bury Council is currently delivering a significant phase of transformation in response to challenging financial pressures and increasingly complex demand for services across all Council functions. In order to be able to respond to these challenges effectively, Cabinet is asked to consider changes to the Corporate Core management structure to ensure a greater focus on the delivery of the Council's transformation and improvement programmes, and to strengthen leadership capacity across the organisation to match the requirements of key strategic priorities.

10. In 2021, a Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge recognised the distance travelled by the Council since the previous review in 2018 in terms of the establishment of a Corporate Core and the improved grip on governance and delivery and has put in place the framework agreed to deliver the MTFS including establishing a corporate transformation plan, resource and culture. This has also been achieved through reshaping the key enabling functions including finance, human resources and digital to better align to this work.

11. On their return visit in 2023, the LGA Peer Team commended the Council for the progress that had been made and recognised a "sharpened focus" which demonstrated that the Council had responded to the feedback from the initial review and taken action. The report concluded that further work be further strengthened to more closely align the transformation programme to the objectives of the MTFS, whilst remaining true to the priorities set out in the Corporate Plan, as well as the LET'S principles. This required a renewed focus on ensuring the right capacity and resource were in place, supported by appropriate strategic leadership.

12. In response to this, in April 2023, Bury Council's Cabinet agreed to create the new post of Executive Director (Strategy & Transformation) to provide overall leadership of the Corporate Core. The creation of this post served a dual purpose of delivering efficiencies through the deletion of the vacant post of Deputy Chief Executive and provided a single accountable lead for all Corporate Core Services to deliver against the LGA recommendations and to

ensure transformation and improvement had visible leadership within the Council.

13. In addition to leading Corporate Core Services, the postholder was also given responsibility for managing the in-sourcing of the Arm's Length Management Organisation for social housing to oversee the effective transfer and full integration of Housing Services into the Council. This action was brought forward to February 2024 due to concerns about the safety and standards of services being delivered by the ALMO and therefore this became a key priority for the Corporate Core during that period.

14. As noted elsewhere on this agenda, Housing Services have since had the first inspection from the Regulator of Social Housing under the new regulatory framework. The Regulator has given the Council a C3 rating, meaning that significant failings must be addressed in order to meet required standards. As such it remains important that the Executive Director (Strategy & Transformation) has enough capacity to be held accountable for the improvements in Housing, as well as the council-wide transformation and improvement programme.

15. To enable this, it is recommended to Cabinet that a series of changes are made to the structure of the Corporate Core. These movements will allow for a greater focus on the work required to deliver against the commitments within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, but also to provide additional leadership capacity in other areas of the Council as set out below.

16. **Proposed Structural Changes**

17. This report requests that Cabinet approve the following recommendations in order to allow for the commencement of a formal consultation with affected staff. Whilst some of these changes are contained with the Corporate Core, others will impact other directorates as set out below. These changes are also illustrated in the structural charts included in Appendix One.

18. **Changes within the Corporate Core**

19. In the summer of 2026, the Head of Customer Contact left the Council. Since that time interim arrangements have been in place through the Head of Corporate Collection and Support to manage the Customer Contact Centre, including Reception. During this period improvements have been made to call response times and the resilience of operations within the contact centre. There have also been business benefits realised through closer working between the Contact Centre and the Corporate Collection and Support Team who have recently re-opened an in-person service within the Town Hall reception.

20. There is more work to do and during 2027/28 the telephony system and customer relationship management system will be re-tendered with a specification that provides for enhanced productivity through greater digital integration with other council systems and improved response times through

better call routing and the use of automated responses where appropriate. This is in line with the Council's Digital First; Not Digital Only strategy which encourages supporting residents with digital inclusion in order to be able to use on-line information and services more effectively and to ensure face-to-face options are always available for those who need it.

21. Therefore, it is recommended that these changes are made permanent and that the Head of Customer Contact post is deleted, representing a saving to the Council. Responsibility for the Contact Centre and Reception would be moved from the Assistant Director (DDAT) to the Head of Corporate Collection and Support. This change will also support the delivery of savings within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy which are predicated on further improvements within customer services through the new telephony contract referenced above.

22. To recognise the increased responsibility for delivering these outcomes it is recommended that the post of Head of Corporate Collection and Support be redesignated as Assistant Director (Customer Services) with the post revaluated accordingly. Should this proposal be approved the increase in grade will be funded from the savings achieved from deleting the post of Head of Customer Services and has been accounted for within the Draft Budget report presented to Cabinet in October 2026 in relation to efficiencies within customer services to be achieved through the digital improvements outlined above.

23. **Impact on the Place Directorate**

Operational Services

24. It is recognised that there already exists a strong alignment between the Public Protection & resilience Team and the Place Directorate, particularly in relation to the security of our buildings and infrastructure, enforcement and licencing and addressing fly tipping and environmental protection. To strengthen this work and provide additional capacity within the Place directorate, it is recommended that the reporting line for the Assistant Director (Public Protection & Resilience) is moved to the Executive Director (Place) and that the title of the role changes to Assistant Director (Environment and Neighbourhood Services).

25. The repositioning of this post within the Place department will provide increased capacity for leading improvements including greater alignment to the Council's neighbourhood model, a review of performance against service level agreements and providing for a more resident focused offer.

26. It is also recommended that the reporting line for the Head of Waste Management and Transport be changed to report into the Assistant Director (Environment and Neighbourhood Services). This will align the waste management and fly tipping functions under the same Assistant Director and allow for greater integration between the services.

Regeneration and Economic Development

27. The Council's All Age Work and Skills Strategy was launched in April 2025 and represented a significant step-change in a multi-agency approach to the delivery of the vision for Inclusive Economic Growth set out in the LET'S Do It! Strategy. As part of this work there has been greater alignment between the Economic Development function within the Council and the Adult Learning service which currently sits within the Corporate Core.

28. The Adult Learning service has transformed over recent years to offer more community based provision and to ensure that learning is focused on supporting residents into the labour market and gaining the skills needed to progress in employment. In November 2025, the service was inspected by Ofsted and was found to be meeting expected standards in three of the five areas that were inspected. The other two areas were judged to need attention. Whilst it was acknowledged that "Tutors create inclusive and respectful positive learning environments" it was noted that learners would benefit from more "planned careers advice and guidance to help them into employment or to realise their career aspirations."

29. To achieve this and to maximise the opportunities Bury has to capitalise on the increased devolution of funding for skills and employment, it is recommended that the line management of the Head of Adult Learning be moved to the Assistant Director of Regeneration (Economy & Business). This will allow for further integration of Adult Learning Services with the wider work and skills portfolio, including Working Well and our neighbourhood offer.

30. This is a timely move given the publication of the Milburn Review "From a Welfare State to a Working State" with the target of increasing in the number of young people who are not in education, employment, or training (NEET). Through the Bury Employment, Health, and Skills Task Group much work has already been done to build a high quality offer for all young people and adults looking for support with skills and employment. The Council teams within Education, Economic Development and Adult Learning already work closely on initiatives such as the opening of the Bury Works Neighbourhub, the first Work Well centre for the borough in the Millgate Shopping Centre. These proposals such to strengthen these arrangements through the alignment of line management and opportunities to further joint working.

31. **Links to Public Service Reform and impact on the Health & Care Directorate**

32. Since the launch of the LET'S Do It! Strategy significant work has been done to re-shape place based working and co-design the Council's neighbourhood model with partners and communities. This work on public service reform was again recognised by the Local Government Association during their visit in 2021 as "innovative and integrated". Since then, it has been recognised as the model for delivering the Living Well initiative in the borough, leveraging investment from the Live Well Communities Fund. This resulted in our Local

Infrastructure Organisation, the VCFA, being able to facilitate the opening of our first Live Well Centre in Whitefield earlier this year.

33. This work has been underpinned by the Council's strategic partnership function who, as a legacy from the Covid Community Hub funding, have been the catalyst for the establishment of the Public Sector Leadership Teams (PSLTs)in each neighbourhood area. During recent years there has been a much greater alignment between the PSLTs and the Integrated Neighbourhood Teams based within Health and Care. There have also been strengthened collaborations between the Community Safety Partnership and Health and Care, with the Executive Director (Health and Adult Care) now chairing the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board.

34. Therefore, it is recommended that the post of Strategic Partnership Manager is moved to report into the Executive Director (Health and Adult Care) to further align the work of the partnerships team with the wider prevention strategy and continued evolution of the Live Well model across the borough.

35. Structure charts illustrating the proposed changes are included in Appendix One.

36. **Consultation and Implementation**

37. Subject to approval by Cabinet the proposals set out in this report will be presented to Trade Union Colleagues at the next Local Government Services Consultation Meeting and agreement sought to start a period of 30 days consultation with affected staff. Following this, final proposals reflective of feedback from the consultation process, will be shared with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services (Deputy Leader) for approval.

Links with the Corporate Priorities:
Please summarise how this links to the Let's Do It Strategy.

38. The proposed structural changes have been developed to ensure the most effective alignment of the Council's organisational structure and senior leadership capacity behind delivery of the Corporate Plan and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

Equality Impact and Considerations:

39. The proposed changes will be implemented in line with the Council's workforce policy framework which has been subject to appropriate equality analysis.

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

40. Not applicable

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
The proposed structure does not effectively deliver on the Council's strategic priorities	The Chief Executive will continue to monitor the effectiveness of the Council's operating structure and bring forward further proposals if required.

Procurement Implications:

41. No Procurement Implications

Legal Implications:

42. Change of role from Assistant Director (Public Protection & Resilience) to Assistant Director (Environment and Neighbourhood Services) and Head of Customer Collections and Support to Assistant Director (Customer Services) would involve a change to an individual's contract of employment, such change will require consultation with the individual and variation to contract. This will be aimed to achieved by agreement. All consultation feedback will be considered in full prior to moving to implementation. Legal advice will be provided through out.

43. The new roles of Assistant Director (Environment and Neighbourhood Services) and Assistant Director (Customer Services) will be job evaluated and shared during the staff consultation period.

Financial Implications:

44. There are no financial implications arising directly from the proposed structural changes outlined in the report. Once approved, existing impacted service budgets will need to be transferred from Corporate Core to the receiving Directorates and the chart of accounts updated accordingly to support future financial reporting.

Appendices:

Please list any appended documents (please save these as clearly labelled separate documents in the Teams folder).

45. Appendix One: Structure Charts

Background papers:

Please list any background documents to this report and include a hyperlink where possible.

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

Term	Meaning

Appendix One: Structure Charts