

ANNUAL SCRUTINY REPORT 2017-18

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To submit the Annual Scrutiny Report 2017-18 of the Scrutiny Committees to the Council, as required by Article 6 of the Council's constitution.

2 Recommendations/for decision

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| 2.1 That the Annual Scrutiny Report 2017-18 be noted. |
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3 Supporting information

- 3.1 This annual report provides Members with an overview of the work carried out over the last twelve months by the Council's scrutiny committees, and provides a brief summary of the further challenges and opportunities for scrutiny looking forward to 2018-19.
- 3.2 It is intended to use the report to generate greater public interest and engagement in the overview and scrutiny process. A copy of the final report will be emailed to all Parishes and will also be available on the Council's website.
- 3.3 In accordance with the constitutional changes agreed at the full Council meeting on 23 February, 2011, the annual scrutiny report has been agreed by the Chairmen of the four Scrutiny Committees.

Contact Officer
Background Documents

Craig Saunders (01296) 585043
None



Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2017/2018



Introduction

The Council's overview and scrutiny role allows Councillors to look closely at services and issues which affect the lives of local people – usually with a view to improving them. It's more commonly referred to simply as scrutiny.

Each year the Council produces a Scrutiny Annual Report which provides an account of the work carried out as part of the Council's overview and scrutiny arrangements.

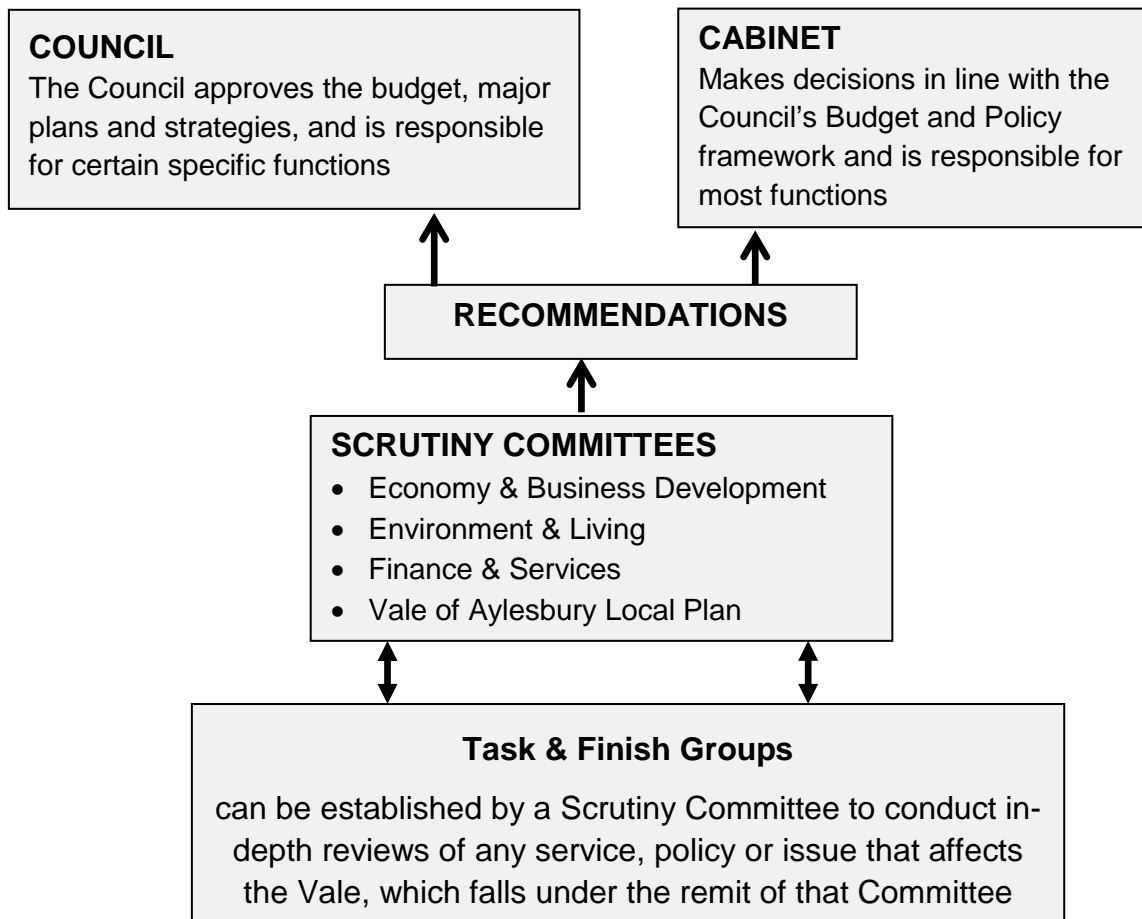
This provides an excellent opportunity for members of the public to see easily what Council functions and activities have been scrutinised over the past year and what may be looked at during the next year. There is also a form at the back of the report which can be used to allow people to raise issues which Scrutiny Committees may wish to investigate in the future.

What is Overview and Scrutiny?

All non-Executive councillors are eligible to participate in the work of scrutiny to review, support and improve Council services and to consider wider issues affecting the people of Aylesbury Vale.

The Council has four overview and scrutiny committees that consider new policies that are being developed, existing policies to see how well they are working and performance information to check that the Council is meeting the standards that have been set.

Each of these committees is also able to establish time-limited Task and Finish Group reviews that focus on a particular issue and consider it in greater detail than is possible at Committee. This usually happens at a number of meetings held over a 6-7 months period.



Membership of the Scrutiny Committees

Economy and Business Development Scrutiny Committee

The role of the Economy and Business Development Scrutiny Committee is to grow the economy by attracting new businesses to the Vale, improving the infrastructure of the Vale and delivering town centre projects.

Chairman
Councillor Peter
Strachan



Vice Chairman
Councillor Cameron
Branston



Membership: Councillors Brian Adams, Jenny Bloom, Anders Christensen, Michael Collins, Mike Hawkett, Tom Hunter Watts, Paul Irwin, Chris Poll and Warren Whyte.

Statistics: information on attendance at meetings (including temporary changes), previous agendas/minutes and temporary changes is accessible on the Council's website at <http://democracy.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=139>

Future meetings: 23 May 2018, 12 September 2018 and 12 October 2018

Environment and Living Scrutiny Committee

The role of the Environment and Living Scrutiny Committee is to protect and improve the living experience in the Vale by enhancing our natural and built environment, building better communities and improving our towns.

Chairman
Councillor Mark Winn



Vice Chairman
Councillor Sandra
Jenkins



Membership: Councillors Mark Bateman, Sue Chapple, Andrew Cole, Simon Cole, Peter Cooper, Ben Everitt, Brian Foster, Tom Hunter-Watts and Roger King.

Statistics: information on attendance at meetings (including temporary changes), previous agendas/minutes and temporary changes is accessible on the Council's website at <http://democracy.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=141>

Future meetings 22 May 2018, 25 September 2018 and 19 December 2018

Finance and Services Scrutiny Committee

The role of the Finance and Services Scrutiny Committee is to deliver efficient and economic services by improving our services, generating more income and reducing costs.

Chairman
Councillor Michael
Rand



Vice Chairman
Councillor Ben Everitt



Membership: Councillors Jenny Bloom, John Chilver, Steven Lambert, Richard Newcombe, Edward Sims (until 6/2/2018), Mike Smith, Mary Stamp, Robin Stuchbury and Mark Winn.

Statistics: information on attendance at meetings (including temporary changes), previous agendas/minutes and temporary changes is accessible on the Council's website at <http://democracy.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=143>

Future meetings: 9 July 2018, 15 October 2018 and 17 December 2018

Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan Scrutiny Committee

The role of the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan Scrutiny Committee is to undertake the overview and scrutiny function in relation to the plans, schemes, statements and documents which together comprise the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan

Chairman
Councillor Chris Poll



Vice Chairman
Councillor Andrew
Cole



Membership: Councillors Brian Adams, Michael Collins, Michael Edmonds, Sandra Jenkins and Llew Monger.

Statistics: information on attendance at meetings (including temporary changes), previous agendas/minutes and temporary changes is accessible on the Council's website at <http://democracy.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=177>

Future meetings: To be advised

Key scrutiny work undertaken during 2017/18

The work of overview and scrutiny during 2017/18 has considered some of the following issues and themes:-

Overarching (all Committees)

- **Working with external partners and local communities** – During the year, a range of organisations and individuals from outside the Council have assisted scrutiny work, including the County Council, the Vale of Aylesbury Housing Trust, Buckinghamshire Advantage and Aylesbury Vale Estates.
- **Working with the Cabinet / Cabinet Members** – Cabinet Members have continued to be actively involved with scrutiny review work and ensured that the good scrutiny/Cabinet relationship has developed and strengthened.

Economy and Business Development Scrutiny Committee

- Aylesbury Vale Enterprise Zones
- Aylesbury Vale Estates – review of performance against 2016-17 Business Plan
- Strategic Economic Plans and Skills Strategy / Buckinghamshire Skills Strategy
- Connected Counties Broadband Update
- National Infrastructure Commission
- Aylesbury Vale Estates Business Plan 2017/18
- Aylesbury Town Centre Plan Update

Environment and Living Scrutiny Committee

- Vale of Aylesbury Housing Trust – Annual Update
- Sustainable Travel Plan; Emissions Reductions report
- Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) report; Local Climate Impacts
- Inspection of Residential Buildings in the Vale to review Fire Safety
- Food Service Plan 2017-18
- Air Quality Management Areas
- Ecology Update
- Taxi Licensing Fees Review
- Development Management Service and Enforcement
- Community Safety Plan 2018/19 – Action Plan
- MRF Contract for Mixed Recycling

Finance and Services Scrutiny Committee

- **Corporate Health and Safety Policy / Strategy**
- Housing Benefits – Risk Based Verification policy
- Treasury Management 2016-17 Year End and 2017-18 Mid Year Review
- Business Rates – Discretionary Relief Scheme 2017
- Commercial Property Investment Strategy
- Leisure Management Contract review
- Budget Planning 2018-19
- Budget Scrutiny / in-year monitoring of the Council's financial performance
- Connected Knowledge Investment Proposal
- Capital Programme Review
- Public Sector Equality Duty
- Contract Management / Procurement report

Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) Scrutiny Committee

- VALP Update (as the plan was developing)
- Proposed Submission draft Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (Regulation 19)

How is AVDC changing?

AVDC is changing as like all local authorities the Council is facing huge funding cuts from central government. The money received from Council tax bills and central government grants is reducing to such an extent that from 2018/19 the Council will effectively not receive any Government Revenue Support grant towards the costs of services residents receive. This is an £8m shortfall since 2010.

To meet this challenge the Council has implemented new ways of working and re-structured the workforce to ensure that it is more commercial focussed. It has also reviewed every aspect of every service to find more cost effective ways of operating them, as well as looking for more business opportunities. While £16m has been saved in the last 7 years through both efficiencies and new income streams, further savings/income still need to be found. This will all be accompanied by change and it is likely that AVDC will have to stop some services and introduce new ones.

More information on the Changes to the way we work, charges introduced for some services, some services that have been stopped and changes the Council has already made are detailed on the website at <https://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/how-avdc-changing>

What are our challenges for 2018/19?

Future Challenges and Opportunities

- Making sure that our work reflects concerns of service users, community and public – consulting with a wide range of organisations, partners and the public for suggestions for scrutiny review and then on the actual work programme.
- Monitoring Council performance and recommending action for improvement.
- Supporting efforts to develop and introduce new ways of working which improve the bottom line financial performance of the Council.
- Continuing to ensure best use is made of taxpayers' money, and the Council's assets.
- Monitoring what has happened as a result of scrutiny work.
- Working with our partners at the County Council, neighbouring councils, Town/Parish Councils and external organisations to improve service delivery.
- Raising the profile of scrutiny within the wider community.
- Developing our links with the community.

What do people think are the issues emerging nationally and locally likely to affect Aylesbury Vale?

Do current policies meet your needs or is there room for improvement?

Let us know about issues that the Scrutiny Committees may wish to investigate in the future by returning the Get Involved 'Have Your Say': Suggestions for Scrutiny form on page 9.

Overview and Scrutiny on the web

Overview and Scrutiny has a dedicated section on the Council's website and can be found at <https://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/section/scrutiny>

This website provides up-to-date information on overview and scrutiny at AVDC.

The screenshot shows the website's navigation bar with the council logo, 'Pay Apply Report' links, and a search box. Below the navigation are three main menu items: 'Living in Aylesbury Vale', 'Working and Business', and 'Your Council'. The breadcrumb trail reads 'Your Council > Councillors, meetings and elections > Scrutiny'. The main heading is 'Scrutiny'. Underneath, there is a section 'What does a scrutiny committee do?' with a bulleted list: 'holds the cabinet to account', 'monitors and reviews policies', and 'reviews council services to obtain better outcomes for the community'. This is followed by a paragraph stating that all meetings are open to the public and a link to a suggestion form. The next section is 'Scrutiny committee reviews', explaining that committees handle in-depth and one-off reviews. A paragraph describes the process where the chairman presents recommendations to the cabinet. The 'The 'call in' procedure' section explains that committees can 'call in' cabinet decisions for review and that urgent decisions cannot be called in. A list of 'Other information' includes 'Scrutiny annual report 2014-15' and 'Scrutiny suggestion form'. At the bottom, there are two orange circular icons with speech bubbles, labeled 'Councillor Call for Action' and 'The scrutiny committees'.

Get Involved – Have your say

Scrutiny Suggestion form

The Scrutiny Committees would welcome suggestions from members of the public, businesses or other organisations who wish to put forward issues which they feel could warrant review.

Your Subject

Please tell us about the subject you would like the Scrutiny Committees to review by either completing the form below or by visiting the website at:
www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk

Suggested topic:

Why do you feel the topic should be reviewed?

Have you contacted Aylesbury Vale District Council about this issue in the past? (Please give details)

Name:

Address

Postcode:

Telephone Number:

Email address:

Organisation:

(where appropriate)

Thank you for completing the form. We'll acknowledge receipt of your suggestion and let you know what happens next. Unfortunately we're not always able to review topics suggested.

Please return to: Democratic Services, Aylesbury Vale District Council, The Gateway, Gatehouse Road, Aylesbury, Bucks HP19 8FF (admin@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk)

Contact Us

Telephone: 01296 585043
Text Relay: Please prefix your telephone number with 18001

Email: admin@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk

Address: Democratic Services
Aylesbury Vale District Council
The Gateway
Gatehouse Road
Aylesbury
HP19 8FF

Web: www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/section/scrutiny

**If you want to know more about overview and scrutiny at AVDC
then please feel free to contact Democratic Services**

This document can be made available in other formats. For more information please telephone (01296) 585043

To be published in mid 2018 (subject to Council approval)



Democratic Services
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