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AYLESBURY VALE DISTRICT COUNCIL Democratic Services

Please ask for: Alice Fisher; afisher@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk;
Switchboard: 01296 585858
Text Relay Prefix your telephone number with 18001
25.8.16

ECONOMY AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Economy and Business Development Scrutiny Committee will be held at **6.30 pm** on **Wednesday 7 September 2016** in **The Olympic Room, Aylesbury Vale District Council, The Gateway, Gatehouse Road, Aylesbury, HP19 8FF**, when your attendance is requested.

Membership: Councillor P Strachan (Chairman); Councillors A Southam (Vice-Chairman), C Adams, Branston, A Christensen, M Hawkett, T Hunter-Watts, P Irwin, C Poll, J Ward and W Whyte

Contact Officer for meeting arrangements: Alice Fisher; afisher@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk;

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES

2. TEMPORARY CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP

Any changes will be reported at the meeting.

3. MINUTES (Pages 3 - 10)

To approve as correct records the Minutes of the meetings held on 18 May and 1 June 2016; copies attached.

4. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Members to declare any interests.

5. WATERSIDE NORTH NEXT PHASES (Pages 11 - 24)

To consider the attached report.

Contact Officer: Teresa Lane 01296 585006

6. AYLESBURY VALE BROADBAND BUSINESS PLAN (Pages 25 - 26)

To consider the attached report.

Contact officer: Evelyn Kaluza – 01296 585549



7. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

The following matter is for consideration by Members "In Committee". It will therefore be necessary to

RESOLVE –

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the Paragraph indicated in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

Item 7: Aylesbury Vale Broadband Business Plan (Paragraph 3)

The public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information because the report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of organisations (including the Authority holding that information) and disclosure of commercially sensitive information would prejudice negotiations for contracts and land disposals or transactions.

8. AYLESBURY VALE BROADBAND BUSINESS PLAN (Pages 27 - 68)

To consider the information attached.

Contact Officer: Evelyn Kaluza (01296) 585549

Public Document Pack **Agenda Item 3**

ECONOMY AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

18 MAY 2016

PRESENT: Councillors B Adams, J Bloom, C Branston, A Christensen, M Hawkett, T Hunter-Watts, P Irwin, C Poll, A Southam, P Strachan and W Whyte

APOLOGY: Councillor Mrs J Ward

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED –

That Councillor Strachan be elected Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing year.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED –

That Councillor Southam be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing year.

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Economy and Business Development Scrutiny Committee

1 JUNE 2016

PRESENT: Councillor P Strachan (Chairman); Councillors A Southam (Vice-Chairman), B Adams, Branston, A Christensen, M Hawkett, P Irwin, C Poll, J Ward and W Whyte

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor S Bowles

APOLOGIES: Councillor T Hunter-Watts

1. TEMPORARY CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP

There were none.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the minutes of 15 March 2016 be approved as a correct record.

3. STRATEGIC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

Members were given an update on the proposed economic development priorities for AVDC, following a progress review and refresh of the AVDC Economic Development Strategy 2011-2014 and an ongoing review of the BTVLEP Strategic Economic Plan priorities from 2016 onwards.

The report circulated to Members summarised the key economic development priorities and focus for action.

In December 2015 an economic development stakeholder meeting had been held and chaired by Councillor Steve Bowles, where it was agreed to progress and align the joint economic development strategies of AVDC, BTVLEP and BBF, helping to create a common action plan. This had been intended to cover all areas of economic Development related activity including:

- Business investment, survival and growth
- Skills “fit for purpose” and
- Underpinning infrastructure

A diagram setting out the proposed focus for the Economic Development team in future subject to any change during the service reviews had been attached as an appendix to the officers report.

The immediate outcomes from that meeting were summarised in the officers report to committee as was the progress made since then.

Updates were also given on the following:-

Aylesbury Vale Enterprise Zone (Silverstone Park, Westcott, Arla Woodlands)

Paul Spooner, Government Advisor on Enterprise Zones had visited the above sites on 15 April. The outline Heads of Terms Agreement between AVDC, BTVLEP and other stakeholders had been agreed on 10 May 2016. It was proposed that the Council’s Economic Development Team work closely with BTVLEP as an integral part of the

Buckinghamshire Enterprise Zone operational team focusing on marketing and business development. There would be a specific focus on Motorsports and High Performance Technologies, Space Propulsion/UAVs, Healthcare and the Food and Drink manufacturing sectors and working alongside Buckinghamshire Business First, Government bodies such as DCLG, BIS, Innovate UK, UK Space Agency and Space Catapult, the Automotive Investment Organisation, the MIA, UKTI, and the Universities and Research Councils.

Other Key Employment Sites

The Economic Development team had been engaged with major employment sites in the Vale in addition to those now granted Enterprise Zone Status. The key activity for the team was in attracting and retaining businesses in the Vale as it came under increasing competition from nearby locations. The team would be working closely with the Development Management team on major commercial applications. The team had recently met with Aylesbury Vale Estates (AVE) and would be working with them and their agents to review the status of lettings and available space, sharing market intelligence and enquiries.

The team were also working with Forward plans to help with key employment site information and the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan process. In summary the Economic Development team worked with agents, developers, Forward Planning and Development Management to:-

- Promote and market schemes
- Flexible planning approach
- Series of developer meetings, and
- Capturing up-to-date key site information

Inward Investment and Sector Information

Since January AVDC had agreed with BTVLEP/BBF that the process for supporting ongoing aftercare of companies relocating to the Vale would be agreed on an individual case basis in line with AVDC's business engagement strategy and the evolving top 100 companies that the Council wished to engage with. More information was attached as an appendix to the report.

As the Enterprise Zones incorporated key sectors, it would allow AVDC to continue to work with One Team Bucks on sector development initiatives. For example the Council were working on a food and drink sector event for 2017 and were an active participant and sponsor of the Grand Prix week business event.

There was to be a refreshed investment website to include a whole approach in the use of social media in targeting inward investors and promoting successes.

Business Engagement

A list of an initial 100 companies had been compiled based on employee size and growth potential. A review would be conducted monthly on the best method of engagement. This would be built into the work programme. An annual overview of the key issues and outcomes would also be produced and this would be used to help inform and influence future activity.

Presentations had been made to Lloyds Bank, Handelsbank and Metro Bank by the team which would be increasingly important when the equity/loan funds from the LEPs

come on stream. An appendix regarding this had been attached to the report as an appendix.

Skills and Motivation

It was acknowledged that although the team did not lead on skills, a great deal of intelligence could be gathered from engagement with businesses and the enterprise zones to inform future interventions.

Ongoing work would be in supporting the new and emerging centres of excellence and innovation centres, following the launch of the EU funded centres to collaborate with businesses, the research base and Government. This would assist with inward investment, higher level manufacturing and engineering apprenticeships in the core areas of healthcare, high performance technologies and space; for example:-

- Bucks New University is involved in a rehabilitation and healthcare innovation hub which will link with Woodlands;
- The National Space catapult is involved in a Space Innovation centre bid at Westcott; and
- Silverstone was looking to develop further innovation centre space, which would be further stimulated by the launch of the Silverstone Cluster report.

The team were also exploring ways around how a science, technology and engineering and maths facility could be developed in Bucks, in which RAF Halton may have a role.

Infrastructure

AVDC was represented on SEMLEP/BTVLEP groups that were involved in determining the priority infrastructure requirements in terms of transport, including the Aylesbury Town Centre transformation and other infrastructure which will help underpin the effective execution of the final adopted Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan. Working groups such as Connected Counties, the Strategic Alliance and the Economic Heartland, Bucks Advantage, Aylesbury Town Centre Partnership and Midlands Connect/Midlands Engine all supported the future infrastructure endeavour.

Members commented on and supported a number of issues, including:-

- Some Members had raised concerns that AVDC were pressing ahead with a number of Vale Commerce commercial activities which they felt had not been properly scrutinised. It was felt imperative that both the Scrutiny committee and the Audit committee were fully involved with any such activities.
- Clarification was needed on who had bought the estate at Silverstone previously owned by Eddie Jordan and how many units were now in use.
- It would be appreciated if Members of the committee could get regular updates on what was happening at Silverstone, Westcott, Woodlands and other enterprise zones etc.
- Item 4.5 in the officer's report related to Skills and Innovation. It was felt that there was a significant skills gap relating to the building trades, the NHS, agriculture for local food consumption and engineering. There had been some interest in creating a sports village within the Vale. However, an update on Skills was given in the next item to committee.
- It was noted that the Aylesbury Town Centre manager had been in discussions with the Kingsbury retailers with the aim of revamping the area and encouraging more independent shops to the area.

- Work had been started on a food and drink online community which could potentially be developed by IncGen, not dissimilar to Not on the High Street/Just Eat.
- It was hoped a food and drink festival would be held in 2017, similar to that already held in Towcester/Northampton and possibly complement a Garden/Homes event that Limecart had been considering.
- BT/Broadband – Members had raised concerns on where this was heading. It was explained that that the Council were still waiting for a response from BT on connected counties before a decision on how much the Council could invest was made.
- A bid had been made for a Healthcare Hub from EU funding. There was an opportunity through Bucks New University to start to invest in nurse training for use in new telehealth techniques such as remote assistance via the internet etc. Royal Bucks Hospital have clearly stated that they were in need of a number of specialist nurses. Members sought clarification on how much involvement there was from Stoke Mandeville Hospital or the local NHS trust.
- It was acknowledged that Aylesbury Vale had one of the biggest growths of small businesses anywhere in the UK.
- There was concern over the loss of employment space particularly in Aylesbury Town which was being turned into housing. The Enterprise Zones could be used for future employment space. However, there were a number of vacant offices which if filled could increase the footfall in the town.
- Keep linking up with the planning team over developments.
- A jobs and opportunities fair should be looked into to encourage people into the areas where there were skills shortages.
- It would also be useful to have a speaker at a future meeting of the committee, ideally someone who was local and had made a success at recruiting locally.

RESOLVED –

That Members noted the report.

4. SKILLS UPDATE REPORT

Mena Caldbeck provided the Committee with an update on skills and the progress made since the last update in October 2015.

At the previous update she reported that one in three businesses had reported a skills gap, which included specific skills relating to technical or practical skills or IT skills and that businesses across the Vale were reporting difficulties recruiting skilled people.

Members at the committee in October 2015 had received presentations from Ian Harper, Managing Director from University Campus Aylesbury Vale (UCAV), Ruth Farwell and Jackie Campbell from Bucks Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership (BTVLEP) Skills Board and had also received testimonial evidence from David Handley, a director of Thame Workholding.

Following the last meeting of the Scrutiny Committee, the Chairman had written to Jackie and Ruth at BTVLEP Skills Employability Programme highlighting the Council's support for the Board's ambitions and the intention to work more closely with them and other local partners to ensure there would be an improvement between businesses, local schools and colleges so that young people would be aware of the opportunities available to them. The Chairman had also written to Ian Harper at UCAV in support of the UCAV's aims, and David Handley with the offer of support to provide engagement with the Employability Skills Board. The Economic Development Team had since met with Ruth and Jackie at BTVLEP.

The Economic Development Team had drawn up a list of recommendations to take to the BTVLEP Employability Skills Board to ensure the Council supported employers and young people for the future economy and this has been attached as an appendix to the officers report. The Economic Development team were actively engaged in several of the developments already underway as listed in the appendix.

The Council would like to address the issue of Science Technology Engineering Maths (STEM) skills at Higher Apprenticeship level availability and also support those people in their 20s and 30s in the manufacturing sector.

A number of recommendations included in the appendix are being carried forward by BTVLEP Skills Hub and are supported by AVDC including:-

- Skills Hub – This included the promotion of the Hub and its activities with employers, in particular the OppsinBucks web portal www.oppsinbucks.org. Awareness of the Hub had been raised in number of ways including an article in Aylesbury Vale Times.
- Enterprise Advisors – Representatives of businesses were being encouraged to become Enterprise Advisors to engage with schools and colleges to work with the senior leadership so that young people had full awareness of all career choices and options locally.
- The Local Careers and Enterprise Company – This company was independent of Government and would focus on young people aged between 12 and 18. BTVLEP had invested in the company to address the poor “work readiness” skills of young people which it was felt the current careers advice system didn’t effectively achieve.
- The Bucks Skills Show, July 2016 – hosted by BTVLEP at University Centre Aylesbury Vale would provide an opportunity for employers to promote their companies and the diverse careers opportunities on offer to young people and their parents in Bucks. The event was being held on Saturday 2 July 2016. Members were encouraged to pass on information about this to any interested businesses they knew of and to others in their wards.
- University Centre Aylesbury Vale (UCAV) – the Economic Development team had met with Ian Harper at UCAV to ascertain how the team could work with and support the aims of UCAV and businesses in the area. It had been agreed that a joint group of stakeholders in support of UCAV; “Friends of UCAV”, would be set up.
- Unilever/ARLA University Technical College (UTC) Bid – The Economic Development team had recently supported Unilever’s bid for the creation of a University Technical College (UTC) at Colworth Park, in Bedfordshire. This would help to support the food and drink manufacturing and processing companies and SMEs in the Vale. Further information was given in the officers report to committee. More information on the bid should be known by October.
- Local Area Reviews – as part of the Government’s devolution plans, Area reviews were being undertaken to establish whether local institutions were financially resilient, were able to offer high quality education and training based on the needs of learners and employers within the local area and support the need to move towards fewer, larger, more resilient and efficient colleges. This would include the need for greater specialisation. Aylesbury College was

currently undergoing this process with the support of SEMLEP and BTVLEP to hopefully deliver some of the three million apprenticeships by 2020 as targeted by Government. There was a need to ensure that the colleges were offering the right courses for the workplace.

It was confirmed that success was measured against case studies. The age group that was being targeted was 14 to 21 possibly up to 24. Mentoring was part of the offer to young people. The main skills gap was in technical and marketing.

Members felt there was a need to possibly target some young people at an even younger age, i.e. 11, before they became disillusioned with school. The local Careers Enterprise was looking to address that problem. It was acknowledged that not all schools provide good careers advice. Work in secondary schools could perhaps include extended work experience

It would be useful to have an employer speak to the committee that uses apprenticeships effectively. A couple of suggested companies were given to the Economic Development team to contact.

Members also suggested perhaps holding careers evenings on a regular basis although it was acknowledged that this was mostly an area that Bucks County Council should cover. There was concern on how to get young people in the rural communities in touch with job centres etc.

The Chairman thanked the Economic Development team for their work in achieving all of the above.

RESOLVED –

That Members noted the report.

WATERSIDE NORTH NEXT PHASES

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To report the steps that need to be taken to bring forward the next phase of the re-development of Aylesbury town centre.

2 Recommendations/for decision

- | |
|--|
| 2.1 To note the content of the attached report and consider any views the committee might wish to make to the relevant Cabinet Member/Council. |
|--|

3 Supporting information

- 3.1 Attached is a report which will be considered by Cabinet on 6 September 2016. It is anticipated that Cabinet will endorse the recommendations contained in the report, but an oral update will be given at the Committee meeting.

4 Reasons for Recommendation/Resource Implications

- 4.1 These are contained in the attached report.

Contact Officer	Teresa Lane 01296 585006
Background Documents	None

WATERSIDE NORTH - FUTURE PHASES OF DEVELOPMENT
Councillor N Blake
Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Major Projects

Purpose

- 1.1 This report outlines the steps that need to be taken to bring forward the next phases of the redevelopment of Aylesbury town centre and asks approval for a budget to enable the preparatory work to progress.

2 Recommendations/for decision

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">2.1 That Cabinet recommend to Council that a budget of up to £250,000 is met from the general revenue fund to enable the preparatory work for the next stages of the redevelopment of Aylesbury town to progress in support of the council's economic and Commercial AVDC strategies. |
|---|

3 Supporting information

Background

- 3.1 In 2014, AVDC published a masterplan (Appendix A) for the phased redevelopment of the Exchange Street car park. The master plan was indicative but set the context for phase one - ie the redevelopment of the area between the restaurants outside the cinema and Long Lion.
- 3.2 Outline planning for phase one which comprises restaurant and commercial space on the ground floor with one and two bedroomed apartments on four floors above, together with a stunning new public square, was granted in late 2014. At the time of writing this report, the reserved matters application was due to be considered by the Strategic Development Management Committee on 21 September. If approved, construction is expected to start on site in early Spring 2017 with completion approximately 18 months later.

Demand for further redevelopment

- 3.3 The progress made on the plans for phase one have been monitored with interest by the market. The collective investment in recent years by both the private and public sector is a sign of the growing confidence in the town centre and an optimism about its future.
- 3.4 There is also a recognition that as the county town expected to accommodate significant housing growth on its fringe as part of the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP), Aylesbury has the scope and potential to attract more retail and food and beverage outlets whilst providing a highly desirable location for town centre living. More quality public space would be expected to feature as an important part of the mix.
- 3.5 These assertions are supported by a recent study by The Retail Group which was commissioned as part of the evidence base for the draft VALP. The final conclusions of the study are awaited but the early indication is that there is demand for additional retail space whilst recognising that it's also important to ensure that existing retail space is fully occupied and not compromised by new space.
- 3.6 With respect to food and beverage demand, a study by Coverpoint in 2013 confirmed that upwards of 15 additional operators were needed to reflect the changing role of town centres, where leisure dining has become a visit in its

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own right as well as now being an increasingly popular part of a visit for retail shopping. The growth in the food and beverage sector remains very strong and even though new restaurants have opened since 2013, they have mostly replaced former operators rather than taken new space. The delivery of the new restaurants in phase one of Waterside North, will still leave considerable unmet demand and will help attract other operators who want to be part of the Aylesbury food and beverage community.

- 3.7 There also continues to be a compelling case for town centres to be a hub for new homes and any schemes which emerge for future phases of re-development are likely to include new housing as well as quality open space helping to connect pedestrian circuits through the town and provide places for people to dwell, relax and socialise.
- 3.8 The draft VALP Aylesbury town centre policies (Appendix B) support the continued development of the town centre and reflect the Vision (see overleaf) of the town described in the Aylesbury Town Centre Plan.

Aylesbury will:

...be a high profile, sub-regional centre for entertainment and the arts, which has added a distinctive edge to its market town heritage.

...be a distinctive, 'best in class', modern market town, which is attractive, safe, sustainable and connected.

...provide a quality, day and night-time environment in terms of leisure, retail and food and drink, which attracts and brings together people of all ages and communities from within its enviable catchment.

With respect to future phases of redevelopment, the draft VALP does not limit this to the Waterside North site, and Appendix C shows the plan in the draft VALP which identifies an area which embraces a wider area for potential redevelopment. However, the scope of area for future phases will depend on a number of factors not least the market, developer interest in Aylesbury (which is expected to be good) and the financial viability of any draft scheme put forward.

The role of AVDC

- 3.9 Nationally there is an expectation that local authorities will take a leading role

“Strong and dynamic leadership is required, this will be led at local authority level but critically working with businesses and with community involvement to bring about successful long term changes on town centre function and provision.”

Beyond Retail. Redefining the shape and purpose of town centres. A report published in 2013 by a taskforce set up by the Government following the Mary Portas review.

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- 3.10 In effect AVDC has been ahead of the game, and for some years has taken a leading role in the regeneration of the town centre. It has taken a place shaping role and financial and economic development objectives to deliver a wide range of new facilities including the theatre, Waitrose, Travelodge, new car parks, public space and more recently the University Campus Aylesbury Vale.
- 3.11 This has returned both direct and indirect benefits. By using our prudential borrowing capability and assets we have funded the build costs and used the rental income from tenants to generate a return on investment and a revenue income stream to contribute to the costs of delivering other services. Indirectly, AVDC led development has delivered:
- an increase in business rates (of which AVDC retains a %) as other operators have moved into town
 - protection of our own investments eg customers visiting the new restaurants also patronise the theatre
 - over 200 jobs creating wealth in the local economy and sustainability
 - the theatre brings people to the town centre with spin-off spend for local businesses
 - AVDC's role and reputation helped secure a £3.3m grant from the South East Midlands LEP for Waterside North phase one.
- 4.12 AVDC is now bringing phase one of Waterside North to fruition. With supporting funding from Aylesbury Vale Advantage, it has led the process from working with the architects and the market to develop the masterplan to procuring a development partner and detailed planning approval. It is, therefore, well placed to continue in this role and ensure that the momentum building in the town is not lost.
- 4.13 AVDC will not be in a position to take any scheme forward without a private investment partner(s) and /or support funding from other sources. However, in order to attract quality investment partners and potentially other funds in a very competitive market, it will need to have carried out certain preparatory work first.
- 4.14 As with phase one, any future development will need to be supported by a business case and meet the objectives of the Commercial AVDC programme. Costs incurred now by AVDC will be built into the business case and recouped over time.

Preparation for next phases

- 4.15 There are six areas of work which we need to commission. These are summarised below with indicative costs:

1. A retail review to identify market opportunities and operator interest

- 4.16 The Retail Group has been commissioned by Planning to update the capacity retail requirements of Aylesbury and other centres to inform the VALP policies. However, to help shape the future development of Aylesbury town centre, we need to extend the brief to understand current retail trends, gaps in the retail offer and start a dialogue with target operators to 'pitch' Aylesbury and obtain a realistic understanding of their interest of locating in the town. Indicative cost £25k

2. Additional master planning support to define the scope of the next phases of development and specify the development and planning outcomes we wish to achieve.

- 4.17 The council has a number of significant land and operational interests in the town centre, including surface and decked car parks, mixed commercial accommodation and land being used for informal/formal vehicular and pedestrian access.
- 4.18 There may also be land and property which AVDC would like to see being brought into beneficial economic uses which is currently in third party ownership. When we are considering the next phases of development, we will need to support these development factors with an indication of our planning objectives in the form of a master plan or development framework. And whilst a framework was produced and published in 2014 for the redevelopment of the whole of the Exchange Street car park and some adjacent areas, the area in scope as defined in the draft VALP, is now much more extensive. Thoughts about the composition of mixed-used schemes have also moved on. Indicative costs £25k

3. Soft market testing

- 4.19 Soft market testing (SMT) the emerging proposition is an important opportunity to engage with active developers and gauge market appetite for the project. Through a SMT process the Council will also gain insight into aspects of the master plan which require further consideration before a formal marketing process commences.
- 4.20 The agreed project would be market tested with a pre-agreed list of developers and investment partners. These may comprise developers which are principally known for their retail expertise, some who may be better known for their contracting expertise, and some who focus on residential led schemes and others with a regional focus.
- 4.21 The soft market testing would enable AVDC to establish current developer interest in the project, benefit from developer ideas and thoughts about the best approach to delivering the next phase of development and understand current capacity to respond to a tender invitation. We can also use the soft market testing to explore AVDC's role in the delivery process, critical aspects of the scheme which require more detailed consideration prior to marketing and the scope to participate in a joint venture if that is one of our preferred options. Indicative cost £10k.

4. Valuation advice relating to land and property included in scope or affected by any next phases

- 4.22 We do not see the next phases of development being necessarily constrained to land just within AVDC ownership. Understanding third party interests will be an important part of producing the master plan or development framework. In order to inform the viability of a prospective scheme, we will need to prepare a land assembly cost assessment, which will take account of acquisition by agreement as well as through the use of any compulsory purchase order powers we consider necessary. Indicative cost £15k

5. Marketing the development proposal and procurement

- 4.23 The successful implementation of the next phase will involve many ingredients, but a critical one will be the procurement of the right development partner (s) to work with us. In order to deliver the council's objectives, we will want to carefully consider our partner selection and have a robust business plan in place to prior to the formal marketing taking place.
- 4.24 We will need to evaluate the procurement options open to us and evaluate the relative benefits of each option before deciding on our procurement strategy. Once we have a strategy in place, we can move to delivering the procurement process. The procurement process can be complex and lengthy but our aim will be to simply it where we can and make it as streamline as possible to ensure that we attract interest from quality, potential development partners. Indicative cost £135k

6. Commissioning a parking strategy

- 4.25 With the housing growth anticipated on the edge of town and our own aspiration to increase employment and visitor footfall in the town centre, we need to review our parking capacity and plan for the future. Parking will need to be included in the master plan or the development framework referred to in section 2 above, but this strategy would need to extend beyond the area in scope and consider the whole town needs alongside any parking arrangements and plans by the private sector and Bucks County Council. The Bucks County Council input would also reflect their on street parking and public transport plans. Indicative cost £30k

Summary of costs

- 4.26 The total indicative cost of the work highlighted above is £240k. If approval is given, the different services will be procured on a competitive basis using a relevant procurement framework. At least two different commercial services will be needed to fulfil the brief given the specialist nature of some of the work. However, where possible existing contractual arrangements will be used – for example H B Law.

6 Options considered

- 6.1 AVDC could chose to do nothing and wait for a developer (s) to come forward and suggest a scheme(s) for the next phases of redevelopment. However, this would be highly unlikely to happen and a high risk strategy given the competition from other centres seeking to attract development partners for similar sized schemes. Leaving it to the market would also mean that our ability to shape and influence what happens next, would be very much reduced.
- 6.2 There is a significant risk that unless AVDC continues to take the lead, the momentum in the town centre could stall putting at risk our already considerable investment in the town centre, including Hale Leys Shopping Centre which AVDC 50% owns as part of the Aylesbury Vale Estates agreement.

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- 6.3 Alternative sources of funding have been applied for via the LEPs but unfortunately revenue spend does not qualify for Local Growth funding. However, a request has been made to the BTVLEP for Local Area funding. At the time of writing this report, a response was awaited. In the meantime, progress needs to be made for the reasons outlined in the paragraphs above.

7 Reasons for Recommendation

- 7.1 To enable a mixed scheme for the next phases of redevelopment of the town centre to be progressed.

7.2

8 Resource implications

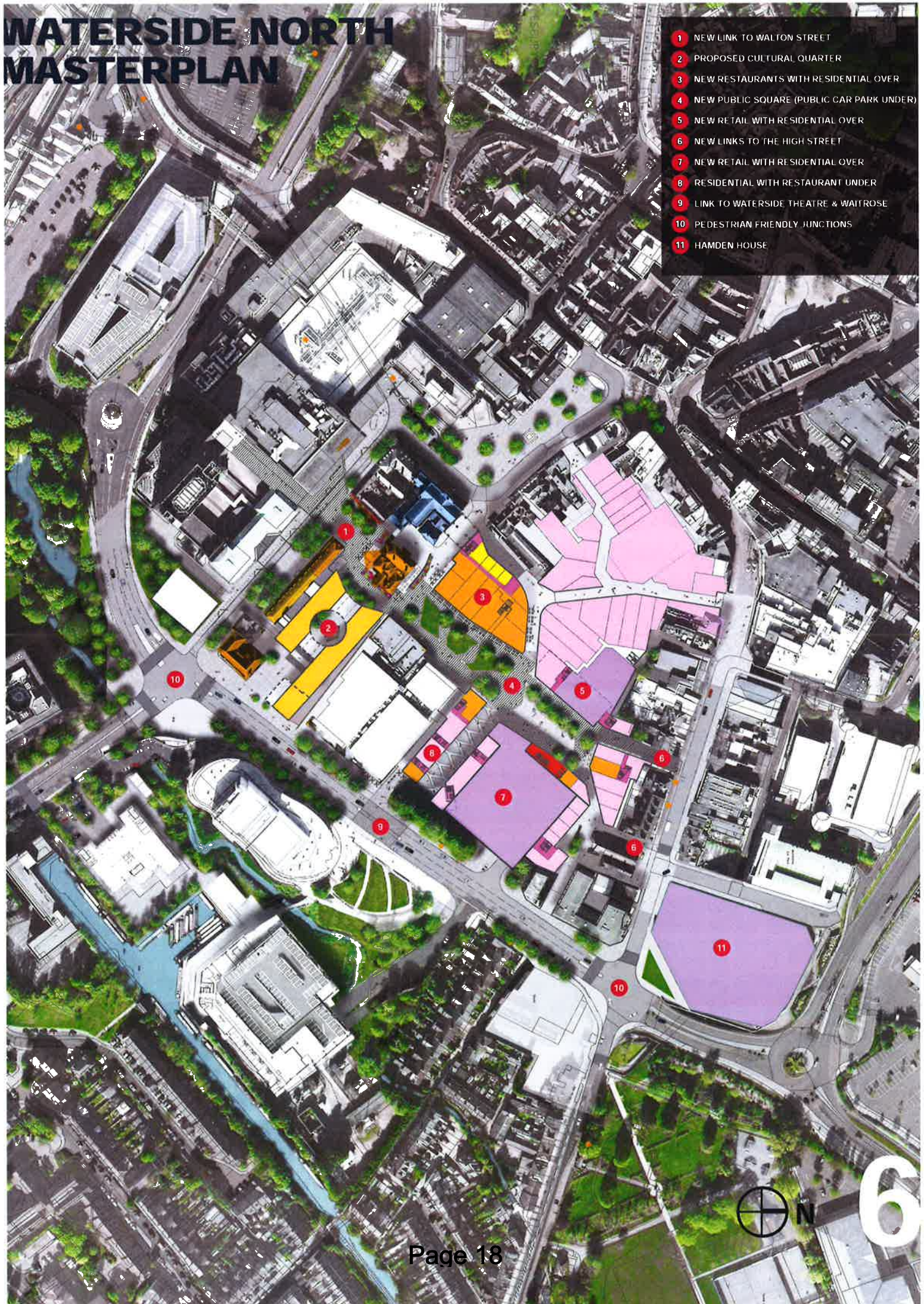
- 8.1 If approved, the estimated costs of £250k would initially be met from the general revenue fund but would need to be recouped as part of the business case for any scheme coming forward as a result of the forward investment.

Contact Officer
Background Documents

Teresa Lane 01296 585006
Master plan for Waterside North July 2014
Aylesbury Town Centre Plan 2014
Draft Vale of Aylesbury Plan July 2016

WATERSIDE NORTH MASTERPLAN

- 1 NEW LINK TO WALTON STREET
- 2 PROPOSED CULTURAL QUARTER
- 3 NEW RESTAURANTS WITH RESIDENTIAL OVER
- 4 NEW PUBLIC SQUARE (PUBLIC CAR PARK UNDER)
- 5 NEW RETAIL WITH RESIDENTIAL OVER
- 6 NEW LINKS TO THE HIGH STREET
- 7 NEW RETAIL WITH RESIDENTIAL OVER
- 8 RESIDENTIAL WITH RESTAURANT UNDER
- 9 LINK TO WATERSIDE THEATRE & WAITROSE
- 10 PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY JUNCTIONS
- 11 HAMDEN HOUSE



6

Aylesbury town centre

- 4.112 Aylesbury is the county town of Buckinghamshire and has long been the focus of new development in the district and will continue to be the main location for growth in its role as a garden town. This means that investment and development both inside and beyond the town centre boundary will to be necessary to meet the needs of the growing population.
- 4.113 Aylesbury is fortunate in having successfully retained its historic centre whilst accommodating significant modern developments. A major part of its attraction is the proximity of the "Old Town", centred around St. Mary's Church, to the main shopping area, and that within the shopping area there is a number of historic buildings and frontages which adds to its distinctiveness and character.
- 4.114 Recent years have seen significant investment in the town with the development of Aylesbury Waterside Theatre and a Waitrose store, and further development is planned as part of the Waterside North scheme. The town is reasonably well represented by national retailers and has a major department store. However, in order to compete successfully within the sub-region, Aylesbury needs to overcome the current challenges it faces:

The challenges

- 4.115 **Recession** - for towns of Aylesbury's size, the recession had a significant impact and whilst unit vacancy rates remained below the national average, many national retailers have reduced their portfolio concentrating their investments into the regional towns or cities. Attracting new private sector investment has also, until relatively recently, been difficult. Future aspirations for the town centre need to recognise that phased development within a vision framework will be the favoured approach.
- 4.116 **Attractiveness and identity** - like all town centres, there are areas of Aylesbury which haven't been improved for some time and consequently reflect negatively on the town. This affects both visitors' perception and those of potential new investors. Future plans need to pay equal attention to these areas as well as the opportunities for new development.
- 4.117 **A growing population** - with Aylesbury remaining the main focus and a significant area for housing and employment growth in the district, further infrastructure (including retail) within and beyond the town centre will continue to develop, simply to meet the needs of a growing and working population.
- 4.118 **Protecting existing investment** - the success of existing assets and investments such as Aylesbury Waterside Theatre and Aqua Vale depend on the whole visitor experience. Plans to deliver new shops, catering outlets and public realm improvements have not come forward as quickly as originally anticipated, largely due to the economic downturn.
- 4.119 **Competition and changing expectations** - as well as people's changing expectations of their town centres, other growing trends are posing a threat to the traditional high street:
- **Out of town retailing** – key retailers moving out of Aylesbury's town centre when their leases come up for renewal could have a major impact.
 - **Competition from major supermarkets** who have made themselves more appealing to people with busy lifestyles by broadening their non-food retail offer and raising their game in sectors such as fashion by using leading designers.
 - **Internet/mobile shopping** – this continues to be the single biggest impact on the shape of town centre retailing. Retailers are responding partly by rationalising their portfolio but also by developing their click and collect offer to capture secondary purchases through the collect visit.

- **Consumers making fewer, shorter trips to towns**, preferring to make longer trips, less frequently to bigger regional centres which offer the total day experience. Here shopping can be combined with a variety of leisure activities whether dining or visiting the cinema. A two-hour drive is not considered unreasonable by today's consumers.
- **Leisure time is becoming more important** to people leading busy lives and coupled with the growth of internet retailing this means that shopping will no longer be the primary reason to visit a town centre. The opportunity to socialise in Aylesbury town centre will be key to its future success.
- **The proposed east-west rail route** could attract visitors from the villages in between Aylesbury and Milton Keynes. However, it will also make it easier and more attractive for them to go to MK from Winslow (a new station is due to open in 2020) if Aylesbury does not succeed in improving its offer.
- **The rising popularity and enhancement** of other competing centres such as High Wycombe and Bicester town.

Failure to capitalise on our catchment.

- 4.120 Aylesbury has a large potential catchment of 238,000 people within a twenty-five-minute drive time. Three quarters of this catchment are 'affluent, aspirational and from the highest social profile groups in terms of lifestyle.' Yet the town is failing to capitalise fully on these high spending consumers because, while some are visiting the town centre for employment reasons or to use services such as banks, they are not necessarily visiting in the numbers that could be achieved in terms of retail and other activities. Of those who are visiting, an insufficient number are spending their money in the town. So, unless Aylesbury improves its offer to give its catchment market what it is increasingly looking for, current leakage to neighbouring towns will continue.

Guiding principles and strategic aims for future development

- 4.121 In seeking to enhance Aylesbury's role as county town and sub-regional shopping centre, the council has developed and approved the Aylesbury Town Centre Plan (2014) which was prepared working closely with Aylesbury Town Council and Buckinghamshire County Council. The Town Centre Plan sets out seven guiding principles for the future development of Aylesbury town centre:
- 4.122 **Principle 1:** Positioning the town centre correctly by providing a complementary, credible alternative to Milton Keynes and Watford and being a 'best in class' sub-regional centre.
- 4.123 **Principle 2:** Being different, rather than a 'clone', but base the town's unique selling point on reality. Aylesbury needs to distinguish itself from other town centres in the area, but in a way that is credible.
- 4.124 **Principle 3:** Offering what the 'market' is looking for to capitalise on our enviable catchment. Whilst there has been significant investment in the town centre in recent years by both the public and private sector, Aylesbury's retail offer is currently weighted towards the lower/mass market consumer, with a limited choice in terms of product categories, ranges and brands for the mid/upper market, discerning consumer.
- 4.125 A food and beverage assessment carried out by Coverpoint in 2014, also concludes that the town centre retail and food and drink sector needs more choice across all categories, but particularly in the family dining and mid-higher quality categories.
- 4.126 **Principle 4:** Encouraging social interaction. Whilst the retail experience is changing largely as a result of the internet, visitors will still value a physical town centre outlet, particularly if it offers them opportunities to browse and spend time in an attractive environment and meet their friends and family. They will see the town centre as a place not just for shopping

or business, but for social interaction in its widest sense and as a place in which to meet, relax and spend their leisure time. New improvement schemes need to recognise this by delivering, integrated mixed uses including housing and quality public space throughout the town to help connect the different areas.

4.127 **Principle 5:** Build community spirit. Social interaction is about inclusiveness and using space and facilities to help build a sense of togetherness as one community. We should aim to create a town which shows its community spirit through welcoming events and activities.

4.128 **Principle 6:** Take a connected, 'whole town' approach. The success of one area of the town should not be compromised by development in another and we must take a strategic approach to work such as green infrastructure and signage.

4.129 **Principle 7:** Appeal to all our different town centre users. We must make sure we're appealing to the whole of our potential catchment including families, young professionals, students, college and university leavers who are looking for their first jobs, 'empty nesters' and older people.

4.130 The following strategic aims flow from the guiding principles, our vision for Aylesbury and the studies and strategies which arose from the recommendations from the previous Aylesbury Town Centre Masterplan carried out by ARUP. They are cross-cutting, which means they have implications for the whole of the town, but the action plans in the Town Centre Plan show how they will apply to specific areas.

4.131 The strategic aims are grouped under two main headings:

Economic regeneration

4.132 Provide a more balanced and attractive leisure, retail and food and beverage offer and circuit, which:

- helps transform the day, evening and weekend economy in Aylesbury and puts it on the map as a destination of choice
- matches the needs of all ages and communities and brings them together
- matches the needs of consumers from within our catchment (and beyond), as well as business investors and operators, and
- builds on the legacy of London 2012.

Physical regeneration:

4.133 Create a high quality, connected and sustainable built, natural and transport environment which appeals to, and matches the needs of, all consumers and business investors within our catchment market and supports our leisure, retail and housing aspirations.

The vision

4.134 To enable Aylesbury to compete and succeed in the future we need to continue our work to reinvigorate the town centre. The Aylesbury Town Centre Plan contains the following vision for the town:

- To be a high profile, sub-regional centre for entertainment and the arts, which has added a distinctive edge to its market town heritage.
- To be a distinctive, 'best in class', modern market town, which is attractive, safe, sustainable and accessible.

- To provide a quality, day and evening environment in terms of leisure, retail and food and drink, which attracts and brings together people of all ages and communities from within its enviable catchment
(Aylesbury Town Centre Plan, 2014)

4.135 There are a number of uses and activities that should be accommodated in the town centre including shopping, leisure, entertainment, employment, housing, worship and tourism. It is one of the objectives of this Plan to accommodate these sometimes competing uses in a way which most benefits the whole of the town centre.

4.136 The Aylesbury Town Centre Plan reflects the advice in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) regarding town centres, which states that policies should support their viability and vitality and promote competitive town centres that provide customer choice and a diverse retail offer.

A place to shop

4.137 In accordance with the NPPF, the principles of the settlement hierarchy, and recognising Aylesbury's role as a garden town, new shopping development should be concentrated at Aylesbury, and this development should be concentrated within or on the edge of the town centre. Aylesbury's town centre embraces a multitude of uses and activities including shops, homes, jobs, pubs and clubs, restaurants, leisure, sports and community facilities. The town centre is defined on the policies map and includes the area within the inner relief road, along with areas to the south which include Morrison's and the railway station, to the south east including Aylesbury Waterside theatre, Waitrose, and Vale Park and Aqua Vale swimming and fitness centre to the east, and to the north east including Aylesbury Shopping Park, B&Q and the Royal Mail sorting office. The proposed town centre boundary is as identified in the Retail Study Annex F. Proposals for development within this area will be considered having regard to their town centre location.

New floor space requirements

Comparison goods

4.138 As the population grows with the expansion of the town (and wider district), there is a need for the town's shopping facilities to expand and improve in order to maintain Aylesbury's role as the main retail focus in Aylesbury Vale and as a sub-regional centre in the county. The Aylesbury Vale Retail Study was carried out in 2015. This concludes that 16,000 m² of comparison floor space²⁰ will be required by 2033 and that this should predominantly be delivered towards the end of the Plan period.

4.139 This is a district-wide target, but it is the council's intention to focus new comparison retailing at Aylesbury as the main focus for shopping in the district. This figure is not seen as a prescriptive target, but rather as an indicative guide to the amount of floor space that will be required in the plan period. However, it is the council's intention to commission an update on the retail evidence to accompany the next stage of the plan (proposed submission) in order to reflect the most up-to-date information on the amount of growth to be accommodated in the district, and where it should be located recognising Aylesbury's enhanced role as a garden town delivering the majority of the district's growth. As such, the floor space requirement may increase.

4.140 It is essential to locate comparison shopping in such a way as to extend range and choice. The first priority is therefore to accommodate the additional floor space within the retail

²⁰ Comparison goods are defined in full in the glossary, but include items such as clothing and electrical items

core of the town centre . The additional floor space will primarily be delivered by allocating a new site within the town centre for a mixed-use redevelopment.

- 4.141 Waterside North, a town centre site adjacent to Exchange Street and currently in use as a temporary surface car park, has been identified for a number of years as the location for the next phases of development. The Phase one scheme will see the construction on part of the car park, of up to four restaurants, with 47 apartments on three floors above and a new public square beginning in early 2017 with completion in 2018.
- 4.142 The provision of the additional retail floor space is expected to be included in future phases of development which will extend the site beyond Waterside North to the Royal Mail sorting office. This area is shown on the policies map. In addition to retail, these development phases should provide a mix of main town centre uses and fulfil the vision and strategic aims for the town centre as set out above. This should include an element of car parking to redress any shortfall in car parking from the loss of existing car parks as a result the next phase of town centre regeneration.
- 4.143 An Aylesbury parking strategy is due to be commissioned shortly, which will set out the council's aims regarding parking in the town, identify the amount of parking that the town centre needs and conclude where this should be located and in what form.
- 4.144 Within the town centre, the council will view positively proposals for retail and other main town centre uses provided that they contribute positively to improving the quality of the town centre and delivering the vision and aims set out above. The Retail Study concludes that qualitative improvements and investment will be needed to retain Aylesbury's credibility as a sub-regional centre and ensure that it can increasingly be seen as a place for social interaction. In particular, the development or redevelopment of smaller sites can lead to qualitative improvements in shopping facilities and can readily be accommodated within and enhance the town centre. Other proposals for town centre comparison goods shopping will be assessed against policy D10.

Convenience stores

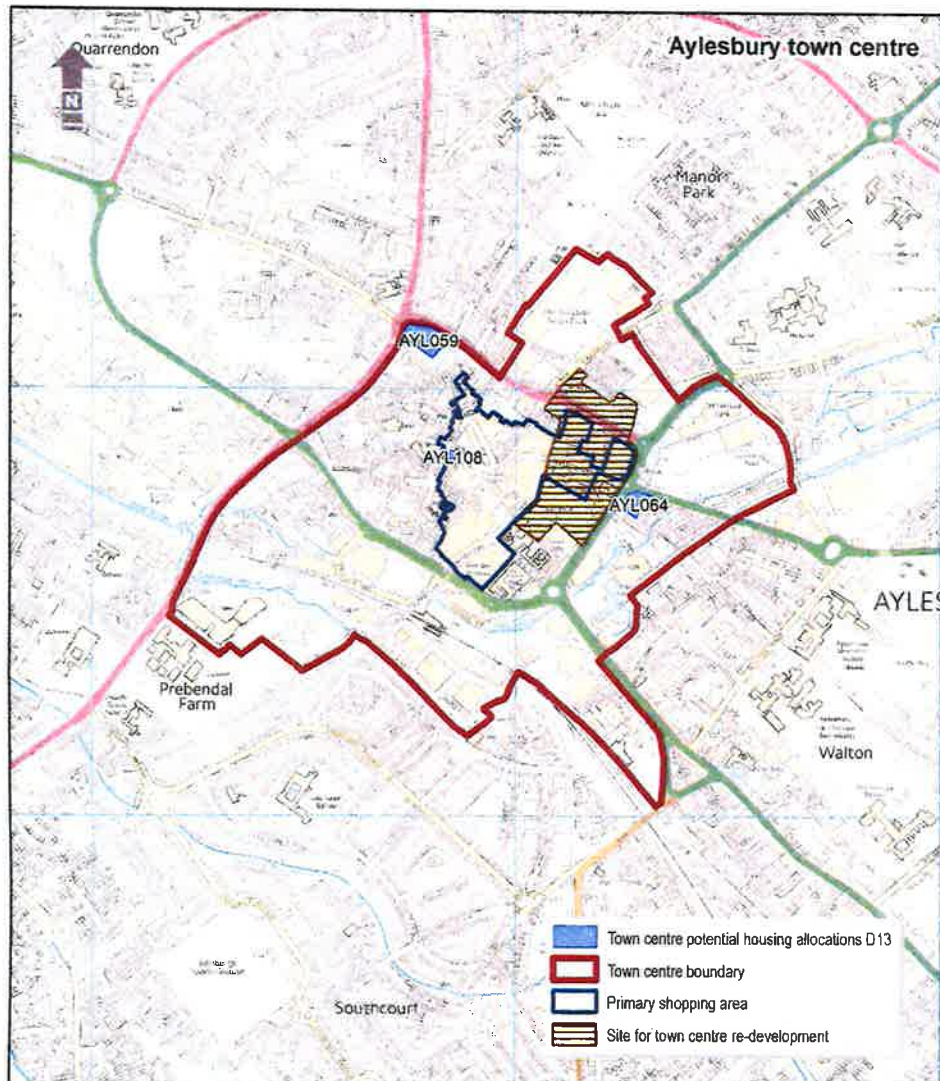
- 4.145 Aylesbury is well served by convenience stores²¹, and the Retail Study concludes that only around 3,000 m² of new convenience floor space will need to be delivered by 2033 in Aylesbury. Within the town centre, a scheme for external enhancements and an extension to the existing Sainsbury's store fronting Buckingham Street has been approved subject to a section 106 planning obligation agreement. This is linked to the development of the larger, new Sainsbury's store which is proposed at Gatehouse Road, Aylesbury.

D11 Site for town centre redevelopment

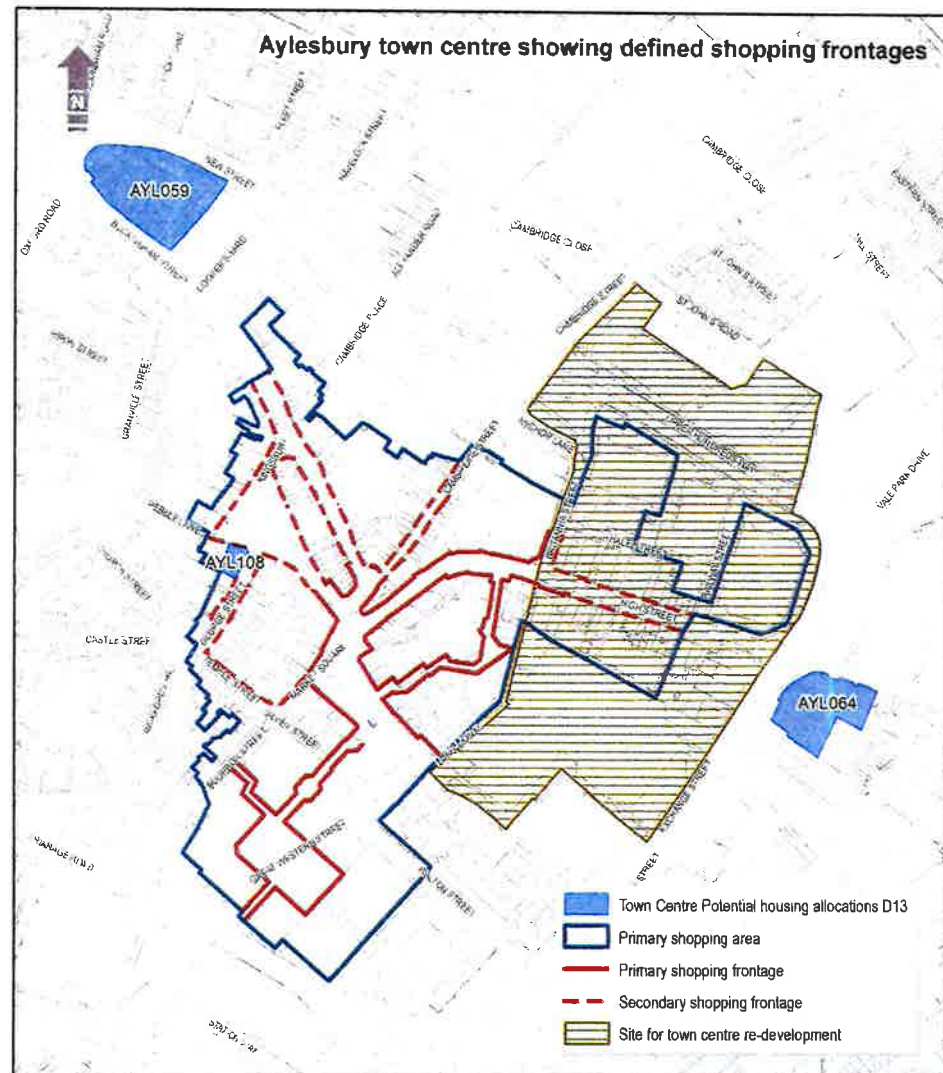
The policies map identifies a site between the Exchange Street car park and the Royal Mail sorting office (including Hampden House and Upper Hundreds car park) for mixed-use redevelopment based principally on retail uses with an element of residential and other town centre uses at an appropriate scale and location. The redevelopment scheme(s) must make adequate provision for car parking in accordance with the council's car parking strategy. Development proposals must contribute positively to meeting the vision and strategic aims for the town centre.

Aylesbury town centre and the primary shopping frontages are defined on the Policies Map (see Policy E2). Informed by the aims and objectives of the Aylesbury Town Centre Plan (2014), and the evidence in the 2015 Retail Study identifying a continuing need to improve and invest in

²¹ Convenience stores are defined in full in the glossary but include items such as food, beverages and newspapers



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AYLESBURY VALE BROADBAND LTD BUSINESS PLAN

1 Purpose

To give the committee opportunity to consider the draft Annual Business Plan prepared by Aylesbury Vale Broadband Ltd following the first full year of trading. Cabinet will be receiving the same report on 6th September 2016.

2 Recommendations/for decision

2.1 To note the report and invite the committee to consider any views they might wish to be make to the relevant Cabinet member regarding the draft Business Plan prepared by Aylesbury Vale Broadband Ltd (set out in Appendix 1 in the confidential pages of this report).

3 Supporting information

- 3.1 In December 2014 the Council committed £1.536m of New Homes Bonus funding to support the rollout of superfast broadband across the district. In April 2015 the Council approved an initial loan from this funding of £200,000 to run a pilot project through the creation of a limited liability company Aylesbury Vale Broadband Ltd (AVB) to provide superfast broadband to villages of North Marston and Granborough. Progress with the pilot has been reported to the committee on a regular basis with the last report on 15 March 2016.
- 3.2 As a result of the success of the pilot, in April 2016 a further loan was approved for £500k to support further expansion of the service across the Vale. These loans are made under commercial rates terms and are expected to be repaid by 30 June 2022.
- 3.3 To remind the committee AVB is structured with the majority shareholder (95%) AVDC and 5% Ironic Thought. Ironic Thought is owned by Andrew Mills who was appointed as the Managing Director in July 2016 following a decision by Cabinet.
- 3.4 Some of the wider benefits of AVB's progress to date that have been achieved include:
- AVB's network, in the middle of rural Aylesbury Vale, is delivering speeds that only 2% of the UK population can currently receive.
 - Approximately one in three of AVB's customers are small business owners whose businesses are now benefitting from AVB's 100% fibre broadband.
 - As a direct result of AVB's pilot, its competitors (including fixed and wireless providers) have spent an estimated £600,000 on upgrading

their existing solutions and providing new services to Aylesbury Vale. This expenditure is unlikely to have happened without AVB's existence and it means fewer people are having to make do with poor broadband in Aylesbury Vale.

Plans for the Future

- 3.5 The business plan includes plans for expansion which go further across the Vale to deliver fibre to the home (FTTH) to more villages. This is predicated on an additional £550k loan being allocated to AVB from the original £1.535m funds earmarked for super fast broadband.
- 3.6 It is forecast by several industry bodies that demand for bandwidth is expected to “grow exponentially” by 2020. Fibre is in the only known technology that can cope with this exponential demand, without additional investment and therefore by selecting FTTH, AVB is reducing its future support and maintenance costs and therefore increases confidence in the financial forecasts for the future.

4 Reasons for Recommendation

To continue to expand the access of rural areas across the district to super fast broadband.

5 Resource implications

- 5.1 There are no further resource implications

Contact Officer	Evelyn Kaluza, Commercial Sector Lead - IP/People Tel: 01296 585549
Background Documents	None

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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