

AYLESBURY TOWN CENTRE PLAN UPDATE

1 Purpose

- 1.1 This report is to inform members of progress on the Aylesbury Town Centre Plan published in April 2014, and explain how the Plan is being updated.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 To note progress on actions included in the Aylesbury Town Centre Plan since its publication. Also to note, where actions have not been progressed, which of those continue to be a priority and will be carried forward into the updated plan to be published in January 2017 – and which are no longer a priority to be pursued.

3 Supporting information

Development and purpose of the Plan

- 3.1 In April 2014 the Aylesbury Town Centre Plan was published. It showed the shared vision and commitment of partners whose aim was to continue improving the town centre, building on the multi-million pound investment that had already been made. This vision is that 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 accessible
 - 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
- 3.2 The Plan also set out the challenges facing the town centre and the guiding principles (see para 3.14) to steer future development.
- 3.3 Aylesbury Vale District Council, Aylesbury Town Council and Bucks County Council developed the plan, supported by a range of partners from the public and private sector who would not only be involved in helping deliver the identified actions for improvement but also be mindful of the guiding principles when considering proposals for their own assets.
- 3.4 A summary brochure of the full Plan was published at the same time and widely distributed. Copies of this will be available at the meeting.
- 3.5 The Plan was and continues to be an important document particularly as at the time of its publication, the dated 2004 Local Plan was still being used to determine planning applications relating to the town centre.
- 3.6 The Town Centre Plan whilst not a binding document in terms of planning policy, has been used very effectively as a reference point for comments (both positive and negative), made by, for example, the Aylesbury Town Partnership, on planning applications. It has also be widely used both by AVDC and private sector partners to help promote the town centre and attract

new operators and investors.

Aligning the Vale of Aylesbury Plan

- 3.7 In recent months, the opportunity has been taken to ensure that the Aylesbury town centre policies in the draft Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP), reflect the ethos of the Aylesbury Town Centre Plan. The guiding principles and vision have also been included in the VALP, aligning the Local Plan and Town Centre Plan for the first time.
- 3.8 In drafting the text for the VALP, the challenges, vision, guiding principles were all reviewed. However, only minor changes were made to the challenges to reflect the growing of the internet on traditional retail space.
- 3.9 The subsequent Aylesbury Town centre Growth Opportunity Assessment Study carried out by The Retail Group to provide supporting evidence for the Vale of Aylesbury Plan, has confirmed that no other significant changes were needed. The detail of this Study which also covered an update on the catchment area of Aylesbury town and the catchment socio-economic profile, will be brought to a future committee meeting.

Updating the Plan

- 3.10 In January 2017, AVDC plans to publish an update to the Town Centre Plan, identifying how the actions listed in the Plan have been progressed.
- 3.11 The actions listed in the plan covered all areas of the town centre and were each classified as one of the following:

Green – work which can begin or be completed within current budgets and operational arrangements

Amber – work which could be undertaken within current operational arrangements but revenue or capital funding is needed to deliver it

Red – longer term aspirations which require significant operational and funding capacity

- 3.12 Some 75 actions are listed in the original plan, broken down by areas of the town centre with each area having its own mini vision. In addition, a number of actions apply across the whole town centre. Progress has been made on 60 actions. Of the remaining 15, 13 actions continue to be priorities of differing timescales, and two are no longer required because legislation has been passed enabling new powers to address the issues.
- 3.13 Appendix 1 provides a detailed commentary on progress against each of the actions. Appendix 2 is an excerpt from a consultation document on the Aylesbury Transport Strategy, detailing planned transport improvements which will be relevant to a number of important actions in the Aylesbury Town Centre Plan. The consultation runs to 3 January 2017.

Progress

- 3.14 Progress has included a range of activities from small actions to larger, longer-term schemes:
 - Improvements to the market include its appearance, the quality of products sold, the range of market types and making it easier for stall holders to pay their rent

- Improvements to Walton Street through planting, with plans for more major changes as part of the conversion of the old County Offices to apartments with associated pedestrian-friendly space
- Forming a stakeholder group to engage Kingsbury landlords and tenants in improving its appearance, making use of its links to the Roald Dahl Children's Gallery at Bucks County Museum
- Tackling parking issues in Kingsbury through the introduction of new car parking controls.
- Protecting buildings in Church Street/Parson's Fee from damage by large vehicles by installing bollards
- Bringing empty buildings such as AVDC's former High Street offices back into use
- Installing new equipment in the Vale Park skate park
- The opening of the brand new University Campus Aylesbury Vale in autumn 2015 by the canal basin
- Working with landowners and partners to plan the ambitious next step in the Waterside North development, co-ordinating parking plans and the conversion of existing buildings and construction of complementary new buildings. Work on AVDC Phase 1 (restaurants, apartments and a public square) will begin in January 2017.
- Making it easier for people with disabilities to use taxis through the Fare4All team in partnership with the Taxi Association and Bucks Disability Service.
- Increasing the scale and profile of town centre events to attract more people and encourage them to spend more time. For example the Roald Dahl Festival is now an all-day event celebrating children's literature and Vale Park hosted a bigger event to celebrate the lighting of the Heritage Flame at the start of the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games.
- Making use of the strong brands now present in the town centre, including Waitrose, Nando's, Wagamama, Travelodge and Gourmet Burger Kitchen to attract interest from other food and beverage suppliers

3.15 The Plan update also includes some new actions suggested by town centre stakeholders. These have all been considered by the Aylesbury Town Centre Steering Group which is made up of officer representation from AVDC, Bucks County Council and Aylesbury Town Council. Those which will appear in the updated Plan are those found to support the guiding principles of the Plan, which were used as selection criteria. These guiding principles are:

Principle 1: Position the town correctly

Principle 2: Be different, rather than a 'clone', but base it on reality

Principle 3: Offer what the 'market' is looking for to capitalise on our enviable retail catchment

Principle 4: Encourage social interaction

Principle 5: Build community spirit

Principle 6: Take a connected, 'whole town' approach

Principle 7: Appeal to all our different town centre users

3.16 The format of the published update to the plan will be:

- A full updated Aylesbury Town Centre Plan, including the vision for the future of the town centre, background information, a summary of achievements in recent years since the original plan in 2014, guiding

principles and Aylesbury's position. This document will also list all of the action points from the 2014 Plan, showing progress against each.

- A summary document as before with the key points of the above, highlighting the important progress that has made and plans for the future, as well as developments that the Plan is responding to since originally published.

4 Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 Whilst AVDC is the lead for the Town Centre Plan and plays a significant role in the delivery of its actions, it is a partnership Plan so is not subject to Aylesbury Vale District Council's exclusive approval. This is why the recommendation is to note progress on these actions and the proposals for updating the Plan.

5 Resource implications

- 5.1 As each action in the Town Centre Plan is progressed the resources required are taken into consideration. To date, a variety of sources of finance have been used to progress actions. Section 106 monies, the redeployment of the monies previously invested in the Visitor Information Centre, and AVDC's capital programme, are examples. Any that cannot be met within identified resources need to come forward with a business plan evidencing how the funding required can be obtained.
- 5.2 This report does not require any extra funding.

Contact Officer
Background Documents

Jill Hemmings
Aylesbury Town Centre Plan, published April 2014
Notes of meetings of the Aylesbury Town Centre
Steering Group

Appendix 1

Aylesbury Town Centre Plan – Update on Actions and Progress

In April 2014 the Aylesbury Town Centre Plan was published, bringing together a whole host of improvements that were planned to build on the multi-million pound investment already made to transform the town centre. Two years on, we are checking progress and celebrating improvements with an update to the original document.

This Appendix to the Economy and Business Development Scrutiny Committee report details the actions that were listed in the Town Centre Plan and shows progress against these actions since it was published. It also reflects the findings of the 2016 Growth Opportunities Assessment Study for Aylesbury which identifies progress since 2014 and confirms future requirements for creating a vibrant and successful town centre.

This appendix will form the content of the action plans published as part of the updated Town Centre Plan documents later this year. These actions will guide improvements in the town centre over the next few years.

This appendix is structured as follows:

Section 1: Progress on actions from the 2014 Town Centre Plan

In this section you will find listed, area by area of the town centre, the actions that were planned together with the progress achieved on each one since the Plan was published in April 2014.

Where an action has not been progressed, an explanation is provided including clarification as to whether the action continues to be a priority or has been succeeded by other actions.

Section 2: New additions for the updated 2016 Town Centre Plan

There have also been additions to the plan.

Those listed in this section are suggestions that the Town Centre Steering Group assessed as successfully meeting the Guiding Principles of the original Town Centre Plan document. The principles continue to apply to the updated Plan and are as follows:

- Principle 1: Position the town correctly
- Principle 2: Be different, rather than a 'clone', but base it on reality
- Principle 3: Offer what the 'market' is looking for to capitalise on our enviable retail catchment
- Principle 4: Encourage social interaction
- Principle 5: Build community spirit
- Principle 6: Take a connected, 'whole town' approach
- Principle 7: Appeal to all our different town centre users

Section 1: Progress on actions from the 2014 Town Centre Plan

A) Market Square, Walton Street and Friars Square		
Action	Priority	Progress
<p>Create a more attractive and usable environment for shopping, eating, drinking and leisure (including large scale events and socialising), through a public realm review to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • better links between areas • vehicle, pedestrian and events use and • public space (including layout, surfaces, street furniture, signage, lighting and electricity supply). 	Green	We have already made some improvements listed in more detail below, including through changes to the market and new town centre signage, but this remains a priority.
<p>Improve the retail, food and beverage and leisure offer by improving the markets</p>	Green	Colourful new stalls have created a more attractive look and we are fostering greater community spirit amongst traders through social media. Market traders are now offered the convenience of making cashless payments for their stall rental. We are signed up to the Real Deal initiative to root out counterfeit or illegal products. The new Tuesday Vintage Market and Bazaar and speciality food market on Fridays offer shoppers more reason than ever to visit the market. Construction work for the Metro Bank at the entrance to Friars Square Shopping Centre created some delay to our plans but market improvements continue.
<p>Improve the retail, food and beverage and leisure offer by encouraging new retail operators into the square</p>	Green	Partners in this plan are working to maintain and increase units for retail. As non-retail units become empty, a change of planning use to retail space is considered where possible. The Town Centre Management team is working with businesses to encourage them to make any of their unused space available. On the market, space is prioritised for retailers. The latest Growth Opportunities Assessment Study for Aylesbury has confirmed the need to attract greater numbers of memorable retailers and an

		'anchor store' into the town centre in future development phases.
<i>Improve the retail, food and beverage and leisure offer by holding more large scale events</i>	Green	The Roald Dahl Festival and Play in the Park now offer more activities, many of them free, for all ages. Town centre events celebrated the lighting of the Paralympic Games Heritage Flame in 2014 and 2016. We have also improved the Christmas lights switch on and Santa's Parade, while reducing costs. Work began in summer 2016 on replacing electrical sockets in Market Square and we plan to increase the electricity supply for larger events. The latest Growth Opportunities Assessment Study for Aylesbury has confirmed the importance of events in attracting greater numbers to the town centre in future.
<i>Improve the retail, food and beverage and leisure offer by updating planning guidance to ensure it reflects the aim of making Market Square the hub of the town centre</i>	Green	The new Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan, which will inform planning decisions, supports this aim.
<i>Improve the retail, food and beverage and leisure offer by stopping parking on the Market Square in the evenings and at other inappropriate times.</i>	Green	By identifying regular offenders and making better use of bollards we have cut down on parking in Market Square. The Town Centre Management team also has new powers to tackle the issue through a Public Space Protection Order.
<i>Enable and support, where appropriate, improvement plans of landlords in this area of town to ensure a co-ordinated and complementary approach to future development.</i>	Green	Established relationships with landlords are helping to share information and ensure that their improvement plans reflect the vision for the town centre.
<i>Review the treatment and use of Walton Street, to improve the environment and encourage better links between Walton Street and other town centre locations such as Waterside North, Friars Square and Market Square (see Waterside North action plan).</i>	Green	Planting near Old County Hall and the Crown Court has improved the look of these areas, with additional planters also installed in Walton Street by the Library and the County Council offices. As part of the conversion of the old County Offices in Walton Street to flats, civic and food and beverage outlets, an environmental enhancement scheme is being developed. It will also consider an energy efficient

		shared heat plant for the new and redeveloped buildings. The area in front of the flats will be part of a more pedestrian-friendly space and better connect Walton Street to Market Square.
<i>Improve access to and visibility of the King's Head heritage site.</i>	<i>Red</i>	Action still to be progressed Explanation and ongoing status: Progress has not been made on this action due to the scale of capacity and financial resources that will be needed to make a significant impact. It remains a longer-term aspiration.

<u>B) Kingsbury (including George Street and Pebble Lane)</u>		
Action	Priority	Progress
<i>Form a stakeholder group to identify options for improving the physical environment, looking at seating, lighting, surfaces etc so that better use of the open space can be made all year round.</i>	Green	A group including landlords and tenants is considering how the area should look and will apply for Heritage Lottery funding to make these changes happen. Their support is crucial to ensure improvement plans can be sustained. Initial progress since the publication of the plan includes flowers and foliage planted in the unused fountains and in extra containers, which is bringing year-round colour to Kingsbury. We are addressing issues caused by vehicles ignoring no access signs, by visiting businesses here to clarify access arrangements and to warn them of possible legal penalties. Failed areas of the road surface have been repaired. Planning ahead for funding the next phase of improvements, we are urging Churchill Homes to begin construction on the Sainsbury's town centre site which will release their Section 106 financial contribution.
<i>Investigate if it's possible to enforce a 'saturation policy' for betting shops and off-licences.</i>	Green	Councils now have powers to refuse applications for betting shops where sufficient numbers are already provided.
<i>Improve and promote Kingsbury as the gateway to the Old Town, eg through the signage strategy for the town.</i>	Green	A design report showed that Kingsbury could be more of an alternative route for visitors to the Roald Dahl Children's Gallery in the Bucks County Museum. New signage will reflect this.
<i>Deliver these (above) improvements, in a phased way if necessary.</i>	Red	Action still to be progressed Explanation and ongoing status: See above
<i>Support, however possible, plans by the Local Government Association to lobby government for new powers to prevent clusters of betting shops overwhelming town centres.</i>	Green	As Government has now introduced relevant powers, this action has been dropped from the plan.

<u>C) Aylesbury Old Town</u>		
Action	Priority	Progress
<i>Include the Old Town in the town centre signage strategy to maximise the visitor potential of the County Museum and other attractions, such as the Roald Dahl Children's Gallery and classical concerts at St Mary's Church.</i>	Green	The local residents' association have been part of the stakeholder group shaping the new signage strategy for the town centre. Signage experts have helped to create a plan which should guide visitors to see as many of Aylesbury's attractions as possible.
<i>Investigate ways to protect buildings at the junction of Church Street and Parson's Fee from large vehicle damage.</i>	Green	Bollards have been installed in these locations, which are successfully preventing potential damage.
<i>Enforce on-street parking regulations to support traffic management flow and protect the quality of the environment.</i>	Green	All partners responsible for parking are in regular communication and aim to better co-ordinate parking plans and restrictions to achieve these aims. The Aylesbury Transport Strategy will look at on-street parking and should help to clarify the future role of parking regulations. The Town Centre Management team also has new powers to enforce on-street parking regulations through a Public Space Protection Order.
<i>Investigate pedestrianisation of Temple Street and how to connect it better to the rest of the town centre.</i>	Red	Action still to be progressed Explanation and ongoing status: As with other proposed pedestrianisation, this needs to be considered as part of the Aylesbury Transport Strategy, led by Bucks County Council. It remains a longer term aspiration.

<u>D) Gateway South (Railway and Bus Station)</u>		
<i>Action</i>	<i>Priority</i>	<i>Progress</i>
<i>Link the bus and railway stations more attractively and effectively to other key points in the town, including the shopping areas through, for example, a more welcoming 'arrival statement', better signage and vistas.</i>	<i>Green</i>	New signage will help with wayfinding as people arrive at key points including the train and bus stations. Rockspring, owners of Friars Square Shopping Centre, are considering how they can improve its presence using the external facades of the building but there are significant physical constraints on making major changes.
<i>Improve the bus and rail environment, eg the watercourses running alongside the footpath and the wooded area near the station car park.</i>	<i>Green</i>	The town council co-ordinates regular litter-picking in this area by volunteers.

<u>E) Upper and middle High Street (incl Hale Street and Railway Street)</u>		
Action	Priority	Progress
<i>(In upper High Street from the top of Market Square to McDonalds) Reinforce and extend pedestrianisation to improve safety, the quality of the environment and the opportunity to create additional public space for entertainment.</i>	Green	It has been very challenging finding ways to reinforce the restricted vehicle access without the use of the rising bollards, which no longer work. However, by using planters to narrow the access for vehicles and by extending enforcement powers to more AVDC staff we have reduced the number of incidents. AVDC's taxi licensing service is also supporting the action.
<i>(In middle High Street from McDonalds to the roundabout with Exchange Street) Work with the owners of Hampden House to bring the vacant offices back into use in a way which reflects the aims and aspirations set out in the Plan.</i>	Green	All stakeholders hope to see this building brought back into use or the site redeveloped in line with Town Centre Plan principles. The current owners have considered schemes but so far not progressed any. We continue to work with them to establish the role that this building will play.
<i>(In middle High Street from McDonalds to the roundabout with Exchange Street) Proactively market 66 High Street, AVDC's former offices, to return them to full occupation.</i>	Green	These offices are now almost entirely occupied by a variety of tenants. The longer term plans for the site are to include it in the next phase of redevelopment as part of a mixed-use scheme.
<i>(In middle High Street from McDonalds to the roundabout with Exchange Street) Create a link as part of the Waterside North Masterplan to: a) connect middle High Street with Waterside North and increase the flow of pedestrians from one part of town to another and b) help attract new investment to the High Street.</i>	Red	The new signage should help pedestrians to flow better between different parts of the town centre. In addition the new public square, part of Waterside North phase one, should help strengthen the pedestrian 'circuit'. The planned enhancements to Walton Street and the new public spaces connecting it to the restaurants, apartments and public square (to be built as part of Waterside North phase one via the Judges' Lodgings) will also make an important contribution to this action.
<i>(In middle High Street from McDonalds to the roundabout with Exchange Street) Review the balance between traffic,</i>	Red	The draft Aylesbury Vale Local Plan now includes this area in future redevelopment plans for the town

<p><i>pedestrians, buses and parking including how stronger links can be made between the car parks in Anchor Lane (Upper Hundreds) and Railway Street (Hampden House).</i></p>		<p>centre. Any plans which come forward would need to show how they address this issue. Bucks County Council's Aylesbury Transport Strategy (expected to be completed early 2017) will also consider the balance between these modes of transport and inform actions that are required.</p>
<p><i>(In middle High Street from McDonalds to the roundabout with Exchange Street) Investigate pedestrianisation and public realm improvements (surfaces, street furniture, lighting and signage) in light of the above review.</i></p>	<p>Red</p>	<p>Action still to be progressed Explanation and ongoing status: In the shorter term, the new wayfinding signage will make it easier for pedestrians to navigate into and around the town centre. Public realm improvements are an ongoing priority and form part of our longer term plans.</p>
<p><i>(Upper High Street) Develop proposals and a plan for public realm improvements.</i></p>	<p>Red</p>	<p>Action still to be progressed Explanation and ongoing status: Public realm improvements in this area continue to be an ongoing longer term priority but are partly dependent on the Aylesbury Transport Strategy for the town centre and the opportunities that presents, including for 'shared space'.</p>

<u>F) Cambridge Street, Buckingham Street and New Street</u>		
Action	Priority	Progress
<i>(In Cambridge Street) Work with Sainsbury's and their partners on the redevelopment of their existing town centre store to ensure the planned retail units complement and enhance the range and quality of shopping and the environment.</i>	Green	Sainsbury's are being encouraged to complete the refurbishment of their site as soon as possible, to improve this area of the town centre and help reduce antisocial behaviour around the empty buildings. The new signage planned will include Cambridge Street.
<i>(In Buckingham Street and New Street) Develop a vision and masterplan for the area, which will consider:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pedestrian access, including better links between Buckingham Street and New Street</i> • <i>Potential for green spaces</i> • <i>Parking</i> 	Red	Action still to be progressed Explanation and ongoing status: This action remains a priority and will be progressed once the Aylesbury Transport Strategy, which includes roads in the heart of the town centre, is completed.
<i>(In Cambridge Street) Investigate pedestrianisation and public realm improvements.</i>	Red	Action still to be progressed Explanation and ongoing status: As with other actions proposing pedestrianisation in different parts of the town centre, this proposal needs to be looked at as part of the wider Aylesbury Transport Strategy.

G) Vale Park and the Grand Union Canal (to Circus Fields)		
Action	Priority	Progress
Improve the general environment and access to the park, eg provide better lighting.	Green	The 5-a-side pitches, drainage and lighting in Vale Park have all been improved.
Carry out a review of the skate park	Green	This review was completed and as a result new equipment was installed in the skate park in Vale Park and promoted to young people at events such as Play in the Park to encourage its use.
Complete the new marina and boathouse at Circus Fields, to enable the next phase of the development of the site.	Green	The marina and boathouse were completed in late 2014. The canalside housing development is now occupied, bringing an added vibrancy to the area.
Work with the Canal & River Trust (CART) to promote the canal and its associated facilities to users, visitors and existing residents.	Green	The town council, district council and the trust are working together to encourage tourism and coordinate interpretation boards and signage. The new town centre pedestrian signage will encourage pedestrians to visit this area and will be complemented by interpretation boards to be funded by Section 106 developer contributions. CART has already organised a number of events here and a canal boat festival and canal boat theatre show are being considered. The trust is in the process of updating its website content about Aylesbury. The town council is hoping to install new planters near Highbridge Walk in 2017/18, with the help of CART volunteers.
Review canal access and frontages (eg at Stocklake and Pembroke Road) and produce a list of requirements which can be used when considering new planning applications or for working with existing, adjacent landlords/tenants to secure improvements.	Green	Action still to be progressed Explanation and ongoing status: This action remains a priority. Section 106 money from an adjacent housing development has now been secured and will fund planned improvements to the towpath and environment on this stretch of canal.

<p><i>Work with neighbouring properties, eg Tring Road Tesco, to improve the appearance and context of the canal in relation to their property, based on the list of requirements referred to above.</i></p>	<p>Amber</p>	<p>Action still to be progressed Explanation and ongoing status: As above, this action remains a priority and we will work with neighbouring properties to achieve maximum impact from improvements funded by the Section 106 money secured.</p>
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H) Waterside South (from Walton Street junction to Upper Hundreds, including Exchange Street, Lower High Street)		
Action	Priority	Progress
<i>Deliver an education centre, including two restaurants and a café, at the head of the canal basin, working in partnership with tenants Buckinghamshire New University and Aylesbury College.</i>	Green	University Campus Aylesbury Vale opened in autumn 2015 and is welcoming students. The restaurant/café space has still to be let but lettings agents are confident that once the Waterside North phase one restaurants are let, this space will also be in demand. In the meantime Bucks Education Skills and Training (BEST), the partnership between the university and college, has asked for a temporary variation to the lease clause which will enable them to use the space in different ways eg meeting space. The organisation Explore Learning has also expressed an interest and BEST is pursuing this.
<i>Create a new public space as part of the education centre development which opens up the head of the canal basin to access from Walton Street, the canal towpath, the theatre, Waitrose and Travelodge.</i>	Green	The new public space is complete. BEST are considering ideas for events to promote the canal as they are put forward, co-ordinating with the town council, district council and the Canal and River Trust as they plan events to promote the canal.
<i>Identify if alternative/improved coach parking, drop-off points and waiting areas can be provided for visitors to the theatre.</i>	Green	It is proving difficult to identify an alternative drop off point although we will continue to pursue this as improvements to the town centre progress. In the meantime, we have confirmed that the current arrangements using the north lane of Exchange Street as a drop-off point will continue.
<i>Carry out a feasibility study for remodelling Exchange Street, including the underpass to Vale Park, to help strengthen links between the developments either side of the carriageway.</i>	Green	Action still to be progressed Explanation and ongoing status: This remains a priority. The results of the Aylesbury Transport Strategy commissioned by the county council will play an important role in progressing this feasibility study.

<u>I) Waterside North (the current Exchange Street car park) and immediate adjacent areas</u>		
Action	Priority	Progress
<p>Work with adjacent landowners, eg Bucks County Council, to develop a Masterplan for the site, which will take into account the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • scope of the site, ie buildings/land to be included • future use of buildings to be retained • need for a mixed-use scheme, eg restaurants, cafés, public space, housing, retail, to reflect the changing requirements of successful town centres. • requirement for the development to be phased to provide flexibility and avoid displacement of services from other parts of the town. • desire to retain some prime town centre parking, at least in the short to medium term. • potential to use the development to develop pedestrian links to adjacent areas such as the High Street and Hale Leys Shopping Centre and enhance their ability to attract new investment. 	Green	Outline planning permission has been secured on AVDC-owned land (part of the temporary Exchange Street car park) for a mixed use scheme with a new public square, restaurants on the ground floor and residential accommodation above. On adjacent land, owned by Bucks County Council, a new temporary 100-space car park has been created at the rear of the old county offices, and work is planned to convert the remaining building to apartments, civic space and restaurants/bars. The pedestrian route from Walton Street to Exchange Street car park will also be improved and will include a new public space. We are considering the next phases of development of the Exchange Street car park and beyond, including replacing parking spaces to meet current and predicted future demand from business, residents, workers and visitors.
<p>Progress Phase 1 of the Masterplan through the planning and delivery process by 2016/17, consulting local communities and stakeholders as and when appropriate.</p>	Green	The new BCC car park opened in late 2015 and the county council continues to work on the other elements of its scheme. AVDC has appointed a development partner to progress its part of Phase 1 and has secured funding from the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP). A detailed planning application was submitted in July, and work is planned to start on site in January 2017 for completion in spring 2018. The views of a wide range of stakeholders have shaped the proposed new public square.
<p>Enable and support, where appropriate, improvement plans by the landlords of adjacent properties such as Hale Leys Shopping Centre, The Church of St Joseph's and the cinema complex to ensure that plans are co-ordinated and complement each other.</p>	Green	Partners in this plan continue to work hard at maintaining productive working relationships with landlords of adjacent properties, who are supportive of the proposed plans.

	<u>J) Work across the town centre</u>		
	Action	Priority	Progress
Planning	Review current planning policies and Supplementary Guidance. Examples include: a) ensuring that the emerging importance of leisure (eg in the form of cafés and restaurants) is recognised. b) ensuring that Section 106 agreements are flexible (eg to support the enhancement and provision of the public realm, where the case can be made).	Green	The new Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan recognises the importance of cafes and restaurants in the success of the town centre and supports their presence. It is now clear that additional elements of the town centre plan, such as the Sainsbury's site and Kingsbury, do fall within the scope of Section 106 funding. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), introduced in 2010, gives greater scope for contributions to be used outside of the area which will be directly impacted by a development. We are currently assessing how CIL may affect available developer funding for town centre improvements.
	Adopt a 'development management' approach to key development sites (regardless of their ownership) by, for example, proactively providing planning guidance and concept statements.	Green	This work is underway.
	Ensure the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) supports the aims and delivery of this Plan, influences and shapes it, and vice versa.	Green	AVDC has been careful to ensure the new draft Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan policies which affect Aylesbury town centre reflect the aspirations of the Town Centre Plan.

	Action	Priority	Progress
Licensing	<i>Investigate if it's possible to enforce a 'saturation policy' for betting shops and off-licences (eg in Kingsbury).</i>	Green	On betting shops, the government has introduced new powers for local authorities to refuse applications for betting shops where sufficient numbers already provided. AVDC has for 10 years successfully implemented the Licensing Act 2003 to help reduce crime and disorder and assist in the development of the town centre. The council's latest licensing policy was adopted in 2015 following widespread consultation and reflects the council's vision for the night time economy and the role of pubs, clubs, takeaways etc.
	<i>Review taxi rank positions to reflect the emerging new development plans for the town (eg Waterside North) and make them more identifiable.</i>	Green	This action is ongoing and factors such as the county council's proposal to introduce parking meters (likely to affect where taxi ranks can be positioned) need to be part of the considerations.
	<i>Work towards making pavement licensing the sole responsibility of AVDC, rather than shared between AVDC and BCC, to achieve a more effective and co-ordinated approach.</i>	Green	This plan has changed since it has become clear that the county council already deals with most pavement licensing. The aim is now for BCC to take over this entire element.
	<i>Work with the Taxi Association to introduce and encourage take-up of the Fare4All access-friendly scheme, to help people with a disability.</i>	Amber	Fair4All was launched in 2014 to a very positive reception. Currently

			all drivers of Hackney Carriage taxis have been trained and signed up to the service, as well as Express Travel and ABC Cars of Aylesbury. We continue to work with the Taxi Association to encourage further take up and with the Bucks Disability Service to make booking a suitable taxi easier for travellers with specific needs.
	<i>Introduce a more environmentally sustainable fleet of hackney carriages and the use of a limited number of smaller private hire vehicles for single person use.</i>	Red	Action still to be progressed Explanation and ongoing status: Due to cost and logistics this ambitious aim remains a longer-term aspiration, but we continue to be committed to it.
	<i>Support, however possible, current plans by the Local Government Association to lobby government for new powers to prevent clusters of betting shops overwhelming town centres (eg in Kingsbury – see action plan)</i>	Green	Action still to be progressed Explanation and ongoing status: These powers have been introduced so this action has been dropped from the plan.
	<i>Review Aylesbury town centre street trading and pavement trading licensing policy to ensure consistency in terms of conditions and fees, permanent and seasonal trading and the use of parts of town as markets.</i>	Green	Any street traders operating in Market Square on market days now have to comply with the terms and conditions for market traders. AVDC Licensing officers and the Town Centre Management Team hope to meet in early 2017 with Bucks County Council to progress this work further.

	Action	Priority	Progress
Environmental improvements	<i>Develop a de-cluttering programme including a sign removal/angle grinding day</i>	Green	Working with Bucks County Council, we are identifying opportunities to declutter and have scheduled the installation of the new signage as one of these.
	<i>Investigate a restricted zone, whereby the number of different signs is kept to a minimum.</i>	Green	Still in progress. The county and district councils recognise the need to work together and start by identifying one street as a trial that can be reviewed to see what signs could be removed, learning from work that took place in Bury St Edmunds as included in the Public Realm Strategy.
	<i>Put in place measures to stop inappropriate parking in public spaces, eg in the Market Square at evenings and weekends</i>	Amber	We have significantly reduced parking in Market Square through better use of bollards. The Town Centre Management team also has new powers to tackle the issue through a Public Space Protection Order.

	Action	Priority	Progress
Transport and access improvements	<i>Develop and deliver a Transport Plan for the town centre which supports the actions in the Plan, takes into account the implications of the housing and employment growth planned for the broader Aylesbury area and seeks to balance vehicle-based access with consideration for cyclists, pedestrians and people with less mobility.</i>	Green	BCC has commissioned an Aylesbury Transport Strategy, due for completion early 2017, and the partners in the Town Centre Plan continue to work towards its shared aims. Along with housing growth identified in the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan, the town centre is likely to be affected by HS2 construction work starting in 2017, with disruption to the local transport infrastructure although resulting in highway improvements in the longer term. East-West Rail, extending the line north, is due to open in the early 2020s and will bring the town within easier reach of those living further north. If successful, Aylesbury's Garden Town bid will also make available further funding for improvements.
	<i>Use the Transport Plan to help inform a Parking Plan for the town centre which looks at the short, medium and long term requirements, while balancing the different demands on town centre space.</i>	Green	A Parking Plan will be commissioned shortly. It will review existing capacity and identify future requirements, taking into account parking which will be lost as the town centre is redeveloped as well as new parking needed to accommodate the housing and

			employment growth proposed for Aylesbury.
	<i>Produce a co-ordinated signage plan. This will involve investigating branding and signposting the walking routes across the town to sit alongside the Gem and Rainbow routes and other routes, such as the Paralympic Way and Waterside Way.</i>	Green	Working with town centre stakeholders, a signage strategy has been produced and the first priority phase of signage identified, linking with routes into and around Aylesbury and reflecting the most accessible routes. It is hoped to complete the installation of the improved signage by Spring 2017.
	<i>Use the Stoke Mandeville Way access standard to carry out an audit of the town centre with businesses and other partners.</i>	Amber	Actions still to be progressed Explanation and ongoing status: Discussions with the Buckinghamshire Disability Service (BuDS) are underway to agree the brief for the audit as a first step. It is anticipated that the resulting action plan will require delivery over a significant period of time together with ownership by a wide variety of stakeholders.
	<i>Deliver the agreed access action plan (coming out of the above action) on a phased basis.</i>	Amber	The Aylesbury Transport Strategy recommends as one of its actions: <i>Ensure accessibility for all within the town and to key destinations including the canal basin.</i>
	<i>Review how the (Stoke Mandeville Way) access standard can be enforced.</i>	Amber	Action still to be progressed Explanation and ongoing status: There are opportunities

			to ensure that when planning applications are considered, or building control inspections made, access arrangements are reviewed to reflect the town's aspiration to be an accessible town for everyone. Permitted development rights have enabled many buildings to be converted/alterd without reference to planning, so we need to find ways in which to raise awareness about the importance of accessibility.
Leisure and tourism development	<i>Develop a culture trail to highlight historic features and improve connectivity by leading visitors through the Old Town and into new parts of the town and green spaces.</i>	Green	Aylesbury Town Council has published a Heritage Walk brochure. The Kingsbury improvement scheme is being developed using Roald Dahl as a theme and when the new public square opens as part of Waterside North, there will be opportunities to introduce new trails which connect different parts of the town to each other.
	<i>Devise an action plan for the town centre based on the relevant recommendations set out in the Cultural and Leisure study and the Tourism Study for Aylesbury Vale.</i>	Green	An audit of outdoor leisure needs is underway and a study of commercial leisure requirements is planned for 2017, with actions to be identified from these pieces of work. The scope for more hotel space will be considered as

			part of the next phases of development.
	<i>Carry out a joined-up and enhanced events programme (including nationally-significant artistic and sporting events which build on the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics), to help increase footfall and visitor numbers from all sections of the community.</i>	Green	Events in the town centre have included celebrations to mark the area's unique role in the history of the Paralympic Games, an expanded Roald Dahl Festival which succeeded in increasing more visitors across a whole day, seasonal events, charity days and upgraded Christmas events. The latest Growth Opportunities Assessment Study for Aylesbury has confirmed the important role of events in the success of the town centre.
Marketing and communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Set up a joint partnership to:</i> • <i>promote specific sites to potential inward investors.</i> • <i>promote the town centre to commercial landlords to encourage them to attract quality tenants.</i> • <i>promote the town centre to prospective new tenants/operators.</i> • <i>promote the town centre to visitors through guides, leaflets, familiarisation trips, website, exhibitions and other communications (including digital where appropriate). This will include Town Centre Partnership materials, eg to promote events.</i> 	Green	The Marketing Aylesbury Group has drawn up a plan of communications work and is progressing this work under the Eye Opening Aylesbury branding. Examples include the VisitAylesbury website which was launched in October 2015 and a Mix96 radio campaign. Group members share information about events, opportunities and materials available to promote Aylesbury and have helped to shape plans for the new town centre signage.

	<p><i>Marketing and communications - Build on the current communications in place with town centre businesses and operators, to ensure that they are knowledgeable about Aylesbury's offer and can use this both to promote and enhance users' experience of their visit.</i></p>	<p>Amber</p>	<p>The Town Centre Management team sends out e-newsletters every two months and at quarterly Town Centre Partnerships meetings useful information about the quality of Aylesbury town centre's offer is shared. Recent developments include Aylesbury's Purple Flag and Safer Business Award.</p>
	<p><i>Marketing and communications - Create a sponsorship prospectus for a public art programme to enhance existing and proposed new public space.</i></p>	<p>Amber</p>	<p>A sponsorship brochure was produced for the Paralympic Heritage Flame Lighting ceremony in September 2016 at Stoke Mandeville Stadium, part of the work which secured 16 sponsors and partners. In 2017 materials will be produced promoting sponsorship opportunities at the expanded arts and literature event previously known as the Roald Dahl Festival. Work to bring together sponsorship opportunities will continue and will reflect the development of new public spaces in the Waterside North scheme.</p>

Economic development / town centre management	- Continue to provide a range of ongoing support to town centre businesses.	Green	We have launched the Nightwatch partnership (AVDC, Thames Valley Police and Barnardo's) to enable members of the local night-time community to spot and report suspected child abuse and sexual exploitation.
	<i>Economic development / town centre management - Continue to work with landlords of empty units to attract a higher quality retailer, including independent retailers.</i>	Green	The Town Centre Manager has supported new tenants The Works, Bella Café, Holy Cow and Rocky & Kook as they moved into the town centre.
	<i>Economic development / town centre management - Continue to carry out inward investment activities in order to attract new investment and operators into the town.</i>	Green	A programme of communications activity is underway to promote inward investment. Popular and well-used 'Reasons to Invest' leaflets are regularly updated. The introduction of strong brands including Waitrose, Nando's, Wagamama, Gourmet Burger Kitchen and Travelodge has strengthened Aylesbury's appeal. The Waterside North development will further consolidate this progress enabling us to raise the town's profile, creating further F&B outlets, apartments and a new public square. The town's predicted housing growth will boost its potential attractiveness for investment by offering a

			growing catchment population. The latest Growth Opportunities Assessment Study for Aylesbury has confirmed the importance of both daytime and evening venues for food and drinks in attracting greater numbers to the town centre in future.
	<i>Economic development / town centre management - Continue to review with local businesses the potential for Aylesbury town to become a Business Improvement District (BID) to help fund delivery of this Plan.</i>	Green	Following further investigations, AVDC recommends pursuing this opportunity and is working to secure support and endorsement from businesses to progress it.
	<i>Economic development / town centre management - Continue to work with landlords/landowners of vacant property/land to agree, if possible, a co-ordinated approach to residential development.</i>	Green	In its draft Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan, AVDC is committed to supporting proposals for residential development in the town centre on the upper floors above shops, in converted vacant or underused buildings, as part of mixed-use developments.
	<i>Economic development / town centre management - Continue to work with landlords and tenants to improve their frontages through for, example, a 'look book' which recommends appropriate looks and materials to enhance the general environment and their business prospects.</i>	Green	We hope to improve the look of Kingsbury by making use of its link with the Roald Dahl Children's Gallery, being en route to the Bucks County Museum. We are working with landlords and tenants to seek their support to progress the project. Town centre businesses

			have committed to putting up more hanging baskets on their properties to make the centre look more attractive.
	<i>Economic development / town centre management - Continue to deliver the Food & Beverage Strategy, collaborating, where possible, with other landlords of potential food and beverage outlets.</i>	Red	As part of the Waterside North and South developments, further F&B opportunities are being created and marketed to potential new tenants.

Section 2: New additions for the updated 2016 Town Centre Plan

Below are new additions to the Town Centre Plan. All of these actions have been judged against the Guiding Principles listed in the original Town Centre Plan document (see p1 for the list of principles). Many are complementary to actions already in the Plan, and where possible have been incorporated into those actions.

Introduce a Canal Basin Boat Festival

Note: This suggestion is incorporated into the existing actions to create more events at the Canal Basin and to better promote the canal.

Make use of Aylesbury Ducks in promoting the town

Note: The use of Aylesbury Ducks to represent part of the town's history will be incorporated into the marketing and communications work.

Noteworthy events in Aylesbury's history to be included as part of the new signage

Note: Local history information will be included on the monoliths to be installed as part of the new signage.

(In the medium to long term) A permanent exhibition of local history to be provided in the town centre

Note: This will be subject to the availability of resources and a suitable location.

Install interpretation panels in the semi-rural area in front of Waitrose

Improve the links between the Waterside Theatre, across Exchange Street and up to the Waterside North area, through use of open space

Note: This reflects longer term aspirations to improve the shared space and modify the priority of vehicles and pedestrians in this area of the town centre.

Keep under review the possible reopening of an AVDC Town Centre Office and Tourist Information Centre

Note: This is in line with the commitment made by AVDC when the Aylesbury Visitor Information Centre was shut in 2016 due to low levels of use.

In planning future phases of development, the financial or otherwise feasibility of an indoor market/winter garden to be considered

Use the passageway next to the Green Man pub in Market Square (leading to the former Borough Assembly Hall) to create a visual timeline of Aylesbury's musical heritage based on the Friars music club.

Install plaques at or near the sites of the four former Friars club venues

Install stars in the pavement, showing artists who appeared in Aylesbury

Support a saxophone/jazz festival in Aylesbury

Note: If a privately-funded event, partners will support in any way they can. If funding is being sought for this event from town centre partners, a business case will be required for consideration.

Extend the installation of 'Aylesbury nameplates' to further areas of the town centre, replace some nameplates with suitable alternatives or where necessary reposition street nameplates to reflect the standards set out in the Public Realm document

Note: This action subject to cost and sourcing adequate financial resources

Appendix 2 Aylesbury Town Centre Plan – Summary of Transport Improvements from Draft Aylesbury Transport Strategy

This Appendix to the Economy and Business Development Scrutiny Committee report is an excerpt from the Draft Aylesbury Transport Strategy, currently in a consultation phase until 3 January 2017. These transport improvements will be relevant to a number of important actions in the Aylesbury Town Centre Plan.

Summary of Transport Improvements

This section describes the transport improvements that have been developed in response to the transport issues and growth described above. The table below shows the full set of improvements included in the strategy, which are described in further detail within the Implementation Plan.

Transport Improvement (TI)	
1	Implement new outer road links
2	Improve safety on the highway network
3	Restrict through traffic within Aylesbury town centre
4	Implement a low emission zone for the centre of Aylesbury
5	Analyse parking provision and controls
6	Provide a Park & Ride system
7	Improve transport links to the railway stations
8	Upgrade the existing bus station in Aylesbury town
9	Implement bus priority measures
10	Improve the local bus network
11	Improve the regional bus network
12	Integrate public transport ticketing
13	Improve the cycle network
14	Increase the supply of cycle parking
15	Introduce a cycle hire facility
16	Improve safety in the pedestrian network
17	Improve the pedestrian network and public realm in the town centre area
18	Ensure accessibility for all within the town and to key destinations
19	Provide or upgrade active travel information
20	Improving access to travel information
21	Promote cycling, walking and public transport travel through awareness campaigns
22	Ensure accessibility within new developments
23	Ensure connectivity to and between new developments
24	Develop a robust tool to test improvements to transport network
25	Update transport infrastructure to accommodate future transport technology

Each transport improvement was assessed to determine how well they support the strategy objectives and described in a pro-forma that sets out the benefits and risks in more detail, including transport benefits, fit with the strategy objectives, potential risks in the implementation and potential sources of funding. Further details of this can be found in the full draft strategy online, titled *The Draft Aylesbury Transport Strategy - November 2016*.