

# AYLESBURY VALE DISTRICT COUNCIL

## Democratic Services

Please ask for: Craig Saunders  
Direct Line: (01296) 585043  
Switchboard: (01296) 585858  
Text Relay: prefix telephone number with 18001  
Email: [csaunders@aylesburyvaledc.gov.co.uk](mailto:csaunders@aylesburyvaledc.gov.co.uk)

Our Ref: CS  
Your Ref:



5 December, 2013

## ENVIRONMENT AND LIVING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Environment and Living Scrutiny Committee will be held at **6.30 pm on 16 December, 2013**, in **The Olympic Room at The Gateway, Gatehouse Road, Aylesbury**, when your attendance is requested.

**Membership:** Councillor Hunter- Watts (Chairman); Councillors Adams, Bond, Mrs Brandis, Cashman, Mrs Chapple, Fealey (Vice Chairman), Foster, Mrs Phillips, Mrs Russel, Mrs L Smith, Stuchbury, Mrs Takodra, Vick and Winn

Contact Officer: Craig Saunders (01296) 585043.

L White  
Head of Administration

### Members:

Ms Pam Bibby, Mr Derek Willmer, Committee Clerk (Generic Author), Web Master (IT), Cllr Chris Adams, Cllr Ashley Bond, Cllr Jenny Bloom, Cllr Judy Brandis, Cllr Corry Cashman, Cllr Sue Chapple, Cllr Brian Foster, Cllr Patrick Fealey, Cllr Paul Hughes, Cllr Tom Hunter-Watts, Cllr Barbara Russel, Cllr Lisa Smith, Cllr Robin Stuchbury, Cllr David Vick, Cllr Mark Winn, Miss Alice Fisher, Mr Bill Ashton, Ms Bryony Roberts (Audit), Mr Craig Saunders, Mr David Lamb (Audit), Mr Douglas Gray (Audit), Mr Les White,

## AGENDA

1 **APOLOGIES**

2 **TEMPORARY CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP**


Any changes to be reported to the meeting.

3

## **MINUTES**

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2013, copy attached as Appendix A.

Documents Attached:

 Environment living minutes 06 11 2013.pdf

4

## **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members to declare any interests.

5


## **AYLESBURY VALE COMMUNITY STRATEGY PARTNERSHIP UPDATE**

To consider the report attached as Appendix B coloured green.

Contact Officer: Kay Aitken (01296) 585005

**Note:** Thames Valley Police Acting Area Commander Olly Wright will be in attendance.

Documents Attached:

 App B - KA-CSP13-CS.pdf

6

## **VALE OF AYLESBURY HOUSING TRUST (VAHT) - UPDATE REPORT**

To consider the report attached as Appendix C coloured blue.

Contact Officer: Will Rysdale (01296) 585561

Documents Attached:

 App C - VAHT Update report (16 12 2013 meeting).pdf

7

## **ENVIRONMENT AND LIVING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2013-2014**

To note the current Work Programme attached as Appendix D coloured pink and to:

(i) Consider the feedback from the Work Programme planning meeting held on 28 November 2013 and agree the future work programme.

(ii) Consider questions and other matters relating to items to be considered at the next meeting on 12 February 2014.

Contact Officer: Craig Saunders (01296) 585043

Documents Attached:

 App D - ELSC Work Programme (16 12 2013 meeting).pdf

# ENVIRONMENT AND LIVING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

6 November 2013

**PRESENT:** Councillor Hunter-Watts (Chairman); Councillors Adams, Mrs Brandis, Cashman, Mrs Chapple, Fealey (Vice Chairman), Foster, Isham (in place of Mrs Bloom), Mrs Russel, Mrs L Smith, Stuchbury, Mrs Takodra and Vick.

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors Mrs Bloom, Bond and Winn.

## 1. MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2013 be approved as a correct record.

## 2. PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLING SAFETY

In recent years cycling had grown in popularity for both work and pleasure use, and was being encouraged by the government and other agencies to emphasise the benefits in improved physical activity together with the reduction in air pollution, emissions and motor traffic congestion. This increased popularity of cycling had also been helped by the recent success of British cyclists in the London Olympics and the Tour de France.

More locally, the use of cycling in tourism had also been promoted as a good way of exploring the District and beyond. For example, the Gemstone Cycle network provided nine cycle routes that had direct and safe cycle access to the town centre from residential areas in and around Aylesbury.

However, as the number of cyclists had grown, the overall safety of cyclists had been highlighted, which had been a primary reason for the Scrutiny Committee to look at cycling and pedestrian safety as part of its work programme.

The Committee received a presentation from Mrs Sue Brown (Team Leader, Casualty Reduction) and Mr Peter Chapman (Collision Investigation Officer) from Transport for Buckinghamshire on the current local statistics regarding road safety, the road safety team's role in responding to issues and trends, and how they worked with other services.

Data on accidents was obtained from Thames Valley Police personal injury collision reports and recorded onto a County Council database. The data was then analysed to get a picture of County-wide trends and for sites and routes to be prioritised for treatment. The data was also used:-

- for education, training and publicity.
- Engineering – Safety schemes.
- as input for Road Safety audits.
- in support of speed limit requests.
- to help support the locations for safety cameras.

Individual data and information was provided for the number of killed and seriously injured (KSI) casualties in road traffic collisions in Bucks from 1994-2012. This was further broken down and data provided for all casualties in the Aylesbury Vale District

area for the period 2003 to 2012. The total number of casualties had reduced considerably over that 10 year period, with a 38% reduction in KSI and a 29% reduction in slight accidents. Separate information was also provided on casualties for pedal cyclists and pedestrians.

A map of the Aylesbury Vale area revealed that accidents had occurred across the whole area, although there were a larger number in and near to Aylesbury, and on the main 'A' roads. For the period 2008-2012, the types of road casualties were: 58% vehicle drivers, 21% vehicle passengers, 8% motorcyclists, 7% pedestrians and 6% cyclists.

There had been a number of cycle improvement initiatives put in place over the past years which had been funded mainly through developer contributions or central Government funding. These included:-

- extending the Ruby Way cycle path up to Berryfields.
- Arla – cycle route along the canal towpath.
- small scale cycling improvements in Wendover.
- starting to develop a cycle network for Buckingham, with work currently being done with the Town Council on a proposed cycle network.
- cycling improvements at Haddenham and Thame Parkway Station (including cycle parking).

With regard to local casualty reduction schemes, Mr Chapman was currently looking at what improvements could be made to the intersection of High Street and Britannia Street, Aylesbury town, in response to 8 reported accidents with pedestrians at this location over the past 3 years.

Members requested further information and were informed:-

- (i) that any location that had 5 collisions in a 50 metre radius in the last 5 years would be given a high priority for treatment.
- (ii) that the KSI data looked at the number of accidents and not necessarily the causes of them.
- (iii) that the worst months for accidents were May and November. The data did not suggest that there were variations in the number of accidents due to seasonal factors, i.e. summer versus winter.
- (iv) that it was important for Transport for Buckinghamshire to be informed of any problems with roads and where maintenance or reparatory works were required.
- (v) that the County Council Officers worked with the Thames Valley Police on casualty reduction initiatives, which included going out with the police to do stop and advise checks relating to using mobile phones whilst driving and driving the morning after a heavy drinking session.
- (vi) that the 45 current safety (speed) cameras used at locations across Buckinghamshire would need to be upgraded to digital ones over the next few years.
- (vii) That information would be reported back to Members on potential plans to extend the Gemstone cycling routes.

Members also commented:-

- that the Buckingham Town Council was looking at their local infrastructure as part of preparing their Neighbourhood Plan, as well as how to unlock Section 106 monies to assist with infrastructure requirements.
- that average speed camera systems were a more effective way of detecting speeding motorists and of enforcement, rather than safety (speed) cameras located at a particular location. It was also possible that some Local Area Forums would be interested in committing some funding towards such systems.  
An undertaking was given to pass this information back to Transport for Bucks' sustainability team.
- that Transport for Bucks be encouraged to run a proximity detector promotion scheme targeted at owners of large vehicles and haulage companies, as evidence suggested that the cost of installing proximity detectors far outweighed the costs of accidents caused by large vehicles that could not see, and collided with, cyclists or smaller vehicles when they were turning.  
Again, an undertaking was given to pass this information back to Transport for Bucks' sustainability team.
- that they had some concerns about the safety of children cycling to school, particularly where this involved crossing busy roads. Mention was made of a private scheme which successfully promoted cycling training and awareness in Haddenham.
- that they were fully supportive of measures being taken in High Street, Aylesbury town to reduce the number of accidents, which would hopefully also look at reducing the speed limit along this piece of road to 10 or 15 miles per hour, and introducing stronger restrictions on where taxis could pickup and drop-off passengers.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the County Council Officers be thanked for attending the meeting to inform Members about the work that was being done to reduce the number of accidents and casualties in road traffic collisions in Buckinghamshire.
- (2) That the Officers be asked to pass back the comments made at this meeting to Transport for Buckinghamshire.

### **3. DRAFT HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2014-2017**

The current Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2008-2013 set out how the council aims to meet housing needs in the district, which were derived from the following statutory provisions:

- Section 8 Housing Act 1985 – duty to consider the housing conditions and housing needs of the district with respect to the provision of further housing accommodation.
- Sections 1 to 3 Homelessness Act 2002 – duty to implement a homelessness strategy and to take the homelessness strategy into account in the exercise of all its functions. The duty requires a review of the housing strategy at least every five years.

Key successes from the current Strategy included:

- almost 2,000 new affordable homes enabled between April 2008 and March 2013
- Griffin Place (self-contained accommodation with support, to homeless households) completed.
- Bearbrook Place (supported accommodation for single vulnerable homeless people) opened.
- 1,156 households prevented from becoming homeless during the period April 2008 to March 2013.

The current strategy would expire this year and a working group had been set up by council officers to work on a new strategy. The working group included external organisations: Aylesbury Vale Homeless Action Group and Bromford Housing Group.

The new Housing and Homelessness Strategy spanning 2014-2017, has four main strategic aims:

- Maximise the supply of affordable housing.
- Prevent and reduce homelessness.
- Maximise the use of private sector homes.
- Respond to the challenges of the Welfare Reforms.

The main part of the strategy was the action plan, which set out how the Council was going to achieve these aims. This would be monitored regularly by the Homelessness Prevention Group, the Director and Cabinet Member. The draft strategy was currently going through a robust and thorough consultation process. This had began in June and run through until November. It included 3 key stages, which were:

**Stage 1** – we conducted interviews with housing clients face-to-face and by phone. These clients have used a variety of services including Homelessness, Housing Advice, Bucks Home Choice, the Private Rent Scheme, drop-in services at the HUB (which is part of the Aylesbury Homeless Action Group) and residents of Griffin Place.

**Stage 2** – we held a successful stakeholder event on 9<sup>th</sup> July, which included Registered Providers, voluntary groups, statutory agencies, Members, Parish Councillors, and representatives from the private sector, such as the National Landlords Association and private landlords. It was centred around a series of themed workshops which formed the four strategic aims of the strategy.

**Stage 3** – we are carrying out wider public consultation on the draft strategy document, which will be published on the AVDC website for six weeks, ending on 27<sup>th</sup> November. Further actions include emailing all stakeholders, Members and Parish Councils to inform them of this consultation and issue a press release to reach the wider public.

Once the consultation responses had been evaluated and a final strategy agreed upon by the working group, it would be considered firstly by the Cabinet on 17 December 2013, and then reported to Council on 26 February 2014 for approval.

Members requested further information and were informed:-

- that Community Impact Bucks did not have funding that could be used for house building.
- that reciprocal arrangements operated between local authorities regarding the referrals of people who had suffered from domestic violence.

- (iii) that AVDC had submitted a bid for funding to help with tackling irresponsible landlords in the area.
- (iv) that the 'Rent in Advance' payments scheme to suitable tenants on the AVDC private rent scheme assisted people on low incomes who were often required to pay landlords 6 weeks rent in advance of moving into a rental property.
- (v) that in the event of a developer contesting the viability of delivering a percentage of affordable housing, this would be referred to the District Valuer who, statistically, usually found in favour of the developer.
- (vi) that a definition of affordable housing was detailed at Strategic Aim 1:  
 "affordable housing, as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework document, included social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs were not met by the market, and who cannot afford to enter the market".
- (vii) that the main issue faced in providing affordable housing on rural exception sites was finding suitable land. The Council supported the development of rural exception schemes in the district.
- (viii) that the number of people accepted as homeless and in priority need varied. The council would not have a homelessness duty towards single homeless people unless they were considered to be vulnerable in some way, Each applicant was assessed according to their individual circumstances. The council was working with voluntary agencies and the police to reduce the number of rough sleepers in Aylesbury.
- (ix) that the draft Strategy at Strategic Aim 2 (page 9) included information on who was deemed to be statutorily homeless and the duties that AVDC had in legislation to provide them with advice and assistance.  
 The legislation also required the Council to take steps to prevent homelessness, which was also explained in the draft Strategy.
- (x) that affordable rent was usually calculated as 80% of local market rent.
- (xi) that 16 or 17 years olds who qualified under the Bucks Home Choice allocations policy could register in order to be considered for rehousing once they turned 18.
- (xii) that 851 new affordable homes required per annum to meet affordable housing need, as outlined in the GL Hearn report, was not attainable. The 35% affordable housing planning requirement was a percentage of the market housing total and this was not sufficient to produce that number of affordable homes.
- (xiii) that Winter Warmth Scheme 4 would be operating this year, although there had been some difficulty in sourcing appropriate accommodation to use for the scheme.

Members also commented:-

- (a) that they would like to see the GL Hearn report figure of 851 new affordable housing per annum become the target for house building in the Vale.  
 (Members were informed that AVDC was the top performing authority in enabling new affordable homes, when compared to its 15 CIPFA 'nearest neighbours').



- (b) that the scrutiny committee should invite the District Valuer to a future meeting to explain the underlying principles used in dealing with developers and assessing their financial viability to be able to deliver local affordable housing.

Members were informed that Officers had recently met with the Homes and Communities Agency, and discussed the rationale behind viability testing.

- (c) that, if possible, larger developments that were delivered over more than 10 years and in a phased approach, should be monitored over time to ensure that a financial viability test for affordable housing remained appropriate, rather than undertaking a one-off measurement at the start of a scheme.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That Members were happy with the approach being taken to developing the new Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2014-2017.
- (2) That the relevant Director and Cabinet Member for Community Matters be asked to consider the comments made by Members at this meeting in finalising the draft Strategy to be reported to Cabinet in December 2013.

#### **4. AYLESBURY VALE COMMUNITY COHESION AND INTEGRATION STRATEGY – PROGRESS REPORT.**

The Committee received a report on progress made by the Council in implementing the Community Cohesion and Integration Strategy for Aylesbury Vale. The strategy had last been reviewed by scrutiny in July 2011.

In 2008, in partnership with the Vale of Aylesbury Housing Trust, Thames Valley Police and Buckinghamshire County Council, AVDC had commissioned the Institute of Community Cohesion (ICoCo) to establish a baseline assessment of cohesion within Aylesbury Vale from which a strategy could be developed. This had been in response to government guidance about community cohesion.

The Aylesbury Vale Community Cohesion and Integration Strategy was developed as a partnership strategy, and adopted by the Aylesbury Vale Local Strategic Partnership in June 2010, and by Aylesbury Vale District Council in July 2010. It identified the following priorities:

**Priority 1** Building cohesion within and between new and existing communities to address projected population and housing growth

**Priority 2** Tackling deprivation and disadvantage in the district

**Priority 3** Activities and facilities for young people and addressing any intergenerational tensions

**Priority 4** Empowering and modernising the voluntary and community sector

Community cohesion and integration continued to be important issues nationally, and this was illustrated in a Department of Communities and Local Government report; 'Creating the Conditions for Integration' (2012). This report emphasised the role of councils and other organisations in creating the conditions in which people share similar life opportunities, where there existed a common vision and where bridges were built between diverse communities.

Many of the Council's activities and initiatives contributed to community cohesion, for example, many of the Council's leisure services and events. The report provided examples of various initiatives and projects which were specifically contributing to the implementation of the strategy in support of each of the priorities. It focussed on the contribution of the council, and not all of the partners to the strategy.

**Priority 1** – AVDC, as the lead agency, had initiated an action plan and brought together local partners to support the new community on the new Berryfields estate, Aylesbury. A partnership group consisted of representatives from the Police, GP practice, registered housing providers, community centre manager, faith groups, and the County Council. The group aimed to identify and address issues faced by residents living on this new estate. Emphasis was on sharing resources, responsibilities and good practice to achieve outcomes and work in a collaborative way. The group had been instrumental in ensuring that the temporary community centre was opened with minimum delay; had organised a weekly coffee morning and toddler group, and three events to encourage new residents to meet together. A residents' association and community website had also recently been established.

AVDC continued to work with parish and town councils to support the development of Neighbourhood Plans. Ten Neighbourhood Areas had been approved and were working towards Neighbourhood Plans. Parish and town councils in Aylesbury Vale were now able to apply for New Homes Bonus (NHB) funding under the council's new funding scheme. £491,000 was available in 2013/14 for communities which had been affected by growth.

Work was also being done with the Police to re-launch the Independent Advisory Group, to make sure that it is as representative of the community as possible, and that its members can inform the Police and the council about a range of community related issues.

**Priority 2** – A number of projects had evolved from the Council's 'Women as Community Leaders of Tomorrow programme' held in 2011/12. These projects targeted women from minority communities who continued to be amongst the most isolated and disadvantaged, and included weekly drop-in sessions and a women only 'Movers and Shakers' exercise group specifically for Asian women.

Other projects that had been delivered included:

- (i) The 'citizen's university' which delivered bite sized training modules intended to increase personal development and skills with wider community benefits, for example: 'Healthy Households', 'Strong Communities', 'Creative Communities' and 'Safer Communities'.
- (ii) Loan Shark and benefit reform training for the voluntary and community sector, to raise awareness and also to highlight the advice and support that was available to individuals and groups.
- (iii) Engagement with people with learning disabilities and people with visual impairments to understand what they found difficult in accessing services, and which could then help to inform the future delivery of AVDC services.
- (iv) The Safe Places scheme, which provided a safe place for vulnerable people to go and receive help if they felt uncomfortable or upset in some way.
- (v) The Winter Warmth project had provided shelter and a hot meal to homeless households on a nightly basis during the coldest months of the winter, and had received grant funding from the Homelessness Grant.

**Priority 3** – a range of projects had been developed for young people through working in partnership with the voluntary and community sector. These included:-

- (vi) A three day photography and fashion shoot workshop in the Quarrendon area to provide young people with some work related skills to put on their curriculum vitae.
- (vii) A robbery awareness film ‘Snatched’ was made with young people and shown throughout schools in the Vale
- (viii) Young people from the Mosque premiered a drug awareness film, made in partnership with Islah and Thames Valley Police.
- (ix) Mock interviews were offered to young people from the Quarrendon area following some work with Connexions, allowing young people not in employment, education or training, the opportunity to experience a formal interview process.

Responding to changing demographics, 4 information fairs had been held throughout the year addressing the needs of older people and an older people’s conference was planned for early in 2014. AVDC had also contributed to establishing a Men in Sheds project in Aylesbury, aimed at reducing social isolation, improving health and wellbeing and in promoting collaborative learning. The Aylesbury Youth Action continued to be funded to deliver a variety of intergenerational activities in sheltered schemes throughout the year.

**Priority 4** – advice surgeries and funding fairs were held throughout the year for voluntary sector organisations. During 2012/13, the Community Chest had provided funding to 83 projects thereby supporting 2000 volunteering opportunities.

An Ageing Well programme was being developed in Buckingham, which would aim to recognise all the good things about growing older in the town, and consider how to make things even better. The programme began with 2 workshops in the community centre which attracted over 70 local people and colleagues from the public, private and voluntary sectors. The resulting ideas were being worked into an action plan.

Work also continued to support older residents in the Haddenham and Long Crendon local area forum and had also been extended into the Winslow LAF area. Work was also undertaken with interfaith groups celebrate National Interfaith week in November. The event last year brought different communities together to share music, food and dance.

In their original report, ICoCo had identified that Aylesbury Vale was generally a cohesive community, based on the levels of deprivation, the history of race and wider community relations and perception measures. In this context there had been little change over the past few years. The area remained amongst the most prosperous districts in England and demonstrated community resilience when faced with an English Defence League protest in 2011.

As part of a corporate consultation carried out in 2011/12, 74% of respondents agreed with the statement ‘local people pull together’; and 92% of people felt happy living in the Vale. This feeling of ‘togetherness’ was enhanced by the numerous community events which continued to take place across the district, not least the Olympic celebrations in 2012.

ICoCo had identified some challenges facing the local community as the demographic profile changed, which was informed by data from the most recent 2011 National Census. The Council would continue to monitor the impact of these changes.

The Council's aim in 2010 had been to promote cohesive communities, strengthening intergenerational, interfaith and cultural understanding against the key challenges identified by ICoCo. The current strategy had been in place for the past three years and it was proposed to review this in 2014, as part of the Aylesbury Vale Local Strategic Partnership (LSP).

Members were informed that the new Homes Bonus Advisory Grant Panel had met on 6 November 2013 to consider 6 applications from Parish and Town Councils for grant funding under the New Homes Bonus grant funding scheme. It would be recommended to Cabinet on 19 November that £373,000 be allocated for the 5 of the 6 projects, which would see £118,000 of the 2013/14 funding carried over to 2014/15. Approximately £ 600,000 in funding would likely be available for the scheme in 2014/15, although there was some uncertainty on the levels of funding beyond 2015 due to proposed changes by central Government in the way that New Homes Bonus monies were to be distributed.

Members requested further information relating to paragraph 5.3 (vii) to allow a comparison of this attainment figure against national average attainment levels, including pupils from white poor backgrounds, who were the worst performing group in some areas of the country.

Members agreed that this information was necessary to calculate appropriate baselines for various groups and to better assess the impact of changes.

During the discussion, Members commented:-

- (i) that they were very supportive of the initiatives that encouraged the integration of young people, in particular young girls.
- (ii) that it might be helpful for AVDC to feed into the review that one of the County Council's Overview and Scrutiny Select Committees was currently undertaking looking at how the attainment level gap between different demographic groups could be narrowed.
- (iii) that it was disheartening that 10% of people within Aylesbury Vale feared attack because of their ethnicity, colour or religion.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That progress made by the Council in implementing the Community Cohesion and Integration Strategy for Aylesbury Vale be noted.
- (2) That the comments made by Members at this meeting regarding the progress and future direction of the strategy be passed to the relevant Director and Cabinet Member for Community Matters.

## **5. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

The Scrutiny Committee considered their future Work Programme and were informed by Councillor Cashman that his Local List Research Group were presently exploring ways in which Aylesbury Vale development management policies could support local communities in the identification and protection of their local heritage through

neighbourhood plan, parish plan and village design statement processes, while taking account of both the potentials and the limitations of such processes.

Members who had any questions that they wished to put to the Vale of Aylesbury Housing Trust or to the Thames Valley Police at the December 2013 were asked to provide these to Councillor Hunter-Watts as soon as possible and in advance of the meeting.

In recognising the need to set a future Work Programme for 2014 and beyond, it was –

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the current position of the Work Programme be noted.
- (2) That a Work Programme Planning Session be organised in late November or early December, so that the future Work Programme from February 2014 onwards could be put together.

## AYLESBURY VALE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

### 1 Purpose

- 1.1 This report provides Members with a summary of activity in 2012/13; an update on the delivery of the Community Safety Partnership Plan so far in 2013/14; and an opportunity to comment on the emerging 2014-17 strategy.

### 2 Recommendations

That Members:

- 2.1 Note the progress against 2013/14 Community Safety Partnership Plan,
- 2.2 Note and comment upon the proposed priorities for the Aylesbury Vale Community Safety Partnership Strategy 2014-17,
- 2.3 Highlight any matters to be brought to the attention of the Cabinet Member for Community Matters.

### 3 Executive summary.

- 3.1 In 2012/13 total crime reduced by 5% but there was a 3% increase in serious acquisitive crime (SAC) related offences.
- 3.2 The main areas of concern were thefts from vehicles and robbery, and two new initiatives were launched in the Vale, catalytic converter engraving and a student led awareness raising film about the risks and consequences of robbery.
- 3.3 During 2013/14 (to October) we have experienced an increase in total crime of 4%. The main crime types of concern are violence against the person, non dwelling burglary and theft from vehicles, which have been the focus of initiatives so far this year.
- 3.4 The current Aylesbury Vale Community Safety Partnership (AVCSP)<sup>1</sup> strategy comes to an end in March 2014 and work is underway on the new strategy for 2014-17. The Strategic Assessment alongside the PCC plan and public consultation will shape the strategy and annual plan identifying priority work areas for the Vale.
- 3.5 Key emerging priorities for the strategy are safer town centres and dealing with issues that have significant impact on victims and communities.
- 3.6 The Police and Crime Commissioner was elected in November 2012 and has written a PCC plan setting out how to tackle crime and disorder in Thames Valley. We have a reciprocal duty to have regard to each others plan.
- 3.7 Reductions in funding from the PCC to local authorities will impact on some areas of work within the Vale, with 6% less budget for Buckinghamshire than previous years. The budget currently funds work around domestic violence, ASB and offender management.
- 3.8 Other key challenges for the forthcoming strategy include the Police and Antisocial Behaviour Bill which will change existing ASB powers and tools; the transformation agenda within the Probation service; and ongoing budget cuts affecting responsible authorities.

---

<sup>1</sup> The partnership Aylesbury Vale District Council, Buckinghamshire County Council, Thames Valley Police, Thames Valley Police Authority, Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Authority, Thames Valley Probation and Buckinghamshire Clinical Care Commissioning group.

- 3.9 CCTV Continues to be a useful tool in Aylesbury town centre, helping with the arrest of 399 offenders during 2012/13. However Thames Valley Police is currently liaising with local authorities about the level and distribution of its contribution for CCTV across the region.
- 3.10 We recently conducted the tri annual evaluation of CCTV as part of the partnership agreement and updated our Codes of Practice to ensure that they are compliant with the Information Commissioner's new guidelines.

#### **4 Summary of activity and statistics for 2012/13**

- 4.1 From 1st April 2012 to end of March 2013 overall crime reduced by 5% compared to previous year.

Domestic Burglary	363 (down 72)	16% reduction
Theft of Vehicles	93 (down 43)	31% reduction
Theft from vehicle	774 (up 144)	22% increase
Robbery	64 (up 13)	25% increase
Total crime	7741 (down 408)	5% reduction
SAC <sup>2</sup> offences	1294 (up 42)	3% increase

The crime reduction target for SAC crime for the year was a 5% reduction, or 62 less offences than the previous year. The increases in SAC were in relation to thefts of catalytic converters (theft from vehicles) and thefts of iphones etc (robbery).

- 4.2 Examples of successful projects in 2012/13 include:

- i) The AVCSP maintained the Purple Flag Award<sup>3</sup> for Aylesbury town centre.
- ii) A new initiative was launched to reduce the effects of alcohol fuelled crime and disorder which targeted information at venues holding under 18 nights. A new poster campaign was also taken up by all licenced premises which provided tips on safety.
- iii) Reducing burglary was a key focus over the year and saw an overall reduction of 16%. During the summer campaign our first youtube video entitled "Don't let thieves house-sit this Summer" was launched on our website and the wintertime campaign was a series of awareness raising events in which 900 households received information packs.
- iv) The AVCSP concern about a rise in robbery on young people resulted in the Mandeville School writing and directing a film called "Snatched" which was then shown in all secondary schools' assemblies in the Vale, supported with a property marking session to mark their personal property. Over 12,000 students watched the film, and a further 2500 people viewed the film via our website.

<sup>2</sup> SAC is a term used for Serious Acquisitive Crime, and represents a total of the crime types listed in point 3.1.

<sup>3</sup> The Purple Flag aims to raise the standards and broaden the appeal of town centres between 1700hrs and 0600hrs. It is an award independently assessed by the Association of Town Centre Management (ATCM).

## 5. Crime figures 2013/14 to the end of October 2013 and key highlights

5.1 From April 2013 to the end of October 2013, there has been a 4% rise in overall crime (176 more crimes than the same period last year).

Burglary	174 (down 18)	9% reduction
Theft from Vehicle	468 (up 83)	21% increase
Theft of Vehicle	70 (up 9)	15% increase
Robbery (Business)	3 (down 1)	33% reduction
Robbery (Personal)	25 (down 11)	31% reduction
SAC Offences	748 (up 62)	9% increase

5.2 The SAC reduction target for 2013/14 is to achieve a 2% reduction on the previous year.

Although the above figures show a rise in crime in the current year it is worthy to note that all crime and SAC have reduced by 30 and 33% respectively since 2006/07.

4.2 Examples of successful projects in 2013/14 include:

i) Night Time economy (NTE) events have taken place in Buckingham and Aylesbury town centres during August, in which partners have engaged with users of the NTE to give advice about safety and drinking sensibly. We continue to work with Buckingham University to address issues around ASB associated with students after nights out, reducing complaints. In Aylesbury town centre we have recently completed the reassessment process for the Purple Flag and a decision is expected on the 27<sup>th</sup> November.

ii) Operation Ranger is a new TVP rural crime initiative which has 'action weeks' throughout the year. During the first week of action 1600 addresses were visited in rural communities giving crime prevention advice and getting people to sign up to TVP alert (717 new sign ups). In addition 18 heritage sites and 89 farms were visited and we attended the cattle market in Buckingham to provide rural businesses crime prevention advice.

iii) Thefts from vehicles started to rise during 2012/13, mainly due to thefts of catalytic converters. The increased value of the metal they contain, and ease of stealing them from high sided vehicles, such as vans, makes this an easy crime to commit, and a fairly difficult crime to detect. Etching catalytic converters makes them less attractive due to the potential of being caught with them; 18 vehicle servicing garages across the Vale now offer this service, with about 500 residents taking up the offer to date.

iv) Burglary has a challenging 2% reduction target for 2013/14. Our current position is a reduction of 9% as we enter the key risk period of Winter. Operation Arctic<sup>4</sup>, launched at the end of September for the winter period, is targeting at risk locations.

## 6. Aylesbury Vale Community Safety Strategy 2014-2017

6.1 Current legislation<sup>5</sup> requires the AVCSP to produce a three year partnership strategy with an annual action plan.

---

<sup>4</sup> Operation Arctic is an partnership operation to reduce the wintertime burglary, by raising awareness about not leaving homes in darkness, as this shows a would be offender your house is unoccupied.

<sup>5</sup> Crime and Disorder Act 1998.



6.2 The development of the strategy is informed by a strategic assessment carried out by TVP, the results of community consultations, and ongoing monitoring of crime trends across the district. The following paragraphs identify current crime series and trends. This information should be considered in the context that Aylesbury Vale is consistently a low crime area when compared to other districts within the county and Thames Valley region<sup>6</sup>.

6.3 During the strategic period all crime had seen an increase which was predominately caused by rises in three offence types, theft from vehicles, violence against the person and burglaries non dwelling (such as sheds and garages).

When looking at violent crime 53% of this crime occurs in four locations within the vicinity of the town centre. Analysis shows that  $\frac{3}{4}$  of these offences still occur during the period 9pm to 5am period and are assumed to be alcohol related. We therefore propose that safer town centres remains a priority within the new strategy.

6.4 It is also proposed to retain the priority of “dealing with issues that have a significant impact on victims and communities”. Two crime types that sit within this priority are urglary non dwelling, which has no specific hotspot locations and any emerging trends/locations are identified throughout the year, and theft from vehicles, which continues to rise.

6.5 Throughout the last two years of the current strategy AVCSP has conducted public consultation to shape the activities within the annual action plans. Communities have informed us that domestic burglary, bogus callers, ASB, and burglary non dwelling are areas of concern. A new online consultation launched 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2013 will help to inform the new strategy<sup>7</sup>.

## **7. Police and Crime Commissioner and Police and Crime Panel.**

7.1 The election of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) in November 2012, replaced Police Authorities which were statutory members of the CSP. The PCC is not a statutory member of the CSP but does have a duty to have regard to the CSP priorities. There are six strategic aims of the Police and Crime Plan (see appendix 1) which the AVCSP strategy 2014-2017 will give regard to. A refresh of the PCC plan is expected during 2014/15.

7.2 The PCC holds all the funding for Community Safety Partnerships that used to come from Government. Reductions in core funding have been made in the last 2 years and in 2014/15 a further budget cut will be applied across Thames Valley. Using an agreed Formula, the PCC has allocated funding to countywide areas and in Buckinghamshire the overall reduction will be 6% (approx. £30,000). Decisions about how this will affect the area are yet to be determined by the Safer and Stronger Partnership Board.

7.3 One of the key activities for the PCC is to consult with local communities. The PCC has held a series of local events around the Thames Valley area and is coming to Aylesbury Vale on February 13<sup>th</sup> at 7pm at the Multicultural Centre, Aylesbury.

---

<sup>6</sup> In 2012/13 The total numbers of crimes per 1,000 population in the Vale was 44.46 crimes compared to 58.90 in Thames Valley Region.

<sup>7</sup> The consultation can be found at [www.aylesburyvalecdc.gov.uk/communitysafetysurveydec2013](http://www.aylesburyvalecdc.gov.uk/communitysafetysurveydec2013)

## **8. Challenges for the period 2014/2017**

- 8.1 Reductions in funding continue to be a challenge for community safety services. We currently receive a grant of £15,000 from the PCC to help provide diversionary activities for ASB which will be at risk with a smaller Community Safety Fund (CSF) next year. Other funding streams which provide the Youth Offending Service (YOS) and the Drugs Intervention Programme (DIP) will be facing budget reductions of around 6%. This will have an impact on the numbers of young people they can work with and the number of drug users who access treatment.
- 8.2 Due to reductions in funding over coming years some of our countywide services are being reviewed to see if they can be re-commissioned on larger scales to achieve efficiencies. Such services include domestic violence, drug and custody intervention schemes.
- Within Buckinghamshire concerns over funding and future proofing services, has led to the re-commissioning of a Bucks wide domestic violence service. The current Women's Aid organisations in Wycombe and Aylesbury are working more closely together to ensure they are fit for purpose to bid for providing local services.
- 8.3 ASB powers are still being reviewed by Government, which has been on-going since 2010. The Police and Antisocial Behaviour Bill is currently making its way through the House of Lords. We believe the implementation of the new powers will now be during 2014/15. Some of the new powers, such as the Community Trigger<sup>8</sup> and the Community Remedy, will take time to embed and may increase demand on the service in the short term.
- 8.4 The Probation service is facing a major transformation. 35 Probation Trusts covering England and Wales are being abolished to create 21 Community Rehabilitation Companies to deliver outsourced services. Thames Valley's five probation Local Delivery Units will be retained but within two clusters, Berkshire and Oxon/Bucks/MK.
- 8.5 In May 2011 a new duty was placed on community safety partnerships to conduct domestic homicide reviews. The purpose of the review is to establish if any lessons can be learnt by responsible authorities about the support the victim received in the time leading up to their death. The average cost of a review is £5,000 and is an unpredictable expense.

## **9. CCTV**

- 9.1 CCTV continues to be a valuable tool in the reduction and detection of crime and disorder. Since April 2011 CCTV has been used to capture 2052 incidents and has supported 399 arrests. In particular it is worthy to note that public order incidents have decreased by 12 (285 in total). CCTV footage has assist in 177 arrests for these offences.
- 9.2 During 2012/13 we commissioned Global MSC to undertake the tri-annual evaluation of the CCTV system which is part of our CCTV partnership agreement with TVP. An action plan has been developed, based on the recommendations of the report, which is currently being considered.

---

<sup>8</sup> The Community Trigger is gives victims and communities the right to require agencies to deal with persistent anti-social behaviour that has previously been ignored. The trigger could be activated by a member of the public, a community or a business if repeated complaints about anti-social behaviour have been ignored, by making an application for a case review to the local Community Safety Partnership.

- 9.3 The Information Commissioner<sup>9</sup> published new guidelines for the use of CCTV in June 2013 to ensure that the use of CCTV was more transparent and accountable. The review conducted by Global MSC ensured that the town centre operating policy (Codes of Practice) were current and compliant to the new guidelines.
- 9.4 Thames Valley Police is currently consulting local authority partners on potential CCTV budget savings. The proposed savings would impact on the control room operation in Aylesbury and options are currently being investigated around the future provision of CCTV using the council's new business model methodology.

## **10. Resource implications**

- 10.1 There are no additional financial implications for the Council associated with the publication and implementation of the Community Safety Partnership Strategy.

## **11. Response to Key Aims and Objectives**

- 11.1 Reducing crime and ASB are corporate plan targets for 2011-2014.

Contact Officer  
Background Documents

Kay Aitken 01296 585005  
Community Safety Partnership plan 2011-14  
Police Reform and Social Responsibilities Act 2011  
Police and Crime Commissioners Strategy 2013-2017

---

## **Appendix 1 – Police and Crime Commissioner Strategic objectives.**

The strategic objectives of the PCC plan are:

1. To cut crimes that are of most concern to the public and to protect the most vulnerable members of our community
2. To increase the visible presence of the police and partners to cut crime and fear of crime and reassure communities.
3. To protect the public from harm arising from serious organised crime and terrorism.
4. To communicate and engage with the public in order to cut crime and the fear of crime, and build trust and confidence with our communities.
5. Work with criminal justice partners to reduce crime and support victims and witnesses.
6. To ensure policing, community safety and criminal justice services are delivered efficiently and effectively.

---

<sup>9</sup> The Information Commissioner's Office is an independent official body. The Information Commissioner is appointed by the Queen. The Commissioner is responsible for administering the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

## VALE OF AYLESBURY TRUST (VAHT) – UPDATE REPORT

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 To receive an update report on the Vale of Aylesbury Trust (VAHT) operations over the last 12 months.

### 2. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to:-

- 2.1 Note the report.
- 2.2 Indicate any comments they might have, or further work they may wish to undertake as part of their work programme.

### 3. Executive summary

- 3.1 When AVDC's housing stock was transferred to VAHT in July 2006, VAHT undertook to fulfil a range of commitments to transferred tenants. AVDC undertook two reviews of the Transfer Promises and found that VAHT had fulfilled the vast majority.
- 3.2 The Chief Executive of VAHT has kindly agreed to attend this Scrutiny Committee to provide Members with an update of VAHT's operation over the last 12 months.
- 3.3 Members have been asked during October – November 2013 to submit any questions in advance of the meeting to VAHT that they wished to discuss at the meeting. The following has been received by Members and passed on to VAHT:-

From Councillor Mrs Brandis

- (i) When flats which are privately owned but the outside is maintained by VAHT need to have repairs/maintenance could the following reassurances be given:
- that people are not overcharged for the labour and materials; that only materials actually used are charged for.
  - that surveyors check what actually needs doing and don't assume it needs doing.
  - that the final work is then checked by VAHT properly not a visual check from the ground.
  - that the cost is kept to a reasonable level.
- (ii) Is there any possibility that those that have had work done to the outside at their own expense could be given a reduced portion of the bill for the whole block?
- (iii) On another subject could VAHT (Councillor Mrs Brandis has previously spoken to Richard de Ville about this issue) talk more thoroughly to the residents when they want to develop old garage blocks? A great deal of heartache at Bishopstone would have been saved if the resident had known how little of her garden she would be losing.

Other Questions

- (iv) Can VAHT elaborate on how they are engaging with communities to bring forward rural exception schemes?

- (v) How have the increased levels of right to buy discounts offered to residents and/or the recent uplift in the housing market impacted on right to buy sales?

**4. Response to Key Aims and Objectives**

- 4.1 The review of services offered by VAHT to its relevant is relevant to AVDC's Corporate Plan 2011-2015 with the priority theme "Protecting and improving the living experience in the Vale."

Contact Officer  
Background Documents

Will Rysdale, (01296) 585561  
None

## ENVIRONMENT AND LIVING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 To set the provisional future work programme for the Environment and Living Scrutiny Committee for the next 12-15 months.

### 2 Recommendation

The Committee is asked to:-

- 2.1 Consider the issues raised at the recent Work Programme planning meeting and agree whether or not any of the 18 issues identified should be prioritised for inclusion within the work programme from February 2014.
- 2.2 Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive and the Senior Scrutiny and Democratic Services Officer, in consultation with the Committee Chairman, to prepare a work programme after taking account of the issues raised at the meeting.

### 3. Executive summary

- 3.1 The Environment and Living Scrutiny Committee was formed in July 2012 and initially set a work programme in September 2012 covering the period until the end of 2013.
- 3.2 A work programme planning meeting was held on 28 November 2013, which was attended by Councillors Fealey, Mrs Brandis, Foster and Stuchbury, at which Members were asked to identify issues that were within the Committee's terms of reference and would be suitable to look at as either a single report to the whole Committee or as a more "in-depth" review over a number of meetings. Members who were not able to attend the meeting were also free to suggest future topics and these were also included within the identified issues below.
- 3.3 During an interactive planning session, 18 issues were identified for possible inclusion onto the work programme. Information on these issues is detailed at Appendix 1. Officers have given an undertaking to provide a brief commentary on the issues, which will be circulated at the meeting on 16 December 2013.
- 3.4 As further background information, Appendix 2 also details the range of issues discussed over the last two years by the Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.5 Members are requested to consider all of the information submitted to this meeting and agree a provisional work programme for the next 12-15 months. To assist in this process a prioritisation guide is attached at Appendix 4, which asks Members to assess whether the issues put forward are strategic, add value to the work of the Council, or impact on section(s) of the community.

### 4. Resource Implications

- 4.1 Members will no doubt bear in mind that the Work Programme needs to be manageable both from the Committee's perspective and resourcing work by Officers including representatives from partner organisations.

**5. Response to Key Aims and Objectives**

- 5.1 The work of overview and scrutiny, particularly on making recommendations on matters which affect the area or its residents all support the key aims and objectives that Aylesbury Vale District Council is striving to achieve.

Contact Officer  
Background Documents

Craig Saunders, (01296) 585043  
None

Issue	Priority
<p><b>Planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Developments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ how can standards of excellent design be achieved, for example, through incentivising developers to follow good design principles as part of new developments. Could be looked at through DM policies covering design?</li> <li>○ Councillor Cashman – explore ways in which Development Control Committee can proactively inform planning applications and the planning process generally with robust design principles</li> <li>○ DM Policies – allow for the layout of larger schemes and major developments to be seen and commented on at an earlier stage by the Council?</li> <li>○ what is being done to connect new developments with older development, and larger urban areas with bordering villages?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What more could be provided to help to bring communities together?</li> <li>○ Assessing how the sum of a number of smaller developments have a greater impact that their whole on infrastructure, e.g. traffic</li> </ul> </li> <li>• District Valuer (raised by Councillor Vick) – review to get a better understanding of the determination process done to assess the viability of providing affordable housing and infrastructure with developments.  (The profit on a development is still considerable despite land, building and marketing costs etc. Whilst some developments built to our preferred standards and specification may not achieve the normal levels of profit for a traditional developer, they should still hold very significant profit margins. I believe therefore that they are viable, and we should look at whether the current business model for the developers, or their level of profit, is perhaps becoming out of date with the modern requirements for truly sustainable communities)</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Licensing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introducing a licensing scheme for Houses in Multiple Occupancy (HMOs) – scrutiny would like to comment on this when it is considered by Cabinet.</li> <li>• Betting shops</li> </ul>	



Issue	Priority
<p><b>Housing Delivering</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(raised by Councillor Vick) – reviewing the possibility of AVDC becoming the housing developer of choice for communities, whether small scale or MDA, as the Council will be able to implement the standards and infrastructure that communities rightly demand and deserve.</li> </ul> <p>(AVDC could, with a department of sourced or existing staff, be completely capable of sourcing land, procuring and developing homes and infrastructure, to the specification that can be classed as truly sustainable, innovative, and a flagship example for other councils to follow)</p> <p>What have other Councils done? Business models?</p>	
<p><b>Environmental Health</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Food Law Enforcement Service Plan</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Crime and Disorder / Community Safety</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Safety Partnership Plan (outcomes in Aylesbury Vale against the targets within the Plan)</li> <li>Report from AVDC's representative (Cllr Mrs Pearce) on the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel</li> <li>Drug and Alcohol Action and Management</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Leisure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Play Areas – review of the good work that has been done in a number of local areas, including encouraging volunteering</li> <li>Bernwood Project update</li> <li>Parks / Open Spaces – management of them and on recent work done, e.g. re-accreditation for Green Flags.</li> <li>Open spaces- on how these will be provided for in the future and how they will managed (Management Models)</li> <li>Review what is being done to meet the changing needs of the aging population. At the other end of the spectrum, what is being done to provide facilities for young people and, to encourage increased levels of activity of young people, e.g. discounts for activity. What is happening with Youth Clubs</li> <li>Review of use of Council controlled Community Centres</li> <li>Review how Council provides support to groups to access funding (specifically non-Council funding) for local projects, might include talking with Community Impact Bucks.</li> </ul>	

Agenda Items for the period 2012-13

**6 November 2013**

1. Cycle and Pedestrian Safety
2. Housing and Homelessness Strategy
3. Aylesbury Vale Community Cohesion and Integration Strategy – progress report

**18 September 2013**

1. Audit of Leisure facilities
2. Farming and wildlife report
3. Vale of Aylesbury Plan – Development Management policies – update report

**12 June 2013**

1. Quarterly Performance Report
2. Vale of Aylesbury Plan – Development Management policies
3. Public Health (with BCC Cabinet Member + Director of Public Health)

**26 March 2013**

1. Enforcement in The Vale (focus on Environmental Health & Planning)
2. Wind Energy update
3. Quarterly Performance Digest

**13 February 2013**

1. Bucks Home Choice – Review of Housing Allocations Policy
2. Task and Finish Group Scoping forms (Renewables AVDC Business, Local Building List)

**12 December 2012**

1. Aylesbury Vale Infrastructure Delivery Plan
2. The Volunteering Legacy of 2012 in Aylesbury Vale
3. Quarterly Performance Digest

**20 November 2012**

1. London Luton Airport Development
2. Bucks Home Choice – Review of Housing Allocations Policy

**3 October 2012**

1. Vale of Aylesbury Plan (Strategy document)

**19 September 2012**

1. Draft Buckinghamshire Tenancy Strategy
2. Quarterly Performance Digest
3. Corporate Plan indicators

**3 July 2012**

1. Procurement of a Bio-Waste facility
2. Update of Aylesbury Town Centre Public Realm & Urban Design Guides
3. Sustainable Construction report
4. Quarterly Performance Digest

**6 June 2012**

1. Corporate Delivery Plans – Vale of Aylesbury Plan

<b>Purpose of the review</b>	
<b>Review membership</b>	
<b>Background</b>	1-2 short paragraphs of the background, leading up to the Scrutiny Committee wishing to review this issue
<b>Key questions for the review to ask</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ?</li> <li>• ?</li> <li>• ?</li> <li>• ?</li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	Both in terms of Officer time, Member time, and of witnesses / public who might be asked to participate in the review
<b>Out of scope</b>	What the review IS NOT looking at, although this might be of interest.
<b>Anticipated outcomes</b>	What are Members hoping to achieve during the review (it might also be helpful to identify the people to whom any recommendations might be presented.
<b>Outline timetable</b>	Of meeting dates and Officers / witnesses that the review would like to speak to, or evidence that Members would like to consider

**WORK PROGRAMME PRIORITISATION GUIDE**

**Appendix 4**

