

**APPENDIX C**  
**Agenda Item No. 6**

**VIBRANT AYLESBURY VALE – AN EMERGING VISION/  
REVIEW OF STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

Chief Executive

**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 To provide an opportunity for the Scrutiny Committee to comment on proposals developed by the Cabinet, which together will influence the future focus and direction of the District Council and, indeed, the wider Vale.

**2. Recommendation/for decision**

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Committee is recommended to comment on the proposed vision and revised strategic objectives.

**3. Background**

- 3.1 Over recent months, the Cabinet has been developing a vision for Aylesbury Vale, taking into account the likely influences on the District, including the projected housing growth for the area. The first draft of this emerging vision was adopted by Cabinet in February 2003 and subsequently revised in August 2003 following extensive consultation and discussion with key partners in the Vale, whose support and contributions will be required if we are to convert aspirations into a reality. Partners were supportive of the thrust of the document, but pointed out that it should be:
- focused on the Vale as a whole, rather than just Aylesbury;
  - reflect the fact that communities are essentially a reflection of the people within them, rather than just the buildings and physical elements of the settlements in which they live.
- 3.2 Appendix A sets out a summary of those key factors which are anticipated to influence the Vale over the coming years and which should influence both our vision for the area and, indeed, the Council's own strategic objectives.
- 3.3 Underpinning the revised vision document (Appendix B) is a fundamental choice that needs to be made between two contrasting scenarios. If it is accepted that considerable growth will come to the Vale, either we can seek to harness this and use it to advantage, or respond to it passively. If we adopt the latter approach and do not, for example, seek to nurture and expand the local economy to provide opportunities for both existing and new residents to work and live locally, the likelihood is that the Vale will become little more than a dormitory area. By contrast, the vision is built on the premise that we should seek to create a vibrant and sustainable community, where people can work, shop and spend their leisure time locally.
- 3.4 The Cabinet has gone on to review the Council's strategic objectives, in the context of the emerging vision, as well as our adopted mission – to make Aylesbury Vale the

best possible place for people to live and work – and the key influences on the Vale summarised in Appendix A.

- 3.5 Appendix C proposes a new model for our strategic objectives, which is built on the powers granted to local authorities in the Local Government Act, 2000, to promote the social economic and environmental wellbeing of their areas. In place of our current eight cross-cutting themes, thirty-three key issues and fifty-one strategic objectives, the Cabinet is proposing three strategic objectives designed to reflect our commitment to the economy, communities and the environment.
- 3.6 In order to give effect to these strategic objectives, the Cabinet has gone on to identify the specific outcomes we should seek to achieve and these are summarised in Appendix D. A number of these are marked by an asterisk, which reflect the Cabinet's initial thoughts about those outcomes which require initial investment and improvement.
- 3.7 The Cabinet is now seeking the contribution of others to the development of these proposals, including the Council's four Scrutiny Committees. In the context of the emerging vision, public consultation is also being carried out on the outcomes identified by the Cabinet in support of the suggested new three strategic objectives. The culmination of this process will be the presentation of proposals to Council itself, which is envisaged in December. This is to enable our future financial planning, including our budget preparations, to be built around a clearer definition of our objectives and our initial priorities.

#### **4. Options considered**

- 4.1 A number of factors have triggered the work described in this report on our emerging vision and the review of our strategic objectives, including:
- the need to prepare for the anticipated growth of the Vale;
  - our preliminary preparations for our Comprehensive Performance Assessment, where our early self assessment work highlighted the need for us to be clearer about our aspirations for the Vale and our specific contribution to delivering those aspirations;
  - the Richard Szadziwski report on moving towards a strategy-led budget, which emphasized the need for us to be clearer about our true objectives and priorities, in order that we could allocate our resources in a way which reflected these.

Arguably, not to have conducted this work in response to these factors would have been irresponsible.

#### **5. Reasons for recommendation**

- 5.1 To provide the Council's Scrutiny Committees with an opportunity to respond and contribute to the proposals developed by the Cabinet.

#### **6. Resource implications**

- 6.1 The development of the vision and the review of our strategic objectives has been carried out within existing resources. However, their real significance lies in their impact on future decisions made by the Council about how it allocates its resources and, indeed, the influence it seeks to exercise over other partners, whose resources will also be required to deliver the vision set out in Appendix B.

## **7. Response to strategic objectives**

- 7.1 This report contains revised strategic objectives.

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Background Documents: Reports to Cabinet: “Vision for Aylesbury (and the Vale)” - 4 February 2003 and “Towards a Vibrant Aylesbury and the Vale: An Emerging Vision” - 5 August 2003. Richard Szadziewski report: “Towards a Strategic Budget” - March 2003. Report to Cabinet: “Review of the Council’s Strategic Objectives” - 16 September 2003.

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