



## Improvement and Review Commission

Date: Wednesday, 28 November 2018  
Time: 7.00 pm  
Venue: Council Chamber  
District Council Offices, Queen Victoria Road, High Wycombe Bucks

### Membership

Chairman: Councillor D Knights  
Vice Chairman: Councillor A D Collingwood

Councillors: K Ahmed, M C Appleyard, H Bull, Mrs L M Clarke OBE, A E Hill, M E Knight, Mrs W J Mallen, H L McCarthy, R Newman, Ms C J Oliver, R Raja, J A Savage, D A C Shakespeare OBE, P R Turner, C Whitehead and R Wilson

### Standing Deputies

Councillors: Ms A Baughan, M P Davy, M Hanif, M A Hashmi, A Hussain, M Hussain, M Hussain JP, Mrs G A Jones and N B Marshall

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**Filming/Recording/Photographing at Meetings** – please note that this may take place during the public part of the meeting in accordance with Standing Orders. Notices are displayed within meeting rooms.

**Agenda**

1. **Apologies for Absence**  
To receive any apologies for absence.
2. **Declarations of Interest**  
To receive any disclosure of disclosable pecuniary interests by Members relating to items on the agenda. If any Member is uncertain as to whether an interest should be disclosed, he or she is asked if possible to contact the District Solicitor prior to the meeting.  
  
Members are reminded that if they are declaring an interest, they should state the nature of that interest whether or not they are required to withdraw from the meeting.
3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting** 1 - 9  
To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 September 2018.

**IMPROVEMENT AND REVIEW**

4. **Cabinet Responses to the Anti-Social Behaviour in the District Task and Finish Group** 10 - 19
5. **Report of the Remaking the River Wye Task and Finish Group** 20 - 49

**TRAINING, JOINT SCRUTINY, WORK PROGRAMME AND SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS**

6. **Commission Work Programme & Cabinet Forward Plan** 50 - 62
7. **COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION**  
To consider any Councillor Call for Action submitted in accordance with the agreed procedure.
8. **SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS**  
If circulated in accordance with the five clear days' notice provision.
9. **URGENT ITEMS**  
Any urgent items of business as agreed by the Chairman.

**For further information, please contact Jemma Durkan 01494 421635, [jemma.durkan@wycombe.gov.uk](mailto:jemma.durkan@wycombe.gov.uk)**

# Improvement and Review Commission Minutes

Date: 12 September 2018

Time: 7.00 - 9.23 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillor D Knights (in the Chair)

Councillors K Ahmed, H Bull, Mrs L M Clarke OBE, A D Collingwood, A E Hill, M E Knight, Mrs W J Mallen, H L McCarthy, R Newman, Ms C J Oliver, R Raja, D A C Shakespeare OBE and C Whitehead,

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M C Appleyard, J A Savage, P R Turner and R Wilson

## 11. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

## 12. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting of the Improvement and Review commission held on 20 June 2018 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

## 13. WYCOMBE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP 2018/19

The Chairman welcomed Superintendent Kevin Brown, Local Police Area Commander and Sarah McBrearty, Community Safety Team Leader, WDC.

The Commission was provided with an update on the Wycombe Community Safety Partnership priorities and actions for 2018/19. The priorities and key actions for 2018/19 were as follows:

- **Tackling anti-social behaviour and crime** – Work would be undertaken in partnership to deal with street drinkers and aggressive beggars. A multi-agency communications campaign would be delivered to educate and raise awareness with members of the public in relation to begging. To reduce repeat victims of burglary support would be provided with advice, home surveys and property marking schemes. Also crime reduction advice would be provided to residents via various methods of communication such as a Pop-Up Police Station.
- **Safeguarding our communities** – It was explained that there were different forms of exploitation in communities, and crime statistics in the district and county indicate this as a key priority. Further work would be undertaken to

support the victims of domestic abuse and to provide information to signpost victims to support agencies. There would be training with staff from bars, pubs and late night eateries on safeguarding issues. Also initiatives and campaigns, such as taxi and private hire checks, and monitoring and enforcement of alcohol licensing conditions. Multi agency work with The Willow Project, who support victims of exploitation in Buckinghamshire, would be undertaken to raise awareness and tackle modern slavery.

- **Working together to address Child Sexual Exploitation** – Raising awareness of child sexual exploitation locally including a campaign and training materials provided to late night eateries and taxi driver training. Thames Valley Police would lead on a multi-agency safeguarding meeting. Also test purchase operations would be carried out on hotels/licensing premises within the town centre.
- **Building community resilience** – There would be promotion of the Safe Place scheme. Also support and work with Neighbourhood Watch and raise awareness of scams particularly with the elderly and vulnerable.

Partnership work so far had included Operation Goat dealing with anti-social behaviour issues, a two day licensee event, a campaign around spring crime and garden security, taxi safeguarding training package and schools safeguarding work.

Referring to a power point presentation Superintendent Kevin Brown outlined the key crime statistics for the District, picking out the major reductions and the major increases in 2017/18 from below:

Wycombe LPA Crime Data					
	Outcome Rate Last Year April - August 2017	Outcome Rate This Year April - August 2018	Number of Crimes Last Year April-August 2017	Number of Crimes this year April-August 2018	% Change
Rape	8%	2%	53	47	-11%
Burglary Dwelling	18%	6%	114	163	+43%
TFMV	1%	2%	254	300	+18%
TOMV	7%	3%	83	130	+56%
Robbery Personal	22%	12%	32	43	+34%
Robbery Business	25%	50%	4	8	+100%
Criminal Damage	8%	8%	544	515	-4%
Arson	0%	0%	23	29	-26%
Violence against the Person With Injury	20%	15%	343	491	+43%
Violence Against the Person Without	16%	8%	583	961	+65%

Wycombe LPA Crime Data					
	Outcome Rate Last Year April - August 2017	Outcome Rate This Year April - August 2018	Number of Crimes Last Year April-August 2017	Number of Crimes this year April-August 2018	% Change
Injury					

It was reported that anti-social behaviour in the District had decreased in comparison to the previous year. However there had been an increase in the Marlow area and it was expected that this was due to the World Cup celebrations. It was noted that crime across the country was rising with an increase in the demand for policing. In the Wycombe area burglary dwelling had increased but the low starting point was noted and some burglaries were due to offenders being released from prison. Personal robbery had increased due, in some part to perpetrators on mopeds, however six people had been arrested. The robbery of businesses had increased but the small numbers were noted. It was also noted that crime recording had been reviewed and this had led to domestic violence being recorded differently hence the increased figures. Regarding modern slavery only two people had been referred via the National Referral Mechanism. It was noted that many victims did not want to be referred.

Members made a number of points and received clarification on a number of queries as follows:

- The training for taxi drivers would be delivered by a trainer and was in relation to children in the vehicles.
- Regarding burglars reoffending it was noted that there were mechanisms in prisons to educate offenders, however it was reported that this was dependent on the availability of courses. Notification of the release of prisoners had improved so that police could visit and check on offenders after their release.
- It was noted that police resources had reduced significantly and that only 20% of policing was dealing with criminal acts.
- The Public Spaces Protection Order in the town centre was now in force and new signs were being updated. Work was being undertaken on a clear plan for enforcement. It was noted that the town centre was now a no drinking zone.
- The Sensible Change Text Giving scheme would again be promoted to help encourage members of the public not to give money to beggars. The scheme enabled a text donation to a local charity rather than giving change directly to a beggar.
- It was requested that HWBIDCo be included in the joint communications work.

- Regarding deception of vulnerable individuals it was noted that this was not robbery which required an element of violence but classed as theft from vulnerable adults or sometimes reported as fraud crime.

The Chairman thanked Sarah and Superintendent Brown for the presentation.

**RESOLVED:** That the Wycombe Community Safety Partnership priorities and actions for 2018/19 be noted and supported.

#### **14. REPORT OF THE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN THE DISTRICT TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

The Commission considered and discussed the report and draft recommendations of the Anti-Social Behaviour in the District Task and Finish Group. The report featured 10 draft recommendations for consideration for onward referral to Cabinet.

The Chairman of the Task and Finish Group: Councillor Chris Whitehead guided members through the report.

It was reported that the ASB in the District Task and Finish Group had been set up by the Improvement and Review Commission following a motion by the Leader of the Council to Council on 18 December 2017, as follows:

*“WDC notes the increasing concern of councillors and members of the public regarding an apparent rise in instances of anti-social behaviour across the district and within Wycombe Town Centre in particular.*

*WDC believes giving greater prioritisation to the enforcement of available anti- social behaviour measures by Thames Valley Police will improve the situation before it becomes overly detrimental to the residents, businesses and visitors to the district.*

*WDC resolves to seek swift re-prioritisation of TVP resources to tackle this issue in conjunction with improved partnership working with other stakeholders to improve neighbourhood policing.”*

The Task and Finish Group considered the whole of the district and attempted to address three questions, as follows:

- I. How does ASB in our area compare with crime in other similar areas?
- II. How does ASB in our area compare with ASB in the Thames Valley Police Force area?
- III. How has ASB changed over time in our area?

The draft recommendations were divided into four headings, Wycombe District Council, Enforcements, Support and Communications. The draft recommendations along with the reasons for the recommendations were outlined as follows:

**Wycombe District Council**

1. WDC demonstrates its commitment to tackling ASB by:
  - a) Appointing a Cabinet Member (or Deputy Cabinet Member) with specific responsibility for ASB, and that progress is reviewed at every Cabinet meeting.
  - b) Identifying a single officer with lead responsibility for ASB, to be responsible for monitoring and reporting progress on tackling ASB.
2. That the working of the Community Safety Partnership be reviewed and tightened up to provide a stronger focus on tackling ASB.
3. WDC improve the quality of data and information in relation to ASB by:
  - a) Creating its own database of incidents, similar to the Police Repeat ASB/Signal Crime Callers and Locations report, plotting their locations precisely on a map, indicating exactly where and when they occurred.
  - b) Developing performance measures to enable progress in tackling ASB to be monitored.
4. WDC close its public toilets on an experimental basis and that pubs and local businesses should be encouraged to allow members of the public to use their toilet facilities when needed.

### **Enforcement**

5. TVP should be encouraged to enforce against ASB as follows:
  - a) WDC support TVP to achieve their full manning levels in Wycombe town - to match the proposed investment in Street Wardens (see items 6 & 7 below).
  - b) WDC support TVP to improve responsiveness to the 101 emergency number.
  - c) WDC explore options for supporting TVP to carry out successful recruitment to vacant posts including free parking.
  - d) The feasibility of the Council having access to a TVP computer should be explored.
6. WDC should employ Street Wardens to enforce PSPOs, who would be directed by WDC officers, but would work closely with the Police. The numbers suggested were four in Wycombe and two in each of Marlow and Princes Risborough.

7. The appointment of Street Wardens be accompanied by a stricter enforcement of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) to demonstrate that the Council will not tolerate ASB.
8. FPNs continue to be issued even if only PCs and the Council's own ASB officer are authorised to issue them.

### **Support**

9. WDC put more resources into the understanding of these links (between begging, mental health and substance misuse), and actively support those agencies working to alleviate the problems.

### **Communications**

10. The Council have a co-ordinated campaign in relation to street begging involving posters, banners, press, social media and radio to cover the whole of the District, the purpose of which would be not only to educate the public as to what the Council is doing, but also to try to remove the source of funding in the hope that it may persuade beggars to seek help from agencies and deter begging.

The Commission considered and discussed the recommendations and a number of points were made as follows:

- The recommendation regarding the closure of public toilets should be amended to request that thorough investigation be undertaken and implications be considered.
- In response to a query it was reported that data was already available for WDC to have its own database. The issue was that there was currently no central source of data to access to help direct resources.
- Once in post street wardens could be used to monitor and manage any issues around public toilets. This information could then be used as evidence base for any investigations.
- It was suggested that the working of the Community Safety Partnership be reviewed and monitored by the Cabinet Member appointed with responsibility for ASB.

The Chairman and the Commission thanked Councillor Whitehead and the members of the Task and Finish Group for their report. It was noted that the comments would be taken into consideration and recommendations amended to reflect the discussion. The final report would then be submitted to Cabinet on 17 September 2018.

## **15. REPORT OF THE RETURN OF THE RIVER WYE TASK AND FINISH GROUP**



The Commission considered and discussed the report and draft recommendations of the Return of the River Wye Task and Finish Group. The report featured eight draft recommendations for consideration for onward referral to Cabinet in November 2018.

The Chairman of the Task and Finish Group: Councillor Hugh McCarthy provided the Commission with a short presentation and guided members through the draft recommendations.

The Task and Finish Group was set up by the Improvement and Review Commission on 21 June 2017. The terms of reference were agreed by the Task and Finish Group as follows:

*To conduct a review of the proposal that the River Wye between Westbourne Street and the Archway roundabout should be re-made and opened up as an amenity within the town.*

The draft recommendations of the Task and Finish Group considered by the Commission were as follows:

1. To recognise that the technical feasibility of remaking the river has been established.
2. To recognise the extent of support for remaking the river.
3. To recognise that the wider economic, social and environmental benefits justify the remaking of the river.
4. To recognise that the financial returns which will accrue directly to Wycombe District Council resulting as a direct consequence of remaking the river will exceed the costs in most scenarios.
5. To agree that highway works within Phase 7 (Oxford Road) should not be progressed if they prejudice remaking up the river and that it would be most cost effective and publicly acceptable to undertake both the road and the river together.
6. That it has been established that the remaking of the river between Westbourne Street & Archway Roundabout will cost approximately £3 million more than highway works alone.
7. To consider funding the works from its CIL & capital programme.
8. That funding be made available to commission the detailed design, costing and consultation of public realm work including the river for the phase 7 area.

The Chairman of the Task and Finish Group thanked Neil Marples, MWH Global, Dan Fenn, DRF, Phil Simpkin, WDC and all the officers involved for their work and support.

The Commission considered and discussed the recommendations and a number of points were made as follows:

- The roads around the proposed area for opening the river would be narrowed however access to the Marks and Spencer loading bay would still meet the highway standards. Due to the town centre Masterplan works there should be less traffic going through the town centre.
- This was a visionary scheme and fit for the future. It was suggested that more cyclists and pedestrians would use the town centre in the future.
- It was commented that the town centre flyover could be a problem and the river should have been included in the Eden shopping centre designs.
- It was suggested that recommendation 7 regarding funding should be made clearer and strengthened.
- The economic benefits to the town were questioned. In response it was suggested that there could be increased ground rents and property values. The town centre experience was changing nationally and towns would become more of a leisure destination. There would be a long term gain to the town centre.

The Chairman of the Commission thanked Councillor McCarthy and the Task and Finish Group for their work.

## **16. COMMISSION'S WORK PROGRAMME AND CABINET FORWARD PLAN**

The Commission considered the work programme report featured along with the appended Cabinet Forward Plan and Commission Work Programme.

The Chairman of the Commission asked for volunteers for the Budget Task and Finish Group. The following members volunteered for the TFG: Councillor Hugh McCarthy, Councillor Matt Knight, Councillor Rafiq Raja and Councillor Chris Whitehead. Final details would be arranged and dates would be circulated to the TFG members.

The Chairman also requested the Commission to consider the Cabinet Forward Plan and if there were any items that they would like to take to a task and finish group. The Vice-Chairman suggested the Joint Waste Contract Extension and the Use of S106 Affordable Housing Funds as potential items for future discussion.

## **17. COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION**

There were no Councillors Calls for Action.

## **18. SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS**

There were no supplementary items.

## 19. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

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Chairman

### **The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:**

Jemma Durkan	- Senior Democratic Services Officer
Elaine Jewell	- Head of Community
Sarah McBrearty	- Community Services Team Leader
Philip Simpkin	- Natural Environment Officer
Catherine Whitehead	- Head of Democratic, Legal & Policy.

## Agenda Item 4.

### **RESPONSE TO THE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN THE DISTRICT TASK & FINISH GROUP**

Officer contact: Catherine Whitehead (Head of Democratic, Legal & Policy) 01494 421980, Catherine.whitehead@wycombe.gov.uk

#### ***PROPOSED DECISION***

To note the Cabinet responses to the recommendations made by the Anti-Social Behaviour in the District Task & Finish Group.

#### ***Reason for Decision***

To discuss the Cabinet responses to the 10 recommendations made by the Anti-Social Behaviour in the District Task & Finish Group.

#### **Corporate Implications**

The corporate implications are set out in the Cabinet report. .

#### **Executive Summary**

The Improvement and Review Commission (IRC) established a Task & Finish Group to look at anti-social behaviour across the District and how support could be provided to ensure that the Council achieved its objectives in this regard.

The recommendations from the Group (and IRC) were noted by Cabinet on 17 September 2018, Cabinet then provided their responses to the recommendations on 12 November 2018. The Cabinet report and associated extract from the Cabinet minutes has been attached for consideration.

#### **Options**

None.

#### **Conclusions**

That the Improvement and Review Commission consider the Cabinet responses to the Anti-Social Behaviour in the District Task and Finish Group.

#### **Background Papers**

Held in Democratic Services

# Agenda Item 4.

## **RESPONSE TO THE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR TASK & FINISH GROUP**

**Cabinet Member:** Councillor Graham Peart

**Wards Affected:** All

**Officer contact:** Elaine Jewell Ext:3800

Email:[elaine.jewell@wycombe.gov.uk](mailto:elaine.jewell@wycombe.gov.uk)

### **PROPOSED DECISION**

That the responses to the recommendations made by the Improvement & Review Commission (IRC) through its Anti-Social Behaviour Task & Finish Group as set out below be agreed.

### **Reason for Decision**

To respond to the recommendations made by the Anti-Social Behaviour Task & Finish Group.

### **Corporate Implications**

1. There are no significant corporate implications arising from this report. There is a financial impact related to Recommendation 6, which will be considered as part of the Council's budget setting process.

### **Executive Summary**

2. The IRC established a Task & Finish Group to look at anti-social behaviour across the District and how support could be provided to ensure that the Council achieved its objectives in this regard.
3. The recommendations from the Group (and IRC) were noted by Cabinet on 17 September 2018, with a commitment that a further report be presented to Cabinet in due course.

### **Sustainable Community Strategy/Council Priorities - Implications**

4. Community Safety is a key strand for the Council in delivering against its People priority.

### **Background and Issues**

5. The Improvement and Review Commission set up a Task and Finish Group to answer the question 'Is there a problem with anti-social behaviour in the District, and if so what can Wycombe District Council do about it?'
6. The task and finish group was established following a motion by the Leader of the Council to the Council and a resolution of Council that the matter should be considered.

7. Following the decision by Council the Improvement and Review Commission met to set up a Task and Finish Group to look into antisocial behaviour in the district. The ASB Task and Finish Group (T&FG) was established by the Improvement and Review Commission.

### **The Recommendations and Responses**

The ASB Task and Finish Group had 10 recommendations, as follows.

The T&FG recommended that:

#### **Wycombe District Council**

##### **Recommendation 1**

WDC demonstrates its commitment to tackling ASB by:

- a) Appointing a Cabinet Member (or Deputy Cabinet Member) with specific responsibility for ASB, and that progress is reviewed at every Cabinet meeting.
- b) Identifying a single officer with lead responsibility for ASB, to be responsible for monitoring and reporting progress on tackling ASB.

##### **Cabinet Response**

The Council already has a Cabinet Member with specific responsibility for ASB, namely the Cabinet Member for Community Services. The Council also has a representative on the Police and Crime Panel, Cllr David Carroll. The Cabinet Member and Cllr Carroll both attend the Community Safety Strategy Group and receive three-monthly updates from the Police on ASB. IRC receives an annual presentation on crime and ASB within the District.

We will increase the frequency of the Community Safety Strategy Group meetings to bi-monthly as a demonstration of our commitment to a close working relationship with Thames Valley Police in particular. ASB is one among many issues that touch our residents, they cannot all be reported on at every Cabinet meeting and we propose that the Cabinet Member for Community has discretion to update Cabinet as and when he sees fit.

The Head of Community Services chairs the Community Safety Strategy Group and has the lead officer responsibility for community safety and ASB. It is not considered necessary or beneficial to move staff between Community and Environment to align them with the lead officer. The TFG itself acknowledges that this does not negatively impact on day to day work as officers work well together.

This recommendation is already supported.

##### **Recommendation 2**

That the working of the Community Safety Partnership be reviewed and tightened up to provide a stronger focus on tackling ASB through the relevant Portfolio holder and Lead officer identified in recommendation 1 above.

##### **Cabinet Response**

The Council has two different, complementary roles in relation to crime and ASB. One relates to strategy, overall direction and planning of resources and is the role performed by the Community Safety Strategy Group. The other relates to the daily,

weekly and monthly allocation of staff to achieve specific tasks. This second role is carried out in partnership with TVP, via their close working with the WDC ASB Officer. It is not the role of the Strategy Group to tackle ASB on a daily basis. For information a map of the partnership landscape is provided at Appendix A.

ASB has consistently been one of the strategic priorities set out in each annual plan – it is not a sign of failure that it has remained so but of our continued focus on this as an issue of great importance to our residents. Cabinet knows that we have comparatively low levels of ASB but we are not complacent in our commitment to reduce levels still further.

The TFG cites the presence of other priorities in the annual plan as a sign that the focus on ASB is insufficiently strong. Residents expect us to address more than one area of work at a time and are perfectly right to do so. Cabinet cannot accept that we should lessen our focus on other significant crime types, such as domestic abuse, exploitation of the vulnerable, cybercrime, to solely focus on ASB.

This recommendation is partially supported in that the frequency of meetings of the CSSG will be increased to bi-monthly. It is hoped that the partnership map allays some of the concerns the TFG has about the focus on tasking.

### **Recommendation 3**

WDC improve the quality of data and information in relation to ASB by

- a) Creating its own database of incidents from all partners, subject to appropriate data sharing considerations, similar to the Police Repeat ASB/Signal Crime Callers and Locations report,<sup>1</sup> plotting their locations precisely on a map, indicating exactly where and when they occurred.
- b) Developing performance measures to enable progress in tackling ASB to be monitored.

### **Cabinet response**

The primary point of contact for members of the public reporting incidents of ASB is TVP. WDC and housing providers in the District together will have a much smaller volume of ASB reported to them in comparison. WDC could employ a data officer to collate data from housing providers who may have a much lower volume of incidents reported but the value of WDC collecting this data is uncertain. The TFG notes issues with how data is recorded by TVP call handlers but it is unreasonable to suggest that WDC has a role in addressing this when only TVP can do so in reality. Cabinet considers that while the Council would know that the true figure is slightly higher than that reported to TVP our focus must be on working with TVP to address the majority of ASB incidents that we actually have a mandate and ability to deal with. The ASB Officer works on an average of 20-30 incidents per month but over half of these were initially reported to TVP and are being dealt with in partnership with TVP.

TVP can plot data on maps for the majority of ASB incidents across the District and it is uncertain what benefit would be provided by WDC duplicating this. Under GDPR locations need to be suitably anonymised so that individuals cannot be identified.

TVP and WDC already set partnership targets to reduce current reported levels of crime and ASB, although the national and local trend is for increasing levels of both so recommendation 3b is already supported.

Recommendation 3a is not supported.

#### **Recommendation 4**

WDC consider the implications and options for closing public toilets on an experimental basis and also consider whether pubs and local businesses could be encouraged to allow members of the public to use their toilet facilities when needed.

#### **Cabinet Response**

Some of the public conveniences operated by the Council, particularly in High Wycombe town centre, are prone to anti-social behaviour, and are frequented by drug users. The frequency of this type of abuse of the facilities is variable (and in some cases appears to be seasonal) and further work will be undertaken to identify the worst. Investigative work will be undertaken by officers with the BidCo and town centre businesses to identify the potential for customer toilets to be made available for use by the wider public. The Council could positively publicise and provide information about those businesses that are willing to be part of any such scheme, and signage to identify these participating businesses could be developed.

This recommendation will be investigated further.

#### **Recommendation 5**

##### **Enforcement**

TVP should be encouraged to tackle ASB as follows:

- a) WDC support and encourage TVP to achieve their full manning levels in Wycombe District - to match the proposed investment in Street Wardens (see items 6 & 7 below).
- b) WDC support and encourage TVP to improve responsiveness to the 101 emergency number.
- c) WDC explore options for supporting TVP to carry out successful recruitment to vacant posts including the possible provision of free parking.
- d) the feasibility of the Council having access to a TVP computer should be explored.

#### **Cabinet Response**

- a) Cabinet understands that TVP staffing levels dipped after the last restructuring saw a number of longer-serving and experienced officers leave. Cabinet is pleased that both the Marlow and Risborough rural areas are now fully staffed. However it is disappointing that police officers do not choose High Wycombe as a place to make their mark.



With regard to promoting the role of Special Constable to staff the Council has its Employer Supported Volunteering Policy which provides: -

“Up to one day (7.24 hours) paid time off per year for employee supported volunteering (pro rata for part time staff) will be allowed. Volunteering time can be taken as a single day or over a number of days (up to 7.24 hours for a full-time employee, or equivalent hours representing one day's work for staff working reduced hours). Requests for paid time off for voluntary work will be subject to manager approval and business needs”

- b) Cabinet is aware of the long wait times people are experiencing with the TVP 101 number and the Leader has already expressed concern about this to the Chief Constable and it has been raised at the Police and Crime Panel.
- c) The Council does not provide free car parking to its own staff, only to those that have a requirement to use their cars regularly for work. TVP staff are in a different position in that their work vehicles are supplied for them so they need a supply of low cost all day parking. Passes for town centre car parks can be purchased by Thames Valley Police on behalf of staff and until May 2019, when the service is due for review, the Handy Cross Park and Ride can be used free of charge.
- d) Access to the TVP system could only be via public wifi, which is insufficiently secure. The ASB Officer has access to all police stations as well as access to the TVP system. He also regularly works over in High Wycombe police station.

This recommendation has been partially supported.

### **Recommendation 6**

WDC should consider employing Street Wardens to enforce PSPOs, who would be directed by WDC officers, but would work closely with the Police. The location and number of street wardens to be determined according to need and best practice.

### **Cabinet Response**

Cabinet does not accept that it should step in and fund street wardens BECAUSE there are insufficient police officers. TVP are better funded than WDC to police the District and their issue is not one of funding but difficulty in recruiting officers to work in one town within the District. The Council's role is to reduce ASB and improve the environment for visitors and residents, not to take on the role or work of the Police.

Having noted that, Cabinet supports this recommendation in principle but is mindful that, while there is positive evidence of their effectiveness, there are also some places where street wardens have not been the solution. Cabinet therefore agrees to implement a one year pilot for High Wycombe town centre, as this is the area where most incidents are reported, and will include funding to employ three FTEs within the 2019/20 budget. Cabinet agrees that it is vital that street wardens work effectively with TVP and the HWBidCo to swiftly identify and tackle town centre ASB.

This recommendation is partially supported and will be the subject of a more detailed proposal to Cabinet.

### **Recommendation 7**

The appointment of Street Wardens be accompanied by a stricter enforcement of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) to demonstrate that the Council will not tolerate ASB.

## **Cabinet Response**

Cabinet wants our town centres to be welcoming, safe and attractive. There is a balance to be struck between using fines to deter anti-social behaviour and issuing large numbers of fines for other matters such as licensing, taxi licensing, waste management, littering, illegal street traders, parks by-laws, idling motor vehicles etc. that may deter regular users of our towns. While Cabinet notes that, in theory, it could issue a large enough volume of FPNs to cover the cost of street wardens, as the TFG suggests, it is mindful that issuing such a volume of FPNs may cause an adverse public reaction. Therefore Cabinet prefers to fully fund a pilot rather than set targets for issuing numbers of FPNs to fund the pilot.

Cabinet commits to using FPNs in a responsible manner to tackle those issues that are of most concern to our residents and visitors.

This recommendation is partially supported.

## **Recommendation 8**

FPNs continue to be issued even if only PCs and the Council's own ASB officer are authorised to issue them.

## **Cabinet Response**

This recommendation is already supported. The Desborough PSPO has been in place, with minor revision, since it was agreed. The town centre PSPO has been revised, consultation has been completed and the revised PSPO is in place. This has not prevented WDC and TVP from issuing FPNs.

## **Recommendation 9**

WDC put more resources into the understanding of these links (between begging, mental health and substance misuse), and actively support those agencies working to alleviate the problems.

## **Cabinet response**

Relevant Portfolio Holders and officers within Housing, Community Services and Environmental Services are aware of the complex, multiple issues relating to vulnerable people within our town centres. The TFG encourages Cabinet to explore whether services designed to support people with addiction problems are coping, and if not why not. The TFG may not be aware that Bucks County Council is responsible for the commissioning of such treatment services locally.

The recommendation is not supported as this is not a service WDC has responsibility for. The TFG's observations will be shared with the County Council.

## **Recommendation 10**

### **Communications**

The Council has a co-ordinated campaign, with partners, in relation to street begging involving posters, banners, press, social media and radio to cover the whole of the District, the purpose of which would be not only to educate the public as to what the Council is doing, but also to try to remove the source of funding in the hope that it may persuade beggars to seek help from agencies and deter begging.

## **Cabinet Response**

Cabinet has supported the HWBidCo's Sensible Change scheme to divert funding from beggars to charities and others that are in a position to provide the support people need to turn their lives around. Cabinet is keen to work with the new BidCo Manager to reinvigorate this campaign and the Communications Team is already working with Community Safety officers to publicise this area of work.

The recommendation is supported.

## **Background Papers**

Improvement & Review Commission papers – 12 September 2018

Cabinet papers – 17 September 2018

Held in Democratic Services

Buckinghamshire  
Safeguarding Adults  
Board

Buckinghamshire  
Safeguarding Children  
Board

Prevent

Safer and Stronger  
Bucks Partnership  
Board

Health and Wellbeing  
Board

Early Help Panel

Child Exploitation Sub  
Group

Policy and Procedure  
Sub Group

Quality and Assurance  
Sub Group

Training Sub Group

Channel  
Panel

Safer and Stronger  
Bucks Co-ordinating  
Group

Domestic Violence  
Strategy Group

Safe Place Group

Bucks Anti-Slavery  
Network

Domestic Violence  
Strategy Group

Adult Exploitation  
Group

Wycombe Community  
Safety Strategy Group

Wycombe LPA monthly  
Tasking meeting

Anti-Social Behaviour  
Multi-Agency meeting

Wycombe Street  
Community Partnership

Rough Sleepers Core  
Group

TVP Safeguarding  
meeting

HW BIDco Shop Watch

HW BIDco Pub Watch

# Agenda Item 4.

## CABINET MINUTE EXTRACT - MEETING 12 NOVEMBER 2018

### 46 RESPONSE TO THE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR TASK AND FINISH GROUP

The report before Cabinet detailed the Cabinet responses to each of the Improvement and Review Commission's Anti-Social Behaviour Task and Finish Group recommendations. In September 2018, the recommendations of the Group's review of anti-social behaviour had been presented to Cabinet and it was agreed that the responses would be presented to a future Cabinet meeting

Thanks were expressed to the Task & Finish Group Members for all their hard work.

The Cabinet Member for Community summarised the responses to each of the recommendations and Members noted that the reasons for changing or rejecting certain recommendations had been detailed in the report. During discussion, support was expressed to provide funding for three FTE street wardens from the current financial year rather than from the 2019/20 budget as had been set out in the response to recommendation 6.

The following decisions were made to formally respond to the recommendations made by the Anti-Social Behaviour Task and Finish Group.

**RESOLVED:** That (i) the proposed recommendations that had been contained in the Anti-Social Behaviour Task and Finish Group report to Cabinet in September 2018 be noted; and

(ii) the Cabinet responses set out in the report be agreed, subject to the response for Recommendation 6 in relation to employing three FTEs within the 2019/20 budget be amended to enable funding to be available in this financial year.

# Agenda Item 5.

## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE RIVER WYE TASK AND FINISH GROUP

Officer contact: Catherine Whitehead (Head of Democratic Services Officer) 01494 421980, catherine.whitehead@wycombe.gov.uk

### ***What is the Commission being asked to do?***

- i) To consider the recommendations of the River Wye Task and Finish Group as outlined below;
- ii) To decide on whether to endorse, amend or reject these recommendations for referral onto the Cabinet Meeting of 17 December 2018; and
- iii) To note that the River Wye Task and Finish Group has now completed its work.

### **Task and Finish Group Recommendations -**

#### **1. That cabinet be recommended:**

To recognise that the technical feasibility of remaking the river has been established.

#### **The reason for this recommendation:**

On the basis of all the evidence the TFG has considered since its first meeting in September 2017, it is now known that the river can be opened between Westbourne Street & Archway Roundabout, (see the indicative plan in appendix 1), this takes into account issues relating to hydrology, flooding, underground utilities, levels and other considerations.

#### **2. That cabinet be recommended:**

To recognise the extent of support for remaking the river.

#### **The reason for this recommendation:**

The economic assessment found that 8/9 stakeholders interviewed were very positive about the idea of remaking the river. Bucks County Council's Head of Highway Infrastructure Projects has voiced supportive to bringing the river back at the same time as carrying out highway works. The High Wycombe Society have shown their support. Other public and press support is also evident (see appendix 2).

#### **3. That cabinet be recommended:**

To recognise that the wider economic, social and environmental benefits justify the remaking of the river.

#### **The reason for this recommendation:**

From research undertaken into benefits and experience in other case study towns where watercourses have been remade, the effects are

transformative and this could be replicated in High Wycombe. The remaking of the river work would bring substantial benefits to the town, improving its environmental, health & wellbeing, air quality, social and economic outlook, thus enhancing the sense of place and transforming it to a more desirable destination (see appendix 3).

**4. That cabinet be recommended:**

To recognise that the financial returns which will accrue directly to Wycombe District Council resulting as a direct consequence of remaking the river will exceed the costs in most scenarios.

**The reason for this recommendation:**

Wycombe District Council has employed consultants to undertake an Economic Assessment of remaking the river. This focussed particular attention on the financial impact on the Council. The assessment has shown that the remaking of the river will impact rents, rates and redevelopment values all of which will improve income for the council. High, central and low impact scenarios were modelled for 30 and 60 year time frames, only the low impact scenario over 30 years, resulted in the remade river returning less than its full cost to the council (see appendix 4).

**5. That cabinet be recommended:**

To agree that highway works within Phase 7 (Oxford Road) should not be progressed if they prejudice remaking up the river and that it would be most cost effective and publicly acceptable to undertake both the road and the river together.

**The reason for this recommendation:**

Given that highway and river works within Phase 7 (Oxford Road) are so closely related, a phased delivery approach would not only substantially increase the costs and disruption but also be seen unfavourably by the public when compared to undertaking the works together in a coordinated fashion.

**6. That cabinet be recommended:**

That it has been established that the remaking of the river between Westbourne Street & Archway Roundabout will cost approximately £3 million more than highway works alone.

**The reason for this recommendation:**

The preliminary design work for Phase 7 (Oxford Road) has been costed with the benefit of a detailed understanding of the river culverts, underground utilities, levels, and other survey information, as well as expert engineering knowledge and experience gained from delivery of the

rest of the Town Centre Master Plan.

**7. That cabinet be recommended:**

To consider funding the works from its CIL & capital programme.

**The reason for this recommendation:**

A wide range of external opportunities have been investigated but due to their scale and focus they are unsuitable for anything other than minor augmentation of Council funding sources (see appendix 5).

**8. That cabinet be recommended:**

That funding be made available to commission the detailed design, costing and consultation of public realm work including the river for the phase 7 area.

**The reason for this recommendation:**

Detailed design and technical work is required before phase 7 (Oxford Road) and the river can be brought forward. Funds that have been allocated in the 2018-19 capital program for High Wycombe town Centre public realm enhancements should be made available to support this, subject to the development and approval of suitable project documentation.

**Background and Issues**

1.1 The River Wye Task and Finish Group was set up by the Improvement and Review Commission on 21 June 2017 and the following Terms of Reference were subsequently agreed at the meeting on 11 September 2017:

- To conduct a review of the proposal that the River Wye between Westbourne Street and the Archway roundabout should be re-made and opened up as an amenity within the town.

The Group Membership was as follows:

Chairman: Councillor Hugh McCarthy

Vice-Chairman: Councillor Mrs Lesley Clarke

Membership:

Councillor A Hill

Councillor R Farmer



Councillor M Hussain

Councillor R Raja

Councillor M Clarke

Councillor C Whitehead

Councillor P Turner

Councillor A Baughan

The following investigations were carried out by the Group:

Monday 17 July 2017

- Scoping Meeting

Monday 11 September 2017

- Discussion to confirm the terms of reference and consideration of the work programme. Also a review of the feasibility and design work carried out to date and a recap of how the river is considered in policy.

Thursday 12 October 2017

- Discussion with Charles Brocklehurst, Major Projects and Estates Executive, WDC and external visitor Neil Marples, MWH Global, about feasibility, costs and a high level discussion about economics of remaking the river.

Friday 1 December 2017

- Site visit to Sheffield to consider the regeneration of the river and other green infrastructure improvements in the city centre.

Monday 4 December 2017

- Discussion with Dan Fenn, DRF Ltd and Ian McGowan, Head of Highways Infrastructure Projects, BCC. Members also received feedback on the site visit to Sheffield.

Tuesday 30 January 2018

- Presentation from Dan Fenn and Ian McGowan on estimated project costs and visit from Mike Overall, Chairman of Revive the Wye; Chris Woodman, High Wycombe Society; and Allen Beechey, the Chilterns Chalk Streams Project Officer, who explained the special nature of chalk streams and the

Wye in particular. A presentation was also given by Philip Simpkin on some of the health benefits which would be associated with remaking the river.

### 30 July 2018

- Presentation of the Economic Assessment of remaking the river wye by David Baxter and associated discussions Report of - Eunomia.

### 6 August 2018

- Presentation given by Philip Simpkin on the results of investigations into funding sources, and of the recent condition survey of the culvert. Finalising the recommendations and reasons for recommendations of the Task and Finish Group.

### 12 September 2018

- The Improvement and Review Commission received a presentation on the work and recommendations of the Task and Finish Group.

### 13 November 2018

- The High Wycombe Town Committee received a presentation on the work and recommendations of the Task and Finish Group. An extensive discussion was undertaken with a question and answer session. It was requested that the following comments be noted:
  - i. That sufficient water flow be made available to the river.
  - ii. That the public should be consulted on the reopening of the river.

A majority of the High Wycombe Town Committee supported the recommendations.

## **Conclusions / Recommendations**

The Group having taken evidence from external sources and WDC officers and identified that the remaking of the river is a feasible, desirable and well supported project which would not only have great environmental, social, health and wellbeing, place making benefits but that it would also have positive economic benefits with direct financial benefits to the Council in the long term.

The costs of the work to reopen the river would be a relatively small proportion of the total cost of phase 7 of the Town Centre Masterplan and in the longer term remaking the river would overcome any future need to replace the culvert.

The works to remake the river would be most economically and efficiently undertaken if carried out at the same time as highway works in phase 7 (Oxford Road) of the High Wycombe Town Centre Master Plan (HWTCMP) and therefore it is recommended that the Council fund the necessary detailed work to bring the project to a point where it can be delivered and then that the council fund its delivery through CIL and the capital programme.

## **Next Steps**

To be referred to the Improvement & Review Commission on Wednesday 28 November 2018 for onward referral, with endorsement, amendment or rejection, to Cabinet on Monday 17 December 2018.

## **Background Papers**

Notes of TFG meetings held in Democratic Services

Appendices

# Remaking The River TFG Report Appendices

## Contents

2-12	Background and Context
13	Appendix 1: DRF Plan of river within phase 7.
14-15	Appendix 2: Extract from Economic Assessment on Stakeholder opinions & letter from The High Wycombe Society.
16-17	Appendix 3: Summary of Environmental, Social and Health & Wellbeing benefits of remaking the river.
18-20	Appendix 4: Local Authority Cash-flow and Wider Economic Assessment of Remaking the River Wye. (Executive summary is contained here, the full report can be provided on request, a redacted version without commercially sensitive data can be made available to the public)
19-24	Appendix 5: Investigation of potential funding sources for remaking the river.

# Background and Context

High Wycombe is located at the confluence of the River Wye and the Hughenden stream and at the crossing point of a key route through the Chilterns and another which crossed at right angles to it from London to the Aylesbury Vale.

The Wye Valley has been occupied since Neolithic times and the Romans had a villa here in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century. At the time of the Domesday book in the late 11<sup>th</sup> century there were already 6 mills and by medieval times this grew to 32 between West Wycombe and Bourne End.

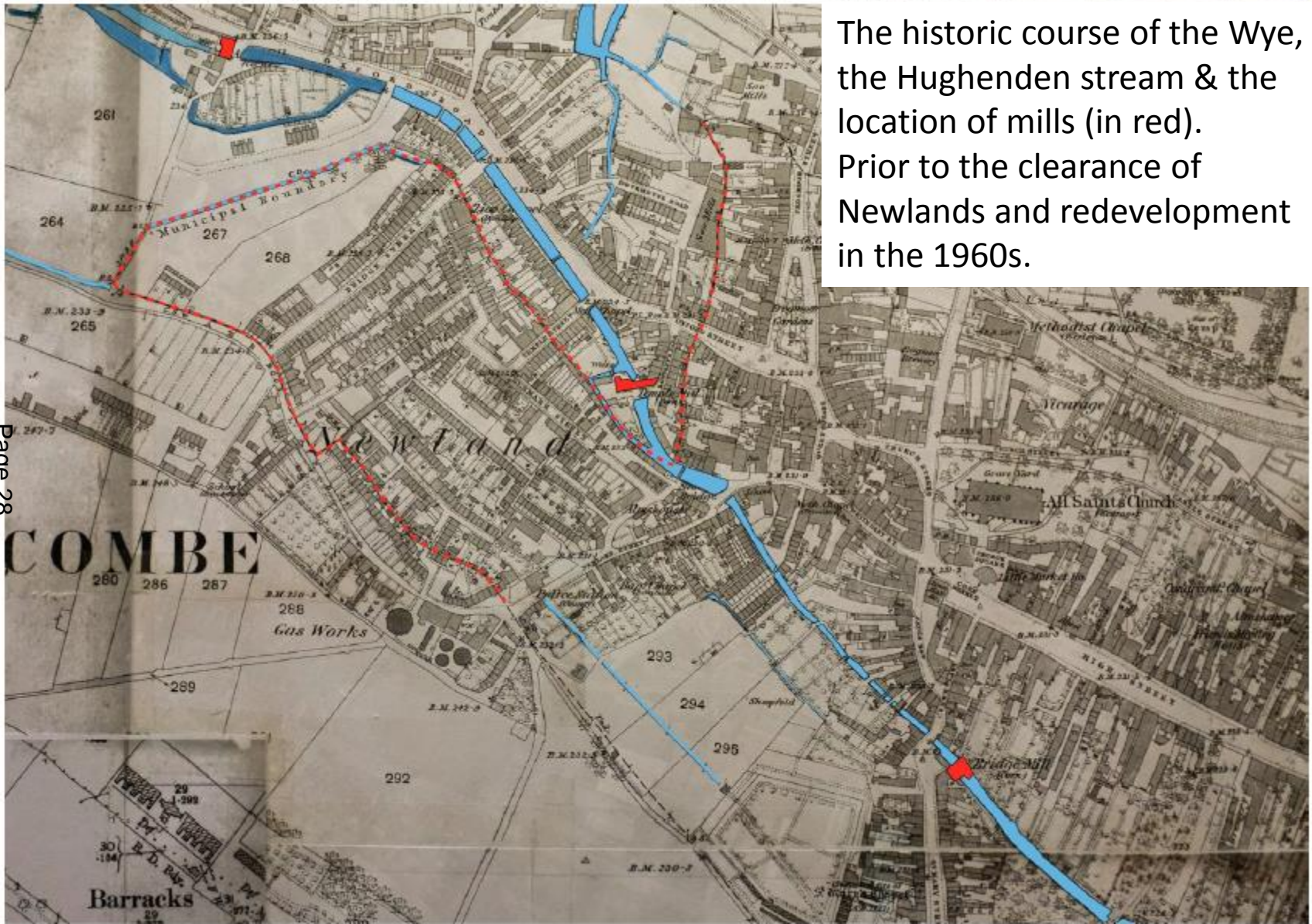
The plan on the following page shows the historical route of the river before it was covered over. Much of its route was a series of leats rather than the 'original' route of the river.

The photo below was taken c1910. It is looking east along Oxford Road from close to Brook Street. None of the buildings in the view survive and the river is no longer visible.

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Many more historic photos of the river and the town centre can be found on the 'Sharing Wycombe's Old Photos (SWOP) website here: <https://swop.org.uk/>



The historic course of the Wye, the Hughenden stream & the location of mills (in red). Prior to the clearance of Newlands and redevelopment in the 1960s.



# Background and Context

In the 1960's the area known as Newlands was cleared, the river was put into 840m of twin culverts from the location of Ash Mill to Bridge Mill, the A40 was turned into a dual carriageway along this length, the fly over was built and the Octagon shopping centre was constructed.



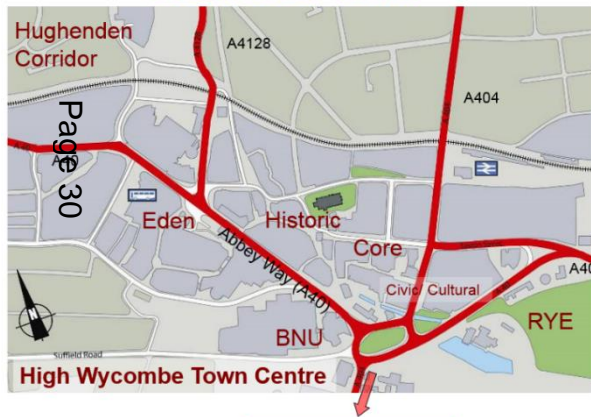
Much of what was Newlands remained as a surface car park until the construction of the Eden shopping centre circa 2006, at the same time the old bus station was replaced. Although many had hoped that the river would be remade at the same time as this redevelopment, it wasn't to be. A few years later much of the frontage on the roadside facing Eden was replaced with a new Sainsbury's.

# Background and Context

## High Wycombe Town Centre Masterplan (HWTCMP)

The High Wycombe Town Centre Masterplan was developed in the early 2000s with a vision of a different kind of town centre, less divided by a duel carriage way running through the middle and perhaps creating an opportunity to remake the river wye, facilitated by an 'alternative route' to reconsider how traffic moves through the town.

A divided town



Handy Cross Hub/ M40

Bringing the town together



And the return of the river



The 'alternative route', which is absolutely key to being able to remake the river is in the process of construction.

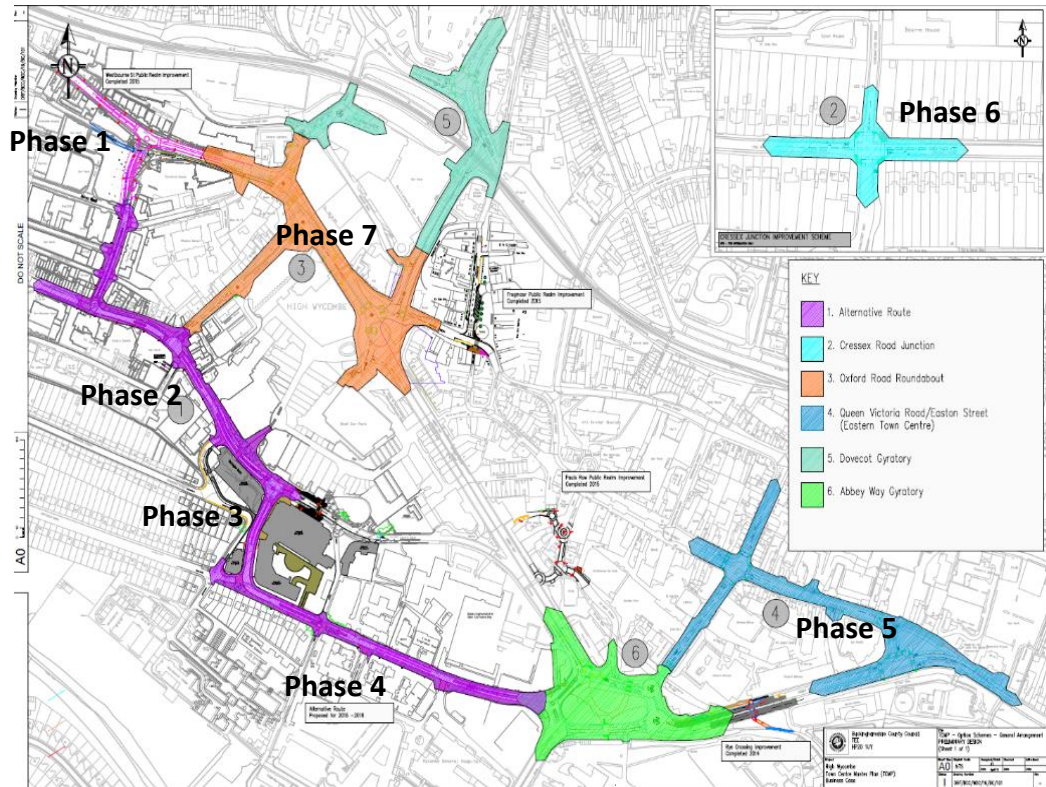
The new link has been constructed at Westbourne Street (phase 1) and futureproofing has been undertaken for the future remaking of the river by constructing a new culvert under the new road which could take the river close to surface level (rather than dropping down to the level of the old twin culverts).



# Background and Context

The section of the masterplan along Desborough Road (phase 2) has also been completed the works on Suffield Road (phase 4) are nearly complete and the old gas works (phase 3) site is currently being redeveloped with the new link road across it being built at the same time.

The only other parts of the HWTCMP which is currently funded is the section around Queen Victoria Road and Easton Street (phase 5) where works started in July 2018 and Cressex Road Junction (phase 6) where works are yet to start. The opportunity for the river to be reopened is within phase 7 (Oxford Road) of the HWTCMP would is in the most part covered by the orange area on the plan.



# Background and Context

## Policy

Wycombe District Council's planning policy has for a long time had policies which have sought to conserve and enhance watercourses and which seek deculverting, this is mentioned in policy L5 of the still extant 2004 [Local Plan](#).

Policy CS3 in WDC's [Core Strategy](#) sets out principles relating to the Town Centre and seeks to ensure opportunities are taken in relation to the River Wye and the Hughenden Stream.

Page 32 Policy CS3 is mentioned in the May 2012 High Wycombe Town Centre Masterplan Background Paper, this paper goes on to set out a numbered objectives for the town.

**MPS** - To utilise the River Wye for “place-making” throughout the town centre by taking advantage of opportunities to reopen and improve the river corridor, including by increasing access to it and maintaining and enhancing its bio-diversity value. Ensure that no development prejudices future opportunities for the reopening of the River Wye.

**xi)** The town centre has many historic and natural assets, such as the setting of the historic High Street and the River Wye and Hughenden Stream, which make it a special place. However, in the past these assets have not been realised fully and there has been, over time, a deterioration of the quality of public spaces around the town centre. Studies have shown a direct link between the quality of a town centre environment and its economic performance – the more pleasant the place, the more people enjoy visiting and the more likely they are to return. Therefore a key element of the masterplan is to continue the programme of investing in improvements to the public spaces around the town centre to make it a more attractive and visitor friendly place.

# Background and Context

## POLICY HWTC1 DELIVERING THE TOWN CENTRE VISION

1. All development within the town centre should contribute towards delivering the vision for High Wycombe town centre as set out in Box 1 and illustrated in Figure 2. Planning permission will not be granted for any development which prejudices the implementation of this vision.
2. All development within the town centre should contribute towards meeting the following objectives for the town centre:
  - a. To transform people's perceptions of High Wycombe, focusing new economic growth and development in the town centre and creating a diversity and richness of uses that satisfies community needs, enhances the natural and built environment and attracts visitors to the town.
  - b. To reduce the physical impact of the highway network on the environmental quality of the town centre and re-establish High Wycombe as a People Place, where people on foot and cyclists take precedence, whilst maintaining accessibility to the town centre.
  - c. To give High Wycombe an improved sense of place and make it a focus for the community and for civic activity, facilitating the integration of the 'old' and 'expanded' parts of the town centre, connecting key areas of activity together and protecting and enhancing where possible the historic townscape, environment, and landscape setting of the town centre.
  - d. To create a high quality public space network within the town centre to act as focal points for the community and make a strong contribution to the image of the town.
  - e. To utilise the River Wye for Place Making throughout the town centre by taking advantage of opportunities to reopen and improve the river corridor, including increasing access to it and maintaining and enhancing its biodiversity value. Ensure no development prejudices future opportunities for the reopening of the River Wye.

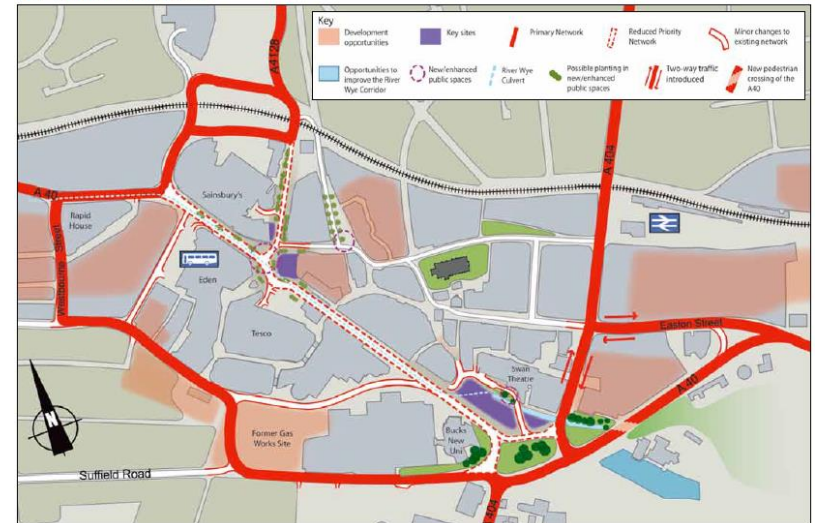
In the [Development and Site Allocations Plan of July 2013](#), the river and the context for place making is recognised in paragraph xi) Transforming Spaces: This then translates into policy in HWTC1 Delivering the Town Centre Vision:

### 3.9 Box 1 sets out our vision for High Wycombe Town Centre

*"High Wycombe town centre will be a uniquely appealing and attractive destination with a thriving economic centre, and a high quality public realm, which emphasises the natural, historic and cultural assets of the town. The town centre will be a place where people choose to live, work and visit, with a variety of uses that include a good retail offer, high quality office and residential accommodation and cultural and educational opportunities centred around the Swan Theatre and Bucks New University campus.*

*The town centre will be well connected and accessible on foot, by road and by public transport. The provision of an improved street network will allow for greater integration of the historic and expanded town centre, with new high quality public spaces connecting key areas together through more direct and attractive linkages for pedestrians and cyclists and creating opportunities to enjoy the River Wye."*

Figure 2. Our Plan for delivering the vision



Point 2. e. of the policy is of particular relevance to the river and para 3.17 of the supporting text which states (amongst other things):

**3.1.7** The proposals set out within this document protect the opportunity for more significant changes to the town centre beyond 2026, including the full closure of Abbey Way flyover and the removal of the flyover ramps and further de-culverting of the River Wye, if the evidence at that time supports such a strategy.



# Background and Context

Policy HWTC2 Town Centre Environment is also highly relevant to the ambition to remake the river:

## POLICY HWTC2 TOWN CENTRE ENVIRONMENT

- Page 37
1. An improved public space network will be provided within the town centre, including:
    - a) Improvements to the existing public spaces at:
      - i. Frogmoor
      - ii. HWTC10 Swan Frontage
    - b) New spaces at:
      - i. HWTC16 Oxford Road Roundabout
    - c) Enhanced pedestrian and cycling links between new and improved spaces and the existing built and natural public space network, in particular between the town centre and the Rye
  2. In order to achieve a high quality public realm, public spaces and streets should be designed to achieve the following:
    - a) Connectivity – public spaces should be well related to surrounding pedestrian

movement patterns and land uses

- b) Use and interaction – the use of street furniture and hard and soft landscaping should encourage pedestrians to meet and pass through the spaces
  - c) Opening up of the river – public spaces at HWTC10 Swan Frontage, and at other opportunities if they arise, should be designed to maximise the place-making potential of the River Wye
3. Development which is adjacent to new and/or existing public spaces is required to:
    - a) Provide active ground-floor frontages and interactive uses, such as retail, cafes and restaurants
    - b) Through its design, demonstrate consideration to the enclosure of, and sunlight penetration to the public space
  4. All development within the town centre should conserve or enhance the town centre townscape. Development proposals should give consideration to:
    - a) Impact on existing key views and opportunities for the opening up of new views
    - b) Relationships to adjacent buildings and important features within the townscape
  5. Development proposals which are located within the Source Protection Zone (SPZ) for the Pann Mill Public Water Abstraction (Principal Aquifer in the New Pit Chalk) should be designed to ensure no impact on the function of the Source Protection Zone

The supporting text to this policy in paragraph 3.26, is of particular significance:

**3.26** Natural features can make a significant positive contribution to the character and quality of a place. The River Wye, currently culverted through much of the town centre, represents a significant underused resource. A key long-term aspiration for the town centre is to de-culvert the river, particularly in locations where it can make a significant contribution to busy public spaces in the town centre. At HWTC10 Swan Frontage there are shorter-term opportunities to enhance the existing river corridor and maximise its contribution to a high quality public realm in this area. Policy DM15 Protection & Enhancement of River and Stream Corridors protects these future opportunities.

# Background and Context

[Wycombe District Council's Draft New Local Plan](#) does not replace any of the policies contained within the DSA but it does add additional support for the remaking of the river.

In the 'Principles for the High Wycombe Area', the heading reads:

'To meet the district-wide Strategic Objectives, the Council will shape development in the High Wycombe area to:'

Under 'Strength of Place', 2. c) states:

Page 35  
**Secure further environmental enhancements to the River Wye and Hughenden Stream corridors including opening them up;**

Under 'Champion town centres', 7.c) states:

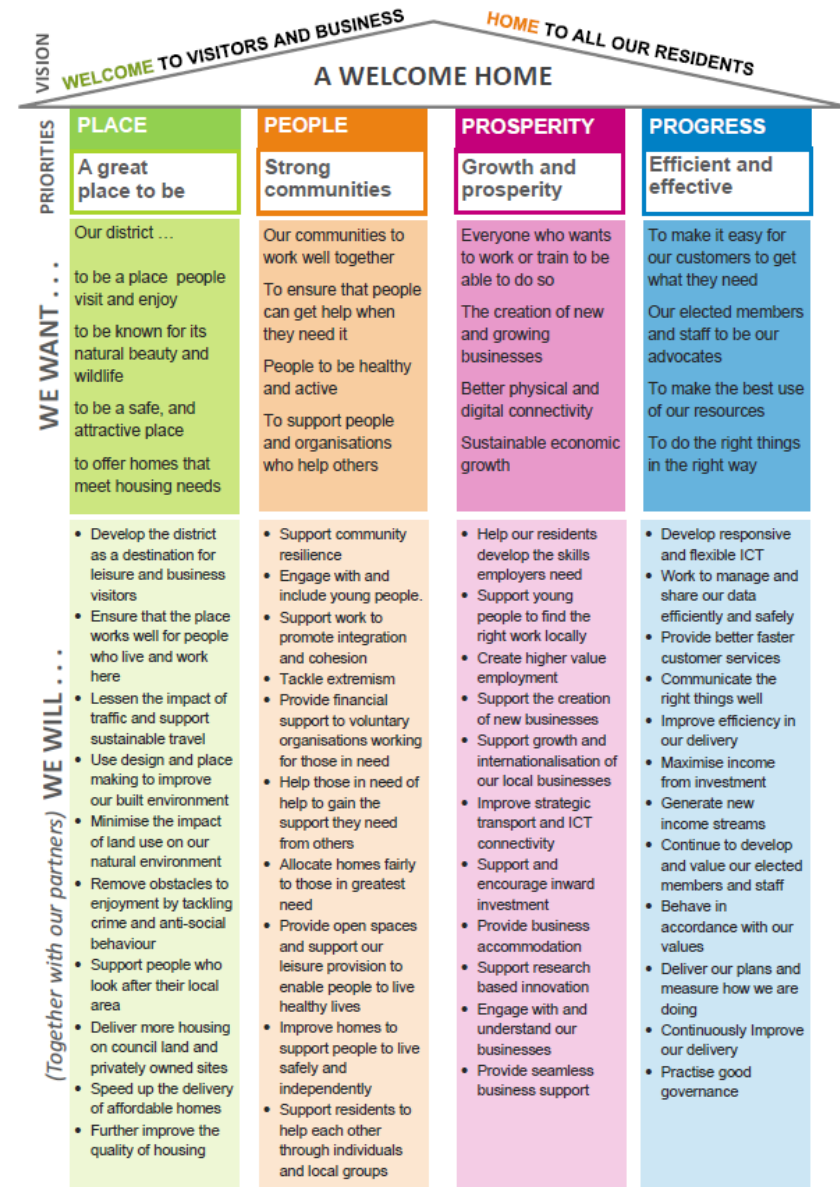
**Make significant improvements to the quality of the town centre by re-routing traffic and "opening" up the River Wye;**

# Background and Context

WDCs Corporate Plan 2015-19 is also supportive of remaking the river:

The “People Priority” of the Council’s 2015-19 Corporate Plan includes an ambition to work on projects and schemes that benefit local communities.

The “Place Priority” identifies a key work stream as using CIL to invest in the area and improve infrastructure to reflect growing needs locally, and refers explicitly to continuing to implement the High Wycombe Town Centre Master Plan (HWTCMP) including the alternative route, public realm improvements and exploring ways to make the return of the River Wye through the town a reality.



# Background and Context

The Wye is a river which has received much interest over the years, much of this has been from a positive perspective, whether it being because of the clean fresh water which would have supplied water meadows, the mills it has historically powered, the trout it supports (which have populated rivers in the southern hemisphere) or countless other significant features of interest. However the river also has had a negative side to its life, the water of the river was for a period polluted with industrial and sewerage waste (see [Silt Road, The Story of a Lost River by Charles Rangeley-Wilson](#)) and have carried stench and disease.

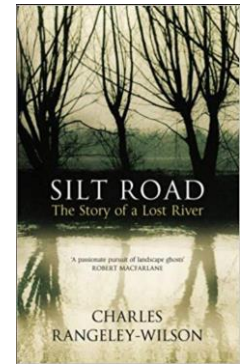
In more recent times the upper reaches ran dry due to over pumping of the aquifer that feeds it, this is well documented in the 1998 'River Wye Alleviation of Low Flows Study'.

It could be said that historically the value of the river has been as a resource, for agriculture, for powering mills, for taking waste away, or for supplying drinking water. However with changing times the value attributed to the river and the space it occupies has changed. Much of the building adjacent to the river has turned its back on it, realigned its course and reduced its space within a steep walled channel.

In a sense, culverting a river is an extreme example of undervaluing the benefits of a river, taking away its space, removing the contribution it makes to an area and destroying much of its wildlife value. Whilst historically this was fairly common as areas urbanised, recent decades have seen much greater recognition of the benefits and safeguarding of watercourses.

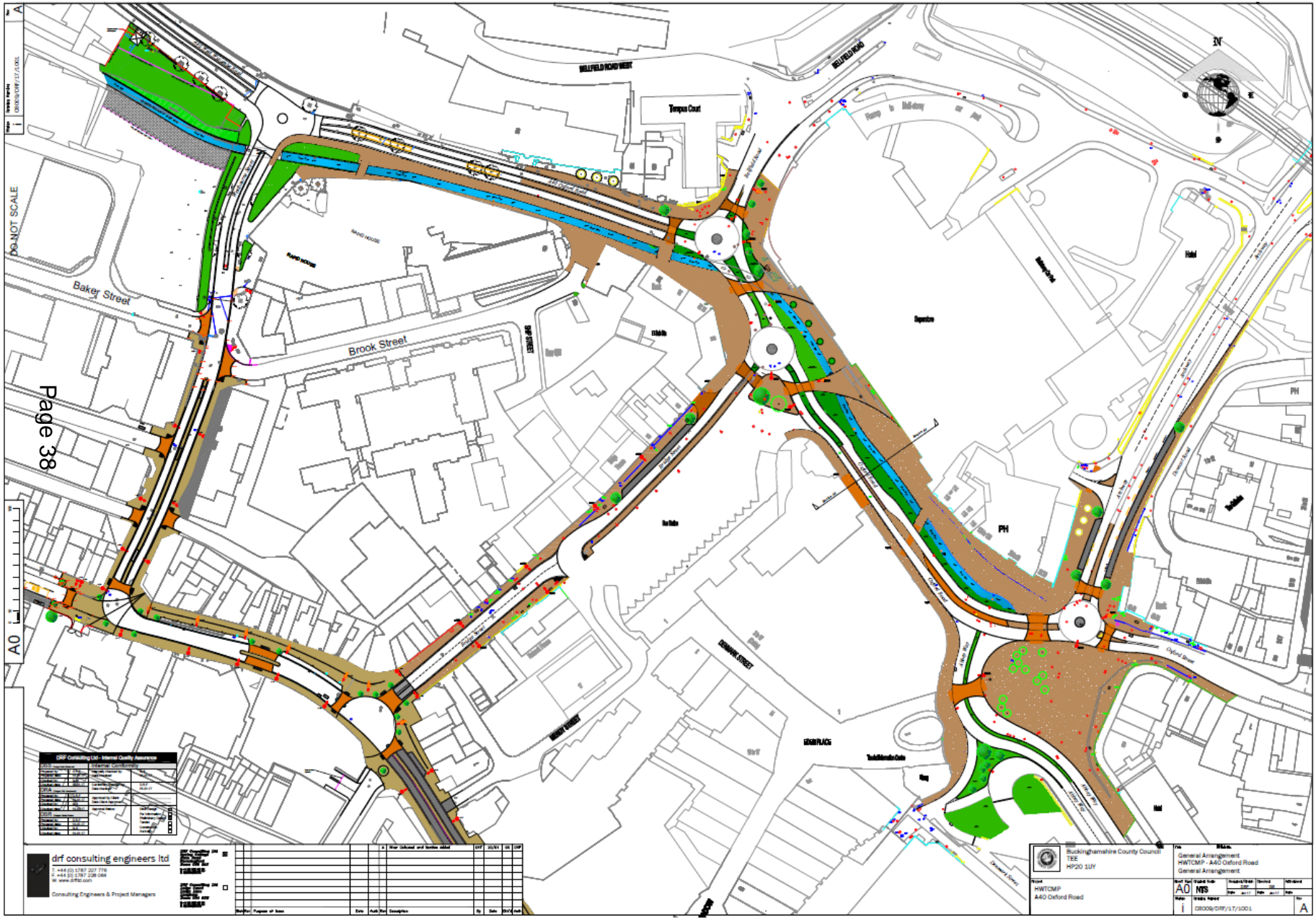
Wycombe District Council produced the [River Wye Study](#) in the 1990s which looked in depth at the issues which faced the Wye and the Hughenden stream at the time. This was updated in 2006 with a Technical Study. Several organisations have worked together to improve the river completing projects and fighting for the protection and enhancement of the river:

WDC have been involved and funded works at Desborough Recreation Ground and the section in front of the Wycombe Swan and adjacent the Liberal Club. WDC have also produced the [River Wye Advice Note](#) to be read in conjunction with planning policy. The [Revive the Wye](#) Partnership have championed the river and secured funding. The [Environment Agency](#) have worked to try and remove barriers to fish passage and improve its biodiversity and a desire to see the culvert removed in the town centre is included in the [River Basin Management Plan](#) for the area. The [Chiltern Rangers](#) have secured funding and worked with volunteers to accomplish many improvements. The [Chilterns Chalk Stream Project](#) have given expert advice and run projects. The [Wycombe Wildlife Group](#) has worked tirelessly to remove invasive species and look after the river. The [High Wycombe Society](#) has long campaigned for the environment of High Wycombe and recently voted overwhelmingly to support the remaking the river.





# Appendix 1: DRF Plan of suggested course of remade river.



Page 38

**DRF Consulting Ltd - Internal Quality Assurance**

NO.	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	CHECKED
1	DRF Consulting Ltd - Internal Quality Assurance			

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 Tel: +44 (0) 1865 201 170  
 Fax: +44 (0) 1865 201 100  
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Consulting Engineers & Project Managers

NO.	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	CHECKED
1	DRF Consulting Ltd - Internal Quality Assurance			

Buckinghamshire County Council  
 TEE  
 HP20 1UY

General Arrangement  
 HWTCMP - A40 Oxford Road  
 General Arrangement

Sheet: HWTCMP  
 A40 Oxford Road

Scale: 1:1000

Drawn: NBS  
 Date: 01/11/10

Checked: NBS  
 Date: 01/11/10

Project: HWTCMP  
 Date: 01/11/10

Revision: 1



## Appendix 2: Public support

When Eunomia carried out the economic assessment, they interviewed 9 local stakeholders, 8 were very positive about the proposed work 'providing it was part of a wider scheme' and 'done properly'. They felt it would 'provide a location within High Wycombe's town centre' and 'a catalyst for regeneration' and indicated it would enhance attractiveness and increase footfall and turnover.

### Some views expressed by High Wycombe stakeholders about the proposed remaking of the River Wye

Reasons:	Provisos:
<p>"People often have a negative view of High Wycombe but become more positive when they visit and see the historic buildings".</p> <p>"We are short of places to go in the town centre to sit down"</p> <p>"The High street is dying currently. Would like to see it closed to traffic, only for bus/taxis use to create a café culture as in Reading".</p> <p>"The area is very drab, lots of buildings and tarmac".</p> <p>"Oxford Road has tended to divide the town into two halves so little movement because of the volume of traffic in that area".</p>	<p>"It needs to be managed subsequently as part of a bigger strategy."</p> <p>"It needs to be done properly with joined up thinking as part of a wider regeneration."</p> <p>"Physical access to the river is crucial, without it, it's pointless".</p> <p>"would be more of a focal point if it had the river and benches".</p> <p>"Needs to be in conjunction with more public open space along the river further through High Wycombe"/"Should be extended through the town".</p>
Positives:	Concerns:
<p>"The natural element of the river can be nothing but a good thing".</p> <p>"Catalyst for change in area that is traditionally the heart of the town centre".</p> <p>"If the area was an attraction rather than a divide it could start development".</p> <p>"People will actually want to come into town when there are pleasant walkways and greenery, especially seeing the river".</p> <p>"if the change could help build a café culture and was linked to development in the high street, it would be good for all".</p> <p>"it could be the primary driver/ first step to make a transformative area".</p> <p>"it would add to the offer of the town. If it stimulates the street scene it would be very positive".</p> <p>"Maybe would bring people to this side of town rather than staying by the Rye and would help the Eden area too".</p> <p>"It might form the glue to bring the two ends of the town together".</p> <p>"Creating green space would add to what the town has to offer".</p> <p>"Would be great to see swans and ducks on the river".</p>	<p>"Economically not sure that it is the best use of spend for impacting the Eden, have spoken with council about increasing streetscapes etc."</p> <p>"Really hard to see the benefits without considering the impact of the construction and works on the centre. Have experienced negative impacts from previous council work on footfall etc in the centre".</p> <p>"Not sure how it would impact on flooding. This would need to be assessed properly to reassure businesses".</p> <p>"This is a little distanced from the High Street so not sure it would impact there".</p>

# Appendix 2: Public support



Please reply to:  
CHRIS WOODMAN  
29 Maybrook Gardens,  
High Wycombe,  
Bucks. HP13 6PJ.  
Tel: (01494) 528106  
chriswoodman29@gmail.com

Cllr Hugh McCarthy  
Chairman, River Wye Task & Finish Group  
Wycombe District Council  
Queen Victoria Road  
High Wycombe  
HP11 1BB

23 August 2018

Dear Hugh

This letter is to notify the Task & Finish Group of the outcome of the consideration of the proposed deculverting of High Wycombe's waterways by the Society's Annual General meeting on 8 June when, as you will recall, I gave a presentation on the subject to our Society members.

In my presentation I reminded the meeting that the River Wye is steeped in history (20 mills mentioned in the Domesday Book) and originally went through our town centre. Although it was culverted in 1967 that was recognised as a mistake almost immediately. Deculverting became one of the Society's aims by 1972, and in 2004 it was adopted by the Council as an objective in the Wycombe District Local Plan. Since then, the Council has achieved a great deal and I showed photographs of the excellent work done through planning consents, on both the River Wye and the Back Stream, at the Retail Park, Glory Mill, Grafton Street and Wye Dene. I noted that it is an aim of Revive the Wye and Friends of The Wye to have a footpath along the length of the Wye, and to make it more attractive to wildlife with the possibility of attracting even otters and water voles. And in the town centre itself, there is already the garden with a plaque to Jack Scruton next to Queen Victoria Road, and the recently-improved stretch near the Fire Station.

Then in 2010 the Peter Brett study set out options for deculverting, showing how the river could be attractively laid out through the town centre, provided the water level was raised (which has since been enabled by reconfiguring the culvert under Westbourne Street).

Nevertheless, I expressed my concern that there were signs that the good work done so far might go uncompleted, with Wycombe District Council now hesitating, possibly concerned that early public reaction to the works on the alternative route around the town centre could spill over into a lack of public support for deculverting. I gave my view that, once the Gas Works link (Suffield Hill) is complete, the public would come to appreciate and to use the Alternative Route. And whereas there would be more opportunities for deculverting if the Abbey Way flyover were eventually removed, a decision to remove would be for elected Councillors to take at the time in light of their assessment of public opinion. Meanwhile many other attractive deculverting opportunities (including outside Sainsbury) amply justified the Society renewing its long-held policy in favour of deculverting.

At the end of my presentation the meeting (with 62 members present) was asked to confirm or otherwise that the Society's accepted policy is "in favour of deculverting our waterways". Approximately 50 members voted in favour, with no votes against and 6 abstentions.

We would be grateful for any indication you can give of the next steps for the TFG, and also what you would now like the High Wycombe Society to do to help achieve the deculverting objective.

A copy of my presentation (slides and text) is available if this would be of assistance.

Kind Regards

High Wycombe Society  
Planning Group

# Appendix 3: Summary of Environmental, Social and Health & Wellbeing benefits of remaking the river.

## Environmental Benefits

Chalk streams and rivers are internationally rare habitats (there are only 210 in the world). And in the UK they are designated a Habitat of Principal Importance (also known as a [Priority Habitat](#)) which means that they are recognised as most threatened and requiring conservation action under the ['UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework'](#) and [Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services](#)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/biodiversity-2020-a-strategy-for-england-s-wildlife-and-ecosystem-services>.

They are known for their exceptionally clean water which comes to the surface as springs from the underlying chalk aquifer. Their clean water, the substrate they flow over and their shallow gradients means that they have a unique set of characteristics which give them a rare and valuable ecology.

Despite the significant alterations to the Wye over the years the river still retains some of the special ecology which is associated with chalk streams. The Environment Agency have however identified that the river is failing its Water Framework Directive objectives in several ways, the upper section of the wye (from the source to the fire station) is classified as 'bad' which is the lowest category (<http://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/WaterBody/GB106039023890>). An area where there is significant scope for improvement of the river is with regards to fish passage. The EA and other groups are working towards removing barriers to fish passage but the largest barrier is the culvert which due to its length (greater than 50m) means that fish won't move through it. Removing the section of culvert on Oxford Road will not remove the barrier completely - as approximately 400m will remain - it will be a significant step forward which could be further extended in the future.

The remaking of the river would bring nature into the town centre with riverside and instream vegetation and also a variety of fauna, and the moving of underground services and removal of the culverts allows for rooting space to be created in which trees can be planted which can grow to their full potential.

[http://assets.wwf.org.uk/downloads/wwf\\_chalkstreamreport\\_jan15\\_forweb.pdf?\\_ga=1.44823268.1991529649.1444910634](http://assets.wwf.org.uk/downloads/wwf_chalkstreamreport_jan15_forweb.pdf?_ga=1.44823268.1991529649.1444910634)



### UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitat Descriptions

#### Rivers (Updated December 2011)

From:  
UK Biodiversity Action Plan, Priority Habitat Descriptions. BRIG (ed. Ann Madocks) 2008.

This document is available from:  
<http://www.defra.gov.uk/biodiv/2010>

For more information about the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) visit  
<http://www.jncd.gov.uk/page-5119>

Please note: this document was updated in November 2010, and replaces an earlier version, in order to correct a broken web-link. No other changes have been made. The earlier version can be viewed and downloaded from The National Archives:  
<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/2013030512244/http://www.defra.gov.uk/page-5706>



### UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework

Published by JNCC and Defra  
on behalf of the Four Countries' Biodiversity Group

### Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services



# Appendix 3: Summary of Social, Health & Wellbeing and Environmental impact of remaking the river.

## **Social, Health and Wellbeing benefits.**

Research has produced a large amount of evidence which demonstrates the positive impacts of green and blue space on health and wellbeing and this is accepted and promoted by many professional institutions the NHS and the UK government. The benefits come from both the way in which vegetation and water can change the physical urban environment which effects our bodies but also in the way in which the environment they create affects us mentally.

Remaking the river would not only bring the river back but it will also make green space into which trees and other vegetation can be planted. Trees planted in the ground can grow to their full potential and have far greater benefit. Leaves of plants capture particulate pollution and improve air quality, they cool the air around them through transpiration and shade, therefore reducing the heat island effect of urban areas, this is important because air pollution and excess heat puts stress on the human body and increases death rates.

The psychological effects of the remaking of the river would be likely to be wide ranging. Natural Environments tend to be visually complex, fascinating and mentally satisfying. The experience of seeing, hearing, touching and being within them reduces our stress levels, we become calmer, less tense and our blood pressure reduces, this is in stark contrast to the way we perceive many urban environments which can be hard, loud and threatening and these environments increase stress levels and blood pressure. The knock on effects of the physiological changes created by the worst urban environments has been shown through research to correlate with poor health and higher antisocial behaviour amongst other things. It has even been shown that just a view of nature can improve office workers state of mind and make them more productive, it has also been shown that people with a view of nature from a hospital window recover more quickly after operations. It is not surprising that in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century many green spaces were designated and protected with the health of the population in mind and that in many countries people are now prescribed spending time in nature to treat their physical and mental health.

What is sometimes an unconscious reaction to the environment impacts on our conscious choices of where we want to go and spend time. People will often go somewhere because they have to do their shopping or because they work there but when people have a choice they often prefer to spend time in more attractive places, often with green space. [WDC's canopy cover study](#) showed how property prices are higher where tree canopy cover is greater, that is because they are more desirable (many other correlations relating to health were also demonstrated).

Attractive places with green and blue spaces experience higher 'footfall' and 'dwell time' than places with equivalent services but without the green and blue spaces. This is because people visit them for more than just utilitarian reasons, they are destinations which people enjoy visiting. As they become destinations for their environment, they become places where people interact more and this has further positive physical and mental health

### **Further Reading on green and blue spaces and health:**

A good article which looks at how 'blue' spaces impact upon people's health: <https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/impact-sea-lakes-rivers-peoples-health>

A summary of lots of research into the positive impact of trees and green spaces: <https://depts.washington.edu/hhwb/>

A European project which looks at how blue spaces impact upon our health: <https://bluehealth2020.eu/>

# Appendix 2: Local Authority Cash-flow and Wider Economic Assessment of Remaking the River Wye.

Wycombe District Commissioned Eunomia to carry out an economic assessment of the impact of remaking the river along Oxford Road as part of phase 7 of the High Wycombe Town Centre Masterplan. The executive summary is included on this and the next 2 pages:



## Executive Summary

Remaking the River Wye along Oxford Road will generate a more attractive area with green and blue space that creates financial benefits to Wycombe District Council (WDC) and wider environmental and social benefits to residents and visitors of High Wycombe. It is likely that such a project could repay itself from additional cash flows generated to WDC, provided its cost were mitigated by connecting delivery to any future highways work in the area. Financial returns to WDC could be made more favourable if co-funding were secured from grant-giving bodies that support recreation of heritage, improvement in urban river quality or reduction in flood risk.

In particular, a remade river would generate financial benefits to WDC from:

- increased turnover, and hence increased rents to WDC, in the Eden Centre, by generating more footfall;
- increased occupancy of business and residential premises;
- increased rateable value of business premises;
- increased resale value of residential properties developed in sight of the remade area;
- reduced long-term costs of maintaining the culverts under Oxford Road, the condition of which are degrading and could present a flood risk to the town centre.



# Appendix 2: Local Authority Cash-flow and Wider Economic Assessment of Remaking the River Wye.

Figure E1 – Artist's impression of potentially remade section of the River Wye (<http://www.robertcolbourne.co.uk/>)

Looking west on a remade Oxford Road from the current roundabout location



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Looking west over a remade roundabout, from the flyover





# Appendix 2: Local Authority Cash-flow and Wider Economic Assessment of Remaking the River Wye.

The scale of benefits has been calculated using a mixture of literature reviews, comparable case studies and interviews with local High Wycombe businesses and WDC officials. A central model has been created that takes relatively conservative values from these findings and applies them to High Wycombe in relation to effects on properties that would be adjacent or within 500m of the proposed remaking area along Oxford Road, and its potential impact on footfall in the Eden Centre, which generates rents for WDC on the basis of its businesses' turnover.

To test the sensitivity of assumptions, two alternative scenarios were modelled, one using more conservative (Low) values and the other using values more in line with the findings found in research (High). Based on cost estimates of around £3.0m if co-delivered with wider highways development plans for the area, then the cash-flows to WDC are positive in most scenarios over a 30 year period, and positive in all scenarios over 60 years, see Table E-1.

**Table E-1: Summary of Financial Model Results**

Indicator/ Time	Low Estimate	Central Estimate	High Estimate
<b>30-year Investment Period</b>			
NPV (£)	-£0.7m	£0.5m	£2.6m
Benefit: Cost Ratio	0.8 : 1	1.2:1	1.8:1
Payback period	47 years	29 years	17 years
<b>60-year Investment Period</b>			
NPV (£)	£1.4m	£3.6m	£7.4m
Benefit: Cost Ratio	1.4 : 1	2.0:1	3.1:1

In addition to the financial benefits to WDC, it is highly likely that a wider range of environmental and social benefits would arise from the remaking. Based on evidence from comparable case-studies, and views from local stakeholders, the scheme would provide wider benefits related to a sense of place and 'civic pride', recreation, wellbeing and health arising from opportunities to relax and connect with nature, and by ameliorating the effects of urban heat and air pollution. There is also scope for reduced flood risk which removing culverts can bring about. As a benchmark (reported in the appendices of this report) the Mayesbrook Park project, which included a remaking of a river, produced a wider benefit to cost ratio of 7:1 beyond any financial returns.

In terms of local support, of 9 local stakeholders interviewed, 8 were very positive about the proposed work 'providing it was part of a wider scheme' and 'done properly'. They felt it would 'provide a location within High Wycombe's town centre' and 'a catalyst for regeneration' and indicated it would enhance attractiveness and increase footfall and turnover.

From a longer-term strategic perspective, the proposed remaking this section of the River Wye would clearly be in line with WDC's vision for High Wycombe town centre:

*"High Wycombe town centre will be a uniquely appealing and attractive destination with a thriving economic centre, and a high quality public realm, which emphasises the natural, historic and cultural assets of the town."*

Taking the opportunity to make one section of the river would also enable High Wycombe to take advantage of any wider redevelopment opportunities that might arise elsewhere along the remaining culverted section of River Wye. Revealing the river in its entirety would recreate a statement of identity for High Wycombe that serves a much bigger environmental benefit and provides a focal point for the town that was lost in the 1960s.

## Appendix 4: Investigation of potential funding sources for remaking the river.

Part of the remit of the Remaking the River T&FG has been to look into funding. A large number of potential sources have been investigated:

	Name	Description	Issues
Page 46	1 Thames Water - AMP6 – With EA	This money relates to water abstraction, it is essentially administered by the Environment Agency. There is only approximately £40,000 for the Wye.	EA would not want this all to be used towards one big project leaving them no funds for other smaller scale projects.
	Thames Water Community Environment Fund	This is a fund relating to community engagement in river projects and up to £100,000 is available.	This is catered towards community involvement rather than funding of capital projects. The project would need to be delivered in a completely different way to enable this money to be relevant. Therefore this is not a viable source of funding.
	3 Environment Agency – Water Environment Grant	This was a one off opportunity to seek funding for projects. It would cover capital costs and up to £2 million could be bid for.	This was aimed at projects on rural stretches of river, that were definitely going to go ahead starting in 2019. Remaking the River Wye could not be made to fit the criteria.
	4 Thames Rivers Trust	This was able to fund projects up to £25,000 which would: Slow the flow, Improve water quality, Increase access/connectivity for fish.	It is likely that we could be successful in applying for this, but the mismatch in scale means that it could only be a small additional part of a much larger funding package. (it is uncertain whether this will be available in the future.



# Appendix 4: Investigation of potential funding sources for remaking the river.

	Name	Description	Issues
5	Viola Environment Scheme	This fund is available for environmental and social projects	We would have to apply for this fund with a partner (we discussed this with the Groundworks trust) as it is not directly available to Local Authorities. The maximum award is £75,000 and this can only be for projects where the total cost is less than £250,000. Therefore we would have to separate part of the works to be a package which we could make appropriate for this fund, complicating project management and delivery. There is uncertainty whether we could be successful in obtaining this and we would need to do a lot more work with partners to and be sure the project was going ahead before pursuing.
Page 47	Bucks County Council RFCC	This funding is central government grant aid which is administered by the Thames Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC) which is associated with the Surface Water Management Plan for High Wycombe. The money is to help alleviate the surface water flooding problems in HW. To obtain funding a business case would need to be put forward. The funding is given out on a pro rata basis - x number of houses saved = y £ of funding. The most which could be bid for would be in the region of £250,000	Karen Fisher (BCC) does not see the reopening of the river project as having much potential to reduce surface water flooding and therefore does not believe this funding would be granted. However we are aware that flood maps show the area in front of M&S as being at risk from flooding BCC are now looking at doing some more modelling work which will inform thinking. ( <a href="https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/long-term-flood-risk/map?eastings=496443&amp;northing=192151&amp;address=100080505662">https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/long-term-flood-risk/map?eastings=496443&amp;northing=192151&amp;address=100080505662</a> ) If the culvert was opened up, the impact on the surface water flood risk would depend on the design and the capacity of the new river channel and associated connections. Therefore certainty on whether funding could be available from this source is dependent upon the results of the planned modelling, the design of the remade river and being able to make a successful bid.

## Appendix 4: Investigation of potential funding sources for remaking the river.

	Name	Description	Issues
7	Heritage Lottery Fund	This is the only Lottery Fund which could support the Remaking of the River Wye. It could in theory provide approximately £1.5 million for an eligible scheme.	A meeting with HLF in London revealed scepticism that the project could successfully attract this funding. Key issues included: The fund is heavily oversubscribed. There is no built heritage which would be uncovered as part of the project. There is not the urgency as is associated with other projects (e.g. building falling down). From a natural heritage perspective there the value for money is open to question as most of the cost relates to hard engineering works. There is limited scope for community engagement in the scheme.
8 Page 48	EU Life Funding & EU Regional Development Fund	Large sums of money (£millions) are potentially available. In 2014 an unsuccessful bid was made – helpful feedback was given.	With Brexit this funding will be unavailable. The bidding and project timescales mean that we will have left the EU before the start of the project and we could therefore not be successful. The scale of improvements to the eco-system was also an issue
9	WWF	WWF have funded projects on Chalk streams/ivers	Funding has been through money from HSBC which has now dried up and through Coca Cola – but only in areas where they extract water for making their drinks.
10	Esme Fairburn Foundation	In 2016 they allocated £49.1 million of funding towards a wide range of work including the environment.	They no longer fund capital costs
11	Highways England	Highways England had £300 million for environmental improvements to the road network.	This money is only related to Highways England own strategic highway network, this does not include the A40 in Wycombe.

# Appendix 4: Investigation of potential funding sources for remaking the river.

	Name	Description	Issues
12	Crowd Funding and sponsoring.	This could provide several thousand or perhaps 10s or even 100s of thousands towards the costs.	We cannot start a funding campaign unless we are sure we will do the work. Therefore this could be a potential funding source for top up funding but we would need a decision first. The administration of funds would need to be considered further.
13	Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	Both Cabinet and High Wycombe Town Committee are able to allocate CIL funding for the area in question. This money is collected from developers so that appropriate infrastructure improvements can be made.	CIL receipts are used to support the development of the local area, by funding: (a)the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure; or (b)anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area. Hence CIL funding is suited to projects like this which would bring about infrastructure renewal and support the regeneration of the town centre in a way that is consistent with the development framework and the Councils town centre vision
14	Capital Funding	Capital funding comes from the councils own funds. The Capital Programme agreed by February 2018 Cabinet and Full Council noted the aspiration to allocate £19m through CIL and Capital funding between 2019/20 and 2022/23 for the continuation of public realm and highway improvements in High Wycombe town centre. This has included provisions of £3.1 million for the remaking of river.	It is often (but not always) invested with the expectation of creating an asset or achieving a return. Remaking the river would produce long term returns to WDC as well as other returns e.g. place making, health & wellbeing, environmental gain, to the town and its businesses and people.

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To Conclude:

- There are only a small number of available funding options for remaking the river.
- If the scheme has the Council's support it will almost certainly need to provide the majority of funding to reopen the river through CIL and/or Capital funding.
- Crowd funding and other smaller grants may be able to provide a small amount of additional funding.

# Agenda Item 6.

## COMMISSION'S WORK PROGRAMME AND CABINET FORWARD PLAN

Officer contact: Catherine Whitehead (Head of Democratic, Legal & Policy Services)  
DDI: 01494 421980 Email: [Catherine.whitehead@wycombe.gov.uk](mailto:Catherine.whitehead@wycombe.gov.uk)

### What is the Commission being asked to do?

The Commission is asked to:

- i) Note the update on the Work Programme;
- ii) Identify any topics from the Cabinet Forward Plan that require review by the Commission as a future meeting, ahead of any item scheduled for consideration by Cabinet: and
- iii) Note the current position with regards to the Task and Finish Groups.

### Task and Finish Groups

The Committee is permitted (under the Constitution) to establish four Task and Finish Groups at any one time (not including joint Task and Finish Groups).

The current position regarding the established Task and Finish Groups are as follows:

- **Remaking the River Wye Task and Finish Group**

The Task and Finish Group presented the report to the High Wycombe Town Committee on 13 November where an extensive discussion was undertaken. The report of the Task and Finish Group has been featured as a separate item on this agenda.

### **Anti-Social Behaviour in the District Task and Finish Group**

At its meeting on the 12 November the Cabinet responded to the recommendations. These responses and the minute extract from the Cabinet meeting has been featured as a separate item on this agenda.

### **Budget Task and Finish Group**

The Budget Task and Finish Group membership has been agreed as follows:

Councillor A Collingwood (Chairman)  
Councillor Roger Wilson (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillor Mrs Lesley Clarke  
Councillor Matt Knight  
Councillor Chris Whitehead  
Councillor Rafiq Raja  
Councillor Hugh McCarthy

The arrangement for the first meeting of the Group was being undertaken.

### **Proposed new Review Topics**

If at any time Commission Members wish to suggest further topics for the Commission's consideration then please complete and return the new Work

Programme Suggest Form (**Appendix A**) to the Democratic Services section for consideration at a future meeting of the Commission.

### **Scrutiny Work Programme**

For items coming to meetings of the Commission that are not the subject of a Task and Finish Group, please see the table in (**Appendix B**), the current active Task and Finish Groups are also featured in the Gantt chart at the end.

### **Cabinet Forward Plan**

The Commission is also asked to consider the Cabinet Forward Plan published 28 August 2018 (**Appendix C**). The purpose of submitting the Forward Plan to the Commission is so that Members can review forthcoming items and highlight any reports that the Commission would like to consider ahead of Cabinet consideration.

## Guidance for Councillor for Work Programme Suggestions

### **Proposed scope / focus of review**

Identify precisely what will be reviewed to provide focus and direction.

### **Your rationale for selection**

What are the reasons for reviewing the topic and the key issues? Are they good ones which will stand up to Scrutiny themselves?

e.g. Is the issue important to local people?

What is the strength of Member interest?

What is the possible impact of a review – is there the potential to make a difference?

The focus must be on improving services, performance, policies or decisions for residents and/or significant savings. The Commission needs to be sure that the reviews do not tie up officers on work which has little impact.

### **Evidence**

What are the issues / facts which will support the need for a review?

e.g. Is there any evidence of dissatisfaction with the service or under performance?

### **Desired outcomes/objectives**

What are the outcomes the review is seeking or expected to achieve and how will it benefit or impact on the local community? Again, the Commission needs to be sure that the reviews do not tie up officers on work which has little impact.

e.g. Will the outcomes assist in achieving corporate priorities? If so, which ones?

### **Other comments**

Any other information, proposals or queries.

e.g. How will the subject be reviewed and is this achievable by the resources available?

The Commission needs to be aware of any impact on the ability of officers to deliver services especially small teams where there is likely to be a disproportionate impact.

What sort of timescale is involved?

Need to check what else has happened, is happening or is planned in the areas being considered in order to avoid duplication or wasted effort ( i.e. have regard to the wider programmes of reviews recently completed, being undertaken or programmed).

Are there other, more suitable, ways of investigating or picking up the issues?

## Work Programme Suggestion Form

Democratic Services  
Wycombe District Council  
Council Offices  
Queen Victoria Road  
High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire HP11 1BB

[committeeservices@wycombe.gov.uk](mailto:committeeservices@wycombe.gov.uk) 01494 421214

Your Name:

Contact Number:

**Proposed Scope / focus of review:**

**Your rationale for selection:**

**Evidence:**

**Desired outcomes / objectives / possible terms of reference:**

**Other comments:**

What timescale do you perceive to be necessary for this review?

- Urgent                       Within six months                       Within 6-12 months

## Wycombe District Council

### Improvement & Review Commission Plan – DECEMBER 2018 - MARCH 2019

Title & Subject Matter	Wards	Corporate Priority	Date to be taken	Lead Member	Department	Where referred to (if referred)	Contact Officer
Budget Task and Finish Group Report Report of the Budget Task and Finish Group	All Wards	Pounds. Delivering value for money	9 January 2019	Improvement & Review Commission	Finance	To Cabinet TBC	Catherine Whitehead, Head of Democratic, Legal & Policy. catherine.whitehead@wycombe.gov.uk
Commission Work Programme & Cabinet Forward Plan Commission Work Programme & Cabinet Forward Plan	All Wards	People. Engaging and working with our communities	9 January 2019	Improvement & Review Commission	Democratic, Legal & Policy Services	N/A	Catherine Whitehead, Head of Democratic, Legal & Policy. catherine.whitehead@wycombe.gov.uk
Commission Work Programme & Cabinet Forward Plan Improvement & Review Commission Work Programme & Cabinet Forward Plan	All Wards	People. Engaging and working with our communities	13 March 2019	Improvement & Review Commission	Democratic, Legal & Policy Services	N/A	Catherine Whitehead, Head of Democratic, Legal & Policy. catherine.whitehead@wycombe.gov.uk



## IMPROVEMENT AND REVIEW COMMISSION TASK AND FINISH GROUPS – as at 16 November 2018

2018		2019			
NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR
<b>REMAKING THE RIVER WYE TASK &amp; FINISH GROUP</b>  <b>Chairman:</b> Cllr H McCarthy  <b>Membership:</b> Cllrs Ms A Baughan, M Clarke, Mrs L Clarke OBE, R Farmer, A Hill, Mahboob Hussain, R Raja, P Turner & C Whitehead.					
<b>BUDGET TASK &amp; FINISH GROUP</b>  <b>Chairman:</b> Cllr A Collingwood <b>Membership:</b> Cllrs R Wilson (Vice-Chairman), Mrs L Clarke, M Knight, C Whitehead, R Raja, H McCarthy					

**KEY**

	current task and finish group		planned task and finish group		extant groups not currently active
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**Wycombe District Council**  
**THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES (EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS) (MEETINGS AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (ENGLAND)**  
**REGULATIONS 2012**

**Cabinet Forward Plan – 2018/2019– Published Tuesday, 6 November 2018**

**Notice is hereby given of the decisions listed below that are likely to be taken in private at the meetings indicated. For further information on why these matters will be considered in private, please see the description on the individual item.**

**Should you wish to make any representations in relation to the meetings below being held in private, please contact Democratic Services, Wycombe District Council, Queen Victoria Road, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP11 1BB. Email: [committeeservices@wycombe.gov.uk](mailto:committeeservices@wycombe.gov.uk)**

Y = key decision      \* = item to be submitted/decision to be made if necessary

Title & Subject Matter	Key	Decision to be taken by	Will the report be held wholly or partly in private	Reason no public access	Lead Member & Contact Officer
<b><u>Cabinet 17 December 2018</u></b>					
Remaking the River Wye - Task & Finish Group Recommendations Report of the Remaking the River Wye - Task & Finish Group		Cabinet	Open Report	N/A	Improvement & Review Commission  Head of Democratic, Legal & Policy.

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Agenda Item 6.

Title & Subject Matter	Key	Decision to be taken by	Will the report be held wholly or partly in private	Reason no public access	Lead Member & Contact Officer
Council Tax empty Premium & Discounts (subject to Legislation) Legislation to increase the empty homes premium commencing April 2019 is currently going through Parliament. The WDC scheme needs to be reviewed in light of these changes, once passed	Y	Cabinet	Open Report	N/A	Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources  Revenues and Benefits Service Manager
Recycling Centres	Y	Cabinet	Open Report	N/A	Cabinet Member for Environment  Head of Environment & Housing, Senior Democratic Services Officer
2019/2020 Council Tax Base & Collection Fund Surplus/Deficit	Y	Cabinet	Open Report	N/A	Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources  Head of Finance & Commercial
Draft Capital Programme	Y	Cabinet	Open Report/ Exempt Appendices	Para 3 - Information about the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).	Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources  Head of Finance & Commercial

Title & Subject Matter	Key	Decision to be taken by	Will the report be held wholly or partly in private	Reason no public access	Lead Member & Contact Officer
Draft Revenue Budgets	Y	Cabinet	Open Report/ Exempt Appendices	Para 3 - Information about the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).	Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources  Head of Finance & Commercial
Hughenden Quarter Upper Site	Y	Cabinet	Open Report/ Exempt Appendices	Para 3 - Information about the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).	Cabinet Member for Economic Development & Regeneration  Major Projects and Property Executive
Collins House	Y	Cabinet	Open report/ Exempt Appendices	Para 3 - Information about the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).	Cabinet Member for Economic Development & Regeneration  Major Projects and Property Executive
Ashwells	Y	Cabinet	Exempt Report	Para 3 - Information about the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).	Cabinet Member for Economic Development & Regeneration  Major Projects and Property Executive

Title & Subject Matter	Key	Decision to be taken by	Will the report be held wholly or partly in private	Reason no public access	Lead Member & Contact Officer
Baker Street - Phase 2	Y	Cabinet	Exempt Report	Para 3 - Information about the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).	Cabinet Member for Economic Development & Regeneration  Major Projects and Property Executive
<b><u>Cabinet 4 February 2019</u></b>					
Bucks Home Choice Policy Amendments		Cabinet	N/A	Open Report	Housing Services Manager
Referral from the Audit Committee on the Treasury Management Strategy 2019/20	Y	Cabinet	N/A	Open Report	A Member of the Cabinet  Head of Finance & Commercial
2018/19 Quarter 3 Budget Monitoring Report	Y	Cabinet	Open Report/ Exempt Appendices	Para 3 - Information about the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).	Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources  Head of Finance & Commercial
Revenue Budgets & Capital Programme	Y	Cabinet	Open Report/ Exempt Appendices	Para 3 - Information about the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).	Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources  Head of Finance & Commercial

Title & Subject Matter	Key	Decision to be taken by	Will the report be held wholly or partly in private	Reason no public access	Lead Member & Contact Officer
<b><u>Cabinet 11 March 2019</u></b>					
2018/19 Service Performance: Q3 (October - December)	Y	Cabinet	Open Report	N/A	Executive Leader of the Council Policy Officer
Temporary Accommodation	Y	Cabinet	Exempt Report	Para 3 - Information about the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).	Cabinet Member for Housing Development Manager

### Members of the Cabinet

Name	Address	Ward represented	Position
Cllr Ms K Wood	c/o Wycombe District Council Council Offices Queen Victoria Road High Wycombe HP11 1BB	Tylers Green & Loudwater	Executive Leader of the Council
Cllr D Barnes	18 Juniper Rd Marlow Bottom Bucks SL7 3NX	Greater Marlow	Executive Deputy Leader & Cabinet member for Engagement & Strategy
Cllr Mrs J Adey	Hatherley, Princes Road, Bourne End, Bucks SL8 5HZ	The Wooburns	Cabinet Member for Environment
Cllr S Broadbent	Michaelmas Cottage Bryants Bottom Road Great Missenden Buckinghamshire HP16 0JS	Greater Hughenden	Cabinet Member for Economic Development & Regeneration
Cllr D Carroll	10 Hoppers Way Great Kingshill Bucks HP15 6EY	Greater Hughenden	Cabinet Member for Youth & External Partnerships
Cllr D Johncock	32 Highfield Road Flackwell Heath High Wycombe Buckinghamshire HP10 9AN	Flackwell Heath & Little Marlow	Cabinet Member for Planning
Cllr J Langley	18 Rush Burn Wooburn Green Bucks HP10 0BT	The Wooburns	Cabinet Member for Housing

Cllr G Peart	8 Abbotswood Speen Princes Risborough Buckinghamshire HP27 0SR	Lacey Green, Speen and the Hampdens	Cabinet Member for Community
Cllr D Watson	Copper Howe, 17 Wendover Road, Bourne End 17 Wendover Road Bourne End Buckinghamshire SL8 5NS	Flackwell Heath & Little Marlow	Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources
Cllr L Wood	37 New Road Penn High Wycombe Buckinghamshire HP10 8DL	Tylers Green and Loudwater	Cabinet Member for Digital Development & Customer Services