



VISIONING ABERDEENSHIRE 2050

Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL





Serving Aberdeenshire from mountain to sea – the very best of Scotland

The best area

Helping to create and sustain the best quality of life for all through . . .

- happy, healthy and confident people
- safe, friendly and lively communities
- an enterprising and adaptable economy
- our special environment and diverse culture

The best council

Aiming to provide excellent services for all by . . .

- involving, responding and enabling
- finding new and more efficient ways of doing things
- providing elected leadership for our area
- working with our partners in the North East and beyond
- always looking to the future

Foreword

The purpose of this document 'Visioning Aberdeenshire 2014 – 2050' is to set out the Council's vision for Aberdeenshire – for the people we serve and the places we live and work in along with the environment we share.

Aberdeenshire Council is committed to ensuring that we offer the very best services in Scotland. In order to be the very best we must be ambitious and make plans.

Many of the Council's current strategies are scheduled for delivery within a 10 to 20 year horizon. In order to inform these strategies and their successors we wanted to create a vision for Aberdeenshire up to 2050.

Creating a long term vision is the easy part; the challenge is finding a way to get there and identifying the barriers which must be overcome.

The final vision will be integrated into Council policies and we will encourage our partners to use it in formulating their own policies in order to ensure we achieve our mutual goals.



Councillor James Gifford
Leader Aberdeenshire Council June 2014

Aberdeenshire in 2050

Our Vision

A **Society** that is renowned for being welcoming, modern, safe and healthy.

An **Economy** that is prosperous, diverse and attractive to investors, employers and employees.

Communities that are dynamic, culturally diverse and locally active.

An **Environment** that is beautiful, bio-diverse, accessible to all, and sustainably used.

Challenges from 2014 to 2050

We are clearly unable to say what will happen between now and 2050; however we can use the projections available today to consider what Aberdeenshire might need to address in the years ahead to achieve our Vision.

Economic progress will see physical growth in housing and employment opportunities in existing settlements and in new towns. This will mean services have to adapt or be delivered differently to support the infrastructure, utilities, community facilities, open space and sports, social care and people's wellbeing.

The economic base will become more dynamic. From an oil and gas based economy that currently sustains much of Aberdeenshire, we will have to be adaptable to support the wider energy service sector as it evolves, whilst also welcoming and providing the opportunity for new industries to locate in Aberdeenshire, therefore sustaining our strong economic foundations. Traditional industries such as farming and fishing and their associated processing sectors will have to adapt to the influences of climate change as well as facing the challenge of feeding an increasing world population, whilst technology and improved forest management should see an increasing percentage of local timber enter the construction market.



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As the economy of Aberdeenshire continues to grow, and with the delivery of projects such as Energetica, there will be an ongoing increase in population as more skilled and unskilled people come to live here. Education provision, for adults as well as children and young people, will need to adapt to meet the requirements of future employers and have a global perspective.

Social progress will see a continued growth in digital reliance and changes in the traditional way of working, shopping, virtual experiences and social interaction. For this reason digital adoption in many of our service areas is required. In other areas and without intervention, we will see a mis-match between healthier, active and longer living communities and increasingly less active individuals with increased obesity and health impacts. This means services will have to adapt to be responsive and proactive, promoting responsible communities and supporting all communities. Communities are likely to become more empowered, integrated and active. Those with greater community capacity are likely to be most successful and so we need to promote and support community empowerment across all Aberdeenshire.

As the population increases, the public services we provide will need to adapt by embracing even greater partnership working between the public, third and private sectors in Aberdeenshire and in neighbouring authorities. People will live longer and many will be active well into their 80's so we need to deliver services that are not just about care. Young people will face a conflict between the way things have traditionally been done and the way they want things to be. Without intervention pressures will remain in terms of securing an affordable place to live for young people, key workers and those on low wages.

People and communities will be more dynamic and culturally diverse. We will want to continue to preserve the best of our heritage while at the same time adopting different lifestyles and outlooks. Visitors to Aberdeenshire will expect real life experiences along with green, contemporary and responsive services.

Underpinning all of the above is our environment. Progress will see people, particularly the young, realise that the protection of our planet's resources is critical to our social, cultural and economic progress. By 2050 people in Aberdeenshire will expect that our biodiversity, farmland, marine resources, minerals and natural resources are protected, managed and respected in order to ensure sustainable development.

The challenge of climate change, pollution and resource depletion (either through over-exploitation or threat from climate change) should not be underestimated and without being addressed could threaten the ability for this Vision to be realised. Challenges are likely to be in terms of agricultural productivity, water and mineral resources, extreme weather conditions, flooding, energy security, and sea level rises.

Outcomes from our Vision

By 2050 we will have secured:

- Empowered communities where a sense of community, identity and citizenship is strengthened and supported and so are attractive and safe to live and work in;
- The narrowing of social, health and wealth inequalities and provision of opportunities for people from all backgrounds in order to break down divisions, encourage social wellbeing and cultural diversity;
- Educated and skilled young people and adults who want to live and be part of Aberdeenshire society so as to underpin the entrepreneurs, business leaders and social champions of the future;
- An increase in active, fit and healthy residents in all age groups, while managing a growing and aging population and so the demands on the health and social care and services;
- A growing and adaptable economic base where our core industries and traditional industries want to remain and new industries, people and visitors are attracted to the area because of its culture, vibrancy and quality of life;

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- Communities, towns and villages which have adapted to retail and social changes with such adaptation being innovative, responsive and timely;
- New buildings (homes, community hubs and places of work) that are well designed, affordable, maintained, energy efficient and fit for purpose which are in the right places for people and the environment;
- Efficient and accessible public and active transport options within and beyond the area to ensure we get people to where they want to be while not overloading the road network with unnecessary single occupant car journeys;
- A modern, accessible and well maintained infrastructure embracing roads, railways and digital connectivity, as well as promoting our air and sea routes to ensure we can compete with other regions and have the best foundations for economic growth;
- Effective protection of our natural environment, while lowering climate change emissions and proactively managing the effects of climate change such as erosion, flooding and sea level rises in order to protect where necessary or to manage as appropriate.



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