

**WOBURN SANDS TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Memorial Hall, 4 High Street, Woburn Sands, Milton Keynes, MK17 8RH**  
**Telephone: 01908 585368 e-mail: [clerk@woburnsandstowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@woburnsandstowncouncil.gov.uk)**  
**[www.woburnsandstowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.woburnsandstowncouncil.gov.uk)**

Members of Woburn Sands Town Council are hereby summoned to attend the Town Council Meeting of Woburn Sands on **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2025 at 7.30pm in the Committee Room, Memorial Hall.**  
Members of the public are welcome to attend.

**DRAFT MINUTES**

- 260/25 Present: Chairman David Hopkins, Cllrs Keith Temple, Trudie Sutton, Alex Poppleton, Lee George-Barnes Ward Councillor Tracey Bailey, Town Clerk Joanne Farrant. 1 Member of Public**
- 261/25 Apologies: None**
- 262/25 DECLARATION OF INTEREST:** Members to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests, or personal interests (including other pecuniary interests), they may have in the business to be transacted, and officers to disclose any interests they may have in any contract to be considered.
- 263/25 Invitation to TVP:** Will join the meeting when available - Update from meeting – 11<sup>th</sup> November - in Clerks Report
- 264/25 Mayor's Announcements and Report:** Main points from the Mayors Report are listed below. Full report can be found attached to the minutes:
- Christmas Fayre Feedback
  - Community Speed Watch Signs installed in Theydon Ave
  - Electric Bikes Hubs
  - Meet the Mayor Feedback
  - East West Rail (EWR) has published it's *You Said, We Did* Newsletter in November
  - New parent/carers toddler group
  - Issues Update
  - Creative and Cultural Strategy
  - New Town, New Town Briefing
  - Community Library Boxes
  - Tavistock Close
  - Flooding and Water Management
  - MK Sport Strategy
  - Street of the Month!
- 265/25 Public Question Time:** The time allocated is at the discretion of the Council/Chairman. Residents are invited to give their views and question the Town Council on issues on this agenda, or raise issues for future consideration at the

discretion of the Chairman. Members of the public may not take part in the Town Council meeting itself. A Councillor with a prejudicial interest in a particular issue may address the Council on the issue during Public Question Time subject to the Councillor leaving the room in the event of an exchange of the issue between the public and the Council during this period. 3 minutes per person if public wish to speak, or at the Chair's discretion.

**266/25 Co-opting Councillors:** Advert for new councillors has been placed on social media, the notice boards and in the Hogsty End Handbook. **ACTION:** Clerk to follow up previous enquiries.

**267/25 Minutes:** To consider the approval of the draft minutes of the last meeting of the Council held on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2025. **APPROVED**

**268/25 Actions from previous minutes and Clerk's report:**

- **Club Lane Lanterns :** Now installed – feedback has been good.
- **Meeting with the Neighbourhood policing team:** The meeting with Paige and Tia was good. The two days that they spent in Woburn Sands was looking at anti-social behaviour and drug related crimes. We looked at the map of Woburn Sands, and I talked them through the boundaries. There are a couple of spots that I see people congregating at night, so they were going to patrol those areas. Luke from Crimewave - CCTV also came in and he spoke to Paige about groups that meet at the rec. He has monitored this through the CCTV and Paige asked him to supply her with a report; I will keep in contact with him to make sure this happens. In the weeks before they came into the office, they had made some drug dealing arrests, one on the high street and one at the bottom of Russell Street at the junction with Weathercock Lane. Paige and team would be very keen for us to have another CCTV camera which we could hopefully fund, if we are awarded money from the Thames Valley Community Fund.  
We also spoke about private e-scooters in the town. There are quite a few. Paige said that she would have to request approval to be able to spend the time in Woburn Sands on this. For them, logistically, it can be a bit of a nightmare. When they seize an e-scooter they must call CMG to remove it which can take up to an hour. They are not allowed to take them in their car because of the risks with the batteries. If they did want to go ahead with an e-scooter operation in the town, I wonder if we could support them better, perhaps giving them access to the shed at the Summerlin so they could lock the scooters away until CMG can come and collect – this would require some thinking and planning!  
Finally, Paige and Tia both said that they must justify their time in Woburn Sands because there are few crimes reported, so we need to encourage people to report crime.
- **Christmas Lights:** Forde & McHugh came out and installed the Christmas lights on the lampposts. Unfortunately, our previous caretaker had painted over the Forde and McHugh references that were on the lampposts. This

turned into a big job for them, but they have completed the work. They had to change a timer on one of the lampposts as it was broken. They advised that there may be a few more to do next year. I had not been made aware in handover or by Forde and McHugh that I needed to book them to put lights on the library and with the additional time they had to spend on the streetlights the library does not have lights. I attended the Christmas Fayre Committee meeting and will be working with the committee to fix these bits for next year.

- **S106 Funds:** I was made aware that there are some S106 monies available to the value of £1831.61. Signs Express came and quoted for wayfinding and accessible signage for the halls Quote = £1586.47. I have applied for the S106 funds with this quote.
- £14500 has also been received for the repairs to the Sports Hall. I will feedback with the invoices for the works completed.
- **Russell St Car Park:** A resident reported 3 cars that had been abandoned in the Car Park. These have been logged through the report it system with MKC – two have been removed.
- **Library:** I attended a fire safety check at the library. One of the volunteers asked me to look in to policies that they should have at the library. I have contacted Viv at MK libraries to find out if they have standard policies to cover: H&S / Risk Assessment / Volunteer Policy
- **Caretaker Phone:** I would like to get another handset to keep in the office for times when a caretaker is on holiday or sick.
- **Edgewick Farm Meeting:** Edgewick Farm came in for a meeting. I have some actions to complete from the meeting.
- **Chairman of the Allotment Society:** Phil Rutt came in to the office. The Allotment Society and residents of woodland way are having difficulties with cars parking at the top of Woodland Way. These are both groups of dog walkers and people loitering in cars at night. The allotment society and residents are going to be putting a gate on the road, at the end of the houses and before the allotments. They wanted to make us aware. They are planning to do the work in the New Year. I asked them to report the loitering at night to the police and I have also emailed the neighbourhood team to make them aware. I have informed Edgewick Farm Volunteers and will check they are still able to get access through the gate.

## 269/25 Ward Councillors Reports:

### a. Cllr Tracey Bailey

- Herbicide query on Theydon Ave answered by MKCC
- Tracey has requested Zebra crossings to be re-painted in the High Street
- Complaint from wheelchair user about accessibility. Accessibility should be considered by planning when new businesses arrive.
- Reported a broken sign at the Leys/Theydon Ave from an accident that happened there recently.

- People have raised concern regarding a problem with rubbish in Blackthorn Grove
- Tree at the rec has been trimmed back by Woburn Sands grounds maintenance. Hedge along the side of swallowfield needs cutting back. This is with CBC.
- Concerns about gas canisters in store on high st. Fire service has been contacted.
- Tavistock is scheduled for resurfacing in the financial year, along with Theydon Ave
- Prosecution for fly-tipping. There have been 2 recently in MK
- Milton Keynes City Council has published its new Youth Justice Plan which sets out priorities and local support, alongside the work of Thames Valley Police, to keep children and young people safe and minimise youth offending.
- 13.9 million has been allocated for public transport for Milton Keynes

**b. Cllr David Hopkins:** Main points from the Report are listed below. Full report can be found attached to the minutes:

- Focus on the local plan and moving towards the Planning Inspectors enquiry in the spring.
- What can the s106 Receipts can be spent on by town and parish councils?
- Milton Keynes City Councils plans for the development of SE Milton Keynes
- Fire Prevention in the Danesborough & Wavendon Woods (Greensand Ridge)
- East West Rail & the future of the station / new Woodleys Farm bridge etc
- Highways Gully Cleaning .....
- Parishes Forum Meeting
- New Town Presentation
- Terminal Illness & Council Tax
- MK City Council Cultural Strategy is coming out for consultation soon....
- Public Advice: bird flu
- Milton Keynes City Plan 2050.
- The Parks Trust
- Centre for Ageing Better
- Cllr Pete Marland announces retirement

## **270/25 Committee Updates:**

### **a. Staffing Committee Update:**

To agree office closed 29<sup>th</sup> December – 2<sup>nd</sup> January incl. **APPROVED**

To agree TOIL for office staff and on call cover for caretakers. **APPROVED**

**b. Halls Committee Update:**

We have a couple of hall hirers that have booked the sports hall on a regular basis. This is all set up in the system. They have started to chop and change their bookings which is creating additional admin work for Rachel. She would like to introduce a £5 admin fee per change **APPROVED**

All bookings to be bought online for 2026. Some bookings have special arrangements that were previously approved on 2025 booking forms. Bookings for all halls should be paid in advance. **APPROVED**

New track has been installed on memorial hall stage. **NOTED**

**Question from a Hall Hirer:** One of the lines on a badminton court is called Kitchen Line which is 7 feet from the net on each side. It's about 6 inches further away from the front line of badminton court. Is it possible to add another line of different colour? We can fund the painting if the Council is happy to make this fit for both badminton and pickleball sports. Alternatively, can we put some masking tapes on when we have matches? **APPROVED - Ask MKCC for advice re the lines**

**c. Environment Committee Update:**

- Winter plants have been planted
- Edgewick Farm are happy support the poppy campaign and will make the bottom field available for decoration

**d. Finance Committee Update:**

To approve payments for December **(list circulated) APPROVED**

To approve bank statements **(circulated) APPROVED**

Approve grant applications: **(circulated) APPROVED**

Approve budgets for 2026/27: **(circulated) Noted with a view to approve budgets at the January meeting and to agree a precept**

- 271/25 EWR consultation/information:** EWR published their You Said, We Did – Autumn Update on 19<sup>th</sup> November. Waiting for news of a formal or informal consultation. EWR would like work to be completed for the 2031 opening of Universal. NPPF and transport and works act. Oxford to Bletchley delayed no guards trained, drivers are trained and there is a problem with a bend in the track which is a risk to trains over 6 carriages and the station at Winslow creates a vortex when the speed of a passing train reaches a certain speed.
- 272/25 Street map showing benches:** Clarification needed for the use of the map? Previous minutes: Cllr T Sutton asked if the Clerk can produce a map indicating all benches and planters. Cllr D Hopkins suggested we could make use of the interactive maps now available for asset records. The map is for insurance purposes and the asset register. **ACTION:** Clerk too gather photos and create a document/map of assets in the Town.
- 273/25 Response to MKCC Transport Strategy Consultation:** Town Council to encourage residents to go online and participate. Update needed for when it will begin. Consultation has been delayed.

- 274/25 New local plan (MK2050):** Consultation on the final proposed submission Milton Keynes City Plan 2050 document is open until 22<sup>nd</sup> December. This will be the new development plan for Milton Keynes, guiding the growth and development of the city until 2050. This consultation is evidence based . Focus will now be on planning inspector for July or September. Representatives from surrounding councils to come together and agree proposal.
- 275/25 Universal Studios:** Standing Item
- 276/25 Youth Club:** Questionnaire sent to Fulbrook. They have circulated the link in the parents bulletin on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> Nov. Online responses will come directly to the Town Clerk. 17 responses received. **Action:** Clerk to go out to the market for proposals on what would be on offer. Assess in February.
- 277/25 Mick George Community Fund:** Chairman and Town Clerk invited to the library on 17<sup>th</sup> December for the volunteers social event. Nicky (Librarian) would like to show Chairman and Town Clerk improvements that she would like made to the library. Potential to apply for a community fund for the library project.
- 278/25 Household Support Fund:** Funding has been received. CAB have sessions available for the New Year. 3 sessions = £570 – Fund received: £625 – £55 left. Alternatively we can book 4 sessions for £760 and the council approve a top up of £135 – **APPROVED** 4 Sessions to be booked with CAB
- 279/25 Website:** Vision ICT are assessing the website and will provide a report with their findings. Due to not receiving any feedback from them I would like to get quotes for a new website as it will need to be assertion 10 compliant. **APPROVED**
- 280/25 2 Station Road:** Standing Item – Town Council Parking Space located at the rear of 2 Station Road. Email sent to MKCC for a update on the sale. **ACTION:** Follow up with Bee at MKCC
- 281/25 Crossing for the schools on Station Road:** Email sent to MKCC for update
- 282/25 E-Bikes & E-Scooters:** Tom from Lime has been invited to the 12<sup>th</sup> January meeting **ACTION:** Invite Dott to join the meeting.
- 283/25 Community Market:** Space in the library booked for 13<sup>th</sup> December 10-11am
- 284/25 New Benches:** In the most recent newsletter there was a request for ideas for new benches in the town. We have received 3 suggestions received: **ACTION:** Clerk to look for available funding options
- The Leys: By the bus stop
  - Station Road: outside the alms-houses, by the bus stop
  - On the recreation Ground
- 285/25 Planning Applications:**
- PLN/2025/2501: Approval of details required by condition 6 (Implementation and Maintenance of Railway Fencing) for development stage 2D of application ref. TWA/18/APP/04 relating to the Network Rail (East West Rail Bicester to Bedford Improvements) Order 2020: Land Between Bletchley And Woburn Sands Associated

With The Route Corridor of The East West Rail Project <https://www.be.milton-keynes.gov.uk/pr/s/detail/a0lWS0000032gkbYAA> **Comments by 17<sup>th</sup> Dec**

PLN/2025/2505: 1 THE LEYS, WOBURN SANDS, MILTON KEYNES, MK17 8QF  
Erection of first floor side extension and single storey rear extension  
<https://www.be.milton-keynes.gov.uk/pr/s/detail/a0lWS0000032iZVYAY> **Comments by 24th Dec**

PLN/2025/1962: ST HILARY, 46 WEATHERCOCK LANE, WOBURN SANDS, MILTON KEYNES, MK17 8NY Proposed extension to existing garage <https://www.be.milton-keynes.gov.uk/pr/s/detail/a0lWS000002PRa9YAG> **Comments by 24th Dec**

**ACTION: Respond to all applications**

**Notifications of decisions made by MKCC:**

PLN/2025/1483: The crown reduce by 1 to 1.5m all round to previous reduction points of Field Maple trees (T1 & T2) to maintain tree health protected by Milton Keynes Council Tree Preservation Order no. PS/540/15/165 **at** 29 TURNPIKE COURT, WOBURN SANDS, MILTON KEYNES, MK17 8UA- <https://www.be.milton-keynes.gov.uk/pr/s/detail/a0lQH000003Rnan>. **NOTED**

PLN/2025/2133: The reduction by up to 3m in height and 0.5m from sides of Holly (T1) **at** 4 STATION ROAD, WOBURN SANDS, MILTON KEYNES, MK17 8RW  
<https://www.be.milton-keynes.gov.uk/pr/s/detail/a0lWS000002fZiE> **NOTED**

PLN/2025/1933: Certificate of lawfulness for proposed use of provision of a MOT testing centre for Class 4 Vehicle to be ancillary use to the existing car servicing and repairs business (use class B2) **at** UNIT 9, PRISTINE BUSINESS PARK, NEWPORT ROAD, WOBURN SANDS, MILTON KEYNES, MK17 8UD <https://www.be.milton-keynes.gov.uk/pr/s/detail/a0lWS000002LsvV> **NOTED**

PLN/2025/2116: The crown reduction by 3m of sycamore tree (T1) **at** HOLLY LODGE, 52 WEATHERCOCK LANE, WOBURN SANDS, MILTON KEYNES, MK17 8NY  
<https://www.be.milton-keynes.gov.uk/pr/s/detail/a0lWS000002e6dR> **NOTED**

PLN/2025/1983: The erection of a single storey rear extension **at** 3 TAVISTOCK CLOSE, WOBURN SANDS, MILTON KEYNES, MK17 8UY <https://www.be.milton-keynes.gov.uk/pr/s/detail/a0lWS000002Uve1> **NOTED**

PLN/2025/2174: Non-material amendment seeking to amend plots 47, 50, 58 & 71 amending the 'Stratford' house type (relating to permission ref. 22/03005/REM for [Approval of reserved matters (layout, scale, appearance and landscaping) pursuant to outline permission ref. 21/02085/OUT (for the construction of up to 103 residential dwellings, together with associated access, parking, open space, landscaping and all ancillary works]) **at** Land Off Newport Road, Newport Road, Milton Keynes, MK17 8UE <https://www.be.milton-keynes.gov.uk/pr/s/detail/a0lWS000002jUla> **NOTED**

PLN/2025/2088: The felling to ground of Holly (T1) approx. 6 metres tall **at** 52 STATION ROAD, WOBURN SANDS, MILTON KEYNES, MK17 8RU  
<https://www.be.milton-keynes.gov.uk/pr/s/detail/a0lWS000002cBm5> **NOTED**

**286/25 Notification of urgent decisions made:**

Lobby in the memorial hall had a leak in the rain. D Haynes came out to fix the leak. Caretaker has painted over the water marks: **NOTED**

**287/25 Correspondence to note: None**

**288/25 Councillors Reports and items for the next agenda:**

**Woburn Sands Convenience Store: ACTION:** Follow up on the signage with planning and Cllr L Goerge-Barnes to pop in to speak about the cage of cardboard being kept outside the shop.

**289/25 Date of next meeting:** Monday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2026, Committee Room at the Memorial Hall

**Meeting Ends: 21:00**





## Chairman / Mayors Report – December 2025

**Town Council Meeting – 8 December at 7.30 pm - Public Question Time:** The time allocated is at the discretion of the Council/Chairman. Residents are invited to give their views and question the Town Council on issues on this agenda or raise issues for future consideration at the discretion of the Chairman. Members of the public may not take part in the Town Council meeting itself. A Councillor with a prejudicial interest in a particular issue may address the Council on the issue during Public Question Time subject to the Councillor leaving the room in the event of an exchange of the issue between the public and the Council during this period. 3 minutes per person if public wish to speak, or at the Chair's discretion.

### Christmas Fayre



What a turn out for the Christmas Fayre, great to see it back in full swing after having to cancel last year's event due to the inclement weather was pleased to be able to help the Deputy Mayor on the day of the Christmas Fayre. The Town Council has received the following update from the Christmas Fayre Committee.

*'The Woburn Sands Christmas Fayre would like to thank all the amazing local businesses who have supported our event this year. Our biggest thanks go to our biggest supporters; Frosts for donating all the small trees for the High Street, Lions Estate Agents for sponsorship, advertising boards and first prize in the raffle and Dudley's for giving up so much of their time putting up trees and transporting various items for us.*

*We would also like to thank all of the businesses who kindly donated a prize to our raffle - AG & WS Golf Club, Woburn Safari Park, Spinks Creative, Redrow, Pikesleys, The Woburn Fort, Jalori, Doe & Fawn Coffee, Ritual Fitness, Social Pottery, The Whisk, Mrs Macs, The Swan, Ottaman's Kitchen, The Greedy Italian, Alexia Loves, Lovingly Made by LJ, Greggs.*

*Thank you to everyone who came out and supported the stalls and visited Santa. We hope you all had a great day!*

*And of course, a huge thank you to all our fabulous volunteers who put in so much time and effort to produce this great community event.*

*We are always on the lookout for more volunteers to help keep this festive event running. If you would like to get involved, please email us on: [woburnsandschristmasfayre@gmail.com](mailto:woburnsandschristmasfayre@gmail.com)*

*Our next task will be the removal of trees on Sunday 4th January, from 9am at the Memorial Hall on the High Street. The more volunteers, the quicker the job! '*

## Community Speed Watch Signs



Along with other volunteers, I have installed two Community Speed Watch signs at either end of Theydon Avenue in support of the resident's community speed watch group of volunteers that operate on that street. I am talking with residents to devise the next stage of the strategy to lobby MK City Council to take further action to calm traffic and indeed dissuade traffic from using this rat run route. Measures need to be in place before development of the SEMK residential development of up to 4,000 dwellings begins construction west of Woburn Sands in 2026/27.

## Electric Bikes Hubs



The Town Council is meeting with Lime Bikes and Dott Bikes in January.

Colleagues may be interested in reviewing the mapping of the potential future locations.

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/edit?mid=1ykwMXAHouGkHbLthc1zH-lcfJh3MNA&ll=52.04917580574174%2C-0.6976458412541464&z=12>

Dott is planning to end the free-floating operation by the end of the year and move to mandatory parking locations. It would like to finalise the suggested locations asap.

[www.ridedott.com](http://www.ridedott.com)



**Saturday 13th December**  
**10.00AM – 11.00AM**

**Woburn Sands Library,  
The Institute, High Street, Woburn Sands**

**Come and say 'Hello!'**

**Come along for a friendly chat with your Town  
Mayor and Town Council Representatives**

- **Discuss local matters**
- **Pose your questions**
- **Share your ideas and suggestions**

**No appointment necessary – just drop in!**



**Town Mayor  
Cllr David Hopkins**



**Meet the Mayor Feedback - Tackling cold calls in a No cold calling zone**

Residents raised the question of Woburn Sands becoming a No Cold Calling Zone at the November Meet the Mayor session bring the town in line with the blanket No Cold Calling Zone order across the whole of neighbouring Central Beds Council.

MK City Council do apparently follow up all reported incidents of cold calling. This may be limited to finding out why a trader has ignored a designated no cold calling zone but may include more formal enquiries.

**There is no law preventing cold calling.** However, by law, you have 14 days to cancel contracts signed at home or your place of work for works costing more than £42. The trader must give you a cancellation notice, allowing a 14-day cooling off period. It's a criminal offence if they don't do this and Trading Standards may be able to take enforcement action.

Many people prefer not to be disturbed by people selling goods or services (such as roofing work, driveways, tree trimming and so on). If you would like to prevent these callers from knocking on your door, you can put up a 'No Cold Calling Sticker'.

You can ask for a sticker by calling the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on 0808 223 1133 (they will pass your name and address on to MK City Council so that MKCC can send it to you).

You can visit the Money Saving Expert website where you can download a trading standards sticker and print it out for yourself. This website also has some useful information about avoiding junk telephone calls and unwanted post.

You can buy stickers from a number of online sellers, including sellers on eBay and Amazon

If you see doorstep cold callers operating in a No Cold Calling zone in MK, please contact us through our partners the Citizens Advice consumer helpline on freephone 0808 223 1133 or online via their website.

You can also report doorstep cold calling incidents to Thames Valley Police on 101 or if you feel intimidated or are concerned for vulnerable neighbours by calling 999.

### **Padel and Pickleball tennis**

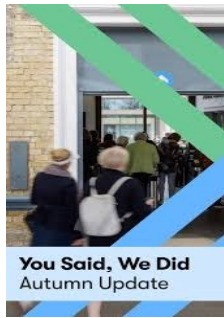


Residents raised the prospect with me at the Meet the Mayor session of padel and pickleball (tennis) being promoted with facilities in the town. They are no longer fringe sports. I was told that they are apparently reshaping the UK's leisure landscape, with new courts opening every week and clubs scrambling to meet demand. For developers (such as those working on the SEMK expansion areas close to the western end of Woburn Sands and other asset owners and contractors, this shift is creating

fast-moving opportunities. From repurposing underused tennis facilities to building specialist indoor venues, I am told that infrastructure needs to be catching up. Pickleball is also I am told, growing quickly as well. According to Sport England, over 27,000 people played the sport at least once last year across more than 270 venues. Pickleball England has seen a 73% increase in registered players in 2024, with growth set to accelerate again in 2025.

The Town Council and Woburn Sands Futures will work with developers to see if facilities can be included in the leisure area to be designed on the western end of the current town development area boundary.

## East West Rail (EWR) has published it's *You Said, We Did* Newsletter in November



Between 14 November 2024 and 24 January 2025, EWR carried out our third non statutory consultation offering local communities, landowners, and other stakeholders the opportunity to help shape our proposals. The consultation shared emerging plans and gathered feedback on our design proposals and options. They provided an overview of how the consultation was delivered and some emerging findings in our 2024 NonStatutory Consultation Update published in May 2025, which can be found by visiting: [www.eastwestrail.co.uk/consultation2024](http://www.eastwestrail.co.uk/consultation2024) .

As part of the consultation, EWR asked for feedback to help it develop plans for:

- The railway's alignment.
- Station locations and sizes, parking, and access.
- How the railway would cross roads and rivers.
- How the railway would impact existing level crossings.
- Ways to avoid or reduce environmental effects and improve both the natural and built environment.

They also asked for feedback about our approach to consultation and the information it presented, to help them improve any future consultations they carry out.

In total, EWR received 6,218 responses which included feedback on route-wide matters as well as specific proposals in local areas.

Following the consultation, EWR analysed the feedback received and grouped feedback comments into themes, including:

- Community benefits and impact.
- Environment and sustainability.
- Traffic and transport.
- Construction and logistics.
- Land and property

See the full report at <https://eastwestrail.co.uk/you-said-we-did>



There has been an expression of interest (via Community Action) from residents in the newer part of the town who would like to establish a group for parents/carers and their children.

The residents are seeking support for the idea on local social media to gain more interest and establish just how deep is the level of interest.

The clerk and I will be meeting with Community Action and with the residents to establish the next steps.



## Issues Update

As Mayor and Chairman of WSTC I have been in correspondence with MK City Council regarding

1. The Town Council proposal for a safe crossing for school students crossing Station Road heading towards Fulbrook and Swallowfield Schools.
2. Any updates to the dates of the completion of the 20 MPH through the remainder of the town.
3. Updates on proposals for calming on Theydon Ave. Ideally, we need urgent sight of a traffic management plan in light of East West Rail, the SEMK development and proposals contained in MK2050. We are aware that both MKC and EWR have prepared such plans which they appear reluctant to share.
4. Other updates on Woburn Sands highways related issues in the process of being addressed (or not) as the case may be.

**BE PART OF  
TREE CHEERS FOR WAVENDON**

In association with the Forest of Marston Vale Trust, England's Community Forests, and backed by DEFRA, we're planting nearly 900 trees as part of *"Trees for Climate"*. Come along to the new Wavendon Heights Community Playing Fields off Dankworth Way, Wavendon, MK17 8ZN on Sunday 18th January 2026 between 10am & 2pm and be a part of *"TREE CHEERS FOR WAVENDON"*.

*Help make this amazing new open space even better, fight climate change, and get involved with your community!*

Dress appropriately for the weather – It might be muddy, so wellies are recommended, and wrap up warm for the weather! Suitable for all ages. No booking required – just turn up and join in!!

Follow this link for tree planting guide:-  
<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/advice/how-to-plant/>

LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU.  
Email:- [WavendonConnect@WavendonParishCouncil.gov.uk](mailto:WavendonConnect@WavendonParishCouncil.gov.uk)

Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

England's Community Forests

Forest of Marston Vale



## **Creative and Cultural Strategy**

I attended the launch of the consultation phase of the new city council Creative and Cultural Strategy at MK City Centre Library. Amongst other issues we heard about the planned new conference and events centre to be installed in the city centre close to the railway station.

### **The Six Priorities/Themes of the revised strategy will be:**

#### **A. Cultural Identity & Values**

What makes Milton Keynes unique culturally?

How do we tell our story to ourselves and others?

#### **B. Access, Inclusion & Participation**

Who's currently engaged in cultural life? Who isn't?

How do we ensure broader and deeper participation?

#### **C. Spaces, Places & Infrastructure**

What's working and what's missing – venues, public space, digital infrastructure?

#### **D. Skills, Talent & Workforce**

How do we nurture creative careers and retain talent?

What partnerships are needed for education/training?

#### **E. Funding, Investment & Sustainability**

What would a sustainable funding ecosystem look like?

How do we build resilience?

#### **F. Collaboration, Leadership & Governance**


How do we better work together as a sector?

What models of cultural leadership work for MK?

The new centre close to the CMK railway station will be constructed to the following specifications

Live music and entertainment focus with 3,500 capacity indoor venue (mid-scale) with 250+ events per year, with over half being main auditorium events

- 350,000+ visitors to CMK every year
- Transformative for the nighttime economy and street scene
- Catalyst for cultural ecology
- £75m investment by MKDP in the city centre
- £157m monetised wider benefits (HMT, MHCLG, DCMS)
- Targeting opening Q1 2029



**9. Who pays for all this? What does Milton Keynes get by being part of the programme?**

The Government is expected to provide some funding as part of their support for the New Towns programme; this could be in the form of grants and/or loans. A Development Corporation would also work with developers to make sure more of the increase in land value is reinvested into infrastructure like roads, schools, public transport and utilities.

An important part of how any funding will be used is to help pay for a bus rapid transport system which we call Metro. Metro will use tram-like vehicles – similar to the Belfast Glider – initially on a network of three lines which will serve key locations including Central Milton Keynes, the hospital, Bletchley and new expansion areas. The system will give everyone more choices in how they move around the city, without needing access to a car.

We would also aim to put in place a cashflow mechanism – similar to the Tariff approach that already operates in our major growth areas – that allows us to continue to deliver infrastructure ahead of expansion.

### New Town, New Town Briefing

I also attended a briefing given to town and parish council regarding the impact on MK of the government's new town in the new town announcement.

In effect this would mean an additional 40,000 dwellings in the north of MK around Haversham and Stoke Goldington with accompanying infrastructure plus additional development in the east of MK east from Moulsoe/New Crawley to the Beds border and a regeneration of central MK with homes for 16,000 more people in numerous tower blocks creating a Manhattan MK.

MK hope this could also lead to a new Mass Rapid Transit system (MRT) to be called Metro and based on the Glider System in use in Belfast.



# HAVE YOUR SAY



Thames Valley Police (Hosted by Wavendon Parish Council)

*Have your Say* event

Wednesday 7 January 2026 from 7.00pm to 8.00 pm

Wavendon Community Hub, off Dankworth Way, Glebe Farm, Wavendon, MK17 8ZN



## Community Library Boxes

I have been invited as Mayor of Woburn Sands to visit the \*Men in Sheds Group in January and to, hopefully, place an order for two community Library Boxes to be located in the town. The boxes will be based on the design used in the very popular and much used box in Wavendon and should be installed in the Spring.

*\*Men in Sheds MK is a registered charity, primarily, though not exclusively, for men. Many are retired or not working. The charity works in an informal way and is open up to four days a week. Members have the use of workshop space for wood and metal work, crafts, model making, art and electronic projects. We undertake all sorts of construction activities: making things for individual members and to fulfil commissions from the community*



## Tavistock Close

I was disappointed to find that MK City Council did not consider the appalling road surface conditions at Tavistock Close sufficiently bad to warrant repairs. The response from the Highways team at MK City Council with regards to the road surface breakup is reproduced below.

- Our highways inspector has checked the defects you reported to us and assessed it based on our criteria that categorises defects into low, medium or high risk
- This defect you reported has been assessed as LOW, which means it will not be repaired unless it gets worse
- We will continue to monitor the road on our regular safety inspections
- If you'd like to know more about our Codes of Practice, inspections and decision-making process, visit the Highways section on the MKCC website

Highways' expectation is that Cllrs will need to refer to the library for more specific explanation as to why this task is a low priority

### Flooding and Water Management



The Clerk and I are meeting with Phillip Lovesey (Area Manager) of the Inland Drainage Board on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> December to view first-hand the areas of the town liable to flooding.

- Bedford Group of Drainage Boards | Vale House | Broadmead Road | Stewartby | Bedfordshire | MK43 9ND



The Clerk and I will be meeting Library volunteers on 17 December for the Christmas thank you event and will be reviewing improvements suggested by the Full Time Librarian to the layout, structure and working of the library.



I have been contacted by residents of Elliot Avenue who have moved in in recent times and are now concerned that that street may become an access to any new Woburn Sands station car park and possibly by definition a potential rat run into and out of the planned expansion area of South East Milton Keynes.

Clearly we cannot comment until East West Rail reveals its plans for any station move and MK City Council agrees any highways plans for the so-called Woburn Sands SEMK Transport Hub so, as they say, watch this space.



### As Mayor and Chair of WSTC I attended the launch of the MK Sport Strategy

Last week was also the first meeting of the MK Clubs Forum, which will meet regularly to connect the city council with the topics that grassroots sports clubs feel is most important. The Forum welcomed its new Sports

Strategy, which sets out how the council can support clubs so they can improve community engagement and get more of the resources they need to thrive. Read the full strategy here.

<https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/leisure-sport-and-community-activity/our-strategies>



And finally, the selection for street of the month in need of urgent repair and resurfacing goes yet again to Theydon Avenue and has been reported, for the umptieth time to MK City Council Highways team for urgent remedial works.

Given the response they gave to the potholes and decay in Tavistock Close we are not holding our breath.

*David Hopkins – Mayor of Woburn Sands (December 2025)*



## **Report from your local Unitary Councillor, Cllr David Hopkins**

Focus on the local plan and moving towards the Planning Inspectors enquiry in the spring.

I, along with the town clerk, attended a NALC Planning Seminar in Aylesbury on 24 November focusing on local plans and the Bucks Local Plan and the MK Local Plan, MK2050 in particular. The seminar was titled Futureproof Planning, and the slide set will be circulated to fellow councillors separately.

However, headlines from the event

Expect an announcement from government on its changes to NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) on 19 December. Major changes expected

- Restrictions on additional 'evidence' presented at planning appeals
- Neighbourhood Plans would be valid for only 5 years (currently 10)
- Changes to National Development management Policies. Unlike the broader National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which guides plan-making and decision-taking, NDMPs are intended to directly influence planning decisions by overriding local policies where there is a conflict.
- The Secretary of State will 'call in' any planning decisions for sites with over 150 dwellings
- Parishes will no longer be considered as statutory consultees
- New combined authorities being promoted
- Housing delivery is currently at a 10-year low
- MK has a 7.31-year land supply (min acceptable is 5 years) but Bucks varies from area to area from 3.62 years to 0.75 years in south of the county.

### **What we don't know**

- The role of 'community engagement' moving forward
- What will be the revised 'Neighbourhood Priority Statements' – these are supposed to be focused mainly on local issues, priorities and ideas drawn from forms of thorough survey and not move on – at that stage – to what initiative might be best to deliver on those priorities
- The status of climate change as it seems that Environment Outcome Reports will replace Strategic Environment Assessments. This means a developer simply pays a sum in compensation or creates an alternative environment to replace areas destroyed in development. Whilst the government always sites bats or spiders etc this also applies to dormice and badgers!
-

So

- Is it a system in turmoil
- Is the government attempting to achieve more from less
- Does the government, as it appears, view parishes as 'blockers'?
- And therefore, town and parish councils are being driven to lead on behalf of their respective communities

### Conclusions

- A move towards multi parish neighbourhood plans and joint neighbourhood spatial strategies, scenario planning and the use of professional specialist consultants.
- Local Plans do not think spatially, strategic planning councils choose the least worse options in its planning decision
- The Government has now published new planning practice guidance (PPG) on Green Belt land which outlines the steps to be taken by Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) in assessing Green Belt land to identify grey belt, assessing development proposals on grey belt land and the Golden Rules (specifically accessibility to green space).
- Town and Parish Councils must make themselves aware of their rights under Rule 6 status. An Inquiry procedure also enables interested parties to apply for 'Rule 6' status. This means that parishes can actively engage in the inquiry process and will provide a Statement of Case, proofs of evidence and cross examine at the inquiry.
- Government also views 'nature' as a blocker to planning. However, the Planning and Infrastructure Bill look at establishing the Nature Restoration Fund and thereby create the opportunity for housing and infrastructure to do more for environmental recovery.
- Under the mitigation hierarchy the developer pays money to natural England with which they would acquire alternative sites for displaced nature elsewhere. But there will be the loss of specific habitats. However, it is claimed that developers actually prefer to retain green spaces as they add to the value of the built environment. A new Nature Bill is due in 2026.
- People are urged to review the \*Wild Justice Report at <https://wildjustice.org.uk/general/lost-nature-report/>
- National research reveals that only \*53% of green features are ever delivered in the finished developments

The seminar then referred to the Local Plan for Buckinghamshire

<https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-planning/buckinghamshire-local-plan/>

And the Natural Environment Partnership, which is the Local Nature Partnership for Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes

<https://bucksmknep.co.uk/> and <https://bucksmknep.co.uk/nature-strategy/>

### Recommendations from your ward councillor to the Parish Council

1. That Woburn Sands TC looks to work with its fellow Danesborough Parish and Town Councils to have professional representation at the forthcoming public (Inspectors) Enquiry – likely to be late Spring 2026 - and to place within its budget its proportional share of that cost based loosely on its population figures. Assuming a total cost of £15K that would amount to just a 35% proportion for Woburn Sands.

- 2. That Woburn Sands appoints a representative to attend a Task and Finish Group made up of representatives of each of the parishes under the heading of Danesborough Futures T&F Group with the set purpose of selecting a suitable professional consultancy to act on their behalf jointly, set out the terms and conditions of the appointment and the outcomes required for representation at the Public Enquiry**

Note: The seminar also heard that it was both lawful and encouraged for parishes to use s106 monies for the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans.

**What can the s106 Receipts can be spent on by town and parish councils?**

Regulations state that this proportion of funds must be 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.'

This gives Parish and Town Councils considerable freedom to spend their proportion of s106 on things that address the impacts of developments on the area.

Examples include:

- Improvements to village halls, playparks, footpaths, streetlights etc.
- Preparation of a Neighbourhood Development Plan (providing it addresses the demands that development places on the area)
- Planning Application Fees – monies can be used towards a planning application fee that relates to community proposals

**Other Matters**

- Milton Keynes City Councils plans for the development of SE Milton Keynes
- Fire Prevention in the Danesborough & Wavendon Woods (Greensand Ridge)
- East West Rail and the future of the station / new Woodleys Farm bridge etc
- Highways Gully Cleaning .....

This was the response provided to the enquiry by MK City Council:

MKCC apparently follow a risk-based approach to gully cleansing. This is in line with its Codes of Practice which sets out how it will carry out the maintenance of its 75,000+ gullies and drainage infrastructure. They maintain that as they can't do everything, they use a method of prioritising maintenance actions so that areas with recorded flooding issues are done more frequently.

MKCC apparently assess requests for gully cleaning based on flood risk; photographic evidence or site visits; when we last visited or if there is a planned visit; last recorded silt level. After this assessment has been made, the enquiry will be either Critical, High, Moderate or Low Risk.

Critical areas: they report will be visited twice a year to make sure all the roadside gullies are working to capacity.

High Risk: will be done once every two years.

Medium Risk: will be done every four years.



Low Risk: we will attend once within a six-year period.

The councils gully tanker is in constant use and so if it attends a site as part of its cleaning programme and cannot access the gully due to parked vehicles, it is likely that we will be unable to attend again until the next planned cleaning date.



### Parishes Forum

The Parishes Forum (online only this time) was hosted by MKCC on 4 December includes

- AI – Artificial Intelligence – Cloudy IT

David Hall (Managing Director)

Steve Walker (Head of AI)

- MKCC and AI

Lisa Beckett (MKCC – Head of Customer and Insight)

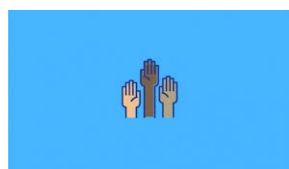
- Parish Successes – AI (A Parish Perspective)

Lynne Compton (Town Clerk – Stony Stratford Town Council)

- Good News and Hot Issues – Sports Strategy Update

Kelly Sutton (MKCC - Sports Partnership Officer)

Sarah Gonsalves (MKCC - Director of Customer and Community Services)



### East West Rail

**Subject: You Said, We Did – Autumn Update now published**

*Good morning,*

*East West Rail's **You Said, We Did** report has been published. This report outlines how our designs have evolved, shaped by extensive public consultation and detailed technical design work. The updates show how feedback from communities and stakeholders has directly influenced the development of the project. It also explains where there is still more work to be done.*

*For further detail, the report can be found attached, and on our website here:*

*[www.eastwestrail.co.uk/you-said-we-did](http://www.eastwestrail.co.uk/you-said-we-did) .*

*If you have any questions or would like to discuss the project further, please contact us at*

*[contact@eastwestrail.co.uk](mailto:contact@eastwestrail.co.uk)*

*We look forward to continuing to engage with you as we design a railway that delivers benefits for generations to come.*

*Yours sincerely,*

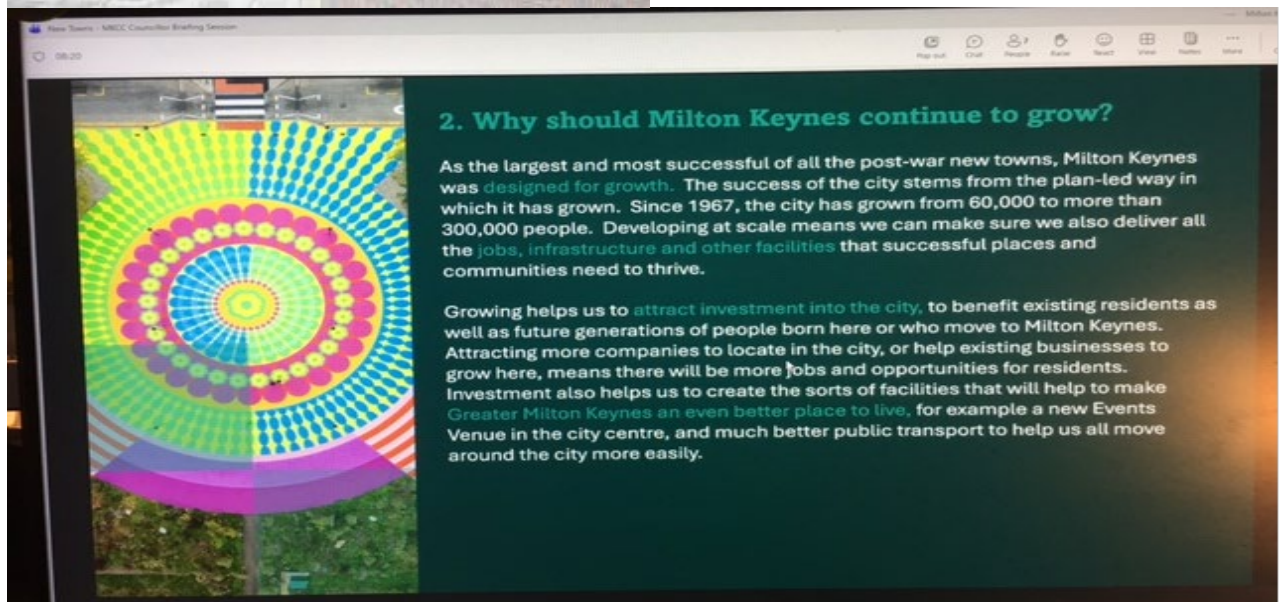
*David Hughes - Chief Executive Officer (East West Rail)*

## New Town, New Town

Why MK City Council feels Milton Keynes should continue to grow as a new, new town in addition to the planned expansion of 60,000 dwellings contained in the local plan. **MKCC Presentation** below



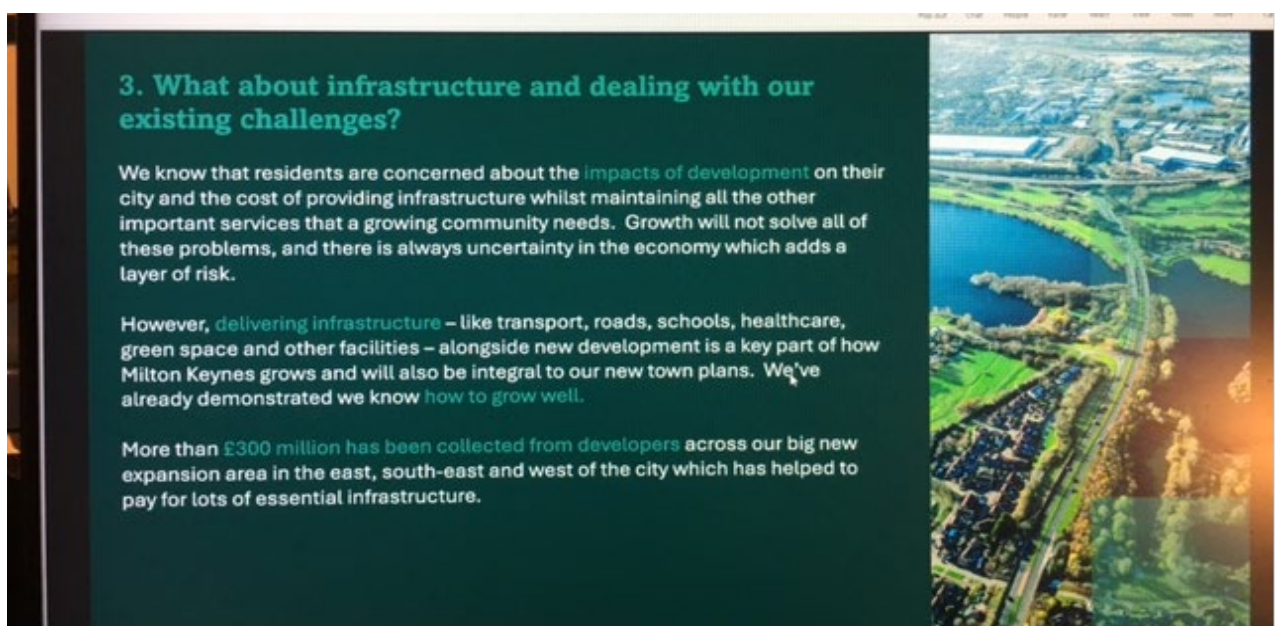
Glider buses, such as these in Belfast, proposed as the Mass Rapid Transport Solution



### 2. Why should Milton Keynes continue to grow?

As the largest and most successful of all the post-war new towns, Milton Keynes was *designed for growth*. The success of the city stems from the plan-led way in which it has grown. Since 1967, the city has grown from 60,000 to more than 300,000 people. Developing at scale means we can make sure we also deliver all the *jobs, infrastructure and other facilities* that successful places and communities need to thrive.

Growing helps us to *attract investment into the city*, to benefit existing residents as well as future generations of people born here or who move to Milton Keynes. Attracting more companies to locate in the city, or help existing businesses to grow here, means there will be more *jobs and opportunities* for residents. Investment also helps us to create the sorts of facilities that will help to make *Greater Milton Keynes an even better place to live*, for example a new Events Venue in the city centre, and much better public transport to help us all move around the city more easily.




### 3. What about infrastructure and dealing with our existing challenges?

We know that residents are concerned about the *impacts of development* on their city and the cost of providing infrastructure whilst maintaining all the other important services that a growing community needs. Growth will not solve all of these problems, and there is always uncertainty in the economy which adds a layer of risk.

However, *delivering infrastructure* – like transport, roads, schools, healthcare, green space and other facilities – alongside new development is a key part of how Milton Keynes grows and will also be integral to our new town plans. We've already demonstrated we know *how to grow well*.

More than *£300 million* has been collected from *developers* across our big new expansion area in the east, south-east and west of the city which has helped to pay for lots of essential infrastructure.





We've delivered 10 new schools, and we're now building the 11<sup>th</sup>. In total, across new-build schools and by extending existing schools, we've created more than 13,000 new school places in the last 10 years.

Using funding secured through housebuilding, we've also built three health centres – at Brooklands, Whitehouse and Elverby – with capacity for around 60,000 new patients. At Whitehouse, there's also a Community Diagnostic Centre and a Renal Unit, and an MRI Unit is being added.

At the Hospital itself, growth across the city has helped to fund both the Cancer Unit and the Radiotherapy Unit, plus the new Pathway Unit at Maple House.

So, we know how to deliver infrastructure alongside expansion. It is part of the DNA of how Milton Keynes develops. We will make sure this approach continues with further growth, including securing further investment for the hospital and the Metro system.


#### 4. What does it mean for Milton Keynes to be recommended by the Taskforce?

The Taskforce is a group of experts set up by the Government in 2024 to advise on where and how to build new towns. They looked for large sites that could deliver at least 10,000 homes.

Milton Keynes already has big ambitions – and we are putting statutory plans in place to grow to more than 410,000 residents by 2050. Our plans for the future fit well with the Government's ambitions, recognising that Greater Milton Keynes can make a big contribution towards meeting the country's need for new homes, to develop our growing economy and make places where people love to live.

The Government will now look further at the Taskforce recommendations, including the opportunity for Milton Keynes to again be designated as a new town, during a period of 'due diligence'. If they take Milton Keynes forward as a preferred location, it means parts of our city will be in a national programme to speed up building homes, improving infrastructure (like transport and schools), and boosting the local economy. Creating a Greater Milton Keynes would be a step-change in the level of growth that the city has seen in the last few decades. It's a chance to bring more investment into the city, helping to improve the quality of life for existing and future generations.





### 5. Which areas are being looked at for development in this programme?

Three areas are being considered in Milton Keynes.

1. a new urban neighbourhood in **Central Milton Keynes**
2. continuing the major expansion to the **East of the M1 motorway**
3. a developer-led proposal for major expansion **North of Milton Keynes**.

The first two are already part of the city's long-term plan (MK City Plan 2050) now out for Regulation 19 consultation. The third has been proposed by landowners and developers, and is not being progressed through this local plan process.

In total, these three areas could deliver **around 40,000 new homes**, as well as jobs, schools, surgeries, community facilities, open space and the other infrastructure and facilities needed to make **people-friendly and healthy places**.



### 6. Will there be a Development Corporation for Milton Keynes?

We do not know. We believe the Government is *likely* to require **Development Corporations** to be set up to help manage and focus on the new town developments.

However, the Taskforce have recommended that "Where local or combined authorities have a **strong recent track record of housing delivery** or have **robust plans to develop capability to deliver on the scale required**, they should play an enhanced role in delivery of new towns."

So we don't know what this would look like in Milton Keynes as there are a number of different variants. Development Corporations can be used to **deliver infrastructure projects** or **get land ready for construction**, which helps to speed up development.

More will be known about this as the engagement process with Government progresses.







## 7. How does this affect the MK City Plan 2050? What does it mean for other things that the City Council does?

The growth proposals for the city centre and east of the M1 that would form part of the new town programme are already in the emerging **MK City Plan 2050**. The northern area isn't in the emerging plan and we await guidance from Government as to how it will treat 'additional' sites.

Having taken legal advice, and in line with the Government's response to the Taskforce Report, the City Council is continuing with its current local plan process.

In terms of the impact on other local services or council tax, no immediate changes are planned. Over time, the improvements from being a new town should lead to **even better services and quality of life** for everyone.

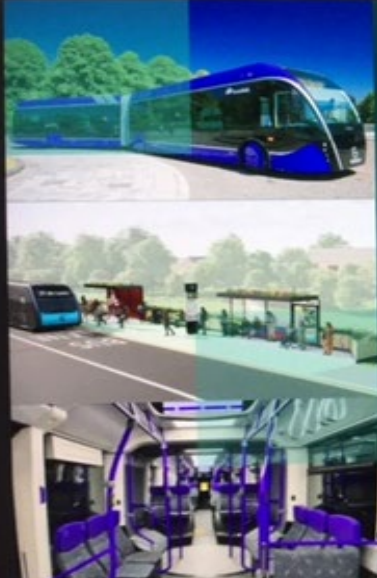
## 8. What kind of places will be built?

We want to make sure all of these new communities are people-friendly and healthy places to live and spend time in, so they'll need a **wide variety of facilities alongside a range of types and sizes of homes**.

Across the different parts of the new town area, a mix of homes will be built, including many affordable homes, family homes, homes for people that want to live in the city centre and homes for older people, key workers and students. The New Towns Taskforce set an expectation that **at least 40% of new homes should be affordable**.

In **Central Milton Keynes** in particular, we expect there will be more flats and apartments – but we also want to see more townhouses and family homes to create a **mixed urban community** in the city centre.





### 9. Who pays for all this? What does Milton Keynes get by being part of the programme?

The Government is expected to provide some funding as part of their support for the New Towns programme; this could be in the form of grants and/or loans. A Development Corporation would also work with developers to make sure more of the **increase in land value is reinvested into infrastructure** like roads, schools, public transport and utilities.

An important part of how any funding will be used is to help pay for a **bus rapid transport system which we call Metro**. Metro will use tram-like vehicles – similar to the Belfast Glider – initially on a **network of three lines** which will serve key locations including Central Milton Keynes, the hospital, Bletchley and new expansion areas. The system will **give everyone more choices** in how they move around the city, without needing access to a car.


We would also aim to put in place a **cashflow mechanism** – similar to the Tariff approach that already operates in our major growth areas – that allows us to continue to deliver infrastructure ahead of expansion.

### 10. What happens next?

The Government has said it will carry out a six-month period of 'due diligence' where it will be looking in particular at a **Strategic Environmental Assessment** to consider the impacts of growth in the places it is looking at.

We'll also put in place arrangements within the City Council and with key partners, including developers/landowners, to help the process. We will also continue moving forward with our **MK City Plan 2050** process.

This all means that we expect to know if MK will be included in the first wave by the spring.




If you or someone you know has been diagnosed with a terminal illness, MK City Council can help

If you or a loved one has received a terminal diagnosis, you will no longer have to pay council tax. MKCC understand this is an incredibly difficult time, and worrying about bills should not be part of it.

This support is available through our Council Tax Reduction Scheme. It means the full amount of council tax will be covered from the date of diagnosis, so you can focus on what matters most.

If you need this support, or know someone who does, please visit our website <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/benefits/cost-living-support> or contact us on 01908 253794.

MK City Council is here to help make things a little easier.



## **MK City Council Cultural Strategy is coming out for consultation soon....**

**The Six Priorities / Themes are:**

### **A. Cultural Identity & Values**

What makes Milton Keynes unique culturally?  
How do we tell our story to ourselves and others?

### **B. Access, Inclusion & Participation**

Who's currently engaged in cultural life? Who isn't?  
How do we ensure broader and deeper participation?

### **C. Spaces, Places & Infrastructure**

What's working and what's missing – venues, public space, digital infrastructure?

### **D. Skills, Talent & Workforce**

How do we nurture creative careers and retain talent?  
What partnerships are needed for education/training?

### **E. Funding, Investment & Sustainability**

What would a sustainable funding ecosystem look like? How do we build resilience?

### **F. Collaboration, Leadership & Governance**

How do we better work together as a sector?  
What models of cultural leadership work for MK?



## **Public Advice: bird flu**

DEFRA has confirmed cases of avian flu among some wild birds collected locally. While human infection is extremely rare, there are sensible precautions to take, such as not feeding ducks and other wild birds at present.

Read them here: <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/avian-flu-guidance>





Don't forget we are now in the Regulation 19 consultation phase for the **Milton Keynes City Plan 2050**. At this stage, MK City Council is asking for comments on whether the plan is legally compliant, based on strong evidence, and consistent with national planning policy.

This plan sets out how Milton Keynes can grow in a way that delivers new homes, attracts investment and creates well-connected communities. It focuses on making sure people have access to schools, health services, shops and green spaces, while protecting the environment and putting infrastructure in place from the start.

Since 2023, MKCC has run a wide-ranging engagement programme, including events across the city and an online campaign. Around 7,000 comments were received, and your feedback has helped shape the policies now included in the plan.

Before we submit the plan to government for independent examination, we're asking for comments specifically on its legal soundness and alignment with national planning policy.

If you'd like to share your views or suggest changes to help ensure the plan meets national requirements, you can do so **until 22 December at 5:30pm**.

For further information about the consultation and details on how to respond, please visit: <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/mk-city-plan-2050/mk-city-plan-2050>





**The Parks Trust** offers free water safety assemblies to help encourage children to stay safe around water. With winter upon us, it's important to remind students about the hazards of cold water and ice.

MK is home to numerous lakes, long stretches of river, a canal and many ponds across the parkland. This gives lots of opportunities to explore interesting habitats, but they can be dangerous if people don't know how to act around them or what to do if they

get into trouble.

To book a water safety assembly please contact the outdoor learning team on [outdoorlearning@theparkstrust.com](mailto:outdoorlearning@theparkstrust.com) or visit the Parks Trust website. <https://www.theparkstrust.com/schools-groups/primary-schools/assemblies/>



**The Centre for Ageing Better picks out the policies likely to have the biggest impact on older people and the work they do at Ageing Better.**

The Chancellor has announced tax increases totalling £26 billion in the face of forecasts of weaker economic growth, faster inflation and higher unemployment.

The budget announcement follows weeks of frenzied speculation as to what the Chancellor might announce with up to 13 potential tax policies mooted in the weeks before today's official unveiling in Parliament. The policies confirmed during the Chancellor's Speech in the Commons and official Budget papers include:

- A £150 cut to the average household energy bill from April next year as the government removes a large proportion of energy efficiency subsidies off electricity bills and scraps the energy company obligation (ECO) scheme.
- The government will provide an additional £1.5 billion capital investment to tackle fuel poverty through its warm homes plan.
- The freeze on the thresholds for when people start paying different levels of income tax has been extended and will result in 1.7 million people paying more tax. But the government has said that pensioners whose sole income is the basic or new State Pension will not have to pay the tax due when the state pension rises above the £12,570 threshold for paying 20% income tax.
- Basic and new state pension payments will go up by 4.8% from April, more than the current rate of inflation, under the triple lock.
- More than £800 million in funding over the next three years announced as part of the government's Youth Guarantee which gives every young person a place in college, an apprenticeship or personalised job support.
- Training for apprentices is to be free for under 25-year-olds at small and medium-sized companies as part of the programme.
- Salary-sacrificed pension contributions above an annual £2,000 threshold will no longer be exempt from national insurance from April 2029.

## **Leader of the Council Announces Retirement**

After 12 years as Leader of Milton Keynes City Council, Councillor Pete Marland has announced that he will be stepping down from the role and will not stand for re-election as a councillor in May 2026.

Councillor Marland has represented Wolverton Ward since he was first elected in May 2011, becoming leader in May 2014.



***Cllr David Hopkins – Representing Woburn Sands at MK City Council***