



Chairman / Mayors Report – February 2026

Town Council Meeting – 9 February 2026 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.

Mayoral Appointments

- I will be attending the Mayor of Milton Keynes Annual Civic Reception on 27th February in my capacity as Mayor of Woburn Sands.
- The Town Clerk and I met with Annlouise Taylor of Alzheimer's UK to find out how the town council owned and operated halls (including the town library) and the businesses in Woburn Sands become more dementia friendly.

Snippets

The Royal Mail's universal service obligation



To deliver letters **6 days a week** (not Sundays)
To deliver parcels **5 days a week** (not weekends)



Two delivery speeds:
1st Class (next day) and **2nd Class** (within three days)



This legal obligation has not changed since **2011**

Source: Ofcom



Royal Mail Deliveries – Following numerous

reports made to me regarding the intermittent and unreliable local royal mail delivery services in recent weeks during which time hospital appointments and other critical NHS correspondence, invoices and accounts and legal documents were often delayed by days or often weeks. I contacted the local Royal Mail management who have responded as follows

They apologise stating that the Brinklow sorting office in MK is experiencing severe staff shortages which they are attempting to address by recruiting 13 new postal delivery staff.

Royal Mail declined an invitation to meet with the town council or representatives of the town council basically stating they did not meet with town and parish councils.

The problems do seem to be city wide but not consistent. For example, Little Brickhill residents report that they have experienced no such problems.

I was pleased to be able to raise the matter on local television via the BBC Look east magazine and BBC Three Counties Radio.



Theydon Avenue – Following my question (as ward councillor) to Cllr Jennifer Wilson- Marklew (Cabinet Member at MKCC for Highways) she agreed to attend a site meeting on Theydon Avenue at 9am on March 5th to review the unique challenges this road displays.

To formal questions asked by local residents to which the above-mentioned City Council Cabinet member offered the following responses

Q. Theydon Avenue is used as a cut through road, however, it is a busy pedestrian access for local residents, access to the dentist, access to the GP surgery in adjoining Wood street, and importantly an access route to both Primary and Secondary schools in the village with most village children walking to school making it considerably concerning to have speeding vehicles travelling along it.

When 20mph was introduced on Theydon Avenue over 7 years ago the road was lined with 20mph roundels, which have faded to nothing. Residents have made repeated requests to maintain these; however, a formal request was made directly to MKC Senior Management and local Councillors in October 2024. MKC assured us these would be replaced in 2025/26 budget in the better months, but this has work has still not been completed. The 2025/26 budget year end is 31st March 2026, therefore, what date will the work now be completed?

A. The work is scheduled with our contractor Ringway for February 2026 which is within the financial year 25/26. This type of work is subject to favourable weather conditions which need to be dry and not freezing.

Q. We are deeply concerned Theydon Avenue speed restriction street signage is minimal, incorrect and misleading, along with a 20mph sign damaged some time ago. We would like SID's (speed indicator devices) installed and have started a petition to support the additional installation of speed pillows. We have compared Theydon to Walton Road, Wavendon which is much the same and has all these items clearly installed. What objections do MKC have to sending a senior officer to TA to review & agree the signage with CSW and residents within the next month?

A. MKCC are happy to consider the installation of a SID as part of an application from the Parish council through the Community Infrastructure Fund to help fund half of the cost of installing a SID plus pole in their area. The CIF runs each year. Any SID site also requires other measures too such as speed humps or waiting restrictions (double yellows) to ensure there is enough visibility for the SID to measure speeds and alert drivers.

Q MKC carried out a speed count advising the average speed was 20mph. The device was placed between parked cars, which creates a natural passing place and reduces the speed traffic can travel. Clearly this proves that motorists are driving well in excess of the speed limit, the law of averages explains this, and the average speed would increase furthermore if this were placed on a straight piece of the road, as we have requested for next time. Additionally, vehicles mount the pavements on a regular basis. As previously explained, this is a busy pedestrian route for residents especially to the village Primary and Secondary schools. We have been advised another one is to be carried out

'soon'. What objections do MKC have to sharing this data with CSW and residents and when can this be sent?

A. The speed count we carried out as promised on Theydon Avenue showed that the average speed by vehicles is 20mph or lower so there are no plans for any additional measures on this road, apart from the potential SID application and road markings mentioned previously, however once these are in place a further speed count may be possible, with further engagement with the PC to agree a location.

- *The average speed of vehicles travelling Westbound along the road was 18.7mph.*
- *The average speed of vehicles travelling Eastbound along the road was 20.0mph.*



The future likely role of Parish & Town Councils in the Milton Keynes of 2050.

Given the challenging financial landscape and the growth of the city, there is a view that Parish and Town Councils are well positioned to support and deliver more services, and this is a position that MKCC has taken for several years. MK City Council Scrutiny is exploring with Parish and Town Councils their view of where they believe they could work more effectively and /or to a higher standard than the Council and also to understand their capacity for taking on further services and assets in future



Community Foundation MK Vital Signs Report – As Mayor of Woburn

Sands I attended the launch of the 2026 Community Foundations MK Vital Signs Report. This year, the community foundation offers a comprehensive look at all the city's Vital Signs areas. From poverty and disadvantage to housing, employment, the environment, and health and wellbeing, it highlights what's working well and where challenges remain.

The report reveals a city that continues to grow from strength to strength, not only in the physical but in all communities too. When interviewing organisations for case studies for this report, the community foundation asked them what they felt was unique about their work in the city, and for many the answer was: the strong sense of community and collaboration between different organisations

The BBC Coverage of the report can be viewed at
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cq5y91enx5wo>



SEMK expansion area update – Given the lack of activity from developers etc and the uncertainty of the EWR proposals the next SEMK Stakeholders Group meeting this quarter will probably be held toward the end of March - but ideally MKCC would need to have something more tangible to talk to people about before asking participants to meet again.



East West Rail – Representatives of Woburn Sands Town Council met with senior management representatives of East West Rail in Woburn Sands on 4th February.

EWR Representatives:

- David Bray – Delivery Director
- Adam Lawless – Senior Political Relations Manager
- Tom Wood – Project Executive/ Sponsor - MVL

Feedback and Engagement

- The East West Rail *You Said, We Did* report was successful, receiving over 4,000 responses and resulting in 80 changes. This feedback has directly influenced the strategic and economic plan for the line.

Stations and Alignment

- The impact of Universal has highlighted the need for consolidated stations along the route.
- A new station for Woburn Sands is now confirmed as now being formally proposed located some 300 metres to the west of the existing station. The existing station building is a protected listed building and in the ownership of Network Rail. EWR are keen to preserve it and repurpose it as a community asset.

Operations and Level Crossing

- Current proposals allow for a maximum of 5–6 coach trains due to line constraints.
- Planned service levels are five trains per hour in each direction. (i.e 10 per hour)
- Potentially, given current thinking, the existing level crossing could remain open.
- 10 trains per hour plus freight would require the crossing to be closed for approximately 30 minutes per hour, in addition to any freight movements.
- A new local traffic model would be introduced, with upgraded signage directing vehicles to use the 'bypass'.

Construction and Closures

- The line will need to close for a period to enable completion of the works.
- A Code of Construction Practice will be shared with local authorities by the summer.

Bridge at Woodleys Farm Design

- Plans and designs for the bridge over the railway are not yet finalised.
- Network Rail, ONH, and MKCC will all be involved in the design process.
- The current proposal is for a single carriageway in each direction, with the bridge constructed to allow for future electrification.
- Final design will be confirmed through the local planning process.
 - EWR are keen to address construction issues along the route to ensure minimal disruption to local people.

Community Engagement

- Design update sessions are not yet ready.
- EWR is keen to increase engagement with local communities through events, route-wide consultations, and ongoing feedback to refine designs.
- Maintaining strong working relationships with communities is a priority.
- An invitation made by the mayor for representatives of the EWR consortium to **attend and present to the Woburn Sands Annual Town Meeting in May and this invitation was accepted.**

Programme and Timescales

- There is pressure from Universal to complete the project by 2031.
- The line will open in phases; however, EWR is not currently able to commit to specific dates
 - The Development Consent Order (DCO) is scheduled to be applied for in 2027 with a decision 12 months later (2028). The DCO is a piece of law that gives authority to East West Railway Company (EWR Co) to build the new railway.

Other issues

Bow Brickhill Railway station is scheduled to close and a bridge constructed roughly in line with the current road layout.





H10 Extension (Bletcham way)

Main Construction now underway

This will involve building the main eastern extension of H10 Bletcham Way, along with associated works.

Advance Works (January – April 2026)

These will be carried out by the MKCC Highways Service Provider, Ringway, and include:

- Site clearance (trees and vegetation) in Byrd Crescent and nearby land
- Diversion of Anglian Water Sewer in Gregories Drive (over easter holidays to minimise disruption).
- Divert electrical cables in Byrd Crescent (in grass verge) no road closure)
- Diversion of overhead high-voltage cables within the field

Main Works (Starting Summer 2026 – approx. 18 months)

Scope includes:

- Construction of the H10 road extension
- Enlarged roundabout at Britten Grove/Gregories Drive
- New bridge over Byrd Crescent
- Landscaping and tree replacement
- Noise bunds and barriers
- Extension of Redways and footways
- Service diversions
- Provision of a Temporary Car Park for residents and Wavendon Gate Primary school staff during road closures

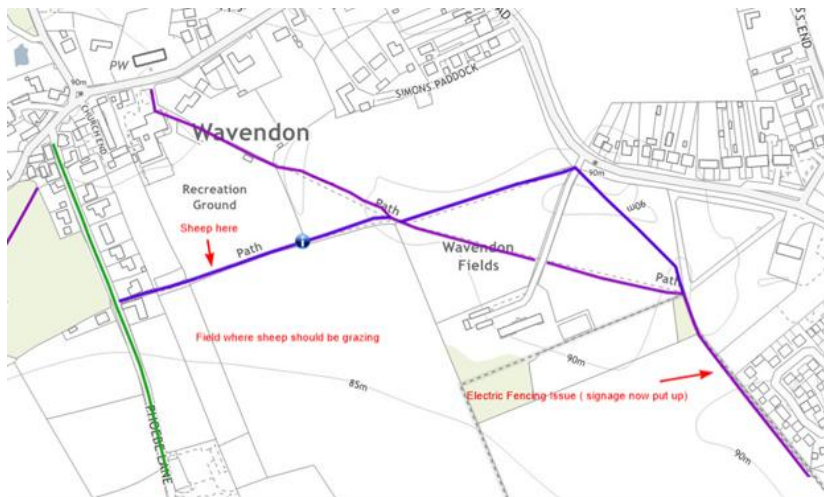
Electric Fencing

A farmer has rented the O&H owned land to the north of the railway (behind Frosts) and is grazing sheep. He also installed an electric fence which when run into or touched by dogs running off the leash caused harm and distress.

MKCC Rights of Way were contacted and responded as follows'We have undertaken a site visit into this issue and would agree that the provided width available for the footpath adjacent to the electric fencing is not sufficient. As you suggest some form of warning signs should have also been provided.

We are currently in the process of contacting O&H to flag this issue up to them so it can be resolved'.

James Walsh - Rights of Way Officer



Thames Valley Police *Have your Say* meetings

The Town Clerk in liaison with PC Paige Grady have arranged forthcoming visits to Woburn Sands by our local police team. Paige has booked in to attend the following markets in Woburn Sands:

- 14th Feb
- 14th March
- 11th April
- 9th May
- 12th September
- 10th October

The local TVP Danesborough team are also going to hold their '*Have your Say*' event in the Memorial Hall in the town to be held on 31st March - 7pm - 8pm and the town council will extensively publicise that event in well in advance.



E Bikes and Scooters

We are now meeting with Tom from Lime bikes (Tom Newham tom.newham@li.me) in March and we have now heard back from Dott. Del O'Sullivan del.osullivan@ridedott.com so can meet both at

the same time. We are also meeting with Hayley Roche Senior Transport Planner (Walking, Cycling and Smarter Travel) to understand MK City Councils ambitions on these matters.

Mandatory Parking Zones for E-Bike and E-Scooter Hire

From 29 January, the rollout of Mandatory Parking Zones (MPZs) for e-bike and e-scooter hire schemes began across Milton Keynes. MPZs are locations where users can go to pick up or leave their e-bikes and e-scooters. Users will know where these locations are from the Lime or Dott app they are using.

Previously the e-scooter and e-bikes could be picked up and left after journeys using a 'free-floating' system which means they could be left at any place within the operational area, causing some complaints about obstructions, especially if the e-bike or e-scooter had accidentally fallen over.

The new practice will be monitored by the two operators and users will continue to be required to leave the vehicles upright and take a photo before they can 'End Ride'. Users who park obstructively will be warned and may be fined. Patrollers will also visit locations to tidy vehicles. These new locations will be monitored over the next two-three months to make sure that they are the right spots for both users and residents.

After this initial phase, we'll look at putting some permanent markings to show the MPZ locations such as racks or painted markings, depending on usage, budget and available space.

For access to an embargoed copy of the map of all the MPZ locations, or to provide feedback on the suitability of sites / suggesting alternative sites, please contact the team at cycling@milton-keynes.gov.uk.

To report issues with the Lime or Dott e-bike or e-scooter equipment, please report it directly using the details below.

Lime: help-miltonkeynes@li.me | Dott: mk-ops@ridedott.com for direct contact: del.osullivan@ridedott.com

Universal Studios Project

I attended a meeting of the Marston Vale Community Rail Partnership in January, and some discussion took place regarding the new Stewartby station etc relating to the Universal Studios Theme Park project.

Universal has apparently appointed (promoted from within) a Senior Vice President to manage public affairs regarding the project and his email is below.

gidon.freeman@nbcuni.com.



*Join the
Youth Council*

Woburn Sands (Proposed) Youth Club / Possible Youth Town Council

Responses have now been received to the tender for the provision of youth services in the town. The Town Council will discuss the options at its February meeting.

Community Library Boxes



Two Community Library boxes for Woburn Sands are now on order with the local charity *Men in Sheds*. Our Librarian, Nicky Slater has welcomed the initiative and is helping by advising the town council on the best locations.

Aspley Hill Flood Water

As residents are aware, much of the flooding to Aspley Hill properties results from waves being caused by traffic driving through flood water.

Following the limited 'improvements' to kerbing on Aspley Hill' I wrote to MKC Highways requesting that temporary speed restriction signs be made available for use in such incidents. MKCC respond that *they cannot provide signs with a 5mph speed limit on for residents*. They continue ...

If localised flooding is reported to us, a highways officer will attend and assess the level of risk. If needed, we will put out Flood and/or Diversion signs, or we may fully close the road if it is unsafe for vehicles. We also may close a road following a police request.

We have previously posted on our social media channels asking people not to drive at speed through flood water which was circulated well across other local groups and the media.

We would strongly suggest that residents create a local Flood Group (if there is no group already in place). Flood Groups in other area e.g. Newport Pagnell and Stony Stratford, work very well during flood events to circulate key messages locally and feed information through to the council and the police.

If there are reports of vehicles driving at speed through flood waters, this can be reported to the police as they can take action if a driver's behaviour is considered careless or dangerous.



New Local Plan – MK2050 (Reg 19 Consultation Extended)

Following a procedural error at MKCC and to ensure everyone has a fair chance to take part, we are reopening the consultation for another six weeks. This additional consultation runs to 16 February 2026, closing at 5:30pm.

If you have already submitted comments and do not wish to add to or change them, you do not need to take any action, however, if you would like to make a change, please make it clear if any submission replaces a previous one.



Citizens Advice Sessions



Sponsored by

WOBURN SANDS
TOWN COUNCIL

Friday 27th February

Friday 6th March

Friday 20th March

At the library 10.30am – 1.30pm



Saturday 14th February
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**



2 Station Road – Update from Bee Lewis (Assistant Director – Property MKCC)

'The new officer dealing with this issue is Kevin Cassidy. He is working closely with the purchasers of Station Rd to get the deal over the line – as we anticipated, everyone is scratching their heads on how to deal with the sale condition around parking provision for the Town Council.

We have suggested that a 1-year lease is offered to the TC and during that time, both parties discuss future options. That would at least get the sale moving, but I am sure you will feel uncomfortable about the lack of a secure deal.

However, we can't allow the parking issue to delay the sale, which I would like to have completed by the end of March.

I am sure the purchasers will be in touch at the right time'.



MKCC Pesticides Management Policy

<https://milton-keynes.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=139&MId=7581>

Town residents have lobbied the town council in regard to the use of pesticides on the highways and sports grounds in the town. MKCC has adopted city wide policies relating to this important issue.

Executive Summary

The Integrated Pest Management policy is a new dedicated policy to cover the use and deployment of various pesticides by Milton Keynes City Council.

This report sets out the proposed policy for management of herbicides in Milton Keynes and drives one of the detailed and progressive approaches to the integrated approach to managing public realm in the UK.

The Biosecurity policy confirms the approach to be taken by the Authority to manage pests and diseases that might affect our trees and biodiversity



Road Works and Repairs

- MK City Council report that they have 15 current enquiries for the Woburn Sands area.
 - Of these, 4 are awaiting inspection/traffic signal works.
 - 9 have a Job Raised. (6 for Streetlighting and 3 for Pothole repairs)
 - One permit is already issued for Theydon Avenue pothole repair (can be viewed on One Network)
 - The city council is working with a resident on Ridgway (unadopted road) to gain access to a faulty light.

There are some surface patch works coming up using the Elastomac machine. These are not in Woburn Sands but are nearby, namely:

- Wavendon - Lower End Road, Cross End
- Bow Brickhill - Station Road

MKCC has a programme of these works taking place between now and the end of March weather permitting.



MK City Council Transport Strategy

The LTP5 consultation is now live on the Commonplace website here

<https://mktransportconversation.commonplace.is/en-GB/proposals/v3/the-local-transport-plan?step=step1>

The LTP5 Summary Document for Consultation which is attached here is really all that's needed - and I would draw your attention to the blue text boxes at the end of each section which highlight our policies and programmes in each of the subject areas, namely:

- Roads, Traffic and Parking,
- Travelling Safely,
- Improving Public Transport,
- Enabling and Encouraging Active Travel, and
- Future Transport.

I hope providing the LTP5 Summary Document for Consultation will assist with your discussions on the plan, and in formulating your responses.

Residents can send their views to the MKCC dedicated email address at

transport.planning@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Alzheimer Society - The clerk and I are met with Annlouise Taylor - Communities and Volunteering Officer (Milton Keynes and Bedfordshire) Alzheimer Society on Feb 5th to review signage etc within our community owned buildings. This to ensure we are doing all we can to make them dementia / Alzheimer 'friendly'.

Bucks and MK Fire – Protection of Greensand Ridge Woodlands

"We currently hold risk information for the site as it has been previously assessed. Following your request he has asked the WAS and Broughton Station Managers to co-ordinate visits and exercises to include the RFV and a wildfire officer. If they haven't yet done this, he will ensure it is expediated."

WAS = West Ashland Stion or the Blue Light Hub.

RFV = Rural Firefighting Vehicle.



Merger of local Multi Academy Trusts

We are delighted that you and your organisation are part of the community working with and within Inspiring Futures through Learning Multi-Academy Trust.

We want to be proactive and transparent in keeping you informed about significant developments across our Trust. Across the education sector, it's become crucial to look strategically at growth and potential mergers. Not as an end goal, but as a robust way to protect and enhance the educational quality for our children, and to ensure the long-term sustainability of our mission.

Our Board of Trustees has been deeply engaged in this strategic consideration. Over the past few months, the Trustees have thoroughly reviewed opportunities for local and regional growth. Further to extensive partnership working and a natural alliance on this, we are now exploring the option of a potential merger with another Multi-Academy Trust, Chiltern Learning Trust (CLT).

The synergy here is powerful: IFtL and CLT already share very close ties through our Teaching School and recent strong, impactful partnerships. Our two Trusts are highly complementary with shared values – combined they are well recognised and respected locally, regionally and nationally for their work including in early years, primary, secondary phases, initial teacher training, work with the DfE through school improvement programmes and regional hubs and digital literacy, both in AI and teaching and learning.

Also, crucially, we are geographically neighbouring: a merged trust would cover North Northants, Milton Keynes, Luton, Bedford, Central Beds and Buckinghamshire, meaning a formal merger would be logical and highly efficient in preserving local identity and our school development models based on this.

There is an engagement website set up with links to letters and information:

<https://www.iftl.co.uk/about/engagement/>

CLT Schools locally include

- Aspley Guise Village School
- Cedars Upper School

IFtL schools locally include

- St Mary's Wavendon CofE Primary
- Glebe Farm School

Cllr David Hopkins

Mayor of Woburn Sands 2025/26

David.hopkins@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Upcoming Fundraising courses

Meet the Funder: The National Lottery Community Fund	Tuesday 24th February, 11am - 12pm (online)	https://events.aidecrm.co.uk/communityactionmk/events/265
Meet the Funder: Tesco Stronger Starts	Thursday 26th February 2026. 11am -12pm (online)	https://events.aidecrm.co.uk/communityactionmk/events/263
Meet the Funder: easyfundraising	Tuesday 3rd March 2026, 11am - 12pm (online)	https://communityactionmk.aidecrm.co.uk/booking/booking-form-online?event_id=271