



## SUMMONS TO THE MEETING OF MILTON KEYNES CITY COUNCIL

**When:** Wednesday, 22 February 2023 at 7.30 pm

**Where:** Council Chamber, Civic Offices, 1 Saxon Gate East, Milton Keynes MK9 3EJ  
and on [Youtube](#)

Sharon Bridglalsingh  
Director Law and Governance

### **Public Questions and Petitions**

The deadline for the submission of public questions and petitions is 7.30pm on Monday, 20 February 2023 and should either be delivered to the address below or sent by email to [democracy@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@milton-keynes.gov.uk)

The Mayor has the discretion to extend the deadline if the matter is sufficiently urgent and relates to a matter that has arisen in the last 48 hours, subject to the question being submitted a minimum of 30 minutes before the start of the meeting.

### **Public Speaking**

Persons wishing to speak on an agenda item must give notice by not later than 7.15 pm on the day of the meeting. Requests can be sent in advance by email to [democracy@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@milton-keynes.gov.uk)

### **Enquiries**

Please contact Roslyn Tidman on 01908 254589 or [roslyn.tidman@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:roslyn.tidman@milton-keynes.gov.uk)

## **Public attendance / Participation**

All our meetings are open to the public to attend.

We use our best efforts to stream meetings on YouTube. From time to time there are technical problems which could mean we are unable to stream the meeting. When this happens, our meetings will continue, and we will do our best to upload a recording of the meeting after it takes place. Meeting minutes form the formal record and are published after every meeting.

For those registering or entitled to speak, facilities will be in place to do so in person or via video / audio conferencing, but this is not guaranteed. From time to time there are technical problems which mean we are unable to enable remote participation. When this happens our meetings will continue, although we will try to provide alternatives options, for example through a telephone call as opposed to a video call.

If you wish to speak at a meeting we recommend reading our guide to Public Participation at Meetings first to understand the process and technology behind participation.

## **Agenda**

Agendas and reports for the majority of the Council's public meetings can be accessed.

## **Webcasting and permission to be filmed**

Please note that this meeting will be filmed for live broadcast on the internet and can be viewed online at [YouTube](#). Generally, the public gallery is not filmed, but by entering the meeting room and using the public seating area you are consenting to be filmed. All recording will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders.

## **Recording of Meetings**

The proceedings at this meeting (which will include those making representations by video or audio conference) will be recorded and retained for a period of six months, for the purpose of webcasting and preparing the minutes of the meeting.

In accordance with the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, you can film, photograph, record or use social media at any Council meetings that are open to the public. If you are reporting the proceedings, please respect other members of the public at the meeting who do not want to be filmed. You should also not conduct the reporting so that it disrupts the good order and conduct of the meeting. While you do not need permission, you can contact the Council's staff in advance of the meeting to discuss facilities for reporting the proceedings and a contact is included on the front of the agenda, or you can liaise with staff at the meeting. View the [Guidance from the Department for Communities and Local Government](#).

## **Agenda**

### **Procedures**

**1(a) Apologies**

**1(b) Minutes**

**(Pages 7 - 24)**

To approve, and the Mayor to sign as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting of Council held on 18 January 2023.

**1(c) Disclosures of Interest**

Councillors to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests, other registerable interests, or non-registerable interests (including other pecuniary interests) they may have in the business to be transacted, and officers to declare any interests they may have in any contract to be considered.

**1(d) Announcements**

To receive announcements, if any.

### **Public Involvement**

**2(a) Petitions**

Any petitions received by the deadline of 7:30 pm on Monday 20 February 2023 will be reported at the meeting.

**2(b) Questions from Members of the Public**

To receive questions and provide answers to questions received from members of the public by the deadline of 7:30 pm on Monday 20 February 2023 and any urgent questions agreed by the Mayor.

**3. Business Remaining from Last Meeting**

None.

### **Reports from Cabinet and Committees**

The referrals are set out in full below. With the exception of Item 4d which has been circulated under separate cover.

**4(a) Standards Committee - 26 January 2023**

**(Pages 25 - 32)**

Revised Terms of Reference.

- 4(b) Cabinet - 7 February 2023** (Pages 33 - 74)  
North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan.
- 4(c) Cabinet - 1 November 2022** (Pages 75 - 86)  
Council Tax Base 2023/24 (Funding Contribution to Parish and Town Councils).
- 4(d) Cabinet - 7 February 2023** (Pages 87 - 88)  
Council Budget for 2023/24 and Medium-Term Financial Plan 2023/24 – 2026/27
- Note: A report which outlines changes to the Cabinet’s Budget Report, sets out the additional recommendations that the Council must adopt when setting the level of Council Tax and includes confirmation of the precepts from the Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner, the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority and Parish / Town Councils will be circulated under separate cover in advance of the Council meeting.

#### **Councillors' Matters**

**5(a) Councillors' Questions**

Councillors to ask questions of the Leader, a Cabinet Member, the Chair of any Committee, or the Leader of a Political Group on the Council.

**5(b) Notices of Motions:**

None received.

**6. Review of Committee Proportionality** (to follow)

A review of proportionality is required due to the resignation of Councillor Walker.



Minutes of the MEETING of MILTON KEYNES CITY COUNCIL held on WEDNESDAY  
18 JANUARY 2022 at 7.30 pm

**Present:** Councillor Marlow (Mayor)

Councillors Andrews, Balazs, Bowyer, M Bradburn, R Bradburn, Cannon, A Carr, J Carr, Clarke, Crooks, Darlington, Exon, Ferrans, Fuller, Geary, Hall, D Hopkins, Hosking, Hume, Imran, M Khan, N Khan, Lancaster, Legg, Long, Mahendran, Marland, McPake, Middleton, Montague, Muzammil, Nazir, B Nolan, Z Nolan, Oguntola, Priestley, Raja, Rolfe, Smith, Taylor, Trendall, Verma, Walker, Wallis, Wardle and Wilson-Marklew.

Alderman Miles and Alderwoman Saunders and 2 members of the public.

**Apologies:** Councillors K Bradburn, Cryer-Whitehead, De Villiers, Hearnshaw, V Hopkins, Hussain, Jenkins, McLean, McQuillan and Townsend.

Aldermen Bartlett, Beeley, Bristow, Connor, Coventry, Geary, Henderson, Lewis, McCall, McKenzie and Tallack and Alderwomen Henderson, Irons and Lloyd.

**CL88 MINUTES**

RESOLVED -

That the Minutes of the Special Meeting of Council held on 23 November 2022 and the meeting of Council held on 23 November 2022 be approved and signed by the Mayor as correct records.

**CL89 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

None.

**CL90 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor made announcements in respect of: Oracle Red Bull Racing Home Run event; New Year's Honours; the death of Pat Wicker and Brad Bradstock, the safe arrival of Councillor Jenkins's daughter and a reminder to submit Ward Based Budgets.

**CL91                    PETITIONS**

None.

**CL92                    QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

- (a)     Question from Sophie Bell to Councillor Trendall (Cabinet Member for Customer Services)

Sophie Bell, asked Councillor Trendall, if he would advise how many times the City Council were contacted after the error that saw direct debits being taken early?

Councillor Trendall indicated that as of the 12 January 2023 there had been 903 phone calls and 200 emails on this issue.

As a supplementary question Sophie Bell, asked Councillor Trendall, how many households had received emergency financial support as a result of the direct debits being taken early?

Councillor Trendall advised that fourteen households had received emergency financial support.

- (b)     Question from Alderman Bartlett to Councillor Darlington (Cabinet member for Adults, Housing and Health Communities)

Alderman Bartlett was unable to attend the meeting and their question and the response is attached as an Annex to the minutes.

**CL93                    BUSINESS REMAINING FROM THE LAST MEETING**

None

**CL94                    REPORTS FROM CABINET & COMMITTEES – CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL – 4 JANUARY 2023 – DISSOLUTION OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL AS A COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL**

Councillor M Bradburn (Chair of the Corporate Parenting Panel) moved the following recommendation from the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel held on 4 January 2023, which was seconded by Councillor Balazs:

“That Council be asked to agree to dissolve the Corporate Parenting Panel as an advisory Committee of Council.

The Council heard from one member of the public.

The recommendation was agreed by acclamation.

RESOLVED:

That the Corporate Parenting Panel be dissolved as an advisory Committee of Council.

**CL95**

### **COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS**

- (a) Question from Councillor Smith to Councillor Wilson-Marklew (Cabinet member for Climate and Sustainability)

Councillor Smith, referring to the month of action against violence and having the Knife Angel based at Stadium MK in December, asked Councillor Wilson-Marklew, would she provide the Council with an update on the impact this month of action had?

Councillor Wilson-Marklew indicated that over December the Council had worked with partners including Thames Valley Police, MK Dons Sports and Education Trust, the Safety Centre, Police and Crime Commissioner and local volunteers to deliver 50 events, 100 education sessions and 25,000 conversations between volunteers and members of the public. This was a small amount of the work that was taking place against violence and the Council would continue to work with partners to tackle violence and help keep local people safe.

- (b) Question from Councillor D Hopkins to Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council)

Councillor D Hopkins, referring to the decision by officers not to extend the deadline for member requests that an application for 103 dwellings in Woburn Sands be referred to Planning Committee, asked Councillor Marland, did he support this decision or would he overrule officers to allow this significant, detailed planning application to come before Planning Committee or Planning Panel?

Councillor Marland indicated that it was not in his gift to overrule officers on a delegated matter as the delegation came from the Planning Committee and not the Executive.

- (c) Question from Councillor Oguntola to Councillor Trendall (Cabinet member for Customer Services)

Councillor Oguntola asked Councillor Trendall, if he could provide an update as to what the City Council are doing to increase community activity in Campbell Park and Old Woughton?

Councillor Trendall indicated that there were two free book exchanges that had been established in decommissioned and renovated bus shelters. He thanked the Council and local volunteers and he hoped that these would be the first of many.

- (d) Question from Councillor Geary to Councillor Mahendran (Chair of Planning Committee)

Councillor Geary, referring to the Planning Committee receiving reports on appeal decisions and award of costs, asked Councillor Mahendran, could she advise when the appeal decision on the 'Bletchley Landfill' site would be reported to the committee?

Councillor Mahendran indicated that she would ask officers for an update as to when this appeal would be reported to the Planning Committee.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Geary asked Councillor Mahendran, was the fact that the Council was facing a costs bill of over £900,000 one of the reasons that this was being held up from being reported to the committee?

Councillor Mahendran advised that as indicated above she would ask officers for an update on this matter.

- (e) Question from Councillor Rolfe to Councillor Darlington (Cabinet member for Adults, Housing and Healthy Communities)

Councillor Rolfe, asked Councillor Darlington, if she could provide an update on the Mellish Court demolition?

Councillor Darlington indicated that the tender had been awarded to demolish both Mellish Court and The Gables. Work was progressing floor by floor at The Gables and once this was completed the contractor would start work at Mellish Court.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Rolfe asked Councillor Darlington, did she agree with him, that it was important that Ward members were kept up to date on the major issues happening in their wards and if she did agree could she investigate why he had not been kept up to date with briefings



or why officers had not responded to his emails?

Councillor Darlington advised that she would follow up with officers as to why he was not being kept up to date.

- (f) Question from Councillor Mahendran to Councillor J Carr (Cabinet member for Tackling Social Inequalities)

Councillor Mahendran, referring to the importance of youth democracy and the recent motion to Council on this matter, asked Councillor J Carr, if she would provide an update on how the Youth Council will be shaped and any progress with electing a youth mayor?

Councillor J Carr indicated that MK Youth Cabinet would now be known as MK Youth Council and elections for this would be held in February. There would be 50 places on the Youth Council with the aim that this was a diverse representation of the youth population of Milton Keynes. The Council was committed to introducing a youth mayor and deputy mayor and elections for these roles would take place after the main set of elections.

- (g) Question from Councillor Muzammil to Councillor Darlington (Cabinet member for Adults, Housing and Healthy Communities)

Councillor Muzammil, referring to the recent announcement of £4.2 million in funding from the government for homelessness, asked Councillor Darlington, would she join with her in thanking our two local MP's for lobbying for this funding?

Councillor Darlington indicated that she was not aware of any lobbying that our MP's had done but she was aware of the hard work of officers to submit the bids and that Milton Keynes which for so long had been known as a tent city was now in the situation that nobody who needed and wanted a safe place to sleep was denied one. Councillor Darlington indicated that if either of the MP's would like to fine out more about this work they just needed to contact her.

- (h) Question from Councillor B Nolan to Councillor Wilson-Marklew (Cabinet member for Climate and Sustainability)

Councillor B Nolan, referring to works that were taking place to improve Grafton Park, asked Councillor Wilson-Marklew, if she could provide an update on the work that was happening at the park?

Councillor Wilson-Marklew indicated that the Council was working in conjunction with My Milton Keynes to carry out improvements in the park including landscaping, flood prevention and refurbishment of the public art. The park was on its way to being an open and attractive space in the central city.

- (i) Question from Councillor Balazs to Councillor Middleton (Cabinet member for Resources)

Councillor Balazs, referring to the rollout of fibre broadband in Tickford Street, Newport Pagnell, asked Councillor Middleton, if he could provide residents with an update as to when this would be connected and go live?

Councillor Middleton indicated that the broadband rollout was done by City Fibre which was a private company but that he would ask officers if they could provide a response

- (j) Question from Councillor Clarke to Councillor Darlington (Cabinet member for Adults, Housing and Healthy Communities)

Councillor Clarke, referring to the colder weather that we were experiencing, asked Councillor Darlington, what steps was the Council putting in place to support rough sleepers?

Councillor Darlington indicated that there was a bed available for anyone who wanted a safe warm space to sleep at either the night shelter or the winter shelter. Those rough sleepers who were not yet willing to engage with the Council were visited every morning.

- (k) Question from Councillor Hosking to Councillor Middleton (Cabinet member for Resources)

Councillor Hosking, asked Councillor Middleton, could he confirm the current and projected cost overruns on the Milton Keynes East Development and crucially any associated

liabilities on this Council?

Councillor Middleton indicated that as he had not had advance notice of the question he did not have the details available and he would therefore clarify what the question was and provide a written response.

- (l) Question from Councillor A Carr to Councillor Z Nolan (Cabinet member for Children and Families)

Councillor A Carr asked Councillor Z Nolan, if she could provide an update on the recent Ofsted Inspection on children in care?

Councillor Z Nolan indicated that Ofsted had recently published their report and had praised the Council for improving its practices for supporting children in care and recognised the positive impact that these improvements have had on children's lives. Our social workers were commended for their understanding of the needs of the individual children and the strong family support ethos. There was more to do and actions had already been identified and work was taking place on these.

- (m) Question from Councillor Raja to Councillor J Carr (Cabinet member for Tackling Social Inequalities)

Councillor Raja, referring to the community cost of living event that had been held today, asked Councillor J Carr, could the event be held again on the weekend so that those residents that work during the week could attend?

Councillor J Carr indicated that that the event had not been organised by the Council but she would ask officers to follow up with those that had organised it to see if it could be run again on a weekend.

- (n) Question from Councillor D Hopkins to Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council)

Councillor D Hopkins, referring to the fact that Woburn Sands was losing its last remaining high street bank, asked Councillor Marland, would he work with local members and the town council to find ways to retain a cashpoint for the town or a weekly mobile banking service?

Councillor Marland indicated that there were a number of campaigns to ensure that free to use cashpoints were provided particularly in areas of deprivation. This criteria may not apply to Woburn Sands but that he was prepared to see what he could do on this matter.

- (o) Question from Councillor Hume to Councillor Wilson-Marklew (Cabinet member for Climate and Sustainability)

Councillor Hume, referring to the aim of the Council to be net zero by 2030, asked Councillor Wilson-Marklew, what support would be available for town, parish and community councils to help them reduce their carbon footprints?

Councillor Wilson-Marklew indicated that there would be guidance available soon for how these groups can access the carbon off-set fund. This fund was paid for by developers to ensure that carbon saving measures could be supported and delivered locally. Councillor Wilson-Marklew indicated that she would welcome providing more information to groups that were interested and there would be a briefing and support available.

**CL96**

### **TAKING BACK CONTROL OF PLANNING**

Councillor D Hopkins moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor Bowyer:

- “1. That this Council notes plans to build a significant number of new homes in the next twenty-seven years as part of its MKFutures 2050 ambitions, and the impact this will have an upon our existing residents, particularly while the development is taking place.
2. That this Council recognises its responsibility to minimise and mitigate impacts of construction, such as increased traffic disruption, noise pollution and pressure on our already stretched infrastructure.
3. That the Director of Planning and Placemaking be asked to ensure that the Council’s approach to the assessment of construction management plans is sufficiently robust to offer enforceable protection for existing residents and to ensure that Milton Keynes remains a great place to live and work.

4. That Cabinet be asked to reiterate their commitment that Milton Keynes City Council will take back control of planning by placing MK residents, their communities and MK business first in each and every decision relating to draft policies and other strategic work, relating to the new City Plan.
5. That Planning Cabinet Advisory Group be asked to ensure their work programme is sufficient to scrutinise and assess the relevant studies that will form part of the evidence base for the new City Plan in a way that deliver on the Cabinet's commitment to take back control of planning."

Councillor Ferrans moved the following amendment which was seconded by Councillor Trendall:

The motion, if amended would read:

- "1. That this Council notes plans to build a significant number of new homes in the next twenty-seven years as part of its MKFutures 2050 ambitions, and the impact this will have an upon our existing residents, particularly while the development is taking place.
2. That this Council recognises its responsibility to minimise and mitigate impacts of construction, such as increased traffic disruption, noise pollution and pressure on our already stretched infrastructure, **and shall work towards minimisation of these within the constraints set by the government.**
3. That the Director of Planning and Placemaking be asked to ensure that **where the law currently allows**, the Council's approach to the assessment of construction management plans is sufficiently robust to offer enforceable protection or existing residents, **and to ensure that Milton Keynes remains a great place to live and work.**
4. That Cabinet be asked to reiterate their commitment that Milton Keynes City Council ~~will take back control of planning by placing~~ **will, in so far as they have the power to do so, prioritise the needs of** MK residents, their communities and MK businesses first, **deconflicting or prioritising these needs where necessary**, ~~in each and every decision relating to draft~~ **when formulating** policies and other strategic work, relating to the new City Plan.

5. That the Cabinet member for Planning be asked to ensure that the work of the Planning Cabinet Advisory Group is sufficient to advise development of the new City Plan, be asked to ensure their work programme is sufficient to scrutinise and assess using knowledge of the relevant studies that will form part of the evidence base, for the new City Plan in a way that delivers on the Cabinet's commitment to take back control of planning.
6. That Cabinet and the members of the City Council continue to lobby the government, and support the call for the amendment and repatriation of planning powers back to local authorities including but not limited to, the power to make locally appropriate decisions which digress from the National Planning Policy Framework, the power to make general local development management policies that override the national Development Management policies, and to restrict the right of appeal to the government's Planning Inspectorate so that planning appeals cease to be just another step in the planning application process."

The amendment was accepted.

The motion was declared carried by acclamation.

RESOLVED –

1. That this Council notes plans to build a significant number of new homes in the next twenty-seven years as part of its MKFutures 2050 ambitions, and the impact this will have on our existing residents, particularly while the development is taking place.
2. That this Council recognises its responsibility to minimise and mitigate impacts of construction, such as increased traffic disruption, noise pollution and pressure on our already stretched infrastructure, and shall work towards minimisation of these within the constraints set by the government.
3. That the Director of Planning and Placemaking be asked to ensure that where the law currently allows, the Council's approach to the assessment of construction management plans is sufficiently robust to offer enforceable protection to existing residents, to ensure that Milton Keynes remains a great place to live and work.

4. That Cabinet be asked to reiterate their commitment that Milton Keynes City Council will, in so far as they have the power to do so, prioritise the needs of MK residents, their communities and MK businesses first, deconflicting or prioritising these needs where necessary, when formulating policies and other strategic work, relating to the new City Plan.
5. That the Cabinet member for Planning be asked to ensure that the work of the Planning Cabinet Advisory Group is sufficient to advise development of the new City Plan, using knowledge of the relevant studies that will form part of the evidence base, in a way that delivers on the Cabinet's commitment to take back control of planning.
6. That Cabinet and the members of the City Council continue to lobby the government, and support the call for the amendment and repatriation of planning powers back to local authorities including but not limited to, the power to make locally appropriate decisions which digress from the National Planning Policy Framework, the power to make general local development management policies that override the national Development Management policies, and to restrict the right of appeal to the government's Planning Inspectorate so that planning appeals cease to be just another step in the planning application process.

**CL97**

**BAITING THE SEWERS**

Councillor Trendall moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor McPake:

- "1. That this Council believes that:
- a) in common with all large cities Milton Keynes has a rodent population which is problematic to control in some areas;
  - b) control of the rodent population is a complex problem, which requires a multi-track approach, for which there is no one solution; and
  - c) whilst the efforts of the City Council have had some success, a concerted efforts by all the parties involved is essential for a permanent reduction of the rodent population.

2. That this Council resolves to ask the Chief Executive of the Council to write to the Chief Executive of Anglian Water to request:
  - a) that the baiting of the sewers which they are responsible for be reinstated; and
  - b) that data concerning where baiting is taking place, and the outcomes resulting from that, be shared with the City Council's Environmental Health function in order that a co-ordinated approach to the matter can be taken."

The motion was declared carried by acclamation.

RESOLVED –

1. That this Council believes that:
  - a) in common with all large cities Milton Keynes has a rodent population which is problematic to control in some areas;
  - b) control of the rodent population is a complex problem, which requires a multi-track approach, for which there is no one solution; and
  - c) whilst the efforts of the City Council have had some success, a concerted efforts by all the parties involved is essential for a permanent reduction of the rodent population.
2. That this Council resolves to ask the Chief Executive of the Council to write to the Chief Executive of Anglian Water to request:
  - a) that the baiting of the sewers which they are responsible for be reinstated; and
  - b) that data concerning where baiting is taking place, and the outcomes resulting from that, be shared with the City Council's Environmental Health function in order that a co-ordinated approach to the matter can be taken.

**CL98**

### **VOTER ID**

Councillor Crooks moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor R Bradburn:

- "1. That this Council, mindful of its previous opposition to Voter ID which it still believes discriminatory and unnecessary in Britain, notes:



- a) how many people were turned away from voting when first it was required in Northern Ireland in 1985; and
  - b) that regulations and associated guidance is still being laid and drafted less than six months prior to the elections, which is in contravention of the established and accepted Gould Principle.
2. That this Council resolves to ask the Chief Executive to write to the Government Minister responsible, to:
- a) support the call of the Chair of the Local Government Association for new requirements to be introduced after elections in May 2023 so as to allow time for more publicity and staff training; and
  - b) call for a wider range of Photo ID to be permitted.
3. That this Council:
- a) notes that a significant national communications campaign run by the Electoral Commission which will support key changes being introduced in May 2023, will commence from around the 9 January 2023, but that resources to support local campaigns were made available just days before Christmas 2022;
  - b) notes that the national application portal for residents to apply for Voter Authority Certificates will not be available until the 16 January 2023 at the earliest; and
  - c) requests that the Council's Returning Officer arrange for a comprehensive and proactive communication and resources programme, to supplement the national communications campaign as soon as is possible."

The motion was declared carried by acclamation.

RESOLVED –

- "1. That this Council, mindful of its previous opposition to Voter ID which it still believes discriminatory and unnecessary in Britain, notes:
- a) how many people were turned away from voting when first it was required in Northern Ireland in 1985; and
  - b) that regulations and associated guidance is still being laid and drafted less than six months prior to the elections,

which is in contravention of the established and accepted Gould Principle.

4. That this Council resolves to ask the Chief Executive to write to the Government Minister responsible, to:
  - a) support the call of the Chair of the Local Government Association for new requirements to be introduced after elections in May 2023 so as to allow time for more publicity and staff training; and
  - b) call for a wider range of Photo ID to be permitted.
5. That this Council:
  - a) notes that a significant national communications campaign run by the Electoral Commission which will support key changes being introduced in May 2023, will commence from around the 9 January 2023, but that resources to support local campaigns were made available just days before Christmas 2022;
  - b) notes that the national application portal for residents to apply for Voter Authority Certificates will not be available until the 16 January 2023 at the earliest; and
  - c) requests that the Council's Returning Officer arrange for a comprehensive and proactive communication and resources programme, to supplement the national communications campaign as soon as is possible."

**CL99**

#### **SCHEME OF COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCES FOR 2023-24**

The Mayor moved the following recommendations which were formerly seconded by the Deputy Mayor:

- i. That the Scheme of Councillors' Allowances attached at Annex A to the report be agreed to take effect from 1 April 2023.
- ii. Should Corporate Parenting Panel be dissolved as a Committee of Council, the SRA for Chair of that Committee should cease immediately and once a successor body has been constituted the Independent Remuneration Panel be asked to make a further recommendation as to whether the payment of an SRA to the Chair would be appropriate, and if so at what level.
- iii. That the recommendations of the IRP to index allowances by 4.69% be noted and agreed for 2023/24 only.

- iv. That the recommendations of the IRP that (where paid) Town, Parish and Community Councils, allowances should also be indexed by 4.69% for 2023/24 only, be noted.

The recommendations were declared carried by acclamation.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Scheme of Councillors' Allowances attached at Annex A to the report be agreed to take effect from 1 April 2023.
2. Should Corporate Parenting Panel be dissolved as a Committee of Council, the SRA for Chair of that Committee should cease immediately and once a successor body has been constituted the Independent Remuneration Panel be asked to make a further recommendation as to whether the payment of an SRA to the Chair would be appropriate, and if so at what level.
3. That the recommendations of the IRP to index allowances by 4.69% be noted and agreed for 2023/24 only.
4. That the recommendations of the IRP that (where paid) Town, Parish and Community Councils, allowances should also be indexed by 4.69% for 2023/24 only, be noted.

CL100

#### **REVIEW OF COMMITTEE PROPORTIONALITY AND EXTERNAL COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS**

The Mayor moved the following recommendations which were formerly seconded by the Deputy Mayor:

- i. That the Council notes that the dissolution of Corporate Parenting Panel as an advisory Committee of the Council leads to an overall reduced number of committee seats (132) comprised of the following allocations to each political group; Conservative (53), Labour (46) and Liberal Democrat (33).
- ii. That the Council notes that the revised allocation of seats continues to achieve political balance as set out in Table 1 (of the report).
- iii. That the Council notes the resignation of Councillor Peter Marland from the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority and agrees the appointment of Councillor Shanika Mahendran.
- iv. That authority be delegated to the Director of Law and Governance in consultation with the Leaders of Political Groups and in accordance with the wishes of the relevant Political

Group, to make appointments to the following bodies in the event that vacancies occur during the Council year:

- a) Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority;
- b) Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel; and
- c) Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes (BLMK) Joint Health Scrutiny Committee (or successor body)."

The recommendations were declared carried by acclamation.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Council notes that the dissolution of Corporate Parenting Panel as an advisory Committee of the Council leads to an overall reduced number of committee seats (132) comprised of the following allocations to each political group; Conservative (53), Labour (46) and Liberal Democrat (33).
2. That the Council notes that the revised allocation of seats continues to achieve political balance as set out in Table 1 (of the report).
3. That the Council notes the resignation of Councillor Peter Marland from the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority and agrees the appointment of Councillor Shanika Mahendran.
4. That authority be delegated to the Director of Law and Governance in consultation with the Leaders of Political Groups and in accordance with the wishes of the relevant Political Group, to make appointments to the following bodies in the event that vacancies occur during the Council year:
  - a) Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority;
  - b) Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel; and
  - c) Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes (BLMK) Joint Health Scrutiny Committee (or successor body)."

**CL101**

**QUARTERLY REPORT ON SPECIAL URGENCY PROVISIONS**

The Council received a quarterly report on special urgency decisions.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

**CL102**

**WARD BASED BUDGETS 2022/23**

The Council received a report on the Ward Based Budgets for 2022/23.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

THE MAYOR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 9:29 PM

[The recording of this meeting is available to view on the Council's YouTube Channel at: https://www.youtube.com/user/MiltonKeynesCouncil](https://www.youtube.com/user/MiltonKeynesCouncil)

## WRITTEN RESPONSE TO PUBLIC QUESTION

### **Alderman Bartlett to Councillor Darlington**

*“Will the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Housing explain why MKC Housing has not commenced any work to develop 33/35 Ousebank Way, Stony Stratford after her promise over 12 months ago that after a then delay of five years following a fire to number 35 work would start.”*

### **Response from Councillor Darlington**

*“As we are including replacement of the roofs, we also had to do additional internal upgrades to the properties in the terrace to improve the overall block. This meant we needed to revisit how the boilers vented which in turn impacted on kitchen sizes and design. This caused a delay as we had to update designs and scope of works, along with getting agreement from Building Control, which has now happened. The updated project scope has now been tendered in December 2022 and we are looking to start works this financial year, subject to contractor availability at what is always a busy time of year.”*

## Reports from Cabinet and Committees

**a) Standards Committee – 26 January 2023**

Revised Terms of Reference

That revised Terms of Reference for the Standards Committee (attached at Annex B with tracked changes), reflecting the new arrangements be referred to Council for approval.

A copy of the report considered by the Standards Committee (and relevant Annex) is attached.

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26 January 2023

## **REVIEW OF THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR DEALING WITH STANDARDS ALLEGATIONS UNDER THE LOCALISM ACT 2011**

Report author **Sharon Bridglalsingh**  
Director of Law and Governance

Exempt / confidential / not for publication	<b>No</b>
Council Plan reference	<b>Not in Council Plan</b>
Wards affected	<b>All wards</b>

### Executive summary

The Localism Act 2011 requires all Local Authorities to have in place arrangements for making and investigating complaints against Councillors alleging breaches of the Code of Conduct. Apart from a requirement that the arrangements include provision to seek the views of an Independent Person, the contents of the arrangements are a matter for the local authority.

The consideration of complaints against Parish, Town, and Ward Councillors in Milton Keynes is carried out in accordance with the Council's Arrangements for Dealing with Standards Allegations under the Localism Act 2011 (known as the 'Arrangements').

It is important that the Arrangements are clear, concise, and informative. The Arrangements are a public document which advises those wishing to make a complaint, and those subject to a complaint, how to make a complaint and what to expect from the process.

Milton Keynes City Council adopted its new Code of Conduct in June 2022 and the Standards Committee decided that the key piece of work for 2022/2023 was to ensure that the Arrangements remain fit for purpose.

### **1. Recommendations**

- 1.1 That the revised Standards Arrangements (attached at Annex A), be agreed.
- 1.2 That authority be delegated to the Director of Law and Governance to make minor typographical corrections or consequential amendments to the revised Standards Arrangements.

- 1.3 That revised Terms of Reference for the Standards Committee (attached at Annex B with tracked changes), reflecting the new arrangements be referred to Council for approval.

## **2. Review of the Arrangements**

### Methodology

- 2.1 On 20 July 2022 the Standards Committee formed a politically balanced working group comprising of Councillors B Nolan, Geary and Crooks, with Town Councillor Windsor serving as the Parish representative. The working group met on 3 occasions in 2022 to consider the issues with the current Arrangements and how they it could be improved.
- 2.2 The working group first met on 15 August 2022 and determined that a comparison against other local authorities Arrangements would be useful as this would enable it the working group to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the current Arrangements and identify areas of improvement. This comparison was carried out against Buckinghamshire Council, Bedford Borough Council, Luton Borough Council, Kent County Council and Newcastle City Council.
- 2.3 A review of the Local Government Association's (LGA) guidance was also undertaken to ensure that any recommended changes were in accordance with national guidance.
- 2.4 During this meeting, the working group identified 17 areas to consider, and this report identifies and recommends how the Arrangements can be improved and revised to address them.
- 2.5 The revised Draft Arrangements can be found at Annex A. The existing Arrangements are available on the Council's [website](#).
- 2.6 The 17 points identified by the working group are appended to this report. In summary the changes proposed address these issues and cover:
  - a) Clarity in the sanctions available and the role and remit of committee and Monitoring Officer.
  - b) Streamlining the process – including the role of the Assessment Sub Committee.
  - c) The flexibility of the arrangements to deal with complaints involving allegations of a criminal or litigious nature and with Subject Members who resign or lose their seat.
  - d) The general language and presentation of the Arrangements.
- 2.7 The revised Draft Arrangements provide a framework for dealing with any complaint raised against councillors. The working group felt it was vital to have a clear and comprehensive document which complainants and subject members alike would be able to have confidence in and which represents effective governance.

### 3. Implications of the decision

Financial	N	Human rights, equalities, diversity	N
Legal	Y	Policies or Council Plan	N
Communication	N	Procurement	N
Energy Efficiency	N	Workforce	N

#### a) Legal

The Localism Act 2011 (section 28(6)) requires local authorities to adopt arrangements for dealing with member Code of Conduct complaints both for its own Councillors and for those of Parish and Town Councils within its area. By adopting and updating the Arrangements Procedure, the Council has complied with this requirement.

The report is consistent with the Council's commitment to good governance. Following the large number of complaints received in 2020, it was pivotal to review the Arrangements Procedure. This review is a means of giving transparency and accountability to such arrangements.

This report does not raise any additional legal issues.

### 4. Timetable for implementation

- 4.1 If adopted, the new arrangements would become effective for any new complaint received, immediately.
- 4.2 Existing complaints, which are in progress would continue to be dealt with under the old arrangements.
- 4.3 The Committee's revised Terms of Reference will be referred to the Council meeting for approval in February.

### 5. Appendix (areas identified for review by the working group)

1. Whether the Monitoring Officer (MO) and officers can triage complaints prior to initial assessment?
2. How much discretion can we give the MO when considering complaints at initial assessment?
3. Confidentiality of MO initial assessment, Assessment Sub-Committees and Hearings
4. Introducing reporting and consultation with the Standards Committee
6. Publication of Decision Notices
7. Include a Hearings and Appeals procedure
8. How to handle complaints with a criminal element?
9. How to handle complaints with a litigious element?

10. How to handle complaints where the Councillor resigns/loses seats and is re-elected later either within MK or at a different authority?
  11. To be clearer on sanctions and Committee powers
  12. To be clearer on informal resolution
  13. When and how to consider complaints received against a councillor when a complaint is already being considered against them?
  14. To consider removing Assessment Sub-Committees
  15. To include a section on 'acting in capacity as a councillor'
  16. Is there scope for an informal discussion with a potential complainant prior to initial assessment stage?
  17. Minor changes to timings and wording
- 

### List of annexes

Annex A – Arrangements for Dealing with Standards Allegations under the Localism Act 2011

Annex B – Draft Revised Standards Committee Terms of Reference

### List of background papers

The Council's Current Standards Arrangements:

<https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-03/Arrangements%20for%20Dealing%20with%20Standards%20Allegations.pdf>

(i) Standards Committee

Membership: 9 councillors **(and up to three co-opted Parish representatives)**

Quorum: 4

Terms of Reference:

1. To promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members and co-opted Members of Milton Keynes Council.
2. To assist parish councils within Milton Keynes to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by their Members and co-opted Members.
3. To grant dispensations in respect of requests made under s33 Localism Act 2011.
4. To establish and maintain arrangements under which allegations against all such Members can be investigated and decided upon in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 7 (Standards) of the Localism Act 2011 ~~within the following framework:~~ **(as last agreed by the Standards Committee on 26 January 2023).**
- 5. To establish a sub-committee for Hearings and Appeals as required by the Council's adopted standards arrangements.**
- 6. To make recommendations to Council in respect of appointing Independent Persons and from time to time, to agree any local protocols or procedures relating to the work or training of Independent Persons.**
- 7. To make recommendations to Council about appointing co-opted Parish representatives.**

~~a) That the Monitoring Officer be delegated the authority to determine, after consultation with the Independent Person, whether or not a complaint merits a formal investigation, in line with any policy set by the Standards Committee.~~

~~Explanatory Note (Procedure Agreed by the Standards Committee): The Monitoring Officer will consult with the Independent Person on the matter and may:~~

- ~~i) reject the complaint, with reasons;~~
- ~~ii) explore informal resolution of the matter;~~
- ~~iii) investigate the matter (or appoint an investigator to investigate the matter); or~~
- ~~iv) refer the matter to a Standards Sub-Committee where the complaint is:~~
  - ~~• very serious;~~
  - ~~• a conflict of interest has arisen;~~
  - ~~• the matter is particularly complex;~~
  - ~~• the matter is potentially going to attract a high level of public interest;~~

- the matter is politically sensitive; or
- Any other substantial reason.

b) The Monitoring Officer, on receipt of the investigating officer's report,

in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chairs, be delegated authority to decide that no further action is warranted, to refer a case for a hearing, or to decide on other action.

c) That a Standards Sub-Committee be established and be delegated power, after consultation with the Independent Person and, if a Parish matter, in consultation with a co-opted Parish Member, to determine whether or not a complaint merits referral to the monitoring officer to undertake a formal investigation or other action.

d) That Standards Sub-Committee be established and, after consultation with the Independent Person and, if a Parish matter, in consultation with a co-opted Parish Member:

i) be delegated power to undertake a hearing to determine whether or not a Member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct; and

ii) be delegated such of the Council's powers as can be delegated to take decisions in respect of a Member who is found on hearing to have failed to comply with the Code of Conduct.

e) That a Standards Sub-Committee be established and be delegated power, after consultation with the Independent Person and, if a Parish matter, in consultation with a co-opted Parish Member, to adjudicate on appeals against the findings of Hearing Sub-Committee on the grounds that:

i) the procedure has been wrongly applied;

ii) new evidence has come to light since the hearing which, if disclosed to the panel, may result in a different outcome; or

iii) the Committee has misdirected itself in law.

f) That the Monitoring Officer be appointed as the Proper Officer to receive and administer complaints of failure to comply with the Code of Conduct.

## Reports from Cabinet and Committees

### b) Cabinet – 7 February 2023

North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan

That Council be recommended to make the North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan pursuant to the provisions of Section 38(A)(4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

A copy of the report considered by Cabinet is attached.

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7 February 2023

## **MAKING THE NORTH CRAWLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

Name of Cabinet Member	<b>Councillor Peter Marland</b> Leader of the Council
Report sponsor	<b>Paul Thomas</b> Director of Planning & Placemaking
Report author	<b>David Blandamer</b> Senior Urban Designer <a href="mailto:david.blandamer@milton-keynes.gov.uk">david.blandamer@milton-keynes.gov.uk</a> 01908 254836

Exempt / confidential / not for publication	<b>No</b>
Council Plan reference	<b>Not in Council Plan</b>
Wards affected	<b>Olney Ward</b>

### Executive summary

The report seeks Cabinet's agreement to recommend to Council that it makes (brings into legal force) the North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan, following the successful referendum held on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

#### 1. Decision to be Made

1.1 That Council be recommended to make the North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan pursuant to the provisions of Section 38(A)(4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

#### 2. Why is the decision needed?

2.1 The North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to the Council for examination and was subsequently publicised for a six-week period, ending on 19<sup>th</sup> August 2022. All comments received were then passed to the Examiner, Ann Skippers, who submitted her report on the Plan in November 2022, stating that the plan met the relevant basic conditions and requirements, subject to modifications, and should proceed to referendum.

- 2.2 Following the examination, Milton Keynes City Council, in consultation with North Crawley Parish Council, accepted the examiner’s recommendations and proceeded to make arrangements for a referendum to be held on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2023.
- 2.3 The North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan was successful at the referendum. In total, 253 people voted ‘Yes’ and 35 ‘No’; turnout was 49%. Under Section 38(3A) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 a neighbourhood plan comes into force as part of the statutory development plan once it has been approved by referendum. The plan must still be made by the local planning authority within 8 weeks of the referendum.
- 2.4 Under Sections 38A(4) and 38A(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004, before making the Neighbourhood Plan, Milton Keynes City Council is required to consider whether the making of the plan would breach, or would otherwise be incompatible with, any retained EU obligation or any of the Convention rights within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998. The Neighbourhood Plan would not be in breach of any retained EU obligations or any of the Convention Rights. This was also the view of the Neighbourhood Plan examiner.
- 2.5 National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF) footnote to paragraph 29 states that neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan. Neighbourhood Plans should reflect these policies, and neighbourhoods should plan positively to support them. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than is set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies. The North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan was examined against the strategic policies set out in Plan:MK, adopted in March 2019, and was found to be in general conformity with them.
- 2.6 Once a neighbourhood plan has successfully passed the referendum stage, it comes into force as part of the statutory development plan, meaning it will be a material consideration when considering development proposals in the neighbourhood plan area.

### 3. Implications of the decision

Financial	N	Human rights, equalities, diversity	Y
Legal	Y	Policies or Council Plan	Y
Communication	N	Procurement	N
Energy Efficiency	N	Workforce	N

#### a) Financial implications

The Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (“the 2012 Regulations”) place duties on local planning authorities in relation to neighbourhood planning. These duties have considerable implications for Council resources.

In recognition of the additional burdens that these duties place on local planning authorities, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) makes funding of £20,000 available to local authorities in the form of a Neighbourhood Planning Grant. A claim has been submitted for the Neighbourhood Planning Grant.

Publicity and officer support costs associated with making neighbourhood plans is met within the Urban Design budget and staff resources to implement the plan come from the existing staff within the Development Plans and Development Management teams.

b) Legal implications

Neighbourhood planning is part of the Government's initiative to empower local communities to take forward planning proposals at a local level, as outlined in Section 116 of the Localism Act 2011. The Localism Act 2011 and the subsequent regulations confer specific functions on local planning authorities in relation to neighbourhood planning and lay down the steps that must be followed in relation to Neighbourhood Planning.

The North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan has been consulted on in accordance with the 2012 Regulations and subjected to a referendum in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012.

In accordance with Regulation 19 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 Regulations, the Council must, as soon as possible after deciding to make a neighbourhood development plan:

- publish on the website and in such other manner as is likely to bring the Plan to the attention of people who live, work or carry on business in the neighbourhood area:
  - i) the decision document,
  - ii) details of where and when the decision document may be inspected;
- send a copy of the decision document to:
  - i) the qualifying body; and
  - ii) any person who asked to be notified of the decision.

In accordance with Regulation 20 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) 2012 Regulations, the Council must, as soon as possible after making a neighbourhood development plan:

- publish on the website and in such other manner as is likely to bring the Plan to the attention of people who live, work or carry on business in the neighbourhood area:
  - i) the neighbourhood development plan; and

- ii) details of where and when the neighbourhood development plan may be inspected; and
- notify any person who asked to be notified of the making of the neighbourhood development plan that it has been made and where and when it may be inspected.

As with any planning decision there is a risk of legal challenge, but that risk has and is being managed by ensuring that the regulations are being followed and that the Council's decision-making process is clear and transparent.

c) Other implications

The North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan has been tested against and found to meet the basic conditions (paragraph 37 of NPPF) required for neighbourhood plans.

The Examiner's report has confirmed that the North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions and officers are satisfied that there are no conflicts with these aspects.

The consultations on the draft plan carried out by North Crawley Parish Council and then the publicity on the submitted plan carried out by Milton Keynes City Council have helped to raise awareness of its preparation and have allowed community engagement and participation in the process.

## 4. Alternatives

- 4.1 In the event of a 'Yes' vote in the referendum, the Council is obliged to proceed to make the Plan as outlined above, unless there is a breach of a retained EU obligation or Convention rights. Cabinet is advised in this report that there is no breach of a retained EU obligation or Convention rights, and therefore it is recommended that Cabinet recommends to the Council to make the North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan, and for Council to implement that recommendation, so that the North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan becomes part of the Milton Keynes Development Plan. Alternative option for Cabinet is to recommend to the Council that the North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan is not made, if Cabinet considers that there is a breach of a retained EU obligation or Convention rights.

## 5. Timetable for implementation

- 5.1 The Neighbourhood Plan will be made by Council at its 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2023 meeting.

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## List of Annexes

Annex A – Decision document for making the North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan

Annex B – North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan [North Crawley Neighbourhood plan | Milton Keynes City Council \(milton-keynes.gov.uk\)](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/north-crawley-neighbourhood-plan)

Annex C – Examiner’s Report

## List of Background Papers

The Localism Act, 2011

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012

National Planning Policy Framework paras 29 & 37

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**MILTON KEYNES CITY COUNCIL  
NORTH CRAWLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

**Decision Statement - 22 February 2023**

**Summary**

Following a referendum of residents eligible to vote within the North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan area, Milton Keynes City Council will make the North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan part of the Milton Keynes City Council Development Plan on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2023.

**Background**

North Crawley Parish Council, as the qualifying body, successfully applied for its area to be designated a Neighbourhood Area, under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012). The area was designated on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2018.

The North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to Milton Keynes City Council for examination and was subsequently publicised for a six-week period, ending on, 19<sup>th</sup> August 2022. All comments received were then passed to the Independent Examiner, Ann Skippers, who submitted her report on the Plan in November 2022, stating that the plan met relevant basic conditions and requirements, and should proceed to referendum.

Following the examination, Milton Keynes City Council, in consultation with North Crawley Parish Council, accepted the examiner's recommendations on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2022 and proceeded to make arrangements for a referendum to be held on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

The North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan was successful at the referendum held on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2023. 253 voted 'Yes' and 35 'No', turnout was 49%. Under the changes to Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, introduced by the Neighbourhood Planning Act, 2017, following the successful referendum the North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan came into force as part of the Milton Keynes statutory development plan. The North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan must still be made by the Council within 8 weeks of the referendum.

**Decision**

The Council makes the North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan part of the Milton Keynes City Council Development Plan.

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Milton Keynes City Council

**North Crawley  
Neighbourhood Plan  
2021-2036**

**Independent Examiner's Report**

By Ann Skippers BSc (Hons) MRTPI FHEA FRSA AoU

28 November 2022

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## Summary

I have been appointed as the independent examiner of the North Crawley Neighbourhood Development Plan.

North Crawley is located about 3.5 miles east of Newport Pagnell. The village has a rich heritage with a Conservation Area, three Ancient Monuments and a number of listed buildings, including the Grade 1 St Firmin's Church. The village is located in an elevated position and is surrounded by arable fields and pasturelands with significant woodlands. This landscape and the village's heritage give it a distinct local character.

It has a population of around 736 according to the Census 2011, but this population is declining with fewer families and an ageing profile. The village has a number of services and facilities including an infant school, shops and two public houses.

The Plan is presented well. It has 14 policies covering a wide range of issues, but most importantly it contains five site allocations providing for around 30 – 35 houses, over and above any requirement. This recognises the importance placed on a sustainable community and a strong desire to influence the area's future. The policies do not repeat Milton Keynes City Council level policy, but seek to add a local layer or address matters of importance to the local community.

It has been necessary to recommend some modifications. In the main these are intended to ensure the Plan is clear and precise and provides a practical framework for decision-making as required by national policy and guidance. These do not significantly or substantially alter the overall nature of the Plan.

Subject to those modifications, I have concluded that the Plan does meet the basic conditions and all the other requirements I am obliged to examine. I am therefore pleased to recommend to Milton Keynes City Council that the North Crawley Neighbourhood Development Plan can go forward to a referendum.

In considering whether the referendum area should be extended beyond the Neighbourhood Plan area I see no reason to alter or extend this area for the purpose of holding a referendum.

Ann Skippers MRTPI  
Ann Skippers Planning  
28 November 2022



## 1.0 Introduction

1. This is the report of the independent examiner into the North Crawley Neighbourhood Development Plan (the Plan).
2. The Localism Act 2011 provides a welcome opportunity for communities to shape the future of the places where they live and work and to deliver the sustainable development they need. One way of achieving this is through the production of a neighbourhood plan.
3. I have been appointed by Milton Keynes City Council (MKC) with the agreement of the Parish Council, to undertake this independent examination. I have been appointed through the Neighbourhood Planning Independent Examiner Referral Service (NPIERS).
4. I am independent of the qualifying body and the local authority. I have no interest in any land that may be affected by the Plan. I am a chartered town planner with over thirty years experience in planning and have worked in the public, private and academic sectors and am an experienced examiner of neighbourhood plans. I therefore have the appropriate qualifications and professional experience to carry out this independent examination.

## 2.0 The role of the independent examiner

5. The examiner must assess whether a neighbourhood plan meets the basic conditions and other matters set out in paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).
6. The basic conditions<sup>1</sup> are:
  - Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood plan
  - The making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development
  - The making of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area
  - The making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, retained European Union (EU) obligations<sup>2</sup>
  - Prescribed conditions are met in relation to the neighbourhood plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood plan.

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<sup>1</sup> Set out in paragraph 8 (2) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

<sup>2</sup> Substituted by the Environmental Assessments and Miscellaneous Planning (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2018/1232 which came into force on 31 December 2020

7. Regulations 32 and 33 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) set out two additional basic conditions to those set out in primary legislation and referred to in the paragraph above. Only one is applicable to neighbourhood plans and was brought into effect on 28 December 2018.<sup>3</sup> It states that:

- The making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

8. The examiner is also required to check<sup>4</sup> whether the neighbourhood plan:

- Has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body
- Has been prepared for an area that has been properly designated for such plan preparation
- Meets the requirements to i) specify the period to which it has effect; ii) not include provision about excluded development; and iii) not relate to more than one neighbourhood area and that
- Its policies relate to the development and use of land for a designated neighbourhood area.

9. I must also consider whether the draft neighbourhood plan is compatible with Convention rights.<sup>5</sup>

10. The examiner must then make one of the following recommendations:

- The neighbourhood plan can proceed to a referendum on the basis it meets all the necessary legal requirements
- The neighbourhood plan can proceed to a referendum subject to modifications or
- The neighbourhood plan should not proceed to a referendum on the basis it does not meet the necessary legal requirements.

11. If the plan can proceed to a referendum with or without modifications, the examiner must also consider whether the referendum area should be extended beyond the neighbourhood plan area to which it relates.

12. If the plan goes forward to referendum and more than 50% of those voting vote in favour of the plan then it is made by the relevant local authority, in this case MKC. The plan then becomes part of the 'development plan' for the area and a statutory consideration in guiding future development and in the determination of planning applications within the plan area.

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<sup>3</sup> Conservation of Habitats and Species and Planning (Various Amendments) (England and Wales) Regulations 2018

<sup>4</sup> Set out in sections 38A and 38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as amended by the Localism Act

<sup>5</sup> The combined effect of the Town and Country Planning Act Schedule 4B para 8(6) and para 10 (3)(b) and the Human Rights Act 1998

### 3.0 The examination process

13. I have set out my remit in the previous section. It is useful to bear in mind that the examiner's role is limited to testing whether or not the submitted neighbourhood plan meets the basic conditions and other matters set out in paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).<sup>6</sup>

14. Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) confirms that the examiner is not testing the soundness of a neighbourhood plan or examining other material considerations.<sup>7</sup> Often representations suggest amendments to policies or additional and new policies. Where I find that policies do meet the basic conditions, it is not necessary for me to consider if further amendments or additions are required.

15. In addition, PPG is clear that neighbourhood plans are not obliged to include policies on all types of development.<sup>8</sup>

16. PPG<sup>9</sup> explains that it is expected that the examination will not include a public hearing. Rather the examiner should reach a view by considering written representations. Where an examiner considers it necessary to ensure adequate examination of an issue or to ensure a person has a fair chance to put a case, then a hearing must be held.<sup>10</sup>

17. I sought clarification on a number of matters from the Parish Council and MKC in writing on 4 November 2022 and my list of questions is attached to this report as Appendix 2. I am grateful to both Councils who have provided me with comprehensive answers to my questions. These responses received (all publicly available) together with consideration of all the documentation and the representations made, have enabled me to examine the Plan without the need for a hearing.

18. In 2018, the Neighbourhood Planning Independent Examiner Referral Service (NPIERS) published guidance to service users and examiners. Amongst other matters, the guidance indicates that the qualifying body will normally be given an opportunity to comment upon any representations made by other parties at the Regulation 16 consultation stage should they wish to do so. There is no obligation for a qualifying body to make any comments; it is only if they wish to do so. The Parish Council chose not to offer any comments.

19. I am very grateful to everyone for ensuring that the examination has run smoothly and in particular David Blandamer at MKC.

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<sup>6</sup> PPG para 055 ref id 41-055-20180222

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

<sup>8</sup> Ibid para 040 ref id 41-040-20160211

<sup>9</sup> Ibid para 056 ref id 41-056-20180222

<sup>10</sup> Ibid

20. I made an unaccompanied site visit to familiarise myself with the Plan area on 20 September 2022.

21. Where modifications are recommended they appear in **bold text**. Where I have suggested specific changes to the wording of the policies or new wording these appear in ***bold italics***.

22. As a result of some modifications consequential amendments may be required. These can include changing section headings, amending the contents page, renumbering paragraphs or pages, ensuring that supporting appendices and other documents align with the final version of the Plan and so on.

23. I regard these as primarily matters of final presentation and do not specifically refer to such modifications, but have an expectation that a common sense approach will be taken and any such necessary editing will be carried out and the Plan's presentation made consistent.

#### 4.0 Neighbourhood plan preparation

24. A Consultation Statement has been submitted. It meets the requirements of Regulation 15(2) of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

25. Work began on the Plan in 2017. A questionnaire was sent to all households and the results fed back at a number of events

26. During preparation of the Plan, monthly public meetings were held between November 2019 and March 2020. An information leaflet was distributed to all households in February 2021 explaining how feedback could be offered. Regular updates were made on the Community Facebook page and emailed to those on a distribution list. An update on the Plan was a standing item on Parish Council agendas and included in the monthly Parish magazine distributed to all households. A series of events was also held in July and November 2021.

27. Two periods of pre-submission consultation were undertaken. In response to a question regarding this sequence of events, I am informed that the Strategic Environmental Assessment had not been prepared prior to the first consultation as it was only Historic England's response to the first consultation which highlighted the need for SEA.

28. The first period was undertaken for a six week period between December 2021 and January 2022. The second period was undertaken for a six week period between April and May 2022.

29. The first and second periods of consultation were advertised by a hand delivered letter with a copy of the Plan (in the first consultation) and an explanation of the SEA (in

the second consultation) to each household and email contact with all those on the distribution lists and statutory bodies. The consultations were publicised on the Facebook page and via the Parish Council meetings and website. Two drop in sessions were held during each consultation period.

30. I consider that the consultation and engagement carried out is satisfactory.

31. Submission (Regulation 16) consultation was carried out between 8 July – 19 August 2022.

32. The Regulation 16 stage resulted in six representations. I have considered all of the representations and taken them into account in preparing my report.

## **5.0 Compliance with matters other than the basic conditions**

33. I now check the various matters set out in section 2.0 of this report.

### **Qualifying body**

34. North Crawley Parish Council is the qualifying body able to lead preparation of a neighbourhood plan. This requirement is satisfactorily met.

### **Plan area**

35. The Plan area is coterminous with the administrative boundary for the Parish. MKC approved the designation of the area on 30 January 2018. The Plan relates to this area and does not relate to more than one neighbourhood area and therefore complies with these requirements. The Plan area is shown on page 1 of the Plan.

### **Plan period**

36. The Plan period is 2021 – 2036. This is clearly stated on the front cover of the Plan and within the Plan itself. This requirement is satisfactorily met.

### **Excluded development**

37. The Plan does not include policies that relate to any of the categories of excluded development. The Plan therefore meets this requirement.

### **Development and use of land**

38. Policies in neighbourhood plans must relate to the development and use of land. Sometimes neighbourhood plans contain aspirational policies or projects that signal the community's priorities for the future of their local area, but are not related to the development and use of land. If I consider a policy or proposal to fall within this



category, I will recommend it be clearly differentiated. This is because wider community aspirations than those relating to development and use of land can be included in a neighbourhood plan, but actions dealing with non-land use matters should be clearly identifiable.<sup>11</sup>

39. In this instance, actions and projects unrelated to the development and use of land are referred to in the Introduction and more detail is provided in the separate Section 4 of the Plan. This approach aligns with the approach advised by PPG.

## 6.0 The basic conditions

### Regard to national policy and advice

40. The Government revised the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) on 20 July 2021. This revised Framework replaces the previous National Planning Policy Framework published in March 2012, revised in July 2018 and updated in February 2019.

41. The NPPF is the main document that sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

42. In particular it explains that the application of the presumption in favour of sustainable development will mean that neighbourhood plans should support the delivery of strategic policies in local plans or spatial development strategies and should shape and direct development outside of these strategic policies.<sup>12</sup>

43. Non-strategic policies are more detailed for specific areas, neighbourhoods or types of development.<sup>13</sup> They can include allocating sites, the provision of infrastructure and community facilities at a local level, establishing design principles, conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment as well as set out other development management policies.<sup>14</sup>

44. The NPPF also makes it clear that neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than that set out in strategic policies or undermine those strategic policies.<sup>15</sup>

45. The NPPF states that all policies should be underpinned by relevant and up to date evidence; evidence should be adequate and proportionate, focused tightly on supporting and justifying policies and take into account relevant market signals.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> PPG para 004 ref id 41-004-20190509

<sup>12</sup> NPPF para 13

<sup>13</sup> Ibid para 28

<sup>14</sup> Ibid

<sup>15</sup> Ibid para 29

<sup>16</sup> Ibid para 31

46. Policies should be clearly written and unambiguous so that it is evident how a decision maker should react to development proposals. They should serve a clear purpose and avoid unnecessary duplication of policies that apply to a particular area including those in the NPPF.<sup>17</sup>

47. On 6 March 2014, the Government published a suite of planning guidance referred to as Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). This is an online resource available at [www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance) which is regularly updated. The planning guidance contains a wealth of information relating to neighbourhood planning. I have also had regard to PPG in preparing this report.

48. PPG indicates that a policy should be clear and unambiguous<sup>18</sup> to enable a decision maker to apply it consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications. The guidance advises that policies should be concise, precise and supported by appropriate evidence, reflecting and responding to both the planning context and the characteristics of the area.<sup>19</sup>

49. PPG states there is no 'tick box' list of evidence required, but proportionate, robust evidence should support the choices made and the approach taken.<sup>20</sup> It continues that the evidence should be drawn upon to explain succinctly the intention and rationale of the policies.<sup>21</sup>

50. Whilst this has formed part of my own assessment, the Basic Conditions Statement sets out how the Plan has responded to national policy and guidance. It contains a table which considers each Plan policy alongside the NPPF offering a helpful commentary.

### **Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development**

51. A qualifying body must demonstrate how the making of a neighbourhood plan would contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

52. The NPPF confirms that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.<sup>22</sup> This means that the planning system has three overarching and interdependent objectives which should be pursued in mutually supportive ways so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives.<sup>23</sup> The three overarching objectives are:<sup>24</sup>

- an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved

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<sup>17</sup> NPPF para 16

<sup>18</sup> PPG para 041 ref id 41-041-20140306

<sup>19</sup> Ibid

<sup>20</sup> Ibid para 040 ref id 41-040-20160211

<sup>21</sup> Ibid

<sup>22</sup> Ibid para 7

<sup>23</sup> Ibid para 8

<sup>24</sup> Ibid

productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

- a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and
- an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

53. The NPPF confirms that planning policies should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but should take local circumstances into account to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.<sup>25</sup>

54. Whilst this has formed part of my own assessment, the Basic Conditions Statement offers a commentary on how the Plan helps to achieve sustainable development as outlined in the NPPF.

### **General conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan**

55. The development plan consists of the Local Plan for Milton Keynes (Plan:MK) which was adopted on 20 March 2019. The development plan also consists of the Site Allocations Plan adopted on 18 July 2018, the Minerals Local Plan adopted on 1 July 2017, the Waste Development Plan Document adopted in 2008 and a number of made neighbourhood plans detailed on MKC’s website.

56. The Basic Conditions Statement includes an assessment of the Plan’s policies in relation to Plan:MK. I have also assessed the Plan against the relevant strategic policies in the development plan which are helpfully identified in Appendix J of Plan:MK.

57. MKC has also begun work on reviewing the Plan:MK, but this is at an early stage.

### **Retained European Union Obligations**

58. A neighbourhood plan must be compatible with retained European Union (EU) obligations. A number of retained EU obligations may be of relevance for these purposes including those obligations in respect of Strategic Environmental Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment, Habitats, Wild Birds, Waste, Air Quality and Water matters.

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<sup>25</sup> NPPF para 9

59. With reference to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) requirements, PPG<sup>26</sup> confirms that it is the responsibility of the local planning authority, in this case MKC, to ensure that all the regulations appropriate to the nature and scope of the draft neighbourhood plan have been met. It states that it is MKC who must decide whether the draft plan is compatible with relevant retained EU obligations when it takes the decision on whether the plan should proceed to referendum and when it takes the decision on whether or not to make the plan.

### ***Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment***

60. The provisions of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the 'SEA Regulations') concerning the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment are relevant. The purpose of the SEA Regulations, which transposed into domestic law Directive 2001/42/EC ('SEA Directive'), are to provide a high level of protection of the environment by incorporating environmental considerations into the process of preparing plans and programmes.

61. The provisions of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (the 'Habitats Regulations'), which transposed into domestic law Directive 92/43/EEC (the 'Habitats Directive'), are also of relevance to this examination.

62. Regulation 63 of the Habitats Regulations requires a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) to be undertaken to determine whether a plan is likely to have a significant effect on a European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. The HRA assessment determines whether the Plan is likely to have significant effects on a European site considering the potential effects both of the Plan itself and in combination with other plans or projects. Where the potential for likely significant effects cannot be excluded, an appropriate assessment of the implications of the Plan for that European Site, in view of the Site's conservation objectives, must be carried out.

63. The Basic Conditions Statement states that the Plan has been screened by MKC for both SEA and HRA purposes. In relation to SEA, the Screening Report dated February 2022 identified that a SEA would be needed because of the potential for significant effects in relation to heritage considerations following a response to this effect from Historic England.

64. An Environmental Report (ER) has been submitted. This explains that a scoping exercise was carried out. The ER underwent a period of consultation alongside the pre-submission version of the Plan as a second period of consultation was held.

65. The ER concludes that the Plan "...with the appropriate mitigation in place, ... is likely to lead to positive or neutral effects in relation to the historic environment..."<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> PPG para 031 ref id 11-031-20150209

<sup>27</sup> ER page 30

66. The ER has dealt with the issues appropriately bearing in mind the reason for the ER and the policies and level of detail in the Plan. This in line with PPG advice which confirms the SEA does not have to be done in any more detail or using more resources than is considered to be appropriate for the content and level of detail in the Plan.<sup>28</sup>

67. With regard to Habitats Regulations Assessment, the Screening Report of February 2022 concluded that Appropriate Assessment was not required. This was because no European sites are located within the District and no impact pathways have been identified linking those sites outside the District to development within Milton Keynes Borough. Natural England did not respond to the consultation undertaken.

68. I have treated the Screening Report to be the statement of reasons that the PPG advises must be prepared and submitted with the neighbourhood plan proposal and made available to the independent examiner where it is determined that the plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects.<sup>29</sup>

69. Given the distance, nature and characteristics of the nearest European sites and the nature and contents of this Plan, I agree with the conclusion of the HRA Screening Report that an appropriate assessment is not required and accordingly consider that the prescribed basic condition is complied with, namely that the making of the Plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Habitats Regulations.

#### ***Conclusion on retained EU obligations***

70. National guidance establishes that the ultimate responsibility for determining whether a plan meets EU obligations lies with the local planning authority.<sup>30</sup> In undertaking work on SEA and HRA, MKC has considered the compatibility of the Plan in regard to retained EU obligations and does not raise any concerns in this regard.

#### **European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)**

71. The Basic Conditions Statement contains a very short statement in relation to human rights. Having regard to the Basic Conditions Statement, there is nothing in the Plan that leads me to conclude there is any breach or incompatibility with Convention rights.

## **7.0 Detailed comments on the Plan and its policies**

72. In this section I consider the Plan and its policies against the basic conditions. As a reminder, where modifications are recommended they appear in **bold text** and where I suggest specific changes to the wording of the policies or new wording these appear in **bold italics**.

<sup>28</sup> PPG para 030 ref id 11-030-20150209

<sup>29</sup> Ibid para 028 ref id 11-028-20150209

<sup>30</sup> Ibid para 031 ref id 11-031-20150209

73. The Plan is presented to a high standard and contains 14 policies. The Plan begins with a helpful contents page and a Foreword from the Chairman of the Parish Council.

## **1. Introduction**

74. This section offers a helpful introduction to the Plan and how to use it.

## **2. Background and Context**

75. This interesting and well-written section provides an informative and thorough description of the Plan area as it has developed historically and sets out some of the key issues facing the Parish today.

76. This section also contains a vision and objectives for the Plan.

77. The vision for the Plan states:

“Over the period of this Neighbourhood Plan, North Crawley will continue to be a thriving and vibrant community. Future development will recognise and respect its history, rural landscape and distinctive views and its unique village character. Modest growth will contribute to the parish becoming an even better place in which to live, work and to visit.”

78. The vision is supported by five objectives covering housing, employment and traffic, heritage and design, landscape and green spaces and community facilities. All are articulated well, relate to the development and use of land and will help to deliver the vision.

## **3. Neighbourhood Plan Policies**

### ***3.1 Housing***

79. This section contains a set of eight policies on housing including five site allocations. Plan:MK aims to deliver a minimum of 26,500 dwellings between 2016 and 2031, but allocates land for around 30,900 dwellings. Plan:MK covers the same length of time as this Plan, but has different start and end dates.

80. Although this is not a strategic policy, I note that Plan:MK Policy DS1 indicates that development within villages and other rural settlements will be within defined settlement boundaries and in compliance with made neighbourhood plans.

81. Plan:MK Policy DS2 is the housing strategy. It sets out the delivery of a minimum 26,500 new dwellings. The focus for development is the existing urban area of Milton Keynes, the adjoining land to the urban area and in three key settlements. In addition, the development of small and medium sized sites within rural settlements appropriate to the size, function and role of that settlement is supported through site allocations in neighbourhood plans.

82. I am also mindful that the NPPF supports the allocation of small and medium sized sites suitable for housing through neighbourhood plans.<sup>31</sup>

83. The approach to delivering new development in villages and other rural areas at City level is then, as Plan:MK indicates, is to place the emphasis on neighbourhood plans. There is therefore no specific or specified housing requirement figure set out in strategic policy given the stated strategy.

84. MKC has set a nominal housing requirement figure of one dwelling, but has agreed that the Plan can allocate more housing provided it is sustainable and in general conformity with Plan:MK.

85. To support the housing figures put forward by the Plan, a Briefing Paper on the Future Housing Requirement has been prepared. It concludes that the amount of housing proposed in the Plan of some 30 – 35 dwellings is appropriate. This level of growth, which equates approximately to a 10% uplift in housing numbers for the Parish, has been supported by MKC. I consider that this is an appropriate figure taking account of relevant policies, the existing strategy at MKC level, the characteristics of the Plan area and the aspirations of the local community and the reasons for those aspirations.

86. A defined settlement boundary was designated by the Plan:MK. This Plan follows that boundary but revises it to include the proposed site allocations. There are also some other additions to land which will now fall within the settlement boundary. These are areas of land to the west of the bowling green, to the rear of Ivy House, the curtilage of Church Farm, an area adjacent to the road by the telephone exchange and north of the Lodge House on Pound Lane.

87. Having sought clarification from the Parish Council, I understand it was the intention to only alter the settlement boundary to include the proposed site allocations. I therefore intend to recommend that the settlement boundary shown on the Policies Map reverts to that in the adopted Plan:MK, but is amended to include the proposed site allocations. This recommendation appears under the Policies Map section of this report.

88. Plan:MK Policy DS5 defines the land outside settlement boundaries as open countryside and sets out the type and extent of development suitable for such areas.

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<sup>31</sup> NPPF para 70

## Policies H1 Delivery of Housing, H2 Infill Development and Replacement Dwellings

89. **Policy H1, Delivery of Housing**, sets out the provision of 30 – 35 new homes over the Plan period. It supports new housing on sites within the settlement boundary, windfall sites and through the site allocations proposed in the Plan. As explained above, I consider this to be an appropriate strategy for the Plan.

90. However, it is important to recognise that despite the design work carried out by AECOM on the proposed site allocations, the figures are indicative and should not be regarded as a ceiling. In addition, in adding up those yields from the indicative design work, the total number of dwellings could be in the range of 30 – 40. For this reason, a modification is recommended.

91. **Policy H2, Infill Development and Replacement Dwellings**, supports windfall development on appropriate infill sites within the settlement boundary. It details what type of land or sites would not be acceptable; these include the loss of open space and wildlife habitats. This is an appropriate way forward as Plan:MK refers to selective infill and this policy defines what that consists of at a local level.

92. The second element of the policy supports development in residential gardens; again where appropriate. The policy details those types of sites which would not be considered appropriate.

93. I consider that the policy could be made more precise in places to provide clear and unambiguous content so that it is evident how a decision maker should react to development proposals in line with PPG.<sup>32</sup> A modification is therefore recommended to paragraph two of the policy.

94. With this modification, I consider both Policies H1 and H2 will meet the basic conditions by having regard to national policy for the delivery of housing, being in general conformity with the housing strategy in Plan:MK and in particular Policies DS2 and DS5 of Plan:MK and helping to achieve sustainable development.

95. There is also a correction to make in paragraph 3.1.3 which refers to schemes of more than 11 houses in relation to affordable housing. Plan:MK Policies HN1 and HN2 which respectively address housing mix and density and affordable housing, refer to “11 or more”.

- **Insert the word “*about*” before “...30 to 35 new homes...” in the first sentence of Policy H1**
- **Amend paragraph two of Policy H2 to read:**

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<sup>32</sup> PPG para 041 ref id 41-041-20140306



**“Inappropriate infilling includes proposals that *would* result in the loss of open space; development that would adversely affect the special interest, character, or appearance of the conservation area (or the *setting* or significance of other heritage assets); intensification of existing uses where this *would have* adverse impacts on *the amenity or privacy of nearby occupiers*; development that would cause harm to the *character or appearance of the local area through the loss or reduction of important gaps* between existing dwellings, *the partial or total loss of wildlife habitats*, including the loss of significant trees and *hedgerows*; and developments that are inconsistent with the design principles of Policies HD1 and HD2.”**

- **Amend the first sentence of paragraph 3.1.3 on page 13 of the Plan to read: “A development of *11 or more* houses will be required...”**

### **Policies H3 – H7 Site Allocation Policies**

96. **Policies H3 to H7** are the site allocation policies. The Plan explains that an independent site assessment and selection process was carried out by AECOM. The 13 sites assessed resulted from a Call for Sites in 2017 and through landowners’ submissions in 2020. Five sites were found to be suitable or potentially suitable for housing development.

97. AECOM has been commissioned to produce a series of Site Design Guides. As well as containing design guidance, the document also includes specific guidance, a suggested capacity and an illustrative layout for each of the proposed site allocations.

98. The first site allocation is **Policy H3, Top Croft, Chicheley Road**. This is the largest of the site allocations both in terms of site size and number of dwellings. The site is allocated for 15 – 20 units dependent on site-specific technical reports and evidence.

99. The policy has nine criteria. It recognises that the site borders the busy Chicheley Road, one of the main routes into the village of North Crawley. Given the topography of the site, its location and the fields opposite it is very much a transition site with existing residential development in North Crawley forming a strong boundary to the existing countryside. It serves a purpose acting as part of a gap between North Crawley and Little Crawley and Moat Farm, a listed building and scheduled monument, is close by on the opposite side of the road. This means careful design is needed in order to integrate this edge of village site successfully.

100. The Site Design Guide asks for access to be taken off Chicheley Road with pedestrian access via Site H4. The Highways Officer has indicated a preference for vehicular and cycle access to also be taken through Site H4 and wishes to see a footway fronting Chicheley Road. Although Policy H3 refers to the Site Design Guide, it is recognised that this is guidance and the plans illustrative of what might be achieved on

the site. I consider detailed matters can be resolved at any planning application stage. A modification is put forward so that there is flexibility on this point.

101. The second site allocation is **Policy H4, Former Maslin Property**. This site is adjacent to Site H3 and H5. It is allocated for five dwellings. This policy has eight criteria including reference to the Site Design Guides. All are appropriate given the site's context.

102. The third is **Policy H5, Land North of Orchard Way**. This is allocated for five dwellings. Again this policy has seven criteria; all appropriate given the context of the site and its location adjacent to Site H4.

103. This site has confirmed landowner support, but concern has been raised that only one and one and a half storeys properties are to be allowed. This height is specified in the Site Design Guide although I appreciate that the drawing in the document could be interpreted as showing two storey dwellings. However, I consider the words take precedence and this is also included as one of the criteria in the policy. I am therefore clear that the intention is to limit the heights to one and one and a half storeys, but the policy includes the words "where appropriate" and this gives sufficient flexibility.

104. In considering the appropriateness of this height criterion, I consider that given the site's location on the edge of the village and its relationship with Sites H3 and H4, this limit, particularly given the flexibility referred to above, is appropriate to retain in the policy. I appreciate a design-led scheme for the site may demonstrate other solutions. I noted at my site visit that there are two storey properties opposite the site. The criterion is included to ensure that heights are appropriate in relation to the site's edge of village location and the mix of dwelling heights to be found in the locality and to avoid the introduction of high dwellings that would be out of character.

105. The representation also suggests the site is 'squared off' and a further piece of land included in it. There may be merit in this suggestion for practical farming reasons. However, the site has been assessed and consulted upon as it is defined now. To change the boundaries at this late stage in Plan production would not give an opportunity for consultation or further assessment in terms of the site's potential. In my view this would represent a significant change given the land would have to be taken out of its present open countryside designation and included within the new settlement boundary. For these reasons, and taking into account my remit, this is not a modification I recommend.

106. The fourth site allocation is **Policy H6, Land South of High Street**. This site is in two parts with a single dwelling on the smaller part and two units on the other. One part is adjacent to an existing terrace and has sufficient space for one dwelling. The second part is larger, forming a triangular shaped site on the south side of the High Street at one of the entrances to North Crawley village.

107. The site at present has an existing large detached garage building and stable type building on it.

108. It falls within the Conservation Area. In the Conservation Area Review, the larger area of land is identified as parkland and green space. In the Character Area Assessment, the land is described as “Towards the eastern end of the village there is an area often referred to as ‘allotments’ (which is, in fact, private garden land) that provides an informal openness before the village gives way to open countryside.”<sup>33</sup>

109. I saw at my visit that the larger part of the site was a transition between the more built up heart of the village and the countryside. As well as an important hedgerow that added to the setting of the terrace and ‘feel’ of this part of the village, there is a large tree close to the boundary of the site.

110. Given the site-specific characteristics of the site, I do have some reservations about development on the site, particularly in relation to the larger part. However, I am mindful that the independent site assessment work shows it as being suitable for development, the previous examiner found the site to be acceptable and no objections have been raised, including from MKC to its inclusion.

111. A number of modifications are recommended in the interests of clarity and to help achieve sustainable development.

112. The first is to recognise that the site is in two parts.

113. The second is to state that two, rather than one, new accesses will be needed. This accords with the strategy put forward in the Site Design Guides Report. A modification to the fourth criterion is therefore recommended.

114. There is a further modification to the criteria of the policy to bring it in line with the legislation that relates to Conservation Areas.

115. Lastly, a new criterion is added in relation to the horse chestnut tree adjacent to the site.

116. The fifth and last site allocation is **Policy H7, Land on Folly Lane**. This site is allocated for two bungalows. The site lies adjacent to the Conservation Area.

117. I saw at my visit that this is a sensitive site on the edge of the village along a narrow lane. Given the topography of the site and the existing development, I consider it is essential that single storey dwellings be specified in the policy itself.

118. The site access is taken outside the site allocation demarcation which I expect has been done in this way to prevent a greater number of dwellings on the site. However, this means that the site boundary does not tie up with the Site Design Guide and the criteria and key features within that document. In addition, one criterion that addresses access is ambiguously worded and refers to not causing “difficulty” for residents living opposite the site. If the access is satisfactorily provided, it should not

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<sup>33</sup> Character Areas Assessment page 5

cause any issues, although it is unclear what difficulties were in mind when the policy was written. A modification is therefore made about the access to address both these points.

119. This site has landowner support through a submitted representation.

120. In assessing **Policies H3 – H7**, I consider the site allocations to be in general conformity with Plan: MK Policy DS2 which, as described above, supports site allocations in neighbourhood plans for small and medium sized sites where they are appropriate to the size, function and role of that settlement. Plan:MK Policy NE5 sets out that where development in the open countryside (as defined by Plan:MK Policy DS5) is acceptable in principle under other policies (including Plan:MK Policy DS2), development will need to respect the character of the surrounding landscape. The policy continues that proposals will need to be sensitively designed and incorporate landscape mitigation and enhancement where possible. This includes consideration of historic setting and important views.

121. The Site Design Guides reflect these criteria.

122. Therefore with these modifications, I consider that **Policies H3 – H7** have regard to national policy, are in general conformity with the relevant strategic policies outlined above and will help to achieve sustainable development thereby meeting the basic conditions.

- **Change the first bullet point of Policy H3 to read: “Proposals should satisfy the strategic criteria and incorporate the key features identified in the Site Design Guides Report (Appendix 2) *unless technical evidence demonstrates the need for alternative solutions.*”**
- **Add the words “*in two parts*” after “Site H6...” in the first sentence of Policy H6**
- **Change the fourth criterion of Policy H6 to read: “The development should *retain the existing hedgerows by the introduction of no more than one additional access to the eastern part of the site and only removing what is necessary and essential in the interests of highway safety considerations.*”**
- **Change the fifth criterion of Policy H6 to read: “The housing should be laid out and designed to *conserve, and is encouraged to enhance, the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and its setting to respect the site’s location at the entrance to the village.*”**
- **Add a new criterion to Policy H6 that reads: “A *full assessment of the impact on the protected horse chestnut tree adjacent to the site will be undertaken at an early stage to inform the design of any scheme on the site. The tree should be retained provided it is in good health and otherwise replaced with a specimen of equal merit.*”**

- **Change the first criterion of Policy H7 to read: “Proposals should satisfy the strategic criteria and incorporate the key features identified in the Site Design Guides Report (Appendix 2) and only single storey dwellings will be supported on this site.”**
- **Reword the second criterion of Policy H7 to read: “Vehicular access should be provided to the south of the allocated site in a way that meets all technical requirements and has an acceptable impact on the local highway network.”**

## Policy H8 Affordable Housing

123. The premise behind this policy is to ensure that new residential development addresses local housing needs. Policy H8 takes its lead from Plan:MK Policy HN2 which deals with affordable housing and updates it through reference in the supporting text to First Homes. A local connection policy is also set out in the supporting text and the policy has been written with support from MKC.

124. The NPPF is clear that the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of housing should be supported and that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed.<sup>34</sup> Within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be addressed and reflected in planning policies.<sup>35</sup> This includes the provision of affordable housing, housing suitable for families or older people and those wishing to build their own homes.<sup>36</sup>

125. However, whilst the policy refers to the policies in Plan:MK and the latest associated supplementary documents, it could be future proofed further. A modification is made to address this in the interests of achieving sustainable development.

126. With this modification, the policy will meet the basic conditions in that it has regard to the NPPF, in particular by seeking to boost the supply of housing needed for different groups in the community. It will help to achieve sustainable development and especially the social objective of ensuring a sufficient number and range of homes are provided to meet the needs of present and future generations. It is a local expression of Plan:MK Policies HN1 and HN2 which respectively address housing mix and density and affordable housing.

- **Add at the end of the third bullet point in the policy “and the latest available data on local housing needs.”**

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<sup>34</sup> NPPF para 60

<sup>35</sup> Ibid para 62

<sup>36</sup> Ibid

### 3.2 Employment and Traffic

#### Policy T1 Employment Development and Traffic

127. This is a short policy that seeks to ensure that employment related development does not generate traffic that will cause an adverse impact on the local highway network and provides onsite parking.

128. The supporting text refers to the NPPF's support for a prosperous rural economy through the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of businesses and through the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based businesses.<sup>37</sup>

129. The supporting text has a number of 'asks' of new development proposals which read as policy and could be included within the policy. With these modifications, I consider the policy will have better regard to the NPPF which indicates policies should support economic growth<sup>38</sup> and set out a clear economic vision that positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth.<sup>39</sup> This will mean the policy will help to achieve sustainable development. It will be in general conformity with Plan:MK and particularly Policies ER8 which supports employment uses in the countryside if they are, amongst other things, appropriate for their location and CT2 which refers to the impact on local highway networks from development and parking amongst other things.

- **Change Policy T1 to read:**

***“Employment development proposals should demonstrate that traffic generated will not result in an unacceptable adverse impact on the local highway network and that *satisfactory* on-site parking can be provided *in line with the Council’s latest parking standards*. The layout of development should ensure that *pedestrians and cyclists are taken into account in terms of convenience, safety and accessibility with sufficient cycle parking facilities provided*. Electric vehicle charging points should be provided.”***

### 3.3 Heritage and Design

#### Policy HD1 Protecting Heritage Assets

130. The Plan area has a number of listed buildings including the Grade 1 listed St. Firmin's Church, three Scheduled Monuments and a Conservation Area.

131. Policy HD1 seeks to ensure that development proposals sustain and enhance the significance of heritage assets through an understanding of the asset's significance and

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<sup>37</sup> NPPF para 84

<sup>38</sup> Ibid para 81

<sup>39</sup> Ibid para 82

a statement, as appropriate, that complies with Plan MK: Policy HE1, heritage and development, criterion B. It also refers to the need for an archaeological assessment as appropriate. It supports traffic calming within the Conservation Area. Finally, it refers to the Site Design Guides Report and the Conservation Area Review.

132. The NPPF is clear that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.<sup>40</sup> It continues<sup>41</sup> that great weight should be given to the assets' conservation when considering the impact of development on the significance of the asset.

133. The policy meets the basic conditions having regard to national policy. It is in general conformity with strategic policies and particularly Plan:MK Policy HE1, which refers to heritage assets and from which this policy takes its lead; Policy NE5 which refers to conserving and enhancing landscape character including through the historic setting and structures of villages and hamlets; and Policy D1, designing a high quality place. The policy will especially help to achieve sustainable development. No modifications are therefore recommended.

## **Policy HD2 Advertisements and Signage**

134. This policy deals with advertisements and signage. The Plan notes that the village benefits from what is described as "relatively discrete signage". The Conservation Area Review notes that MKC will be supportive of signage that positively contributes to village life.

135. The display of advertisements is subject to a separate consent process which is principally set out in the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

136. Advertisements are controlled only with regard to their effect on amenity and public safety.

137. The policy refers to signs and adverts requiring planning permission. It then refers to size, lighting and otherwise in keeping with their setting. As explained above, advertisements do not require planning permission and where they do require express consent, only amenity and public safety can be considered. In addition, phrases like "in keeping with their setting" could be open to interpretation in relation to policies of this nature.

138. PPG explains that amenity is not defined exhaustively, but can include visual and aural amenity.<sup>42</sup> Relevant considerations for visual amenity may include the

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<sup>40</sup> NPPF para 189

<sup>41</sup> Ibid para 199

<sup>42</sup> PPG para 079 ref id 18b-079-20140306

characteristics of the locality, including historic, architectural and cultural features, but it is a matter of interpretation.

139. The NPPF states that the quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed.<sup>43</sup> Mindful of this and the importance the local community place on advertisements given the inclusion of a policy on this topic in the Plan, I propose modifications to the policy to ensure it will meet the basic conditions.

140. The second part of the policy refers to support for Plan:MK Policy SD1 which sets out a number of place-making principles for development and in criterion 12. expressly refers to visual cues. However, Plan:MK Policy SD1 sets out the key principles that will guide urban extensions and other strategic scale development to Milton Keynes. In any case, it is not usually necessary to cross-reference other policies. A modification is therefore made to delete this reference in this element of the policy as it does not apply to the scale of development expected in the Plan area. However, the aim of the policy can be brought into this policy.

141. With these modifications, the policy will meet the basic conditions by having regard to the NPPF, be a local expression of Plan:MK policies and help to achieve sustainable development.

- **Change Policy HD2 to read:**

***“Advertisements requiring express consent should be sited and designed appropriately for their setting. In undertaking assessments of visual amenity, the characteristics of the locality in which the advertisement is situated and any features of historic, architectural or cultural interest including any locational specific features special to the area will be taken into account.***

***Otherwise acceptable development that includes visual cues to help with wayfaring through the use of landmarks and other features, design and views will be encouraged and supported.”***

### **3.4 Landscape and Green Spaces**

#### **Policy L1 Local Green Space Designation**

141. Four areas of Local Green Space (LGS) are proposed. These are shown on the Policies Map in the Plan.

142. The proposed designations are supported by a Local Green Space Assessment.

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<sup>43</sup> NPPF para 136



143. The NPPF explains that LGSs are green areas of particular importance to local communities.<sup>44</sup>

144. The designation of LGSs should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services.<sup>45</sup> It is only possible to designate LGSs when a plan is prepared or updated and LGSs should be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.<sup>46</sup> The NPPF sets out three criteria for green spaces.<sup>47</sup> Further guidance about LGSs is given in PPG.

145. I saw the areas on my site visit:

1. **Nixey's Walk** is an irregularly shaped area which as well as providing a tranquil, open area for sitting and recreation, also provides a link between a housing area and the village centre. A small wildlife area has been created.
2. **Kilpin Green** is an oval area at the heart of a residential estate. It is valued for its beauty, recreation and tranquility. I saw at my visit that this grassed and treed area was an integral part of the estate important from a visual amenity and recreation perspective.
3. **The Recreation Ground** is readily accessible for the village and wider Parish and primarily offers sports and recreation facilities including a children's play area. It is valued for its recreational offer.
4. **The tree lined verge adjacent to site H4 along Orchard Way** is a narrow strip of land opposite houses, but also adjacent to one of the proposed site allocations, H4. It is already designated as an Asset of Community Value which gives the community an opportunity to bid for the land should the owner wish to dispose of it. The two designations serve different purposes and I can see no conflict between them. I saw at my visit it is important visually and ecologically. It is demonstrably special to the local community and has local significance. The adjacent proposed site allocation specifically protects this tree-lined verge.

146. In my view, all of the proposed LGSs meet the criteria in the NPPF satisfactorily as they all are demonstrably important to the local community, all are capable of enduring beyond the Plan period, all meet the criteria in paragraph 102 of the NPPF and their designation is consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services given other policies in the development plan and this Plan.

147. I note that Kilpin Green and Nixey's Walk are allocated as amenity open spaces in Plan:MK. Plan:MK allocates the Recreation Ground as recreational open space. Both types of areas are defined in the Plan:MK and subject to non-strategic Policies L2 and L3

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<sup>44</sup> NPPF para 101

<sup>45</sup> Ibid

<sup>46</sup> Ibid

<sup>47</sup> Ibid para 102

of that Plan. However, the designation as LGSs will be a stronger protection for these locally significant areas.

148. Turning now to the wording of the policy, in setting out how new development might be regarded, it should have regard to, and be consistent with, the NPPF which explains the management of development in LGSs should be consistent with that in the Green Belt.<sup>48</sup> Therefore the policy needs modification to ensure that it takes account of national policy and is clear.

149. With this modification, the policy will meet the basic conditions.

150. Another issue arises; in this Plan two policies, this one and the following (L2 Rights of Way) have the same numbers as policies in the Plan:MK. I consider it prudent to change the numbers of the policies in this Plan so no confusion arises.

- **Change the second paragraph of the policy to read: “*Development proposals within the designated local green space will be consistent with national policy for Green Belts.*”**
- **Change the numbers of Policies L1 and L2 to something else which does not repeat policy numbers in the Plan:MK**

### Policy L2 Rights of Way

151. The Plan explains that rights of way around the Parish are valued highly. The NPPF is clear that planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and access including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users.<sup>49</sup>

152. Plan:MK Policy EH7 promotes healthy communities and refers to cycling and walking networks.

153. Policy L2 seeks to ensure that new development does not adversely affect existing public rights of way and that enhancements are supported.

154. It meets the basic conditions by having regard to national policy, being in general conformity with the policies in Plan:MK and helping to achieve sustainable development and so no modifications are recommended.

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<sup>48</sup> NPPF para 103

<sup>49</sup> Ibid para 100

### 3.5 Community Facilities

#### Policy C1 Loss of Existing Facilities

155. Policy C1 resists the loss of community facilities unless evidence is provided that six months of marketing has been undertaken unsuccessfully. The policy includes an illustration of the facilities covered by the policy such as public houses, shops, sports facilities, meeting halls and so on.

156. The Plan refers to both Policies CC3 and ER11 of the Plan:MK. I note that Plan:MK Policy CC3 is not a strategic policy. However, it refers to the protection of community facilities, supporting such losses only where it is demonstrated there is no longer a need for the facility for community use purposes or if an acceptable alternative can be found. Strategic policy Plan:MK Policy ER11 is a specific policy protecting local shops, post offices, banks and public houses unless all means of retaining the use have been explored and the use is no longer viable. The supporting text to Policy ER11 refers to a minimum period of six months for marketing.

157. This policy is then an amalgamation of two policies at MKC level.

158. With regard to supporting a prosperous rural economy, the NPPF is clear that planning policies should support the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities such as shops, meeting places, sports venues public houses and places of worship as well as sports venues.<sup>50</sup>

159. The NPPF is clear that to provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services needed by a community, policies should plan positively for community facilities and guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services.<sup>51</sup>

160. Usually, as in Plan:MK Policy CC3, policies of this nature also include a proviso that equivalent or better replacement facilities can be provided. This allows for flexibility.

161. I consider given the stance of the NPPF, that the policy with some modification, will have regard to national policy, be in general conformity with Plan:MK policies and will help to achieve sustainable development.

162. The supporting text also refers to planning obligations. I consider it would be helpful if the text added more detail as to when such obligations can be sought in the interests of clarity.

- **Add a second criterion b) to the first bullet point of the policy that reads: “or an equivalent or better facility is provided in an accessible location to the local community”**

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<sup>50</sup> NPPF para 84

<sup>51</sup> Ibid para 93

- Add at the end of paragraph 3.5.4 *“Planning obligations should only be used where it is not possible to address unacceptable impacts of the development through the imposition of a planning condition.”*
- Add a new paragraph after paragraph 3.5.4 that reads: *“Planning obligations must only be sought where they meet all of the following tests:*
  - a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;*
  - b) directly related to the development; and*
  - c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.”*

#### 4. Community Projects and Monitoring

163. Although it is not mandatory at the present time to monitor neighbourhood plans, I welcome the stated intention to monitor the Plan as a point of good practice. The Plan is also to be reviewed every five years; again this is not a requirement, but certainly this will help to ensure the Plan is delivering as intended and kept up to date.

164. This section also includes three community projects. Their status is clear.

#### 5. North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan Policies Map

165. It is good to see a Policies Map that is simple and clear to use.

166. As explained earlier, the settlement boundary shown on the Policies Map also includes five areas which the Parish Council have clarified were not intended for inclusion. The only change from the settlement boundary shown in Plan:MK is to include the proposed site allocations. MKC supports this approach. Therefore I recommend a modification to this effect.

- **Change the Policies Map to show the settlement boundary as is in the Plan:MK but to include the proposed site allocations**

#### 6. List of Appendices

167. A number of appendices follow. Appendix 1 is the questionnaire results. Appendix 2 is the character area assessments. Appendix 3 is the briefing paper on future housing requirements. Appendix 4 is the Conservation Area Review. Appendix 5 is the site options and assessment report. Appendix 6 is the site design guides. Appendix 7 is the local green space assessment. Appendix 8 is the basic conditions statement. Appendix

9 is the consultation statement and Appendix 10 is the strategic environmental assessment report.

## 8.0 Conclusions and recommendations

168. I am satisfied that the North Crawley Neighbourhood Development Plan, subject to the modifications I have recommended, meets the basic conditions and the other statutory requirements outlined earlier in this report.

169. I am therefore pleased to recommend to Milton Keynes City Council that, subject to the modifications proposed in this report, the North Crawley Neighbourhood Development Plan can proceed to a referendum.

170. Following on from that, I am required to consider whether the referendum area should be extended beyond the Neighbourhood Plan area. I see no reason to alter or extend the Plan area for the purpose of holding a referendum and no representations have been made that would lead me to reach a different conclusion.

171. I therefore consider that the North Crawley Neighbourhood Development Plan should proceed to a referendum based on the North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan area as approved by Milton Keynes City Council on 30 January 2018.

*Ann Skippers* MRTPI

Ann Skippers Planning

28 November 2022

## Appendix 1 List of key documents specific to this examination

North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan 2021 – 2036 Submission Version May 2022

Basic Conditions Statement May 2022

Consultation Statement May 2022

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Report Appropriate Assessment Screening February 2022 (MKC)

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Scoping Report February 2022 (PC)

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Environmental Report May 2022 (PC)

Questionnaire Data and Summary Statements December 2017

Character Area Assessment amended January 2022

Briefing Paper on the Future Housing Requirement for North Crawley Version 1 May 2018 amended November 2021 (Smith Jenkins/Steering Group)

Conservation Area Review December 2021 (MKC)

Site Options and Assessment March 2021 (AECOM)

Site Design Guides Final Report June 2021 amended January 2022 (AECOM/Steering Group)

Local Green Space Assessment March 2021

Plan:MK 2016 – 2031 adopted 20 March 2019

**List ends**

## Appendix 2 Questions of clarification

### **North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan Examination**

#### **Questions of Clarification from the Examiner to the Parish Council and MKC**

Having completed my initial assessment of the Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan), I am writing to the Parish Council (PC) and Milton Keynes Council (MKC) to ask a number of questions of clarification.

#### ***Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment***

1. Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) advises that in some limited circumstances, where a neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant environmental effects it may require a strategic environmental assessment (SEA).

In this case, a SEA Environmental Report (ER) has been submitted. The Basic Conditions Statement states that a screening exercise was carried out by MKC and this concluded a SEA would be needed. Please send me a copy of the screening document and any responses from the statutory consultees.

The ER also refers to a scoping stage. Please send me a copy of the scoping documents, including any responses from statutory consultees.

2. In relation to Habitats Regulations, an assessment must be made to see whether the Plan is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

If the conclusion is that a plan is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site, then an appropriate assessment of the implications of the plan for the site must be undertaken.

The prescribed basic condition states: "The making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017." The relevant Regulations indicate that sufficient information must be provided to enable the competent authority (in this case MKC) to determine whether an appropriate assessment is required.

The only information I can find about habitats is a short statement in the Basic Conditions Statement that "The making of the Neighbourhood Plan will not have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site."

Please can sufficient information or earlier screening reports that support this statement be sent to me to help me assess whether the Plan meets the prescribed condition?

#### ***Engagement***

3. Two periods of consultation have been carried out. The second included the SEA. Please could this sequence of events be clarified? Was the Plan significantly changed between the first and second periods of consultation?

***Other queries***

4. I have already asked, and received with thanks, a plan which shows the individual boundaries for sites H3, H4 and H5. I include this request here in the interests of completeness.
5. Please could MKC confirm the date of the Plan area designation?
6. For my information, please could a copy of the previous submission neighbourhood plan, the previous examiner's report and the referendum version of the plan be provided?

This note will be a matter of public record and should be placed on the relevant websites.

With many thanks,

Ann Skippers MRTPI  
Independent Examiner  
4 November 2022



## Reports from Cabinet and Committees

**c) Cabinet – 1 November 2022**

Council Tax Base 2023/24 (Funding Contribution to Parish and Town Councils)

That the proposed 2023/24 funding contribution to parish and town councils of £0.325m, as set out in Annex D, be noted, and recommended to Council for approval as part of the final Budget in February 2023.

A copy of the report considered by the Cabinet (and relevant Annex D) is attached.

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1 November 2022

## COUNCIL TAX BASE 2023/24

Name of Cabinet Member	<b>Councillor Rob Middleton</b> Resources
Report sponsor	<b>Steve Richardson</b> Director Finance and Resources
Report author	<b>Lisa Wheaton</b> Senior Finance Manager - Budget and Financial Planning <a href="mailto:lisa.wheaton@milton-keynes.gov.uk">lisa.wheaton@milton-keynes.gov.uk</a> 01908 254827

Exempt / confidential / not for publication	<b>No</b>
Council Plan reference	<b>1 – Balanced Budget</b>
Wards affected	<b>All wards</b>

### Executive Summary

The report sets out; the main assumptions used in calculating the Council Tax Base for 2023/24; confirms the level of funding the Council will pay to town and parish councils for Local Council Tax Reduction and how this funding will be distributed.

The Business Rates Baseline 2023/24 will be included with the Draft Budget report going to Cabinet in December.

#### 1. Decision/s to be made

- 1.1 That the 2023/24 Council Tax Base be set at 94,196.22 Band D equivalent properties.
- 1.2 That the provision for uncollectable amounts of Council Tax for 2023/24 be set at 1.30% producing an expected collection rate of 98.7%.

- 1.3 That the proposed 2023/24 funding contribution to parish and town councils of £0.325m, as set out in Annex D, be noted, and recommended to Council for approval as part of the final Budget in February 2023.
- 1.4 That the Cabinet recommends to Council that the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme, as adopted by the Council on 16 February 2022, be continued for 2023/24, with amendments that reflect changes to related benefits and to the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) Regulations; retaining the delegation to the Director Finance and Resources to make technical legislative changes.

## 2. Why is the decision needed?

### 2.1 The purpose of this report is to set out:

- the main assumptions used in calculating the Council Tax Base for 2023/24
- the level of Council funding to be distributed to parish and town councils in 2023/24 to offset a proportion of their financial loss as a result of Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS)
- the funding distribution between the individual parishes and town councils

### **Council Tax Base Setting 2023/24**

- 2.2 In accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and related Statutory Instruments, the Council is obliged to set its Council Tax Base for the forthcoming financial year by 31 January 2023.
- 2.3 Since April 2013, under the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS), qualifying council taxpayers no longer receive a benefit to offset the cost of their Council Tax bills. Instead, eligible residents who are on a low income, receive a discount. The impact of this change reduces the Tax Base for the Council and all precepting authorities.
- 2.4 Part of the potential loss created by this Tax Base reduction is offset by Government funding, which forms part of the Council's Revenue Support Grant (RSG) as well as an amount of funding intended to partially offset the impact of the Tax Base reduction for town and parish councils.
- 2.5 In February 2022, the Council approved the LCTRS for 2022/23. Schedule 4 of the Local Government Finance Act 2012 requires, for each financial year, that each billing authority must consider whether to revise its scheme or to replace it with another scheme. The authority must make any revision to its scheme, or any replacement scheme, no later than 11 March in the financial year preceding that for which the revision or replacement scheme is to have effect.

- 2.6 This report recommends continuing with the current LCTRS for 2023/24. This would mean the maximum level of Council Tax support for working age claimants would be maintained at 80%. The only changes that would be made are to incorporate legislative amendments to the Prescribed Scheme in respect of Council Tax Reduction and to other related benefits, where certain changes need to be replicated in the LCTRS to retain administrative simplicity.
- 2.7 A change to the Working Age Scheme was adopted in January 2014, which allows for the Working Age Scheme to be amended in line with changes to the amounts used in the Prescribed Scheme and the Housing Benefit Regulations, as well as amendments to provide parity with changes made to associated legislation. The approval of these changes has been delegated to the Director Finance and Resources.  
Any other revisions to the scheme can only be made following consultation with any major precepting authority and such other persons as the authority considers are likely to have an interest in the scheme.
- 2.8 The changes to the Tax Base resulting from the LCTRS, are calculated, based on this recommended policy.
- 2.9 The setting of a realistic and prudent collection rate for Council Tax is another essential component of the Council's overall budget strategy. If the collection rate set is over-optimistic, this could result in a deficit on the collection fund at the end of 2023/24, which would result in an in-year overspend and a budget correction in the 2024/25 Budget.
- 2.10 The process and key assumptions to set the Tax Base for 2023/24 are as follows:
- The calculation of the Tax Base for precepting purposes is based on the number of properties, the council tax banding of the properties as at 12 September 2022, and the discounts applicable on 3 October 2022.
  - The properties and discounts are then adjusted for estimated new builds and demolitions within the 2022/23 and 2023/24 financial years, taking into consideration the anticipated timing of the new builds and demolitions.
  - A review of historic LCTRS claimant trends, in conjunction with an assessment of future risks to inform the 2023/24 projection, which reduces the Tax Base accordingly.
  - An estimate is then made for non-collection, which reduces the Tax Base further. This is informed by current income collection levels and the anticipated future risks to collection as a result of the national and economic environment.

- 2.11 Milton Keynes is a high growth area and the Council Tax Base is therefore expected to grow by 2,956 Band D equivalent properties within 2023/24 based on our future estimates. However, due to the uncertain economic situation we have reduced our assumption on completed new builds in 2023/24 by 30%.
- 2.12 LCTS claimant numbers remain steady and are lower than anticipated last year. The LCTS Band D equivalent property forecast for 2023/24 will therefore be decreased to 8,282 from the 2022/23 impact of 8,786, a reduction of 504.
- 2.13 To calculate the Council Tax Base, a further adjustment is made to deduct losses from non-collectable debt (bad debt provision). The Council since 1993 has a long-term collection rate of 99.2%, with 0.8% of debit being written off as non-collectable. Given the significant uncertainty in the economy and cost of living crisis we have used a lower collection rate for 2023/24 of 98.7% (0.5% lower than the long-term overall collection rate). This rate includes both in year debt collection for 23/24 bills and collection of debt from prior years.
- 2.14 We have reviewed both current collection performance and historic collection performance in the last economic downturn (2008) to provide a guide on likely collection performance. The overall collection rate being applied is in line with this and is therefore considered to be a reasonable estimate for collection over 2023/24. In the event that collection performance in 2023/24 is lower than estimated, this can be covered from the current surplus held through the Council Tax Collection Fund.
- 2.15 All these assumptions result in a proposed Tax Base of 94,196.22 Band D equivalents, an increase of 3,832 compared to 2022/23. This would result in Council Tax income of £147.513m for Milton Keynes Council (based on the current level of Council Tax charge) which represents an increase of £10.109m compared to 2022/23 precept income (£4.283m of this increase relates to the proposed 2.99% Band D increase).
- 2.16 The Tax Base calculation (set out at Annex A) must be approved by no later than 31 January 2023; but an earlier decision supports key partners in making decisions on their Budget. Annexes B and C analyse the figures at parish level in terms of Band D equivalents and numbers of properties respectively.

2.17 The following table summarises the position:

**Table 1: Council Tax Base 2023/24 – Band D equivalents**

Total of Band D Equivalents	101.898.61
Provision for Valuation & Other Changes	1,820.00
Net Impact of Local Council Tax Reductions	(8,281.70)
Provision for Non-Collection (1.3%)	(1,240.69)
<b>Total Band D equivalent properties</b>	<b>94,196.22</b>

**New Homes Bonus**

2.18 The New Homes Bonus grant (NHB) is funding allocated to councils based on the building of new homes and bringing empty homes back into use. A new build count is taken in October and reported in the CTB1 return submitted to Department for Levelling Up and Homes and Community. This is then used to calculate any NHB entitlement. **The continuation of this funding stream is uncertain** but based on this count if the NHB scheme should continue in its current form then the 2023/24 NHB allocation for MKCC is estimated at £4.4m as detailed in Table 2.

**Table 2: 2023/24 New Homes Bonus Estimate**

New Builds - Oct 2022 (Band D's)	2,661
Movement in long term empty properties (Band D's)	(70)
Net New Builds (Band D's)	2,591
Baseline Growth Reduction (Band D's)	(433)
Net New Build after baseline reduction (Band D's)	2,158
National Band D Average	£1,965.70
Provisional New Homes Bonus before Allowance for Affordable Housing	£4.242m
Estimated Allowance for Affordable Housing (£350 per unit)	£0.175m
<b>Provisional New Homes Bonus</b>	<b>£4.417m</b>

### **Funding for Parishes**

- 2.19 The introduction of the LCTRS reduces the Tax Base, and therefore the Council Tax income collected by individual precepting bodies. However, Central Government funding to major preceptors offset a significant proportion of the impact for this change, although this is reducing each year.
- 2.20 Additional Government funding, as part of Revenue Support Grant (RSG) is also provided to major precepting authorities on behalf of town and parish councils to offset a proportion of their reduced Tax Base as a result of the scheme. From April 2013 this grant has formed part of the Council's RSG.
- 2.21 The RSG is a non ring-fenced source of funding that the Council receives from the Government for the provision of statutory functions and local service provision and together with Business Rates makes up the Council's Formula Grant. In the period 2013/14 to 2021/22 Milton Keynes's RSG had reduced from £61m to £5.6m, a reduction of 90%. Overall Formula Grant had fallen by 43% over this period.
- 2.22 Following consultation in Summer 2019 the size of funding available was reduced to £0.325m in 2020/21 to reflect the reductions in Formula Grant. A new methodology for distribution was also agreed,
- 50% of grant by notional loss of precept income
  - 50% of grant using Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD2019)
- 2.23 For 2023/24 it is proposed that the funding level is maintained at £0.325m and the distribution methodology remains as per paragraph 2.23.
- 2.24 The provisional funding allocations to parish and town councils are illustrated in Annex D. The final allocations will need to be approved as part of the 2023/24 Budget in February 2023.

### **3. Implications of the decision**

Financial	Yes	Human rights, equalities, diversity	No
Legal	Yes	Policies or Council Plan	Yes
Communication	No	Procurement	No
Energy Efficiency	No	Workforce	No

#### **a) Legal and other implications**

Local Government Finance Act 1992, Local Government Finance Act 2003  
Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England)  
Regulations 2012.



#### 4. Timetable for implementation

22 February 2023 – Final Budget for Council approval.

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##### List of annexes

Annex A - Calculation of Council Tax Base 2023/24

Annex B - Council Tax Base 2023/24 by Parish and Town Council

Annex C - Council Tax Base before Discounts and Exemptions

Annex D – 2023/24 Parish and Town Council Funding Allocations

##### List of background papers

None.

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Parish	Loss of Tax Base (net of technical reforms) Band D equivalents	Estimated Precept pre LCTRS (with 2022/23 band D) £	Estimated precept post LCTRS (2022/23 band D) £	Loss of precept income £	Grant Allocation 162,500.00 £	Loss of income (% for all parishes) £	Percentage Loss	IMD 2019 Score (within highest 30% only)	Grant Allocation 162,500 £	Total 2023/24 Grant Allocation 325,000.00	2022/23 Grant Paid out £	Loss of Grant/ (Increase in Grant) £
ABBEY HILL	83.12	72,854.47	68,893.80	3,960.67	0.00	3,960.67	5.44%			0.00	-	0.00
ASTWOOD and HARDMEAD	3.47	8,355.17	8,142.77	212.40	0.00	212.40	2.54%			0.00	-	0.00
BLETCHLEY & FENNY STRATFORD	881.76	1,173,880.65	1,018,082.48	155,798.17	27,976.81	127,821.36	10.89%	277.63	40,930.65	68,907.46	64,624.10	(4,283.36)
BOW BRICKHILL	11.87	32,491.19	31,168.63	1,322.56	0.00	1,322.56	4.07%			0.00	-	0.00
BRADWELL	339.33	169,392.08	151,041.11	18,350.97	0.00	18,350.97	10.83%	30.70	4,525.26	4,525.26	4,638.66	113.40
BROUGHTON and MILTON KEYNES	304.53	229,533.34	219,273.72	10,259.62	0.00	10,259.62	4.47%			0.00	-	0.00
CALVERTON	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%			0.00	-	0.00
CAMPBELL PARK	537.56	912,116.63	805,841.02	106,275.61	6,957.18	99,318.44	10.89%	87.45	12,893.05	19,850.23	21,604.89	1,754.66
CASTLETHORPE	24.81	36,292.01	34,425.31	1,866.70	0.00	1,866.70	5.14%			0.00	-	0.00
CENTRAL MILTON KEYNES	130.01	228,409.22	218,272.34	10,136.88	0.00	10,136.88	4.44%			0.00	-	0.00
CHICHELEY	4.73	575.69	516.10	59.60	0.00	59.60	10.35%			0.00	-	0.00
CLIFTON REYNES and NEWTON												
BLOSSOMVILLE	4.81	5,093.85	4,974.03	119.82	0.00	119.82	2.35%			0.00	-	0.00
COLD BRAYFIELD	1.60	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%			0.00	-	0.00
EMBERTON	13.32	19,556.75	18,701.21	855.54	0.00	855.54	4.37%			0.00	-	0.00
FAIRFIELDS	25.19	59,337.88	58,097.27	1,240.61	0.00	1,240.61	2.09%			0.00	-	0.00
GAYHURST	0.00	2,001.33	2,001.33	0.00	0.00	(0.00)	0.00%			0.00	-	0.00
GREAT LINFORD	714.21	694,211.50	624,326.05	69,885.45	0.00	69,885.45	10.07%	35.24	5,195.91	5,195.91	5,195.91	0.00
HANSLOPE	67.29	139,393.87	132,354.66	7,039.21	0.00	7,039.21	5.05%			0.00	-	0.00
HAVERSHAM cum LITTLE LINFORD	8.68	24,673.65	24,042.36	631.30	0.00	631.30	2.56%			0.00	-	0.00
KENTS HILL, MONKSTON & BRINKLOW	152.27	122,536.66	115,807.85	6,728.81	0.00	6,728.81	5.49%			0.00	-	0.00
LATHBURY	0.00	755.05	755.05	0.00	0.00	(0.00)	0.00%			0.00	-	0.00
LAVENDON	23.66	40,179.27	38,795.63	1,383.64	0.00	1,383.64	3.44%			0.00	-	0.00
LITTLE BRICKHILL	9.12	15,020.28	14,354.88	665.40	0.00	665.40	4.43%			0.00	-	0.00
LOUGHTON & GREAT HOLM	134.65	99,236.62	93,627.10	5,609.52	0.00	5,609.52	5.65%			0.00	-	0.00
MOULSOE	12.00	7,340.82	6,780.06	560.76	0.00	560.76	7.64%			0.00	-	0.00
NEW BRADWELL	120.80	87,964.68	77,946.74	10,017.94	439.66	9,578.29	10.89%	34.61	5,102.58	5,542.24	6,625.79	1,083.55
NEWPORT PAGNELL	301.79	1,063,188.28	1,005,639.95	57,548.34	0.00	57,548.33	5.41%			0.00	-	0.00
NORTH CRAWLEY	10.90	20,786.57	20,149.47	637.10	0.00	637.10	3.06%			0.00	-	0.00
OLD WUGHTON	18.13	11,469.43	11,000.59	468.84	0.00	468.84	4.09%			0.00	-	0.00
OLNEY	143.52	346,658.67	330,268.68	16,389.98	0.00	16,389.98	4.73%			0.00	-	0.00
RAVENSTONE	4.41	10,500.18	10,157.47	342.70	0.00	342.70	3.26%			0.00	-	0.00
SHENLEY BROOK END	652.32	916,903.13	855,976.44	60,926.69	0.00	60,926.69	6.64%			0.00	-	0.00
SHENLEY CHURCH END	330.23	399,892.74	374,134.80	25,757.94	0.00	25,757.94	6.44%			0.00	-	0.00
SHERINGTON	17.86	39,546.66	38,076.61	1,470.06	0.00	1,470.06	3.72%			0.00	-	0.00
SIMPSON	42.55	65,821.77	61,404.65	4,417.12	0.00	4,417.12	6.71%			0.00	-	0.00
STANTONBURY	350.95	499,325.66	450,855.95	48,469.70	0.00	48,469.70	9.71%	65.80	9,700.53	9,700.53	9,700.53	0.00
STOKE GOLDINGTON	13.88	20,654.20	19,626.52	1,027.68	0.00	1,027.68	4.98%			0.00	-	0.00
STONY STRATFORD	248.58	258,069.43	235,475.99	22,593.44	0.00	22,593.44	8.75%	47.95	7,068.81	7,068.81	7,068.81	0.00
TYRINGHAM & FILGRAVE	1.80	1,664.44	1,638.32	26.12	0.00	26.12	1.57%			0.00	-	0.00
WALTON	295.53	441,519.92	413,553.92	27,966.00	0.00	27,966.00	6.33%			0.00	-	0.00
WARRINGTON	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%			0.00	-	0.00
WAVENDON	99.48	110,140.50	105,166.50	4,974.00	0.00	4,974.00	4.52%			0.00	-	0.00
WEST BLETCHLEY	711.07	1,233,100.38	1,118,568.33	114,532.04	0.00	114,532.04	9.29%	90.32	13,314.84	13,314.84	13,314.84	0.00
WESTON UNDERWOOD	1.85	10,769.00	10,610.42	158.58	0.00	158.58	1.47%			0.00	-	0.00
WHITEHOUSE	19.16	87,414.20	86,348.33	1,065.87	0.00	1,065.87	1.22%			0.00	-	0.00
WOBURN SANDS	70.86	148,308.44	141,318.10	6,990.34	0.00	6,990.34	4.71%			0.00	-	0.00
WOLVERTON	504.35	549,864.35	485,191.54	64,672.80	4,799.24	59,873.56	10.89%	118.72	17,502.49	22,301.73	23,288.63	986.90
WUGHTON	833.69	872,985.79	655,601.12	217,384.67	122,327.11	95,057.56	10.89%	313.82	46,265.88	168,592.99	168,937.85	344.86
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8,281.70</b>	<b>11,289,786</b>	<b>10,198,985</b>	<b>1,090,801.17</b>	<b>162,500.00</b>	<b>928,301.17</b>		<b>1,102.24</b>	<b>162,500.00</b>	<b>325,000.00</b>	<b>325,000.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>

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## Reports from Cabinet and Committees

### d) Cabinet – 7 February 2023

Council Budget for 2023/24 and Medium-Term Financial Plan 2023/24 – 2026/27

That the following recommendations be approved by Cabinet and recommended to Council:

1. That the Revenue Budget 2023/24 totalling £246.689m be approved and recommended to Council.
2. That the Council Tax at Band D of £1,596.43 for the Milton Keynes element of the Council Tax, be approved and recommended to Council, noting that this is an increase of 4.99%, consisting of a 2.99% general increase and 2.00% Adult Social Care Precept.
3. That the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2023/24 (excluding Parish Precepts) of £150.378m, be noted.
4. That the estimated position for the Dedicated Schools Grant of £334.261m and the Schools block funding formula for 2023/24 be noted and the budget and formula allocations for the High Needs and Early Years blocks be approved.
5. That the forecast parking surplus be noted.
6. That the Housing Revenue Account Revenue Budget 2023/24 be approved and recommended to Council for adoption.
7. That increases to the Housing Revenue Account dwelling rent in 2023/24 of 11.1% for affordable rents, capped at 7% for current tenants (an average of £6.47 over 52 rent weeks), and of 4.1% for shared owners (an average of £9.18 over 52 rent weeks) be approved and recommended to Council.
8. That the Rent and Service Charge Policy for 2023/24 be approved and recommended to Council for adoption and accompanying Rent Affordability and Market report be noted.
9. That the fees and charges for 2022/23 (including those fees and charges which are exceptions to the Income and Collection Policy) be approved and recommended to Council.
10. That the Capital Strategy be approved and recommended to Council.
11. That the Capital Programme for 2023/24 to 2026/27 be approved and recommended to Council.
12. That the resource allocation for the 2023/24 Tariff programme be approved and recommended to Council.

13. That the Treasury Management Strategy for 2023/24 to 2027/28 and the Treasury Policy Statement, including the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy, Borrowing Limits be approved and recommended to Council.
14. That the financial forecast set out in the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), in relation to both resources and expenditure, be noted.
15. The equalities impact assessments for the Revenue Budget 2023/24 be noted.

A copy of the report considered by the Cabinet and Annexes has been circulated separately.