

**MKCC Council Plan
Delivery Plan 2023/2024 (February 2024 update)**

Council Plan action		Summary of our achievements to date
1	Bring forward a robust and balanced budget	<p>The 2022/23 outturn delivered within approved overall budget. Financial training delivered to the Budget and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 15 June.</p> <p>Finance colleagues, working with the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) have presented a balance draft budget to Cabinet on 19 December 2023 which is currently out for public consultation. A clear approach to savings has been set out, with detailed work underway to address budget pressures anticipated in 2025/26 and beyond.</p> <p>Substantial budget pressures and risks, as seen in most other parts of local government, remain a cause for concern. Very close attention is being paid to budget management across the organisation in the context of a mid-year overspend.</p> <p>Finance colleagues have been actively engaged with government on Housing Revenue Account (HRA) financial sustainability to raise awareness of some of the challenges and sustainability issues in the HRA. Draft HRA budget is balanced for 2024/25 and the gap has been reduced significantly in future years, with a review of capital investment planned in the first quarter of 2024.</p> <p>Final budget published for 6 February Cabinet delivers a balanced and robust budget for 2024/25.</p>
2	Implement innovative recruitment and training initiatives, especially in relation to hard to fill roles like lawyers, planners and social workers	<p>The first cohort of the Planning Academy has seen five graduates work across a selection of our teams whilst they undertake post-graduate professional qualifications in town planning. Recruitment for the second cohort has been completed with two preferred candidates employed.</p> <p>We have also recruited two trainee solicitors and awarded a contract to training provider.</p> <p>To date we have appointed and are progressing 18 apprentice social work roles in children's services who are currently progressing across four cohorts, for whom we have a rolling programme. We have also introduced a competency framework for adult social workers allowing them to achieve new skills, progress and secure a retention payment. This allows us to grow and retrain our own workforce.</p>
3	Support our local high streets with £100,000 of funding for more local events and activities	<p>Funding for the high street support programme was confirmed by Delegated Decision on 10 October 2023.</p> <p>Of the £100k funding, it was agreed that £30k would go towards one-off £5k grants for our six high streets. This will mean £5k each for the Town Councils in Bletchley, Newport Pagnell, Olney, Stony Stratford, Wolverton, and Woburn Sands. Economic Development officials have now met with each of the Town Clerks to progress.</p> <p>The remaining £70k has been earmarked for beautification and landscaping works to support shopping areas – with £50k allocated to the Queensway (Bletchley), and £20k for a number of smaller local centres.</p> <p>An initial site visit to identify potential public realm improvement works on the Queensway in Bletchley has also now been completed, and an action plan developed with work expected to take place between January and March 2024. Site visits for the other local centres took place on 15 January 2024.</p>
4	Provide start-up grants to new high street small businesses and tech start-ups	<p><u>Part One – High Street Grants</u></p> <p>Funding for the £50k high street grant programme was approved at Delegated Decision on 10 October 2023.</p> <p>The initial proposal to utilise empty units in the Brunel Centre cannot now be progressed due to the amount of work required to bring the units back into usable condition.</p> <p>We are working with MKDP to identify alternatives.</p> <p><u>Part Two – Tech start up scheme</u></p> <p>After sign-off by the Cabinet Member, and the public-launching of the scheme in November 2023; the city officials have advertised the MK Tech Fund on social media channels and will be closing the application stage at the end of January 2024. There have already been a number of applications. Our Milton Keynes Investor Group partners will be running an online FAQ session for potential applicants in mid-January.</p>
5	Continue to use More for MK to increase the numbers of local Real Living Wage employers	<p>Online event jointly hosted with the Federation of Small Businesses on doing business with MK City Council took place on 20/09/2023. During the session, officers answered detailed queries from around 20 businesses about doing business with the City Council, sustainability requirements and the More for MK approach.</p> <p>More for MK was also promoted to local SME's at the Milton Keynes Chamber of Commerce expo event in November.</p> <p>Discussions and planning are underway with the Federation of Small Businesses for a 'meet the supplier' in-person event before end of March 2024.</p>
6	Build on existing Economic Development schemes and introduce new ones as appropriate to support businesses throughout periods of economic uncertainty	<p>The Economic Recovery Plan has, to date, directly supported over 6,200 Milton Keynes residents and over 1,300 Milton Keynes businesses in their recovery from Covid-19 and the cost of living/cost of doing business crisis. Over 44 separate schemes have been delivered since September 2020.</p> <p>The existing Economic Recovery plan has a total of ten schemes currently running.</p> <p>All new schemes were agreed by political decisions over Summer 2023, have been launched and promoted during Autumn 2023, and are on track to finish at the end of March 2024. The Economic Recovery Plan will formally end as of 31 March 2024, one final grant funding competition will be launched early in the new year offering support for small tech businesses.</p>

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7	Progress work on a Smart City tech, design and innovation quarter in the city centre	<p>Work on the tech, design and innovation quarter is being progressed by MKDP who are shortly to enter into a second round of market testing.</p> <p>Research and early conversations have been undertaken on 'innovation districts' nationally.</p> <p>In early 2024 a website will be launched for the tech community in Milton Keynes, offering information on organisations, events and facilities in the city.</p>
8	Develop the improvement proposals for Station Square by September 2023 and commence the roll out of works in early 2024	<p>The final proposed design was completed in September 2023. Funding from s106 and other grant funding has been established with further funding being dependent on the landowner, MKDP. Once the final design has been fully tested, external engagement with stakeholders will commence.</p> <p>Phase 1: Substantial landscaping is now at procurement for delivery in quarter four of 2023/24. We are currently procuring the materials for Phase 2 (granite). We are now reviewing the surface material for Phase 3 in order to achieve the right balance between the quality of material being used and the area that can be covered within the available budget.</p>
9	Bring forward a Development Brief for Bletchley town centre (development site) by March 2024	<p>The draft Development Brief for the Brunel Centre was agreed at Delegated Decision on 26 September. It has been published for public consultation until 31 December 2023.</p> <p>Feedback from the consultation process will be considered in detail before the final version of the brief is proposed for adoption through a Delegated Decision in February 2023.</p>
10	Finalise the detailed construction costs for the Agora site redevelopment in September 2023 with an anticipated on-site start target date of February 2024	<p>Work continues with the preferred contractor reviewing the design elements and materials to overcome the impact of inflationary pressures. This is being done alongside working through the new Building Safety Act and understanding the implications of the current design and any changes that should be considered and put into action in accordance with the act.</p> <p>A programme of design meetings has been set-up, with the aim to issue sub-contractor tender packages by the May, returning in January. Following a cost review of the tenders, it is expected to have a build cost in March. On this basis, approvals Cabinet and Council decisions will be sought at the earliest opportunity in the 2024/25 council year.</p>
11	Support the International Festival by providing funding to allow for more free places to those on low incomes and people from diverse backgrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,236 community group participants engaged in creative making workshops throughout the Festival. • 60% of events for the Festival remained free and there were 36,390 attendances at free Festival events overall. • 7,161 attendances were at low cost ticketed event (£6 ticket price). <p>The IF team organised three special trips during the Festival for both daytime and evening activities for Lakes Estate residents. There were two daytime trips which included a variety of activities taking place across the Festival sites from Fred Roche Garden, Middleton Hall and Campbell Park - suitable for families and mixed ages. 105 participants took part on the special trips from the Lakes Estate with free transportation, food and drinks provided. Additionally, the team also worked with the Foster Carer Network, Children's Centres, Holidays and School Food Programme, Kings Centre Wolverton Food Bank and MK Foodbank and 301 free tickets were given and utilised by these groups for ticketed events. Any remaining budget will be carried over to the next Festival.</p>
12	Develop a five-year Smart City Digital, Tech and Creative Industries Strategy to build on Milton Keynes' global reputation as a smart city and home of innovation	<p>A first draft strategy has been developed and engagement sessions are being planned for late January/early February to seek input from the business community.</p>
13	Progress the business case of a multi-use events arena in the city centre	<p>An outline business case has been completed which identifies the potential for a new venue in the City. This is consistent with work carried out to date on the new Cultural Strategy for the City.</p> <p>The second stage of the events venue study has further tested the proposition and considered the financial model through the preparation of a business plan. City officials are now developing a proposal for how to take the project forward including the potential role of MKDP in the delivery of the project.</p>
14	Support our Arts and Cultural sector by working with partners to deliver more events in the city centre	<p>Hidden City at Fred Roche Gardens successfully attracted an large audience of 4,000 over two days in July and was positively received. The MK Market re-launch programme with the Fandangoe Discoteca, additional stalls, live music and creative activities attracted over 2,000 people during the week-long programme. City of Codes and Light was very well received, with Central Library being transformed with a newly commissioned light show, a new parade and concert and laser show in Campbell Park. The 1001 Inventions programme of science inspired workshops attracted over 1000 people and 10 schools to Central Library. Estimated attendance overall for City of Codes and Light was over 4,000, although it is difficult to confirm actual numbers.</p>
15	Build more genuinely affordable homes by using our wholly owned development company	<p>Initial registration process completed in December 2022 and feedback from the Regulator received in March 2023 and MKHC are still considering the business case for MKHC, operating as a Registered Provider of Social Housing.</p> <p>MKDP is considering the bids on Kents Hill Park site from Registered Providers, including MKHC, in January 2024 to agree the best course of action in relation to Kents Hill Park site. This matter will be referred to the Owners Advisory Group (OAG) meeting in January 2024.</p>
16	Ensure that the delivery of affordable housing is prioritised alongside critical infrastructure in all new planning applications	<p>Decisions on planning applications continue to ensure that the delivery of affordable housing and critical infrastructure is maximised. This includes refusing planning applications (e.g. ref: 22/00280/FUL) where a submitted viability assessment is not considered to be sufficiently robust to justify a shortfall in affordable housing and infrastructure contributions.</p>
17	Continue to deliver the maximum number of council homes we can and make the case to government to fund even more	<p>Please refer to item 21.</p> <p>Meetings with DLUHC have taken place to discuss HRA financial viability and how flexibilities in areas such as rents and right to buy receipts can support Council's with Housing. We have also met with Homes England to make the case for funding to enable more new homes in Milton Keynes. We have been successful with £15M of Homes England Grant Funding for the Lakes Phase A development.</p> <p>We have proactively responded to a number of Government consultations into areas impacting the HRA (including Housing Ombudsmen fee increase proposals).</p>
18	Tackle bad landlords by ensuring private tenants can easily report safety issues in their properties and crack-down on unregulated HMOs	<p>Private Sector Housing awareness week and Private Renting Event completed – 18 to 22 September 2023. Private Sector Housing team set up pop ups at Centre MK Shopping centre and Trinity, Frank Moran and Coffee Hall community centres to provide advice and support and to promote the private renting event held 22 September. Private Sector Housing hosted the Private Renting event along with many council services alongside Citizens Advice, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire and Rescue, MKACT and Carers MK. 52 people attended.</p>

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		Investigations into properties identified in the stock condition survey are nearly complete so far resulting in 19 unregistered HMOs being identified. Work is ongoing with the landlords of these properties to achieve compliance with HMO licensing and health and safety standards. Enforcement action will be considered where necessary.
19	Continue to provide accommodation and support services for rough sleepers	<p>To date 512 people have been supported through the Old Bus Station (OBS) nightly crisis accommodation in 2023/2024. Every month the Rough Sleepers team provides support to approximately 60 people rough sleeping. Within this group, 20 people persistently decline the support offered by the Rough Sleepers team.</p> <p>As planned we are now reviewing the development of our service to rough sleepers as The Old Bus Station cannot be long term as at some point MKDP will want to redevelop the site.</p>
20	Agree a strategy for the future provision of repair and maintenance services for council owned properties	<p>Following the Delegated Decision taken on 19 September confirming the hybrid approach (some service directly delivered by MKCC, others under contract by a partner) from April 2025, work has progressed on consultation with residents, engagement with the market and options appraisals for contract types and work streams.</p> <p>A further Delegated Decision is proposed in January to approve the procurement strategy, along with further consultation on this detail.</p>
21	Progress building work on Phase A of the Lakes Estate regeneration by March 2024	<p>An extensive piece of work has been undertaken with the preferred contractor and with cost specialists to optimise the scope and specification of the building designs, and to overcome the significant cost inflation pressures on the project due to extreme market conditions.</p> <p>We have also worked collaboratively with Homes England (HE) to finalise our grant of £15M, which was submitted in August. We received approval in November, subject to entering into a contract with the preferred contractor and completion of the grant agreement.</p> <p>Cabinet and Special Council decisions were taken in December, which approved the appointment of the preferred contractor and extra borrowing to deliver this key regeneration project, considering the final cost and budget requirements, as well taking into account the Homes England grant.</p> <p>The main works contract was executed in December, ready for the main works to commence by February. Early site preparation commenced in December.</p>
22	Establish a Community Advisory Group to work with the Towns Deal Board to develop plans for the future of Bletchley and Fenny Stratford by September 2023	<p>The Town Deal Board approved the formation of an Advisory Group on 19 June. The remit of the Advisory group is to act in an advisory capacity to the Bletchley Town Deal Board, providing feedback on matters of community interest during the delivery phase of the Town Deal programme. Following an inception meeting on the 31 July, several further meetings have been arranged and attended by representatives from the local community, including representatives from local resident associations, local councillors and other interested groups. Note that the group is continuously evolving its membership to ensure it is representative of the local community. Recent meetings have been held on the 9 November in which the group were consulted on the Brunel Centre redevelopment brief and most recently on the 5 December for a general programme update.</p> <p>In 2024, the group will assist in the consultation for several Town Deal projects and will help ensure that, through their collective networks, the programme team are able to proactively engage with the local community. The Terms of Reference for the group were approved at the Town Deal Board meeting on 19 December attended by the Advisory Group Chair.</p>
23	Address damp and mould in council owned properties	<p>There is an established approach for reports of damp and mould, as well as proactive identification of properties which may be vulnerable to it through the repairs profiles. Fabric improvements works continue to be prioritised and delivered in our homes, along with follow up checks at three or six months. The works, along with the spend, on damp and mould continue to be closely tracked.</p> <p>We continue to use thermal imaging cameras to help identify the root causes of damp.</p>
24	Work with Woughton Community Council to develop plans for improving community assets, public spaces and continue to develop renewal plans for the area	<p>A draft asset strategy has been produced ready for consultation with the Leader, Portfolio Holder, Ward Councillors and Woughton Community Council (WCC) in January.</p> <p>Data was gathered on the running costs for each building and potential uses, with a view to rationalise the estate and ensure the right buildings are retained for service delivery. This work is included within MKCC's Corporate Property Strategy 2024-2029 and cross-cutting projects such as the Early Help Strategy and Leisure Asset Transfer programme.</p> <p>In addition, we have been working with WCC to support them in making a bid for the Carbon Offset Fund to deliver energy improvement measures on the retained properties. This was successful, with a £10K grant awarded.</p>
25	Continue to develop renewal plans for Bradville and Fullers Slade, and improvement plans for Galley Hill	<p>The Lakes and Fullers Slade Estate Renewal Forums (ERF) are fully formed and meeting regularly. Discussions continue in relation to Woughton estates. Fullers Slade ERF recently presented a review of the successful projects that have been undertaken across the estate and its community, with further projects planned. Bradville ERF is operating with interim committee whilst looking to recruit permanent members. Meetings are still being held regularly.</p> <p>The land sale at Galley Hill was approved at Delegated Decision on in September. Work is underway to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilise the contractor for the special educational needs and disability provision (start on site January). • Create the new charities hub. • Demolish the pool (due to happen in March). • Regularise the telecoms leases on the site. • Regularise the leases at the Local Centre after tenant alterations. • Determine options for interim community space.
26	Address the aging REEMA prefabricated reinforced concrete residential blocks in Bletchley	<p>Following the surveys and second opinion of experts, along with further monitoring, communications (letters) went to all residents in November confirming that the blocks will continue to be maintained, however, they are not viable to maintain cost effectively in the longer term. The experts recommended a moves plan, which is split into three phases, which we are implementing.</p> <p>A dedicated Housing Officer is in place, making individual one-to-one appointments with our first phase tenants. 23 tenants one-to-ones were completed in December, the remainder will be completed in January. The first phase one move took place before the end of December.</p> <p>Communications with leaseholders will follow in the next few months. All other enquiries are being directed to a dedicated email address. Monitoring continues for all blocks, along with repairs and maintenance and servicing.</p>

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27	Progress a New City Plan to 2050 to ensure our continued, well-planned growth is delivered with proper levels of infrastructure and affordable housing	<p>Extensive research has already been commenced to inform the New City Plan:</p> <p>Final/Draft reports have been received from the consultants on the Open Space Assessment, Landscape Character Assessment, Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment; Retail and Leisure Study; and Nature, Green and Blue Infrastructure Study.</p> <p>In addition, work has been commissioned and/or is ongoing for the Climate and Carbon Study; CMK Growth Opportunities Study; Review of Areas of Attractive Landscape, Land Availability Assessment, Viability Assessment, Integrated Water Management Study, Transport Modelling, People Friendly and Healthy Places Survey and the MK Infrastructure Study and Strategy.</p> <p>An initial consultation on developing an authority-wide Design Code has been published for consultation which ended on 19 January 2024.</p> <p>The issue of housing supply and delivery was scrutinised through the Housing, Planning and Placemaking Scrutiny Committee in November. Consultants have been appointed to assist with a wide range of engagement sessions taking place over November and December.</p>
28	Continue working with DLUHC to investigate new models to ensure the delivery of appropriate levels of funding and infrastructure for future growth	<p>We have used the government funding to appoint external expertise to support our investigations.</p> <p>Evidence gathering for the Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) is progressing, with the exploration of legal considerations nearing completion and a finance commission underway. These studies will inform the development of a recommended option for the SOBC in early 2024. To allow all of the work to take place and the SOBC to be developed comprehensively, the Delegated Decision is now expected in March.</p>
29	Continue the MKCC Planning Academy and train new recruits	<p>The first cohort of the Planning Academy has seen five graduates work across a selection of our teams whilst they undertake post-graduate professional qualifications in town planning.</p> <p>Recruitment for the second cohort has been completed and two graduates joined us in September.</p> <p>A 'good practice' note on the Planning Academy has been prepared and agreed with the RTPI.</p>
30	Bring forward a business case for Mass Rapid Transport (MRT)	<p>The Outline Business Case has been awarded to Ove Arup who developed the previous Strategic (high-level) case. This will provide a more in-depth look at the case for a Mass Rapid Transit system in Milton Keynes. A draft is expected for late December allowing for the case to feed into the New City Plan and local transport plan work.</p>
31	Work with partners to agree a new model of delivery for current SEMLEP functions and continue to seek a Level 2 Devolution Deal for the area	<p>The immediate focus for joint working across the South East Midlands has been planning for the future of services currently delivered by South East Midlands Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP). It has been agreed that the current Growth Hub and Careers Hub will be transferred, with their funding, to West Northamptonshire Council. Government funding has also been promised for the provision of Strategic Economic and Business functions.</p> <p>Detailed work is now underway between the South East Midlands Local Authorities on the integration of LEP services into West Northamptonshire Council. Between January and March 2024, detailed work will take place on the future of business engagement to ensure that new appropriate governance is put in place.</p>
32	Deliver a programme of improvements for local play areas	<p>Two play areas completed, one at Oxley Park and one at Crownhill and are both in good use today.</p> <p>We have also been successful in our application of a grant for £50K from FCC for a new Play Area in Crownhill. This is set to be approved at an internal capital board in October.</p> <p>Play areas deemed to be in poor condition have been identified and plans/works for 30 of these play areas have been agreed for improvement. These works commenced in November and be completed by the new play area contractor, Glendale. 5 have been completed of the year to date</p> <p>The Delegated Decision for the Play Area Action Plan 2024/2034 is planned for March.</p>
33	Improve the fostering service and increase the number of foster carers	<p>As of end December we have approved five new fostering households and are currently progressing a further six new fostering households through the assessment process.</p> <p>We have launched a refreshed foster carer campaign/marketing strategy and are working towards meeting our recruitment target by end March. Our communications team and the fostering service are working together to ensure appropriate mix of general and focussed/targeted campaigns and are aligned to national campaigns</p> <p>We have also recently secured national funding from government to join a Regional Care Cooperative south east project which will focus on fostering recruitment across the south east region.</p>
34	Extend youth services to Fullers Slade and continue work on the Lakes Estate so that community members can run social activities and clubs to boost wellbeing	<p>The voluntary and community sector alongside MKCC have delivered a range of additional outreach youth work sessions working with young people in Bradville and Lakes Estate alongside a number of other youth work activities. This has been delivered through positive and engaging activities and has further built on our existing youth provision utilising and upskilling community volunteers.</p> <p>The level of engagement on this included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diversion project over the summer: 36 targeted young people engaged - Participation and Engagement summer programme: 133 targeted young people were involved - Fullers Slade summer provision: 183 young people engaged in activities set
35	Create new special educational needs provision, including plans for a new school, to ensure we continue to invest in high quality provision and SEND support	<p>Work is progressing to ensure the full works are completed for 24 place small special needs and disability provision at Galley Hill by September 2024</p> <p>Further discussions are progressing with 19 schools who forwarded expression of interests to provide new satellite provision to ensure capacity is in place to meet the anticipated demand for children who may need a more specialist school place.</p>

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		Special school and education place plan sufficiency is now part of the SEND partnership arrangements and priorities and is informed by Education and Healthcare Plans (EHCP) funding and is needs led.
36	Continue to invest in knife crime reduction activities to divert youth offending, especially during the school holidays	<p>Hazard Alley have been funded and delivered knife crime prevention sessions across seven primary schools in the autumn term. A further 24 sessions will be delivered in the spring term and will reach several hundred children.</p> <p>MK Dons SET have two groups established to work with young people who are at risk of engagement in criminal activity. Activities include sports (football, hockey, basketball) and workshops including first aid, mental health awareness and knife crime prevention. The group in the Brooklands area has an average of 34 attendees per session, and the Fullers/Greenleys group had grown from 8 to 18 regular attendees</p> <p>Focussed Deterrent, a programme being delivered over two years where habitual knife carriers are offered access to positive support and diversion activities, is now live and will be evaluated. 45 young people are currently in the cohort, with another ten 18-24s being allocated for engagement by the project in the next couple of weeks</p> <p>The focus groups held as part of the Counter Narrative campaign have begun. We are working with Clairmont Research to support the focus groups and test their counter-narrative brand 'Stay True to You' with our young people. If our young people connect with that brand we will work with them and MK College to develop our own local version.</p> <p>Another project has been successfully delivered providing summer activities in partnership with VCS organisations to over 30 targeted young people, and many continue to engage with organisations post project. £10k of funding secured from 'Million Hours' fund to run for additional six months with further refunding opportunities explored to extend and expand the project.</p>
37	Increase mental health support by working with the BLMK Integrated Care Board and CNWL to improve mental health services for children and young people	<p>A multi-agency group has progressed training on neurodevelopmental pathways and collecting the views of professionals working in schools to inform an approach to strengthen the existing service with education and health professionals. Over the last year this has reached approximately 660 professionals.</p> <p>There is a task and finish group in place for developing a smoother crisis offer, working across partners to improve our joint crisis response to children and young people.</p> <p>A new Clinical Psychologist has been appointed to increase the Mental Health provision to our children in care.</p>
38	Continue to expand our help and support for care leavers	<p>The revised offer to care leavers has been completed and endorsed through the Corporate Parenting Panel to differentiate the needs between 16-18, 18-21 and 21-24 year olds and will be reviewed annually.</p> <p>Work is also continuing to widen the accommodation options for care leavers and revised commissioning arrangements have been undertaken.</p> <p>We have recruited two new care leaver apprenticeships to date who have now started within MKCC and have increased the number and diversity of care leavers contributing to Raise Your Voice.</p>
39	Deliver holiday activities for children and young people	<p>A highly successful and well attended holiday activities programme has been delivered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,500 different children and young people attended a summer session, up 56% on Spring 2023, and 42% on Summer 2022, averaging five days attendance over the maximum of 16 days available. • Number of children eligible free school meals reached over the Summer was 24% compared to 15% in Spring, and 11% last Summer, with 13,800 sessions attended in total. • We have also delivered a strong Christmas holiday provision and planning for the Spring 2024 programme. Overall we will have significantly increased the provider taken up number of children and young people engaged than previous years This has included an increase in SEND involvement and activities offered.
40	Continue to provide a range of help and support for residents impacted by the Cost-of-Living crisis using funding set aside in our budget and utilising any further government funding	<p>Delivery of Cost-of-Living Support continues via the Local Welfare Provision and XTRA. Additional grants to third sector providers, including charities has been agreed as part of the 2023-24 Winter Plan, which was launched in November.</p> <p>Spending for the period April-November was £2.7m out of the £4.8m available in 2023-24. This has been spent primarily on food vouchers for those in receipt of free school meals (over 23,000 will be supported in 2023-24).</p> <p>Over 8000 households are being supported via food parcels and food larders, 2300 households are being provided with assistance with rent or Council Tax Arrears, and over 1,500 residents are receiving help with energy and wider essential living items.</p> <p>Demand and expenditure will increase over autumn and winter period and all the available funding is expected to be spent during the 2023/2024 financial year.</p>
41	Introduce the Mortgage Interest Relief Fund to help hard-working families with emergency financial support to prevent homelessness	<p>Up to the end of quarter three there have been five approaches to the Housing Solutions Team for advice regarding mortgage arrears out 1,463 approaches overall.</p> <p>When the current agreement made by the Government with mortgage providers not to pursue arrears ends March there is a risk there will be an increase in presentations for support.</p>
42	Provide an extra £150,000 to parish councils so they can continue providing vital initiatives such as community cafes, social clubs and wellbeing support	<p>All 48 parishes were contacted and advised of their allocations, of which 34 requested their original allocation, which was distributed in early October. 14 parishes declined an allocation, leaving a surplus of £18,000. Once again, all parishes were contacted with 27 requesting a share of this surplus funding. All payments were made to parishes by end December 2023, and we will be getting feedback from them about the support they offered to residents.</p>
43	Support MK Food Bank, continue to expand food larders and ensure funding for school holiday food programmes to reduce child hunger	<p>We are continuing to support the Foodbank through paying their rent on the current facility at Kiln Farm whilst we prepare the charities hub at Galley Hill (See Action 25).</p>
44	Continue work to establish a Library of Things	<p>A pilot called 'Borrow it' has been developed and is on track to be launched in February.</p>
45	Spend £50,000 boosting accessibility around MK by installing dropped kerbs in areas of high footfall and most need	<p>Following engagement with local ward councillors and the Portfolio Holder, several locations have been highlighted for accessibility improvements.</p> <p>The technical assessments and designs are prepared, with improvements to crossing facilities programmed to be installed in quarter four of 2023/24. The sites currently being assessed are in Olney and Beanhill, from which five will be prioritised.</p>

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		Additionally, works are being considered to improve accessibility both for pedestrians and vehicles near MK Snap which has significant difficulties with access and egress during peak times.
46	Provide a small level of funding to our new Ethnic Minority, LGBTQ+ and Young People Champions to help them promote equality and diversity in the city	Funding is in place.
47	Continue to invest in mental health projects across the city, including youth counselling and support for LGBTQ+ young people	<p>YIS closed in November with the remaining funding being transferred to a new YIS legacy fund, managed by the MK Community Foundation, to support local mental health projects in the voluntary sector.</p> <p>A Q:Alliance youth outreach worker was recruited in September and is providing one to one support in schools as well as via the weekly Q:Hub drop-in. The outreach worker has had engagements with 32 young people to date.</p> <p>Q:alliance are working positively with 11 secondary, and one special school, as well as MK College. The outreach worker has been developing resources for schools in response to defined need by education staff and has conducted three teacher training sessions.</p> <p>A Q:Accreditation scheme is being developed with schools and will now be available from mid-2024. This has been slightly delayed due to prioritising developing resources and training, on request from the schools involved.</p>
48	Support local groups and events that encourage equality and diversity	Agreements are in place with funding for the Disability Advisory Group and the Council of Faiths. A conference on equality and inclusion was held by Adult Services with good attendance. An MKCC community leaders group has been set up with members of all faith groups, and meets regularly to discuss items raised. Feedback from this forum is that it is valued by those who attend, especially attendees from the Muslim community. Some engagement work has started with Christian churches in MK that will be developed in 24/25.
49	Continue our work to make Milton Keynes a Dementia Friendly City	<p>The Dementia Strategy is on the MKCC website and further consultation with people is taking place via the Older Peoples Forum and The Disability Action Group.</p> <p>We continue to work with the Alzheimer's Society and engage with businesses, organisations and individuals, to promote Milton Keynes as a dementia friendly city. We have also begun to discuss with the Open University ways to prioritise and identify more ways to make the city dementia friendly.</p> <p>The requirements for the new Dementia Support Service have now been published on the MKCC procurement system.</p>
50	Ensure a well-planned roll out of the new waste contract	<p>Our new contractor, SUEZ, began the new environmental and waste services contract as planned on 4 September. Serco exited the contract with limited disruption. Lessons learnt for the rollout went to the Public Realm and Environment Scrutiny Committee on 10 January.</p> <p>SUEZ have introduced new ways of working which take time to embed. This includes new rounds, a full database of collections by every property in the city, new safety procedures alongside hiring 20 new drivers and 40 new loaders.</p> <p>New Councillor updates have been compiled that are sent monthly through Councillor News.</p>
51	Progress the roll out of wheelie bins with proper support for suitable alternative and supported collections for properties unable to use the standard service	<p>Delegated Decision for Waste Operational Policies was completed on 20 June 2023.</p> <p>Extensive communications were carried out by our waste team prior to the go-live. Residents were communicated with directly and two letters were sent to every resident to confirm key points for the new service, as well their designated waste solution. We also ran a number of 'Bins on Tour' events, which were well received. An option 'request for review' was given to every resident. We had over 4,000 requests for review. Approximately one third of requests led to a service change being agreed. At go-live (4 September) we had completed and communicated back to residents on 98% of these requests.</p>
52	Fix at least 25,000 more potholes and road defects and repair more redways and pavements	In 2022/23 we completed approximately 18.5K defects (like for like). After nine months we have completed 13,117 defects under the classification listed, representing 52% of the Council Plan forecast. It is usual to see an increase in defect numbers as a result of a cold wet winter period, so the defect numbers will likely rise by the end of quarter four of 2023/23. The first half of the winter period has generally been above average temperatures, helping to maintain the road condition reducing the overall number of defects needing to be fixed.
53	Complete the conversion of unused garage sites in Bletchley and Stantonbury	Demolition, clearance and some landscaping has been completed at Westminster and Dorchester. The issues at Rowle Close are being reviewed – it is likely that any work there will be seeking to reduce the risk of anti-social behaviour around fly tipping in early 2024.
54	Start work on the procurement of a new highways repair and maintenance contract	<p>The procurement commenced as planned in May.</p> <p>Re-procurement milestones completed to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supplier Questionnaire - May to June • Invitation To Participate Notice - July to August • Initial Tender submission - Evaluation/moderation September • Negotiation phase - October • Delegated Decision to extend existing contract to facilitate revised procurement timetable – November • Invitation to Participate in Final Tender – November to January <p>Following review of initial tenders and feedback from the bidders regarding mobilisation timeframes, a review of the procurement timetable was undertaken to enable greater emphasis on the negotiation phase and clarifications, particularly relating to the pricing submissions. This resulted in the new award date being set for March. Additionally, to give sufficient time for mobilisation an extension to the existing contract was required to maintain service provision. This was set for 1 September 2024.</p>
55	Continue to tackle fly-tipping and littering by continuing our clamp down on illegal dumping, better use of CCTV and use of our litter wardens	<p>In October 2023 we awarded the five year contract for the 'Litter Wardens' after a successful trial. The procurement has provided a new colleague to work within our enforcement team who will prepare the prosecution cases for non-payment of Fixed Penalty Notices.</p> <p>The income generated from the new contract has paid for a new abandoned vehicle post. This has freed up senior enforcement officer posts to focus on flytipping cases.</p>

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		<p>Flytipping has reduced to 526 reports in the second quarter of 2022/23 against 1,260 in the same period last year. The Environmental Crime Unit are working on improving turnaround of CCTV deployments on lampposts with Ringway.</p>
56	<p>Improve levels of street cleansing, more frequent litter bin emptying and more weeding with the roll-out of the new Environmental Services contract</p>	<p>As a response to a safety recommendation to close high speed roads prior to working on them, a night-working cleansing regime of the grid roads, roundabouts and estate entrances was trialled for 12 weeks from September. Initial feedback has been positive in terms of the outcomes. The road closures allowed deeper, slower cleansing of road detritus.</p> <p>The new programme for 2024 will enable transformation improvements on the roundabouts to reduce maintenance costs and the numbers of closure permits required.</p> <p>Further to this it is anticipated that the cleaning and landscaping works will be combined with the highways maintenance and gully emptying works for one unified grid road maintenance programme.</p>
57	<p>Campaign for more police, community support officers and visible community policing across Milton Keynes</p>	<p>This action is politically led.</p>
58	<p>Work with Thames Valley Police to tackle city-centre anti-social behaviour, drug dealing and car cruising</p>	<p>A number of initiatives have been progressed over the year: The Safer Streets programme and the safer route have now been successfully completed.</p> <p>'Op Dizzy' ran up to Christmas which included high visibility policing in city streets.</p> <p>Twenty additional trained police officers for 'Op Vigilant', receiving enhanced stalking and harassment training.</p> <p>Multi-agency work continues to address anti-social behaviour at Station Square, including extra police patrols and posters encouraging the public to report incidents. Businesses are being visited regularly and also encouraged to report crime. A number of arrests have been made for public order offences. Longer term plans are being made in partnership with the landlords and MK Central railways station.</p> <p>Joint working to tackle car cruising continues, although this is dependent on resources.</p> <p>The TVP led project to replace the city centre CCTV continues with an investment of £250k of capital funding by MKCC.</p>
59	<p>Continue of work to promote the White Ribbon campaign to end to violence against women and girls</p>	<p>Implementation of the three-year action plan continues. We are utilising internal communications, HR policies, employee development and training to progress.</p> <p>Our Supporting New Employees Policy promotes the White Ribbon video as part of our recruitment onboarding process. We have also introduced specialised training for MKCC Health and Wellbeing Champions. We have established a Domestic Abuse Champions network for Milton Keynes.</p> <p>Seven local organisations have been supported to seek their own White Ribbon accreditation including MK Dons and we are now working with Centre:mk and MK Dons on a campaign in the shopping centre to run throughout the year. First Team players signed up to support the campaign and used social media to make the White Ribbon promise on International White Ribbon Day.</p> <p>We have supported Town and Parish Councils to seek Supporter Organisation status. We continue to work closely with local organisations like Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town council, MK Soroptimists and Voices of Women (VOW). We have successfully supported Sir Herbert Leon school to become a 'White Ribbon school' and are actively encouraging further secondary schools to become Supporter Organisations.</p> <p>We marked International White Ribbon Day on 25 November 2023 and the following 16 days of action with a range of events.</p> <p>We have built White Ribbon accreditation into the commissioning process as a social value indicator.</p>
60	<p>Work with health partners to expand free and low-cost provision of social care such as reablement and home care to help people stay independent when they leave hospital and reduce hospital readmissions</p>	<p>In November we introduced a new Bridging Care service that allows for speedier hospital discharge, and for an assessment to take place in the person's own home. This service ensures that decisions about future care take place outside of the hospital environment.</p> <p>In December we launched a new integrated discharge hub in the hospital where a new team, made up of staff from MKCC, CNWL and the hospital, are working together to facilitate a co-ordinated approach to discharging patients. The aim is to ensure that a patient is discharge at the right time to the right place, avoiding any unnecessary delay.</p> <p>Our new Care Academy went live in December and is beginning to train staff from MKCC's Home First Reablement Service to further support patients to maintain and regain their independence without the need for specialist therapy input.</p>
61	<p>Build a new integrated care hub to provide modern facilities for adult day services, short breaks and care support for those with profound disabilities and their families</p>	<p>The purchase of Avalon House (to be renamed Linford Wood Place) was successfully completed on 28 November 2023 and news has now been shared with staff, partner organisations, carers, families and the wider community.</p> <p>Our architect has visited existing services to gain greater insight into the facilities required in the new building and will be basing proposals around these. A visit to another similar integrated site in Luton has taken place to learn from their experience.</p> <p>A cross-council group is in place to oversee the initial stages of development.</p>
62	<p>Work with the health partners to deliver the MK Deal, including tackling obesity, improving children and young people's mental health and joined up neighbourhood working</p>	<p>Good progress is being made against the MK Deal.</p> <p>(1) Procurement and award for the diabetes technology was been completed, NHS ethics/NICE approval received, randomised control trial (Loughborough University) protocol agreed and practitioner training has commenced. Patient recruitment now underway. Other work on improving weight management services is also taking place.</p> <p>(2) On children and young people's mental health, improved information sharing now in place, an additional psychologist post has been approved and funded and work on a co-location proposal is being taken forward.</p> <p>(3) Agreement was reached on Bletchley as the neighbourhood pilot site and Bletchley Pathfinder initiative has been developed launched in January. Independent Chair (Toni Fisher) appointed and Delivery Board formed with good cross-agency representation. Bletchley Clubs has now been launched providing funding to small clubs and groups in the area.</p>

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63	Campaign for a new Health Hub in Bletchley as part of the regeneration of the town centre	<p>MKCC and MKDP are actively engaged in dialogue over the potential to include health provision in the redeveloped Brunel/Sainsbury's site in Bletchley. The outline 'Draft Brunel Centre, Bletchley Development Brief' agreed on 26 September confirms health uses would be appropriate for this development.</p> <p>Some initial scoping work and an exemplar visit has taken place to explore the feasibility of greater use of the Bletchley Leisure Centre for associated health and wellbeing activities – funding remains a barrier.</p>
64	Improve access to GP services by working with the NHS to expand existing surgeries in Olney, expand the existing surgery in Woburn Sands or build a new facility in SEMK, and build a new health hub in the new Milton Keynes East development	<p>Building works have started on the Milton Keynes East Health Hub. In July 2023 it was announced that Ashe Constuction were awarded the £24M design and build contract for a school and health hub.</p> <p>Construction works to deliver the re-configuration and refurbishment of Asplands Surgery (Woburn Sands) and their Woburn premises is underway. The work at Asplands commenced in July and is expected to take approximately 27 weeks in total. The work in Woburn is expected to take seven weeks and commenced earlier this month. The project is being funded by S106 contributions.</p> <p>The ICB continues to work with Cobbs Garden Surgery to consider opportunities to utilise S106 funding to support the capacity of the practice.</p>
65	Work with the BLMK ICB to improve access to NHS dentists in Milton Keynes	The transfer of responsibility for commissioning NHS dentistry was from NHS England to the Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Board took place in April 2023.
66	Deliver the first phase of the council house insulation programme and assess possible future bids for more funding	<p>The trial homes in Netherfield were completed as planned. Several new items of work were identified through the trial homes, which have now been incorporated into the programme. This has meant that changes to the homes in scope of wave one have been required, including a blend of homes across the borough that meet the grant funding requirements.</p> <p>Wave one is now underway and we are working with the grant providers to ensure they are happy with the programme, which will likely extend beyond the grant timescale for December completion, and complete in March 2023. The initial completed homes have been very well received.</p>
67	Promote the uptake of green roofs to offset carbon and increase biodiversity	<p>Green roof installations were promoted with a workshop session delivered in April as part of the POTenT project.</p> <p>A green roof promotional visit to the green roof project above the YMCA was attended by CMK Councillors in August 2023.</p> <p>In October a green roofs presentation was given to the planning work experience students on the Young Explorer project and green roofs were also promoted at the Community Action MK event this month when the Carbon Offset Fund (COF) was introduced to those present to encourage take up of the available COF contribution to such projects.</p> <p>A final promotional session will be held during the Parish Forum meeting in March 2024.</p>
68	Plant hundreds of new urban trees selected specifically to suit urban areas to replace trees lost to disease or removed due to being unsuitable	<p>The Urban Tree Action Plan Delegated Decision was approved on 20 June. This included our first provisional tree planting plan as to where both urban and amenity trees would be planted. The current programme anticipates 30 urban trees in CMK (including Station Square and Midsummer Boulevard) and 15 in Woughton. The tree planting programme for amenity trees will commence during tree planting season from November to February, with over 200 trees to be planted in parks and other soft dig areas.</p> <p>MKCC have successfully applied for additional funding to assist with tree planting. In November we were awarded £294K from the Forestry Commission for tree planting in 2024.</p>
69	Increase biodiversity within our green spaces by continuing measures such as less frequent grass cutting and increasing wildflowers where appropriate	<p>The new grid road cleansing and landscaping night-working programme has meant that areas can now be strimmed or managed without using herbicides on the soft standing green areas. Also, more time can be spent managing the wildflower areas and additional seeding can be undertaken as needed. However, this will not be undertaken on the central reservations. We have the ongoing landscaping transformation programme to ensure consistency of land management and creation of land and space for biodiversity.</p> <p>The Local Nature Recovery Strategy for our region is being worked up with the Natural Environment Partnership and the Portfolio Holder.</p>
70	Support struggling bus routes by giving private providers time to make services commercially viable	<p>A Delegated Decision in July approved funding to help support the slower than expected recovery of bus patronage following the pandemic.</p> <p>The decision set out several key routes to be allocated short term one-off support funding out of the Transport fund Grant that the DfT allocates. The initial funding was for eight months and was simultaneously delivered alongside an extensive communications campaign (Use It Or Lose It) to increase patronage on the targeted routes. The communications strategy is producing significant online interest, which it is hoped will be reflected through increased passenger numbers.</p> <p>It is proposed to continue the support for the identified routes for a further seven months with the last of the available support funding until July 2024, with a Delegated Decision planned in January.</p>
71	Recommission a DRT service that supports an integrated public transport system	<p>Following completion of a study in November designed to look at alternative operating models for our city-wide Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) service, solutions were identified that could facilitate greater integration with the public transport network, enabling improved DRT performance, whilst supporting the wider public transportation system by removing or reducing the need for subsidised bus routes.</p> <p>The study recommended a transfer-based (zonal) system that provides better fixed route services with DRT as a feeder service driving efficiency and more flexible cost/destination for the end user whilst supporting a holistic public transport solution. As a result, it is proposed that an amended, 'zoned based' DRT transfer service be piloted in early 2024, whilst a formal re-procurement of the DRT service with the service restructure be undertaken.</p> <p>To enable sufficient time for the pilot and procurement process a one year extension of the service (to its full contract term) will be recommended at a Delegated Decision planned on the 23 January.</p>
72	Work with schools and local communities to introduce School Street schemes to increase road safety, improve air quality and reduce traffic around schools	<p>In order to apply for DfT approval to utilise camera enforcement of certain moving traffic offences, which is needed to support the 'school streets initiative', a rigorous audit process of all existing physical/legal provisions is required as part of the evidence base required by central government.</p> <p>Additional to the initial technical audits, which are now nearly complete, the authority is required to undertake 'contravention' surveys, which are currently underway at a number of sites. These will form part of the overall application package. Simultaneously in Qquarter four (and as part of the LTP5 engagement process) public consultation on the proposals must be evidenced. Once this</p>

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		is completed a Delegated Decision may be required to approve that the formal application can commence. For these reasons, it is likely implementation of schemes will be in early 2024/25.
73	Progress the implementation of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) with the initial goal of achieving Level 2 Active Travel Council status	<p>Discussions have taken place with Active Travel England (ATE) to outline our cycling aspirations and Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) schemes. The indications about achieving level two 'active travel council' status are positive. The ATE capability self assessment was submitted on 22 December 2023. ATE have indicated re-rating will happen early in 2024.</p> <p>Following a positive engagement process with residents during September and October, we are planning to develop large scale pilot scheme. This pilot scheme will target health, sustainability and infrastructure issues and opportunities in one location in 24/25.</p> <p>The pilot is a key part of our self-assessment submission and is further evidence for an increased ATE rating</p> <p>Recruitment and training for specialist active travel design engineer and the wider team is currently underway following the restructure of the team earlier in 2023, ensuring that the team has robust delivery capabilities, which is another element required to be demonstrated to ATE for achieving level two status. The costs of the recruitment and training are being part funded by a government grant and will also form part of the overall deliverability and capability of the resource as the authority develops its emerging wider 'Transport Plan 5' that will have extensive active travel components.</p>
74	Work with a pilot school to increase levels of young people cycling and walking to school in the transition from Year 6 to Year 7	<p>Stantonbury School has been identified as a school that would be suitable to introduce new approaches to increase walking and cycling to schools in collaboration with wider services. This has included the school taking part in survey work to better understand the different modes of travel used by pupils to attend school. Further external funding is being applied for to deliver extra cycle training and to encourage Stantonbury year 7 pupils to use active travel modes. A special school assembly has also taken place to further encourage cycling. Focus is now turning to ensuring all year 5 & 6 pupils have had 'bikeability level 2 training' before attending secondary school</p> <p>Additionally, linked to item 73 of the council plan, a further school will form part of the wider 'multi-service' approach planned for 2024/2025, where significant interventions and monitoring will be undertaken increase levels of walking and cycling.</p>
75	Make MKCC's electricity carbon neutral through the provision of a solar farm	<p>Alternative options for the provision of renewable energy are being assessed as additional potential opportunities have been identified at the Milton Keynes Waste Recovery Park (MKWRP).</p> <p>The production of electricity in this manner may reduce the need to purchase a solar farm and any requirement for additional electricity may be via a power purchase agreement (PPA) instead.</p> <p>This work is being undertaken in parallel with the detailed business case for a district heating network as the outputs from the MKWRP need to be carefully utilised to ensure that the returns for MKCC are maximised.</p> <p>A Delegated Decision is being planned by April to confirm these arrangements.</p>
76	Continue to encourage employers in MK to become carbon neutral by 2030	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Twelve Milton Keynes businesses are now working towards full accreditation on our Target Zero scheme, which recognises business with a commitment to reach net zero by 2030. In the next 2 months we will be focusing on promotional activities to attract more small businesses 2. The Net Zero MK Programme has now begun its second stage. More than 144 businesses have already started work to establish the size of their carbon footprints. The businesses have also received decarbonisation reports which will guide their transition to Net Zero. An information-sharing event took place in November and was well attended and received.
77	Invest over half a million pounds in tackling the impact of flooding	<p>A new Flood and Water Manager was recruited in June and this post has commenced recruitment of the flood project management team.</p> <p>This team will be delivering over £3M of new project work over the next five years and it is anticipated that they will apply for significant additional central government funding during this time for major infrastructure works. There are additional works and flood feasibility works proposed through the Shared Prosperity funding. A dedicated post is leading on MK East and balancing lakes programme (Principal Flooding Officer).</p>
78	Use the new highways commissioning process to ensure better maintenance water management systems and work with partners to improve flooding infrastructure	<p>The scope and specification for the Highway's commissioning process was developed in May 2023 and issued as part of the Start Questionnaire process. This sets out the need for an annual drainage programme that is cyclical but targeted based on data and localised knowledge creating a map of known areas of concern and utilising innovative technological solutions to monitor and create each subsequent years targeted works package.</p> <p>The negotiation phase of the commissioning process was undertaken during October, where drainage and water maintenance were discussed with the bidders. This is now expected to be reflected in the solution offered by the bidders at final tender stage.</p>