

Milton Keynes City Council

Glossary of Terms

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Budget	The includes the allocation of financial resources to different services and projects, proposed contingency funds, the Council tax base, setting the Council tax and decisions relating to the control of the Council's borrowing requirement, the control of the capital expenditure and the setting of virement limits.
Budget and Policy Framework	The plans and strategies, which have to be adopted by the Council and within which the Cabinet have to operate.
Cabinet	The councillors who together with the Leader form the Cabinet, each usually having a specific responsibility for a number of services provided by the Council.
Call-in	The process by which the Scrutiny Committee consider whether a decision is properly taken or is the right decision.
Capital Expenditure	Spending, usually on major assets like a building, where the benefit of the asset lasts for more than one year.
Second or Casting Vote	A vote made by the Mayor, or Chair of a committee to decide a matter when there is a tied vote.
Chair/Vice Chair	The person (man or woman) who chairs a body of the Council, e.g. committee etc./the deputy to the Chair.
Chief Executive	The most senior officer, with overall responsibility for the management and operation of the Council.
Chief Finance Officer	The officer responsible for the administration of the financial affairs of the Council. Also known as the Section 151 Officer.
Chief Officers	Currently refer to the Council's Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive and Service Directors.
Code of Practice	A set of rules, usually of expected behaviour.
Committee	A formal body consisting of elected councillors, first constituted under the Local Government Act 1972.
Constitution	A document setting out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and all the procedures that have to be followed.

Co-opted Member	A non-voting, non-councillor appointed to serve on a committee in an advisory capacity.
Director	A Senior Officer.
Council	This can be used either: As the term used for the organisation; or In respect of the meeting of all of the councillors.
Councillor	An elected member of the Council and representative of the local community.
Code of Conduct for Councillors	Agreed Code of Conduct governing how councillors must conduct themselves whilst carrying out Council business or acting as a representative of the Authority.
Councillors' Allowance Scheme	The scheme of payments made to councillors.
Council Tax	The money raised by the Council from residents of Milton Keynes
Deputy Chief Executive	This is not a statutory position. The Deputy Chief Executive performs such functions as are delegated to him / her by the Chief Executive or the Council.
Director	The Chief Officer responsible for a relevant service area.
Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI)	A category of interest established under the Localism Act 2011 and subsequent regulations. It is a criminal offence for a Councillor to fail to register a DPI or to take part in decision making on matters affected by a Councillor's DPIs.
Exempt Information	Information falling into one of 7 categories set out in the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2006 and the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 which usually cannot be publicly disclosed – see the Access to Information Procedure Rules in Part 4 of the Constitution.
Group Leader	In respect of any political group means the person whom the group has identified as its leader by notice in writing to the Chief Executive.
Human Rights Act 1998	The Act which puts European Human Rights into UK law. The Council by law considers the impact of its action on the rights of individuals.

Key Decision	A decision which is likely either to incur significant expenditure/make significant savings (over £500,000) or to have a significant impact on those living or working in 2 or more Wards.
Laws	Acts of Parliament or Regulations.
Leader of the Council	The Leader shall be a councillor elected to that office by a simple majority of the Council.
Local Government Ombudsman	Appointed nationally to look into complaints by the public about the way they have been treated by or the service they have received from councils.
Mayor	The civic head of the Council, who chairs the meeting of the Council. The Chairman is not responsible for the running of the Council.
Member of the Public	Anyone who is not a part of the Council.
Minutes	The formal record of the proceedings of a meeting.
Monitoring Officer	The officer appointed under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 to oversee the legality of the Council's actions and the ethical behaviour of councillors and employees. This is a statutory proper officer role.
Officer	A paid employee of the Council.
Overview and Scrutiny	Committees of the Council with responsibility for scrutinising decisions made in the name of the Council, making reports and recommendations on policy and the discharge of functions and considering matters which affect the well-being of the residents.
Parish Meeting	A meeting at which every local government elector has a vote. Every parish must have a Parish Meeting which must meet at least annually. Parish Meetings discuss local affairs and have power to exercise certain limited functions. They are not Parish Councils.
Petitions	A formal written request, signed by more than one person, appealing to the Council in respect of a particular cause or question.
Policy	A plan of action or approach to an issue.
Policy Framework	The policy framework means the key policies and strategies which must be decided and followed by the Council.

Policy Review	An examination of Policy in relation to a Council function. To establish whether a policy reflects the Council's current obligations, both in law and in relation to the decision-making process. Where no policy exists a review may examine all aspects and formulate a policy for the future decision-making processes.
Proper Officer	A senior officer of the Council who is given a set of responsibilities by statute.
Protocols	Codes of Practice which set out how, for example, various elements of the Council are expected to interact with each other.
Quorum	The minimum number of people who have to be present before a meeting can take place.
Regulatory	The functions of the Council which "regulate" e.g. licensing, planning etc.
Responsibility for Functions	This document (in Chapter Two of the Constitution) sets out which committee, councillor or officer is responsible for particular functions of the Council.
Summons	The term used to inform date, time and place of a meeting and specify business to be transacted.
Statutory	The process of interpreting and applying legislation.
Terms of Reference	A written definition setting out the responsibilities and boundaries of a particular committee.
Town Council / Parish Council / Parish Meeting	A corporate body (in the same way in which the Unitary Council is a corporate body) having precepting powers in its area, and empowerment by statute to undertake certain functions.
Unitary Council	Councils that are responsible for the provision of all the local government services within a district.
Virements	Moving funds from one area of expenditure to another within a financial year.
Ward	An area of Milton Keynes for which elections are conducted. Each ward elects three Councillors on a three-year rolling basis