



MKC Coronavirus update

Friday 27 March 2020

Main messages

- The measures announced Monday are impacting service delivery.
- The plan for responding to requests for support is in place.
- Rising levels of infection and serious illnesses reported.



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The operating and decision making environment is extremely challenging **‘Every citizen is required to comply with these measures’ (until 13 April)...**

Stay at home

You should only leave the house for one of four reasons:

- Shopping for basic necessities (food and medicine) which must be as infrequent as possible.
- One form of exercise a day, for example a run - alone or with members of your household.
- Any medical need, or to provide care or to help a vulnerable person.
- Travelling to and from work, but only where you cannot work from home.

Closing certain businesses and venues

- Pubs, cinemas and theatres and indoor and outdoor leisure facilities
- All retail stores selling non-essential goods, including libraries
- Communal places within parks and playgrounds
- Places of worship, except for funerals
- Hotels, hostels, bed and breakfasts

Stopping public gatherings

The Government is also stopping all public gatherings of more than two people.

There are only two exceptions to this rule:

- Where the gathering is of a group of people who live together
- Where the gathering is essential for work purposes - workers should minimise contact

‘People can travel to and from work, but only where the work they do cannot be done from home. With the exception of the organisations covered above in the section on closing non-essential shops and public spaces, the Government has not required any other businesses to close – indeed it is important for business to carry on’

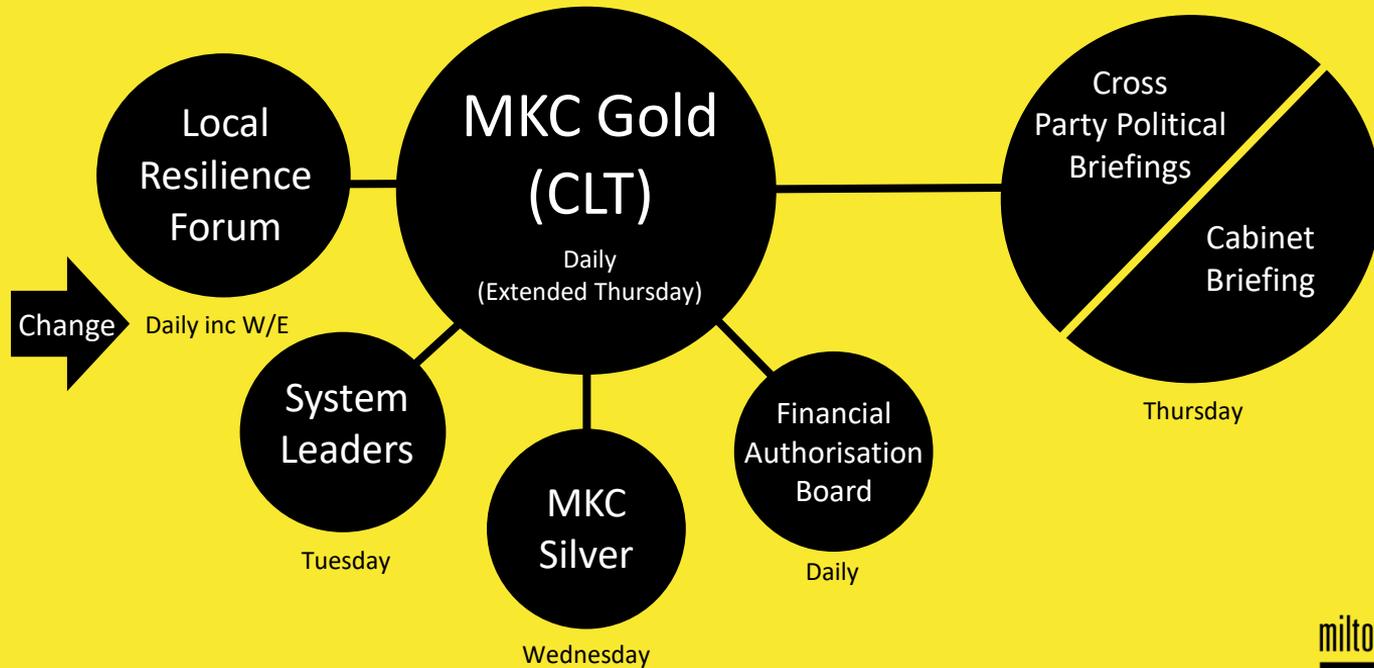
The operating and decision making environment is extremely challenging
Nuance of government advice on work has got lost



- MKC colleagues and contractors are extremely worried
- If they are not, then their families are
- We currently have just over 250 colleagues formally reporting self-isolating
- Behaviour around contact is difficult to balance with government advice
- As usual, council services getting little coverage in national discourse

A reminder...

Control and communication structure



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Decision making

Most 'decisions' are being made as a result of responding to:

- Government directives, which has had two major change points (Friday 20 March and Monday 23 March)
- Trying to address employee concerns
- Dealing with staff shortages, or anticipated shortages
- Create some flex should we need it later (volunteers)
- CLT Gold meetings, Financial Authorisation Board and close involvement of The Leader is assisting co-ordination



Service changes (1)

In line with government advice, all non essential face to face contact has stopped. Currently:

By appointment
and telephone
and online

Essential social care
Registrars (death appointments only)
Housing access and homeless prevention
Local welfare provision, revenues and benefits

Business (more
of less) as usual

Highways (urgent only)
Landscaping services
Household waste collections as normal

Civic is closed to all visitors.

Service changes (2)

There are some changes to waste services:

- **No changes to waste collection:** Tonnages are up. We are behind on Food and Garden Waste as tonnages are really high from where everyone did their gardens.
- **Recycling Centres are shut:** Newport Pagnell will remain open for essential commercial waste. Other areas have done the same.
- **Recycling sack delivery:** In order to focus Serco resources into key frontline services we are looking at having MKC staff potentially deliver the annual recycling sack delivery. The strategy would be to do the annual deliveries as quickly as possible and that will reduce the ad hoc order demand.



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Communications

19 March to 26 March

We've actively reached c165,000 people on e-alerts and social (COVID-19 messages alone) of which c31,000 people have engaged in content

Key channels

Social media

35K followers



Email alerts

12,000 subscribers



Local news/media



Employee and stakeholder comms (inc 'pass it on'...)



Posters and signs



Website



Thursday 19 March

Announced new measures to protect our most vulnerable and continue essential services. Head of Regulatory Services, Neil Allen recorded a video about scams and fraud. Wrote to all council tenants to give advice on finances and help. Daily operational update for staff.



Milton Keynes Council @mkcouncil · 18 Mar
Milton Keynes Council is introducing new measures to protect our most vulnerable and to ensure it continues to provide essential services.
Read more: bit.ly/2fYxUC6

Impact of coronavirus on council services

MK Council is introducing new measures to protect our most vulnerable and to ensure it continues to provide essential services

www.milton-keynes.gov.uk



Milton Keynes Council @mkcouncil
Be aware of scammers using coronavirus to trick or defraud people. Need help or advice? We're on 0808 2231133 and tsd@milton-keynes.gov.uk. Follow @MiltonKeynesTS. #COVID19

Contact Trading Standards
T: 0808 223 1133
E: TSD@milton-keynes.gov.uk

and I'm the Head of Regulatory Services here at Milton Keynes Council.

1:08 | 723 views



Council Housing Rents and Coronavirus

If your circumstances have changed and you are having difficulty paying the rent, we strongly encourage you to speak to a member of our Income Team on 01908 250937.

We also have a small team of Welfare Officers who can support tenants who are having particular difficulties paying the rent and managing household finances.

How to get help with your rent payments if	What to do:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Your earnings have reducedYou have lost employmentYou have lost income	<ol style="list-style-type: none">If you are not currently claiming Housing Benefit or Universal Credit You can apply online for Universal Credit. More information and how to claim at https://www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/coronavirus/



Friday 20 March

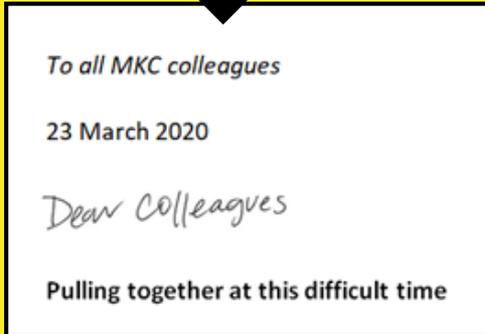
Launched MK Emergency Response Appeal. Published Good Neighbour Guide, How to Help Guide and Business Toolkit. Civil society livestream with Cllr O'Neill and Ian Revell (MKCF). Business live stream with Cllr Middleton, our DCE and Dir of Finance. Update for Heads.





Monday 23 March

In an email to all colleagues, we asked for willing volunteers to join our special team working on supporting local people most in need. We also reminded residents of our waste and recycling protocols following bulky waste being left for collection. Further update for Heads.





Tuesday 24 March

Council Leader Pete Marland published a letter to MK residents. We also announced the closure of all MK Household Waste Recycling Centres in light of government guidance (exc Newport Pagnell which is open for business refuse only).



Message from Council Leader Pete Marland

As you know, Milton Keynes Council is currently working with the government and our local partners on our response to the Coronavirus (Covid 19) outbreak.

I am sending you this email as Leader of Milton Keynes Council to let you know how you can stay safe, protect others and how to get help if you need it.



Milton Keynes Council @mkcouncil · 22h
In line with government rules for people to stay at home, we have closed all our Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) until further notice. Residents are asked not to leave any waste outside the site. (1/2) #COVID19

Coronavirus daily update
Tuesday 24 March

In line with government rules for people to stay at home, we have closed all our Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) until further notice. Residents are asked not to leave any waste outside the site.

Our Newport Pagnell site will be open for commercial waste only. Tradespeople should only visit the site if absolutely necessary and maintain social distancing at all times.

2 6 4



Latest news from your council

Household Waste Recycling Centres update

In line with government rules for people to stay at home, we have closed all our Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) until further notice. Residents are asked not to leave any waste outside the site.

Our Newport Pagnell site will be open for commercial waste only. Tradespeople should only visit the site if absolutely necessary and maintain social distancing at all times.

We will keep this situation under review and reopen as soon as possible.

communications@milton-keynes.gov.uk



Wednesday 25 March

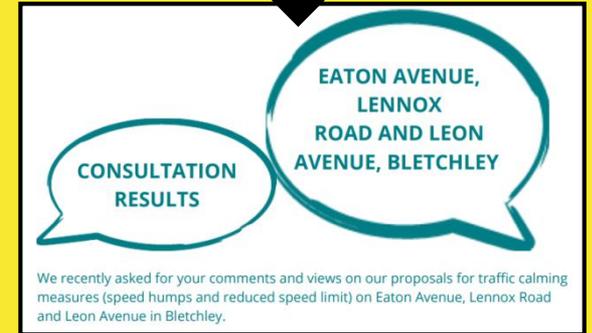
Council Leader Pete Marland on BBC Look East. Reactive media over latest deaths in MK. Announced the closure of playgrounds in MK and closure of Civic, and advised stakeholders. Published guide to financial support for residents. Asked public not to abuse staff going about essential services ('key worker' letter prepared for workers to carry with them).





Thursday 26 March

Launch of MK Food Bank Xtra; media, digital, banners and signage for supermarkets, t-shirts. New web page summarising all COVID-19 support available. Pete Marland article in (final, for now) MK Citizen; moved all public notices from print to online.





Local support service

Local support service

Who is it for?

A

Government has identified a group of 1.5m people who are at particularly high risk due to their serious health conditions

B

Wider group at increased risk of severe illness who should be particularly stringent in following social distancing measures. These are over 70s, anyone instructed to get a flu jab as an adult each year on medical grounds and pregnant women

C

More general people who, while not at increased risk of severe illness, are at risk due to the restrictions that have been put in place through increased social isolation, worsening mental and physical health, increased domestic violence and so on

Government will lead.
Helpline is 0800 0288327
Government will provide standard food packages via supermarkets to this group.
We should expect that they may require local support

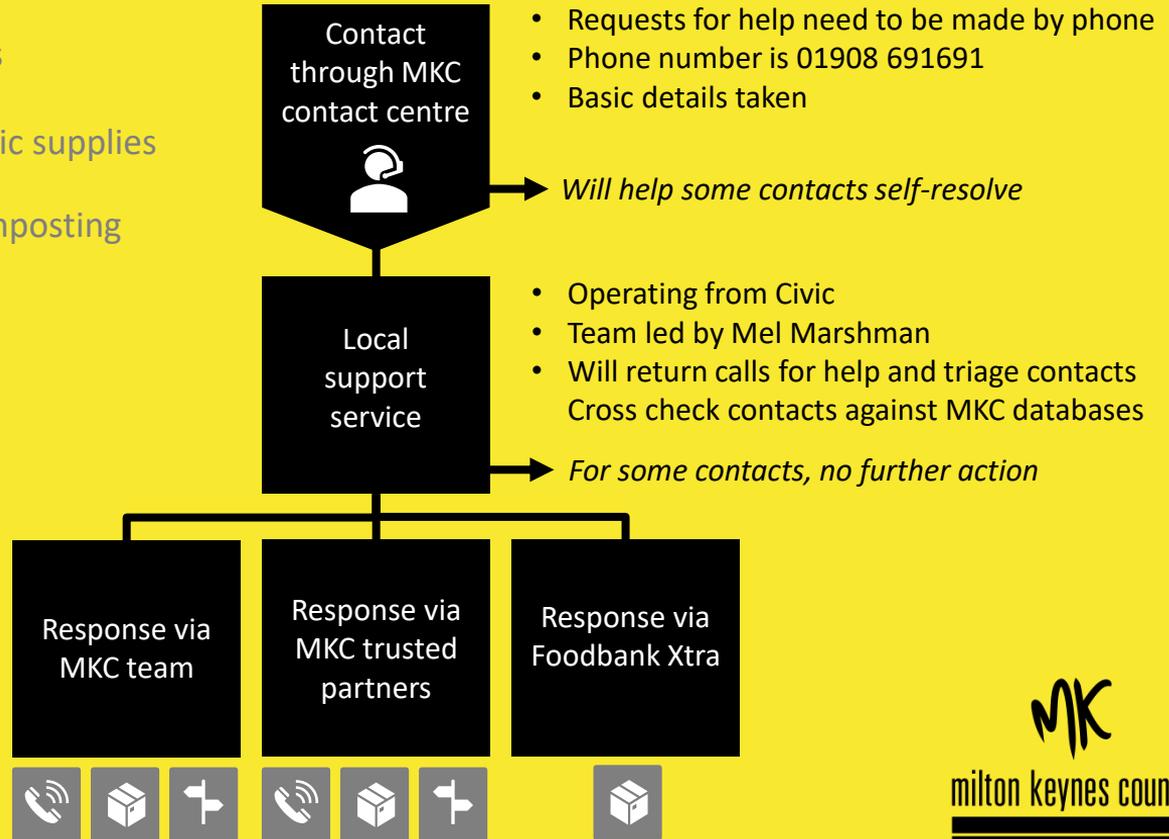
Local support service

Milton Keynes Council, together with our partners, are expected to lead on providing support to people in these groups who need help that can't be provided by family, friends or informal support groups

Local support service

How will it work?

-  Welfare checks
-  Delivery of basic supplies
-  Advice and signposting



A bit more on Foodbank Xtra



In partnership with Foodbank MK we are setting up a larger temporary storage and distribution centre at Saxon Court in Central Milton Keynes.



We will be using the knowledge and expertise of Foodbank MK as we work to create an enhanced service, which will run to the end of June.



There will be a new way for people wanting help to be assessed. This will be done on the telephone from one of our Children's Centres on **01908 565852** (and not through agencies as is usual). Food parcels will be delivered to Children's Centres for collection. If a family in need is self isolating we'll try to deliver.



Foodbank Xtra will also help with the provision and delivery of basic supplies for those not normally be eligible but are in vulnerable groups.



Schools update

We have been in contact with **every school** irrespective of its status, either directly or via existing partnerships.

Numbers attending on Monday were expected to be around 20% but only 5% arrived. This has dropped to **2-3% today** (25/03), and even fewer pupils in the secondary sector.

We are reassured that the **vast majority** of schools have systems in place to safeguard the most vulnerable children whilst they are at home.

We will now marshal our resources towards those schools who are struggling to do this.

** These children and their families are receiving support through their own school staff and allocated social workers where this applies.*

113 schools

3*

closed

The Redway School,
Knowles Nursery and
Moorlands Nursery

18

teaming up
with other
schools

3

temporary
closure due to
deep cleaning

51

schools report they will continue to provide a service through the Easter holidays

93

schools report they are able to ensure their FSM children can be fed on a daily basis

20

either have yet to report or are unable to feed FSM children and we will now address this

MK

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Housing update

- We're working closely with Mears. General day to day repairs will be scaled/cut back. However, emergency and H&S issues will be prioritised, especially for vulnerable tenants.
- Planned projects such as kitchen and bathroom replacement activities are temporarily suspended. We're finishing current works to a safe, secure and sensible condition, which could mean working for a number of days to get to this point.
- Compliance across all housing stock will be maintained. We will continue to undertake compliance duties such as gas safety tests.



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Funding and income

c£6M emergency payment from MHCLG to help fund:

- Increased demand for adult social care (providers) with some pooling with CCG expected to support discharges from hospital.
- Extra costs of providing children's services
- Support those at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19
- Other additional costs, including lost income

c£2M to support Council Tax rebates for those on very low income

We have now just received details of the Business Rates grants and are working on getting this paid as quickly as possible. We still await a decision on state aid waiver. We will be updating the website as soon as we have worked through the details and arrangements

Financial Authorisation Board in place and operating

Areas of concern

- There have been a cluster of deaths of people from residential settings (three settings in total).
- There is not enough Protective Personal Equipment (PPE) for social care. Some deliveries are getting though but these are reported to be limited. This is a national issue which continues to be escalated.
- There was a major problem on Tuesday evening as hotels closed following government direction and those homeless people we had placed because of the cold weather protocol (SWEP) were asked to leave.





How councillors can help the effort

Community – encourage others to join local groups and clubs to volunteer to channel their energy – including signposting to Community Action: MK

Be innovative – support Parish Councils to reach out through new initiatives like telephone befriending to support the vulnerable

Support – help local organisations help others by doing something new or different, and apply for funding from the Community Foundation if needed

Informing – use your networks to share important messages

Protecting – remind people to use the normal ways of raising concerns (MASH, trading standards and so on)

Volunteer – Contact special@milton-keynes.gov.uk to get involved in our local support service

Prioritise – don't overwhelm MKC with non-essential casework

How councillors can help the effort



All councillors are also encouraged, if they haven't done so already, to call all those over 70s and vulnerable groups from their casework contacts and networks to check in with them. Any concerns or requests can then be passed on to either our usual safeguarding numbers of the local support service through the main MKC number.

A simple spreadsheet is available for keeping a record of calls, and it would be helpful if this was returned to the local support service at lss@milton-keynes.gov.uk (a copy of the sheet can be requested using this email)

Civic open Saturday if councillors want to make their calls from Civic. All meeting rooms have phones.



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