



## Unitary Councillors Report to Wavendon PC – February 2025

### Update from your Unitary Councillor – Cllr David Hopkins

|                       |  |   |
|-----------------------|--|---|
| Walton Road, Wavendon | 3rd March 2025 – 6th March 2025<br>9:30am - 4:30pm | <a href="https://one.network/?GB142074780">https://one.network/?GB142074780</a> |
|-----------------------|--|---|

- **Road Closure information**

3rd March 2025 – 6th March 2025 on **Walton Road, Wavendon** (Between 9:30am and 4:30pm each day). From its junction with number 76 Walton Road for approximately 225 meters West. Whilst the above closure is in place the alternative route will be via Walton Road, Passalewe Lane, Isaacson Drive, Tongwell Street, Groveway, Newport Road (and vice versa).

You can see what lengths of road are affected by visiting <https://one.network>

**The Loop Arriva Bus Service** - Loop has enjoyed a brilliant inaugural month; we've been encouraged by customer's comments and celebrated reaching the 10,000-customer journey milestone last week.

We're continuing our launch campaign around the route. The first bus in Loop branding entered service on Tuesday, and we've visited Shenley Wood Retirement Village, the Open University campus, and Milton Keynes Hospital over the past fortnight. We've a few more ideas to continue pushing on spreading the good word; will be in touch if there are any more events local to you.

If you're able to continue your championing of the route within the community, we'd be very thankful. I seem to recall you have a Parish magazine (which a copy made its way to my office, much appreciated!). If we're able to use some space within that, that'd be helpful – please let us know how this could be arranged.

**Matt King (Network Manager – Luton & Milton Keynes - Arriva UK Bus)**

Arriva plc | T: 07977 263691 | E: [kingm@arriva.co.uk](mailto:kingm@arriva.co.uk) | [www.arriva.co.uk](http://www.arriva.co.uk)  
4 Westmoreland Avenue | Thurmaston | Leicester | LE4 8PH.



## East West Rail

The company set to deliver a new railway line to connect Oxford, Milton Keynes, Bedford and Cambridge has welcomed record numbers of attendees to its latest consultation.

More than 5,200 people visited 16 in-person events on the East West Rail project, which took place in communities along the entire route and provided more details about the new scheme.

The railway, which is split into three phases and will take around a decade to complete, will drive economic growth in the region and the UK as a whole. This is East West Railway Company's third consultation, which lasted for 10 weeks and provided the public with the opportunity to view the latest designs and give feedback on the proposals.

The consultation, which closed on Friday, January 24, has seen record levels of engagement with attendance more than doubled from the previous round of engagement in 2023 and also exceeding the consultation in 2019.

Highlights include:

- 5,206 people attended in-person community events including 450 'registered' as having attended the meeting at the Summerlin centre in Woburn Sands in January
- To date, more than 5,500 responses have been received
- 44,296 website consultation page views have been made
- More than 6,000 interactive map views have been registered
- The virtual consultation room has recorded 5,800 views by 2,200 users

David Hughes, CEO at EWR Co, said: "East West Rail is a once in a generation opportunity to connect people and businesses across the region and I would like to thank everyone who took the time to come and talk to us and share their views.

"We are now working to review and analyse the feedback that has been received to help inform the continued development of the design over the coming months."

To date, East West Rail has held three rounds of engagement on its plans, using the feedback to develop more detailed designs. The company is now working on its final proposals which will be presented to the public before a planning application for the new infrastructure, a Development Consent Order (DCO), is submitted to the government.

East West Rail is being proposed to enhance the region's thriving life science cluster, unlock access to jobs and space for businesses to grow, regenerate town centres, improve connectivity across the region and the rest of the UK, and support new affordable housing. The Government committed to delivering the new railway line in full in its 2024 Autumn budget.

Following a summary report on the consultation, which will be available on the East West Rail website in the coming weeks, finalised proposals will be presented at a statutory consultation due to be held in late 2025/early 2026.

For more information about East West Rail, please visit the project's home page or contact its helpdesk at [contact@eastwestrail.co.uk](mailto:contact@eastwestrail.co.uk)

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1i7HtpigyZ18gFYUQLr-fA>

For information and feedback from the previous consultation in 2021, visit:

<https://eastwestrail.co.uk/consultationfeedbackreport>

<https://www.globalrailwayreview.com/news/198039/east-west-rail-share-results-from-latest-consultation/>



**MILTON KEYNES CITY COUNCIL (THE COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF MILTON KEYNES) (VARIOUS ROADS IN MILTON KEYNES AND SURROUNDING AREAS) (20 MPH SPEED RESTRICTION ZONES) ORDER 2021) VARIATION ORDER 2025**

***The general effect of the above proposed Order will be to introduce a 20mph speed zone in Woburn Sands.***

Please note that we have combined the existing 20mph speed limits on various roads in Woburn Sands into a zone with the inclusion of Vicarage Street, Downham Road, Elm Grove, Maple Grove, Blackthorne Grove and Pine Grove. There are no other changes to any of the existing 20mph speed restrictions in Woburn Sands.

We have also formalised the 20mph speed zone for the Greensands development, which although had 20mph signs displayed, does not have a traffic regulation Order to support the speed restriction.

The Council is now carrying out statutory consultation on the above proposal.

I attach copies of the following documents for your information:

- Notice of Proposal
- Proposed traffic regulation Order
- Statement of Reasons

This consultation is also available for public inspection on the Council website at Proposed 20mph speed zones in Milton Keynes and Surrounding Areas (TRO-422) | Milton Keynes City Council  
You are invited to comment on the proposal.

The closing date for comments is 20 February 2025.

Please submit your comments before 5pm on the closing date.

Paul Harrison - Network and Enforcement Manager

To speak with me: use Microsoft Teams or 01908 254604

Milton Keynes City Council | Civic | 1 Saxon Gate East | Milton Keynes | MK9 3EJ

[www.milton-keynes.gov.uk](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk)



### **Proposed No Entry Restriction on Elmswell Road, Wavendon (TRO-423)**

End Date - 20 February 2025

Contact; Paul Harrison

Email: [Paul.harrison@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:Paul.harrison@milton-keynes.gov.uk)

Phone: 01908 252353

#### **Consultation**

Milton Keynes Council intends to make the following named traffic regulation Order under Sections 1(1) and 2(1) to (3) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984:

Milton Keynes City Council (Elmswell Road, Wavendon) (Prohibition of Entry) Order 2025

The general effect of the above proposed Order will be to prohibit all vehicles from entering along part of Elmswell Road in Wavendon between Butcher Crescent and Stockwell Lane (in both directions), except for buses and pedal cycles.

You can view all the documents relating to this consultation below:

Notice of Proposal <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-01/Notice%20of%20Proposal%20%28TRO-423%29.pdf>

Statement of Reasons <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-01/Statement%20of%20Reasons%20%28TRO-423%29.pdf>

Proposed Order <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-01/Proposed%20Traffic%20Regulation%20Order%20%28TRO-423%29.pdf>

The Council is now carrying out statutory consultation on the proposed Order. Any comments or objections to the above proposal, together with the grounds upon which they are made, must be made in writing and sent to the Council's Traffic Regulation Order Team at Milton Keynes Council, Civic Offices, 1 Saxon Gate East, Central Milton Keynes MK9 3EJ, or by email to [TROteam@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:TROteam@milton-keynes.gov.uk) quoting reference TRO-423.

The closing date for this consultation is 20 February 2025.



**Proposed 30mph Speed Restriction along part of Newport Road, Wavendon and Woburn Sands (Reference: TRO-415)**

Please be advised that the Council has now completed statutory consultation on the proposed traffic regulation Order entitled: Milton Keynes City Council (The Council of the Borough of Milton Keynes) (Parts of A421, Standing Way (H8), Groveway (H9) and A5130 Newport Road, Milton Keynes) (40 mph and 60mph Speed Restriction) Order 2015) Revocation (In Part) Order 2025

I can confirm that the Council did receive objections to the proposed traffic regulation Order during the consultation process. Therefore, the Council, in exercise of its powers under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, has on 04 February 2025 made the above traffic regulation Order.

I therefore enclose a copy of the Notice of Making for your information, in accordance with Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996. The traffic regulation Order will take effect from 07 February 2025.

Paul Harrison - Network and Enforcement Manager  
To speak with me: use Microsoft Teams or 01908 254604



**Work begins to install**

**Seven new average speed cameras along 5-mile stretch of A5 between Little Brickhill and Bedfordshire**

Work begins to install 7 new average speed cameras along 5-mile stretch of A5 between Milton Keynes and Bedfordshire

Work is underway to install a series of average speed cameras along a five-mile stretch of the A5 to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on the major A-road.

National Highways say the key route across Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire will 'benefit' from the new scheme which will make the road safer for drivers and those living nearby.

Work started on the A5 safety scheme on 27 January and will see seven new average speed cameras and associated signage installed along a five-mile section of the A5 between Thorn Roundabout, near Dunstable and Little Brickhill, on the outskirts of Milton Keynes.

As part of the improvements, sections of the road will have their speed limit reduced from 60mph to 50mph.

Work on the £2.1m project is expected to be completed by summer 2025.

### A5 Little Brickhill to Thorn Roundabout diversion



#### Village Issues

- Local Plan – MK2050 – next stage <https://milton-keynes.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=163&MId=7497>
- Man who burned asbestos waste <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c2k53nvqk3no>
- Proposed 20mph speed zones in Milton Keynes and Surrounding Areas (TRO-422) <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/consultations/proposed-20mph-speed-zones-milton-keynes-and-surrounding-areas-tro-422>
- Regionalism <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c20g8evrmzno>
- VE Day 2025 <https://www.veday80.org.uk/>



A5 Little Brickhill to Hockliffe - safety improvements

Dear Customer

Following a formal statutory process, I am writing to let you know that we're reducing the speed limit on the A5 between Little Brickhill to Thorn Roundabout.

**Section 1 – Little Brickhill and Hockliffe will change from the National Speed Limit of 60mph to 50mph**

**Section 2 – Hockliffe and Thorn Roundabout will change from the National Speed Limit of 60mph to 50mph**

**These speed management changes are based on collision and risk assessment data.**

**This scheme aims to improve safety for all road users by reducing the number of people harmed on this route.**

**Work includes the installation of speed limit signage and seven new variable speed cameras to enforce the new speed limits.**

**We are not responsible for the enforcement of speed limits, that responsibility lies with the relevant police force.**

**We started work on Monday 27 January 2025. This will last approximately 13 weeks. We will work between 8pm and 6am on weeknights, weather permitting.**

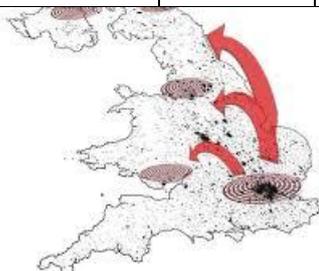


**The Loop**

The Loop – local stopping points

- Caldecotte Heybridge Crescent
- Bow Brickhill Railway Station
- Bow Brickhill Station Road
- Bow Brickhill The Wheatsheaf
- Bow Brickhill School
- Bow Brickhill Parkway
- Woburn Sands The Leys
- Woburn Sands The Swan
- Woburn Sands Weathercock Lane
- Woburn Sands Railway Station
- Wavendon Garden Centre
- Wavendon Cross End
- The Wavendon Arms

| Woburn Sands Station works  |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| <p>Complete phase 3 of station improvements at Woburn Sands Deliver schemes including funded by Section 106 Agreement – including CCTV for cycle shelter, additional Next Bike Docking Station &amp; other schemes Improved confidence for cyclists to leave bikes at the station</p> | <p>Increased awareness of Woburn Sands Station.</p> | <p>Additional cameras installed &amp; increase in number of cycles regularly parked.<br/>Next Bike docking station now installed.<br/><a href="https://www.nextbike.co.uk/milton-keynes/en/">https://www.nextbike.co.uk/milton-keynes/en/</a></p> | <p>Next Bike reports Bike cycle repair session held.<br/><br/>£12,300 approx. for two Real Time bus information timetable screens Site meeting arranged with Next Bike for new docking station next to existing – February 2025</p> | <p>Friends of Woburn Sands Station proposed solar powered real time bus information screens (as used across Milton Keynes) – January 2025</p> |



### Devolution Deal

#### Stop Press ..... last minute change to this report (BBC Report)

*Six councils have missed out on joining a fast track devolution programme.*

*Local Government Secretary Angela Rayner has announced "six new potential devolution areas" with a view to holding mayoral elections in May 2026.*

*West and North Northamptonshire Councils had submitted bids for a South Midlands Combined Authority, whilst Milton Keynes City Council teamed up with Bedford and Luton to enter a joint expression of interest, but all have been unsuccessful.*

*The Labour MP for Milton Keynes North Chris Curtis, speaking in the House of Commons, called on Rayner to look again at whether the "BLMK (Bedford, Luton and Milton Keynes) offer can move forward so that we can get the deal in place by 2026."*

*Curtis said "the government department has put barriers in the way of achieving the devolution deal that we want and we know is needed for our region".*

*In response Rayner said "the proposals needed more development...but we will work to achieve devolution across the whole of England."*

*Both West and North Northamptonshire Councils have said they will continue to work with government and partners towards devolution.*

*Conservative leader of West Northamptonshire Council Adam Brown said he was "bitterly disappointed" at not being successful but was "eager to work with partners in the other South Midlands Councils to form the consensus the Government needs from us".*

*Jason Smithers, Conservative leader of North Northamptonshire Council, added: "A devolution deal has the ability to deliver enormous economic benefits to our area for decades to come and we are committed to working with Government and local authority partners to make this a reality."*

*Independently run Central Bedfordshire Council had submitted a separate letter supporting devolution, but at the time said it was "open to working with all interested local authorities, to explore options".*

*Leader Adam Zerny said: "The government is clear, devolution will happen. We will watch with interest as these proposals are implemented elsewhere to understand the impact."*

*The Labour leader of Milton Keynes city council Pete Marland called the decision "very disappointing" but insisted the BLMK footprint was "the only combination of local authorities on which Milton Keynes expressed an interest or is willing to consider at present".*

*He added that "given recent announcements regarding the re-emergence of the Oxford to Cambridge Corridor and the pressing need for economic growth we believe not progressing with a BLMK Mayoral Strategic Authority as quickly as possible is a missed opportunity".*

*Hazel Simmons, the Labour leader of Luton Council, said the authority was "still keen to engage in a BLMK partnership" due to "our already excellent partnerships and connections and our long-standing joint health and care services".*

*The Conservative Mayor of Bedford Borough Council, Tom Wootton, added his authority was "disappointed" not to be part of the "priority devolution programme".*

MK's council leader has explained why neighbouring Northampton has been left out of the city's devolution bid to the government. If the bid is successful, it will see Milton Keynes paired with Bedford and Luton to become a giant regional authority with an elected mayor at the helm.

As a strategic mayoral authority, it will have greatly enhanced powers and funding devolved from national government to make collective decisions on issues such as economic growth, transport, housing, skills and employment.

This is in line the government's recently announced plan for devolution, which means every English region will have an elected mayor to oversee important issues.



Such devolution would mean "more money, more power and easier working across council boundaries", the government has promised. Ministers also see the creation of more powerful regional authorities as a way of "unblocking" infrastructure and attracting greater investment.

Each regional authority would need at least 500,000 people. As a result, dozens of smaller councils could be abolished.

Labour-controlled Milton Keynes City Council looks after 300,000 residents, so it will need to pair with neighbouring areas to meet the criteria for devolution.

At first the plan was to amalgamate Milton Keynes City Council, Bedford Borough Council, Central Bedfordshire Council, Luton Borough Council alongside West Northamptonshire Council and North Northamptonshire Council. But now there has been an eleventh hour U turn.

MK Council leader Pete Marland confirmed to the Citizen today that he is looking to join forces with Bedfordshire and Luton in the bid – and Conservative-led Northampton will NOT be included.

"After very carefully looking at the potential powers that are on offer, particularly around health, it's clear that a BLMK (Beds, Luton, Milton Keynes) footprint would offer the best chance of success," he said.

"It's really important though that any settlement with the government needs to be on a footprint that makes sense to our residents and that will bring the greatest benefits to the area."

Cllr Marland added: "Alongside this, during the discussions with the main opposition group on MKCC and councils within BLMK, it became clear that there would be very little appetite to include the Northamptonshire authorities at this time, and concerns around how other councils would be able to take the necessary decisions to approve such a bid.

"The government was clear that any application must have the support of all the authorities within any potential grouping to be taken forward.

“The reality is that BLMK is the best option for our city to ensure any future directly-elected Mayor is able to deliver the local change our residents want. “

Local Conservative councillors are far from happy though, and have accused the leader of “deliberately undermining” a potential South Midlands devolution deal.

MK Tory leader Shazna Muzammil said the move could jeopardise millions of pounds in investment.

She said: "For over a decade, we've worked closely with Northamptonshire—sharing transport, health, and economic ties. Why would anyone want to fracture those relationships? Breaking that partnership now is a betrayal of everything devolution could achieve for MK."

She added: “Cllr Marland needs to put residents first. His sudden U-turn on including Northamptonshire is political opportunism at its worst.

“We need to back proposals that deliver for all of us, not rushed plans designed to serve narrow political interests. MK residents deserve better.”

Conservative Cranfield and Marston Moretaine councillor Sue Clark described herself as “fundamentally opposed to the government’s devolution plans”, warning: “They’re consolidation and concentration, and we stand to be subsumed into an anonymous structure.

“We’ll be stripped of some of our really important decision-making powers. This is so rushed as a process.

“My biggest worry is the proposed veto and strategic powers the mayor will have on planning, and the imbalance of power there’ll be between us, as a rural authority, being combined with Milton Keynes and Luton.

“Milton Keynes has never shied away from its desire to expand into Central Bedfordshire. We need to be careful about simply becoming the housing estate for Milton Keynes and not being in control of our planning decisions, which is vitally important.

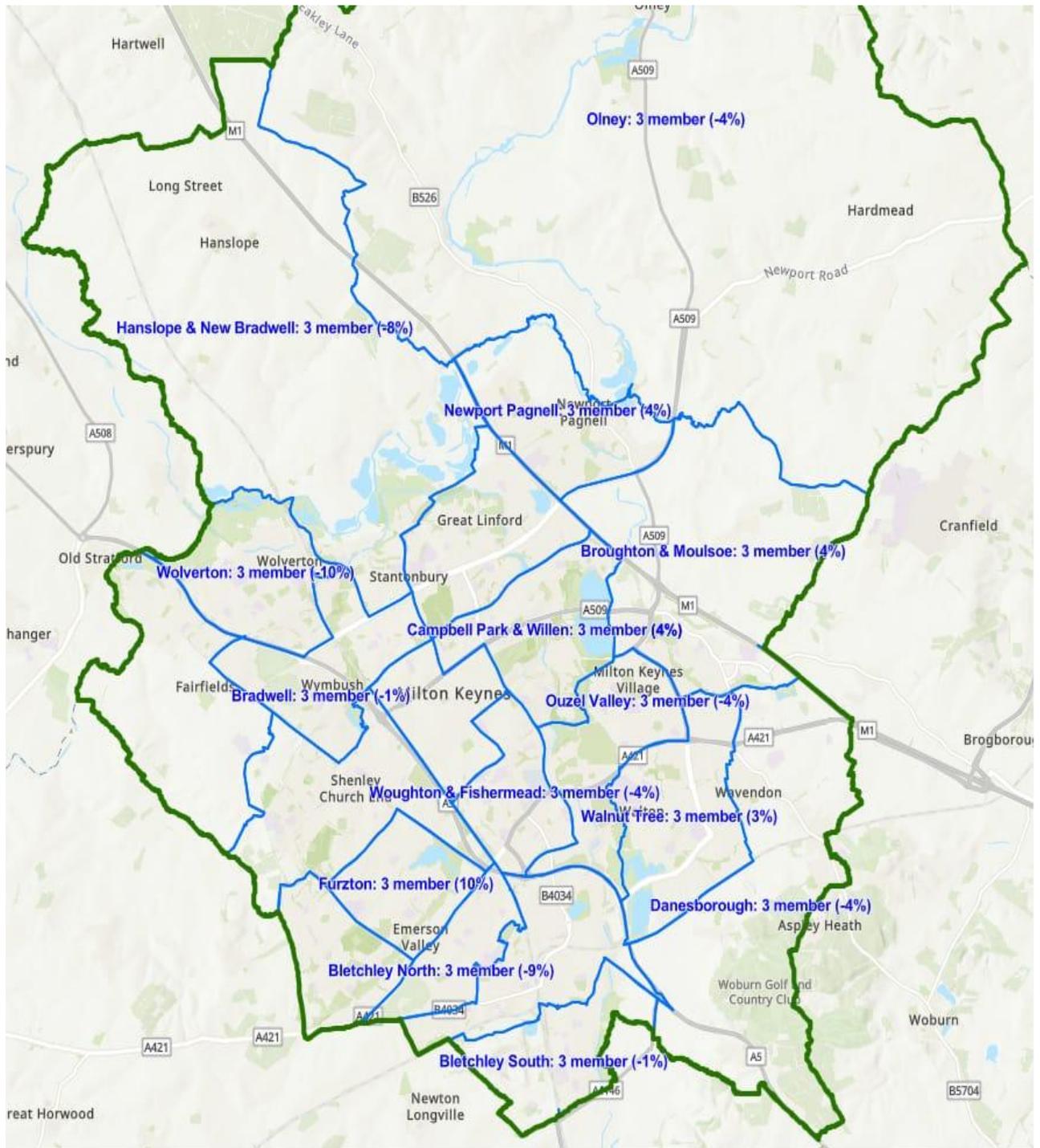
“This is structural messing about of the worst kind and will create a layer of bureaucracy for our residents.”



**(Proposed draft) New Ward Boundaries – after 2026**

The Commission has a dedicated section on its website where people can see the detail of the proposals and comment on the names of wards and their boundaries: <https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/milton-keynes>

The Commission will contact stakeholders informing them of the consultation and advise any parish and town councils who are directly affected by draft proposals.



- **June 2025**      **Boundary Commission publish its final recommendation.**
- **TBD**            **Boundary Commission ask Parliament to approve its recommendations.**
- **May 2026**      **New arrangements apply to local elections.**

As the review concludes, new electoral geography for the City Council is a natural opportunity to review both the councils Polling Districts and Places, and Community Governance.

MKCC will start the reviews with an informal consultation which will involve sending out a survey to all parish and town councils on the 23 January asking for their views on their current electoral and governance arrangements. There will be a separate survey sent regarding the PDR.

### New report says city is thriving.



A new independent report has rated Milton Keynes one of the best places to work in the UK based on wages, access to skilled jobs, and affordable homes. The Cities Outlook report for 2025 by the Centre for Cities showed our work to drive tech investment and create new jobs is paying off: employees in MK earn around £3,000 more than the UK average, and one in three jobs in the city is based in tech.

<https://www.centreforcities.org/publication/cities-outlook-2025/>

We still have one of the highest levels of business start-ups in the country as well as being the fastest growing city.

### Street Lighting Repairs

Whilst I am always happy to report a faulty or broken streetlight the quickest way to report the fault is to use the Report It option on the MK Council website homepage <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/faulty-or-damaged-street-lights> to report any issue to us. You can also call 01908 252353.

Remember to include the reference number from the lamppost so we can find it easily to inspect it.

Also include a description of the fault such as light flickering, light on during the day, damaged street light column, wires exposed, column door missing or damaged. It helps the MK City Council inspectors to find and log the repairs.

Open consultation

## Strengthening the standards and conduct framework for local authorities in England

Published 18 December 2024

### Consultation on the Standards Framework

The Government is consulting on the introduction of new measures to strengthen the standards and conduct regime in England. Some of the proposed new measures include the power to suspend or disqualify Councillors for serious code of conduct breaches.

Parish Councils and other stakeholders are encouraged to respond. The consultation, which is open until 26 February, is here: Strengthening the standards and conduct framework for local authorities in England - GOV.UK <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/strengthening-the-standards-and-conduct-framework-for-local-authorities-in-england/strengthening-the-standards-and-conduct-framework-for-local-authorities-in-england>



#### **Marston Vale Community Rail Association – sharing good news links ...**

Description of Activity Outcomes and Links to Media Coverage or Websites

<https://www.bedfordindependent.co.uk/full-train-service-restored-to-the-marston-vale-line>

<https://www.miltonkeynes.co.uk/news/people/full-rail-timetable-resumes-this-week-on-bletchley-to-bedford-marston-vale-line-in-milton-keynes-4524057>

<https://www.miltonkeynes.co.uk/news/transport/name-a-train-as-marston-vale-line-gets-back-on-track-4533877>

<https://www.bedsbulletin.com/bulletin/2024/04/19/full-train-service-restored-to-the-marston-vale-line-with-1-ticket-offer>

<https://www.bedfordindependent.co.uk/planning-on-coming-to-the-river-festival-this-weekend-heres-how-you-can-get-there>

<https://www.raildeliverygroup.com/uk-rail-industry/value-of-rail> - **Rails to Roots film**

**20's Plenty**



**Where people  
are**

20's Plenty for Us campaigns for 20mph as the default speed limit for urban and village streets where people live, work, shop, play and learn.  
[www.20splenty.org](http://www.20splenty.org)

#### **Consultation on Proposed 20mph Speed Zones**

Milton Keynes City Council is proposing to introduce new 20mph speed limit zones on specific roads in five areas following requests from local communities.

The new zones could be introduced in parts of **Caldecotte**, Newport Pagnell, Oxley Park, **Woburn Sands** and Woolstone.

The Woburn Sands consultation is available at <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/consultations/proposed-20mph-speed-zones-milton-keynes-and-surrounding-areas-tro-422> The closing date for comments is 20 February 2025.

The City Council has published details of each proposal on its website and is inviting local people to comment by 20 February. All comments received will be reviewed and, if the zones are widely supported, the new speed limits could be put in place later this year.

Any local parish, town or community council may apply for a 20mph zone to help improve road safety in their area if the streets included meet set criteria. These include - being located within a built-up area where vehicles and pedestrians will mix; existing speed limit is 40mph or under; evidence of supported by the local community through a petition.



### Public Notices

<https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/highways/public-notices-highways>

#### **Notice of Intent**

*TTRO-2083 (Caldecotte Interchange)*

*TTRO-2093 (Station Road, Bow Brickhill)*

*TTRO-2120 (Bow Brickhill Closure)*

#### **Notice of Making**

*TTRO-2071 (Anglian Water February Closures - Cross End, Wavendon)*

*TTRO-2086 (Church Road Bow Brickhill)*

*TTRO-2109 (Bow Brickhill Level Crossing)*

### **Cabinet Budget Pages for MC City Council – Local ward Interest**

Woburn Sands Recreation Ground - £230,784 (Phil Snell) *Project Completed*

A421 (Dimple Somerton) £1,615,160

East West Rail Contribution (Murray Woodburn) - £2,110,000

Parish Investment Scheme (Rachel Munday) - £72,730

20 MPH Schemes (Murray Woodburn) - £312,943

Glebe Farm Allotments – Susannah Brown - £225,000

SLA Wavendon Pavilion – Sarah Baylis £2,605,000 (project complete)

St Marys Garden of Rest - Susannah Brown £69,000

Wavendon Playing Fields (Susannah Brown) £1,000,504



## **Community Governance - Review 2025**

The Council's ward boundaries are currently being reviewed by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, with draft proposals out to consultation, and final recommendations expected on 3 June 2025, ahead of all out elections in 2026. As the review draws to a conclusion, new electoral geography for the City Council is a natural opportunity for MKCC as the principal council to review both our Polling Districts and Places, and Community Governance.

We are running a Community Governance Review to evaluate the way local communities are represented in Milton Keynes. A Community Governance Review is an opportunity to change parish names, warding patterns, the number of parish councillors and in certain circumstances, amend external parish boundaries, and create/merge/abolish parishes. This review is getting under way after approval by full Council yesterday, 22 January 2025.

The initial phase is an informal consultation which will run from today, Thursday 23 January 2025, until Friday 28 March 2025. Please use the online survey to provide your views on your parishes current governance. We will use your responses to inform our draft proposals, which we will then formally consult on over the summer.

To assist you in completing the online survey, I have attached a map showing the current boundaries and the current seat allocation for each parish/parish ward area.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=APcl1dKKd0aPljhbwlL6dvRUPHAW2kRjMjpQNqPOYEZURVBMMEo2WVhaQ1RLS1VJWTIYMUxJVDdPRS4u>

Peter Taylor

Electoral Services Manager

Milton Keynes City Council | Civic Offices | 1 Saxon Gate East | Milton Keynes | MK9 3EJ

[www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/your-council-and-elections](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/your-council-and-elections)



**The Armed Forces covenant** is a promise by the nation to those who have served and their families that they will be treated fairly. MKCC is very proud to have signed, (and recently re-signed as a city MKCC AF Covenant doc) and also hold the MOD Employer Recognition Scheme 'Gold Award'. More here: [Milton Keynes Armed Forces Covenant | Milton Keynes City Council](#) We share best practice nationally and have an incredible amount of support available to veterans across MK. Please see attached example; our monthly Armed Forces Blue Light Hub walk-in for veterans.

<https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-02/The%20Armed%20Forces%20Covenant%202022.pdf>

Parish councils are also able to sign the covenant. It is cost free!

I'd be very grateful if you could get back to me and let me know if your parish has already signed, and if not, if you'd be interested in an information session where I can let you know more about what, why, how etc.

Johanna Hrycak

Did you know MK now has its own Milton Keynes Armed Forces Directory of Support  
Armed Forces Covenant Project Manager

Milton Keynes City Council

Civic Offices / 1 Saxon Gate East / Central Milton Keynes / MK9 3EJ

M: 07946618381 E: [johanna.hrycak@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:johanna.hrycak@milton-keynes.gov.uk)



Oxford-

**Cambridge Growth Corridor and AI Growth Zones:** The Government is backing major transport projects, including East-West Rail and is taking the next step to create an 'AI Growth Zone (AIGZs) in Culham, Oxfordshire. This is a key part of the UK Government's plan to build out critical AI infrastructure. The Chancellor has invited regional, and industry input the help shape the next stage of its programme for AIGZs.

This week, Government announced the Oxford – Milton Keynes – Cambridge growth corridor would receive significant investment to become a 'Silicon Valley for Europe'. This includes investment for East West Rail, which will link Milton Keynes to Oxford later this year, and will eventually run all the way to Cambridge and beyond. One in three jobs in Milton Keynes are in tech and we have some highly innovative companies based in the city, so we're in a good place to make the most of future investment. The government is supporting 18 submissions for "sizeable new developments" across the route of the new East West Rail line, according to the chancellor. However, residents living along the route have expressed quality of life concerns for the local population from the impact of East West Rail freight and the East West Rail company has come under fire for being 'frugal with the truth'.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-backs-heathrow-expansion-to-kickstart-economic-growth>

But what does this mean in practise ...

**Headline Announcements for Tech:**

Planning & Infrastructure: The upcoming Planning and Infrastructure Bill will streamline development, including for data centres and tech hubs. The government plans to cut regulations, particularly environmental ones, to ease the process for developers.

Oxford-Cambridge Growth Corridor and AI Growth Zones: The Government is backing major transport projects, including East-West Rail and is taking the next step to create an 'AI Growth Zone (AIGZs) in Culham, Oxfordshire. This is a key part of the UK Government's plan to build out critical AI infrastructure. The Chancellor has invited regional and industry input the help shape the next stage of its programme for AIGZs.

**Investment & Growth:** The National Wealth Fund will support tech-related projects, including EV charging networks and critical minerals for renewable energy. Investments made by the National Wealth Fund will focus provide more support for city regions like Glasgow and Manchester. Further information on the announcements

### **Regulation & Planning**

A new Planning and Infrastructure Bill will be introduced this spring to streamline the planning process.

She indicates the government's determination through 13 planning decisions and approved 9 nationally significant infrastructure projects spanning airports, data centres, energy farms, and major housing developments.

The Government will reduce environmental regulations placed on developers which force them to pay into the nature restoration fund, to allow things to focus on getting things built. Judicial review reform will also be considered to prevent delays to major infrastructure projects. The Government will publish an action plan on UK regulation in March to reduce complexity and unlock business investment.

The Chancellor emphasises the Government's commitment to growth by highlighting the plans to introduce growth-focused remits and appoint a new Chair for the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA).

### **Investment & Infrastructure**

The National Wealth Fund will invest in EV charging (through ConnectedKerb and Cornish Metals). The Government is removing barriers around marine protected areas to unlock offshore energy opportunities.

Private finance will be explored to deliver the Lower Thames Crossing between Gravesend and Tilbury.

New investment rules will ensure both cost and benefits are considered when making decisions on infrastructure projects.

### **Oxford-Cambridge Growth Corridor and AI Growth Zones:**

The Government will champion the Oxford-Cambridge arc, supporting investment in infrastructure and research hubs.

The Government is backing East-West Rail and is taking the next step for critical AI-focused developments in the vicinity of the rail project, including to leverage existing areas with energy capacity, including the Culham Space Centre), where the UK Government will create the first 'AI Growth Zone' (AIGZs) to attract private investment, accelerate the build-out of critical AI infrastructure and drive the economic rejuvenation of the area. The Chancellor announced a call for expressions of interest from regional and local authorities and industry, to help inform the next stage of its programme for AIGZs.

The aim is to make this region "Europe's Silicon Valley". The Government has already received 18 submissions for "sizeable new developments" for new towns along the East-West Rail corridor. Minister Lord Vallance would act as the champion for the Oxford-Cambridge corridor, working alongside Peter Freeman, chair of Homes England.

The Chancellor stated that this Growth Corridor could add up to £78 billion by 2035.

Trade & International Relations

The UK will deepen economic ties with the US and EU, as well as fast-growing economies across the world. techUK's latest trade report discusses the complexity of navigating the increasingly complex geopolitical environment, with potentially conflicting goals.

The Jonathan Reynolds, Business Secretary will visit India soon to restart free trade agreement negotiations. Negotiations for a UK-India FTA were launched in 2022, under the previous Government, however an agreement failed to come to fruition before elections in both countries in 2024.

The Government is looking at reforming visa regulations to attract highly skilled international workers, in "growth sectors". This will be done whilst the government attempts to maintain its aim to reduce net migration numbers overall.

### **Heathrow Expansion**

The Government supports a third runway at Heathrow and wants to see proposals come forward before the summer.

The Government will invest £63 million in the UK's sustainable aviation fund, in an effort to make a third runway compliant with national climate goals.

The Chancellor stated that data shows that a third runway could boost GDP by 0.43% by 2050.



**Autonomous shuttle trials in**

### **Milton Keynes**

Exciting start to 2025 as mapping begins ahead of autonomous shuttle trials in Milton Keynes. Advanced mapping is taking place in Milton Keynes city centre as a vital step ahead of a new trial of autonomous shuttles.

In the trial, fully accessible autonomous vehicles will carry up to eight passengers around the city centre with multiple pick up and drop off points. Once the mapping is completed, passengers will be able to try the shuttles for free on city centre roads as early as February. If the trial is successful, it could be used as a blueprint for shuttles in other parts of the country.

The Street Connected and Autonomous Vehicles project is led by Milton Keynes City Council, Smart City Consultancy, Ohmio and others.

Click here to read more <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/news/2025/mapping-begins-ahead-autonomous-shuttle-trials>

### **Go Ahead for New Women's and Children's Hospital in Milton Keynes**

Following a review of the New Hospital Programme (NHP), it's been announced that the new Women's and Children's Hospital, with additional surgical capacity, will be delivered at Milton Keynes University Hospital. The new hospital building will increase clinical capacity and meet the future healthcare needs of the growing city. Construction is expected to take place between 2025 and 2030.

Click here for more information <https://www.mkuh.nhs.uk/mkview/news/go-ahead-for-new-womens-and-childrens-hospital-in-milton-keynes>

### **Planning Pathways**

[https://mycouncil.milton-keynes.gov.uk/service/Planning\\_Pathways](https://mycouncil.milton-keynes.gov.uk/service/Planning_Pathways)

A reminder that Planning Pathways has now replaced the generic planning enquiries mailbox. This is a positive step, and it will help customers access the information they need quickly and consistently. For example, Planning Pathways can present relevant information to help customers understand whether they need planning permission for an extension.

Many of the enquires we receive are looking for informal planning advice, but as the Local Planning Authority we are not able to do this. The MKCC pre-Application service is available for those applicants who want more formal advice.



### **Highways Gully Cleaning**

Since the start of September, MKCC tankers have been busy cleaning and clearing road drains in many areas to make sure they are working as efficiently as possible. Any fully blocked or slow draining gullies will be logged for further investigation.

Each month MKCC will include the next list of areas that tankers will be visiting in Councillors' News. You can also find out more about road gullies and flooding on the MKCC website.

<https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/highways/road-gullies-and-flooding/gullies-and-flooding-highway>

## Reporting Issues Direct to MKCC

Enquiries need to be logged through the Customer Service Centre (Helpdesk) by using one of the following methods: the online system, <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/pay-report-and-apply/report-it>

email: [customerservices@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@milton-keynes.gov.uk) or phone (01908 252398/252353).

By doing this your report will be passed to the correct service by the quickest route, it ensures that there is an audit trail and that we can measure demand for each service.

step 1. Report to Customer Service Centre by using one of the above methods

step 2. Allow 10 working days for a response by the service, other than in the case of emergencies.

step 3. If after 10 working days you have not received an update, please go back to the Customer Service Centre, quoting your reference number.

Please note contacting/emailing/phoning the Heads of Service, managers or any other individual officers in the first instance, may cause delays in the enquiry being investigated and resolved.

There are several reasons for this; officers could be on leave, in meetings, or working off site where they may not always have full access to email. Individual officers' emails are not monitored by other staff.

Following the above process ensures that there is an audit trail of the enquiry that has been raised as you will be allocated a unique reference number for each enquiry.



### **Update on local Gigaclear rollout**

*Good afternoon David,*

*Thank you for your letter to the Customer Operations team at Gigaclear. I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your letter and to provide an update on the broadband installation at Woburn Sands.*

*I have been in communication with the project manager overseeing the build in the community. The project manager has assured me that the team is currently assessing the remaining work in Woburn Sands to determine what is further required to complete this project.*

*Unfortunately, a Joint User Pole (JUP) has caused delays with the installations for some properties. A Joint user pole is infrastructure (a pole) owned by another company, in this case, National Grid.*

*To install our cables on National Grid's infrastructure, we require a license. Gigaclear has submitted applications for this license, and we are now awaiting a response from National Grid to confirm whether we can proceed with the installation.*

*I sincerely apologise for the inconvenience these delays have caused to residents in the area.*

*Thank you for your patience and understanding as we work to resolve this as quickly as possible. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions or concerns in the meantime.*

Kind regards,  
Charlotte

Charlotte Thomas | Customer Operations Advisor

T: 01865 591131 W: <https://ddec1-0-en-ctp.trendmicro.com:443/wis/clicktime/v1/query?url=www.gigaclear.com&umid=85f7a535-0531-4d08-b0e4-af3b9b9711ee&auth=e396a988746d8fa2d480248c1a4aff93d8dcb881-1955e3820a3140b5e412b2468756d72fa7b16286>

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ref:!00D200CgJs.!500dPODAepb:ref

***Cllr David Hopkins – Ward Councillor***

***February 2025***