



**What makes us
Milton Keynes
City Council**

We aim to make a difference
Councillors lead the way
Our team is well organised
We do the right thing
We act as one council
We value our diverse team
We're ready to help
We make every day matter
We reach out to residents
We are financially sound
We focus on performance
We take risk seriously
We're stronger together

**What makes us
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**We aim to make
a difference**

Our aim is to make our city a better place to live.

We've worked out the big, longer-term things we need to do to achieve our aim and you can read all about them in the **Milton Keynes 2050 Strategy**.

However, we also have a lot of things to get on with right now, and our **Council Plan** sets out our more immediate priorities, including:

- Creating cleaner, safer and healthier communities
- Building a diverse and inclusive economy
- Tackling social inequalities
- Delivering decent, affordable homes
- Taking action on climate change

You can read both plans at milton-keynes.gov.uk/council-plan

We also produce specific action plans from time to time to help get things done or address particular issues, but we only do so when it is really necessary. We don't encourage anyone to spend time producing plans and strategies which don't directly lead to action.



Councillors lead the way

Milton Keynes City Council is made up of councillors who are elected by residents in local elections.

We elect one third of the local councillors every year for three years and then have a year off in the fourth. Currently we have 60 councillors across 21 areas (which we call wards). We last had a review of our boundaries in 2025.

Our councillors represent the views of residents living in their ward and work hard to get things done for them. This is usually called casework.

Every four years, the council elects a Leader. The Leader then appoints councillors to lead on specific responsibilities, like adult services. They fulfil this role in addition to being a ward councillor.

The decisions that get made by councillors are then implemented by council employees, alongside delivering all the everyday services that residents expect.

It is important we get the relationship between councillors and council employees right, and the council has a protocol which sets out how this should work.

Milton Keynes City Council is a unitary council. This means that we are responsible for the full range of services in the area – over 200 of them. We work closely with our parish and town councils. The city council and our parish and town councils are all independent and not part of national government.



Our team is well organised

Led by the Chief Executive, the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) is made up of the Deputy Chief Executive and eight experienced Directors, each leading an area of our work.

- Adult services
- Children's services
- Customer and community services
- Finance and resources
- Legal and democratic services
- Planning and placemaking
- Property and environment
- Public health

We have around 50 Assistant Directors and Heads of Service who together with the Director are accountable for service delivery.

Milton Keynes Development Partnership (MKDP) is a separate company, owned by the council. MKDP develops land to help the city become a better place to live, socialise and work.

Around 2,500 colleagues work across our eight busy areas, with many more people working for organisations that deliver services on our behalf, like waste, recycling and highways.

We're also responsible for maintaining community schools who employ more than 2,000 people, although the management of the schools is delegated to headteachers and school governing bodies.

We do the right thing

Adult Social Care.



Scan here to learn more about the support available from Milton Keynes City Council

Our core values are at the heart of how we want to work together as a team, and we expect everyone to share them. Every day, each of us has the opportunity to represent Milton Keynes City Council in the best way possible.



We also deeply believe in:

- Always working safely
- Promoting a supportive culture
- Taking ownership of problems
- Being willing to change
- Making well-informed decisions
- Being accountable

We are determined to create a positive environment where everyone can thrive. Our commitment to **equality, diversity and inclusion** is fundamental to our organisation's success and we are committed to preventing discrimination, eliminating prejudice, promoting inclusion and celebrating diversity. CLT monitors pay gaps, puts policies in place and organises specific projects – but every day we all have a responsibility to make a difference by showing respect for each other.

A woman with dark curly hair, wearing a white lab coat over a black top and a blue lanyard, is smiling and pointing towards a poster on a bulletin board. She is talking to another woman with blonde hair, seen from the back, who is wearing a blue and black top. The bulletin board has various posters, including one titled 'Our Local Children' and another titled 'e for Twos'.

We act as one council

‘One council’ is an attitude and we embrace it. In big organisations, silo working can take hold, with different teams pulling in different directions. We’re more interested in cooperation than competition between our teams.

To support a One Council approach, we encourage teams to come together to share what they are doing or to solve problems. Managers should take the lead in making this happen.

We expect conversations between teams to be positive and direct. When something is agreed, everyone commits to it. If something isn’t working, we don’t focus on blame, but on making it better.

Everyone should be able to rely on their colleagues, and they should be reliable for them in return.

Some of our support services, like ICT, facilities, democratic services or finance are fundamental to every team’s success and the organisation as a whole.

We expect them to be included in anything that they may need to know about and be asked for their help and advice when appropriate - not at the last minute or as an afterthought.

Not everyone appreciates that we are open 24/7, providing essential services like home care around the clock as well as being ready to respond in case of an emergency.

We're always looking for ways to improve customer service. Our aim is to make it as easy as possible to deal with us as well as keeping the cost low.

Many services remain firmly rooted in the community, like our nine libraries or our ten family centres. We continue to invest and develop these, unlike some other councils.

Being out and about in the community is an important part of the work for many of our colleagues, regardless of if they work at home or from an office.

We've now successfully moved away from expecting residents to come to our offices and wait around for us. Instead, we focus our efforts on handling more contact on the phone or electronically and we regularly deal with up to 1,000 customer service calls and over 1,200 online forms are received each day. Of course, we do have facilities for helping residents who are in crisis.

Meanwhile, our more specialist teams handle additional contacts, such as the children's multi-agency safeguarding hub.



We're ready to help



We value our diverse team

We aim to employ the best people we can and are committed to building a talented, diverse team which reflects the community we're here to serve.

We encourage our managers to use simple language when recruiting, saying clearly what the job will involve and explain why working for us is a good choice. Fair and transparent recruitment processes are fundamental to us, and we expect managers to be open-minded and consider candidates with different experience.

We also successfully use apprenticeships to help colleagues, younger and older, to extend their skills and gain qualifications as well as offering high quality on the job training.

We are very proud of our diverse workforce. We want the council to be a welcoming, inclusive place where everyone can feel comfortable, confident and open about who they are. We all have a shared responsibility to make this happen.

Look out for our 'Workplace for Everyone' programme which is helping us improve the way support and develop equality, diversity and inclusion across the organisation.

We encourage colleagues to question assumptions about how, why, and where we do things. If an activity adds little value to what we're here to do, then we stop doing it.

We no longer produce detailed annual service and team plans.

Instead, each service has a short statement of what they're there to do, their key performance indicators and what resources are available. This is only updated when something changes.

We've also now moved away from the more traditional type of appraisal that happens once a year.

Instead, everyone should have regular time with their manager to get feedback and agree goals. This is also a great way of checking in with colleagues' health and wellbeing.

Finally, we embrace home working and many of our colleagues are permanent homeworkers who come into the office one day a week. Site based workers can spend up to two days a week working from home if this is compatible with their role and their manager agrees.



We make every day matter

Communicating well helps us to build trust.

We work hard to make all our written communications easy to read and jargon-free. We don't say 100 words when 10 will get the message across.

People like useful information from their council. More than 80,000 people subscribe to our email and social media updates, and our website gets thousands of visits daily.

Our preference is to use a single city council brand rather than individual team identities, so people recognise who is delivering their valued services.

Listening to residents is very important to us. If we're making changes or starting something new, we often organise focus groups and roadshows to get feedback. We try to make it easy for people to be involved, usually by going to where they are, and explaining clearly what might change.

We also take a lot of time on our internal communications, ensuring colleagues know what is going on, including our weekly newsletter *One Council* and a live monthly programme *The Update*.

A photograph showing a woman with dark hair, wearing a blue and white striped shirt, holding a peace lily plant. She is smiling and looking towards a man with a beard, wearing a blue jacket, who is partially visible on the right side of the frame. The background shows a white door and a white cabinet with a mirror and framed pictures.

We reach out to residents

**We are
financially
sound.**



We are proud to be a financially sound council. We invest a lot of time and effort in budget management. We encourage openness and transparency and expect all colleagues to talk about anything they are worried about as early as possible.

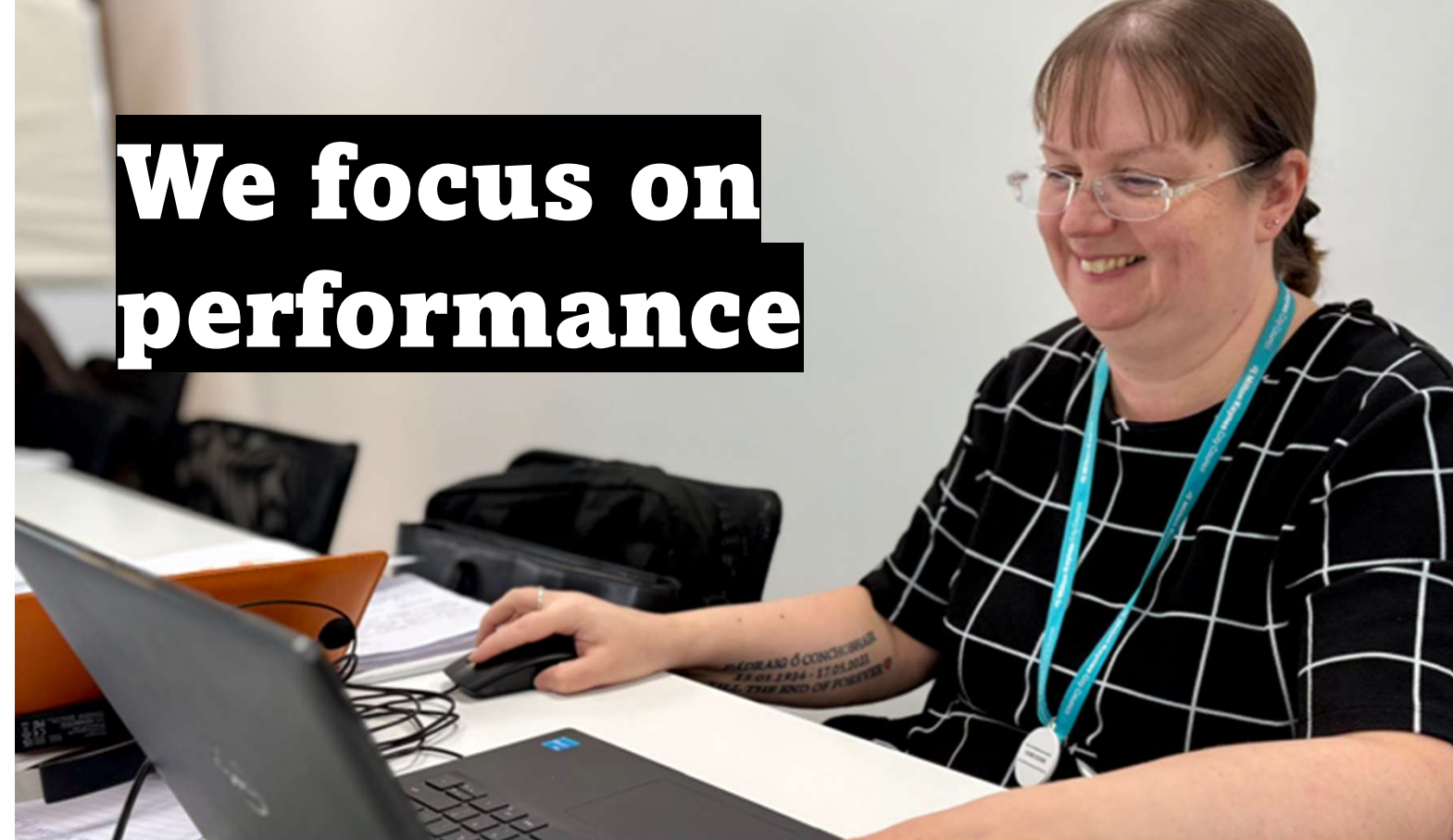
All our budget managers are required to forecast their outturn position each month. Finance colleagues give challenge and support to make sure we get this right. The situation across the council is reported each month to CLT and quarterly to Cabinet.

We generally set our budget for the year ahead in February. We publish a draft budget in December, with any changes scrutinised by a special councillor committee ahead of the budget being considered by Cabinet and then by Full Council in final agreement.

We have a transformation programme, called *Changing because we have to*, which is helping us address the ongoing financial pressure facing the organisation.

Finally, we are very clear that **everyone** has a role to play in using our resources as well as we can. We spend millions of pounds a year on goods, services and works. As a public body we must be fair and transparent and all follow clear rules for every purchase we make, and involve councillors when spending larger amounts.

We focus on performance



We always provide updates on how we are doing to deliver the actions set out in the Council Plan as well as detailed information about the performance of our services.

We have well-established arrangements for collecting and reporting information on our performance.

This includes reports summarising our performance against a set of key council-wide indicators. The report is carefully considered by the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) and by councillors.

We keep a close eye on our major corporate projects, including capital schemes like new buildings or roads. The CLT reviews a report on corporate projects at the end of each quarter before they go on to a councillor scrutiny committee. This report is also publicly available on our website.

One of the most distinctive features of our organisation is how transparent we are. We are required by law to share information on request and to make big decisions in public in case anyone wants to comment. We only withhold something if there is a reason.

Risk is everywhere, what matters is how we respond to it.

We have a system to identify risks and how we are controlling them. Our approach is set out in our Annual Governance Statement, something we have to produce by law.

We recognise that good risk management starts at the top of the organisation, so CLT regularly reviews a corporate risk register and reports to an audit committee made up of councillors and independent members.

Our senior management team also produce risk registers for their areas of responsibility and keep these under regular review.

Our internal audit team carry out a busy audit programme, checking things are being done properly and we have a zero-tolerance policy to fraud and corruption and a clear whistleblowing process for anybody who has a concern.

We take proactive steps to protect everyone's health and safety. Risks and actions are assessed and regularly reviewed.

To ensure IT and data security, colleagues complete training on topics like cyber security and data protection and we monitor whether it's being done.



We take risk seriously



We're stronger together

Every day we work alongside many local organisations to make our city a better place to live.

We want to be a really great partner to work with. It's important because getting things done often takes collective effort, especially when it comes to our more difficult challenges.

Which is why we're very proud of the longstanding and mature relationship we have built with the NHS, the police and fire service, local schools, academies and our college, the voluntary sector, community groups and other local organisations.

Between us, we know someone in just about every organisation in our city and put a lot of effort into keeping it that way.

Like any relationship, it takes work to keep these partnerships strong, especially when there are disagreements, which can happen from time to time.

So, we expect all our colleagues working with partners to invest time and effort into these relationships. That means being positive and supportive as well as being brave and truthful when something needs to be said.

Where we fund a partner organisation to provide a service for us we always ask them to make it clear that the council has provided the money.



May 2026