Kents Hill & Monkston Parish Council
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clerk@khm-pc.gov.uk

Kents Hill & Monkston Parish Council

28th November 2025

An **ORDINARY MEETING** of the **PARISH COUNCIL** will be held on **Tuesday 9th December 2025** at **7pm** at **Monkston Community Centre, St. Bartholomews, Monkston, MK10 9JF** and the following business will be transacted. All Councillors are summoned to attend.

Members of the press and public are welcome to attend the meeting. In accordance with the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, and subject to Standing Order 3(m), any person present is permitted to report on the meeting whilst the meeting is open to the public. To 'report' means to film, photograph, make an audio recording of meeting proceedings, use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear the meeting as it takes place or later, or to report or to provide oral or written commentary about the meeting so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later to persons not present.

Ryan Fuller
Chief Officer/Clerk/RFO

AGENDA

ITEM NO.	ITEM
FC 149/25	**ELECTION OF CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL** To note the resignation of Dan Hippey from the Council, to elect a Chair of the Council for the remainder of the 2025/26 civic year and, if present, to receive the Chair's Declaration of Acceptance of Office.
FC 150/25	**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** To receive apologies for absence.
FC 151/25	**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** To receive declarations of any disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests from Members and the nature of those interests relating to any agenda item.
FC 152/25	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** Members of the public will be invited to speak on items relating to this agenda or to raise matters for future consideration. In accordance with Standing Orders 3f and 3g, the public participation period shall not exceed 15 minutes in total, with a maximum of three minutes per person. Public participation will be conducted under the direction of the Chair, who will invite members of the public to speak.
FC 153/25	**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** To resolve that the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Tuesday 11th November 2025 be signed as a correct record.

FC 154/25	**COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS LOG** To note the Council resolutions log and actions taken.
FC 155/25	**CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED** To note the correspondence received.
FC 156/25	**FINANCE AND ACCOUNTS** a) To consider and approve invoices for payment. b) To note the payments made by the Clerk / RFO using delegated powers. c) To note Direct Debit / Standing Order payments made. d) To note internal transfers made. e) To note the bank balances.
FC 157/25	**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MATTERS** a) To receive the draft minutes of the meeting of the Personnel Committee held on Tuesday 18th November 2025. b) To consider a recommendation from the Personnel Committee to adopt a Dress Code Policy. c) To consider a recommendation from the Personnel Committee to adopt a Drugs and Alcohol Policy. d) To consider a recommendation from the Personnel Committee to adopt a Flexible and Predictable Working Pattern Policy. e) To consider a recommendation from the Personnel Committee to adopt a Homeworking Policy. f) To consider a recommendation from the Personnel Committee to adopt a Maternity and Family Friendly Policy. g) To consider a recommendation from the Personnel Committee to adopt a Menopause Policy. h) To consider a recommendation from the Personnel Committee to adopt a Neonatal Care Leave Policy. i) To consider a recommendation from the Personnel Committee to adopt a Social Media Policy.
FC 158/25	**2026/27 BUDGET, MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL PLAN, AND RESERVES** To receive and consider the initial outline draft budget for 2026/27 together with the draft Medium-Term Financial Plan, and to review and consider the adequacy and appropriate level of general and earmarked reserves.
FC 159/25	**OPTIONS FOR RECORDING COUNCIL MEETINGS** To consider options for the recording of Council meetings.
FC 160/25	**CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS - LETTER RECEIVED FROM MKCC** To receive a letter from the Chair of the MKCC Standards Committee regarding Code of Conduct complaints relating to Kents Hill & Monkston Parish Council, and to consider any actions the Council wishes to take in response.
FC 161/25	**MILTON KEYNES CITY PLAN 2050 - REGULATION 19 CONSULTATION** To note the Regulation 19 consultation on the Proposed Submission MK City Plan 2050 running from 7th November to 22nd December 2025, and to consider whether to submit a representation.

FC 162/25	**PLANNING AND LICENSING** To consider planning and licensing matters as per the appendix.
FC 163/25	**EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC** To resolve that in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be discussed, the press and public be excluded from the meeting.
FC 164/25	**COMPLAINTS INVESTIGATION OUTCOME** To receive and note the remaining outcome report from the WorkNest investigations.
FC 165/25	**CHIEF OFFICER / CLERK / RFO - CONTRACTUAL MATTERS** a) To consider a recommendation from the Personnel Committee that the Chief Officer / Clerk / RFO's probation period, which should have concluded in May 2025 but was not formally confirmed due to an oversight, be formally confirmed in writing as successfully completed. b) To consider a recommendation from the Personnel Committee that the Chief Officer / Clerk / RFO be issued with a new contract on Green Book terms; that the contractual notice period be amended from three months to one month; that the working hours be amended to 9am - 5pm Monday to Thursday and 9am - 4.30pm on Fridays with a half-hour unpaid lunch break; that the salary range for the post be regraded to SCP 33-36 in accordance with the independent staffing review; that the Clerk be placed on SCP 35 within that scale, reflecting the contractual progression associated with CiLCA qualification status; and that the changes to the salary scale be backdated to 1 November 2025.
FC 166/25	**STAFFING MATTER** To receive correspondence and consider recommendations from the Personnel Committee regarding safe and sustainable working arrangements. *(To follow)*
FC 167/25	**PROPERTY SURVEYS - MONKSTON COMMUNITY CENTRE** To consider quotations received for undertaking a full topographical and measured building survey of Monkston Community Centre, and to determine appointment of a contractor.
FC 168/25	**READMITTANCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC** To resolve that the confidential business having been concluded, the press and public be readmitted to the meeting.
FC 169/25	**DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING** To note that the date of the next Ordinary Council meeting is Tuesday 13th January 2026.

Members of the press and public are welcome.

APPENDIX

AGENDA ITEM FC 156/25 – FINANCE AND ACCOUNTS

a) Invoices for approval for payment:

Payee	Invoice No	Amount	Description	Power to pay
R Fuller	28.11.25	£158.10	Reimbursement of expenses (postage and mileage)	Local Government Act 1972, ss 111 & 112
The National Allotment Society	S23946	£84.00	Annual membership renewal	Local Government Act 1972, s111

All invoices are available at the meeting for inspection. A list of invoices and each individual invoice is signed by a Councillor at each meeting. A Councillor also signs bank reconciliations and statements.

b) Invoices paid by the Clerk/RFO between meetings using delegated powers:

Payee	Invoice No	Amount	Description	Power to pay
Shurgard UK	2505807116	£156.53	Storage unit rent 07.12.25 - 06.01.26	Local Government Act 1972, s133
Officers	N/A	£2,886.69	Salaries/WFH - November 25	Local Government Act 1972, s112
Buckinghamshire Pension Fund	N/A	£1,051.24	Pension liabilities - November 25	Local Government Act 1972, s112
J Kong	14.11.25	£27.30	Reimbursement of printing and mileage expenses	Local Government Act 1972, ss 112 & 111
Delta Hotels Milton Keynes	Kent111125	£150.00	Room hire - November Council meeting	Local Government Act 1972, s111
Monkston Community Centre	INV371	£90.00	Room hire – May 2026 Annual Parish Meeting	Local Government Act 1972, s150
Monkston Community Centre	INV380	£25.50	Room hire – December Personnel Committee meeting	Local Government Act 1972, s111
Monkston Community Centre	INV-1713	£77.65	Replacement defibrillator pads (Monkston Community Centre)	Public Health Act 1936, s243 (as extended by the Local Government Act 1972 (c.70), Sch. 14 para. 18
Direct365Online Ltd	1000280738	£150.18	Replacement defibrillator pads (Kents Hill Community Centre)	Public Health Act 1936, s243 (as extended by the Local Government Act 1972 (c.70), Sch. 14 para. 18
CHRGS Ltd	INV-0031	£300.00	Council HR training	Local Government Act 1972, s111

RTM Landscapes Ltd	INV-0424	£114.00	Allotment maintenance	Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908, ss 23, 26, & 42
SLCC	QL208250-1	£144.00	Clerk training	Local Government Act 1972, s111
Viking Office UK Ltd	4410141213	£39.43	Stationery and stamps	Local Government Act 1972, s111

c) Direct Debit / Standing Order payments made - November 2025:

Payee	Payment type	Amount	Description	Power to pay
Unity Trust Bank	SO	£10.65	Service charge - October	Local Government Act 1972, s111
EE	DD	£48.00	Mobile phone contract - November	Local Government Act 1972, s111
Anglian Water (Wave)	DD	£71.46	Allotment water	Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908, ss 23, 26, & 42
Royal Mail Group Ltd	DD	£371.40	PO Box annual fee	Local Government Act 1972, s111

d) Internal transfers - November 2025:

From	To	Amount	Date
Deposit Account	Current Account	£3,000.00	03.11.25
Deposit Account	Current Account	£2,000.00	03.11.25
Deposit Account	Current Account	£2,000.00	11.11.25
Deposit Account	Current Account	£5,000.00	17.11.25
Deposit Account	Current Account	£2,000.00	27.11.25

e) Bank balances at 28.11.25:

1) Current account: £3,738.51
2) Allotment account: £594.85
3) Instant access deposit account: £211,841.75
4) Cambridge Building Society: £22,357.93
5) Cambridge & Counties Bond: £92,441.50

AGENDA ITEM FC 162/25 – PLANNING & LICENSING

Planning Applications Approved by MKCC (For Information Only)

1. **Application Reference:** PLN/2025/2351

   Proposal: Non-material amendment seeking to amend condition 4 in relation to cabinet colour (relating to permission ref. PLN/2025/1031 for Proposed construction and operation of a micro energy storage project) at **Verge by Brinklow Roundabout, Standing Way, Milton Keynes, MK10 0BB**

Planning Applications Refused by MKCC (For Information Only)

2. **Application Reference:** PLN/2025/1405

   Proposal: Demolition of existing conservatory and proposed single storey rear extension at **31 QUEENSBURY LANE, MONKSTON PARK, MILTON KEYNES, MK10 9PQ**

New Licensing Applications

1. **New Premises Licence** - MK Wanderers Ground, Kents Hill Sports Playing Fields, Frithwood Crescent, Kents Hill, Milton Keynes, MK7 6HQ

   Application Details:

   Sale of Alcohol on sales only
   Monday to Friday 18:00hrs to 21:00hrs
   Saturday 13:00 to 22:00hrs
   Sunday 13:00 to 21:00hrs

   Opening hours
   Monday to Friday 13:00 to 21:30hrs
   Saturday 08:00 to 22:30hrs
   Sunday 08:00 to 21:30hrs)

   A copy of the application is available to view online at:

   https://elicensing.milton-keynes.gov.uk/elr/start.aspx

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

AGENDA ITEM FC 153/25 – APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Draft minutes of the Council Meeting held on Tuesday 11th November 2025 can be viewed at:

DRAFT-Full-Council-Minutes-11.11.25-2-1.pdf

AGENDA ITEM FC 154/25 – COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS LOG

The resolutions log can be viewed as a supporting document at:

https://khm-pc.gov.uk/your-parish-council/meetings

AGENDA ITEM FC 155/25 – CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

Emails received:

- MKCC. Emergency planning briefs. (Emailed: Members)
- MKCC. Councillor newsletters. (Emailed: Members)
- MKCC. Road closures. (Emailed: Members)
- MKCC. November partner update. (Emailed: Members)
- Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner. October newsletter. (Emailed: Members)
- NALC. E-newsletters, including events newsletters. (Emailed: Members)
- East West Rail. November update. (Emailed: Members)
- MKPA. October play session reports. (Emailed: Members)
- MK Community Foundation. November newsletter. (Emailed: Members)

AGENDA ITEM FC 156/25 – FINANCE AND ACCOUNTS

Please refer to the appendix above.

AGENDA ITEM FC 157/25 – PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Draft minutes of the Personnel Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 18th November 2025 can be viewed at:

DRAFT-Personnel-Committee-Minutes-18.11.25.pdf

Kents Hill & Monkston Parish Council

Dress Code Policy

Adopted:
Revised:
Review: Biennially or as changes are required.

Council HR and Governance Support
Excellence in all we do

Dress Code Policy

Introduction

This Policy sets out our approach to dress and appearance, both in the workplace and when working remotely. Our Policy reflects our culture and external image and gives confidence to our clients, customers and partners.

We expect you to use common sense in applying this Policy.

Some departments or teams may have different dress codes specific to their requirements.

This Policy does not form part of your contract of employment and we reserve the right to amend or withdraw it at any time.

Standards of dress and appearance

- We expect you to be clean and presentable at work, whether you are working on our premises or elsewhere.
- When working remotely and taking part in video meetings (for example via Teams or Zoom), your appearance should be in line with the standards of this Policy.
- If you are public facing, you are required to wear smart business/smart casual clothing. We may relax this requirement during unusually hot or cold weather and also on particular days (for example on Fridays), depending on the needs of the Council or different departments.
- If you wear a uniform, you must ensure that it is clean and presentable. If you need to alter or adapt your uniform, please let us know and we will discuss this with you. Your uniform belongs to the Council, and you must return it to us at the end of employment in good condition.
- If your role requires protective clothing (for example hi-vis, hard hats, masks, or gloves), you are required to wear this clothing while carrying out your duties and whenever required by law.
- If your job involves working with machinery/food, your hair must either be short or tied back, and you must not wear any jewellery other than a wedding ring. These rules are in place for safety/hygiene reasons.
- If you are not public facing, or on days when the formal dress code is relaxed, you may choose what to wear but this must not include tracksuits, football shirts, jeans, shorts, leggings, gym wear, mini or micro skirts, low-cut or transparent clothing, or excessive jewellery.
- Your clothes must not be ripped or frayed and must not display prominent logos or images/messages/symbols that could cause offence.
- Your clothes should not expose too much skin, should not be low-cut and should cover the midriff or any other areas of the body normally covered during work time.

- You should not display tattoos that could cause offence and if you are public facing, or in specific roles, you may be asked to cover up tattoos. If you are unsure whether a tattoo may be offensive, you should speak to your line manager for advice.
- Any jewellery should not be excessive or pose a health and safety risk.
- Your footwear should be clean and not pose a health and safety risk.

Equality and diversity

We embrace the diversity of cultures and religions of our employees and take a sensitive approach when this affects dress and any uniform requirements. However, there may be specific circumstances (for example to protect the health, safety and security of our staff and customers) where we have to have an entirely neutral environment.

We expect equivalent standards of dress and appearance from all employees of any gender, regardless of how they identify, appropriate to the circumstances.

If there are circumstances that make it difficult for you to follow our dress code (for example, if you have a disability), please let us know and we can discuss how we can support you.

Where employees are transitioning to live in the gender with which they identify, we will apply and adapt this Policy sensitively and flexibly. Where the role requires a uniform, this includes providing uniforms appropriate to an employee's affirmed gender.

Issues and queries

If you arrive at work not dressed in accordance with this Policy, depending on the circumstances, we may require you to return home to change. This may be without pay if you have no good reason for not complying with the Policy.

If you fail to take account of this Policy, it may result in disciplinary action being taken against you.

If you have any concerns relating to this Policy, you should raise this with your line manager.

Administration of the Dress Code Policy

The Chief Officer / Clerk is responsible for the administration of the Dress Code Policy. Should you have any feedback, please contact clerk@khm-pc.gov.uk.

Kents Hill & Monkston Parish Council

Drugs and Alcohol Policy

Adopted:
Revised:
Review: Biennially or as changes are required.

Council HR and Governance Support
Excellence in all we do

Drugs and Alcohol Policy

1. Introduction

1.1. We have duties to protect the health and safety of those who work for us. We want to create a safe and professional working environment for everyone. One of the ways we do this is by making clear what we expect in relation to alcohol and drugs at work and the support we will offer if you face issues with alcohol and drug misuse.

1.2. This Policy sets out:

a) What we mean by 'drugs' and 'alcohol'.

b) Our rules on alcohol and drugs at work and at work-related events.

c) The support we can provide should you struggle with alcohol and drug-related issues.

d) Our policy on searching.

e) What will happen if you breach our rules on alcohol and drugs.

1.3. This Policy applies to everyone who works for us – employees, officers, consultants, self-employed contractors, casual workers, agency workers, volunteers, and interns.

1.4. Please note that this Policy does not form part of any contract with us. We reserve the right to amend or remove it.

2. What substances are covered by this Policy?

2.1. When we talk about 'drugs' under this Policy, we mean illegal drugs, psychoactive substances (often known as legal highs), and any other drugs (including prescription drugs) which may affect your ability to carry out your duties fully and safely.

2.2. 'Alcohol' means any drink containing alcohol, regardless of its strength.

3. Our rules on drugs and alcohol at work

3.1. You must not come to work under the influence of alcohol or drugs (other than prescription drugs which have been prescribed for you).

3.2. You must not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs (other than prescription drugs) at work or in a vehicle being used for work.

3.3. You must not bring alcohol or drugs (other than prescription drugs) into the workplace. There may be occasions when you are able to bring alcohol into the workplace for social events, but you must only do so with the consent of your line manager.

3.4. If we reasonably believe that you are under the influence of alcohol or drugs at work, we may suspend you and start an investigation under our Disciplinary Policy. We will treat such behaviour as potential gross misconduct.

4. Prescription drugs

4.1. If you need medication for a genuine medical condition while working, you should only bring in enough for your own use. Such medication should be kept safely, in accordance with instructions and out of the view of other people. If your medication needs to be stored in a fridge, you must use a clearly labelled, sealed container.

4.2. Medication can have side effects that affect performance. If this applies to you, please raise it with your line manager so that we can take medical advice if necessary and consider any adjustments that we might need to make.

4.3. It is your responsibility to seek advice from a doctor or pharmacist about the possible effects of your medication on your fitness to do your job.

4.4. We want to protect your health and safety, as well as that of your colleagues and anyone you interact with, so if you have any drug-related impairment, you must tell us straight away.

5. Drugs and alcohol at work-related events

5.1. You may, on occasion, attend work-related community or social events where alcohol is available. If you choose to drink at such events, then you must be responsible with regard to your alcohol intake and behave appropriately at all times.

5.2. You must not bring, sell, or buy any drugs at work-related activities.

5.3. These rules apply to events at the workplace and away from the workplace if you are representing us (whether officially or by association).

5.4. We may ask you to leave any event if you behave in breach of these rules, and you may subsequently be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

6. Searches

6.1. We may conduct searches for alcohol and drugs in our workplace. We may search areas including desks, lockers, vehicles, and filing cabinets. If we have reasonable cause to believe that you have brought drugs or alcohol to work with you, then we may, in addition, conduct a search of your bags and clothing. Any failure to agree to such searches will be treated as potential misconduct and will be handled under our Disciplinary Policy.

6.2. If we discover alcohol or drugs following a search, then you may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal under our Disciplinary Policy following an appropriate investigation.

7. How we will support you

7.1. There is support available to you if you face challenges around drug and alcohol misuse. You are not alone. We urge you to talk to us before it becomes an issue at work. You should approach your line manager. They will offer support.

7.2. If you think that a colleague may have an issue with alcohol or drugs, then you should encourage them to seek help. If they do not seek help following your approach, then you should contact your line manager to share your concerns. Any disclosures will be treated confidentially.

7.3. We will offer support if you face issues with alcohol and drugs, including:

a) Referral for treatment.

b) Time off work to attend any treatment.

c) Adjusting your duties to support your recovery.

d) Implementing any other reasonable support recommended by those treating you.

7.4. If you agree to enter treatment for drug and alcohol issues at a time when disciplinary or performance improvement processes are ongoing, then we may pause these processes as a supportive measure pending the outcome of treatment. We may then discontinue or restart such processes as we see fit.

8. Confidentiality

8.1. We appreciate the sensitivity of issues related to alcohol and drugs, and we will aim to maintain the confidentiality of any person experiencing alcohol- and drug-related issues. However, this will not always be possible.

8.2. If you seek help or treatment through the Council or occupational health and ask that your issues are not shared with your line manager, then we will try to respect this unless doing so could put you or your colleagues at risk or pose a risk to the Council.

9. Breaches of this Policy

9.1. Breaches of this Policy may result in disciplinary action being taken against you under our Disciplinary Policy, leading to the termination of your employment with us. If you carry out services for us, we may terminate your contract with us.

10. Useful policies and links

10.1. The following internal policies contain useful links and guidance:

a) Wellbeing Policy

b) Data Protection Policy

c) Disciplinary Policy

10.2. There are external organisations that can offer guidance and support, including:

a) FRANK – https://www.talktofrank.com/

b) Narcotics Anonymous – https://ukna.org/

c) Alcoholics Anonymous – https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/

11. Administration of the Drugs & Alcohol Policy

11.1. The Chief Officer / Clerk is responsible for the administration of the Drugs and Alcohol Policy. Should you have any feedback, please contact clerk@khm-pc.gov.uk.

Kents Hill & Monkston Parish Council

Flexible and Predictable Working Pattern Policy

Adopted:
Revised:
Review: Biennially or as changes are required.

Flexible and Predictable Working Pattern Policy

1. Introduction

1.1. Flexible working is the idea that your working life can, with agreement, be adapted to suit your needs and preferences. This may mean a change to the hours that you work, your start and finish times, your days of work or the place where you work. We recognise the benefits of flexible working and will consider all flexible working requests with an open mind. However, we will need to balance the request against its effect on the Council and its impact on other staff.

1.2. We appreciate that some of you who work for us have a working pattern which lacks predictability – either in terms of the duration of your contract with us or your working pattern. We understand that you may wish to have more predictability.

1.3. This Policy:

a) Sets out your legal entitlement to make a flexible working request, or to make a request for a predictable working pattern.

b) Explains the interplay between the flexible working process and the predictable working pattern process.

c) Explains how requests should be made in each case, and the procedures we follow.

d) Sets out the circumstances where we may decline your request.

e) Explains what happens if a request is approved.

1.4. This Policy applies to all employees. Parts of the Policy also apply to workers and agency workers – we will say where that is the case.

1.5. This Policy does not form part of any contract you may have with us or, in the case of agency workers, any contract you may have with your agency. We reserve the right to amend or remove this Policy.

1.6. This Policy sets out the formal process by which you can request flexibility at work and/or a predictable working pattern. Before you make a formal flexible working or predictable working pattern application, we suggest that you discuss your request informally with your line manager.

2. Interplay between flexible working requests and requests for a predictable working pattern

2.1. If you are employed by us, then you may make two statutory requests for flexible working within any 12-month period and, subject to the eligibility requirements set out below, two statutory requests for predictable working within any 12-month period. If you make a statutory request for flexible working, and the purpose of that request is to have a more predictable working pattern, it will count as both: one of your two statutory requests for flexible working and one of your two statutory requests for a predictable working pattern.

2.2. You may have only one live request either for flexible working or for a predictable working pattern with us at any one time.

Part 1: Flexible Working

3. What is flexible working?

3.1. Flexible working might involve reducing or varying your hours or the days that you work or changing the location from which you work. There are lots of options, including:

a) Part-time working.

b) Term-time working.

c) Annualised hours.

d) Compressed hours.

e) Flexitime.

f) Hybrid, home, or remote working.

g) Job sharing.

4. Who can make a flexible working request?

4.1. All employees have the right to make a flexible working request. As set out above, normally only two requests can be made in each 12-month period. But if you qualify as disabled, you can make requests to work flexibly as a 'reasonable adjustment', and you can do that more than twice a year.

5. How should a request be made?

5.1. Under the formal flexible working regime, a request for flexible working must be sent to your line manager in writing and must:

a) State that it is a flexible working request.

b) Be dated.

c) Set out the change that you want and when you want it to take effect.

d) State whether you have previously made any flexible working requests to us and, if so, when.

e) State whether you have previously made any requests for a predictable working pattern to us and, if so, when.

5.2. You can only have one live request at any one time. Once a request has been made, it remains live until any of the following occur:

a) A decision about the request is made by us and any appeal is concluded.

b) The request is withdrawn.

c) An outcome is mutually agreed.

d) The statutory two-month period for deciding requests ends without an agreed extension.

6. Our approach to flexible working requests

6.1. We will deal with flexible working requests reasonably.

6.2. We will consider the proposed flexible working arrangements, weighing up the benefits to you (and to the Council) against any adverse impact that granting your request would have on the Council or other staff.

6.3. We may grant your request in full or in part, or we may refuse it. We may also propose changes to your request for you to consider. You may be asked to complete a trial period before we confirm whether we agree to the changes.

7. Meeting

7.1. We will usually invite you to a meeting to discuss your request. The meeting will give you the chance to discuss why you are requesting the change, how we can accommodate it, and will allow us to understand how you think such a change will work in practice. We aim to hold a meeting within 14 days of receiving a request.

7.2. We will write to you with the outcome of your flexible working request, usually within 14 days of having held a meeting with you.

7.3. If we are happy to agree to the flexible working request, then we will confirm our agreement in writing without the need for a meeting.

8. Extending the time that we have to deal with a request

8.1. If, for some reason, we are not able to make a final decision within two months of the date that you made your request, then we will ask you to agree to extend the time that we have to deal with the request. This might be necessary if, for example, you have appealed against a decision taken to refuse your request or if we have accepted the request on a trial basis but have not made a final decision.

8.2. We will record any agreement to extend time in writing.

9. What we will do if we receive requests from more than one employee

9.1. We will look at each request individually, on its own merits. Agreeing to one request does not mean we will reach the same conclusion again, nor does it create a right for any other employee. There may be situations when agreeing flexible working with one employee means that others' requests for similar flexible working cannot be granted.

9.2. If we receive several requests from the same Council area or team at the same time, and we believe that we will have difficulty in accommodating all requests, then we will speak to each employee with a view to seeing whether a compromise can be reached. If a compromise cannot be reached, then we will look at the requests in the order that they were received by us (unless a competing request is made as a request for reasonable adjustments because of a disability under the Equality Act 2010, which will normally take priority).

10. Agreeing a request

10.1. If we accept your flexible working request, then your new work pattern will form a variation to your contract of employment and will be permanent unless otherwise agreed. We will confirm your new terms in writing.

10.2. We will review your new working pattern with you at regular intervals following the approval of your request to make sure that it is working as expected and meeting the needs and expectations of both you and the Council.

11. Rejecting a request

11.1. We will try to accommodate flexible working requests where possible. If we cannot accept your request, we will explain why in writing and will rely on one or more of the following reasons:

a) It will cost the Council too much.

b) The Council cannot reorganise the work among other staff.

c) The Council cannot recruit more staff.

d) There will be a negative effect on quality.

e) There will be a negative effect on the ability of the Council to meet service demand.

f) There will be a negative effect on performance.

g) There's not enough work for you to do when you've requested to work.

h) There are planned changes to the Council (for example, the Council intends to reorganise) and we don't think the request will fit with these plans.

11.2. If we reject your request, you have the option to appeal our decision.

12. Trial periods

12.1. The legal framework surrounding flexible working does not include any right to agree to the request on a 'trial period' basis. However, it may sometimes be useful for both you and us to 'try out' the new working arrangements before a permanent change is made to your contract of employment. In these circumstances, we may seek to agree a trial period with you. We will not impose a trial period on you. If you reject the offer of a trial period, we will have to agree or reject your flexible working request straight away. If you agree to a trial period, then we will set out this agreement in writing. The letter may also include reference to an extension of the two-month time limit for dealing with flexible working requests (as this period would otherwise continue to run during the trial).

12.2. At the end of any agreed trial period, we will make a final decision on your flexible working request and will communicate this in writing. If we decide to reject your request, then you will have the option to appeal this decision.

13. Appeals

13.1. You may appeal within one week of our decision. Your appeal should be dated and sent in writing to the person identified as the appeal officer in the decision letter. You must explain exactly why you are appealing.

13.2. We will invite you to an appeal meeting. Wherever possible, the appeal meeting will not be led by the manager who held the meeting at which we decided what action to take. You may be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague, in line with the process outlined below. Appeals will normally be determined before the end of the 'decision period' (two months from when you sent your initial request) wherever possible. An extension to the 'decision period' may need to be agreed with you.

13.3. Our final decision will be sent to you in writing. We will try to do this within two weeks of the appeal hearing. You will not have any further right of appeal.

14. Withdrawal of a request

14.1. You can withdraw a request for flexible working at any time after it has been made. A withdrawn request will count as one of the two requests that you are able to make under the statutory scheme in any 12-month period.

14.2. We may notify you that we have decided to treat your conduct as a withdrawal of your flexible working request where either of the following applies:

a) You have failed, without good reason, to attend both the first meeting arranged to discuss your request and the next meeting arranged for that purpose.

b) We have allowed you to appeal against the rejection of your request and, without good reason, you have failed to attend both the first meeting arranged by us to discuss your appeal and the next meeting arranged for that purpose.

We will notify you in writing if we decide to treat your conduct as a withdrawal of your request.

Part 2: Predictable Working

15. What is a request for a predictable working pattern?

15.1. If you are an employee or worker whose working pattern lacks predictability (either because of when you work, or the duration of your contract with us) then a request for a predictable working pattern involves you making a formal request for your working pattern to be made more predictable in some way. Predictability can take different forms.

15.2. For example, if you have a fixed-term contract of 12 months' duration or less with us, then you can request a longer fixed-term contract, or that your contract with us is made permanent.

15.3. Or, if your working pattern lacks predictability (say, for example, if you are engaged by us as a zero hours' worker), then your application might request a formalised predictable working pattern.

15.4. If you work for us through an agency and your role lacks predictability, then you may (if you are eligible) make a request for:

a) A contract of employment with us (this means to become our employee).

b) A worker's contract with us to do work or provide a service personally (this means to become a worker for us but not our employee).

You may have a separate right to request predictable terms from your agency (this should be taken up with your agency directly).

15.5. We will treat your request as a request for a contract to do the same or broadly similar work as you already do for us through the agency on terms and conditions which are, on the whole, not less favourable to either of the following:

a) The usual terms and conditions, at the time of the request, of our employees (in the case of a request for a contract of employment) or our workers who are not employees (in the case of a request for a worker's contract) who are doing the

same or broadly similar work to you and (where relevant) who have a similar level of qualification and skill.

b) The terms and conditions that would usually be expected to be included in such contracts if we do not have any such employees or workers.

16. Who can make a request for a predictable working pattern?

16.1. Employees, workers, and agency workers whose working pattern (or any part of it) lacks predictability in some way are all able, if eligible, to make a request for a predictable working pattern. This includes those on casual contracts and those on fixed-term contracts of 12 months' duration or less.

16.2. To be eligible, employees and workers must have worked for us for at least one week in the period before the 26 weeks leading to the date that the application is made.

16.3. If you are an agency worker, to be eligible to make a request to us for a predictable working pattern, you must have worked in the same role for us for a continuous period of 12 weeks in the 26 weeks before making your request.

17. How should a request for predictable working be made?

17.1. A request for predictable terms and conditions must be sent to your line manager in writing and must:

a) State that it is a request for a predictable working pattern.

b) Be dated.

c) Set out the change that you want and when you want it to take effect.

d) State whether you have previously made any requests for either a predictable working pattern or flexible working to us and, if so, when.

17.2. You can only have one live request at any one time. Once a request has been made, it remains live until any of the following occur:

a) A decision about the request is made by us and any appeal is concluded.

b) The request is withdrawn.

c) An outcome is mutually agreed.

d) The statutory one-month period for deciding requests ends.

17.3. Only two requests can be made in each 12-month period (unless it relates to a request to consider reasonable adjustments on account of disability under the Equality Act 2010, which can be made at any time).

18. Our approach to predictable working pattern requests

18.1. We will deal with predictable working pattern requests reasonably.

18.2. We will consider your current working pattern – including whether you have already been regularly working broadly the same hours, days or times, or working for us under a series of fixed-term contracts.

18.3. We will consider your proposed predictable working pattern arrangements, weighing up the benefits to you (and to the business) against any adverse impact that granting your request would have on the Council or other staff.

18.4. We may grant your request in full, or we may refuse it. We may also propose changes to your request for you to consider. You may be asked to complete a trial period before we confirm whether we agree to the changes.

18.5. We will decide any request for a predictable working pattern, including any appeal, within one month of receiving the request.

19. Meeting to discuss a request for predictable working

19.1. We will usually invite you to a meeting to discuss your request. The meeting will give you the chance to discuss why you are requesting the change and will allow us to understand how you think such a change will work in practice. We aim to hold a meeting within 14 days of receiving a request.

19.2. We will write to you with the outcome of your predictable working pattern request, usually within 14 days of having held a meeting with you.

19.3. If we are happy to agree to the predictable working pattern request, then we will confirm our agreement in writing without the need for a meeting in line with the procedure for agreeing a request set out below.

20. Agreeing to a request for a predictable working pattern

20.1. If you are an employee or worker and we accept your request for a predictable working pattern, then we will confirm our decision in writing. We will offer you a new contract in writing which reflects the change requested within two weeks of accepting the request.

20.2. If you are an agency worker and we accept your predictable working request, then we will confirm our decision in writing and provide you with written terms reflecting the agreed position.

21. Rejecting a request for a predictable working pattern

21.1. We will try to accommodate predictable working pattern requests where possible. If we cannot accept your request, we will explain why in writing and will rely on one or more of the following reasons:

a) It will cost the Council too much.

b) There will be a negative effect on the Council's ability to meet service demand.

c) There will be a detrimental effect on the recruitment of staff.

d) There will be a negative effect on other aspects of the business.

e) There's not enough work for you to do when you've requested to work.

f) There are planned changes to the Council (for example, the Council intends to reorganise) and we don't think the request will fit with these plans.

21.2. If we consider rejecting a request on one or more of the grounds above, then we will consider whether there are alternative and suitable arrangements for providing more predictability. If there are, we will discuss these with you.

21.3. Where you are an employee or worker and your employment ends during the one-month decision period, we may refuse your request on the following additional grounds:

a) That you ended your contract (unless you had the right to end your contract because we breached it); or,

b) That we, acting reasonably, ended the contract because of your misconduct, capability, redundancy, a legal restriction or duty or some other substantial reason.

21.4. Where you are an agency worker and your assignment ends during the one-month decision period we may refuse your request on the following additional grounds:

a) That you ended your assignment (unless you had the right to end it because we breached it); or,

b) That we, acting reasonably, ended the assignment because of your misconduct, capability, qualifications, a legal restriction or duty or some other substantial reason.

22. Appeals

22.1. You may appeal within one week of our decision. Your appeal should be dated and sent in writing to the person identified as the appeal officer in the decision letter. You must explain exactly why you are appealing.

22.2. We will invite you to an appeal meeting. Where possible, the appeal meeting will be led by a different manager from the one who held the original meeting.

22.3. Our final decision will be sent to you in writing. You will not have any further right of appeal.

23. Withdrawal of a request

23.1. You can withdraw a request for predictable working at any time. A withdrawn request will count as one of the two requests that you are able to make under the statutory scheme in any 12-month period.

23.2. We may notify you that we have decided to treat your conduct as a withdrawal of your predictable working request where either of the following applies:

a) You have failed, without good reason, to attend both the first meeting arranged to discuss your request and the next meeting arranged for that purpose.

b) You have appealed against the rejection of your request, and, without good reason, you have failed to attend both the first meeting arranged by us to discuss your appeal and the next meeting arranged for that purpose.

We will notify you in writing if we decide to treat your conduct as a withdrawal of your request.

24. What we will do if we receive requests for flexible working and/or a predictable working pattern from more than one employee/worker

24.1. We will look at each request individually, on its own merits. Agreeing to one request does not mean we will reach the same conclusion again, nor does it create a right for any other employee. There may be situations when agreeing flexible working or a predictable working pattern with one employee/worker means that others' requests for similar flexible working or predictability cannot be granted.

24.2. If we receive several requests from the same Council area or team at the same time, and we believe that we will have difficulty in accommodating all requests, then we will speak to each employee/worker with a view to seeing whether a compromise can be reached. If a compromise cannot be reached, then we will look at the requests in the order that they were received by us (unless a competing request is made as a request for reasonable adjustments because of a disability under the Equality Act 2010).

25. What if a predictable working pattern or flexible working request relates to a disability?

25.1. If you believe that a predictable working pattern or flexible working may remove a disadvantage you are placed at in the workplace owing to a disability, then you should contact your line manager for further guidance before submitting a formal request under this Policy. We may, with your agreement, seek advice from your doctor or occupational health on the issue.

26. The right to be accompanied

26.1. You may be accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative at any meeting called under this Policy.

26.2. If you want to exercise this right, you should tell us as soon as possible who you want to accompany you. It is your responsibility to arrange for them to attend. If you choose a work colleague, we will not prevent them from attending, but we may rearrange the meeting if their absence from work would cause operational problems.

26.3. Your colleague or trade union representative can, if you'd like them to, explain the key points of your case at the meeting and can respond on your behalf. You can also confer with them during the meetings. However, they must not answer questions put directly to you or try to prevent us asking questions or outlining our points.

27. Useful links

27.1. The following internal policies contain additional information and guidance:

a) Homeworking Policy

28. Administration of the Flexible Working and Predictable Working Pattern Policy

28.1. The Chief Officer / Clerk is responsible for the administration of the Flexible Working and Predictable Working Pattern Policy. Should you have any feedback, please contact clerk@khm-pc.gov.uk.

Kents Hill & Monkston Parish Council

Homeworking Policy

Adopted:
Revised:
Review: Biennially or as changes are required.

Council HR and Governance Support
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Homeworking Policy

1. Introduction

1.1. Homeworking can be beneficial for individuals and organisations.

1.2. This Policy explains how to apply for homeworking and the things we take into account when considering your request. It also covers the safeguards that need to be put in place and the practical arrangements that make homeworking a success.

1.3. This Policy applies to all employees, officers, consultants, self-employed contractors, casual workers, agency workers, volunteers, and interns.

1.4. This Policy does not form part of your contract with us. We reserve the right to amend or remove this Policy.

2. Formal homeworking arrangements

2.1. If you are entitled to work from home because of an approved formal flexible working request, then this is a permanent part of your contract of employment with us. This Policy applies to you, but references to your right to work from home being discretionary and/or being withdrawn do not apply.

3. Informal homeworking arrangements

3.1. We will always consider informal flexible working arrangements which allow you to split your working time between the workplace and an agreed remote working location, usually your home.

3.2. Homeworking arrangements are discretionary and subject to agreement with your line manager. Our position on homeworking will depend on factors including role, duties, behaviour, and responsibilities.

3.3. The days and times when you will be allowed to work from an agreed homeworking location must be agreed with your line manager and may be altered from time to time depending on business need.

3.4. Regardless of any informal agreement on place of work, you agree to attend the workplace if we ask you to.

3.5. We will review homeworking arrangements and may change or end them at any time. We will try and give at least one month's notice of any removal or change in homeworking rights, but this may not always be possible.

3.6. If you wish to change your place of work permanently for some or all of your working time, then you need to make a formal flexible working request under our Flexible Working Policy.

4. What we will look at when considering whether to allow homeworking

4.1. We will look at the following when considering whether to allow homeworking:

a) Whether your job requires workplace attendance (and if adjustments can be made to accommodate working elsewhere, the cost and potential inconvenience of those adjustments).

b) Any performance issues you may be experiencing.

c) Your disciplinary record.

d) Your attendance record.

e) The level of supervision you need in your role.

5. Location

5.1. If we agree to homeworking, then this will be at a defined and fixed alternative location. This will generally be your home address.

5.2. If you want to work from a different homeworking location at any time, then you need to agree it with your line manager in advance.

5.3. If your proposed alternative remote working location is outside the UK, then this will require additional consideration by the Personnel Committee.

6. Your obligations

6.1. You agree to attend at your workplace or other requested location in line with the pattern agreed with your line manager and at any time on our request.

6.2. You agree that we can access your homeworking location on reasonable notice to carry out a health and safety risk assessment. You agree to make any changes required to your homeworking arrangements following our assessment. If you fail to do this or to provide evidence that you have done so, then we may withdraw your right to homeworking. You may also be subject to disciplinary action.

6.3. You must make sure that you continue to work the hours required under your contract of employment when working from home.

6.4. You are responsible for any tax implications of homeworking.

6.5. You must make sure that dependants are cared for when homeworking, and that this does not affect your work.

6.6. You must pay any travel expenses incurred when travelling from home to the workplace.

6.7. You must maintain contact with your line manager and colleagues.

6.8. You agree to make changes to your homeworking arrangements if we ask you to (including the days, times and location from which you work).

6.9. You are responsible for checking the terms of any mortgage or rental agreement to make sure that homeworking will not breach any of the terms.

6.10. You are responsible for all indirect costs associated with homeworking, including heating, broadband, and electricity.

7. Equipment

7.1. We will provide you with the equipment we believe you will need to carry out your work from home. This equipment remains our property and must only be used by you. You must use and store this equipment in line with our Computers, Email, and Internet Policy.

7.2. On the termination of homeworking or your employment or engagement with us, you must return all homeworking equipment provided by us. You are responsible for damage to any issued IT equipment, other than that caused by reasonable wear and tear.

8. Data security and confidentiality

8.1. You are responsible for making sure that all confidential information is stored securely at your home.

8.2. You must use IT equipment provided by us in accordance with our Computers, Email, and Internet Policy.

8.3. You must report any actual or potential breach of security, confidentiality, or data protection to the Chief Officer / Clerk immediately.

9. Insurance

9.1. You will be covered by our Employers' Liability Insurance whilst working from home. You should inform us of any accidents or incidents immediately.

9.2. You should discuss with your home insurer any changes that may need to be made to your policy to make sure that you are fully protected while working from home. You are responsible for any additional premiums.

10. Managing homeworking

10.1. Employees who work from home are subject to the same rules, procedures and standards of conduct and performance as all other employees. Contractual obligations, duties and responsibilities remain in place, as do our workplace policies.

10.2. We want you to remain as involved as possible in our business and our activities while you are working from home. This includes having access to Council news, events and benefits, as well as opportunities for professional development, training, and promotion.

10.3. We will keep in regular contact with you during your homeworking. If, at any point, you feel isolated, left out or lacking guidance or support, you should discuss this with your line manager. Please see our Wellbeing Policy for more details.

10.4. Where an IT or other problem prevents you from working effectively from home, you should contact your line manager straightaway. We may need you to come into work until the issue has been resolved.

10.5. If you cannot work on a homeworking day because of illness or injury, you must follow the procedure set out in our Absence Management Policy.

11. Ending the homeworking arrangement

11.1. Your line manager will keep any homeworking arrangements under review and may suspend or revoke them if there is evidence of misuse or performance or disciplinary concerns.

11.2. We may decide to end your homeworking arrangement on reasonable notice if we think that it is not working as it should, you move to a different job role, your line manager believes it is the correct course of action or it has become or will soon become unsuitable.

11.3. If you want to bring your homeworking to an end, you should speak with your line manager.

12. Useful policies

12.1. The following internal policies contain additional information and guidance:

a) Flexible Working Policy

b) Computers, Email, and Internet Policy

c) Disciplinary Policy

d) Absence Management Policy

e) Data Protection Policy

13. Administration of the Homeworking Policy

13.1. The Chief Officer / Clerk is responsible for the administration of the Homeworking Policy. Should you have any feedback, please contact clerk@khm-pc.gov.uk.

Kents Hill & Monkston Parish Council

Maternity and Family Friendly Policy

Adopted:
Revised:
Review: Biennially or as changes are required.

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Maternity and Family Friendly Policy

1. Introduction

1.1. Mothers, fathers, and partners (including same-sex partners) and adoptive parents all have statutory rights to family leave. In the UK, there are several different types of family leave and some of them overlap

1.2. This Policy explains the rules relating to:

a) Maternity Leave and pay.

b) Adoption Leave and pay.

c) Paternity Leave and pay.

d) Shared Parental Leave and pay.

e) Parental Bereavement Leave and pay.

1.3. We have used abbreviations and acronyms in this Policy for ease. They are detailed in bold in the Policy itself and are listed in the glossary at the end of the Policy.

1.4. This Policy applies to all employees of the Council.

1.5. This Policy does not form part of your contract of employment. We reserve the right to amend or remove this Policy. If there is any conflict between the terms of this Policy and the statutory rights which it covers, then the statutory rights will prevail.

2. Maternity Leave

2.1. You are entitled to take up to 52 weeks of time off work when you have a child. This is known as **Maternity Leave**. This is your right regardless of how long you have worked for us or how many hours you work.

2.2. The rules relating to Maternity Leave separate the time off into an initial period of 26 weeks, which is known as Ordinary Maternity Leave (**OML**), and the following 26 weeks, which is known as Additional Maternity Leave (**AML**).

3. Telling us about your pregnancy

3.1. Once you are aware that you are pregnant, please let us know as soon as possible. This is so that we can review any health and safety implications and start to plan for your absence. Once you have told us you are pregnant, we will arrange for a risk assessment of your work environment to be carried out.

3.2. You should work out what your expected week of confinement (**EWC**) is. Your EWC is the week (beginning on Sunday and ending on Saturday) when your due date falls. Your EWC is used as the basis for several rules relating to maternity rights.

3.3. No later than the 15th week before your EWC (**Qualifying Week**) you must:

a) Tell us what your EWC is.

b) Tell us the date that you want your Maternity Leave to start. This date cannot usually be earlier than the 11th week before your EWC.

Once you have sent us these details, we will write to you stating the date we expect you to return to work (this will be calculated based on the assumption that you will be taking your full period of Maternity Leave) (**Assumed Return Date**).

3.4. Please provide us with a copy of your MATB1 form, which you will receive from your midwife. We will store and process your MATB1 form in accordance with our Data Protection Policy.

4. Starting Maternity Leave

4.1. Maternity Leave cannot usually begin until the 11th week before your EWC (unless your child is born before this date). Maternity Leave will automatically begin when you give birth if it has not already started before this.

4.2. If you want to change the start date for your Maternity Leave, then you should let us know in writing at least 28 days before the earliest of the original start date or the new start date (if you are bringing your leave earlier). We will then write to you with an adjusted Assumed Return Date.

4.3. Your Maternity Leave will start automatically if you are off sick for a pregnancy-related reason at any point in the four weeks before your EWC.

5. Statutory Maternity Pay

5.1. You will be eligible for Statutory Maternity Pay (**SMP**) if you:

a) Have 26 weeks' continuous service with us by the Qualifying Week.

b) Earned at least the average amount set by the Government each year in the eight weeks before the Qualifying Week.

c) Provided us with a copy of your MATB1.

d) Gave us at least 28 days' notice of your proposed Maternity Leave start date.

5.2. You will receive SMP for up to 39 weeks. This will be paid at 90% of your average weekly earnings for the first six weeks and at the standard SMP rate for the remaining 33 weeks. The standard SMP rate is set by the government, and you can see the current rate at the link below. We will pay SMP at 90% of your average weekly earnings for all of your Maternity Leave if your average weekly earnings fall below the standard rate.

5.3. We will deduct tax and National Insurance contributions from your SMP in the same way as we do from your regular salary.

5.4. If you do not have 26 weeks' service by the Qualifying Week, then you may still be eligible for Maternity Allowance (**MA**). MA is administered by the Government rather than us. You should complete the online forms which you can access using the links below. We have no involvement in the administration of MA. This is your personal responsibility.

6. During Maternity Leave

6.1. We may contact you from time to time while you are on Maternity Leave – for example, to discuss arrangements for your return to work, possible internal job vacancies, or qualification expiry dates. If you'd prefer us not to contact you during your Maternity Leave, please tell us.

6.2. You will continue to receive benefits due to you under your employment contract while on Maternity Leave. Except for terms relating to pay, all your normal terms and conditions will apply.

7. Time off for antenatal appointments

7.1. You are entitled to paid time off for antenatal appointments during working hours. We ask for as much notice as possible, and we may want to see confirmation of your pregnancy and an appointment card for all but the initial appointment.

7.2. If you have what is known as a 'qualifying relationship' with a pregnant woman or the unborn child, you are entitled to unpaid time off to accompany her to a maximum of two antenatal appointments. This applies to each pregnancy. A 'qualifying relationship' is one where you are one of the following:

a) The child's father.

b) The pregnant woman's spouse.

c) The pregnant woman's partner.

7.3. We expect you to give us as much notice as possible. Legally, you are only entitled to 6.5 hours off work for each appointment (which includes travelling and waiting time), but if you need more time, please discuss it with us. To attend any further appointments, you will need to request time off as holiday (which will be managed as laid out in our Holiday Policy) or unpaid leave.

7.4. You must provide a signed statement showing the date and time of each appointment. It must confirm that:

a) You are eligible under the 'qualifying relationship' criteria.

b) The time off is solely to accompany the woman to her appointment.

c) A doctor, midwife, or nurse has advised that the woman needs the appointment.

7.5. You may be entitled to time off to attend up to two antenatal appointments if you are having a child by surrogate. For guidance, ask the Chief Officer/Clerk.

8. Time off for adoption appointments

8.1. You are entitled to time off to attend an adoption appointment. This is an appointment arranged by an adoption agency, usually for you to get to know the child who will be placed with you, but sometimes for other reasons related to the adoption.

8.2. If more than one child is being placed with you at the same time, then we treat this as one adoption and will not give you time off to attend additional appointments. Time off for this type of appointment must be taken before any child is placed with you.

8.3. You may attend up to five appointments per adoption, on paid time off if you are adopting on your own or will be the primary adopter. You may attend up to two appointments, on unpaid leave, if you are the secondary adopter.

8.4. You are entitled to take up to 6.5 hours for each appointment. This includes travelling and waiting time. We will need a signed statement with details of the time and date of the appointment as well as confirmation that:

a) The adoption agency has arranged or requested the appointment.

b) You are either adopting the child on your own or jointly with someone else.

c) You are electing to take either paid or unpaid time off work if you are adopting jointly.

8.5. It may be necessary to ask you to rearrange an appointment, and we may refuse a request for a particular day or time in exceptional circumstances. We will, however, never do this without good reason.

9. Adoption Leave

9.1. You are entitled to take up to 52 weeks off work if you are the primary adopter in an adoption process (**Adoption Leave**). Adoption Leave is split into an initial period of 26 weeks, which is referred to as Ordinary Adoption Leave (**OAL**) and a further period of 26 weeks, which is referred to as Additional Adoption Leave (**AAL**).

9.2. You will be eligible for Adoption Leave if you are adopting and meet the following requirements:

a) You are adopting a child through a UK adoption agency, or you are a local authority foster parent who has been approved as a prospective adopter.

b) The adoption agency or local authority has given you written notice that it has matched you with a child and has told you the expected date of placement.

c) You have told the agency or local authority that you agree to the placement.

9.3. Adoption Leave is also available in certain surrogacy cases if you meet the following conditions:

a) A surrogate mother gives birth to a child who is biologically the child of either you or your spouse or partner (or both of you).

b) You expect to be given parental responsibility under a Parental Order from the court. The child must live with you, and you must apply for the Parental Order within six months of birth.

9.4. Only one parent can take Adoption Leave (the **Primary Adopter**). The other parent may be eligible for **Paternity Leave** (see below). In some cases, you may be able to take **Shared Parental Leave** with your partner (see below).

9.5. All of your terms and conditions of employment will continue as normal during Adoption Leave, save those that relate to pay.

10. Notification of adoption or surrogacy

10.1. If you are adopting or fostering for adoption, then you should let us know as soon as you receive an expected date of placement (**EDP**) from the local authority. When you provide us with this information, you should also let us know when you would like your Adoption Leave to start (**Intended Adoption Leave Start Date**). We ask that you provide us with this information within seven days of receiving notification of a match, but we understand that this will not always be possible. Please let us know as soon as possible.

10.2. Please provide us with a copy of your matching certificate as soon as you receive it. We will store and process your matching certificate in accordance with our Data Protection Policy.

10.3. In a surrogacy case, you must inform us in writing of your intention to take Adoption Leave and give the expected week of childbirth (**EWC**) and your Intended Adoption Leave Start Date. You must give this information by the end of the 15th week before the EWC, or, if that is not reasonably practicable, as soon as you can. When the child is born, you must tell us the date of birth as Adoption Leave in surrogacy cases usually starts on the day that the child is born.

10.4. Once you have provided us with this information, we will write to you and confirm our understanding of your assumed return to work date (**Assumed Return Date**), which will be calculated on the assumption that you will be taking your full entitlement to Adoption Leave.

11. Starting Adoption Leave

11.1. In an adoption or fostering for adoption case, you can elect to start Adoption Leave at any point from 14 days before the EDP up to the EDP but not later.

11.2. In a surrogacy case, Adoption Leave will begin on the date that the child is born (or the following day if you are at work on the day that the child is born).

12. Adoption Pay

12.1. If you are the Primary Adopter and have at least 26 weeks' continuous service with us by the 15th week before the date of receiving notification of a match, or EWC in a surrogacy case, then you may be eligible for statutory adoption pay (**SAP**). SAP is paid for up to 39 weeks at the same rate as SMP – see above for details.

13. Returning from Maternity or Adoption Leave

13.1. We will have told you our Assumed Return Date for you when you contacted us with details of your EWC or EDP. If you wish to return from Maternity Leave or Adoption Leave earlier than the Assumed Return Date, then you must let us know your new date in writing at least eight weeks before your altered return date (**Altered Return Date**). If you don't give us eight weeks' notice, then we can delay your return until the eight weeks' notice has been given (or you reach your Assumed Return Date if this is earlier).

13.2. If you want to come back to work later than your Assumed Return Date then you should consider applying for a period of Parental Leave (see below) or taking holiday.

13.3. If you decide not to return to work following Maternity Leave or Adoption Leave, then you should let us know in writing as soon as possible. You must give us at least the amount of notice set out in your contract of employment. Once you have told us that you do not wish to return to work following Maternity Leave or Adoption Leave, then you cannot change your mind without our agreement.

13.4. If you want to return to work with altered hours, days or times of work, then you should consider making a flexible working request under our Flexible Working Policy. Any application should be made in good time before you are due to return from Maternity Leave or Adoption Leave to allow sufficient time for us to consider your request.

13.5. Shortly before you are due to return to work, we may invite you to have a discussion about the arrangements for your return. This may cover:

a) Letting you know about any changes in the business whilst you have been off.

b) Identifying any training needs you might have on return.

c) Any changes to working arrangements (especially if you have made a flexible working request under our Flexible Working Policy).

13.6. If you return from Maternity Leave or Adoption Leave before the end of OML or OAL, then you can normally return to the role that you had before you started Maternity Leave or Adoption Leave. If you return from Maternity Leave during or at the end of AML or AAL, then, if it is not reasonably practicable for us to allow you to return to the same role, we may give you another suitable and appropriate role on terms and conditions that are not less favourable.

14. Keeping in touch on Maternity Leave or Adoption Leave

14.1. You may be offered up to 10 days' work while you are on Maternity Leave or Adoption Leave at a rate of pay agreed in advance. These days are sometimes used for purposes such as keeping a qualification valid or attending key meetings, corporate training days, appraisals or consultation meetings. You are not obliged to make use of these days. Your decision about whether you use some or all of these days will not affect your right to leave and pay. These days are known as Keeping In Touch days (**KIT days**).

15. Relationship between Maternity Leave and Adoption Leave and Shared Parental Leave

15.1. If you are on a period of Maternity Leave or Adoption Leave, then you and your spouse or partner may be eligible to transfer to a period of Shared Parental Leave (see below). This gives you the flexibility to share leave and pay entitlements in the year after birth.

15.2. You need to give us eight weeks' notice if you want to end your Maternity Leave or Adoption Leave and move to a period of Shared Parental Leave. You can give us this notice at any time, but if you have given birth, you must stay on Maternity Leave for at least the first two weeks after birth (**Compulsory Maternity Leave**). After this time, you can share the leave with your partner in accordance with the rules set out below.

16. Shared Parental Leave

16.1. If you want more flexibility in the first year after your child is born or placed with you, you and your partner may want to consider Shared Parental Leave (**ShPL**) instead of just taking Maternity Leave/Adoption Leave and Paternity Leave. Provided that you are both eligible, ShPL allows you to split the available leave between you so that you can be off work at the same time or consecutively.

16.2. There is a total of 52 weeks of ShPL available, less any weeks the mother has either been on Maternity Leave (including the compulsory period) or receiving SMP or MA or any weeks when the Primary Adopter has been on Adoption Leave or receiving SAP or MA.

16.3. You or your partner may be eligible for ShPL if:

a) You are:

(i) the mother and share the main childcare responsibility with the child's father or your partner; or

(ii) the father and share the main childcare responsibility with the child's mother; or

(iii) the mother's partner and share the main childcare responsibility with the mother in place of the father.

b) Either:

(i) A UK adoption agency places a child with you and/or your partner for adoption, or;

(ii) A child in local authority care is placed with you and/or your partner as foster parents under a "fostering for adoption" or "concurrent planning" scheme, or

(iii) You adopt a child from overseas with UK government approval; or

(iv) You have a child with a surrogate mother and the court has made or is expected to make a Parental Order.

c) You have worked for us for at least 26 continuous weeks by the end of the Qualifying Week and you will still be employed by us before you take ShPL; and

d) The other parent has worked at least 26 of the 66 weeks before the EWC – this can be as an employee or self-employed – and had weekly earnings averaging at least £30 during 13 of the weeks; and

e) You and the other parent fulfil the notice and other requirements detailed below.

16.4. The child's mother cannot start ShPL until the end of Compulsory Maternity Leave.

16.5. ShPL is additional to Paternity Leave (see below). The child's father, or the mother's partner, may consider using their two weeks' Paternity Leave before starting ShPL as once ShPL starts, any Paternity Leave not already taken is lost.

17. Notification of Shared Parental Leave

17.1. You must tell us in writing at least eight weeks before you intend your ShPL to begin that you want to opt in to the ShPL scheme. We will also need to know:

a) Your name and the other parent's name.

b) the start and end dates of the mother's Maternity Leave or the Primary Adopter's Adoption Leave (or the SMP/SAP or MA start and end dates if they are not eligible for Maternity Leave or Adoption Leave).

c) How many weeks of ShPL are available – that is, 52 weeks less Maternity Leave, Adoption Leave, SMP or MA already taken by the mother/Primary Adopter or due to be taken.

d) How many weeks of ShPL you will take and how many the other parent will take – you can change this by telling us in writing, and you do not have to take your full allowance.

e) The total Statutory Shared Parental Pay (**ShPP**) available – that is, 39 weeks less the number of weeks of SMP, SAP or MA already taken or due to be taken.

f) How many weeks of the ShPP available is to be allocated to you and how many weeks are to be allocated to the other parent – you can change this by telling us in writing, and you do not have to use your full allocation.

g) The pattern of leave you want to take, with start and end dates for each block of leave. Although this is not binding, it will help us if you give us as much information as possible.

h) That you and the other parent are both eligible to claim ShPL and ShPP – we will need signed declarations from both of you.

17.2. If you are the child's mother or Primary Adopter, you must give us at least eight weeks' notice in writing to end your Maternity Leave or Adoption Leave. We need this curtailment notice at the same time as you supply the ShPL opt-in notice, and you cannot take ShPL unless we have both. In the curtailment notice, you must tell us the date your Maternity Leave or Adoption Leave will end, which must be after the Compulsory Maternity Leave period for Maternity Leave.

17.3. If your partner is the one taking ShPL, we need a written declaration that their employer has received an opt-in notice and all the necessary declarations have been made. They may be able to take ShPL from their employer before your Maternity Leave or Adoption Leave ends, but only if we have received your curtailment notice.

17.4. Curtailment notices are binding and can only be revoked if your Maternity Leave or Adoption Leave has yet to finish and you meet one of the following conditions:

a) You have found out that neither you nor the other parent is eligible for ShPL or ShPP – in this case, you can revoke the curtailment notice by writing to us any time up to eight weeks after it was given.

b) The curtailment notice was issued before the birth and you are revoking it in writing during the six weeks after the birth.

c) The child's other parent has died.

17.5. You cannot opt back in to the ShPL scheme after you revoke a curtailment notice except if the notice was given to us before the birth and it is revoked in writing during the six weeks following the birth.

17.6. If the mother is still on Maternity Leave or the Primary Adopter is still on Adoption Leave or claiming SMP/SAP or MA, the partner will be unable to start ShPL until one of the following has happened:

a) The mother has returned to work.

b) The mother has given a curtailment notice to their employer to finish their Maternity Leave or Adoption Leave.

c) The mother has given a curtailment notice to their employer to finish their SMP or SAP.

d) The mother has given the benefits office a curtailment notice ending their MA.

17.7. We may also ask you to provide the following:

a) A copy of your child's birth certificate or a signed declaration of the date and place of birth if you have yet to get the certificate.

b) Contact details for the other parent's employer, or a declaration that they do not have an employer.

c) In a UK adoption case, one or more documents from the adoption agency showing the agency's name and address and the EDP.

d) In an overseas adoption case, a copy of your Official Notification.

e) In a surrogacy case, the Parental Order from the court (if it has been granted).

18. Organising Shared Parental Leave

18.1. Once you have opted in to the ShPL scheme, you need to give us a 'period of leave' notice to book your time off. You can give us your period of leave notice at the same time as your opt-in notice or at any other time, as long as we receive your period of leave notice at least eight weeks before the first period of ShPL begins.

18.2. On your period of leave notice, you can either give us specific dates or the number of days after the birth that you want ShPL to start and finish. You may prefer the second option if the father plans to take Paternity Leave as soon as the child is born and wants ShPL to run on from it. You must take ShPL in blocks of at least one week at a time.

18.3. You are automatically entitled to take a single continuous block of ShPL (but we will consider any request for separate blocks of ShPL as detailed in the following paragraphs).

18.4. You may lodge up to three period of leave notices, which may allow you to take up to three separate ShPL blocks with periods at work in between. If you later reschedule or cancel one of the blocks, it nevertheless counts towards your three notices.

18.5. To make it easier for us to consider your request to take ShPL in more than one block, you should discuss your requirements with your line manager as early as possible before you submit your formal period of leave notice.

18.6. If you want separate blocks of ShPL, you must give us details of the pattern you want to follow in your period of leave notice. Once we have received your period of leave notice, we will either agree immediately or we will start a discussion period with you, which will last for a maximum of two weeks. If we reach agreement, we will confirm this in writing before the end of the two-week period. If we fail to agree, you can take all the ShPL you asked for in one continuous block, beginning on the start date you gave us in your notice. For example, if you asked for three separate three-week periods, you can combine them into one continuous 9-week leave period.

18.7. The other way we can approach this is if you agree to do one of the following:

a) Choose a new start date and tell us what it is within five days of the end of the two-week discussion period. The new date has to be at least eight weeks after the start date of the first of the blocks you asked for.

b) Withdraw the notice and inform us within two days of the end of the two-week discussion period. This will not be counted as a period of leave notice, and you are free to submit a fresh one.

18.8. If you need to cancel a period of ShPL, you must tell us in writing at least eight weeks ahead of the start date of the relevant block.

18.9. If you want to change a start date, you must inform us in writing at least eight weeks before the earlier of the original date and the new start date. Similarly, you can change the end date if you inform us in writing at least eight weeks before the earlier of the original date and the new end date.

18.10. If you want to combine blocks of ShPL into one continuous period, you will need to give us the new start date or end date, whichever is relevant.

18.11. If you want to split a continuous period of ShPL into two or more periods separated by periods at work, you will need to tell us the new start date or end date. We may not be able to accommodate your request, but we will approach it as if you had asked for separate blocks of ShPL in the first place.

18.12. If you submit a notice to change or cancel a block of leave, we will count this as one of your three period of leave notices. There are three exceptions to this rule, which are:

a) The change is because your child was born earlier or later than the EWC or is placed with you earlier than the EDP.

b) You cancel a request for separate blocks of leave within two days of the two-week discussion period ending.

c) We ask you to make the change.

19. <u>During Shared Parental Leave</u>

19.1. If your child is born before the beginning of the EWC or is placed with you before the EDP, we may allow you to start ShPL during the eight weeks following birth/placement despite you being unable to give us eight weeks' notice. To enable us to do so, we need to apply the following rules:

a) If your period of leave notice gave us a set date within the eight weeks following the EWC/EDP for your ShPL to start, you can move the date forward by the same number of days as long as you write to tell us as soon as possible.

b) If you want to take ShPL in the eight weeks following birth/placement and your child arrives or is placed early, you will need to give us your opt-in notice and period of leave notice as soon as possible.

19.2. If you had a start date of a set number of days – rather than a set date – after the birth/placement in your period of leave notice, you do not need to do anything.

19.3. You will continue to receive benefits due to you under your employment contract. Except for terms relating to pay, all your normal terms and conditions will apply, and you will continue to accrue holiday entitlement.

19.4. If you are due any holiday, you should discuss with your line manager when to take this before starting ShPL, and if you are the mother, you should try to take any holiday due to you before your Maternity Leave begins.

19.5. We may need to contact you from time to time while you are on ShPL – for example, to discuss arrangements for when you return.

19.6. You may also be asked to work during ShPL for up to 20 days. These days are known as **SPLIT** (Shared Parental Leave In Touch) days. SPLIT days are in addition to the 10 KIT days you have the option to work during your Maternity Leave or Adoption Leave. As is the case with KIT days, you are not obliged to work SPLIT days but, if you do, you will be paid at a rate agreed with your line manager. This also applies if you ask to work any of the 20 days.

20. Returning from Shared Parental Leave

20.1. You must give us eight weeks' notice in writing if you want to end a ShPL period early and provide the new return-to-work date. You will be unable to end your ShPL early without our agreement if you have already used your three period of leave notices.

20.2. If you have unused ShPL entitlement and want to extend your leave, you must tell us in writing by submitting a period of leave notice at least eight weeks before the date you had intended to return to work. You will be unable to extend your ShPL without our agreement if you have already used your three period of leave notices. Instead, you may be able to take holiday or Parental Leave (see below).

20.3. You are entitled to take up the same job with the same employment terms you had before going on ShPL. However, in certain circumstances, it may not be reasonably practical for you to resume your previous role, and we may place you in another appropriate post with no less favourable terms and conditions. This will only apply in the following cases:

a) Your ShPL plus any Maternity Leave, Adoption Leave or Paternity Leave taken amounts to more than 26 weeks, irrespective of whether or not it was taken consecutively.

b) Your ShPL was taken consecutively, before or after more than four weeks of Parental Leave.

21. Shared Parental Pay

21.1. If you have at least 26 weeks' continuous employment with us at the end of the Qualifying Week, you may be able to claim ShPP for up to 39 weeks. We will pay this at the rate set annually by the Government, less any SMP, SAP or MA already claimed by either you or your partner. Your average earnings must be not less than the lower earnings limit set each tax year for you to qualify.

21.2. When you give us your period of leave notice (or notices), you must notify us that you intend to claim ShPP while you are on ShPL. You can also write to us at least eight weeks before the date you want us to start paying your ShPP if you have not already told us in a period of leave notice.

22. Holiday rights and Maternity Leave, Adoption Leave and Shared Parental Leave

22.1. You will continue to accrue holiday entitlement during Maternity Leave, Adoption Leave, and Shared Parental Leave. If you are due any holiday before your Maternity Leave, Adoption Leave, or Shared Parental Leave begins and/or if your period of holiday entitlement is likely to span two holiday years, you should try to take all accrued leave before your leave starts where practical.

23. Pension contributions during Maternity Leave, Adoption Leave and Shared Parental Leave

23.1. During OML or OAL, any paid period of shared Paternity Leave and any further period of paid Maternity Leave or Adoption Leave we shall continue to make any employer contributions that we usually make into a money-purchase pension scheme, based on what your earnings would have been if you had not been on leave (provided that you continue to make contributions based on the maternity, shared paternity or adoption pay you are receiving). If you wish to increase your contributions to make up any shortfall from those based on your normal salary, then please contact your line manager.

23.2. During unpaid AML, AAL or unpaid Shared Parental Leave, we will not make any payments into a money purchase scheme. You do not have to make any contributions, but you may do so if you wish, or you may make up for missed contributions at a later date.

24. Redundancy and Maternity Leave, Adoption Leave and Shared Parental Leave

24.1. If a redundancy situation occurs during your Maternity Leave, Adoption Leave or Shared Parental Leave, we will let you know about the proposals and involve you in any consultation process. We will invite you to a meeting before any final decision is reached regarding redundancies. Employees on Maternity Leave, Adoption Leave or Shared Parental Leave will be given first refusal on any suitable alternative vacancies that are appropriate to their skills.

25. Paternity Leave

25.1. If you have been working for us for 26 weeks by the 15th week before the EWC in maternity or surrogacy cases (or the date of receiving notification of a match in adoption cases) and you are the father of the child or the partner of another person who has or expects to have responsibility for the child's upbringing, then you are eligible to take Paternity Leave.

25.2. If you are eligible, you can take a maximum of two consecutive weeks of Paternity Leave, which can be taken at any time from the date of the child's birth or adoption placement (or any day in that week) and the 56 days after birth/placement (or due date if the child is born early).

25.3. Paternity Leave can either be taken as one week or two consecutive weeks but not separate weeks or odd days.

25.4. You must let us know if you intend to take Paternity Leave by no later than the 15th week before the EWC or no more than seven days after you are notified of the EDP if you are adopting. You should tell us the start date of the leave to be taken, the EWC or EDP and whether you are taking one week or two weeks of Paternity Leave.

25.5. If you want to change the date that your Paternity Leave starts, then please give us 28 days' written notice or, if this is not possible, as much notice as you can.

25.6. You are able to take Paternity Leave in the event of a stillbirth after 24 weeks of pregnancy or if your child is born alive after 24 weeks of pregnancy but later dies.

25.7. While you are on Paternity Leave, all the terms and conditions not relating to pay in your employment contract will apply. When you return, you will have the right to the same job with the same terms and conditions as you had before your Paternity Leave began.

26. Statutory Paternity Pay

26.1. Provided that in the eight-week period prior to the 15th week before the EWC or EPD (the **Relevant Period**) your earnings were not less than the lower earnings limit set by the Government (see the link below), you will be entitled to receive Statutory Paternity Pay (**SPP**) during Paternity Leave. SPP is paid at a weekly rate set by the Government each year (see the link below for the current figure) or, if your average weekly earnings in the Relevant Period are lower than this, then at 90% of your average weekly earnings in the Relevant Period.

27. Parental Leave

27.1. Parental Leave can be taken at any time until a child's 18th birthday and comprises 18 weeks' unpaid leave per child.

27.2. If you have responsibility for a child, you are entitled to take Parental Leave. Those eligible include the registered father and anyone else with formal parental responsibility for the child.

27.3. You must have worked for us for at least a year before you can take Parental Leave, already have – or expect to have – responsibility for a child and intend to use the leave only to care for the child or otherwise spend time with them.

27.4. You can take up to four weeks of Ordinary Parental Leave per child, per year, in blocks of a single week or more. You cannot take less than a week at a time unless the child is disabled.

27.5. You need to give your line manager 21 days' notice that you intend to take Parental Leave. We will always try to accommodate your request, but we may have to rearrange your dates if your absence would disrupt our business by, for example, leaving us short-staffed. If your leave has to be postponed, we will tell you why in writing within seven days of your request and provide you with alternative start and end dates.

27.6. We are unable to postpone Parental Leave if you have asked for it to start immediately after a child's birth or adoption. We are also unable to postpone Parental Leave beyond six months or beyond the child's 18th birthday.

27.7. Your employment contract and all its terms and conditions remain in force throughout Parental Leave, other than the fact that it is unpaid. Your holiday entitlement continues to accrue in the normal way.

28. Stillbirth and neonatal loss

28.1. In the event of a miscarriage before the end of the 24th week of your pregnancy, according to the statutory provisions, any time off work is treated as sickness absence. We will, of course, provide you with the appropriate support.

28.2. In the event that you lose your child after 24 weeks of pregnancy or your child is born alive at any stage of pregnancy but later dies, you are entitled to Maternity Leave. You may also be entitled to **SMP** (see below) if you are eligible.

28.3. In the event of a stillbirth or neonatal loss, we will support you in line with our Wellbeing Policy.

29. Parental Bereavement Leave

29.1. We offer two weeks' paid Parental Bereavement Leave for any parent who loses a child aged under 18. This includes a stillbirth after 24 weeks of pregnancy. We will be flexible about how you take this leave (for example, you might want to take it in one block, or as two separate weeks).

29.2. We understand you may not be in a position to have any detailed discussion with your line manager if somebody close to you dies, but please tell your line manager what has happened. An email will be fine.

30. Glossary

AML – Additional maternity leave

EDP – Expected date of placement in adoption cases

EWC – Expected week of confinement/childbirth, or the week in which a pregnant woman is due to deliver

KIT – Keeping In Touch days

MA – Maternity Allowance

OML – Ordinary maternity leave

Qualifying Week – the 15th week before the EWC

SAP – Statutory Adoption Pay

ShPL – Shared Parental Leave: The scheme under which a mother can share leave with somebody else (usually the father) by opting out of the Statutory Maternity Leave scheme

ShPP – Statutory Shared Parental Pay: A payment similar to SMP but paid to the mother and her partner while they are on ShPL.

SMP – Statutory Maternity Pay: The legal minimum women are entitled to receive while on Maternity Leave

SPLIT – Shared Parental Leave in Touch: The equivalent of KIT, in the ShPL context.

SPP – Statutory Paternity Pay

31. Useful policies and links

31.1. The following internal policies are referred to in this Policy and provide additional information:

a) Holiday Policy

b) Flexible Working Policy

c) Wellbeing Policy

31.2. The following links may be useful:

a) www.gov.uk/maternity-pay-leave/pay – for details of the current rate of SMP, ShPP, SAP and SPP

b) https://www.gov.uk/maternity-allowance/how-to-claim – for details of how to claim maternity allowance

32. Administration of the Maternity and Family Friendly Policy

32.1. The Chief Officer / Clerk is responsible for the administration of the Maternity & Family Friendly Policy. Should you have any feedback, please contact clerk@khm-pc.gov.uk.

Kents Hill & Monkston Parish Council

Menopause Policy

Adopted:
Revised:
Review: Biennially or as changes are required.

Council HR and Governance Support
Excellence in all we do

Menopause Policy

1. Introduction

1.1. The menopause is something that we are all affected by, either directly or indirectly. We want you to understand what the menopause is and how it might affect people. We want to remove any stigma associated with the menopause. This is the best way of making sure that everyone impacted by it feels supported and understood.

1.2. This Policy:

a) Sets out what the menopause is.

b) Explains how it might affect people, both directly and indirectly.

c) Provides a clear explanation of the support networks in place across our Council to help those who may need support on this issue.

d) Sets out expected conduct and behaviour towards colleagues who are affected, directly or indirectly, by the menopause.

1.3. Please note that this Policy does not form part of your contract with us. We reserve the right to amend or remove this Policy.

1.4. This Policy applies to all employees, contractors, agency workers, casual workers, interns and volunteers working for us.

2. What is the menopause?

2.1. Menopause occurs when a woman stops having menstrual periods. It is triggered by a reduction in the production of the hormone oestrogen. Menopause usually occurs between 45 and 55 years old. However, the timing and symptoms are different for everyone.

2.2. In this Policy, reference to a specific gender should be taken to include all genders.

2.3. The menopause is split into perimenopause and postmenopause. Perimenopause marks the start of menopausal symptoms and may last several years. Postmenopause is the time after a woman experiences her last period.

3. What are the common symptoms of the menopause?

3.1. The menopause affects each person differently. Three out of four women will have symptoms, and one out of four women will have severe symptoms. Symptoms are both physical and psychological in nature and can change over time.

3.2. Common symptoms include:

a) Hot flushes

b) Headaches

c) Poor concentration

d) Dry eyes

e) Anxiety

f) Low mood

g) Lack of confidence

h) Panic attacks

i) Poor sleep

j) Weight gain

k) Fatigue

l) Poor memory

m) Joint and muscle pain

4. The role of managers

4.1. We are committed to supporting you through the menopause. This process starts with creating an environment where discussion about the menopause is not taboo – it is out in the open and understood. We do not want our employees to feel embarrassed or awkward.

4.2. For managers, recognising the symptoms of the menopause is vital to treating an affected employee fairly. It can explain certain behaviours that you might otherwise put down to a bad attitude or poor performance. Women who do not get the right support can lose confidence in their ability to do their job (some even decide to leave) and may find that their mental health suffers.

5. Support through the menopause

5.1. We know that the menopause is a very personal matter, so we will not raise it with you even if we think you are displaying symptoms. We might ask how you are, in general terms. You can then decide whether to talk to us about the menopause or not. We encourage you to do so because we want to support you.

5.2. We have a four-step procedure that applies to discussions around the menopause and the action we'll take.

5.3. Step 1

a) You could start by speaking with your GP or medical specialist about your menopause-related concerns.

b) You could also go directly to your line manager (see Step 2) if you feel comfortable doing that.

5.4. Step 2

a) Meet with your line manager. You should expect to be able to have a private, friendly, honest, and constructive conversation.

b) We will discuss with you ideas that could make things easier for you. Adjustments will depend on different factors, but things you could ask us to consider include:

- Modifying your uniform/dress code.
- Installing a water cooler.
- Giving you a desk fan.
- Making a room available for rest.
- Allowing you more frequent breaks.
- Extending deadlines.
- Agreeing a flexible working arrangement (a change in working hours or homeworking, for example).
- Altering some aspects of your duties.

c) Your conversation with your line manager will be confidential. They will probably need to discuss issues and possible solutions with others, including other managers/your GP/occupational health. Those people are subject to duties of confidentiality.

d) We will work hard to balance your needs with those of your colleagues; however, on occasions, we may not be able to find a solution that works for everyone.

e) We will keep notes of the things we discuss and will comply with our data protection responsibilities in respect of the information that passes between us, in line with our Data Protection Policy.

f) After your initial meeting with your line manager, and periodically after that, we may carry out health and safety risk assessments and/or seek advice from occupational health.

5.5. Step 3

a) Taking account of any specialist advice, we will agree with you the adjustments that we will make.

b) We will meet with you to make sure that the adjustments are working for you and us. If any modifications are needed, or if anything new needs to be put in place, we will discuss that with you.

5.6. Step 4

a) We will meet with you on an ongoing basis to check that your symptoms are being managed effectively.

b) You may find that your symptoms change over time. Please tell us if that happens, so that we can look at making further or alternative adjustments. Once your symptoms pass, we expect you to tell us, and we may discuss with you removing the adjustments in place.

5.7. We may need to consult with occupational health/your doctor at various points to make sure everything is being done that should be done.

5.8. We are aware that you may be indirectly affected by the menopause. It may directly affect a loved one or family member, and this may cause concern or distress. We are committed to supporting you too. We urge you to talk to your line manager so we can discuss how we might best support you.

6. Our expectations of our staff

6.1. We may not be able to tell you about any menopause-related issues that a particular colleague is experiencing. We need you to accept that and respect their privacy.

6.2. Employees must treat each other fairly. Any unfavourable treatment, harassment, teasing, or inappropriate comments in relation to the menopause or a colleague's symptoms could constitute age, disability or sex discrimination. You are expected to treat each other with respect and compassion. We have a zero-tolerance policy on bullying and harassment (please see our Dignity at Work Policy for more information).

6.3. If you treat a colleague badly (including making unwanted comments or jokes) because of their menopause symptoms, you could be disciplined.

7. Useful policies and links

7.1. The following internal policies contain additional information and guidance:

a) Disciplinary Policy

b) Flexible Working Policy

c) Equal Opportunities Policy

d) Dignity at Work Policy

e) Data Protection Policy

7.2. There are lots of web-based resources where you can find support and information. Examples include:

a) https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause

b) https://www.themenopausecharity.org

8. Administration of the Menopause Policy

8.1. The Chief Officer / Clerk is responsible for the administration of the Menopause Policy. Should you have any feedback, please contact clerk@khm-pc.gov.uk.

Kents Hill & Monkston Parish Council

Neonatal Care Leave Policy

Adopted:
Revised:
Review: Biennially or as changes are required.

Council HR and Governance Support
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Neonatal Care Leave Policy

1. Introduction

1.1. We are committed to supporting employees during challenging times, including when their child requires neonatal care. This policy explains who is eligible for neonatal care leave and pay, notification requirements, and the protections employees have when taking leave.

1.2. These new entitlements took effect from 6th April 2025 and apply to children born after 6th April 2025.

1.3. This Policy applies to all employees of the Council.

1.4. This Policy explains the rules relating to neonatal care leave and pay.

1.5. This Policy does not form part of your contract of employment. We reserve the right to amend or remove this Policy. If there is any conflict between the terms of this Policy and the statutory rights which it covers, then the statutory rights will prevail.

2. Eligibility for Neonatal Care Leave

2.1. Neonatal Care incorporates:

a) medical care received in a hospital;

b) medical care received in any other place where the child was an inpatient in hospital and the care is received upon that child leaving hospital; and the care is under the direction of a consultant; and the care includes ongoing monitoring by, and visits to the child from, healthcare professionals arranged by the hospital; and

c) palliative or end of life care.

2.2. The following employees are potentially eligible to take Neonatal Care Leave:

a) The child's parent who has or expects to have responsibility for the child's upbringing.

b) The partner of the child's mother who expects to have main responsibility (apart from the mother) for the child's upbringing.

c) The child's adopter who has or expects to have responsibility for the child's upbringing.

d) The partner of the child's adopter who expects to have main responsibility (apart from their partner) for the child's upbringing.

e) The child's overseas adopter with responsibility for the upbringing of the child.

f) The partner of the child's overseas adopter with main responsibility (apart from their partner) for the child's upbringing.

2.3. The leave must be taken to care for the child.

3. Leave entitlement

3.1. Eligible employees will be able to take leave if their baby requires seven (or more) days of continuous neonatal care starting within the first 28 days following their birth. Entitlement to begin taking a period of neonatal care leave only begins once the child has spent seven consecutive days in neonatal care.

3.2. Eligible employees are entitled to one week's leave for every week their child spends in neonatal care, capped at a maximum of twelve weeks. The leave may be taken while the child is receiving the care or after.

3.3. The leave must be taken before the end of 68 weeks beginning with the date of the child's birth.

3.4. Where an employee takes neonatal care leave during a period where the child is receiving neonatal care (or in the seven days immediately following discharge) then the employee is able to take neonatal care leave in non-consecutive weeks. This is known as '**tier 1**' leave.

3.5. Where an employee takes accrued neonatal care leave at any point after seven days has elapsed since the child's discharge from neonatal care then the employee must take any accrued leave in consecutive weeks. This is known as '**tier 2**' leave.

3.6. Where more than one child is in receipt of neonatal care, each child is generally to be treated separately as regards entitlement to take neonatal care leave. However, if more than one child is receiving neonatal care at the same time, entitlement only accrues once. So, for example, if twins spend the same three weeks in neonatal care then the eligible employee will accrue three weeks of neonatal leave during this period, not six.

4. Notification Requirements

4.1. If you wish to take a period of neonatal care leave you must give notice of your intention to take neonatal care leave in writing to the Council, specifying:

a) your name;

b) the child's date of birth and where relevant in cases of adoption, the date the child is placed, or in cases of overseas adoption, the date the child enters Great Britain;

c) the date or dates that the child started to receive neonatal care;

d) if the child is no longer receiving neonatal care, the date the neonatal care ended;

e) the date on which you choose the period of absence to begin;

f) the number of weeks of neonatal care leave the notice is being given for; and

g) that you are taking the leave to care for the child; and

h) that you are eligible to take this form of leave.

4.2. Where any initial notice is given before the child has stopped receiving neonatal care, you must inform us of the date that the neonatal care ends, as soon as is reasonably practicable after that date. If neonatal care then starts again after you have notified us that it has ended, you should inform us of the date that neonatal care started again as soon as possible.

4.3. If the leave is to start during the tier 1 period, notice must be given before the employee is due to start work, on the employee's first day of absence or if that is not possible then as soon as reasonably practicable.

4.4. If the leave is to be taken later (during the tier 2 period) then, for a single week, notice must be given no later than 15 days before the first day of leave to which the notice relates. If it is for two or more consecutive weeks then notice must be given no later than 28 days before the first day of the leave to which the notice relates.

4.5. We reserve the right to waive or reduce the notice requirements set out above if we consider it reasonable to do so.

5. Interaction with other family leave

5.1. Neonatal care leave can be taken in addition to maternity, paternity, adoption, and shared parental leave. Employees who qualify for multiple types of leave may take them consecutively, ensuring they receive the maximum support available. Neonatal care leave does not reduce the length of any other statutory leave entitlement.

5.2. If a period of tier 1 neonatal leave is interrupted by the commencement of any other form of family leave then the neonatal care leave ends immediately before the start of the other period of statutory leave and either:

a) the remaining entitlement to neonatal care leave must be taken immediately after the end of the other period of statutory leave, provided the leave is still being taken in the tier 1 period; or

b) where, following the other statutory leave, the employee is now in the tier 2 period, the remaining entitlement to neonatal care leave must be taken consecutively with any other neonatal care leave taken in the tier 2 period.

5.3. An employee is not entitled to take leave in the tier 2 period where, at the time of giving notice, the employee knows that the leave will be interrupted by another statutory leave period.

6. Neonatal Care Leave Pay

6.1. Employees may be eligible for Statutory Neonatal Care Pay (SNCP) during any period of neonatal care leave if they:

a) Have been employed for at least 26 weeks before the relevant week (which is the 15th week before the week in which the baby is due);

b) Earn at least the lower earnings limit for National Insurance contributions (£125 per week from 6th April 2025); and

c) Provide the necessary documentation and notification to The Chief Officer / Clerk (see section 4 above).

6.2. Notice for a statutory pay week beginning in the Tier 1 period must be given before the end of the period of 28 days beginning with the first day of the first statutory pay week to which the notice relates.

6.3. Notice for a statutory pay week beginning in the Tier 2 period must be given (for a single week) no later than 15 days before the first day of leave to which the notice relates, and if it is for two or more consecutive weeks then notice must be given no later than 28 days before the first day of the leave to which the notice relates.

6.4. Provided all requirements are met, SNCP will be paid at the government-set rate for up to 12 weeks. The amount of SNCP is set annually by the government.

7. Protection from dismissal or detriment

Employees taking neonatal care leave are protected from dismissal, detriment, or any form of unfair treatment due to exercising their rights. Any concerns regarding discrimination or negative treatment should be reported to the Chief Officer / Clerk immediately. If an employee believes they have been unfairly treated, they may pursue a grievance or legal claim for unfair dismissal.

8. Protection from redundancy

8.1. If a redundancy situation occurs affecting you:

a) during a period in which you are taking neonatal care leave; or,

b) if you have taken at least six consecutive weeks of neonatal care leave, in the period following the day after you have taken six consecutive weeks of leave and ending 18 months after the birth of the child (or, in cases of adoption and overseas adoption, the date from which the entitlement to take neonatal leave

arose) then, where there is a suitable alternative vacancy, you are entitled to be offered alternative employment with us, our successor or an associated employer, under a new contract of employment which takes effect immediately on the ending of the employee's employment under the previous contract.

8.2. This protection does not apply if you already otherwise have protection under the equivalent provisions relating to pregnancy, maternity, shared parental or adoption leave.

9. Useful policies

9.1. The following internal policies are referred to in this Policy and provide additional information:

a) Maternity and Family Friendly Policy

10. Administration of the Neonatal Care Leave Policy

1.1 The Chief Officer / Clerk is responsible for the administration of the Neonatal Care Leave Policy. Should you have any feedback, please contact clerk@khm-pc.gov.uk.

Kents Hill & Monkston Parish Council

Social Media Policy

Adopted:
Revised:
Review: Biennially or as changes are required.

Council HR and Governance Support
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Social Media Policy

1. Introduction

1.1. Social media is an important tool for all Councils, but it is not without its difficulties. Boundaries which exist in the 'real world' are easy to blur in an online forum.

1.2. This Policy:

a) Explains what we mean by the term 'social media'.

b) Sets out a framework of expected standards and behaviour both in terms of personal social media use and business use.

c) Sets out the implications if those standards are not met.

1.3. Please note that this Policy does not form part of your contract with us. We reserve the right to amend or remove this Policy.

1.4. This Policy applies to all employees and workers in our Council and anyone who could be identified as being associated with us, including contractors, agency workers, casual workers, interns, and volunteers.

2. What is 'Social Media'?

2.1. 'Social media' includes online communications and applications through which communications, media and messages can be shared. The 'social' aspect refers to the fact that you are interacting and sharing with other people.

2.2. There are different types of social media. Examples include:

a) Social networks: the most well-known form of social media, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and X (formally Twitter).

b) Media sharing networks: These are used for sharing photographs, videos and other forms of media, such as Instagram and Snapchat.

c) Discussion forums: These are forums where particular topics of interest can be discussed, such as Reddit and Mumsnet.

d) Consumer review networks: These are sites which allow you to leave reviews in relation to products, services and brands, such as TripAdvisor.

e) Blogs: These are used for publishing and commenting on articles on different topics. Many businesses have their own blogs on their corporate web platforms, and many individuals have blogs chronicling things which they wish to share.

3. Personal use of Social Media

3.1. You should keep personal use of social media to a minimum during working time. Further details in this regard can be found in our Computer, Email and Internet Policy. Personal social media use should not negatively impact your productivity or your ability to meet deadlines.

3.2. There may be occasions when your actions on social media in a personal capacity impact your employment with us. Even if you do not name us as your employer, people who know you and where you work may still make an association with us, or people might use 'jigsaw' identification (putting together information from more than one source) to discover you work for us. We have a right to protect our legitimate business interests.

3.3. Accordingly, we need you to follow these rules:

a) You must not act inappropriately in your interactions on social media. This includes acting in a discriminatory manner, harassing others, or being rude online.

b) You must not make any derogatory statements about any other person or the Council.

c) If, in a social media profile, you disclose your association with us, then you should make sure that all postings maintain an appropriate professional style and content.

d) You must make clear that any opinions given are your personal ones.

e) You must not publish anything which may bring us, or others associated with us, into disrepute.

f) You must not publish anything which would be in breach of copyright or the rights of others.

g) You must not add the details of business contacts you make through work to any of your personal social media accounts.

h) The contact details of any business contacts you make while working for the business belong to us and must remain confidential. When you leave our employment, you must give us this data and delete any copies you have, including any you may have added to your social media accounts.

i) You must not post to social media other than in your own name, and you must not pretend to be another person, real or non-existent.

3.4. Where your actions on social media have a direct or indirect impact on us, then we may take disciplinary action against you.

4. Business use of social media

4.1. It is important that if you are posting or commenting on social media as a representative of our business, you behave appropriately and in a way which upholds our values.

4.2. If your duties require you to speak on our behalf on social media, you must seek approval for that communication from the Chief Officer/Clerk. If you are contacted for comments about the Council for publication, you should contact the Chief Officer/Clerk for support. Do not respond without written approval.

4.3. Any circumstance where you are posting as a proxy for our Council (so that the post reads as if it came directly from us) or as our representative, and any post or comment on a platform where your association with us is visible, is regarded by us as 'business use' of social media and the following rules apply:

a) You should avoid slang.

b) You should avoid inappropriate or rude language.

c) You should only comment on matters which fall within your expertise or knowledge.

d) You should not make any false or misleading statements.

e) You should check spelling and grammar before posting any content online.

f) You should only post on topics which are relevant to the Council.

g) You should never provide references for other individuals on social or professional networking sites. These references, positive and negative, can create legal liability for both you and us.

h) You should not post any confidential or otherwise sensitive information.

i) If your post is a posting as our representative, you should make sure that any post is approved in advance by the Chief Officer/Clerk.

5. Ownership of passwords and contacts

5.1. If you have used social media (such as LinkedIn) to store or accrue business contacts in the course of your employment with us, then those contacts belong to us. If we ask you to, whether during or after your employment, you must send us a list of all contacts accrued in the course of your employment with us, with all the details we reasonably ask for or irrevocably delete those contacts, without retaining any copies.

5.2. We own all passwords to our social media accounts. You must not set up a social media account on our behalf or change a password to one of our social media accounts, unless requested to do so by the Chief Officer/Clerk. If you are set as the contact for two-factor authentication (for example, if a text is sent to your personal phone number to corroborate that you are authorised to sign into a social media account), you must co-operate with us to change those details if we ask you to do so.

6. Monitoring

6.1. We may monitor, intercept and review any social media activity carried out using our IT and communications systems to monitor compliance with this Policy.

6.2. We may monitor, intercept and review social media accounts and posts if they are public. We may also review any content or post in a private or 'member only' forum or any deleted post in either a public or private forum which is brought to our attention (for example, by the provision of screenshots).

7. Breaches of this Policy

7.1. Breach of this Policy may result in disciplinary action being taken against you, up to and including dismissal.

7.2. We may require you to remove social media postings which we believe to be inappropriate or otherwise in breach of this Policy. Failure to comply with any request made may result in disciplinary action being taken against you.

8. Useful policies

8.1. The following internal policies contain additional information and guidance:

a) Disciplinary Policy

b) Computers, Email, and Internet Policy

c) Grievance Policy

d) Data Protection Policy

9. Administration of the Social Media Policy

9.1. The Chief Officer/Clerk is responsible for the administration of the Social Media Policy. Should you have any feedback, please contact clerk@khm-pc.gov.uk.

AGENDA ITEM: FC 158/25

Subject: 2026/27 Budget, Medium-Term Financial Plan, and Reserves

Meeting date: Full Council - 9 December 2025

Author: Clerk/RFO - R Fuller

Purpose: To present the initial outline draft budget for 2026/27, together with the draft Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for 2026/27 - 2030/31, and to invite Member feedback prior to the final detailed budget and precept recommendation being brought to Council in January 2026 for approval. This report incorporates direction given by Members at the informal budget meeting held on 15 November 2025, and reflects updated assumptions, known cost pressures, and the council's current strategic priorities.

RECOMMENDATIONS: That the Council:

1. **Notes the initial outline 2026/27 draft budget and draft Medium-Term Financial Plan.**
2. **Considers the proposed use of reserves and the projected reserve levels.**
3. **Provides comments and strategic direction to shape the final budget and precept report for January 2026.**

1. Background and Context

Councils must set a lawful budget and precept each year and must ensure that:

- Estimated expenditure is calculated on a proper accounting basis.
- Adequate reserves are maintained to manage financial risk.
- The precept requirement is approved no later than 31 January to meet the principal authority's deadlines.

The draft budget and MTFP presented provide the foundation for achieving these duties and planning the council's future financial sustainability.

2. Approach to Budget Preparation

- The draft budget has been prepared using a combination of incremental budgeting and zero-based budgeting, applying known current commitments and contract values wherever available.
- Some budget lines are based on firm known increases or decreases; others reflect committee estimates, historical outturn, or risk-based assumptions about likely expenditure.
- A general inflationary uplift of 3%-5% has been applied to most budget lines where exact future costs cannot yet be confirmed.
- Larger uplifts have been applied where justified by current market conditions, including insurance (+10%) and allotment water charges (+20%).

3. Budget Assumptions and Parameters

- Due to the continuing uncertainty around the transfer date of Monkston Community Centre and the timing of the establishment of a council office, the budget includes contingency to either continue with the status quo for a further year or support a move into MCC once feasible.

- Staffing costs have been modelled using the upper parameters of the newly adopted staffing structure, pending full job evaluation. Pension and Employer NI contributions are based on current known rates and do not assume any changes arising from future LGPS valuations or NI threshold adjustments.

- Salary budgets incorporate both the expected NJC pay awards and contractual annual salary progression for relevant posts.

- Investment income is sensitive to both Bank of England base rate changes and reducing cash balances - any further use of reserves will correspondingly reduce interest income.

- Much of the proposed use of reserves is supporting one-off or time-limited items *(*bins, asset transfers, community centres, environmental improvements).

- Ongoing revenue costs (staffing, administration, bin emptying, grounds maintenance, utilities, insurance etc) are funded primarily by the precept.

- Staffing costs increase year-on-year under the adopted structure. Many other operational budgets remain flat or reduced. Over time, this narrows the council's capacity to deliver new projects or expand services unless income (including precept) increases in line with the growth in baseline expenditure.

- The MTFP shows the Band D charge increasing from £74.77 in 2026/27 to £94.25 by 2030/31. Although cumulative, the annual increases remain modest - typically equivalent to only a few pence per week. This reflects a financial strategy that front-loads capital-style investment through reserves, followed by steady precept growth to sustain an expanded base of services without further reserve drawdowns.

- The proposed 2026/27 budget requires a £100,000 draw from reserves to fund mainly one-off projects and the current gap between precept income and revenue expenditure, reducing total reserves from approximately £233k to approximately £133k.

- The MTFP assumes no further contributions to or from reserves from 2027/28 onwards. Should community centre costs exceed forecasts, or should Members wish to maintain higher levels of capital investment, the council would either need to draw further on reserves (reducing them below target) or increase precept levels above those shown in the MTFP.

- The precept is proposed to increase from a Band D of £66.72 (2025/26) to £74.77 (2026/27) and then rise steadily to £94.25 by 2030/31 - this is the primary mechanism to sustain higher ongoing costs.

- Non-precept income is assumed to remain broadly flat, with no additional s106 or external grant income built into the MTFP. Any such grant income secured will be treated as additional capacity rather than baseline funding.

- Allotment income has been updated to reflect the steer given by Members at the informal budget meeting that allotment rental income should steadily increase to better reflect the true ongoing costs of maintaining and providing the council's three allotment sites. At present, allotment rents recover less than 50% of direct expenditure, excluding any one-off improvement, staffing, or administrative costs. In line with Member direction, the MTFP now assumes that allotment rent income will increase by approximately 20% per year over the period of the MTFP, ensuring a progressive move towards cost recovery over the medium term while allowing tenants time to adjust to a more realistic and equitable charging structure.

4. Summary of the Draft 2026/27 Budget

The 2026/27 draft identifies:

- Net Revenue Expenditure (ongoing baseline): c. £220,000
- Total proposed use of reserves: £100,000
- Resulting estimated reserves (earmarked and general) at year-end: approx. £133,000
- Proposed Band D precept: £74.77 (up from £66.72 in 2025/26)

The baseline revenue expenditure figure of c. £220,000 reflects the true annual cost of operating the council and delivering its services and functions.

The reserves contribution supports one-off or time-limited projects, including community centre transition costs, environmental improvements, and asset replacement.

5. Medium-Term Financial Plan (2026/27 - 2030/31)

The draft MTFP models the council's financial position over five years and shows:

- A stable Band D precept trajectory, rising from £74.77 to £94.25 by 2030/31.
- Assumptions of little non-precept income other than allotment rent, with no s106 or grant income.
- No further planned use of reserves from 2027/28 onwards.
- General reserves stabilising at approximately 5.5 months' net revenue expenditure.

The approach aims to ensure the council remains financially sustainable as baseline costs rise.

6. Net Revenue Expenditure

Net Revenue Expenditure (NRE) represents the council's core, recurring annual costs - the expenditure required each year to run the council and maintain its established services. It excludes one-off projects, capital-style improvements, and items funded directly from earmarked reserves or grants.

For 2026/27, the council's NRE is estimated at approximately £220,000.

7. Guidance on General Reserves

The SAPPP Practitioners' Guide 2025 advises that:

'*The generally accepted recommendation with regard to the appropriate minimum level of a smaller authority's general reserve is that this should be maintained at between three and twelve months of net revenue expenditure.*

The reason for the wide range is to cater for the large variation in activity level between individual authorities. The smaller the authority, the closer the figure may be to 12 months expenditure, the larger the authority, the nearer to 3 months. In practice, any authority with income and expenditure in excess of £200,000 should plan towards 3 months equivalent general reserve.

In all of this it is important that each authority adopt, as a general reserve policy, the level appropriate to their size, situation, risks and plan their budget so as to ensure that the adopted level is maintained. Consideration of the minimum level of reserves requires not only consideration of level of income and expenditure but also the risks to that income.'

Using the NRE figure of £220,000, the following levels represent 3, 4, 5, and 6 months of general reserves:

Months of NRE	Recommended General Reserve
3 months	**£55,000**
4 months	**£73,333**
5 months	**£91,667**
6 months	**£110,000**

Members may wish to consider whether maintaining general reserves around the 5-6-month level is appropriate (considering the risk profile of the Council), or a move towards a 3-4-month level is acceptable.

8. Key Risks and Sensitivities

The following issues may materially affect the final 2026/27 budget:

1. **Monkston Community Centre Transfer Timing**
   Costs could vary depending on whether transfer occurs early, mid, or late in the financial year (or not at all).

2. **Staffing Structure and Pay Awards**
   The budget reflects upper parameter modelling ahead of formal job evaluation.

3. **External HR/Legal Requirements**
   The complex legal, governance, and HR environment within the Council necessitating continued reactive external support presents a significant risk to the Council's budget.

4. **Precept Sustainability**
   Use of reserves in 2026/27 is justified for one-off items, but ongoing revenue costs should be funded by the precept and income in future years to avoid a structural deficit.

9. Next Steps and Member Input

This is an initial outline budget. Members are invited to:

1. Review the draft 2026/27 budget and MTFP in detail.

2. Provide comments, priorities, and amendments for incorporation into the final draft.

3. Indicate whether the Council wishes to maintain general reserves at the 5-6-month level or move towards a 3-4-month threshold.

Draft 2026/27 Budget

Heading	Actual 2024/25	Budget 2025/26	Forecast Year End Position 31.03.26	Proposed Budget 2026/27	Notes/Explanations
EXPENDITURE					
Staff Costs					
Salaries	35,029.92	63,355.00	52,000.00	75,000.00	Committee estimate
Employer NI	1,628.14	8,600.00	5,000.00	8,500.00	Committee estimate
Pension Contributions	8,378.08	17,000.00	12,000.00	17,000.00	Committee estimate
Contract Staff	31,450.22	-	-	-	
	76,486.36	**88,955.00**	**69,000.00**	**100,500.00**	
Administration					
WFH Allowance	430.00	550.00	550.00	624.00	12 months WFH allowance - 3 members of staff
Insurance	755.24	1,250.00	694.73	1,375.00	
Bank Charges	141.89	180.00	130.00	150.00	
HR Support	100.00	14,000.00	14,000.00	3,500.00	Committee estimate
Travel Expenses	465.75	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	
Payroll Processing	539.82	570.00	500.00	275.00	
Recruitment	430.00	500.00	500.00	2,500.00	Committee estimate
IT Costs	5,663.09	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	
Office Equipment	-	3,000.00	-	3,000.00	Equipment purchase for the new office
Staff H&S	-	250.00	250.00	2,250.00	Committee estimate
Website	262.15	836.85	836.85	350.00	Hosting etc
Memberships/Subscriptions	1,558.51	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,650.00	BALC/NALC, SLCC, Breakthrough, & NAS
Audit Fees	620.00	830.00	830.00	860.00	Internal & external audit fees
Room Hire	1,012.50	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	
Communications	-	9,650.00	7,500.00	12,000.00	Scope to reintroduce the parish newsletter
Training	1,515.74	5,000.00	5,000.00	4,000.00	Committee estimate
Legal/Professional Fees	-	6,000.00	6,000.00	10,000.00	Informal budget meeting estimate
Asset Transfers	851.64	14,000.00	8,000.00	8,000.00	Assumes reprofiling of transfer to 2026/27
Office Expenses	219.42	-	-	-	Old budget line - to be removed.
Stationery & Supplies	371.97	900.00	750.00	1,000.00	
Printing	146.83	350.00	350.00	350.00	

Postage	93.14	100.00	100.00	100.00	
PO Box Fees	294.50	309.50	309.50	325.00	If needed
Telephone & Internet	529.99	1,150.00	600.00	1,500.00	3 staff phone contracts (£750) + office
ICO Fee	35.00	47.00	47.00	47.00	
Storage Unit	902.48	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,700.00	If needed
Chair's Allowance	-	1,200.00	100.00	400.00	
	16,939.66	**71,673.35**	**58,048.08**	**63,956.00**	
Services/Projects					
Bin Emptying	16,097.10	16,500.00	16,500.00	23,500.00	Based on the recent bin replacement project
New Bins	-	35,000.00	25,000.00	-	
Defibrillators	-	1,750.00	1,750.00	250.00	Replacement parts
Wellbeing Activities	3,479.70	8,000.00	2,800.00	8,000.00	
Environmental Activities	5,500.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	
Street Furniture	-	10,000.00	10,000.00	5,000.00	Noticeboards may need attention
Community Grants	4,000.00	3,500.00	3,500.00	4,000.00	
MKCAB	4,543.25	4,725.00	4,725.00	5,000.00	
Youth Activities	7,575.00	7,800.00	7,800.00	8,500.00	
Community Events/Activities	1,045.78	5,000.00	1,500.00	5,000.00	
Play Area Improvements	10,000.00	-	-	-	Old budget line - to be removed.
	52,240.83	**96,275.00**	**77,575.00**	**63,250.00**	
Allotments					
Maintenance - Monkston Park	1,975.68	1,750.00	3,500.00	4,000.00	Tree inspections for 20+ trees required
Maintenance - Kents Hill	1,935.68	1,800.00	2,300.00	2,500.00	
Maintenance - Monkston	502.88	400.00	600.00	750.00	
Water - Monkston Park	218.16	600.00	600.00	720.00	Modelled on a 20% increase in water charges
Water - Kents Hill	226.72	450.00	500.00	600.00	Modelled on a 20% increase in water charges
Water - Monkston	596.65	1,100.00	1,100.00	1,320.00	Modelled on a 20% increase in water charges
Allotment Deposit Refunds	116.80	300.00	120.00	175.00	
Improvements	38.33	8,000.00	8,000.00	4,000.00	
	5,610.90	**14,400.00**	**16,720.00**	**14,065.00**	
Monkston Community Centre					
Improvements	**-**	50,000.00	10,000.00	70,000.00	Based on discussions with the architects

Grounds Maintenance	-	7,590.50	-	20,000.00	Grass cutting, tree inspection, shrubs & weeds
	-	**57,590.50**	**10,000.00**	**90,000.00**	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	**151,277.75**	**328,893.85**	**231,343.08**	**331,771.00**	
INCOME					
Bank Interest	7,405.19	6,000.00	7,500.00	5,000.00	Reduced due to proposed reduction in reserves
s106 Grant	-	17,000.00	-	17,000.00	Related to the community centre transfer
Grants/Miscellaneous	929.29	-	10,000.00	-	
Community Centre Rent	-	2.00	-	1.00	
	8,334.48	**23,002.00**	**17,500.00**	**22,001.00**	
Allotments					
Allotment Rent - MP	1,394.70	1,500.00	1,597.80	1,740.00	Agreed rents from 1 April 2026 (£30, £60, £90)
Allotment Rent - KH	989.40	931.20	931.20	1,080.00	Agreed rents from 1 April 2026 (£30, £60, £90)
Allotment Rent - Monkston	1,560.28	1,808.50	1,809.50	1,838.00	Agreed rents from 1 April 2026 (£30, £60, £90)
Allotment Deposits	175.00	300.00	665.00	175.00	
	4,119.38	**4,539.70**	**5,003.50**	**4,833.00**	
Monkston Community Centre					
Maintenance Grants	-	5,120.00	-	-	
	-	**5,120.00**	-	-	
TOTAL INCOME	**12,453.86**	**32,661.70**	**22,503.50**	**26,834.00**	
SUMMARY AND PRECEPT:					
Net Expenditure	**151,277.75**	**328,893.85**	**231,343.08**	**331,771.00**	
Net Income	**- 12,453.86**	**- 32,661.70**	**- 22,503.50**	**- 26,834.00**	
Figure to Balance	**138,823.89**	**296,232.15**	**208,839.58**	**304,937.00**	
Contribution to/from Reserves	**34,271.11**	**- 115,619.15**	**- 28,226.58**	**- 100,000.00**	
Precept	**173,095.00**	**180,613.00**	**180,613.00**	**204,937.00**	
Tax Base	**2663**	**2707**		**2741**	
Band D Annual Figure	**£65.00**	**£66.72**		**£74.77**	

Increase		2.6%		12.1%	
Increase per week		£0.03		£0.15	

Draft 2026/27 - 2030/31 Medium-Term Financial Plan

Heading	Proposed Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
EXPENDITURE					
Staff Costs					
Salaries	75,000.00	80,000.00	84,000.00	88,500.00	93,000.00
Employer NI	8,500.00	9,000.00	9,500.00	10,000.00	10,500.00
Pension Contributions	17,000.00	18,400.00	19,400.00	20,300.00	21,400.00
Contract Staff	-	-	-	-	-
	100,500.00	**107,400.00**	**112,900.00**	**118,800.00**	**124,900.00**
Administration					
WFH Allowance	624.00	-	-	-	-
Insurance	1,375.00	1,445.00	1,515.00	1,600.00	1,680.00
Bank Charges	150.00	150.00	150.00	150.00	150.00
HR Support	3,500.00	3,500.00	3,500.00	3,500.00	3,500.00
Travel Expenses	1,500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00
Payroll Processing	275.00	285.00	295.00	305.00	315.00
Recruitment	2,500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00
IT Costs	4,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	4,000.00
Office Equipment	3,000.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00
Staff H&S	2,250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00
Website	350.00	360.00	370.00	380.00	390.00
Memberships/Subscriptions	2,650.00	2,730.00	2,810.00	2,895.00	2,980.00
Audit Fees	860.00	900.00	950.00	1,000.00	1,050.00
Room Hire	1,500.00	1,550.00	1,600.00	1,650.00	1,700.00
Communications	12,000.00	12,500.00	13,000.00	13,500.00	14,000.00
Training	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00
Legal/Professional Fees	10,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00
Asset Transfers	8,000.00	-	-	-	-
Stationery & Supplies	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Printing	350.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Postage	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
PO Box Fees	325.00	-	-	-	-
Telephone & Internet	1,500.00	1,575.00	1,650.00	1,730.00	1,815.00
ICO Fee	47.00	50.00	53.00	56.00	59.00
Storage Unit	1,700.00	-	-	-	-
Chair's Allowance	400.00	400.00	400.00	400.00	400.00
	63,956.00	**40,395.00**	**41,243.00**	**42,116.00**	**43,989.00**
Services/Projects					
Bin Emptying	23,500.00	24,675.00	25,900.00	27,200.00	28,600.00
New Bins	-	-	-	-	-
Defibrillators	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00
Wellbeing Activities	8,000.00	8,000.00	8,000.00	8,000.00	8,000.00
Environmental Activities	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00
Street Furniture	5,000.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00
Community Grants	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00
MKCAB	5,000.00	5,250.00	5,500.00	5,750.00	6,000.00
Youth Activities	8,500.00	8,500.00	8,500.00	8,500.00	8,500.00
Community Events/Activities	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00
	63,250.00	**62,175.00**	**63,650.00**	**65,200.00**	**66,850.00**
Allotments					
Maintenance - Monkston Park	4,000.00	4,150.00	4,300.00	4,475.00	4,650.00
Maintenance - Kents Hill	2,500.00	2,600.00	2,700.00	2,800.00	2,900.00
Maintenance - Monkston	750.00	780.00	810.00	840.00	875.00
Water - Monkston Park	720.00	760.00	800.00	840.00	880.00
Water - Kents Hill	600.00	630.00	660.00	695.00	730.00
Water - Monkston	1,320.00	1,390.00	1,460.00	1,530.00	1,600.00
Allotment Deposit Refunds	175.00	175.00	175.00	175.00	175.00
Improvements	4,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
	14,065.00	**11,485.00**	**11,905.00**	**12,355.00**	**12,810.00**
Monkston Community Centre					

Improvements/Maintenance	70,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
Grounds Maintenance	20,000.00	15,000.00	15,750.00	16,500.00	17,300.00
	90,000.00	**25,000.00**	**25,750.00**	**26,500.00**	**27,300.00**
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	**331,771.00**	**246,455.00**	**255,448.00**	**264,971.00**	**275,849.00**
INCOME					
Bank Interest	5,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00
s106 Grant	17,000.00	-	-	-	-
Grants/Miscellaneous	-	-	-	-	-
Community Centre Rent	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	22,001.00	**4,001.00**	**4,001.00**	**4,001.00**	**4,001.00**
Allotments					
Allotment Rent - MP	1,740.00	2,088.00	2,506.00	3,007.00	3,608.00
Allotment Rent - KH	1,080.00	1,296.00	1,555.00	1,866.00	2,239.00
Allotment Rent - Monkston	1,838.00	2,206.00	2,647.00	3,176.00	3,811.00
Allotment Deposits	175.00	175.00	175.00	175.00	175.00
	4,833.00	**5,765.00**	**6,883.00**	**8,224.00**	**9,833.00**
TOTAL INCOME	**26,834.00**	**9,766.00**	**10,884.00**	**12,225.00**	**13,834.00**
SUMMARY AND PRECEPT:					
Net Expenditure	**331,771.00**	**246,455.00**	**255,448.00**	**264,971.00**	**275,849.00**
Net Income	**- 26,834.00**	**- 9,766.00**	**- 10,884.00**	**- 12,225.00**	**- 13,834.00**
Figure to Balance	**304,937.00**	**236,689.00**	**244,564.00**	**252,746.00**	**262,015.00**
Contribution to/from Reserves	**- 100,000.00**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**
Precept	**204,937.00**	**236,689.00**	**244,564.00**	**252,746.00**	**262,015.00**
Tax Base	**2741**	**2750**	**2760**	**2770**	**2780**
Band D Annual Figure	**£74.77**	**£86.06**	**£88.61**	**£91.24**	**£94.25**
Increase	12.1%	15.1%	3%	3.0%	3.3%

Increase per week	£0.15	£0.22	£0.05	£0.05	£0.06

Draft Reserves Position

Reserve	Budget 2025/26	Budget 2026/27	Budget 2027/28	Budget 2028/29	Budget 2029/30	Budget 2030/31
EMR New Bins	30,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00
EMR Street Furniture	25,000.00	5,000.00	-	-	-	-
EMR Play Area Improvements	-	-	-	-	-	-
EMR New Website	-	-	-	-	-	-
EMR Allotment Deposits	3,545.00	3,545.00	3,545.00	3,545.00	3,545.00	3,545.00
EMR Community Centres	80,000.00	70,000.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	20,000.00
General Reserves	122,475.25	149,248.67	104,248.67	104,248.67	104,248.67	104,248.67
	261,020.25	**232,793.67**	**132,793.67**	**132,793.67**	**132,793.67**	**132,793.67**
Opening Balance	261,020.25	232,793.67	132,793.67	132,793.67	132,793.67	132,793.67
Projected YE contribution to/from reserves	- 28,226.58	- 100,000.00		-	-	-
Projected Closing Balance	**232,793.67**	**132,793.67**	**132,793.67**	**132,793.67**	**132,793.67**	**132,793.67**

AGENDA ITEM: FC 159/25

Subject: Options for Recording Council Meetings

Meeting date: Full Council - 9 December 2025

Author: Clerk - R Fuller

Purpose: To present Council with options for the audiovisual recording of Council meetings and to seek Members' views on the preferred approach, so that officers can prepare a detailed procurement specification and quotations for formal approval at a future meeting.

RECOMMENDATIONS: That the Council:

1. **Considers the options set out in this report and provides a steer on the preferred recording method, enabling a full procurement specification and quotations to be prepared for approval at a future meeting.**

1. Background

The Council has previously resolved that it wishes to record its meetings, and in order to progress this matter, Members are asked to consider the recording approach most suitable for the Council's meeting venues and working practices.

2. Summary of Options

Two broad categories of recording solutions are available. These are outlined below with key advantages, limitations, and relevant considerations.

Option A - Standalone Camcorder with External Microphones (No Laptop Connection Required During Meetings)

Description

A dedicated camcorder is positioned at the rear of the meeting room and records video and audio directly onto an SD card. Audio is enhanced using a separate microphone system (e.g. wireless microphones). A laptop is not required as part of the recording chain.

Advantages

- High reliability: recording is independent of the laptop, avoiding risks such as battery loss, software crashes, or system notifications interrupting the recording.
- Simple to operate: the device is turned on at the start of the meeting and left running.
- No dependence on Wi-Fi or venue IT infrastructure.
- Clear optical zoom suitable for fixed rear-of-room recording.
- Compatible with a range of external microphones to improve audio coverage of all parts of the meeting room.
- Low operational risk.

Limitations

- Requires manual transfer of files after the meeting (SD card to the laptop).
- Officers must ensure the device is powered (mains or battery) and has adequate storage.

Option B - Wireless-Wi-Fi-Integrated Cameras Using Laptop-Based Recording

Description

Higher-end cameras can stream wirelessly via Wi-Fi to a laptop, which records the stream via software. Wireless microphones can be integrated using a receiver connected to either the camera or the laptop.

Advantages

- Scalable; suitable for hybrid or streaming setups in future.
- Allows advanced framing, zooming, or tracking features.

Limitations

- Relies on access to specific and stable Wi-Fi connections, which may be unavailable in meeting venues.
- Higher cost and greater complexity.
- Laptop still part of the recording chain (with associated risks).
- More suitable for councils that livestream meetings or have dedicated AV infrastructure/support, and more than one member of staff to service the meetings.

3. Financial Considerations

At this stage no purchases are proposed.

Costs vary between the options with Option B requiring more expensive equipment:

Option A: approximately £1,200.

Option B: approximately £1,600.

Once the Council indicates its preferred approach, officers will prepare a detailed specification and obtain quotations in accordance with Financial Regulations.

4. Officer Comment

Given that the Council's primary objective is to create a reliable recording, and that the main meeting venues do not provide the necessary Wi-Fi or AV infrastructure, Members may wish to consider whether the Council prefers:

- A simple, robust standalone recording solution (Option A), or
- A more advanced network/wireless hybrid solution (Option B), recognising the additional cost and complexity.

A steer from Members is requested so that officers can bring forward a full procurement proposal.

Milton Keynes City Council

Councillor Dan Hippey
Kents Hill and Monkston Parish Council
P.O. Box 6293
Milton Keynes
MK10 1ZG

14 November 2025

Dear Councillor Hippey,

I am writing to you in your capacity as Chair of Kents Hill and Monkston Parish Council (the parish council) regarding recent Code of Conduct complaints involving Councillors from the parish council.

The current number of live ongoing complaints arising from the parish council is 20 which when added to the 8 that have been closed since 1 March comes to a total of 28 over an 8-month period. This is an unprecedented volume and has resulted in a disproportionate pull on the City Council's resources. Overall, your parish council is responsible for 64% of all parish council complaints received during this financial year. For context, the number of electors registered in the parish comprises less than 3% of those in the local authority area.

As you are aware, a feature of these complaints is that they are detailed, complex, and almost exclusively made by Councillors about other Councillors. These complaints have already resulted in 2 investigations commissioned by the Monitoring Officer, incurring costs to the City Council of over £10,000, whilst the associated cost of consulting Independent Persons is likely to be in excess of £3,000. While it is the City Council's duty to administer Code of Conduct complaints, the Standards Committee has noted the considerable cost to the public purse and resources associated with these cases and has previously resolved to ask whether the Parish Council would consider contributing towards the investigation costs currently borne by MKCC.

Notwithstanding this, both the Standards Committee and the Monitoring Officer are committed to assisting the parish council to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by its members. Having regard to the historical and ongoing volume of complaints arising from the parish council, that the matters complained about sometimes overlap, and the limitations of the current standards regime (and noting the Government's intention to legislate), the Standards Committee believes the parish council should be promoting preventative and holistic measures such as mediation, training, and governance reviews as opposed to relying only on the complaints process. In our experience, this is a better way of addressing the issues being presented and a more comprehensive approach may result in individual councillors reflecting on the benefits of progressing live complaints. While

Need to contact us?
Councillor.complaints@milton-keynes.gov.uk
01908 252289
Civic, 1 Saxon Gate East, Milton Keynes MK9 3EJ
www.milton-keynes.gov.uk

the decision to undertake any such measures rests with the parish council, the Committee has asked the Monitoring Officer to consider any requests for assistance sympathetically, should you wish to pursue these options.

Please bring this letter to the attention of the parish council and, once you have had a chance to discuss, we would be happy to explore in further detail. Please be advised that outstanding complaints will be administered in line with available resources.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Mandy Legg

Chair of Milton Keynes City Council Standards Committee

Milton Keynes City Council

06 November 2025

Dear Consultee,

From the 7th November to the 22nd December 2025 (inclusive) we are inviting local people and organisations to comment on the Proposed Submission (Regulation 19) MK City Plan 2050.

The Proposed Submission MK City Plan 2050 is an important planning document that sets out how we propose Milton Keynes will change and grow in the years ahead.

Our aim is to get the right type of development in the right places to meet the growing needs of local people and businesses. We want to make sure:

- Infrastructure is put first (such as health facilities, schools and shops).
- Developers provide what communities need to benefit local people.
- Milton Keynes grows sustainably, tackling and reducing the impact of climate change.

We previously consulted on the Draft (Regulation 18) MK City Plan 2050 from the 17th July to the 9th October 2024. In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, these comments have helped shape the Proposed Submission (Regulation 19) MK City Plan 2050.

We are now inviting consultees to consider whether they think the plan is legally compliant and meets the tests of soundness, as defined by the National Planning Policy Framework. This is the final opportunity for communities and stakeholders to comment on the plan before our intended submission to the Secretary of State by the end of March 2026. The Regulation 19 consultation on the Proposed Submission MK City Plan 2050 will be open for six weeks, from the **7th November 2025** until 5.30pm on the **22nd December 2025.**

You can view the Proposed Submission MK City Plan 2050, proposed submission documents and other supporting documents on our website: MK City Plan 2050 | Milton Keynes City Council. Alternatively, if you would rather view the Proposed Submission MK City Plan 2050 and proposed submission documents in person the attached Statement of Representations Procedure sets out in detail where the documents are available for inspection across Milton Keynes.

Need to contact us?
Ncp.engagement@milton-keynes.gov.uk
01908 252 358
Civic, 1 Saxon Gate East, Milton Keynes MK9 3EJ
www.milton-keynes.gov.uk

You can submit your comments online by following this link: MK City Plan 2050 | Milton Keynes City Council. You can also email or post your comments to us, using the contact details provided above.

You have received this letter because you are registered on our planning policy consultation database or you have commented on the MK City Plan 2050 at previous stages in its preparation. If you no longer wish to receive notifications related to planning policy documents, please let us know by emailing ncp.engagement@milton-keynes.gov.uk or calling 01908 252358.

Yours faithfully,

Paul Thomas
Director Planning and Placemaking

Regulation 19
Statement of Representations Procedure

This statement has been prepared by Milton Keynes City Council, pursuant to the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (Regulations 19, 20, 21 and 35), as amended.

Title of documents

- Proposed Submission (Regulation 19) MK City Plan 2050
- Proposed Submission Policies Map
- Sustainability Appraisal
- Habitats Regulations Assessment
- Equalities Impact Assessment
- Health Impact Assessment
- Consultation Statement
- Duty to Cooperate Statement
- Statement of Representations Procedure

Subject matter

The Proposed Submission (Regulation 19) MK City Plan 2050 sets out the spatial strategy and policies to guide development in Milton Keynes, over the plan period from 2022-2050. It sets out how we aim to provide more homes, and meet the growing needs of our local population, businesses whilst protecting our green spaces and rural areas.

Period for representations

Representations are invited from **7 November 2025 to 5.30pm on 22 December 2025.** This statement sets out where to view the documents and how to make comments.

Important Notice: In accordance with the Regulations, representations received after the deadline ***will be marked as late and may not be accepted by the Inspector.***

Document availability

The Proposed Submission (Regulation 19) MK City Plan 2050, proposed submission documents and all supporting documents, including this Statement of Representations Procedure, can be downloaded and viewed online by visiting https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/mk-city-plan-2050.

Need to contact us?
Ncp.engagement@milton-keynes.gov.uk
01908 252 358
Civic, 1 Saxon Gate East, Milton Keynes MK9 3EJ
www.milton-keynes.gov.uk

You can view paper copies of the documents listed above and/or collect representation form(s) at our Civic Offices (via prior appointment) and any of our libraries across Milton Keynes during their opening hours:

- **Central Milton Keynes Library**, 555 Silbury Boulevard, Central Milton Keynes, MK9 3HL
- **Bletchley Library**, Westfield Road, Bletchley, Milton Keynes, MK2 2RA
- **Newport Pagnell Library**, St John Street, Newport Pagnell, Milton Keynes, MK16 8HQ
- **Wolverton Library**, Town Hall, Creed Street, Wolverton, Milton Keynes, MK12 5LY
- **Kingston Library**, Winchester Circle, Kingston, Milton Keynes, MK10 0BA
- **Westcroft Library**, Wimborne Crescent, Westcroft, Milton Keynes, MK4 4DE
- **Woburn Sands Library**, The Institute, High Street, Woburn Sands, MK17 8SD
- **Woughton Library**, Langland Road, Netherfield, Milton Keynes, MK6 4NP
- **Olney Library**, The Olney Centre, High Street, Olney, MK46 4EF
- **Stony Stratford Library**, 5-7 Church Street, Stony Stratford, Milton Keynes, MK11 1BD
- **Civic Offices *(prior appointment to view documents)*** Milton Keynes City Council, Civic, 1 Saxon Gate East, Milton Keynes, MK9 3EJ

You can check the opening hours for libraries here: https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/libraries/library-info/library-hours.

Viewing supporting documents

Individuals may view all supporting documents, alongside the evidence library, online at https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/mk-city-plan-2050/mk-city-plan-2050. In the instance that you don't have access to the internet, we have public computers available at Central Library, Newport Pagnell Library, Olney Library, Wolverton Library, Stony Stratford Library, Bletchley Library and Woburn Sands Library. Library staff are available to help if required.

Additionally, individuals may request to view supporting documents, including the evidence library, in person by arranging an appointment at the Council's Civic Offices. To make an appointment, please contact the Development Plans team at development.plans@milton-keynes.gov.uk or by post to Development Plans, Milton Keynes City Council, Civic, 1 Saxon Gate East, Milton Keynes MK9 3EJ. When arranging an appointment please clearly specify which document(s) you wish to view and whether you wish to view or purchase a paper copy.

Paper copies of the Proposed Submission (Regulation 19) MK City Plan 2050, proposed submission documents and all supporting documents can be made available at a cost by contacting the Development Plans team via email at development.plans@milton-keynes.gov.uk, or by post to Development Plans, Milton Keynes City Council, Civic, 1 Saxon Gate East, Milton Keynes MK9 3EJ.

If you are having trouble accessing the documents, or if you require the consultation documents in an alternative format, please contact the Development Plans team via email at development.plans@milton-keynes.gov.uk

What to consider when making a representation

Please refer to the Regulation 19 response form, which sets out guidance on what to consider when making a representation, you can find the form on our webpage here: https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/mk-city-plan-2050/mk-city-plan-2050

How to make a representation

Representations must be made between **7th November and 22nd December 2025**. Your representation must be received by ***5.30pm on Monday 22nd December 2025.***

Representations can be made:

- Online using our digital consultation platform (Urban Intelligence) which is accessed via the following link: *https://placemaker.miltonkeynes.urbanintelligence.co.uk/p/document/149*
- By emailing a completed representation form(s) to ncp.engagement@milton-keynes.gov.uk. Representation forms are available to download at: https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/mk-city-plan-2050/mk-city-plan-2050
- By post to Development Plans, Milton Keynes City Council, Civic, 1 Saxon Gate East, Milton Keynes MK9 3EJ.

Paper copies of the representation form are available at our Civic Offices (via request) and any of our libraries across Milton Keynes.

All representations must set out clearly why, and how, it is considered that the Proposed Submission (Regulation 19) MK City Plan 2050, in whole or in part, is legally compliant or non-compliant; compliant or noncompliant with the Duty to Cooperate; and/or, sound or unsound.

Data Protection & Privacy Notice

Please note that all submissions will be required to be made public along with the first and last name of the person making the submission, all other personal information will be kept confidential. All submissions will then be submitted to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and the Planning Inspectorate, alongside the Proposed Submission (Regulation 19) Milton Keynes City Plan 2050 and all other supporting documents after this period of representation.

The Council cannot legally accept anonymous submissions during this representation period as these cannot be considered by the Planning Inspector. Personal data will be processed in accordance with the Council's privacy notice (https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/milton-keynes-council/privacy-notices/milton-keynes-city-council-corporate-privacy-notice).

Notification of the next stages of the Milton Keynes City Plan 2050

When making your representation you will also have the option to request to be notified of the following stages of the Local Plan process:

- the submission of the Local Plan for independent Examination,
- the publication of the Inspector's recommendations following independent Examination of the Local Plan, and
- the adoption of the Local Plan.

Once the Regulation 19 representation period has closed, updates regarding the status of the Local Plan will be published on our Local Plan webpages. Any person who makes a submission during the Regulation 19 representation period will automatically be added to our consultation database and will be provided with updates on the progress of the Local Plan including when we submit our Local Plan for independent Examination, when the Planning Inspector's recommendations are published and when the Local Plan is adopted. If you wish to be removed from this database, please contact development.plans@milton-keynes.gov.uk

An independent Planning Inspector will then be appointed by the Secretary of State of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to undertake an independent Examination into whether the Local Plan is legally compliant, meets the duty to cooperate, and passes the tests of soundness. The Examination will include hearing sessions held by the Planning Inspector in public. ***If you have objected to the plan and requested a change should be made and wish to participate in relevant hearings, please make this clear in your representation***.

Contact Us

For assistance or further information on the Proposed Submission (Regulation 19) Milton Keynes City Plan 2050, or any of the supporting documents, please contact us via:

Telephone: 01908 252 358

Email: ncp.engagement@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Post: Development Plans, Milton Keynes City Council, Civic, 1 Saxon Gate East, Milton Keynes MK9 3EJ