The 2020 Budget Challenge  
Let’s Talk Budget

Milton Keynes Council is making decisions about its 2015/16 budget; how best to fund and shape the services it delivers to you, and which support the communities that live, work and learn in Milton Keynes.

The 2015/16 Budget is the most difficult in the history of Milton Keynes Council. The level of savings we have to make are unprecedented.

Since 2011 we have had to cut our spending by £68m and by 2020 we will have to find further savings of over £70m. This is the equivalent of saving £1,300 per household.

All our services are funded in three ways – from the Council Tax that local people pay, a proportion from the business rates paid by local businesses and from grants from central government. However, central government is cutting the funding it gives us by over 40% and over the coming year the council will need to make savings of over £22 million.

We need to change the nature of how we work and how we deliver services in order to reflect the modern world. We will need your input and your help to do this.

The Council is proposing a number of options in order to deliver a balanced budget, and would like your feedback. Listening to your views will help the Council to make these difficult but necessary choices in order to protect services for the most vulnerable of our citizens.

Milton Keynes has a reputation for sound financial management and a balanced budget is proposed with no rise in council tax.

The budget proposals

Each year we deliver over 250 services for over 256,000 residents in 106,000 households, helping to look after your local area and improve the lives of local people.

Council spending covers everything from schools, maintaining roads and pavements, providing home and residential care for the old and vulnerable, to protecting public health, running children’s homes, developing parks and playgrounds and much more.

In reality our costs are rising as Milton Keynes continues to grow by 1,750 households per year. We need to provide services to our growing population of young people and older citizens, but using past methods will only cause our budget gap to grow.

Milton Keynes Council is now a Co-operative Council and by working in partnership with citizens, communities, parish councils and voluntary groups we want to work together on a mutual basis to help save, preserve and continue to deliver the well-loved services you value and make them sustainable. This will be achieved by amongst other things, co-location, co-production and the pooling of resources across sectors. Without doubt this is a very challenging time.

However, it will only be though working in new and different ways will we be able to continue our vital work to improve the life chances of children, young people and families not just next year but into the future.

The budget proposals also include a review to rethink how we fund, deliver and sustain our community and cultural services, including children’s centres and youth services, youth offending and targeted information, advice and guidance. This work will be called the Community and Cultural Services Review (CCSR) and will explore how these valued services can be delivered in different ways with a view to create sustainable services for the future through alternative models of delivery, smarter use of assets and resources, greater partnership working, and community involvement. The review is likely to run until the summer.

The key proposals of the budget include:

1) Savings of £4.1m over four years from Council support services through efficiencies and creating income from other public bodies.
2) Savings of £2.3m over 4 years through streamlining processes, reducing duplication and changing the way customers access services.
3) A review of the way library services, children’s centres and youth provision are delivered through the Community and Cultural Services Review.
4) Responding to a request from local stakeholders to invest in better and more parking facilities, requiring parking charges to be raised.
What happens next?

Once the consultation has closed, all responses will be considered and put into a report that will go to the Council’s Cabinet in February 2015.

Having considered the responses to the consultation the Cabinet will recommend a budget package to Full Council, who are due to meet on 18 February 2015 to agree the final budget and council tax for 2015/16.

How to respond : Let’s Talk Budget

Milton Keynes has been set a huge budget challenge that we all need to face together.

Everyone has a part to play – the council, local businesses and organisations, citizens, community and voluntary groups.
Help us to meet this challenge

Please talk to us about your ideas and comments by attending one of our roadshows, emailing, writing in or commenting online.

We need your replies by 31 January 2015 which is the date the consultation ends.

Details of where the road show events will be held are below:-

Wolverton Town Hall - Tuesday 9 December, 6.30pm–8pm
The Olney Centre – Parish Council - Thursday 18 December, 6.30pm - 8pm
West Bletchley Parish Council Offices - Thursday 8 January, 6.30pm - 8pm
Woughton Community Council Offices - Tuesday 13 January, 6.30pm - 8pm
Civic Offices, Council Chamber - Wednesday 14 January, 9.15am - 11am
Oxley Park Community Centre - Thursday 22 January, 6.30pm - 8pm
St Mary and St Giles Parish Hall, Stony Stratford - Thursday 29 January, 6.30pm - 8pm

You can respond in a variety of ways:

Online at: www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/letstalkbudgetmk

By email: letstalkbudgetmk@milton-keynes.gov.uk.

By post: Lets Talk Budget 2015
Freepost ANG7122
Milton Keynes Council, Civic Offices, 1 Saxon Gate East, Milton Keynes MK9 3HG

In person: The budget will be discussed at a number of public meetings held around the Borough and at council meetings. For agendas and papers visit www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/council-democracy.

- 9 February 2015 : feedback from the public and interested parties will be considered and reflected in a report to the Council’s Cabinet.
- 18 February 2015 : full council meets to agree the final budget and council tax for 2015/16.

Or call us with any questions on: 01908 252595.

Thank you for giving us your feedback.

www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/consultations