



Economic Development Newsletter

June /July 2016

Introduction

Welcome to the June/July edition of the newsletter. In this edition, we round up the latest news from Milton Keynes Council's Economic Development Team. We are happy to report some positive news during June and July including the continuation of incoming enquiries from businesses wishing to relocate in and around Milton Keynes, which in the current climate reinforces that there is still much confidence in the strength of our local economy. To add to this confidence there have also been some exciting new planning applications recently approved, which will all add value to the Milton Keynes offer from a commercial perspective. The team is currently gearing up to showcase Milton Keynes at MIPIM UK in October, which will help to raise awareness of our unique offering as a successful business location and to encourage future investment.

International Festival

The Milton Keynes International Festival (IF) took place in July and consisted of 10 amazing days of world class events including visual arts performances, comedians, large scale outdoor events and free entertainment. Milton Keynes Council has supported this festival, which has continued to improve year on year, since its launch in 2010. Not only does this event provide fantastic entertainment to our local residents, but it also helps to attract visitors to the area who are able to take advantage of our retail and leisure offer. To find out more about the International Festival please visit the website <http://www.ifmiltonkeynes.org/home.html>

Gigabit City Fibre

Milton Keynes has become the UK's latest Gigabit City - CityFibre, the national alternative digital infrastructure provider will be making over 160km of pure fibre network available to local business, Government, health and education sectors, meeting their data connectivity and communication needs for years to come. Businesses will be able to access affordable gigabit speed services up to 100 times faster than the UK's average. The latest investment from CityFibre will support, local cutting edge digital businesses choosing to call MK home to thrive. For more information about Gigabit Cities visit the CityFibre website <http://www.cityfibre.com/gigabit-cities/>

Santander Cycles

Milton Keynes is unique, as it benefits from a network of more than 270 km of safe paths that criss-cross the entire city. These Redways are used by cyclists and walkers and allow you to ride at as safe distance from the roads. To help you get more active Santander are providing bikes which are available to rent 365 days a year, 24 hours a day. These bikes are located all around the city allowing you to jump on and discover the hidden treasures Milton Keynes has to offer. To find out more visit the website <https://santandercyclesmk.co.uk/>



Team News

DMK Marketing Campaign

Destination Milton Keynes (DMK) has come together with the Economic Development Team (ED) to promote Milton Keynes as a premier location. Whereas the ED team focuses on the business needs, DMK aims to promote the area from a lifestyle and visitor angle, encouraging visitors to take advantage of the fantastic activities and places to visit around the area. The expertise from both of these teams provides a great mix to promote Milton Keynes as a 'place'. This summer has seen the launch of #unexpectedmk, a new campaign aimed at changing the pre-conceived ideas of Milton Keynes relating to the leisure and heritage we have to offer. The first phase of the campaign has been rolled out in the London Underground stations, however this is just the beginning, there will also be an online, radio and TV campaign running through to 2017, so watch this space. For more information on #unexpectedmk visit

<http://www.destinationmiltonkeynes.co.uk/About-us/UnexpectedMK>

StartUp Britain

During July Milton Keynes became a host to the StartUp Britain bus which had been making its way across the UK. This campaign was organized by entrepreneurs, aimed at supporting other entrepreneurs with information, resource and guidance to help start and grow their own business. Milton Keynes has been very successful in attracting start-up businesses so it is great that various initiatives are being run to support these businesses in their early stages of life. There has been a great response with more than 100 businesses enquiring on the day of the visit.

<http://startupbritain.org/event/startup-tour-milton-keynes/>

Planning Approvals

Magna Park

There has been some positive news from a commercial property perspective during July with the announcement that IDI Gazeley has acquired development land on the eastern side of Milton Keynes which will be marketed as Magna Park phase 2. This has come at the right time as there is a significant shortage of prime warehouse stock in Milton Keynes to meet the current demand for large, good quality industrial premises. For more information on this scheme visit the website

<http://www.savills.co.uk/news/article/72418/206089-0/7/2016/idi-gazeley-acquires-1.3m-sq-ft-warehouse-and-logistics-site-for-phase-2-of-magna-park--milton-keynes>

Woodlands Business Park

Great news in relation to the Milton Keynes office market as Barwood Capital is granted planning permission for an ambitious expansion programme at Woodlands Business Park ("the Park") in Linford Wood. The development will offer up to 150,000 sq ft of new Grade A office accommodation within four buildings, alongside new roadways, footpaths, parking areas and structural landscaping to serve the existing and new office buildings.

This is another great example of the continued interest to invest in Milton Keynes which will improve our commercial property offer to potential inward investors and expanding local businesses. For more information regarding this scheme visit the website

<http://woodlandsmiltonkeynes.co.uk/>



Norfolk & Ashton House

Norfolk & Ashton house has recently undergone a re-brand and extensive refurbishment. Over the years these two buildings have had long periods of vacancy. However due to improvements made, bringing the office space up to a Grade A standard, and more recently the approval from MK Council to create further allocated parking, this building can now provide a fantastic offer to relocating and expanding businesses wishing to have a presence within Central Milton Keynes. It is great to see investment going into our existing buildings and this can only add more value to the Milton Keynes offer. More information can be found here <http://lsh.agencypilot.com/store/documents/other/222+89029.pdf>

Business Visits

- We met with the chair of the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) for MK and North bucks, the meeting provided us with the opportunity to update the FSB on our new economic development strategy and the skills strategy action planning. We also got the opportunity to hear about upcoming FSB events, discuss the challenges that small businesses in Milton Keynes are reporting, and discuss appropriate support required. Meeting with Business support organisations is vital as they provide us with advice and guidance in the development of our business support offer, and wider strategies such as the Economic Development Strategy 2016/17. For more information relating the FSB visit their website <http://www.fsb.org.uk/regions/thames-valley/branches/milton-keynes-north-bucks-branch>
- Regular readers of our newsletter will remember that we held a Magna Park Business Meeting in 2015, organising a round table discussion between key council staff and businesses based there. Due to the success of the meeting, this year we decided to expand and create a logistics and distribution sector meeting, held at the brand new Waitrose National Distribution Centre. At the meeting we were joined by large employers within the sector in Milton Keynes. Updates were given by council staff around planning, future growth plans, recruitment and apprenticeships. Interesting discussions took place relating to issues around staff recruitment for the festive periods and affordable housing for employees.
- We had the opportunity to reach out to businesses in MK at the recent Business 200 event hosted by MK College. Speaking at the event presented the opportunity to give an economic development update, following the creation of the MK Skills Strategy and Local Economic Assessment 2016. The event gave us the opportunity to speak to businesses directly, listen to feedback and answer questions.
- Tourism and skills in the hospitality sector were on the agenda when we met with Holiday Inn in Central Milton Keynes. It was useful to see the views and opinions of a long established Milton Keynes business with regards to attracting people to a career in hospitality, and the professional development of staff in the sector. The conversation shifted to promoting Milton Keynes as a tourist destination and the benefits it can bring to the hospitality industry.



Social Media

Our social media presence goes from strength to strength. Our Twitter followers at the end of July stood at 3,899 (an increase of 3.7% from May) and our LinkedIn connections are at 3,617 (an increase of 3.1% from May). The Economic Development team continues to utilise social media as a channel to promote Milton Keynes. It is vital that we remain competitive and do not become complacent in our inward investment activities, constantly and consistently engaging with our national and international stakeholders.

The Economic Development team attended a social media training session to support the promotion of Milton Keynes through our Twitter messages. This training was provided by Jeanus Consulting who encouraged the team to utilise various methods when sending out messages to ensure they are reached by our target audience. The team is looking forward to putting these new ideas to use going forward.

Help Spread the Word

Follow us at @InvestMK at www.twitter.com/InvestMK and by joining our LinkedIn group at <http://uk.linkedin.com/in/investmk>

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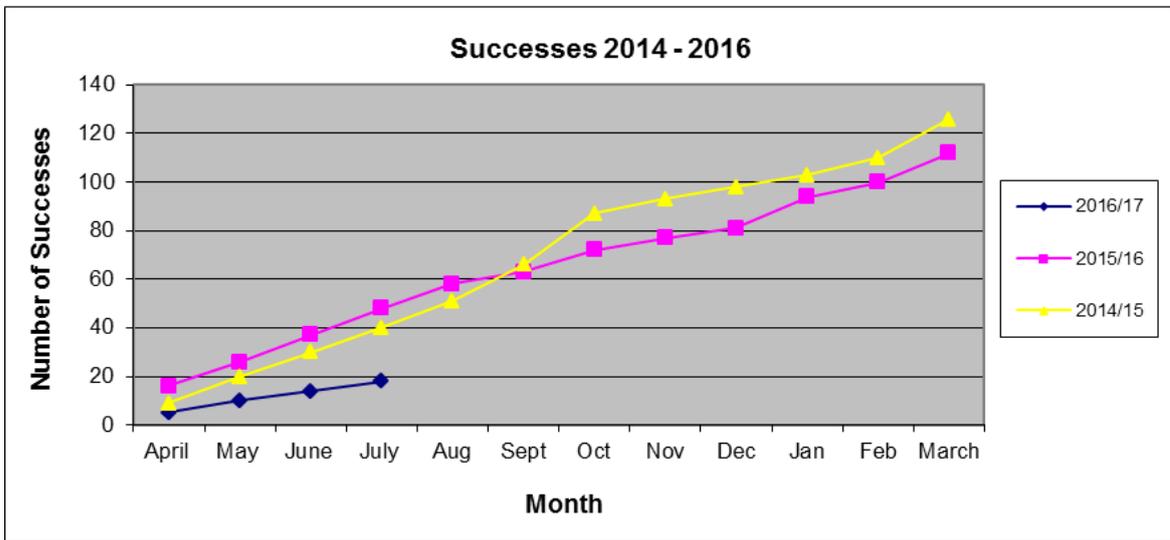
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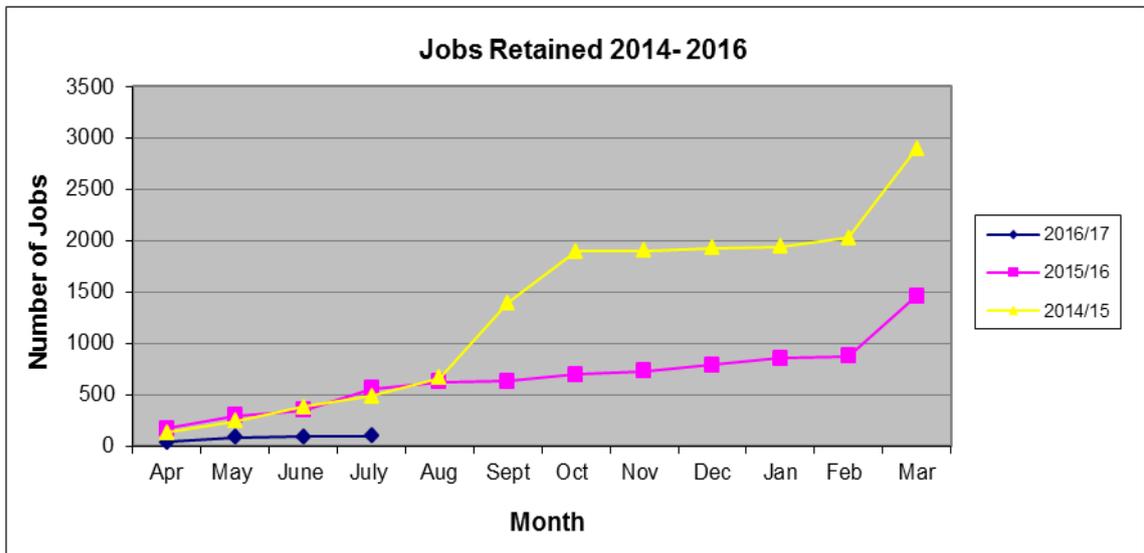
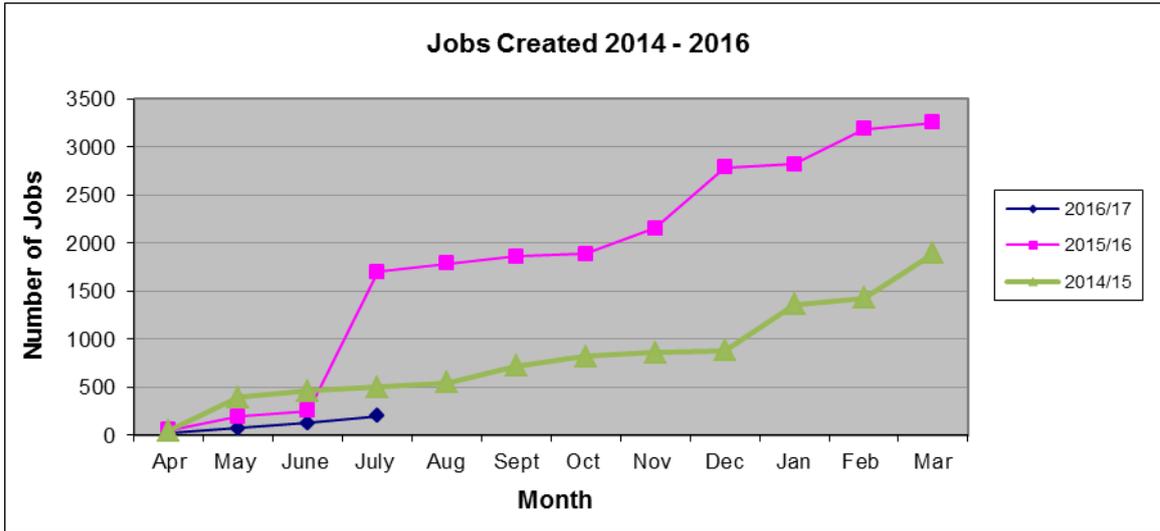


Investment Success Update

	June 2016	July 2016	Year to date
Companies arriving in or relocating within MK	4	4	18
From Target Group*	2	3	8
Total Jobs Created	51	78	200
Total Jobs Retained	2	10	97

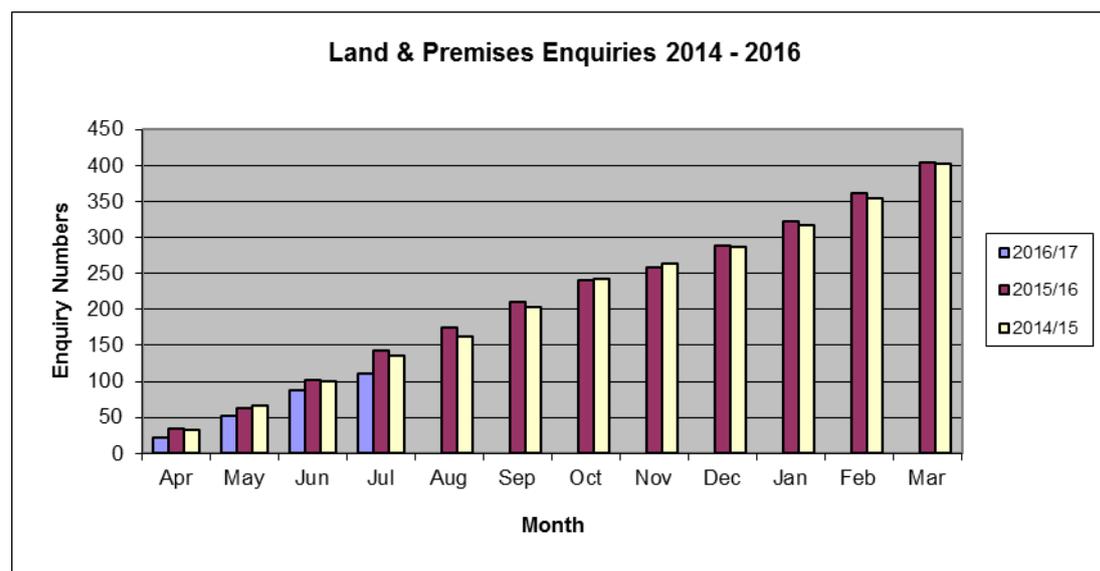
* High growth, high value, knowledge-based businesses





Enquiry Activity Update

The chart below shows the trends for commercial land & premises enquiries between 2014–2016:



Enquiries

During June and July 49 enquiries were received together with 8 investment successes consisting of 2 micro and 6 small businesses. The team continues to promote MK through multiple channels and partners. Our current enquiry caseload is 19 category 'A' and 48 category 'B' enquiries. (Category 'A' covers enquiries from UKTI and foreign owned businesses; land enquiries; industrial premises over 50k sqft; office premises over 10k sqft. and key business sectors. Category 'B' enquiries cover all other requests for support.)

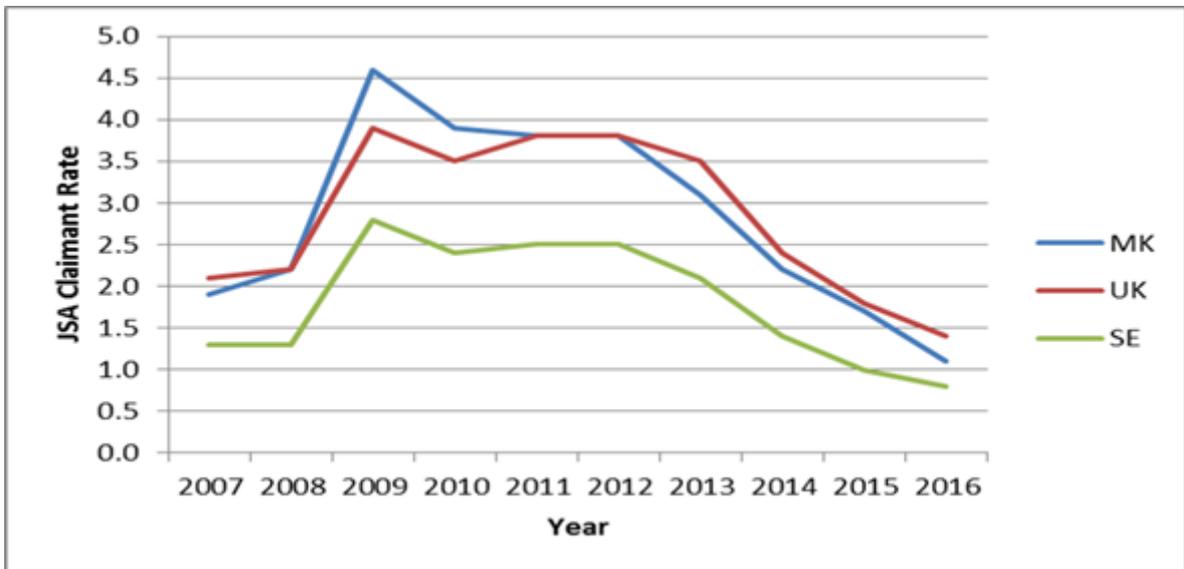
Enquiries by Sector	June 2015	June 2016	July 2015	July 2016
Office	14	6	12	2
Industrial	13	7	9	8
Retail	4	3	2	6
Land	2	1	6	4
Information and Support	6	9	12	3
Total	39	26	41	23



The Labour Market in Milton Keynes, July 2016

The rate of unemployment (JSA claimant count) in Milton Keynes was 1.1% in July 2016. This is a fall of 0.1% from June 2016 and a fall of 0.6% from July 2015 (the claimant count rate stood at 1.7% in July 2015). There were 1,894 JSA claimants in Milton Keynes in July 2016. This is a decrease of 96 individuals from June 2016.

The Milton Keynes JSA claimant count rate of 1.1% is lower than the national (UK) rate of 1.4% but higher than the regional (south east) figure of 0.8%. The chart below shows the unemployment (claimant count) rates in MK, the South East and the UK from 2007.



	Milton Keynes	UK	South East
2007	1.9	2.1	1.3
2008	2.2	2.2	1.3
2009	4.6	3.9	2.8
2010	3.9	3.5	2.4
2011	3.8	3.8	2.5
2012	3.8	3.8	2.5
2013	3.1	3.5	2.1
2014	2.2	2.4	1.4
2015	1.7	1.8	1.0
2016	1.1	1.4	0.8

Source: Jobseekers Allowance, Office for National Statistics via NOMIS. NB: Claimant count data is taken from July of each year.



Getting our residents back into work

The Economic Regeneration Priority has seen stakeholders continue to successfully contribute to the reduction in unemployment levels in Milton Keynes. The council's Neighbourhood Employment Programme (NEP) has exceeded all three of its performance targets over the last three months and saw 376 new service users engaging, along with 106 people being supported into employment and 51 attending accredited training. This was a good start to the new financial year as the service continues to evidence its effectiveness with its positive interventions in supporting vulnerable people into education, training and employment. The NEP is also working much closer with construction contractors to assist in meeting their S.106 planning obligations in relation to employment and skills. A new framework has been created which will be used to determine the level of support owed to people who are furthest from the job market.

The new Mental Health Employment Support service continues its good work following a merger with the NEP. They have engaged 47 new service users this quarter, against a target of 49. The team has been very active in meeting with, and informing the adult mental health support services about the changes to delivery and this has been well received. A new working relationship is also being established with IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies) to enable both teams to work together with service users who access both services. This will provide a much more robust support network for clients

The Troubled Families (Strengthening Families programme), has engaged with 19 families. The two Employment Advisor's seconded from the DWP to support this client group have identified that barriers to employment for some families can include physical and emotional health issues and consequently, much of the Advisor's time is used building confidence levels and/or accessing additional support services to enable service users to move into employment. Due to their successful interventions the service has been able to make two (payment by results) claims to the DWP

Equality Works, with its focus on supporting unemployed people with special support needs have been very active; supporting many of its clients to apply for work, work placements and voluntary work. This service continues to apply interventions that will offer training and employment opportunities for their client group. The NEET support service has engaged with 540 young people since April'16 and continues to provide outreach job clubs in a variety of community settings.

Discussions have taken place between MKC's Transport Section, the NEP and Job Centre Plus (JCP) to introduce a subsidised community bike scheme (sponsored by Santander). The scheme will provide free access to a community bike for a year to those who are unemployed work seekers. The cost of this scheme is being shared by the Transport section, Next Bikes and JCP.

The Economic Development team works closely with Economic Regeneration. Enquiries from businesses interested in employing staff via the NEP are passed through to the Regeneration team, enabling the NEP and JCP to assist in their recruitment drives. The ED team work hard to promote the work of the NEP partnership wherever possible. A strong network of providers in MK and the joint approach to supporting people into employment continues to contribute to the ongoing reduction in unemployment levels in MK.