



Economic Development Newsletter

December/January 2017

Introduction

Welcome to the December/January edition of the newsletter. In this edition, we round up the latest news from Milton Keynes Council's (MKC) Economic Development Team. The New Year has brought local residents and businesses together to celebrate **Milton Keynes 50th Birthday**. There have been a host of events to honour all that Milton Keynes has achieved since its designation and this will continue throughout the year, and more information on what's to come will be covered in this edition. January has included some fantastic events and positive news relating to the growth of the Milton Keynes economy.

Milton Keynes 50th Birthday

On 23 January 2017 Milton Keynes turned 50! It is hard to believe that in 50 years Milton Keynes has been transformed from 8,850 hectares of farmland into a city with a population of 261,000, home to 11,850 businesses and an economy worth more than £10.4billion. 50 arts, leisure and heritage events were held over the birthday weekend. This included a huge party organised with great partnership working between Milton Keynes Council and Destination Milton Keynes and hosted at Bletchley Park. The event was attended by nearly 300 party goers, enjoying fantastic entertainment and a 4ft birthday cake made by local cake artist Karrin Simpson, featuring lots of famous MK landmarks. There is more to come during 2017 as organisations, groups and businesses across the city have pulled together to create a programme of events inspired by the past, present and future of Milton Keynes. To get involved visit the official MK50 website <http://www.mk50.co.uk/> or follow the twitter page @CultureMK

Powerhouse Report

What a great Birthday present as Milton Keynes is highlighted in the UK Powerhouse Q3 report for a GVA increase of 3.0% annually, overtaking Cambridge to take the top spot. This was heavily driven by a strong service sector and healthy business atmosphere, which continue to help production. Milton Keynes was also the strongest performing city in terms of employment growth, expanding employment in line with growth, with a 2.1% annual increase. UK Powerhouse is an extensive business study produced by Irwin Mitchell and leading economic think-tank Cebr.

To view the most recent UK Powerhouse report please visit the website <http://www.irwinmitchell.com/ukpowerhouse>

Centre for Cities

The celebrations continue with results from the most recent Cities Outlook, reporting that Milton Keynes 'average weekly workplace wages' ranking jumped from 10th to 4th place, and 'change in real wages' jumped from 45th to 2nd place out of 64 other locations. These increases should help to attract and retain skilled employees and support recruitment in Milton Keynes. Centre for Cities is an independent think-tank dedicated to understanding and improving UK city economies, by providing economic data on UK cities. To view the Cities Outlook 2017 visit the website <http://www.centreforcities.org/publication/cities-outlook-2017/>



MK Job Show

JS Media hosted the eighth Job Show at Centre MK during January, providing an exceptional mix of national, regional and local businesses, all offering fantastic career opportunities to our local residents. This event has gone from strength to strength in Milton Keynes, and has supported hundreds of people into new careers. For more information relating to MK Job Show, please visit the website www.mkjobshow.co.uk

Apprenticeship Show

Another fantastic event returns to Milton Keynes on 13 and 14 March at Arena MK in Bletchley. The National Apprenticeship Show provides a fantastic opportunity for employers to promote apprenticeships to schools, young people and adults. The event will include more than 100 employers and providers, showcasing opportunities to thousands of visitors. Last year's National Apprentice Show saw more than 13,000 young people, 11,000 teachers and staff and more than 3,000 parents and carers attend, and this year hopes to be even bigger! For more information visit the official website. <http://www.nationalapprenticeshipshow.org/midlands/>

SEMLEP News

New funding to drive forward rural growth plans

£5 million is being made available to Businesses across SEMLEP to help boost employment and growth in rural areas. Businesses are being invited to submit expressions of interest for support as part of a funding scheme. The calls have been developed in collaboration with SEMLEP and will be open to support food processing, business development and tourism infrastructure projects across the private, public and voluntary sectors for an initial 12 month period. A rural workshop will take place on 3 March. This event will help familiarise businesses with the calls and provide the opportunity to talk to members of the Rural Payments Agency team and representatives from SEMLEP. For more information, and details of how to apply for the funding, which forms part of the wider European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development programme, please visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rdpe-growth-programme>

Team News

It has been a very exciting time in the Economic Development Team during December and January as we approached Milton Keynes 50th Birthday. The team has also had an opportunity to feed in to a number of strategic documents and research to support economic growth across the UK, these include the Industrial Strategy and the Area Based review, more information can be found below.

New Industrial Strategy launched

In the lead up to the release of the Industrial Strategy we were invited by independent think tank Localis to share our views on the type of support industry needs, and to highlight what is being done to attract new businesses and support industry and growth. The emerging conclusions from the feedback received were shared with relevant government departments, to help inform the Industrial Strategy, with a fuller report scheduled in the run up to the March budget. The Strategy aims to improve living standards and economic growth in the UK by increasing productivity and drive growth across the whole country. We would encourage our partners and businesses to take



part in the consultation and to share your thoughts and suggestions. To do so, please visit: https://beisgovuk.citizenspace.com/strategy/industrial-strategy/?utm_campaign=gov&utm_source=gov.uk&utm_medium=referral&utm_content=cons-page

Area Based Review of Post-16 Education

The Economic Development team has been closely involved with the Area Based Review of Post-16 provision taking place across the SEMLEP area. The review is one of a national programme of area based reviews focusing on creating high quality education which meets the educational and economic needs of an area. The review encompasses all colleges across the SEMLEP area, including Milton Keynes College. We have been clear from the outset that Milton Keynes requires a strong further education offer to support the continued growth of the city and to ensure our residents have the skills needed to capitalise on the employment opportunities that growth brings. Further information on Area Based Reviews can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/topic/further-education-skills/administration>

Business Visits

We have kicked off our business engagement visits with local intermediaries from the business, professional and financial services sector. It has been extremely useful to share business intelligence not only from a local level but nationally and internationally. Understanding current market trends, building new relationships within this sector and attending events relating to global markets is something that will be built upon in the future.

We were excited to go along to ABB Robotics to see its Milton Keynes operation. ABB is a world leading supplier of industrial robots and robot software. During the tour of their facility we were able to see its robotics training centre, viewing robots in action which was fantastic. We also met a young person who had completed an apprenticeship with ABB, and got to hear about their experience and the projects they have been involved in. It was great to see how committed ABB is to encourage young people to get involved in robotics and also to see another business in Milton Keynes at the forefront of their sector. We look forward to working with them in the future.

We got the opportunity to visit Volkswagen Group UK HQ, which is based right here in Milton Keynes. Volkswagen is one of the world's largest car manufacturers and we discussed the UK HQ operation and its future plans for growth and recruitment of staff.

We started 2017 meeting with the chair of the Milton Keynes and North Bucks branch of the Federation of Small Businesses. These meetings are very useful as it allows us to discuss challenges and opportunities the business community in MK are facing. As well as finding out about FSB's plans to support and increase their membership in 2017, we also discussed the current projects and programmes Milton Keynes Council are involved in.



Social Media

Our social media presence goes from strength to strength. Our Twitter followers at the end of January stood at 4,183 (an increase of 2% from November) and our LinkedIn connections are at 2791 (an increase of 1.2% from November). The Economic Development team continues to utilise social media as one of its channels to promote Milton Keynes. It is vital that we remain competitive, constantly and consistently engaging with our national and international stakeholders.

Help Spread the Word

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

Pam Gosal

Head of Corporate Economic Development & Inward Investment

Economic Development: Invest MK contact: 01908 200800

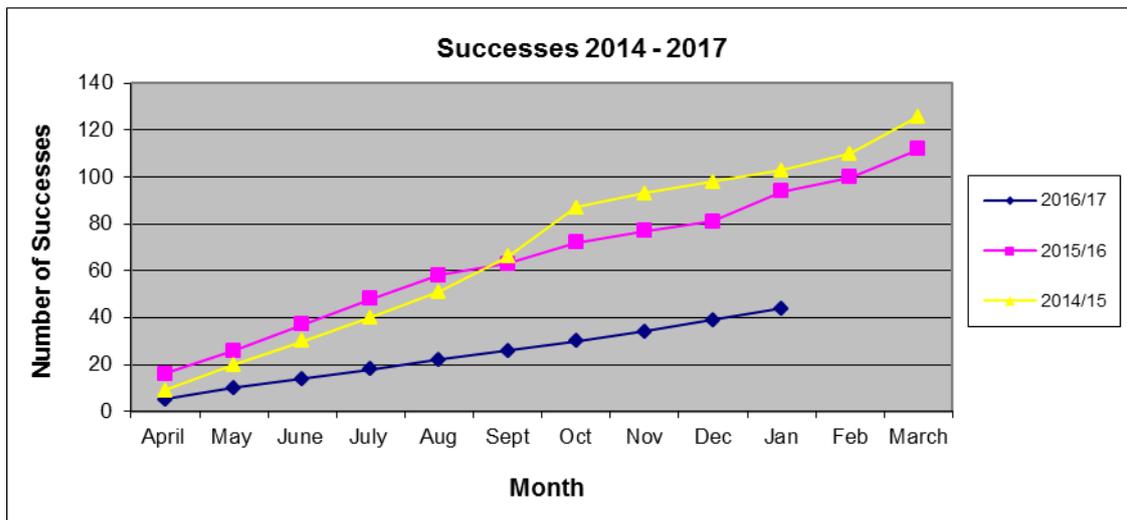
enquiries@investmiltonkeynes.com

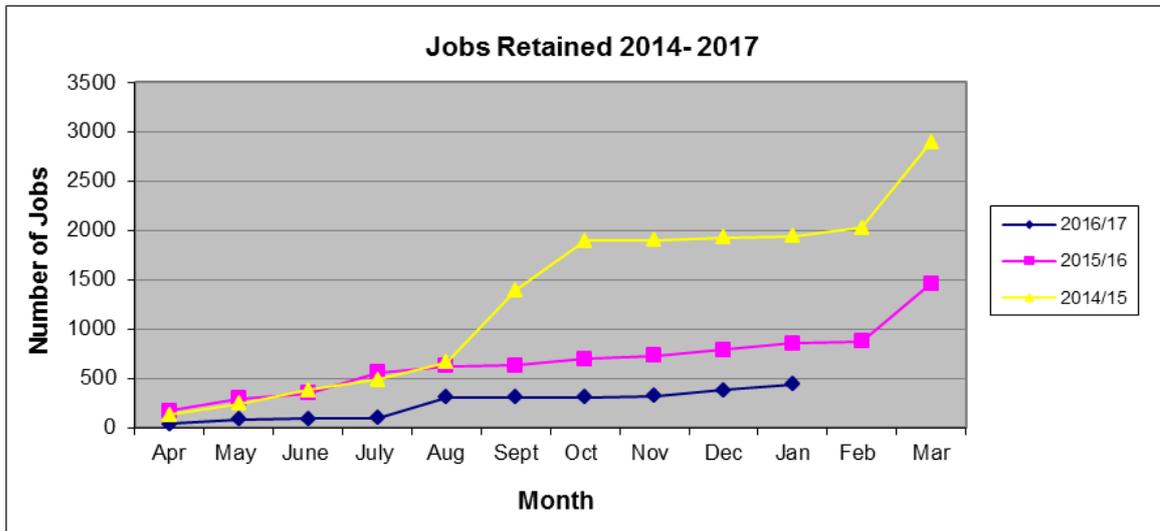
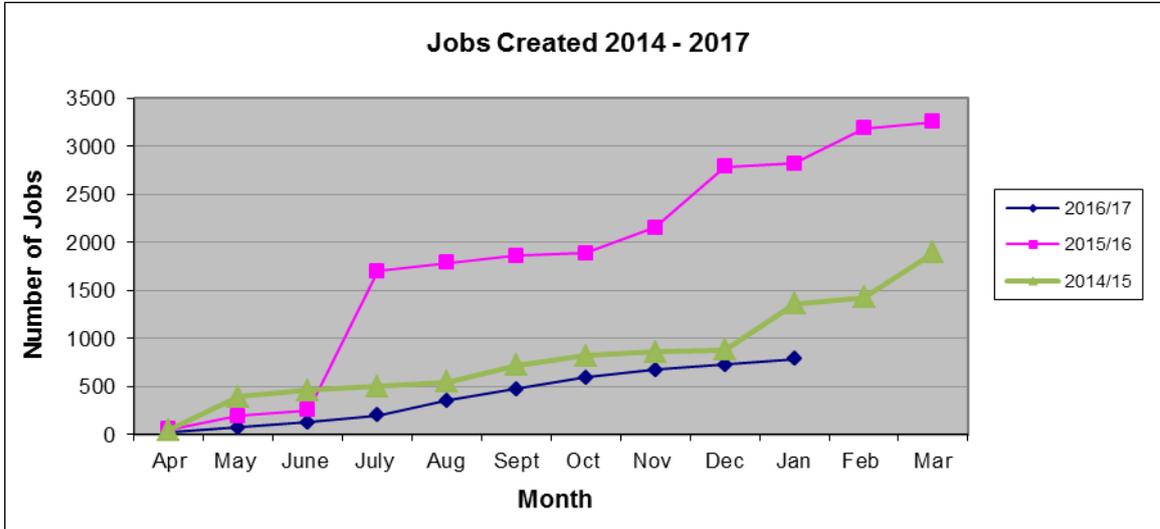


Investment Success Update

	December 2016	January 2017	Year to date
Companies arriving in or relocating within MK	5	5	44
From Target Group*	1	1	15
Total Jobs Created	57	58	783
Total Jobs Retained	64	58	439

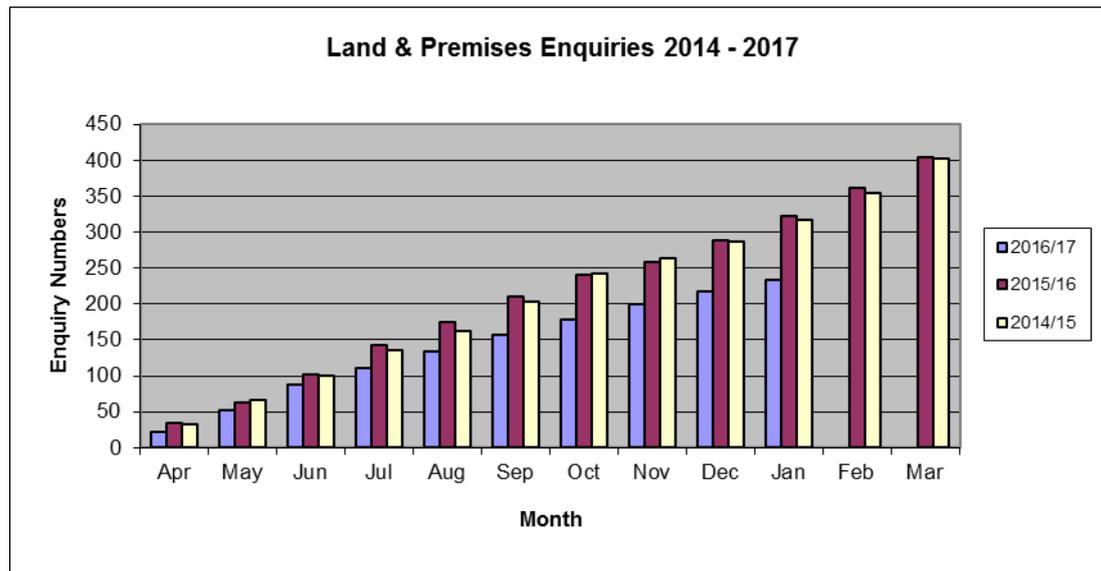
* High growth, high value, knowledge-based businesses





Enquiry Activity Update

The chart below shows the trends for commercial land & premises enquiries between 2014–2017:



Enquiries

During December and January, 34 enquiries were received as well as 10 investment successes consisting of 2 micro, 3 small, 1 medium and 4 large. The team continues to promote MK through multiple channels and partners. Our current enquiry caseload is 36 category 'A' and 70 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.)

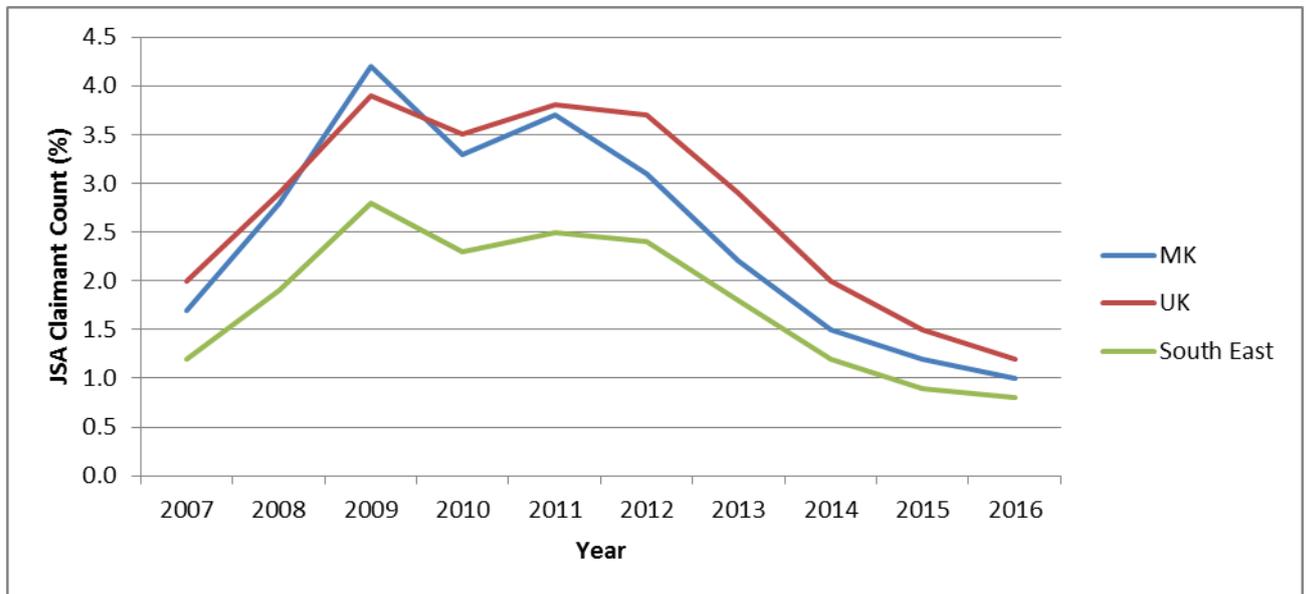
Enquiries by Sector	December 2015	December 2016	January 2016	January 2017
Office	7	8	11	2
Industrial	18	2	13	8
Retail	0	1	8	2
Land	2	2	0	4
Information and Support	4	5	2	0
Total	31	18	34	16



The Labour Market in Milton Keynes, October 2016

In December 2016, there were eight wards within Milton Keynes with JSA claimant unemployment rates above the borough average of 1.0%. Levels of claimant unemployment were highest in the wards of Woughton and Fishermead (2.1%), Central Milton Keynes (1.7%) and Bletchley East (1.5%).

Chart 1: JSA Claimant Rate Milton Keynes, South East & UK 2007-2016



	Milton Keynes	UK	South East
2007	1.7	2.0	1.2
2008	2.8	2.9	1.9
2009	4.2	3.9	2.8
2010	3.3	3.5	2.3
2011	3.7	3.8	2.5
2012	3.1	3.7	2.4
2013	2.2	2.9	1.8
2014	1.5	2.0	1.2
2015	1.2	1.5	0.9
2016	1.0	1.2	0.8

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



Getting our residents back into work

Economic Regeneration has had a very successful period leading up to the end of 2016, contributing to the reduction in unemployment levels in Milton Keynes. The council's Neighbourhood Employment Programme (NEP) has supported 152 people into employment within this period, meaning that they have reached their annual target early. This is a huge achievement considering the decrease in unemployment claimants and is an indication of the continuous usage of the NEP by those with additional employment support needs.

The Mental Health Employment Support service also had an exceptional period, again over achieving on its annual targets, whilst also supporting World Health Day and the Health Watch event in Middleton Hall. The Troubled Families (Strengthening Families programme), has continued to make progress and has made 204 payment by results claims. Equality Works, with its focus on supporting unemployed people with special support needs, has been very active in supporting many of its clients into work and on work placements. They continue to apply interventions that will offer training and employment opportunities for their client group.

There has been a significant decrease in the number of NEET 'unknowns' leading up to December 2016 which is a great improvement on the previous reporting period meaning that they have managed to make contact and obtain the destination of young people who have chosen to remain outside of the education or employment arena. NEET job clubs also saw an increase in young people who attended or received some other form of support. This rose to 495 (an increase of 70 young people) which again is a very successful period for the IAG service in Community Learning.

YourMK held a Trade day event in October at the Hilton/Double Tree Hotel at the Dons stadium, Bletchley inviting contractors to express an interest in the major regeneration work project to estates in MK. The work is expected to commence in 2017. More than 150 contractors registered an interest and attended the session. Presentations on the day outlined the need for all successful contractors to align their social value obligations in relation to employment and training opportunities with the NEP. This will be a very interesting new development for MK and should create many new opportunities for disadvantaged, unemployed local people.

The NEP team has made it to the final six from more than 600 applicants for the prestigious Partnership Award in the Local Government Chronicle (LGC) Annual Awards. The event takes place on 8 March at Grosvenor House in London, where NEP will be flying the flag for Milton Keynes.

The Economic Development (ED) team continues to work closely with Economic Regeneration. Enquiries from businesses interested in employing staff via the NEP are passed through to the Regeneration team. The ED team work hard to promote the work of the NEP partnership wherever possible.