Please find enclosed your Council Tax summary for the 2017/18 financial year. Council Tax makes up around 45% of the Council’s budget and is vital for delivering all the services we provide.

Milton Keynes Council continues to face stark financial challenges. Increasing demand for services and reducing central government funding means Milton Keynes Council must find over £60m in savings by 2021, on top of the £110m of cuts we have already found since 2011/12. In our budget for the coming year we need to find £20m of cuts.

Despite cuts we are continuing to prioritise making Milton Keynes a more affordable city where everyone can get a home to rent or buy at a price they can afford, a good job, and live a long and healthy life. We will continue to deliver hundreds of services to the public, and our budget this year included:

- More investment in prevention services and adult social care
- No reduction in funding to the voluntary sector
- No increase in parking charges for shoppers or visitors to MK
- More funding to tackle housing issues and homelessness

We will always look to ensure that the Council operates efficiently, such as reducing our overheads by decreasing the number of buildings we use, or saving money on procurement and commissioning. However there is a limit to what we can do as demand for services keeps rising and our funding falls.

Tough times mean we must make difficult choices. The reality of having less money is clear.

We have taken the difficult decision to raise Council Tax by 1.95% to fund vital services. Even after this rise many services will still face cuts and you will start, or already have started, to notice a difference in many of the things we do, such as cutting the grass or sweeping the streets.

Milton Keynes Council is also no different than the rest of the country and we face increasing costs delivering social care. We have therefore opted to charge a further Adult Social Care Levy of a 3% precept on Council Tax. This money is solely used for funding Social Care, although the total we will be able to collect from the Levy will still not meet the cost of increased demand.

The task facing the Council in making ends meet is extremely challenging. The need to prioritise our spending and do so with a long term vision for the City has never been greater. I understand the responsibility of ensuring your money is used efficiently and effectively and as Leader of Milton Keynes Council it is my honour and privilege to serve you and the all the people of Milton Keynes.

Kind Regards

Councillor Pete Marland