



## Message from Councillor Pete Marland Leader of the Council

The past year has been one of the most difficult many of us have will have ever had to face.

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected everyone, and my deepest sympathies are with those who have lost loved ones, friends or colleagues to the virus.

I am proud of the way Milton Keynes Council has continued to deliver essential services when people needed them most. It has been very challenging, however we have stepped up when it mattered most.

As well as continuing to provide our core services and meet essential needs such as social care, child protection and waste collection, we've had to change or adapt how many services are delivered due to Covid-19.

With this letter you will find a booklet of all the amazing things Milton Keynes Council and our partners have done to support people during the past year.

It has been another very tough year for us financially. The pandemic comes after ten years of budget cuts. Milton Keynes Council has had to make over £157m of savings over the past decade.

The cost of providing day to day services such as adult social care and children's services continues to rise as demand increases.

The impact of the pandemic on the finances of the council has been immense. The revenue we get from business rates and council tax has fallen as fewer businesses and people are able to pay, and our budgeted income from fees and charges has dropped by over 28%.

Central government has provided some funding to help, however even after this is taken into account there is a financial shortfall of around £15m for the 2021/22 financial year.

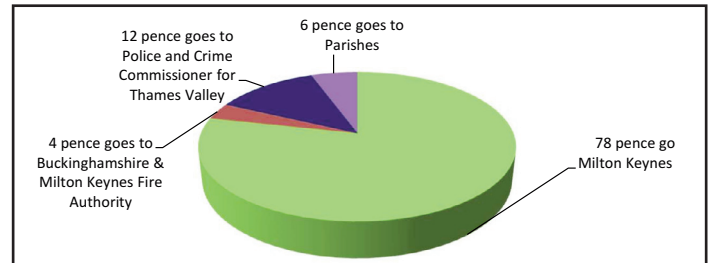
We have taken the very difficult decision that we will meet this gap in a number of ways, but

- **A 2.5% increase in Council Tax;**
- **Spending reductions of £9m;**
- **Use of £3m of reserves to cover loss of income.**

### Council Tax

We know increasing council tax is difficult, however the 2.5% increase is one of the lowest in the country this year and our council tax is the lowest in the South Midlands area.

Milton Keynes Council does not receive all the council tax you pay. A breakdown of each pound we collect from you is:



### Use of reserves

The council puts money aside to use in an emergency. The administration has taken the view that on this occasion due to the unprecedented nature of the pandemic we will use our reserves to balance our budget.

We think this is the right thing to do and it would not have been possible had we spent this money in previous years.

### Our priorities for 2021/22

The funding you provide through your council tax will continue to pay for the services we deliver. It will be challenging and we will need to focus on our priorities which include:

- **Supporting vulnerable people and keeping people safe;**
- **Saving jobs, helping business and investing in a green recovery;**
- **Tackling child poverty and health inequalities;**
- **Continuing to get the basics right.**

I know that the past year has not been easy, but by working together and investing in a green recovery, I'm sure that Milton Keynes will emerge with stronger, greener communities.

Councillor Pete Marland  
Leader of the Council