

Milton Keynes Smart City Action Plan

2024-2029



Milton Keynes City Council published a five-year Technology, Smart City, Digital and Creative Industries Strategy in March 2024 to grow the city's global reputation as a Smart City and home of Innovation.

This strategy committed the City Council to produce a Smart City Action plan to develop MK's Smart City and Innovation goals. This Action plan should be read alongside the [Strategy](#).

In this action plan, we set out:

- Our renewed focus on our Smart City and Innovation projects.
- How we will embed our approach to Smart City and Innovation and trialling new technologies within the City Council.
- Our Goals and how we will measure success.
- A list of deliverables for the next five years of Smart City and Innovation activity, that will enable those Goals.
- Our work plan that will result in those Deliverables.

Moving forwards, we will encourage pilots and experiments within Milton Keynes that contribute to the major challenges the city faces. We are particularly keen to hear from innovative businesses proposing trials that focus on the environment (including biodiversity, net zero, and sustainable transport), health and social care, and reducing the cost of running public services.

We encourage any businesses who would be interested in working with the city to contact enquiries@investmiltonkeynes.com with their ideas.

GOALS

- Embed Milton Keynes' international reputation as a modern Smart City.
- Deliver innovation impact across broader range of City Council priorities: transport, sustainability (including environmental & net zero), social care and health.
- Move from pilots and prototypes to scaled, commercially viable, secure and assured Smart City services.
- Support the delivery of more efficient Council services through Innovation and an improved Citizen experience of living in a Smart City.
- Provide a city scale Smart City 'Test Bed' to encourage innovation and attract Tech industry and investment.

DELIVERABLES

- A **Smart City and Innovation programme** of work that recognises the crossover between internal MKCC and external Smart City projects (25Q3)
- An internal **Smart City and Innovation board** that directs use of resources and ensures benefits are realised (25Q1)
- A new way of working within MKCC that utilises skills and expertise across different Service areas to make the policy, strategy and technical decisions needed to ensure a joined-up Innovation and Smart City programme (25Q1)
- An external **advisory group** of Milton Keynes stakeholders to advise the Smart City and Innovation programme (25Q3)
- A **Smart City prospectus** to inform those MKCC's external partners that deliver against MKCC goals and curate the City Testbed (25Q4)
- A members' **business model** that funds some of the Testbed services and facilities (26Q1)
- A **data strategy** and **technical architecture** for connected infrastructure that serves all the Smart City projects and can be security assured. (25Q4)
- At least three **new Smart City projects** that focus on:
 - Reducing direct costs for the council (25Q3)
 - Improving healthcare and social provision. (25Q4)
 - Improvements in Environmental monitoring and net-zero targets (26Q1)
- At least two **new SMEs** that have started to use the MK Testbed for new product development (26Q1).
- The **Smart City Experience centre** open and running and starting to engage citizens (25Q2).

WORK PLAN

1 Marketing and Engagement - Ensure a continuous storyline of Smart City related project work, through multiple channels. Help develop the Smart City Experience centre as the place for citizen engagement and a shop front for the MK 'City Scale Test Bed'.

2 Programme - Refresh and develop the Smart City & Innovation programme. Expand beyond transport & mobility into other sectors of interest to MKCC Services. Match technology solutions to problems, be agile and flexible to adapt and change.

3 Governance – Derived from the MKCC Council Plan: 'Innovate new ways to deliver services', create a Smart City and Innovation Board that ensures the benefits of the Smart City and Innovation programme are understood and realised, and that rigour around security, assurance and systems integrity is maintained.

4 Team – Develop a new way of working for MKCC colleagues and teams, with a blend of programme, project management, technical and business development skills, that can work with external partners as an Intelligent Customer. This approach will ensure ownership, responsibility, realisation of benefits, systems integrity, data strategy and security assurance for the programme. It will work to the Smart City and Innovation Board, co-ordinating the programme across Services.

5 Testbed & Consortium – Re-launch and market the MK City Scale Testbed, making it easier to contact and engage with MKCC and understand the services and support on offer to businesses. Develop a wider consortium of partners and businesses for grant applications and scaled commercial services.

Smart City Action Plan detail

Specific Action	Start	Complete	Budget (allocated under Delegated Decision 10Oct23)
1. Marketing and Engagement			£40k
Work in partnership with the Open University to keep the MK:Smart brand refreshed and targeted on Smart City activity	Now	Ongoing	
Write a guide for the MK City Scale Testbed, its facilities, services and how to access them and work with MKCC.	25Q1	25Q3	
Ensure active engagement with government partners in DfT and DSIT	Now	Ongoing	
Engage with the Smart City community, through external partners including Bable, Smart Cities world.	Now	Ongoing	£35k
Engage with local businesses & institutions to contribute to the Smart City Experience Centre.	25Q2	Ongoing	
Build the Smart City work into a new annual Milton Keynes Tech week	Now	25Q1	
Work with partners to develop a Citizen engagement strategy for the Experience centre.	25Q1	25Q2	£5k
2. Programme			£50k
Work with other Local authorities to identify successful projects and business cases that have developed into sustained, cost-effective services.	Now	25Q2	
Establish the priority city challenges including: the climate emergency, health, wellbeing, inequality, deprivation, and delivery of social care.	24Q4	25Q2	
Capture internal Service input into Smart City and Innovation programme, including where trials could result in cost savings.	24Q4	25Q2	
Engage with government partners to identify funding opportunities for new trials and projects aligned to the programme.	Now	Ongoing	
Create draft programme for discussion with external advisors.	25Q2	25Q3	
Run an accelerator with a MK partner to encourage local industry participation.	25Q3	26Q2	£50k
3. Governance			£0
Establish the Smart City and Innovation Board.	24Q4	25Q1	
Write a process flow for decision making and allocation of resources on the Innovation/Smart City programme.	24Q4	25Q1	
Work with the tech ecosystem and MK:Smart to establish an advisory group	25Q1	25Q2	
Write a Smart City Prospectus for those that deliver against MKCC goals and curate the Testbed.	25Q2	25Q3	
Identify external partner(s) that can deliver against the Smart City prospectus under the direction of the Smart City and Innovation Board.	25Q3	25Q4	
4. Team			£175k
Identify skill needs and gaps amongst current staff based on current & future Smart City & Innovation programme.	24Q4	25Q1	

Write Job description and recruit for new role within the team, (establishing two roles with the Council's Economic Development team) that can contribute to the Smart City & Innovation programme.	25Q1	25Q3	£175k
Deepen existing relationship with NCSC and identify MK point of contact for connected places	Now	25Q1	
Establish a cross Service Innovation forum to share ideas and best practice.	Now	24Q4	
5. Testbed & Consortium			£10k
Identify a Testbed primary point of contact within the Innovation/Economic Development team.	Now	25Q2	
Set up Enquiries inbox via Invest Milton Keynes website	25Q1	25Q3	£10k
Write a set of Testbed use-cases to help inform the architecture and infrastructure required over time.	25Q2	25Q3	
Build a Testbed premium into grant funded projects to help with running costs and making it self-sufficient.	Now	Ongoing	
Engage with Connected Places Catapult and others for Testbed design advice and its link to the Milton Keynes Tech and Innovation Quarter plans.	24Q4	25Q3	
Build a register of interested potential consortium partners.	Now	Ongoing	
Develop an innovators members model with the Open University (and potentially others).	Now	26Q1	