MK LABOUR PARTY
LOCAL ELECTION MANIFESTO 2018

MAKING A GREAT CITY GREATER
It has been my honour and privilege to serve as Leader of Milton Keynes Council since 2014.

MK Council has had to make over £144m in cuts because of austerity imposed by the Conservative government. Despite the challenges we’ve improved the council, protected services and moved the city forwards.

We’re proud of our record since 2014, as we’ve achieved a lot.

• A new and ambitious vision for our city with MK Futures 2050.
• Ensured financial stability against cuts.
• Kept weekly bin collections.
• Every library and children’s centre kept open.
• No cuts to public transport.

We have also delivered what we said we would do.

We promised new council houses, and despite no central government support, we are delivering 200 new council homes, the first in a generation.

We promised to introduce the real living wage for our employees and on all MK Council contracts, and we did.

We promised to improve our roads and redways, and we have, and after the recent wet winter and cold weather, we’ve even invested an extra £200k to fix over 5000 extra potholes by the end of May.

Yet we know we still have challenges. When we took over running the council we had around 80 homeless families and every single one in Bed & Breakfast. Now even though we have over 600 homeless families in temporary accommodation, the number of families in B&B is zero.

We also have the outrage of increasing numbers of people sleeping rough, yet despite cuts we have introduced a Housing First service offering people a secure, long term place to stay and the support services people need.

Since 2014 we have a record of delivery and with your support in the local elections on Thursday 3 May, we can continue to make a great city greater.

Kind Regards

Cllr Peter Marland
Leader,
Milton Keynes Council
Milton Keynes may grow to be a city of over 500,000 people by 2050, and we will fight to make sure that growth benefits everyone, with higher wages and more affordable housing.

We know that MK Council needs to continue to fight austerity and get the basic services right, like emptying the bins, keeping the roads in good condition and looking after our older people. Yet this is getting more and more difficult as the Conservative Government squeezes our funding even more, we have to make tough choices.

Our key pledges to you are:

- End rough sleeping by 2021
- A deep clean for MK
- Double pothole repairs
- Cut mental health waiting times
- Increase funding to support older people

We are ambitious for the future of Milton Keynes. Last year we launched the MK Futures 2050 project, and we are proud that we recently announced Cranfield University would work with MK Council to open a new university in Central Milton Keynes, with an iconic building to match our £500m ambition.

The upcoming local elections are a test of what type of city we want to be. Labour wants to make a great city greater while keeping what makes us special, and we want to finish the job.

Vote Labour on Thursday 3 May.
A safe place to stay is a basic human right. It is an outrage that in a city like Milton Keynes we have a homelessness crisis.

When we took over running the MK Council from the Tories in 2014 all 80 homeless families were in Bed & Breakfast. Despite now having over 600 homeless families, not a single one is in B&B.

Sadly we have many people who are sleeping rough on our streets. MK Council has taken steps to tackle this crisis by increasing the level of emergency hostel accommodation and support, and funded a One Shop Stop as a place to provide help and support to homeless people.

We know that more needs to be done, and more help is needed to ensure people are able to access the support they need.

A strong record on homelessness, since 2014 we have:

- Reduced families in B&B to zero.
- Established the MK Homelessness Partnership and a One Stop Shop to provide help homeless people.
- Increased the number of emergency beds for rough sleepers.

Our 2018 pledges:

End rough sleeping by 2021, halving rough sleeping by 2019 and ending it by 2021.

Housing First, offering people a secure, long term place to stay and the support services people need to get them off the street quickly.

Improve access to support services, by working with partners to ensure that people who require help and support are able to get it, with more outreach services, improved access to drug and alcohol rehabilitation, and mental health services.

Prevention is better than cure, we will work to prevent homelessness by providing support services to deal with causes of homelessness such as debt or family breakdown.

Respect for everyone, we will not introduce measures that criminalise those in need of help or make it harder to tackle homelessness, while working with partners to reduce anti-social behaviour.
MK is built on the promise of a good home and a good job. We will only tackle the causes of homelessness if we build more genuinely affordable housing.

We will fight to restore the Milton Keynes dream that affordable housing is for everyone, not just the rich.

We want to build more council houses. Since 2014 we have started the biggest council house building programme in a generation, but we want to go further.

We also want more truly affordable housing in MK, not just expensive housing to line the pockets of developers. Whether it is a family trying to get on the housing ladder, a young person wanting to rent and save, or those looking for accessible housing, we want to ensure there is the right housing to meet demand.

A strong record on housing, since 2014 we have:

• Delivering 200 new council houses.
• Increased the number of affordable homes being built.
• Campaigned to build the thousands of affordable houses we need.

Our 2018 pledges:

500 new council houses by 2022, and continuing to campaign to be allowed to build the true level of affordable housing MK needs.

Use MKDP land to deliver more truly affordable housing, requiring at least 36% affordable housing on development sites.

Develop a new housing co-operative, by working with local people on proposals for a Community Land Trust to provide and maintain truly affordable housing.

Bring disused and empty housing back into use, by using all powers available to the council including use of Compulsory Purchase Orders.

75,000 new truly affordable homes by 2050, as part of any additional future growth.
As part of the Oxford - MK - Cambridge Corridor, Milton Keynes has the potential to be at the forefront of national investment and economic growth.

The National Infrastructure Commission has recommended Milton Keynes should grow to over 500,000 people by 2050.

Additional growth should benefit Milton Keynes and future generations, not simply meet targets and line the pockets of developers.

Milton Keynes has the once in a generation opportunity to take our future into our own hands. We believe that building communities; delivering infrastructure; preserving what makes MK special and ensuring any additional housing is affordable to all should be at the heart of any deal for additional housing.

A strong record on growth, since 2014 we have:

• Re-established Milton Keynes as “a project of national significance”.
• Set up a Growth Board with 17 other local authorities.
• Secured investment in major roads and junctions such as the A421, and made £3.5m improvements to Bletchley town centre.

Our 2018 pledges:

We will demand 75,000 new truly affordable homes, including 37,500 new council houses, and other truly affordable and accessible homes if Milton Keynes grows to over 500,000 residents by 2050.

No additional housing without funding for infrastructure required for development, including highways, public transport, schools, community facilities and health services.

Develop plans for a City Metro, a fast, mass transport system for MK.

Ensuring we benefit from our growth, by campaigning to retain locally more of the business rates our economy generates to support services and build cohesive communities.

Preserve our traditional grid roads and good quality green space in new developments, and establish the Parks Trust as the custodian of choice for any new green space.
COMMUNITY-LED REGENERATION

Our city is a success, but for too many the chances they have in life are not what they should be.

Regeneration is about more than bricks and mortar, it is about community, friendships and neighbours.

We want to work with communities so that everyone has the chance to share in the prosperity of the city, but the choices about how regeneration is carried out are for local residents, not MK Council, to decide.

Since 2014 we've taken steps to ensure that regeneration is community-led, but we want to go further, ensuring that local business benefits, and that regeneration offers a chance of a better job for local residents.

We also want to continue the support we give to the most vulnerable residents in MK, despite Tory cuts.

A strong record on regeneration, since 2014 we have:

• Ensured that any regeneration scheme will be community-led.
• Guaranteed no land grab by developers and no overall loss of social housing on regeneration estates.
• Promised high quality housing standards for any new homes.

Our 2018 pledges:

A Yes or No Referendum on any final proposals to ensure that residents are at the heart of any regeneration plans.

Improve resident engagement, by bringing the regeneration design service back in-house, improving communications, strengthening Residents’ Associations and re-establishing a Tenant Scrutiny Panel.

Increase skills and training, by increasing the number of job clubs on regeneration estates, and apprenticeship opportunities for local residents in any regeneration work.

A Local First preference, on contracts to increase the level of local economic benefit from regeneration to local businesses.

Support for the most vulnerable, by maintaining the current levels of access to welfare support.
GETTING THE BASICS RIGHT

We want to make sure that despite cuts, we get right the basic services Milton Keynes Council delivers day in, day out.

It would be impossible to deliver good services without a solid financial foundation. It has not been easy to make £144m of cuts imposed by the Tories and keep services going, while balancing the books.

MK Labour have made sure that MK Council is one of the last places to keep weekly waste and recycling collections, and we haven’t make any cuts this year to landscaping or litter collections.

We know that for many people, these services are the things they see everyday, and they’re important to the perception of the city, so we want to make sure that despite cuts, we focus on getting the basics right.

A strong record on protecting services, since 2014 we have:

- Ensured MK Council is financially secure and solvent.
- Kept weekly bin collections.
- Not closed any local recycling centres.

Our 2018 pledges:

A responsible balanced budget which limits the impact of austerity, focusing on our priorities, but that does not put the financial security of MK Council at risk.

Keep weekly bin collections, protecting the weekly waste service for black sack and recycling collections.

Reduce litter, by not cutting street cleaning services for two years, reducing the use of single use plastics, and replacing all litter bins in CMK.

A deep clean for MK, of any estate, street or redway where a parish council, community group or business takes responsibility for the continued upkeep of that space.

A landscaping service delivered by MKC, bringing the outsourced landscaping contract in-house.
A strong record on transport issues, since 2014 we have:

- Invested over £50m improving highways and fixing more potholes.
- Introduced reduced fares for young people and not cut public transport budgets.
- Not increased parking charges in CMK for shoppers or visitors.
- Installed over 5,000 new LED lights on MK roads and redways.

Our 2018 pledges:

**Double pothole repairs**, including fixing more local estate roads and pavements, and repairing more pothole clusters.

**Maintain reduced bus fares for young people**, and do all we can to protect other public transport funding.

**Implement a road safety review**, including an open consultation on grid road speed.

**Introduce a 20mph speed limit on new estates**, and support any existing community which requests a 20mph limit.

**Replace more missing road and street signs**, by removing the existing backlog and replace newly damaged signs faster.

Our city was built to be easy to get around and with great infrastructure. We’ve been investing over £50m in our highways to improve the overall condition of our roads, and we’ve recently invested extra funding to fix even more potholes after the bad winter weather.

Despite the cuts we also kept our promise and introduced reduced bus fares for young people and we didn’t cut any public transport funding.

We want a great public transport system, and a safe and well maintained road network. Limited resources means we can’t fix every pothole, but we can innovate to make sure our money goes further. We’ll also work with communities to make our roads safer, and continue to invest in public transport.
A strong record on supporting our communities, since 2014 we have:

- Kept open every library.
- No cuts to the voluntary sector, or parish and town councils.
- Fought cuts to Great Holm fire station.

Our 2018 pledges:

Keep all libraries open, to retain the library service and make best use of our buildings.

Fair funding for parish councils, working with town and parish councils on a new funding model that focuses reducing resources on the areas that need it the most.

Not cut funding to the voluntary sector, continuing direct grant funding to the next year.

A sustainable cultural service, that improves access to arts and culture for all, and increases the number of visitors to Milton Keynes, including continued support the of award winning MK:International Festival.

Revitalise MK Bowl, by developing a business case for an enhanced music venue e-Sports centre, and bring the historic city landmark back into regular use.

Milton Keynes is a vibrant, diverse place which has a unique community of communities.

Where other councils such as Northamptonshire have made deep cuts to community services, we’ve invested. We haven’t closed a single library, in fact we’ve opened new libraries and improved our existing ones. We’ve supported our parish and town councils and not cut any of the funding they get from MK Council.

We’ve fought cuts to our policing and to the fire services, including when the Conservatives voted to close Great Holm fire station.

We want to make sure that as MK continues to grow and develop, it isn’t just a place to live, it’s a place with a thriving culture and communities.
A strong record on improving health and wellbeing, since 2014 we have:

- Signed the UNISON Ethical Care Charter
- Improved dementia services and invested over £25m in care services and Learning Disabilities services.
- Funded two new GP surgeries, a new cancer centre and fought attempts to downgrade our hospital.

Our 2018 pledges:

Increase funding to support older people, by investing an extra £500k to improve our Home Care service to support older people to live independent lives in their own homes.

Develop an MK Council community health service, by working with MKCCG and other partners to develop locally based, more resilient and outcomes-focused community health provision.

Cut waiting times for mental health services, by working with partners to reduce waiting times for children’s mental health services, and improve other mental health support.

No cuts to domestic abuse services levels, including retaining the current number of refuge placements.

Review the Safer:MK Partnership, to strengthen community safety and make it more responsive to community needs, despite police cuts.

Ensuring that we have a healthy community that empowers people to look after their own wellbeing, while taking care of our older people is a challenge we need to meet.

MK Labour have consistently fought for more resources and against cuts to our NHS. We’ve ensured two new GP surgeries in Brooklands and Whitehouse, and contributed over £10m to a new cancer centre at MK Hospital.

We oppose any attempt to privatise the NHS by merging services with neighbouring authorities.

We want to make sure that we are integrating health and social care in the city, investing for the long term to keep people well, but also in improving our services to older and vulnerable people, not just to save money, but improve lives.
A strong record putting young people first, since 2014 we have:

- Not closed any children’s centres.
- Created over 2000 new school places, expanded or built 17 new schools, and over 94% of schools are good or outstanding.
- Provided extra funding for the MK Youth Cabinet.

Our 2018 pledges:

**Keep all children’s centres open**, to maintain a full network and provide services to families across MK.

**Focus resources on early intervention and prevention**, protecting spending on services that work to improve life chances for all children, while always putting the safety of vulnerable children first.

**Maintain a council-tax exemption for care leavers**, to ensure that those leaving our care have the best possible chance of success.

**Continue to fund voluntary groups working with young people**, where the funding benefits the physical or mental health and wellbeing of children, while reviewing and rationalising current spending.

**Improve play areas**, working with parish and town councils to improve and better maintain existing play areas, and ensure quality play areas on new estates.

Making sure every child has the opportunity to meet their potential and flourish in a safe environment with the support they need is our driving ambition.

We want to work with parents to ensure our young people grow up to be resilient and happy. We've kept open every single children’s centre so that all families can benefit from them, and we’ve increased investment in areas such as children’s mental health.

Investment in prevention services is a priority, and we will not make short term cuts that have detrimental impact on the welfare of our young people in the long term.

We want to have outstanding children’s services that continue to serve all families in MK, and improve the lives of our children and young people.
A strong record on jobs and skills, since 2014 we have:

- The UK’s fastest growing economy.
- Published the ambitious MK Futures 2050 Report.
- World leading innovation with driverless vehicles and MK Smart.
- Implemented the REAL Living Wage for all employees and in MK Council contracts.

Our 2018 pledges:

Support a new city centre MK College campus, for completion by summer 2022, and developing an Institute of Technology at Bletchley Park to train and develop the next generation of digital skills in the birthplace of computing.

A 21st Century new university in Milton Keynes, finishing the job establishing MK:U, a city centre university for Milton Keynes, with an international design competition for the building.

Establish a Buy Local Procurement Charter, with public sector partners to encourage more public spending with local businesses.

Support for the REAL Living Wage, by exploring a business rate incentive to small businesses who pay the REAL Living Wage.

Continue to roll out ultra-fast broadband, with partners to deliver full fibre gigabit broadband connection to at least 90,000 premises in MK.

We want to make sure that everyone, throughout life, can access a good job and have the skills to compete in a global economy.

Milton Keynes has a successful and vibrant economy, but the world is changing quickly and we want to ensure that we don’t stand still.

We want to make sure that everyone in MK benefits from our success, helping local businesses, and boosting our economy by supporting well paid, secure jobs by changing how MK Council buys goods and services.

We’ve recently announced a £500m project with Cranfield University to create MK:U, a 21st century city centre university in Milton Keynes, working with business to not only teach, but build on MK’s reputation as a centre of innovation to create new technologies and the jobs of the future.