

# New electoral arrangements for Milton Keynes City Council Draft Recommendations

December 2024

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### **A note on our mapping:**

The maps shown in this report are for illustrative purposes only. Whilst best efforts have been made by our staff to ensure that the maps included in this report are representative of the boundaries described by the text, there may be slight variations between these maps and the large PDF map that accompanies this report, or the digital mapping supplied on our consultation portal. This is due to the way in which the final mapped products are produced. The reader should therefore refer to either the large PDF supplied with this report or the digital mapping for the true likeness of the boundaries intended. The boundaries as shown on either the large PDF map or the digital mapping should always appear identical.

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# Introduction

## Who we are and what we do

1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is an independent body set up by Parliament.<sup>1</sup> We are not part of government or any political party. We are accountable to Parliament through a committee of MPs chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons. Our main role is to carry out electoral reviews of local authorities throughout England.

2 The members of the Commission are:

- Professor Colin Mellors OBE (Chair)
- Andrew Scallan CBE (Deputy Chair)
- Amanda Nobbs OBE
- Steve Robinson
- Wallace Sampson OBE
- Liz Treacy
- Ailsa Irvine (Chief Executive)

## What is an electoral review?

3 An electoral review examines and proposes new electoral arrangements for a local authority. A local authority's electoral arrangements decide:

- How many councillors are needed.
- How many wards or electoral divisions there should be, where their boundaries are and what they should be called.
- How many councillors should represent each ward or division.

4 When carrying out an electoral review the Commission has three main considerations:

- Improving electoral equality by equalising the number of electors that each councillor represents.
- Ensuring that the recommendations reflect community identity.
- Providing arrangements that support effective and convenient local government.

5 Our task is to strike the best balance between these three considerations when making our recommendations.

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<sup>1</sup> Under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

6 More details regarding the powers that we have, as well as further guidance and information about electoral reviews and the review process in general, can be found on our website at [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

## Why Milton Keynes?

7 We are conducting a review of Milton Keynes City Council ('the Council') as its last review was completed in 2014, and we are required to review the electoral arrangements of every council in England 'from time to time'.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, some councillors currently represent many more or fewer electors than others. We describe this as 'electoral inequality'. Our aim is to create 'electoral equality', where the number of electors per councillor is as even as possible, ideally within 10% of being exactly equal.

8 This electoral review is being carried out to ensure that:

- The wards in Milton Keynes are in the best possible places to help the Council carry out its responsibilities effectively.
- The number of electors represented by each councillor is approximately the same across the city.

## Our proposals for Milton Keynes

9 Milton Keynes should be represented by 60 councillors, three more than there are now.

10 Milton Keynes should have 20 wards, one more than there are now.

11 The boundaries of 19 wards should change; one will stay the same.

## How will the recommendations affect you?

12 The recommendations will determine how many councillors will serve on the Council. They will also decide which ward you vote in, which other communities are in that ward, and, in some cases, which parish council ward you vote in. Your ward name may also change.

13 Our recommendations cannot affect the external boundaries of the city or result in changes to postcodes. They do not take into account parliamentary constituency boundaries. The recommendations will not have an effect on local taxes, house prices, or car and house insurance premiums and we are not able to consider any representations which are based on these issues.

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<sup>2</sup> Local Democracy, Economic Development & Construction Act 2009 paragraph 56(1).

## Have your say

14 We will consult on the draft recommendations for a 12-week period, from 3 December 2024 to 24 February 2025. We encourage everyone to use this opportunity to comment on these proposed wards as the more public views we hear, the more informed our decisions will be in making our final recommendations.

15 We ask everyone wishing to contribute ideas for the new wards to first read this report and look at the accompanying map before responding to us.

16 You have until 24 February 2025 to have your say on the draft recommendations. See page 27 for how to send us your response.

## Review timetable

17 We wrote to the Council to ask its views on the appropriate number of councillors for Milton Keynes. We then held a period of consultation with the public on warding patterns for the city. The submissions received during consultation have informed our draft recommendations.

18 The review is being conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
12 March 2024	Number of councillors decided
7 May 2024	Start of consultation seeking views on new wards
9 September 2024	End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming draft recommendations
3 December 2024	Publication of draft recommendations; start of second consultation
24 February 2025	End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
3 June 2025	Publication of final recommendations



## Analysis and draft recommendations

19 Legislation<sup>3</sup> states that our recommendations should not be based only on how many electors<sup>4</sup> there are now, but also on how many there are likely to be in the five years after the publication of our final recommendations. We must also try to recommend strong, clearly identifiable boundaries for our wards.

20 In reality, we are unlikely to be able to create wards with exactly the same number of electors in each; we have to be flexible. However, we try to keep the number of electors represented by each councillor as close to the average for the council as possible.

21 We work out the average number of electors per councillor for each individual local authority by dividing the electorate by the number of councillors, as shown on the table below.

	2023	2030
Electorate of Milton Keynes	202,170	219,993
Number of councillors	60	60
Average number of electors per councillor	3,370	3,667

22 When the number of electors per councillor in a ward is within 10% of the average for the authority, we refer to the ward as having 'good electoral equality'. All of our proposed wards for Milton Keynes are forecast to have good electoral equality by 2030.

## Submissions received

23 See Appendix C for details of the submissions received. All submissions may be viewed on our website at [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

## Electorate figures

24 The Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2029, a period five years on from the originally scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2024. These forecasts were broken down to polling district level and predicted an increase in the electorate of around 9% by 2029.

25 We considered the information provided by the Council and are satisfied that the projected figures are the best available at the present time. We have used these figures to produce our draft recommendations. Owing to delays caused by the 2024

<sup>3</sup> Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

<sup>4</sup> Electors refers to the number of people registered to vote, not the whole adult population.

UK General Election, the publication of our final recommendations has been delayed until 2025. After discussion with the Council, we are satisfied that the forecast originally produced for 2029 will stand as the best available estimate for 2030.

26 Our mapping tool uses geocoded electoral registers supplied by the Council to locate electors, by associating addresses with specific geographic coordinates. It considers each elector's location to produce precise elector counts for each ward. There can be very slight differences between the electorate figures published on our website at the beginning of the review and the electorate figures published in this report. However, these are very minor and do not impact on our recommendations.

## Number of councillors

27 Milton Keynes City Council currently has 57 councillors. We have looked at evidence provided by the Council and have concluded that increasing by three will ensure the Council can carry out its roles and responsibilities effectively.

28 We therefore invited proposals for new patterns of wards that would be represented by 60 councillors.

29 As Milton Keynes City Council elects by thirds (meaning it has elections in three out of every four years) there is a presumption in legislation<sup>5</sup> that the Council have a uniform pattern of three-councillor wards. In each review of local authorities that elect by thirds, we will aim to deliver a pattern of three-member wards. However, in all cases this consideration will not take precedence over our other statutory criteria, and we will not recommend uniform patterns in the number of councillors per ward or division if, in our view or as is shown in evidence provided to us, it is not compatible with our other statutory criteria.

30 We received no submissions proposing specific alternative numbers of councillors in response to our consultation on ward patterns. Some residents suggested that the number of councillors should be reduced, but did not offer evidence as to how the Council could effectively discharge its functions with a smaller number of councillors. We therefore based our draft recommendations on a 60-councillor council.

## Ward boundaries consultation

31 We received 65 submissions in response to our consultation on ward boundaries. These included four city-wide proposals: from the Conservative Group (two proposals), Milton Keynes Labour Party and the Liberal Democrat Group on

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<sup>5</sup> Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development & Construction Act 2009 paragraph 2(3)(d) and paragraph 2(5)(c)

Milton Keynes Council. For brevity, throughout this report, these submissions are referred to by the respective political parties.

32 The Liberal Democrat and Labour proposals provided detailed evidence on a ward-by-ward basis in support of their proposals, while the Conservatives did not offer detailed evidence in support of their proposals. This lack of evidence meant that we have not adopted the Conservative proposals as part of our draft recommendations, except where they coincide with proposals from other sources.

33 The remainder of the submissions provided localised comments for ward arrangements in particular areas of the city.

34 The four city-wide schemes provided uniform patterns of three-councillor wards for Milton Keynes. We carefully considered the proposals received and were of the view that the proposed patterns of wards resulted in good levels of electoral equality in most areas of the authority and generally used clearly identifiable boundaries.

35 Our draft recommendations are based on the Liberal Democrats' proposals, modified in some areas to provide a better balance of our statutory criteria. In several areas, all four full schemes proposed identical, or very similar, wards for particular areas of Milton Keynes.

36 Our draft recommendations also take into account local evidence that we received, which provided further evidence of community links and locally recognised boundaries. In some areas we considered that the proposals did not provide for the best balance between our statutory criteria and so we identified alternative boundaries.

37 We visited the area in order to look at the various proposals on the ground. This tour of Milton Keynes helped us to decide between the different boundaries proposed.

## Draft recommendations

38 Our draft recommendations are for 20 three-councillor wards. We consider that our draft recommendations will provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we received such evidence during consultation.

39 The tables and maps on pages 9–21 detail our draft recommendations for each area of Milton Keynes. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory<sup>6</sup> criteria of:

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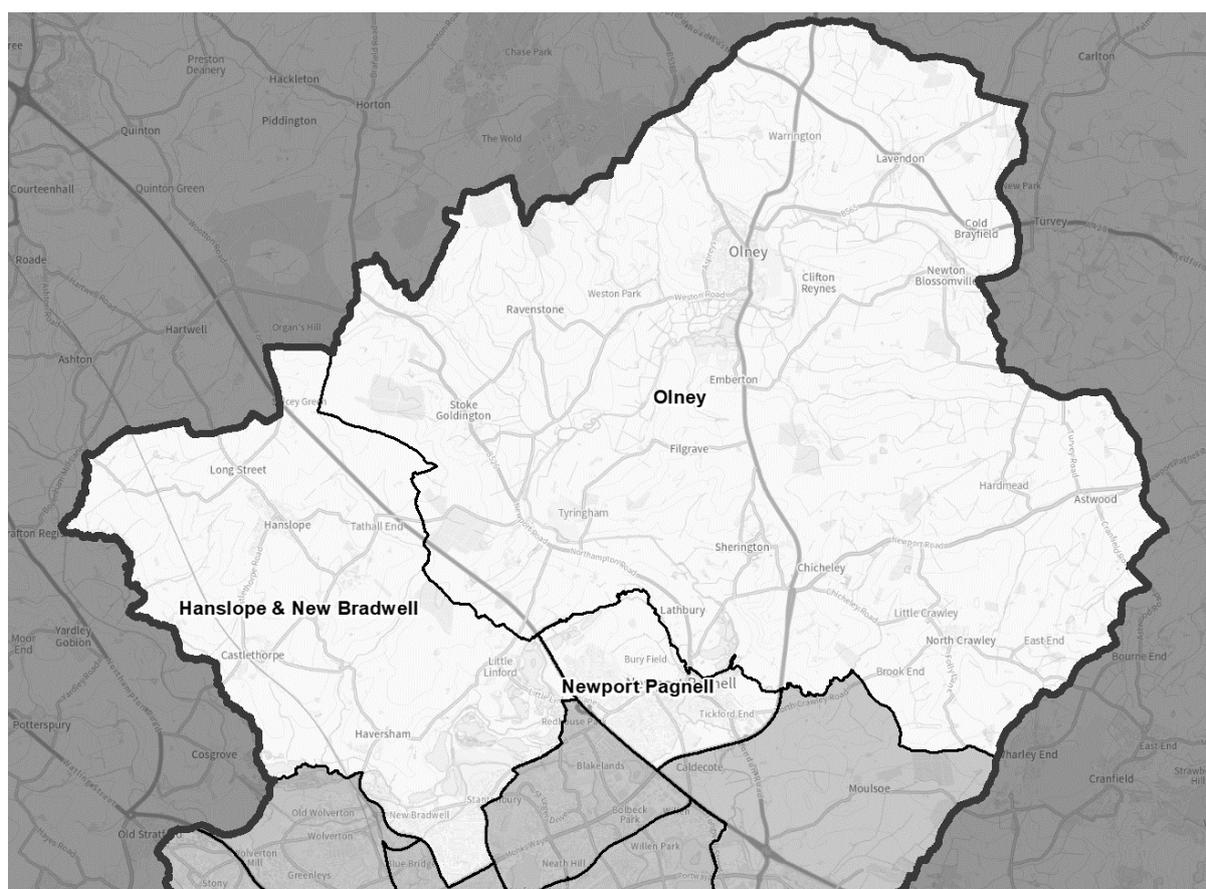
<sup>6</sup> Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

- Equality of representation.
- Reflecting community interests and identities.
- Providing for effective and convenient local government.

40 A summary of our proposed new wards is set out in the table starting on page 33 and on the large map accompanying this report.

41 We welcome all comments on these draft recommendations, particularly on the location of the ward boundaries, and the names of our proposed wards.

## Rural Milton Keynes and Newport Pagnell



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2030
Hanslope & New Bradwell	3	-8%
Newport Pagnell	3	4%
Olney	3	-4%

### *Hanslope & New Bradwell and Newport Pagnell*

42 All four full schemes proposed a single ward covering Newport Pagnell, covering the same areas as the parish of the same name. This proposal was supported by Newport Pagnell Town Council, Cllr P. Ayles, by Bradwell Parish Council and by Great Linford Parish Council, parts of which are currently in Newport Pagnell South ward. Newport Pagnell Town Council, in particular, provided extensive evidence that the town has a somewhat separate identity from Milton Keynes, and that the M1 provides a very clear boundary with few easy crossing points. We have adopted this proposal for a single Newport Pagnell as part of our draft recommendations.

43 Haversham-cum-Little Linford Parish Council suggested that there should be a single-member ward, allowing a clear split of rural and urban areas of the authority. While we have the option to depart from the principle of three-member wards where

a uniform pattern would not be compatible with our statutory criteria, that is not the case in Milton Keynes. We have therefore not adopted this proposal.

44 Cllr Ayles and Castlethorpe Parish Council provided evidence of working links between the three parishes of Castlethorpe, Hanslope and Haversham-cum-Little Linford. They requested that the three parishes be kept together in a single ward. This was achieved by the Liberal Democrats' proposal, but not by Labour's, which placed Hanslope and Castlethorpe parishes in a ward with Wolverton & Greenleys parish, and Haversham-cum-Little Linford in a Stantonbury ward. The Labour proposal cited potential synergies in terms of planning applications around Linford Lakes, while the Liberal Democrats provided evidence of community links between Hanslope and New Bradwell, particularly in regard to employment.

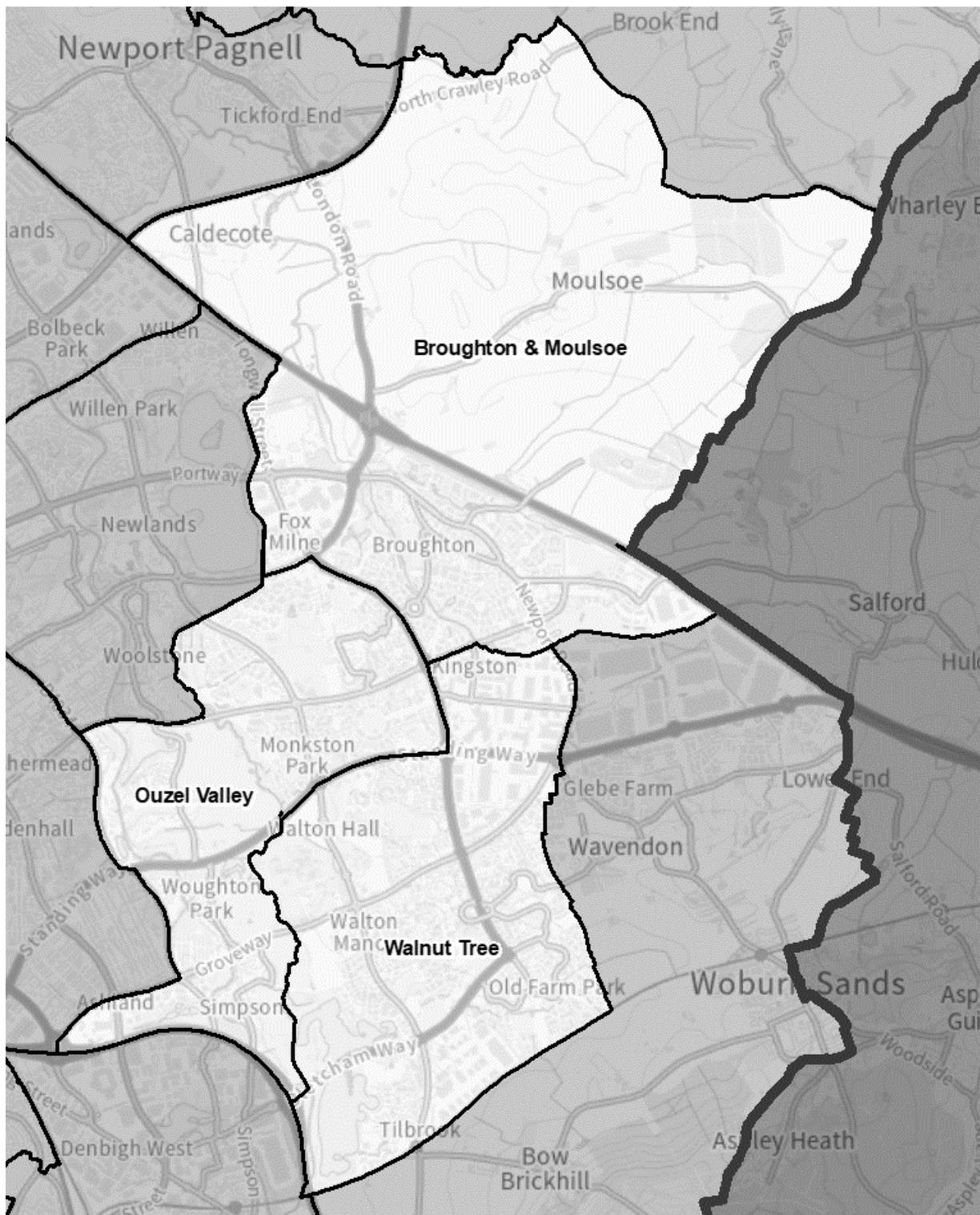
45 Both Conservative proposals placed these three parishes in rural-based wards, including either Olney, or the northern section of Wolverton & Greenleys parish.

46 We have broadly, subject to minor modification (discussed at paragraph 76), adopted the Liberal Democrat proposal for a Hanslope & New Bradwell ward. This allows the evidence of links between Hanslope, Castlethorpe and Haversham-cum-Little Linford parishes to be respected, while allowing a ward with complete internal connectivity. The Labour proposal in particular has no road links between Old Wolverton and Castlethorpe without leaving the ward.

### *Olney*

47 All four full schemes included a rural ward based around the town of Olney, as well as a number of rural parishes. Emberton Parish Council provided a submission discussing the ratio of electors to councillors, but did not comment on specific boundaries. We have adopted the Liberal Democrat proposal as the Labour proposal was contingent upon the Wolverton & Hanslope ward which we were not persuaded to adopt.

## Eastern Milton Keynes



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2030
Broughton & Moulsoe	3	4%
Ouzel Valley	3	-4%
Walnut Tree	3	3%

### *Broughton & Moulsoe*

48 Both the Liberal Democrats and Labour proposed a ward crossing the M1, including the parish of Moulsoe with Broughton & Milton Keynes parish. The major justification offered was the large amount of development occurring in the Caldecote area. The Labour submission noted that community links between Moulsoe and Broughton are yet to develop, but they consider that the MK East development will bring the two areas closer together.

49 Cllr J. Hamilton, of Moulsoe Parish Council, suggested that the parish was likely to remain rural for the near future, and that it should be placed in a rural-based ward. With 1,685 electors forecast to be in Moulsoe parish by 2030, placing the entire parish in our proposed Olney ward would increase the variance of this ward to 12%, as well as, in our view, being unlikely to reflect the developing community identity of the MK East development. We have therefore not been persuaded to adopt this proposal as part of our draft recommendations in light of alternatives with better variances which are also likely to better reflect community identities.

50 We visited this area on our tour of Milton Keynes, driving from Broughton to the existing village of Moulsoe. While we consider that the journey is relatively straightforward, we also consider that there is currently limited evidence of a shared community identity between the village of Moulsoe and Broughton, and that the former is more likely to share a community identity with other similar villages to the north, in our proposed Olney ward.

51 We considered proposing a split of Moulsoe parish in our draft recommendations, with the MK East development area placed in a ward with Broughton, and Moulsoe village placed in Olney ward to the north. We are not proposing this, as we have been unable to identify a clear boundary to split Moulsoe parish, but we would welcome further evidence as to whether such a split would be a helpful reflection of Moulsoe's community identity or not, and if so where the potential boundary could be drawn.

52 While broadly adopting the Labour and Liberal Democrat proposals for this ward, we have modified them to place the Fox Milne industrial area west of the A509 into Broughton & Moulsoe ward. This decision is discussed in more detail below at paragraph 57.

### *Ouzel Valley and Walnut Tree*

53 The existing Campbell Park & Old Woughton ward stretches from Great Linford parish to Simpson & Ashland parish. Campbell Park Community Council argued for the retention of this ward, while the Labour proposal was for a similar, albeit slightly smaller Springfield ward, stretching from the boundary of Great Linford parish to include Old Woughton and the northern section of Walton parish. The Labour

proposal noted that the current ward had limited community identity between the northern and southern sections but suggested that the existing councillors had been trying to remedy this. We consider that the Springfield ward proposed by Labour would have similar issues, particularly with respect to electors in the northern part of Campbell Park parish, who would be isolated within their ward by Willen Lake. We have therefore not adopted this proposal.

54 Old Woughton and Simpson & Ashland parish councils provided submissions with details on their community identity. Both parishes indicated that they worked closely together on issues such as road safety and heritage. Both parishes indicated a desire to remain within the same ward.

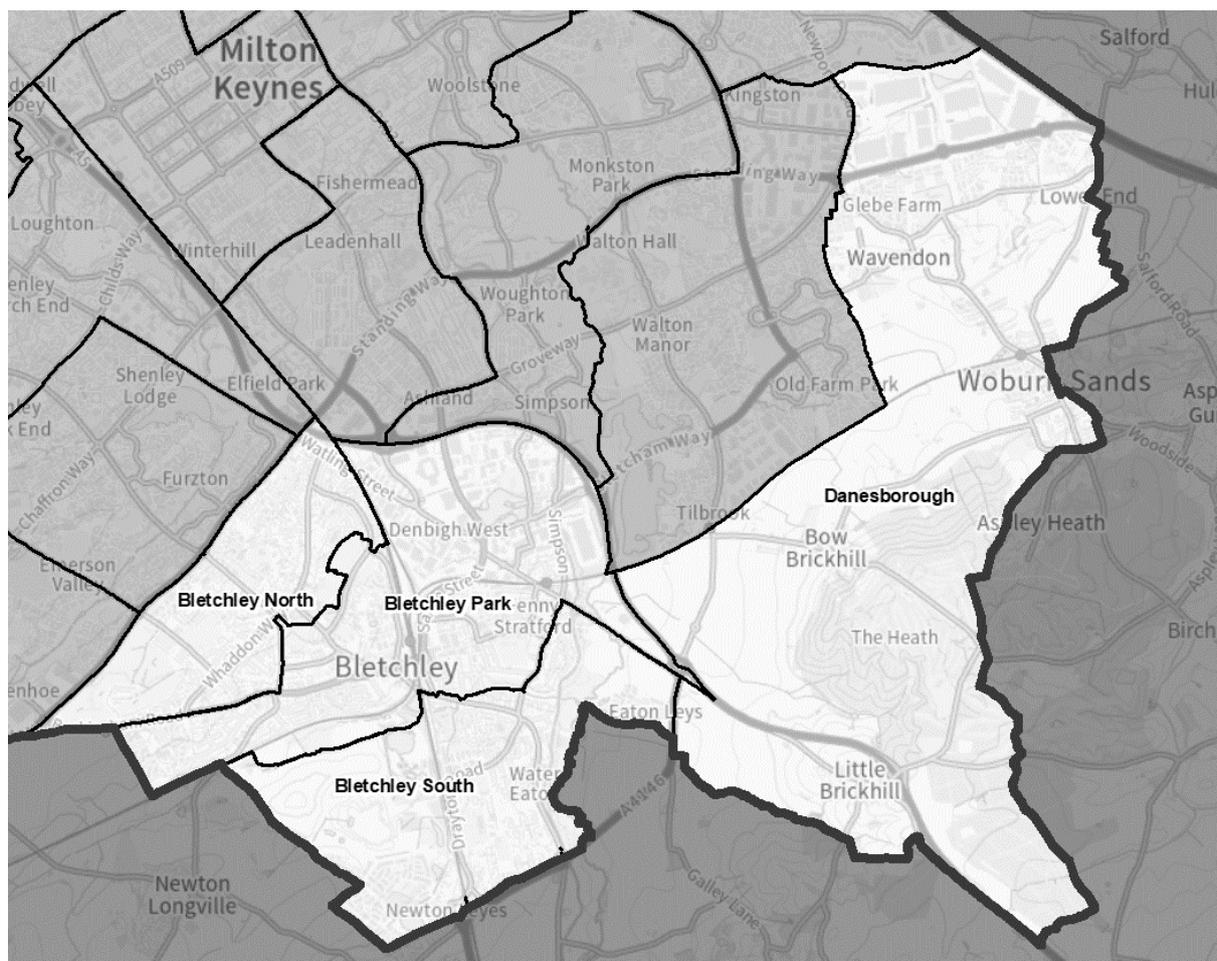
55 Walton Community Council offered evidence that the existing split of Walton parish led to confusion over which councillors were responsible for particular issues. The parish requested being placed in a single ward. Cllr D. Hopkins also suggested that Walton parish could be a ward in its own right. However, the parish alone would have 15% fewer electors than the average across Milton Keynes, so we have not adopted this proposal. Cllr A. Chapman-Ballard proposed a similar plan to the Liberal Democrats, with separate wards for Walton and Danesborough.

56 We have broadly adopted the Liberal Democrat proposal for these wards. The Liberal Democrat submission provided evidence of shared shops, medical facilities and schools across these wards, as well as facilitating most of what was proposed by the parishes. The Labour and both Conservative proposals all involved retaining the existing split of Walton parish, and the Labour scheme also placed Simpson & Ashland parish in a Danesborough ward, as well as proposing a Springfield ward.

57 We have modified the Liberal Democrat proposal for Ouzel Valley. The Liberal Democrats proposed placing both the Fox Milne industrial estate and the area north of Standing Way into Ouzel Valley ward, which they acknowledged would therefore be geographically large, and appear somewhat sprawling. Neither of these areas has any electors, and we consider that it would be preferable to alter the Liberal Democrat proposal and place these areas in the neighbouring wards of Broughton & Moulsoe and Walnut Tree, respectively. We consider in particular that it is logical to have the industrial and retail facilities on either side of Standing Way in the same ward.



## Bletchley and Danesborough



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2030
Bletchley North	3	-9%
Bletchley Park	3	4%
Bletchley South	3	-1%
Danesborough	3	-4%

### *Bletchley North, Bletchley Park, Bletchley South and Danesborough*

58 All four full schemes broadly concurred on the principal of having three wards covering the parishes of West Bletchley and Bletchley & Fenny Stratford. The key differences between the fully evidenced schemes were in the area around Knowles Primary School, including Lennox Road, Leon Avenue and Eaton Avenue. The Labour proposal placed this area in a Bletchley South ward, while the Liberal Democrats proposed placing it in Bletchley Park ward, to the north. The two Conservative proposals also disagreed on this area, one following the Labour proposal and one following that of the Liberal Democrats.

59 We visited this area on our tour of Milton Keynes. While the boundaries proposed across the four schemes are plausible, and all offer good electoral equality, we note that the Liberal Democrats' proposal includes a boundary running along Queensway, immediately to the north of Knowles Primary School. We consider that this road, with shops and community facilities on both sides, does not offer a particularly strong or clear boundary, and we have therefore adopted the Labour proposal for this boundary as part of our draft recommendations.

60 Both Labour and the Liberal Democrats proposed very similar Bletchley West wards, differing only in the areas around Peverel Drive. We have adopted the Liberal Democrat proposal to place this area in Bletchley Park ward, as this allows the use of the railway line as a strong and clear boundary.

61 Submissions were received from Wavendon and Little Brickhill parish councils, and Woburn Sands Town Council, all requesting to remain in the same ward, and citing shared issues around Greensand Ridge and Wavendon Woods. The Liberal Democrat proposal closely followed this suggestion, while the Labour proposal split this area, with Wavendon parish placed in a ward with Kents Hill, Monkston & Brinklow and a Danesborough ward including Simpson & Ashland parish as well as the Southern section of Walton parish. Based on the community evidence provided by the parishes, and the evidence of shared interest in transport issues provided by the Liberal Democrats, we have adopted the Liberal Democrat proposal for this ward, subject to one modification.

62 The Liberal Democrats suggested placing the Eaton Leys area, in Bletchley & Fenny Stratford parish, into Danesborough ward. This would require the creation of a separate, small parish ward for the Eaton Leys area. While it was noted that direct connectivity with the remainder of Bletchley was not straightforward, requiring either use of a footbridge over the River Ouzel or a detour via the A5 roundabout, no specific evidence of a community identity with Little Brickhill, or any other area was provided. We are retaining Eaton Leys as a part of Bletchley South ward as part of our draft recommendations and would particularly welcome further evidence as to the community identity of this newly developed area.

## Central and South-Western Milton Keynes



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2030
Campbell Park & Willen	3	4%
Central Milton Keynes	3	3%
Furzton	3	10%
Loughton	3	8%
Tattenhoe	3	0%
Woughton & Fishermead	3	-4%

*Campbell Park & Willen, Central Milton Keynes and Woughton & Fishermead*

63 We have adopted the proposal of the Liberal Democrats for these wards.

Labour proposed a very similar Woughton ward, differing only in following the parish

boundary between Old Woughton and Woughton on the Green parishes, as opposed to the B4034 Marlborough Street. We visited this area on our tour of Milton Keynes, and consider that Marlborough Street is a very strong and clear boundary. We agree with the suggestion of the Liberal Democrats that the areas to the east of this road are somewhat isolated. The Labour submission referred to strong community links in this area, but did not provide specific information as to the nature of these links.

64 Campbell Park Community Council supported the retention of the existing boundaries, noting that they welcomed the opportunity to work with a wide range of City Council members. We considered this carefully but note that the existing Campbell Park & Old Woughton ward covers many separate communities with little evidence of a shared identity, as discussed above (paragraph 53). We have not adopted the proposal for the status quo in this area as part of our draft recommendations.

65 Labour and the Liberal Democrats proposed slightly different Central Milton Keynes wards, with Labour suggesting extending the existing ward eastwards to include all of Central Milton Keynes parish. The Labour proposal placed the area north of Portway into a Conniburrow ward. We considered this carefully, but consider that as well as being incompatible with our draft recommendations for Ouzel Valley ward, very limited evidence of specific community links between this area and the rest of the proposed ward was provided.

66 The Liberal Democrats proposed a Campbell Park & Willen ward, citing community hubs in Campbell Park and the Conniburrow Community Centre. We have adopted this proposal in preference to that of Labour, as it is not only compatible with decisions taken elsewhere across the city (see paragraph 53–57) but also ensures that individual estates, such as Aldrich Drive, are not isolated within their wards.

#### *Furzton, Loughton and Tattenhoe*

67 The Liberal Democrats and the Conservatives proposed retaining the existing Tattenhoe ward, with a Furzton ward covering either all or most of the remainder of Shenley Brook End parish. Labour proposed an alternative Westbrook ward and placed the Shenley Lodge area of Shenley Brook End parish into a Loughton-based ward, thus splitting Shenley Brook End parish between three rather than two city wards.

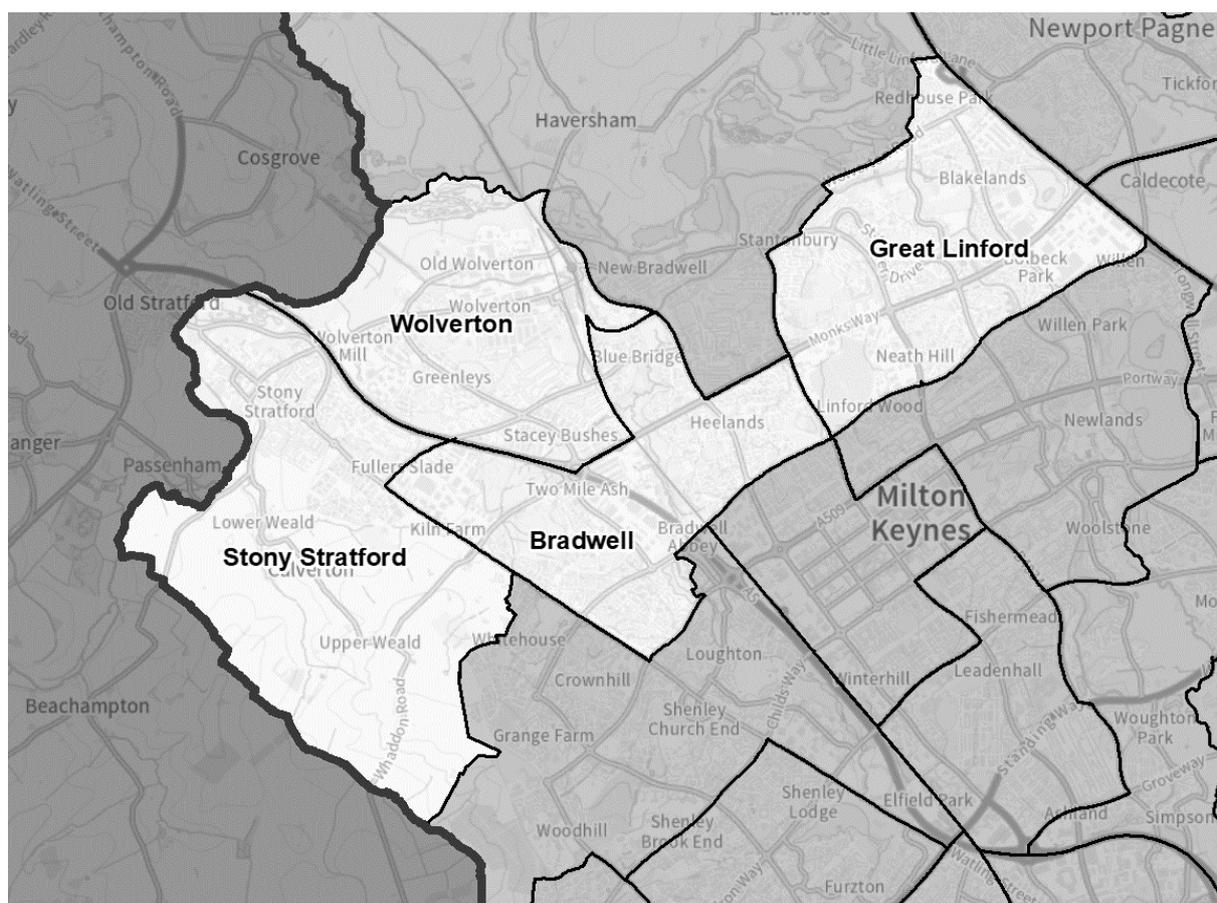
68 We have adopted the Liberal Democrat proposals as part of our draft recommendations. These proposals offer strong boundaries and allow Shenley Brook End parish to remain within two rather than three wards. Furzton ward is at the upper end of the range of good electoral equality, but we consider that the strong

clear boundaries and evidence of community identity through the facilities provided by the Parish Council compensate for this.

69 The Liberal Democrats proposed a ward named simply 'Loughton', arguing that the range of different areas with 'Shenley' in their name meant that using this name for a single city ward might lead to confusion. They proposed adding the already developed area of Whitehouse parish into this ward, providing evidence that residents of this area looked to the Grange Farm and Crownhill areas for shops and schools.

70 Labour proposed a smaller 'Loughton & Shenley' ward, which included a section of Shenley Brook End parish, as discussed above. They also proposed to split Shenley Church End parish between this ward and their proposed Watling ward, whereas the Liberal Democrat proposal and our draft recommendations retain all of Shenley Church End parish within a single ward. We consider that the Labour proposals split Shenley Church End parish unnecessarily, and are reliant on proposals for Watling and Stony Stratford wards which we have not adopted.

## Northern and Western Milton Keynes



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2030
Bradwell	3	-1%
Great Linford	3	2%
Stony Stratford	3	3%
Wolverton	3	-10%

### *Bradwell, Great Linford and Wolverton*

71 We have adopted the proposal of the Liberal Democrats for these wards, with modifications. As discussed above (paragraphs 44–46), Labour’s proposal for Wolverton saw this area linked with rural parishes to the north, while both Conservative schemes proposed a ward crossing the A5 in this area linking Stony Stratford with parts of Wolverton. We prefer to keep the strong boundary of the A5 and propose a ward covering all of Wolverton & Greenleys parish, even at the cost of electoral equality towards the low end of the range.

72 The Liberal Democrat proposal was for the Blue Bridge and Bancroft Park estates to be placed in Wolverton, rather than Bradwell ward. This would improve the electoral equality of Wolverton to -4% (albeit reducing Bradwell to -7%) but would split Stantonbury parish between four wards rather than the three that we propose.

We visited the area on our tour of Milton Keynes and consider that the boundary put forward as part of our draft recommendations, following the boundary between Stantonbury and Wolverton & Greenleys parishes, is at least as strong as that proposed by the Liberal Democrats. Consequently, we have modified the Liberal Democrats' proposal to keep Blue Bridge and Bancroft Park in Bradwell ward.

73 Labour proposed a different Bradwell ward, extending north to include New Bradwell, with the Two Mile Ash and Wymbush areas placed in a ward with Stony Stratford and Stacey Bushes. We visited this area on our tour of Milton Keynes and considered this proposal carefully. However, as well as not being compatible with decisions made for neighbouring wards, we consider that the Kiln Farm industrial area is likely to act as an artificial divide within Labour's proposed Stony Stratford ward.

74 Bradwell Parish Council proposed a ward similar to the one we are recommending as part of our draft recommendations, differing only in the Rooksley area being omitted and Great Holm being included in Bradwell ward. Bradwell Parish Council provided supporting evidence in terms of community identity for the Blue Bridge and Bancroft Park areas to be within the same ward, citing schooling links in particular.

75 Great Linford Parish Council provided a submission offering detailed evidence of the community identities within the parish. It suggested that rather than being divided among five city wards as at present, it would be both effective and convenient and provide a good reflection of community identity for this area to be divided between two wards, with the boundary running along Danstead Way. This agrees with the proposal of the Liberal Democrats, and we have adopted it as part of our draft recommendations. The Labour proposal in this area was for the northern section of Great Linford parish to be linked with Haversham-cum-Little Linford, which we have not adopted as discussed above (paragraphs 44–46).

76 We have modified the Liberal Democrat proposal slightly, moving our draft recommendation boundary to Marlborough Street rather than Wolverton Road, as proposed by the Liberal Democrats. The boundary proposed by the Liberal Democrats would require a separate parish ward of Stantonbury for the area north of Wolverton Road, but with our modification this can be combined into a single parish ward with the central section of Stantonbury parish.

### *Stony Stratford*

77 We have adopted the Liberal Democrat proposal for this ward, which covers the entirety of Stony Stratford, Fairfields and Calverton parishes, as well as the western section of Whitehouse parish. This area is projected to see substantial development over the period of our electorate forecast.

78 Stony Stratford Town Council suggested that they were in favour of retaining the existing ward if the electorate figures allowed, but that if any area was removed from the existing ward, it should be the Whitehouse area. We note that the existing Stony Stratford ward would be forecast to have 40% more electors than average by 2030 – well beyond the bounds of good electoral equality.

79 The Liberal Democrats provided evidence that Stony Stratford parish offers a range of community amenities, including schools and shops. Their proposals involve splitting the Whitehouse estate, currently under development, with the completed areas being placed in Loughton ward, and the areas to be developed placed in Stony Stratford. We would particularly welcome further evidence as to the suitability of this arrangement, and the exact location of the most appropriate boundary to reflect the developing community identity of this area.



## Conclusions

80 The table below provides a summary as to the impact of our draft recommendations on electoral equality in Milton Keynes, referencing the 2024 and 2030 electorate figures against the proposed number of councillors and wards. A full list of wards, names and their corresponding electoral variances can be found in Appendix A to the back of this report. An outline map of the wards is provided in Appendix B.

### Summary of electoral arrangements

	Draft recommendations	
	2024	2030
Number of councillors	60	60
Number of electoral wards	20	20
Average number of electors per councillor	3,370	3,667
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	9	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	3	0

#### Draft recommendations

Milton Keynes City Council should be made up of 60 councillors serving 20 wards representing 20 three-councillor wards. The details and names are shown in Appendix A and illustrated on the large maps accompanying this report.

#### Mapping

Sheet 1, Map 1 shows the proposed wards for Milton Keynes.

You can also view our draft recommendations for Milton Keynes on our interactive maps at [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

### Parish electoral arrangements

81 As part of an electoral review, we are required to have regard to the statutory criteria set out in Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (the 2009 Act). The Schedule provides that if a parish is to be divided between different wards it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward. We cannot recommend changes to the external boundaries of parishes as part of an electoral review.

82 Under the 2009 Act we only have the power to make changes to parish electoral arrangements where these are as a direct consequence of our recommendations for principal authority warding arrangements. However, Milton Keynes City Council has powers under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 to conduct community governance reviews to effect changes to parish electoral arrangements.

83 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Bletchley & Fenny Stratford, Broughton & Milton Keynes, Kents Hill, Monkston & Brinklow, Stantonbury and Whitehouse parishes.

84 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Bletchley & Fenny Stratford parish.

#### Draft recommendations

Bletchley & Fenny Stratford Town Council should comprise 21 councillors, as at present, representing nine wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Central Bletchley	1
Eaton North	3
Eaton South	2
Fenny Stratford	3
Granby	1
Manor North & Eaton Leys	2
Manor South	3
Newton Leys	4
Queensway & Denbigh West	2

85 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Broughton & Milton Keynes parish.

#### Draft recommendations

Broughton & Milton Keynes Parish Council should comprise 12 councillors, as at present, representing two wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Broughton & Atterbury	9
Village	3

86 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Kents Hill, Monkston & Brinklow parish.

**Draft recommendations**

Kents Hill, Monkston & Brinklow Parish Council should comprise 11 councillors, as at present, representing three wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Kents Hill, Kents Hill Park & Brinklow	4
Monkston & Kingston	5
Monkston Park	2

87 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Stantonbury parish.

**Draft recommendations**

Stantonbury Parish Council should comprise 13 councillors, as at present, representing four wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Bancroft	1
Blue Bridge	1
Oakridge Park & Bradville	6
Stantonbury & Linford Wood	5

88 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Whitehouse parish.

**Draft recommendations**

Whitehouse Community Council should comprise seven councillors, as at present, representing two wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
East	3
West	4



## Have your say

89 The Commission has an open mind about its draft recommendations. Every representation we receive will be considered, regardless of who it is from or whether it relates to the whole city or just a part of it.

90 If you agree with our recommendations, please let us know. If you don't think our recommendations are right for Milton Keynes, we want to hear alternative proposals for a different pattern of wards.

91 Our website is the best way to keep up to date with progress on the review and to have your say [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

92 Each review has its own page with details of the timetable for the review, information about its different stages and interactive mapping.

93 Submissions can also be made by emailing [reviews@lgbce.org.uk](mailto:reviews@lgbce.org.uk) or by writing to:

**Review Officer (Milton Keynes)**  
**LGBCE**  
**7<sup>th</sup> Floor**  
**3 Bunhill Row**  
**London**  
**EC1Y 8YZ**

94 The Commission aims to propose a pattern of wards for Milton Keynes which delivers:

- Electoral equality: each local councillor represents a similar number of electors.
- Community identity: reflects the identity and interests of local communities.
- Effective and convenient local government: helping your council discharge its responsibilities effectively.

95 A good pattern of wards should:

- Provide good electoral equality, with each councillor representing, as closely as possible, the same number of electors.
- Reflect community interests and identities and include evidence of community links.
- Be based on strong, easily identifiable boundaries.
- Help the council deliver effective and convenient local government.



96 Electoral equality:

- Does your proposal mean that councillors would represent roughly the same number of electors as elsewhere in Milton Keynes?

97 Community identity:

- Community groups: is there a parish council, residents' association or other group that represents the area?
- Interests: what issues bind the community together or separate it from other parts of your area?
- Identifiable boundaries: are there natural or constructed features which make strong boundaries for your proposals?

98 Effective local government:

- Are any of the proposed wards too large or small to be represented effectively?
- Are the proposed names of the wards appropriate?
- Are there good links across your proposed wards? Is there any form of public transport?

99 Please note that the consultation stages of an electoral review are public consultations. In the interests of openness and transparency, we make available for public inspection full copies of all representations the Commission takes into account as part of a review. Accordingly, copies of all representations will be placed on deposit at our offices and on our website at [www.lqbce.org.uk](http://www.lqbce.org.uk) A list of respondents will be available from us on request after the end of the consultation period.

100 If you are a member of the public and not writing on behalf of a council or organisation we will remove any personal identifiers. This includes your name, postal or email addresses, signatures or phone numbers from your submission before it is made public. We will remove signatures from all letters, no matter who they are from.

101 In the light of representations received, we will review our draft recommendations and consider whether they should be altered. As indicated earlier, it is therefore important that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, **whether or not** they agree with the draft recommendations. We will then publish our final recommendations.

102 After the publication of our final recommendations, the changes we have proposed must be approved by Parliament. An Order – the legal document which brings into force our recommendations – will be laid in draft in Parliament. The draft

Order will provide for new electoral arrangements to be implemented at the all-out elections for Milton Keynes in 2026.



## Equalities

103 The Commission is satisfied that it complies with its legal obligations under the Equality Act and that no adverse equality impacts will arise as a result of the outcome of the review.



# Appendices

## Appendix A

### Draft recommendations for Milton Keynes

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2024)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2030)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Bletchley North	3	10,423	3,474	3%	10,021	3,340	-9%
2	Bletchley Park	3	10,899	3,633	8%	11,401	3,800	4%
3	Bletchley South	3	9,989	3,330	-1%	10,900	3,633	-1%
4	Bradwell	3	11,172	3,724	11%	10,846	3,615	-1%
5	Broughton & Moulsoe	3	8,733	2,911	-14%	11,478	3,826	4%
6	Campbell Park & Willen	3	10,625	3,542	5%	11,446	3,815	4%
7	Central Milton Keynes	3	8,464	2,821	-16%	11,350	3,783	3%
8	Danesborough	3	7,181	2,394	-29%	10,560	3,520	-4%
9	Furzton	3	12,254	4,085	21%	12,059	4,020	10%
10	Great Linford	3	11,049	3,683	9%	11,236	3,745	2%
11	Hanslope & New Bradwell	3	10,050	3,350	-1%	10,169	3,390	-8%

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2024)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2030)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
12 Loughton	3	12,036	4,012	19%	11,832	3,944	8%
13 Newport Pagnell	3	11,282	3,761	12%	11,421	3,807	4%
14 Olney	3	10,238	3,413	1%	10,607	3,536	-4%
15 Ouzel Valley	3	10,204	3,401	1%	10,552	3,517	-4%
16 Stony Stratford	3	7,863	2,621	-22%	11,277	3,759	3%
17 Tattenhoe	3	9,029	3,010	-11%	10,977	3,659	0%
18 Walnut Tree	3	10,656	3,552	5%	11,328	3,776	3%
19 Wolverton	3	9,732	3,244	-4%	9,933	3,311	-10%
20 Woughton & Fishermead	3	10,291	3,430	2%	10,603	3,534	-4%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>202,170</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>219,993</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,370</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,667</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Milton Keynes City Council.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor in each electoral ward varies from the average for the city. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

## Appendix B

### Outline map



A more detailed version of this map can be seen on the large map accompanying this report, or on our website: [www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/milton-keynes](http://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/milton-keynes)

## Appendix C

### Submissions received

All submissions received can also be viewed on our website at:  
[www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/milton-keynes](http://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/milton-keynes)

#### *Political Groups*

- Milton Keynes Liberal Democrat Group
- Milton Keynes Labour Party
- Milton Keynes Conservative Group and Conservative Party

#### *Councillors*

- Councillor P. Ayles (Castlethorpe Parish Council)
- Councillor R. Brady (West Bletchley Parish Council)
- Councillor A. Chapman-Ballard (Walton Community Council)
- Councillor J. Hamilton (Moulsoe Parish Council)
- Councillor D. Hopkins (Milton Keynes City Council)
- Councillor J. McLaughlin (West Bletchley Parish Council)

#### *Parish and Town Councils*

- Bradwell Parish Council
- Campbell Park Community Council
- Castlethorpe Parish Council
- Emberton Parish Council
- Great Linford Parish Council
- Haversham-cum-Little Linford Parish Council
- Little Brickhill Parish Council
- Newport Pagnell Town Council
- Old Woughton Parish Council
- Simpson & Ashland Parish Council
- Stony Stratford Town Council
- Walton Community Council
- Wavendon Parish Council
- Woburn Sands Town Council

### *Local Residents*

- 42 local residents

## Appendix D

### Glossary and abbreviations

Council size	The number of councillors elected to serve on a council
Electoral Change Order (or Order)	A legal document which implements changes to the electoral arrangements of a local authority
Division	A specific area of a county, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever division they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the county council
Electoral inequality	Where there is a difference between the number of electors represented by a councillor and the average for the local authority
Electorate	People in the authority who are registered to vote in elections. We only take account of electors registered specifically for local elections during our reviews.
Number of electors per councillor	The total number of electors in a local authority divided by the number of councillors
Over-represented	Where there are fewer electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average
Parish	A specific and defined area of land within a single local authority enclosed within a parish boundary. There are over 10,000 parishes in England, which provide the first tier of representation to their local residents

Parish council	A body elected by electors in the parish which serves and represents the area defined by the parish boundaries. See also 'Town council'
Parish (or town) council electoral arrangements	The total number of councillors on any one parish or town council; the number, names and boundaries of parish wards; and the number of councillors for each ward
Parish ward	A particular area of a parish, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever parish ward they live for candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the parish council
Town council	A parish council which has been given ceremonial 'town' status. More information on achieving such status can be found at <a href="http://www.nalc.gov.uk">www.nalc.gov.uk</a>
Under-represented	Where there are more electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average
Variance (or electoral variance)	How far the number of electors per councillor in a ward or division varies in percentage terms from the average
Ward	A specific area of a district or borough, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever ward they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the district or borough council

The  
Local Government  
Boundary Commission  
for England

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) was set up by Parliament, independent of Government and political parties. It is directly accountable to Parliament through a committee chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons. It is responsible for conducting boundary, electoral and structural reviews of local government.

Local Government Boundary Commission for  
England  
7th Floor, 3 Bunhill Row,  
London,  
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