**Milton Keynes Council (KMC) – Task and Finish (T&F) – Evidence Submission – Energy**

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We propose the following measures to MKC, as outlined in bold below.

It is fundamental that any local authority that is concerned about climate change should know what the carbon footprint for their area is. This should be a figure for the total carbon emissions for all activities carried out in the area broken down by sector.

To date, in T&F meetings, MKC has often referred to generic figures from BEIS or other providers and has made no reference to any ongoing action to establish baseline data. Any local authority that wants to demonstrate it is taking climate change seriously needs to have an up to date measure of its carbon footprint.

MKC needs to be in a position to publish its carbon footprint along with a detailed and quantified plan to reduce emissions against time in order to achieve net zero carbon. This will also be key to providing future progress reports.

**Recommendation 1: Prioritise measurement of baseline energy usage and put in place ongoing reporting measures, including timing commitments for such updates (e.g. 6 monthly).**

MKC should be in a position to immediately shift to renewable energy suppliers. There are many energy suppliers who can provide energy from 100% renewable sources. These should be from energy companies that invest in new renewables and can therefore evidence that their renewable energy is ‘additional’ and not simply traded. See:

<https://www.which.co.uk/news/2019/09/how-green-is-your-energy-tariff/>

We recommend that MKC avoids using an agent who will get a fee for finding a so called “Green Energy Supplier” which may in fact merely be a company backed by venture capital just buying and selling Green energy certificates and not investing in new renewable energy developments.

**Recommendation 2: Immediately switch to green energy and put plans in place to switch as quickly as possible if this cannot be achieved quickly.**

Typically, local authorities will be contracted to one supplier via an agreement such as a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA). Longer term agreements with renewable energy supply companies can be effective at stimulating investment in renewable energy sources . Some renewable energy suppliers can also enter into joint investment programmes (known as Merchant Power schemes) that allow the Local Authority to benefit from direct involvement in the development of renewable energy production in their area.

**Recommendation 3: Investigate options for aggregating power requirements under a Corporate PPA. We would be happy to make an introduction to people working in this sector such as Ian Wood of EY (corporate PPA arranger), or Monika Paplaczyk of Thrive Renewables (renewable energy developer).**

The National Planning Policy Framework states that new onshore wind generation cannot be approved outside an area “identified as suitable for wind energy in the development plan” unless it is a community-led scheme. With only around a quarter of new local plans identifying such areas the development of onshore wind, one of the most cost effective forms of renewable energy in the UK, has virtually ceased in England & Wales. It is important therefore that the local authority ensures that as wide an area as possible is specified in its development plan and engages positively with developers.

**Recommendation 4: Update local planning policy for the development of onshore wind and engage with community projects and those who can scale up community efforts (e.g. Ripple Energy) to bring new build onshore wind to the area. See recommendation 5 below regarding grid access.**

Solar energy has been under pressure in the UK in recent years due to the loss of tariff support. Cost reductions in the sector have now opened up the sector again and there is a huge number of large scale development in the pipeline. Many possible developments lack available grid capacity, which could reduce the potential rate of local build out.

**Recommendation 5: Meet with the local distribution network operator (DNO), WPD, to see whether the council has any way to accelerate the development of the required network upgrades to enable increased local generation. This may include the establishment of local innovation projects to optimise such work alongside new infrastructure to other developments and the wider roll out of EV infrastructure.**

**Recommendation 6: MKC could insist on the installation of renewable energy such as solar photovoltaics and complementary energy storage solutions on all new build housing & business premises. Work with the DNO, WPD, on such initiatives, as already discussed in Recommendation 5.**

**Recommendation 7: MKC could find ways to encourage new developments to install large scale storage (thermal or battery), private wire networks or district heating. MKC could also prohibit the connection of any new build premises to the gas supply**

Milton Keynes already has a great number of electric vehicle (EV) charging systems within the city, but more could potentially be done to support wider transition to EVs. Electric vehicles also have the potential to be used as energy storage to ameliorate the difficulties of intermittency associated with renewable energy and to increase the viability of embedded generation such as PV (see above).

**Recommendation 7: MKC should continue to focus on widespread EV charging infrastructure, potentially coupled with storage technology, across the city. This should include bus fleets and delivery vehicles. This measure could be further strengthened by a city wide ban on fossil fuel vehicles from 2025. All new-build housing and commercial developments should be required to provide the infrastructure to allow EV charging points to be readily installed.**

MKC has substantial pension fund investments in the fossil fuel industry. Fossil fuel investments are increasingly considered toxic and offer unacceptably high risks to pension funds. Furthermore, continued subsidisation of the fossil fuel sector is at odds with supporting growth in clean energy. Although this measure may not seem directly related to energy, it is highly relevant to the feasibility of the MKC energy plans.

**Recommendation 8: MKC should support its energy plans with investment in the clean energy sector in its pension arrangements, rather than supporting those who lobby against clean energy and drive subsidy support towards activities that are in direct opposition to the MKC ambitions. This will also provide better long term security to its pension investors.**

Many councils licence private landlords and carry out regular inspections of premises.

**Recommendation 9: Within this licensing system, a requirement should be added to ensure all rented properties achieve an appropriate energy efficiency rating thereby encouraging energy efficient measures such as insulation and low carbon heating systems. It is expected that this measure may already be addressed under housing plans.**

LED street lighting saves energy both through much higher efficiency and through the ability to be dimmed when appropriate. Street lighting can account for a significant proportion of a city council’s direct emissions (15-40%) and offer an opportunity for significant cost savings.

**Recommendation 10: Continue to install and retrofit LED lighting, and consider less lighting in order to reduce light pollution.**

There are longer term measures that MKC could take, by investing in infrastructure projects and widespread retro-fitting of existing building stock. These sort of projects, such as investment in utility scale renewable energy, district heating schemes, transport infrastructure or the production of biogas from waste require detailed feasibility assessment.

**Recommendation 11: Assess the potential of joint investment schemes for new clean infrastructure. We would be happy to make an introduction to the Future Cities team at Legal and General Capital.**