

Edlesborough PC mtg, Buckinghamshire Councillors Report for September 2024

Childcare support is expanding in Buckinghamshire

Eligible working parents in Buckinghamshire with children aged +9 months can apply for hours of funded childcare for use in a variety of settings, including nurseries, pre-schools and childminders.

If you are an eligible working parent, you can now apply for:

- 15 hours childcare if your child is aged 9 to 36 months
- 30 hours childcare for your three or four-year-old

You will need to apply by 31 August 2024 to use your hours from 1 September 2024. To do so, visit [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) to get your code for a place in September and then share it with your childcare provider. To continue receiving the Government support, you will need to reconfirm your details every three months on your GOV.UK account.

This comes alongside other government childcare support, including Tax-Free Childcare and Universal Credit Childcare. You might be able to use more than one offer together to help with your childcare costs.

Childcare is also expanding for primary-school age children. From September, parents in England will start to see an expansion in the availability of childcare in their local area before and after school, that runs from 8am until 6pm or later, also known as 'wraparound childcare'. If you are eligible for Tax-Free Childcare or Universal Credit Childcare, you can use the support to help pay for your wraparound childcare.

Please visit our [Buckinghamshire Family Information Service](#) to see what support you might be eligible for.

News from Buckinghamshire Growth Board

An exciting event designed to provide an insight into the future of the space industry and highlight the success of space-related industries at [Westcott](#), is being held on 19 September.

The [Westcott Showcase](#), themed around accelerating space innovation, will highlight the achievements of companies operating on-site alongside their pioneering products and services and their bold vision for the future.

This year's event, organised by [Buckinghamshire Enterprise Zone](#), [Buckinghamshire Council](#) and partners, offers attendees a unique opportunity to listen to informative

talks from industry thought leaders, explore cutting-edge on-site capabilities, network with key players in the field, and delve into topics such as UK Space Sector trends, drones and regulation, space sustainability, university collaborations, and inspiring success stories from professionals in the space industry.

Importantly, it will be an opportunity to promote new developments happening at the venture park, notably the ground-breaking of the Westcott Space Hub development, funded by the UK Space Agency, Westcott Venture Park and Buckinghamshire Enterprise Zone.

Nigel MacKenzie, Development Manager at Westcott said: “A huge amount of development has been completed within the Westcott Space Cluster in the last few years. This has taken the cluster capabilities to the next level by creating a collaborative eco-system for like-minded companies to develop their ideas and grow sustainably.”

Over 40 space companies will be in attendance, providing a platform to discuss future career opportunities and potential involvement in their supply chain.

Attendees will also have the chance to interact with companies from the [Westcott Space Cluster](#), as well as academia, and the vibrant space community. Additionally, guided tours of the Westcott Space Cluster businesses within the [Westcott Enterprise Zone](#) will be running throughout the day.

Council prosecutes company for fraudulent Covid grant application

Buckinghamshire Council has been successful in seeking prosecution of a company which fraudulently applied for a Covid business grant.

In April 2020, S&K Prop Ltd, submitted an application for a grant of £25,000 from the Retail, Hospitality & Leisure Grant Fund that was introduced by the Government during the Covid pandemic. The grant, which was administered locally by local authorities, was designed to provide additional support to local businesses impacted negatively by the imposed Covid restrictions.

S&K Prop Ltd applied for the grant for the George Inn, Post Office Lane, George Green, Slough. To be eligible for the grant, amongst other requirements, businesses needed to be rate payers for the business premises the application related to, and they needed to be in occupation at the premises.

Investigations carried out by the council discovered that this was not the case. A separate company, Milegate Ltd, was in fact in occupation, not S&K Prop Ltd. Milegate Ltd had at first attempted to deny they were the occupants of the premises in order to avoid liability for Business Rates and presented documents which purported to show that S&K Prop Ltd were liable. A point which was denied by the firm.

With the start of the Covid pandemic and the launch of the Retail, Hospitality & Leisure Grant Fund both companies made applications for grants. Following the exposure of the fraudulent claim by S&K Prop Ltd a criminal investigation was launched. The fraudulent application by S&K Prop Ltd was discovered before any grant funding was distributed so no public funding was lost as a result. S&K Prop Ltd submitted a guilty plea to two charges of Fraud by False Representation and appeared at Aylesbury Crown Court for sentencing on Friday 30 August. The judge imposed a fine of £20,625 and costs of £10,750. The defendant company was granted a six month period to pay both.

Could you be a Shared Lives carer?

Do you have space in your life and home to open it up to another adult who needs care and support? If the answer is yes, you could join Buckinghamshire's growing team of Shared Lives carers and start helping to support others in your local community.

Shared Lives is a national initiative with over 10,000 approved Shared Lives carers across the UK. Buckinghamshire's Shared Lives scheme is run in partnership with provider Ategi. As a Shared Lives carer, you would share your home and family life, providing support to an adult with additional needs, to help them develop their skills and live an independent life.

Responsibilities as a carer can include:

- Taking an active role in nurturing their skills and talents
- Assisting with life skills such as learning to use public transport as well as cook and clean for themselves
- Provide support to try new activities both at home and out and about

As a Shared Lives carer, you would be self-employed and will receive monthly payments. One to one ongoing support is provided, along with financial benefits and comprehensive training. There is a careful matching process, ensuring that carers are matched with a suitable person for their lifestyle and experience. Placements can be long or short term.

Councillor Derek Town