

A weekly round up of local government news in the East Midlands brought to you by East Midlands Councils

Top items this week

5 MARCH 2021



Housing and Energy Efficiency workshop for Councillors, 18 March



Budget 2021



Regional Pay Briefing , 15 March 2021



EMC Events for Councillors and Officers

Budget 2021

On Wednesday 3rd March, the Chancellor presented his Budget, including an update on the state of the economy, it's growth prospects and fiscal forecasts, and Government measures.

There are a number of headline announcements of significance to the region and these will be further looked at in advance of EMC's Executive Board on 19th March. Of immediate note, however, is the Government's confirmation of over £1bn from the Towns Fund for further Town Deals across the country, £300m to extend the Culture Recovery Fund, the launch of the prospectus for the £4.8bn Levelling Up Fund, and the announcement that the Humber Ports and East Midlands Airport will become the locations for two of the eight new Freeports in the UK.

Levelling Up Fund

While announced at the recent Spending Review, further details were provided at the Budget on the Levelling Up Fund that will invest in infrastructure across the UK. The £4.8 billion fund will support town centre and high street regeneration, local transport projects, and cultural and heritage assets. 14 Local Authorities in the East Midlands are included within the '1st Priority Category'.

The prospectus provides guidance for local areas on how to submit bids for the Fund.

See more [details on the bidding process](#).

Freeports

The Chancellor has announced 8 Freeports from 8 regions in England. The successful bids are: **East Midlands Airport**, Felixstowe and Harwich, **Humber**, Liverpool City Region, Plymouth and South Devon, Solent, Thames and Teesside. Freeports will be national hubs for international trade, innovation and commerce, regenerating communities across the UK; attracting new businesses, spreading jobs, investment and opportunity to towns and cities across the country.

Subject to agreeing their governance arrangements and successfully completing their business cases, these 8 Freeports will begin operations from late 2021.

Community Ownership Fund

The government has launched a new £150 million [Community Ownership Fund](#) to help ensure that communities across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland can support and continue benefiting from the local facilities, community assets and amenities most important to them.

From summer 2021 community groups will be able to bid for up to £250,000 matched-funding to help them buy or take over local community assets at risk of being lost, to run as community-owned businesses. In exceptional cases, up to £1 million matched-funding will be available to help establish a community-owned sports club or help buy a sports grounds at risk of being lost without community intervention.

Towns Fund

The Towns Fund was set up to ensure local areas can grow their economies, create and sustain local jobs whilst also carving out new opportunities to reshape the look and feel of their area.

It has been announced that 45 towns will receive up to a £25 million share of over £1 billion as part of the Towns Fund. This means that over half of the 101 chosen areas have had their funding confirmed which will help them to build back better after the pandemic. Towns from the **East Midlands**;

- Boston - £21.9m
- Clay Cross - £24.1m
- Lincoln - £19m
- Mablethorpe - £23.9m
- Mansfield - £12.3m
- Newark - £25m
- Northampton - £25m
- Skegness - £24.5m
- Staveley (Derbyshire)- £25.2m

See [further details on all the towns which will receive funding](#).

UK Community Renewal Fund

The government has also launched the prospectus for the £220 million UK Community Renewal Fund. This is a transition fund to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and replaces the European Regional Development Funding.

The fund is an open competition and is UK wide so that people in every region and nation of the UK can benefit. It will run from 2021-22 and will accept applications from local authorities who want to pilot programmes that meet local challenges and local need in urban, rural and coastal areas across the UK.

Find more [information on how to bid](#). Further details on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund will be announced later this year.

Respite Rooms

The Budget has announced £4.2 million funding alongside £15 million to tackle violence against women and girls. This funding comes on top of the £125 million for local authorities delivering the Domestic Abuse Bill's new statutory duty to provide support to victims and their children within safe accommodation.

Further support for homeownership

The Chancellor has announced a new policy to support homeownership and change 'Generation Rent' into 'Generation Buy' with a government-backed mortgage guarantee scheme. First-time buyers and existing homeowners across the UK will have the chance to secure a 95% mortgage on homes of up to £600,000 with just a 5% deposit. [Read more details](#). The government is also extending the Stamp Duty cut by another 3 months, helping more people to realise their dream of home ownership.

For more on announcements following this weeks Budget visit [here](#).

EMC News

EMC Boards Activity

- **Transport for the East Midlands** - 15 March 2021
- **EMC Executive Board** – 19 March 2021
- **Regional Employers' Board/ Regional Joint Council** – 26 March 2021

EMC Councillor Events

Climate Change, Housing and Energy Efficiency workshop for Councillors, 18 March - EMC, the LGA and Midlands Energy Hub working in partnership are offering a series of virtual interactive workshops for Councillors on Climate Change. The second workshop in the series will explore Housing and Energy Efficiency. The workshop will take place on Thursday 18 March 2021, to be chaired by Cllr Richard Wright, Leader of North Kesteven District Council. The interactive virtual workshops will provide Councillors from across the East Midlands with the opportunity to hear from both Councillors and Officers on innovative approaches to climate change reduction plans and initiatives. Further information on the first workshop will be available shortly, to pre-register to attend please visit [here](#).

Employers' Information

Regional Pay Briefing - EMC is hosting a Regional Pay Briefing on 15 March 2021, the meeting is for HR Leads, Leading Members and is not a joint meeting of officers/union representatives. The meeting will be attended by Members of the National Employers' Side of the NJC, including Cllr Sian Timoney (Luton) Chair of the National Employers' and Cllr Sharon Taylor OBE (Stevenage), Naomi Cooke, Head of Workforce at the LGA and Harry Honnor, Senior Advisor (Workforce & Negotiations). If you wish to attend, please contact mila.pereira@emcouncils.gov.uk

In preparation for the meeting, it would help if you were ready to share information about your council that links to the unions' pay claim for 2021/22, we will share with you the information that would be helpful once you register.

If you are unable to attend the event, you can provide the above information which will be collated anonymously by East Midlands Councils to help inform a broad regional view. Please email sam.maher@emcouncils.gov.uk

EMC Fortnightly Summary of COVID-19 Guidance & Information for HR Colleagues - EMC continues to provide a weekly summary to HR colleagues in the East Midlands updating developments relating to COVID-19, along with information on the frequently asked questions we have received and responded, this information can be found [here](#).

This is the 26th issue we've produced and includes information on the following:-

- Roadmap to Lifting COVID Restrictions
- Improving vaccination access and uptake
- Workplace Guidance – Vaccination Hesitancy
- Schools - DfE Rapid testing guidance
- Psychological First Aid training
- Local elections staffing and venue support due to COVID
- Gender pay gap reporting enforcement postponement
- BREXIT Right to work for EEA Employer Update

SIGI News - SIGI Europe's newsletters provide an update on recent developments at European level on workforce matters and the most recent newsletter is available from [here](#).



Health and Social Care

£79 million to boost mental health support for children and young people - Millions more children and young people will have access to significantly expanded mental health services, backed by £79 million [details [here](#)].

Coronavirus cases by local authority, epidemiological data, 4 March 2021- Weekly watchlist giving epidemiological coronavirus (COVID-19) data for each lower-tier local authority (LTLA) in England [details [here](#)].

New inquiry: Long-term funding of adult social care - The Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee has launched a new inquiry to investigate how covid-19 has impacted the adult social care sector and its long-term funding needs following the pandemic.

Building on the work of its predecessor committee, the new inquiry will investigate the likely legacy of the covid-19 pandemic on the adult social care sector and the impact this has had on long-term funding need. It will also examine how additional funds can be raised to ensure the long-term stability of the sector and how the social care market can be supported to improve innovation [details [here](#)].

COVID-19 next steps – International experiences, 10 March 2021, 9:00 - 10:30 - this LGA webinar will build upon the successful international event last Spring to share experiences and innovations from local government across the world in tackling the COVID-19 pandemic and preparing for the recovery. The event is addressed to elected members and officials, more information is available from [here](#).

Local Government News

£30 million investment to provide Changing Places toilets - More than 250,000 disabled people in the country will benefit from greater access to life-enhancing Changing Places toilets, as the government announces a new £30 million fund to increase the number of facilities across England [details [here](#)].

Local Elections 2021: Standing for election and campaigning in a COVID-19 context, Friday 12 March 2021, 14:00 - 15:30 - this LGA webinar will provide the opportunity to learn from comparable elections that have taken place in Scotland during the pandemic by hearing first-hand how candidates and their campaigners responded to the challenges presented by COVID-19 in their recent by-elections. There will also be the opportunity to hear from the Electoral Commission (EC) on their latest available guidance and resources, with attendees able to directly raise questions and concerns to help inform the EC's work to support the polls. Information on this LGA event [here](#).

Business rates: expanded retail discount 2021 to 2022 - local authority guidance - Guidance for local authorities in administering the expanded retail discount 2021 to 2022 coronavirus response, announced at Budget 2021 [here](#).

Local authority collected waste management - annual results - Final annual results for local authority collected waste generation and management for England [details [here](#)].

EMC Events

Child Trafficking awareness session - EMC is hosting a 2 hour virtual Child Trafficking awareness session on 10 March, 14:00 - 16:00, delivered by Barnados. This 2 hour briefing session will give an overview of what Child Trafficking is, how to spot some of the signs and indicators and what to do next. It will also detail what the National Referral Mechanism is, how to complete one and the process that follows a referral. It will include an introduction to the Independent Child Trafficking Guardianship (ICTG) service and how they can support you [here](#).

Solution Focused Brief Coaching, 24 March 2021 - EMC will host a virtual workshop on 24 March exploring Solution Focused Brief Coaching. The session will introduce coaches to solution focused brief coaching and provide an opportunity for coaches to have a go at using the approach in a safe environment.

Coaching is an evidenced-based approach where the coach helps the client to build their own solutions by helping them; Identify clearly what they want; Focus on what is working already; Identify the strengths, qualities and resources they already have; and recognise those small changes that can lead to larger changes at a pace they can handle.

Solution Focused Brief Coaching can often deliver results quicker than conventional approaches because it builds upon what is already working and recognises the limitations of traditional problem solving in resolving complex client issues and avoids it. **Date and time** - 24 March 2021, 9:30 - 12:30. For more information and to book a place please visit [here](#).

EMC Leadership

Chair: Cllr Martin Hill OBE
Vice Chair: Cllr David Mellen
Vice Chair: Cllr Jonathan Morgan
Conservative Group: Cllr Roger Blaney
Labour Group: Cllr Alan Rhodes
Lib Dem Group: Cllr David Bill MBE
Independent Group: Cllr Jason Zadrozny
Executive Director: Stuart Young

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