

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

Top items this week

19 NOVEMBER 2021



Reaction to the  
Government's Integrated Rail  
Plan



Kickstart Scheme



Midlands Engine Update



EMC Events for Councillors  
and Officers

## Reaction to the Government's Integrated Rail Plan: Joint Statement from East Midlands Councils and Transport for the East Midlands

The publication this week of the Government's long anticipated Integrated Rail Plan (IRP) is an important milestone. The IRP is a crucial document which will provide the basis for major rail investment in the East Midlands over the next 30 years.

The East Midlands HS2 Executive Board and Transport for the East Midlands (TfEM) will meet over the coming weeks to consider the IRP in detail.

However, it is recognised that the IRP contains a number of positive commitments for the East Midlands that would deliver billions of pounds of new investment and start to address long standing problems of under-funding and improve some key journey times earlier than might otherwise be expected.

In particular:

- A commitment to deliver HS2 connectivity from Birmingham to the East Midlands (Derby, Nottingham and Chesterfield) and Midland Main Line electrification (including through Leicester)
- Commitment to a package of investment on the East Coast Mainline including removal of flat crossings and junctions (such as at Newark)
- Recognition of the importance of investing in Toton (with the potential for HS2 connectivity) to the wider East Midlands Development Corporation and East Midlands Freeport propositions.
- Recognition of the importance of investing in Chesterfield to the Northern Derbyshire Growth Zone.
- Recognition of the need to improve rail services between Mansfield -Leicester-London via the Maid Marion and Robin Hood lines.

Clearly much more work will be required to implement these and other proposals in the IRP. In particular:

- Connecting HS2 to the Midland Main Line will raise significant capacity issues on the existing rail network and at Derby and Nottingham Stations which will need to be addressed in a collaborative manner with local leaders, and with minimum disruption to existing passengers and freight operators.
- A final decision about how best to extend HS2 connectivity northwards must be made quickly in order to minimise additional blight for local communities, and in collaboration with local leaders in the East Midlands, Yorkshire and the North East to ensure that the local economic and environmental impacts of investment choices are properly understood by Government.

Local leaders in the East Midlands remain convinced that full delivery of the Eastern Leg of HS2 as originally proposed is the best way to connect the towns and cities of the Midlands and the North, address transport poverty and 'level up' the eastern side of Britain – and will continue to work with colleagues in Yorkshire and the North East to make the case for this investment.

**Cllr Ben Bradley MP**

Chair of the East Midlands HS2  
Executive Board

**Cllr Martin Hill OBE**

Chair of East Midlands Councils  
(EMC)

**Sir Peter Soulsby**

Chair of Transport for the East  
Midlands (TfEM)

**Integrated Rail Plan** - published this week, for more information visit [here](#).

- **HS2 Executive Board** - 22 November 2021
- **Regional Employers' Board/Joint Council** - 24 November 2021
- **Regional Migration Board** 30 November 2021
- **EMC Executive Board** - 3 December 2021
- **Transport for the East Midlands** - 6 December 2021

**EMC Support Activity**

**Leading Hybrid Teams** - EMC is currently working with a local authority to support their managers in leading in a hybrid world, this week we have been talking to others about our approach and the support that we can provide. Our approach is to understand the context, and outcomes required and from there we design the programme. The purpose of this development support is to provide an opportunity for managers and team leaders to further understand what it means to be leading hybrid teams and the most effective behaviours to achieve this. For more information about how we can support your organisation contact [Lisa.Butterfill@emcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:Lisa.Butterfill@emcouncils.gov.uk)

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**Infrastructure, Planning & Housing**

**£360 million investment to transform rail ticketing across the country** - Contactless pay-as-you-go ticketing to be rolled out across the commuter networks of the Midlands and North over the next 3 years [details [here](#)].

- £360 million invested to radically reform and overhaul rail passengers' experience of fares, ticketing and retailing
- contactless tap-in and tap-out ticketing to be at more than 700 stations across the country outside London and the South East with 400 stations across the North set to benefit
- investment marks first stage of plan to roll out convenient and modern digital ticketing across the whole rail network, improving thousands of daily commutes and simplifying journeys

**HCLG Committee launches inquiry into regulation of social housing in England** - The Housing, Communities and Local Government (HCLG) Committee launches an inquiry examining the quality and regulation of social housing in England [details [here](#)]. The HCLG Committee will examine concerns about the quality of social housing, with a focus on the ability of the [Regulator of Social Housing](#) and the [Housing Ombudsman](#) to identify and address problems. The inquiry will also focus on the proposals in the [Government's social housing White Paper](#) aimed at improving the regulatory regime.

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**Midlands Engine**

**Accelerating the Midlands journey to net zero** - For over 18 months more than 300 partners and parliamentarians, along with many more leading voices in the Midlands, have worked together to co-create our region's first unified vision for accelerating towards net zero.

The **Ten Point Plan for Green Growth in the Midlands Engine** sets out Midlands Engine's region's priority actions and opportunities around this urgent and vital issue. It details how Midlands Engine will support the government on levelling up, net zero, nature's recovery, post-COVID and post-EU Exit economic growth. Working in partnership, the plan aims to create a 36% reduction in carbon emissions, 196,000 jobs and a £24.2 billion boost for our economy, all by 2041 [details [here](#)].

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**Migration, Asylum Support and refugee resettlement**

**Ministers questioned on Channel crossings and Afghan resettlement scheme** - The Home Affairs Committee takes evidence on two inquiries: Channel crossings, migration and asylum-seeking routes through the EU and Afghanistan: safe routes and resettlement held this week.

In the first session, Home Office Minister for Tackling Illegal Migration, Tom Pursglove MP, faced questions on the rise in the numbers of people attempting to enter the UK by crossing the Channel in small boats.

In the second session Minister for Afghan Resettlement, Victoria Atkins MP, responded to questions on Government progress in establishing safe asylum routes from Afghanistan [details [here](#)].

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**Employers' Information**

**Over 100,000 young careers boosted by Kickstart Scheme** - Over 100,000 young people across the country have now started jobs through the government's landmark Kickstart Scheme, it was announced this week [details [here](#)].

**Kickstart Scheme, Update and Support Available** - EMC's work is well underway as a gateway organisation for the Kickstart Scheme. EMC can also provide the employability training that is a feature of the scheme, and which is also fully funded. Development is structured throughout the placement, so that participants understand what employers look for in effective employees to maximise the time at work and develop key skills such as teamworking and communication. Tailored training and coaching can also be provided if required. The development is provided through virtual or in-person sessions, depending on the preference of the councils. The employability training can also be provided to organisations that have not accessed Kickstart through EMC as the gateway. For further information, contact Suzanne at [Suzanne.boulton@emcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:Suzanne.boulton@emcouncils.gov.uk) or visit [here](#).

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## Local Government News



**Millions awarded for new projects to keep women safe** - The Safety of Women at Night Fund will award up to £5 million to 22 organisations focused on improving the safety of women and girls at night [details [here](#)].

The 22 successful bids are from civil society organisations, local authorities and police and crime commissioners across England and Wales. These include in the East Midlands:

### Lead bidder, Grant funding awarded (£)

- Leicester City Council, £249,491
- Northamptonshire OPCC, £300,000
- Nottinghamshire OPCC, £293,542

**DWP has “lost grip” on fraud and mistakes in benefit system says Public Accounts Committee** - The Public Accounts Committee publishes report on the Department for Work and Pensions’ Accounts 2020-21, Fraud and error in the benefits system -

- Levels almost doubled in pandemic from already record highs
- Mistaken overpayments now account for 7.5% of Department’s benefit expenditure
- Failure of even ambition to recover overpayments means ‘billions of taxpayers’ money is almost certainly lost’

For more information visit [here](#).

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## Health & Social Care



**COVID-19 mental health and wellbeing surveillance: Spotlights** - Spotlight reports are part of the COVID-19: mental health and wellbeing surveillance report. This series is part of the [COVID-19: mental health and wellbeing surveillance report](#). The Spotlight series describes variation within the population. The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities is working with partners so that policy-relevant findings about variation can be published in time for relevant Spotlights

[[here](#)].

**Blog UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), Understanding the health effects of climate change** - For UKHSA, the changing climate is one of the most challenging health security threats we face and understanding and mitigating its impact on our health is a key priority.

UKHAS continue to be concerned that extreme weather, from heatwaves and flooding - through to the risk of mosquito-borne diseases becoming endemic - could cause increasing health and economic harm in the UK.

In this blog UKHAS set out some of the key health challenges and UKHSA’s activities to tackle them [details [here](#)].

**Must know: Is your council doing all it can to improve mental health?** - LGA resource available [here](#).

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## EMC Events



**East Midlands Councils Low-Cost CPD Programme for Planners 2021/22** – EMC is hosting a virtual workshop on ‘Major Growth Proposals in the East Midlands’ on Thursday 25 November 2021. This virtual workshop forms part of the East Midlands Councils Low-Cost CPD Programme for Planners. the programme for this event will include;

- Ox-Cam Arc Spatial Framework, Head of the Spatial Framework, MHCLG
- Update on East Midlands Development Corporation
- Update on Nottingham’s Island Quarter

Further information about the programme is available from [here](#).

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## 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 Rob Parker

Lib Dem Group: Cllr David Bill MBE

Independent Group: Cllr Jason Zadrozny

Executive Director: Stuart Young

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Click on our [Twitter](#) & [YouTube](#) accounts for further information.

