

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

## Top items this week



Local Government Funding Allocations - COVID-19



Wellbeing Conversation interactive virtual workshops



COVID-19 Workforce survey research report, 14 July 2020



EU Settlement Scheme Statistics

17 JULY 2020

## Government confirms allocations of £500 million additional funding for councils

Local Government Secretary Robert Jenrick has this week confirmed allocations for individual councils from the £500 million of additional support for coronavirus-related spending pressures.

The extra £500 million – which brings support for pressures they are facing to £4.3 billion - will be distributed to councils based on population and levels of deprivation, and how the costs of delivery of services varies across the country.

Of the £4.3 billion provided to councils, £3.7 billion is not ringfenced to give more flexibility on how it is used in local areas and £600 million was to support social care providers.

In addition, the government announced a co-payment scheme that will compensate councils for irrecoverable income losses from sales, fees and charges. Councils will be expected to absorb the initial 5% of losses compared to planned income from these sources. Thereafter, there will be a cost splitting arrangement where 75p in every pound of relevant losses will be compensated for by the government.

To support longer-term budget planning, the government is also allowing councils to spread tax deficits over 3 years rather than the usual 1 year to allow authorities to pay deficits off in a reasonable timescale and limit cashflow pressures.

To access the press release visit [here](#). The data for the East Midlands allocations can be found [here](#).

## EMC News

**Wellbeing Conversations Development for Managers, Interactive virtual workshop** - This is a practical and interactive virtual workshop enabling managers to support their team members through wellbeing conversations.

The workshop will provide managers with:

- A greater understanding of stress, anxiety, depression and healthy pressure and how to spot the potential signs.
- An understanding of the key components of personal and organisational wellbeing, and how they can influence these in the teams they manage and support individuals to work on their own personal wellbeing.
- A framework for a wellbeing conversation, along with other support materials to enable them to support their team members.
- Understanding how they can discuss wellbeing more openly with individuals and explore any personal barriers in this regard.

**Dates** - 7 September 2020 (9:30 – 11:30) or 8 September 2020 (14:00 – 16:00), details [here](#).

**Develop skills for effective Wellbeing Conversations**, interactive virtual workshops - This virtual workshop is designed to flow from the Wellbeing Conversations workshop, however, it can also stand alone as an opportunity for managers to develop skills to enhance their wellbeing conversations with individuals.

The workshop is practical and interactive, giving delegates the opportunity to discuss, explore and practice the following skills:-

- Empathetic listening
- Exploring assumptions
- Being curious through effective questions
- Holding back from fixing
- Understanding others frame of reference

Attendees will be provided with support material and signposted to other resources around these skills.

**Dates** - 22 September 2020 (9:30 – 11:30) or 23 September 2020 (14:00 – 16:00), for more information visit [here](#).

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## Infrastructure, Planning & Housing

**New planning rules to protect our cultural heritage** - Changes to the planning system will save theatres, concert halls and live music performance venues for future generations, Communities Secretary Robert Jenrick has announced. Councils will need to take the temporary impact of coronavirus into account when considering permission for change of use, redevelopment or demolition of a theatre, concert hall or live music performance venue [details [here](#)].

**Rail Needs (HS2) Assessment Interim Report** - The National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) published its Rail Needs (HS2) Assessment Interim Report on the 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020 – available [here](#). The report summarises the evidence to date and sets out next steps towards finalising the Assessment by November 2020. The Assessment will include a number of alternative packages of interventions for Government to consider, based around the NIC’s ‘fiscal mandate’. The Government will then publish its preferred way forward in an ‘Integrated Rail Plan for the north and Midlands’ by the end of 2020. The East Midlands submission to the NIC is available [here](#).

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## Employers’ Information

**COVID-19 Workforce survey research report, 14 July 2020** - EMC has been supporting the LGA with a national survey of key workforce data on how the sector is responding to COVID-19. It is a bi-weekly survey and EMC is co-ordinating the data collection from councils within this region. The report which summarises the results of the latest round of data collection is now available. The overall response rate was 65 per cent. The response within the East Midlands was 69% of councils providing their input. The full report is available from [here](#).

Key findings

- Some 32 per cent of councils reported recruiting additional staff (of any type including casual, agency, contingent, etc) in the week ending 26 June 2020. In total 1622 additional staff had been recruited: the median number of staff per authority was four and the mean was 25
- More than a third of councils (108) recorded deaths in service since lockdown. A total of 205 deaths were reported since the start of lockdown (cause not specified).
- Thirty-three per cent of councils reported that they had furloughed at least one member of staff. In total there were 13,180 staff furloughed in the week ending 26 June 2020, which was two per cent of the current workforce. Of those councils that had furloughed staff, the median number furloughed was 101 and the mean was 169 but this varied considerably across different types of authority. The main reason given was that the service had stopped (57 per cent) or that funding had stopped (36 per cent).
- Some 82 per cent of councils had redeployed staff. In total there were 15,966 staff redeployed in the week ending 26 June 2020, which was three per cent of the current workforce. The median number of staff redeployed was 31 and the mean was 76.
- More than nine out of ten councils (92 per cent) reported that they had at least one member of staff unavailable for work. In total there were 33,077 staff unavailable for work in the week ending 26 June 2020, six per cent of the current workforce. The median number of staff unavailable for work was 34 and the mean was 147.
- 30 per cent of staff were unavailable through ‘self-isolation (other)’ and 34 per cent were unavailable due to ‘Non-COVID sickness’.
- When asked whether individual services had enough staff to run them normally or not, the service most badly affected during the week ending 26 June was schools: over a quarter of single tier and county councils reported they were operating with severe disruption due to staffing numbers. Also badly affected were adults and children’s services, with 26 per cent and 18 per cent of councils respectively reporting moderate disruption.
- When asked to assess the council overall, in terms of whether there are enough staff to run services normally or not, 47 per cent of councils report minor disruption.

Finally, councils were asked about the availability of personal protective equipment (PPE) and COVID-19 testing for staff. Eighty-eight per cent reported they had about the right amount of PPE they needed; while three per cent had less than they needed. Eighty-five per cent said all the staff who need testing can access it; only one per cent said it was available to some of their staff who need it.

**EMC Weekly 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](#).

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## Homelessness

**Ombudsman highlights where councils can improve services to homeless people** - Problems with the way councils are meeting new housing duties are making some homeless people’s situation worse, the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman has found. In a new report published this week, the Ombudsman examines the lessons that councils can learn from the first 50 cases it investigated under the Homelessness Reduction Act, introduced in 2018 [\[here\]](#).

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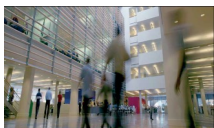
## Migration, Asylum Seekers, Refugee Resettlement and Modern Slavery

**EU Settlement Scheme Statistics** - The latest EUSS monthly statistics were published this week. They show more than 3.71 million (3,713,200) applications to the scheme and more than 3.4 million (3,459,700) applications concluded, up to the end of June 2020. To access the statistics visit [here](#).

**EMSMP daily updates** - The East Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership is providing daily updates on their webpage in relation to asylum seekers, refugees and migrants in the East Midlands, as well as those working with and supporting them [details [here](#)]. They also provide a weekly summary on this via email, to receive this email [Hannah.Smith@emcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:Hannah.Smith@emcouncils.gov.uk).

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## Local Government News



**COVID-19: Guidance for the safe use of council buildings** - This is guidance for those managing council buildings. It signposts to relevant guidance on a range of different activities that can take place in these buildings, in line with the government's roadmap to ease the existing measures to tackle COVID-19.

This guidance will be updated as we move into the next step for easing restrictions and when other guidance relevant to council buildings are produced [details [here](#)].

**Local government's digital response to COVID-19, 28 July 2020** - During the COVID-19 pandemic digital has been catapulted to prominence as the enabler of communication, collaboration and effective remote working. Local government has held a vital role in ensuring resident's needs are accommodated, and digital has allowed the efficient delivery of services over the past few months. This LGA webinar will hear from speakers across the sector on their experiences of using digital and technology to coordinate teams in the swift delivery of solutions and key tools that alleviated the pressure COVID-19 placed on communities. For more information visit [here](#).

**COVID-19: Guidance for the safe use of multi-purpose community facilities** - Guidance for those managing community centres, village halls and other community facilities on safely re-opening multi-purpose buildings. Community centres, village halls, and other multi-use community facilities support a wide range of local activity. However, their communal nature also makes them places that are vulnerable to the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). This guidance is for those managing multi-use community facilities to prepare for re-opening when restrictions have lifted. It signposts to relevant guidance on a range of different activities that can take place in these spaces. Many community facilities are also workplaces and those responsible for the premises should therefore be aware of their [responsibilities as employers](#).

This guidance will be updated as we move into the next step for easing restrictions and when other guidance relevant to multi-use facilities are produced. Access from [here](#).

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## Health & Social Care

**Public Health England COVID-19 surveillance summary** - The latest Public Health England COVID-19 surveillance summary is available [here](#) (published Thursday 9 July 2020).

The report includes data from a variety of different sources: community, primary care, secondary care, virology, mortality and infection surveillance data. These combined data sources show a wider community picture including a breakdown by age, gender, ethnicity and geography and support the national response to the pandemic and assist regional stakeholders in local planning.

**Public Health England Chief Executive Duncan Selbie's Friday Message** - details [here](#). The message includes details of Psychological First Aid training. PHE's [Psychological First Aid \(PFA\) training module](#) for all frontline and essential workers and volunteers has received over 50,000 sign ups in the three weeks since it was published.

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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 Alan Rhodes  
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Executive Director: Stuart Young

## East Midlands Councils

First Floor Offices, South Annexe  
Pera Business Park  
Nottingham Road  
Melton Mowbray  
Leicestershire  
LE13 0PB



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