

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

Top items this week

13 MAY 2022

The Levelling Up and  
Regeneration Bill

The Queen's Speech

Communications and  
Marketing Specialist - East  
Midlands Councils

EMC Events for Councillors  
and Officers

## The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill

Announced during the Queen's Speech this week. The Bill will add to existing legislation by:

- Making it easier to devolve powers to more of England through a new type of combined authority model – “combined county authorities” - to be made up of upper tier local authorities (county councils and unitary authorities) only.
- Simplifying the processes for establishing and amending new and existing combined authorities
- Increasing the accountability and transparency of local leaders to their communities, in line with local areas getting more powers and flexibilities. This will include supporting attendance at overview and scrutiny and audit committees through amending remuneration provisions.
- Enabling local authorities to change their governance model to a stronger form (e.g., with a directly elected mayor) more quickly in order to access a deeper devolution deal.
- Allowing areas to choose an alternative title for their directly elected mayor - such as ‘Governor’ and ‘County Commissioner’ – so areas can choose the title which best reflects their local identity.

In addition, the Bill provides a framework within which power can sustainably be devolved locally by providing supporting tools to tackle excessive risk from borrowing and investing. This allows local authorities to do the capital investment needed, in a way that is financially sustainable both now and in the future.

### Levelling Up, measures include:

- Creating a legal duty for the government to set and report on a number of missions for levelling up the country.
- These missions will include: closing the gap in pay and productivity between the richest and poorest areas, effectively eradicating child illiteracy and innumeracy, closing gaps in healthy life expectancy, getting the rest of the country's transport connectivity much closer to the standards of London's
- The deadline for each mission is 2030, but the Levelling Up Bill will create a duty for the government to report on progress annually.
- Enabling more areas to have the kinds of devolved powers which currently only the largest cities enjoy, helping drive improvements on local priorities such as transport and skills.
- New provisions on council borrowing to protect taxpayers' money while enabling local areas to make investment.

### Regeneration, measures include:

- New powers for local leaders to run High Street Rental Auctions
- Councils will also be able to double council tax on empty and second homes
- ‘Al-fresco dining’ will be made permanent
- A new, locally set infrastructure levy, charged on the final value of property when its sold, will replace much of the broken S106 payments system.
- Legislation to make it easier for councils to regenerate their town centres through Compulsory Purchase Orders

Levelling Up and Regeneration: Policy Paper [here](#). The Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities press release available from [here](#).

**Planning aspects of Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill: Briefing Note** - EMC has produced a 2 page summary of the key planning measures contained in the Government's Levelling Up & Regeneration Bill, available [here](#).

**Communications and Marketing Specialist - East Midlands Councils** - A great opportunity exists for a marketing and communications specialist to work with a highly respected regional organisation with national reach.

You will be leading on all of EMC communications and engagement activity, raising our local and national profile across our core responsibilities and promoting our free and income generating services to member councils and partners.

The closing date for applications is Monday 6 June 2022. Interviews will take place week commencing 13 June 2022, further information is available from [here](#).

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## The Queen's Speech

On Tuesday 10 May, during the State Opening of Parliament, His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales, on behalf of Her Majesty The Queen, set out the Government's agenda for the 2022-23 Parliamentary session.

Full details of all the [announcements included in the Queen's Speech can be read on the Government website](#).

The LGA has also published a briefing that can be found [here](#). The following media statements on the announcements: Including; Transport Bill - The Bill will create a new body, Great British Railways, which will act as the single national leader of the railways. Great British Railways will have contracting powers for passenger services and will be tasked with retaining the best of the private sector to drive improvements to services. The new body will work within a clear mandate, goals and budgets set by the Government, who will reserve powers of direction.

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## EMC News

**East Midlands Councils (EMC) Nomination Process** - EMC will shortly be inviting nominations for membership. All local authority member authorities are allocated one place on EMC, which is usually the Leader of the Council unless otherwise specified. In addition to this there are another 40 added places which are allocated based on the political balance of the region. For more information on EMC Representation and Nomination visit [here](#).

## EMC Boards Activity

Upcoming board meeting dates;

- **Regional Migration Board** - 8 June 2022
- **Regional Employers' Board and Regional Joint Council** - 9 June 2022
- **Transport for the East Midlands** - 22 June 2022
- **EMC Executive Board** - 24 June 2022
- **EMC Meeting** - 15 July 2022 – 2.00pm start

## EMC Councillor Events

**Cyber Security workshop for Councillors in the East Midlands** - EMC, working collaboratively with the East Midlands Special Operations Unit is hosting two free webinars for Councillors on cyber security.

Cyber Security is the protection of your hardware, software and data from unauthorised access and cyber-attacks. We recognise the value and responsibility you bring to our communities as a councillor, with this in mind we want to ensure that you have strong cyber security protection available to you. With the current news around global conflicts, we are seeing a real increase in targeted cybercrime, to combat this, we will cover topics around securing your digital footprint, securing your social media, how to work in public using technology and practical tips. **Dates and times**- 27 May 2022, 10am - 11am or 8 June 2022, 3pm - 4pm (Virtual workshop using MS Teams). To book a place visit [here](#).

**The Role of the Civic Head, 31 May 2022** - EMC is hosting a one day workshop for incoming Civic Heads. The intended audience for this event will be those coming into civic office at their Annual Meetings at the end of May, their deputies and their support staff. **How to book** – visit [here](#).

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## Infrastructure, Planning & Housing

**UK2070 Commission announcement, UK Integrated Rail Plan Inquiry** - The UK2070 commission has announced an inquiry into Integrated Rail Plan as part of Levelling Up agenda and that a call for evidence has been announced. Inquiry details available at [www.uk2070.org.uk](http://www.uk2070.org.uk) Closing date 13th June 2022.

**Future of the planning system in England: government response to the Select Committee report** - The government's response to the Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities Select Committee's inquiry on the future of the planning system in England [details [here](#)].

**Midlands Connect, May newsletter** - the May edition of the newsletter can be found [here](#).

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## Asylum Support and Refugee Resettlement

**Changes to Asylum Dispersal** - The Home Office recently confirmed that all Local Authority areas will be within scope as asylum dispersal areas. This is a significant change of approach. The Full Dispersal model aims to end the use of contingency hotels and reduce pressure on the limited number of areas that are already dispersal areas. As part of the consultation process, councils are invited to agree how the model for dispersal will operate. EMC (through its SMP role) will be working with councils and the Home Office in developing and agreeing the approach. The Home Office factsheet, published in support of this proposal, is available [here](#).

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## Local Government News

**House of Commons Library Research Briefing on Directly-elected mayors, published 9 May 2022** - This briefing paper explains the status of directly-elected mayors in English and Welsh local government, and the routes to establishing them, including the use of local referendums. It also includes an up-to-date list of elected mayors and statistics on previous referendums [details [here](#)].

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## Local Government News

**New role for Chief Executive Anthony May** - Chief Executive of Nottinghamshire County Council, Anthony May has been appointed the Chief Executive of the Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust (NUH) and will take up his new role in the Autumn [details [here](#)].

**Derby City Council's children's services are officially 'Outstanding'** - Derby has become one of only three cities in the country to be rated 'Outstanding' for its services for children and young people, following an inspection by Ofsted. Services were judged to be Outstanding in three out of four categories, including overall effectiveness. The Council also earned this accolade for the impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families, and the experiences and progress of children who need help and protection. It was rated Good for the experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers.

The Ofsted report highlights the progress made over the last five years, where the service's practitioners have embraced a new model of working, which is commended as 'a significant achievement' during the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns in 2020.

**Annual Council Meeting results in change of political leadership** - Rutland's Annual Council Meeting has resulted in a change of political leadership after Council Leader Oliver Hemsley (Independent) stood down. He was replaced by Lucy Stephenson (Conservative), who was elected by a majority of 18 Councillors [details [here](#)].

**Birmingham 2022 Queen's Baton Relay to visit the region as full England route revealed** - The Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games has unveiled the highly-anticipated route that the Queen's Baton Relay will take through England this summer. Birmingham 2022 is hosting the 16<sup>th</sup> official Queen's Baton Relay – a journey which brings together and celebrates communities across the Commonwealth, during the build up to the Games. In England, the Queen's Baton Relay will provide the opportunity for communities to experience the buzz and excitement for Birmingham 2022, as the 11 days of showstopping sport nears ever closer. [The England Route \(birmingham2022.com\)](https://www.birmingham2022.com)  
The Birmingham 2022 Queen's Baton Relay is confirmed to visit the region during its final journey through England, taking place over 2 days:

- 10 July - Northampton, Corby, Oakham, Leicester, Nottingham, Lincoln
- 11 July - Skegness, Boston, Grantham, Loughborough, Derby, Bakewell, Matlock, and Buxton

**LGA Behavioural Insights programme 2022/23** – this is now open for applications. The LGA is seeking applications from a group of local authorities who will work together to run a behavioural insights trial to address a behavioural challenge in their local area. If you are interested in participating in this year's programme, please complete the short [application form](#) by Monday 23 May at 12pm. For queries, please email: [behaviouralinsights@local.gov.uk](mailto:behaviouralinsights@local.gov.uk).

**LGA Climate Action Plan Roundtables** - the LGA is [supporting councils](#) in their development and implementation of climate action plans by organising a set of roundtables to bring councils together to discuss and share learning through facilitated peer support. You can sign up to the support via the [expression of interest form](#), and if you have any queries, you can read the [Climate Change Action Plan Roundtables - Frequently Asked Questions](#)

**Levelling Up Committee questions Government Minister** - On 16 May, the Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (LUHC) Committee puts questions to Eddie Hughes, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, for the final oral evidence session for its inquiry into the regulation of social housing in England [details [here](#)].

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## EMC Events

**Effective Chairing of Hybrid Meetings Workshop, 22 June** - EMC is hosting a half day training session on 'Effective Chairing of Hybrid Meetings'. The workshop will provide training for chairs to maximise opportunities within hybrid meetings [details [here](#)]. A hybrid meeting is a meeting that includes both participants engaging in the real world and virtually. The workshop has been designed to develop skills around managing and engaging with people in a hybrid meeting. The half day training session will be practical.

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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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