



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

Top items this week

27 OCTOBER 2023



The Future's Electric!
The benefits of Midland
Main Line Electrification



Second National
Infrastructure Assessment
summary



Levelling Up and
Regeneration Bill receives
Royal Assent



Understanding Local
Government Finance
Seminar

THE FUTURE'S ELECTRIC!

THE BENEFITS OF MIDLAND MAIN LINE ELECTRIFICATION

Yesterday, Thursday 26 October, Transport for the East Midlands (TfEM) launched its latest publication, outlining the many benefits of Midland Main Line Electrification for the region, and calling on the government to name the date when work will start.

The Midland Mainline carries 3.75 million passenger journeys a year between Sheffield, Chesterfield, Derby, Nottingham, Leicester, Northamptonshire, and London, but trains still have to travel on diesel power for part of the journey – impacting emissions, reliability and the time it takes to travel.

Electrification of the final section of the Midland Mainline would become part of a much wider electrically-powered rail corridor, joining up with government's new Network North plan for electrification of the Hope Valley Line between Manchester and Sheffield, the line between Leeds and Sheffield, and enhancements between Nottingham and Newark.

TfEM's Chair, Sir Peter Soulsby, was joined at Leicester Station by Chris Hobson from East Midlands Chamber and Will Rogers, Managing Director of East Midlands Railway – pictured above.

The full report can be found here:



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NIC—SECOND NATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT—SUMMARY FROM EMC

East Midlands Councils has been reviewing the content of the Second National Infrastructure Assessment, which was published by the National Infrastructure Commission last week.

In the report, the NIC advise that improving infrastructure to boost economic growth across the UK and meet climate goals is both achievable and affordable if the right policy steps are taken now.

East Midlands Councils has prepared a brief summary of the report and the impact of its recommendations for the region, which can be found here:

The full report can be found here:

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LEVELLING UP BILL RECEIVES ROYAL ASSENT

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill has received Royal Assent and is now law, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) has announced.

In a statement released yesterday, DLUHC said that the new laws would: “speed up the planning system, hold developers to account, cut bureaucracy, and encourage more councils to put in place plans to enable the building of new homes.”

The measures in the Act will change the planning system in many ways, including:

- Local planning authorities would be required to have a design code in place covering their entire area
- the Act will replace the current section 106 and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) regimes with a new Infrastructure Levy.
- the scope of local plans will be limited to ‘locally specific’ matters, with ‘issues that apply in most areas’ to be covered by a new suite of National Development Management Policies
- The ‘duty to co-operate’ will be dropped, and time limits prescribed for different stages of plan preparation
- Planning authorities will have the power to instigate auctions to take leases on vacant high street properties
- Authorities will no longer have to maintain a five-year supply of housing land if they had an adopted local plan

EMC will be holding an event in December to cover the aspects of this bill in more detail, more information can be found in the article below.

More information about the bill can be found here:

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NATIONAL AND LOCAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT’S LEVELLING UP AGENDA

Friday 8 December 2023, 10am—1pm

Devonshire Place, 78 London Road, Leicester LE2 0RA

In line with the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill (LURB) receiving Royal Assent, East Midlands Councils will be delivering a free event in December which will cover the political and legal aspects of the LURB, as well as an opportunity to hear directly about the emerging proposals for the new Mayoral County Combined Authorities in the East Midlands.

This event is primarily aimed at councillors and senior officers, and it forms part of EMCs broader Member Development offer.

Hear from:

- Andrew Pritchard, Director of Policy & Infrastructure, East Midlands Councils on the 12 Levelling Up Missions and the current position in the East Midlands.
- Howard Leithead and Odette Chalaby - No5 Chambers on the legislative landscape of the Levelling Up and Reform Bill
- Mark Rogers, Interim Chief Officer – East Midlands Devolution Programme
- Justin Brown, Assistant Director, Growth, Lincolnshire County Council on emerging proposals for Mayoral County Combined Authorities in the East Midlands

For more information or to book your place at this session:

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UNDERSTANDING LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE - A SEMINAR FOR ELECTED MEMBERS

Wednesday 29 November 2023, 5pm-7.30pm via MS Teams

Every elected member has a responsibility to ensure they understand council finances. However, councils are funded from a variety of sources, which can appear complex to those without a financial background. The current system means that local decisions can have a significant impact on the funding your council receives and so it is essential that all elected members understand the potential impact of the new rules as they discuss wider strategies and plans.

This overall objective of this seminar is to demystify council funding and, therefore, enable councillors to engage with the council finances more effectively. The seminar will consider how the council receives its funding and how it plans and controls its spending plans. Plenty of time will be provided for participants to ask questions, with all answers provided in plain English

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NEW REPORT LAUNCHED ON COMBINED AUTHORITIES

A new report launched by Harvard University and King's College London titled 'Why hasn't UK regional Policy worked' has stated that 'devolution hopes rest on combined authorities'.

The report, which interviewed 93 former ministers, civil servants and leading local government figures, including EMC's Chair Cllr Martin Hill, found that there was cross-party support for the combined authority model'.

Interviewees stressed that centralisation, policy instability and lack of local government capacity have all led to a failure to level up England's regions.

The full report can be found here:

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HOME OFFICE TO EXIT FIRST 50 ASYLUM HOTELS BY THE END OF JANUARY

The first 50 hotels across the UK will stop housing asylum seekers by the end of January, as announced by Immigration Minister, Robert Jenrick.

These hotels will be gradually handed back to hoteliers by the end of January 2024, with the first of these expected to be exited in the coming days.

Asylum seekers currently accommodated in these hotels will be moving to other parts of the UK's asylum estate, including the Bibby Stockholm barge.

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East Midlands Councils

Pera Business Park
Nottingham Road
Melton Mowbray
Leicestershire
LE13 OPB

