



ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021



July 2021

EMC Annual Report 2020/21

1. Chairman's Report

Welcome to the East Midlands Councils (EMC) Annual Report 2020/21.

This Annual Report is a summary of our work over the past 12 months and provides EMC with an opportunity to account to its membership for the work undertaken on its behalf. We continually strive to improve and widen our service offer to the sector and to deliver against the membership's agreed priorities.

This Annual Report covers the full breadth of EMC's offer, including proposals for greater investment and infrastructure funds, our work on HS2, providing focused member and officer development programmes and our role as the Regional Employers' Organisation; as well as taking forward the management of important refugee and asylum resettlement programmes.

Looking back over the past year, it was one dominated by the sector's response to Covid-19. The way in which the sector has responded should be applauded and EMC has continued to direct its resources to supporting its membership throughout this challenging time.

The 4 pillar approach continues to provide the framework for EMC's work with our focus on being an all-member organisation, policy development, collective work and lobbying, and improving communications. This fits well with the national context, particularly with the opportunities of the evolving levelling-up and recovery agenda and the White Paper expected in the Autumn.

As an 'all-member organisation'; we routinely offered *all* councillors and officers in the region opportunities to attend our briefing, skills development and training events. There have been over 2300 councillors and officer places taken throughout the year.

We have continued to offer advice, access to low cost services and capacity support to our member councils - and all councils in membership accessed at least one of these discounted services during 2020/21, with EMC delivering savings on behalf of its member councils estimated to be £548,000.

A significant focus remains on infrastructure and growth. Local authorities in this region continue to lead work with Midlands Connect and Midlands Engine in delivering investment into this region. EMC established a new model for rail franchise

management with an influencing role for local authorities in the region, and council leaders continue to play a full role in the region's collective leadership on HS2. Uncertainty remains and our partners, including investors, need greater certainty. Following the publication of the Okervee Review and the National Infrastructure Commission's (NIC) report, we look to the Government's forthcoming publication of its Independent Rail Plan to set the scope for the HS2 route, its station and connectivity.

EMC has also provided support to the developing East Midlands Development Corporation proposition, and we will offer all support in taking forward the Chancellor's recent announcement that the Humber Ports and East Midlands Airport will become the locations for two of the eight new Freeports in the UK; subject to confirming successful completion of their business cases.

It has remained important that EMC provides effective leadership on asylum and refugee resettlement work – providing support for this vulnerable group of people while working with Government to put in place more resources that are needed at the local level. While we're rightly proud that councils voluntarily resettle refugees and vulnerable children, there remain concerns with asylum dispersal and how we can put in place a more equitable solution for the care of UASC.

The workforce implications of Covid-19 have been significant and in its role as the Regional Employers' Organisation, EMC refocused its work to support councils in managing these issues. Councils were provided with timely advice and information, with EMC responding to more queries in a month than is usually received across a year. Three main themes that EMC focused on to support council as part of its overall work programme were employee wellbeing, particularly relating to mental health; supporting managers with the implications of managing people remotely; and assisting the transition to new ways of working for managers, team members and from an organisational culture perspective.

This was delivered through regular advice, guidance, events and networks. These were quickly adapted to operate effectively within an on-line and virtual environment. EMC continued to provide additional capacity and services on HR and organisational development issues through 43 separate assignments to councils in the region.

And on finances, EMC continues to tightly manage its budget, ensuring a balance of external grant, consultancy funding and membership subscriptions. However, the Covid-19 pandemic and national/local restrictions reduced EMC's earned income activities (e.g., consultancy, fees, recruitment, events) and affected the budget. Alongside the disruption of EMC external income activities, the refocus of activity from

income generation-type activities to providing direct sector support to councils to assist in responding to the pandemic, as part of the core offer, further impacted on the budget leading to a £47,000 deficit that was fully met by previously accrued reserves.

As we look towards 2021/22, as the impact of Covid on our local communities becomes clearer, and as the Government lays out proposals for levelling-up and recovery, local government in this region has an opportunity to put in place new arrangements to strengthen leadership and resilience.

We remain grateful to EMC staff, councillors and officers across the region for their efforts and on-going engagement. We look forward to continuing to work with colleagues across the East Midlands during 2021/22.



Cllr Martin Hill OBE
Chair
East Midlands Councils



Cllr David Mellen
Vice Chair
East Midlands Councils



Cllr Jonathan Morgan
Vice Chair
East Midlands Councils

2. Annual Accounts 2020-21

This financial statement details the financial position of East Midlands Councils for the year ending 31st March 2021. Reserves stood at £588,400 as of 31st March 2021.

Management Accounts (Period 1st April 2020– 31st March 2021)¹

BUDGET	BUDGET*	2020/21	
		ACTUAL	VARIATION
INCOME	£	£	£
Grants	417,500	417,500	0
Subscriptions	279,000	279,000	0
Other Income	262,400	295,100	32,700
TOTAL INCOME	958,900	991,600	32,700
EXPENDITURE			
Staffing Costs	811,800	822,800	11,000
Member Allowances	23,500	23,500	0
Premises	23,500	23,500	0
Direct Costs	147,900	167,900	20,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	1,006,100	1,037,100	31,000
OPERATIONAL DEFICIT	(47,200)	(45,500)	1,700

The Statement of Accounts will be audited and presented to Management Group at its meeting on 10th September 2021.

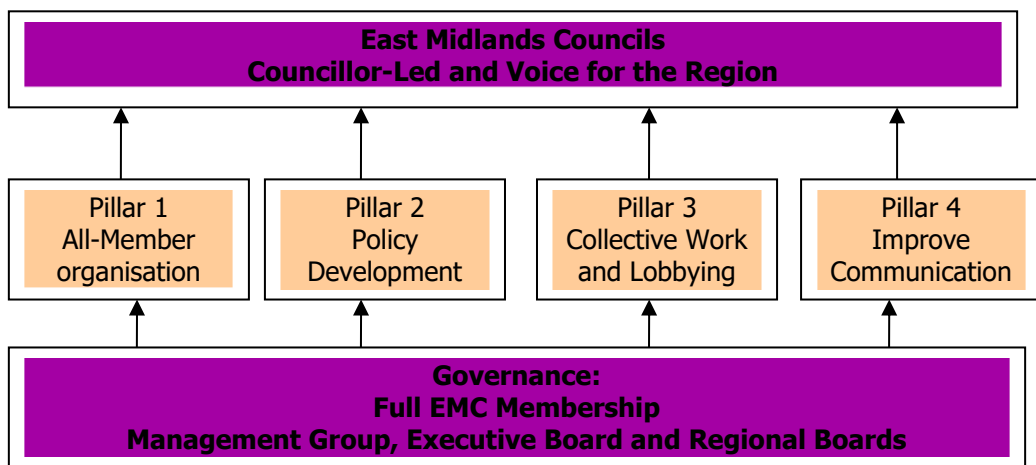
*Original Budget amended to incorporate the impact of Covid19

¹The accounts of East Midlands Councils are formally consolidated within those of Nottingham City Council (our accountable body during 2020/21), who are responsible for the providing the formal Statement of Accounts.

3. The 4 Pillar Approach to Regional Work

A four-pillar approach provides the framework for all work that EMC undertakes on behalf of its member councils:

- a) An 'all-member' organisation - offering opportunities for all councillors to become actively involved.
- b) Policy development with a clear membership mandate.
- c) Linking EMC's campaigning and lobbying activities with the collective work of member councils.
- d) Improving communication with the membership and better promote the region.



4. Achievements 2020/21

Pillar 1: All-Member Organisation

Members have long been clear that EMC must be an 'all-member organisation' that offers opportunities and involves *all* councillors and officers in the work of the organisation, rather than a limited number who comprise the *actual* membership or are senior officers.

EMC therefore continues to try to engage with all 2,000 councillors in the region, and through officer networks. All councillors and officers are regularly offered opportunities to attend briefing and development events at nil or low additional cost. All councils and councillors are offered opportunities to inform our work and our weekly Policy Brief is routinely sent to all councillors in the region.

All activities were quickly and effectively transferred to virtual and on-line platforms, and East Midlands Councils stepped in to help councils share information, guidance and approaches to assist them in moving their democratic processes to the virtual environment. A 4-part virtual development programme was delivered for Democratic Services officers in the region and their colleagues to support them with their councillor development objectives and programmes.

We ensured that key issues being addressed by local authorities were reflected in our programme, with highlights including:

a) Conferences & Key Events

A **Modern Slavery Summit** was held virtually on 11th and 14th December 2020 to support councils in their work to eradicate human trafficking and modern slavery. Speakers at the event included Dame Sara Thornton, Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, Daxa Pancholi, Head of Community Safety & Protection at Leicester City Council and colleagues from academia, the Home Office and the East Midlands Special Operations Unit.

This was the first time these issues have been raised at a joint regional forum and offered an opportunity to consider how to respond to the prevalence and impact of modern slavery on individuals and local communities. As well as being covered by BBC East Midlands, feedback and on-going engagement from across the sector has been excellent.

b) Councillor Development Skills Workshops

A tailored programme of virtual workshops was launched to support councillors to further enhance skills relevant to their roles working on behalf of their local communities. The programme included chairing skills, scrutiny – reset and recovery, and communication skills in the virtual environment.

c) Climate Change workshops for Councillors

Climate Change is one of the stand-out priorities for the sector, and to support this agenda, EMC launched a programme of free workshops in partnership with the LGA and the Midlands Energy. 47 councillors took part in a programme looking at innovative approaches to climate change reduction plans and initiatives including improving community engagement, and housing and energy efficiency.

d) In-house Councillor Development Support

In response to requests from Councils, EMC provided in-house councillor development, with workshops on: Scrutiny, Chairing skills, Presentations and Public Speaking.

e) Networks

EMC has a pivotal role in supporting a collective approach between councils across the region on matters of common importance and a focus on key responsibilities and services for local authorities. Our network activity plays a key part in this, and during 2020/21 we managed the following regional lead member networks on behalf of its members:

- Children's Services
- Scrutiny
- Councillor Development

f) Delivering Value through Discounted Services for Member Councils

Delivering value for our member Councils is at the heart of East Midlands Councils and this is achieved by providing discounted services tailored to the needs of councils, and by negotiating preferential rates with other providers on behalf of our councils. As a result, Councils in membership saved at least £548,000.

These services included consultancy support for individual councils, the East Midlands Jobs recruitment portal, and XpertHR – an on-line information system to support HR compliance, good practice and benchmarking. **All councils** in membership accessed at least one of these discounted services during 2020/21.

g) Support for Officers

For the 2nd year running, over 2000 officers attended EMC's development programmes, signalling the important role EMC plays in supporting councils and officers to meet their objectives for service delivery and personal development.

A feature of EMC's offer is that it is tailored to the needs of Councils and this year the programme has been focused on helping officers meet the challenges presented by Covid. This has included:

- Hosting a series of seminars so that councils and other partners could collectively learn and plan in response to the Covid pandemic.
- Co-ordinating fortnightly meetings of chief executives to cascade and share information and approaches.
- Fortnightly briefings for HR colleagues to keep pace with emerging information and shape national guidance.
- Virtual exchanges to share practice and collaborate on topical issues such as shielding, supporting wellbeing, new ways of working.
- Workshops on the impact of a crisis on behaviour and on supporting wellbeing in the context of remote working.
- Practical workshops to help councils move their training to on-line platforms.

East Midlands Coaching Network (EMCN)

Coaching is a particularly effective way of achieving performance and personal development. Through EMC's coaching network, councils can access high quality coaching and materials for coaching in a cost-effective way (saving up to £18,000 per year). EMCN provides workshops and access to a network of qualified coaches for local councils to build their own coaching capacity. An additional council joined the network last year, so now has 12 organisations as members, 63 coaches from across local government and 6 independent coaches.

The development programme provided by EMC for coaches in the network recognised the challenges that Covid-19 presented for employees being coached and for the coaches themselves. These workshops included:

- How a crisis influences behaviour
- Selfcare for Coaches
- Solution Focused Coaching

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Programmes

Being able to maintain expertise and continue professional development is critical for councils to be able to deliver excellent services. EMC's CPD programmes for planners and environmental health officers provide a low-cost

way for this to be achieved and their value can be seen in the high participation levels. To ensure that councils were able to continue to benefit from these programmes last year, EMC adapted the programmes to run through virtual platforms and widened access to even greater numbers of participants. The approach proved successful, 627 delegates attending the webinars provided for Environmental Health Officers and 260 delegates attending the webinars for Planners.

EMC's Learning & Development Offer

To meet the needs arising in local authorities, EMC designed and delivered tailored training and development, maximising the opportunities provided through virtual platforms. This included:

- Action learning sets for two councils to help individuals resolve challenges being faced within the context of COVID and new working arrangements.
- Coaching Confidence Workshop – to help those employees who act as coaches within their councils to build confidence in their coaching.
- How a crisis influences behaviour.
- Wellbeing conversations for managers.
- Report Writing.
- Virtual Communication Skills.
- Employment Law – two sessions were held including one focused on the implications of the exit pay cap regulations.

Virtual Networks

The ability for councils to be able to share information and best practice helps them to address common issues facing the sector in an efficient and effective way, as learning and experience is shared across the region. EMC's networks are therefore a highly valued service and EMC successfully transformed their networks to run virtually. The approach opened opportunities for more people to be able to participate than in face-to-face settings traditionally used. The networks cover the following themes:

- Performance Management Network
- Democratic Service Officers network, held in conjunction with the Association for Democratic Service Officers (ADSO) - Meetings focused on supporting officers with the move to virtual committee meetings
- Scrutiny Network
- Councillor Development
- HR and organisational development

Cyber Security Network

Cyber security is a priority for local authorities and during 2020/2021, EMC's Cyber Security Network increased the frequency of its meeting, with virtual meetings taking place every other month and regularly attended by the East Midlands Special Operations Unit. The network membership included 31 councils from across the East Midlands.

Kickstart Scheme

The Government has introduced a range of initiatives to help alleviate the impact of the Covid pandemic on employment opportunities. EMC has been working to make it easier for councils to participate in the Kickstart scheme, which provides funded work placements and employability development for young people at risk of long-term unemployment. During the year, EMC gained accreditation as a gateway organisation, to co-ordinate the grant/funding process on behalf of the group of Local Authorities who have offered job placements. EMC is also providing training and development to support employability of the young people on the scheme using grant funding for this purpose.

Advice on HR Issues

There was a 100% increase in the volume of queries and requests for advice on HR and employment issues last year. EMC provides a free advice service to councils as part of its role as the Regional Employers' Organisation, and councils found this particularly valuable given the significant workforce implications of the COVID pandemic and response. EMC responded to 136 separate requests for advice – this represents a 100% increase in the volume of queries and requests for assistance compared to previous years. Additionally, fortnightly information and newsletters were provided to all councils, which included advice on common queries and benchmarking results so that all councils were able to benefit from pooling knowledge and information.

Research and Information Requests

56 separate research assignments were carried out for local authorities. This service enables councils to share policies and practices on a broad range of matters.

h) In-house Support to Councils

EMC provided individual support to councils on a not-for-profit consultancy basis on a range of projects with 43 separate assignments being completed. The service receives excellent feedback, with councils returning to EMC for repeated support having had such positive experiences. This year support provided included:

- Strategic HR capacity

- Interim HR capacity
- Pay and grade structure reviews, equal pay audits and job evaluation
- Mediation
- Assessment Centres
- Providing advice on approaches to job evaluation
- Chief Executive appraisal facilitation
- Independent investigations
- Outplacement Support
- Inhouse support, providing two cohorts of ILM 5 Leadership programmes for an authority
- Top Team development support

This support has included a range of recruitment and selection advice and support to local authorities through the design and development of assessment centres for a range of senior roles and a graduate development programme. We have also supported member panel interviews, provided psychometric assessments and ability testing and delivered training to both councillors and officers.

EMC staff are qualified to design and deliver assessment centres and carry out psychometric testing and during the year, EMC provided this service using on-line platforms. Virtual assessment centres were delivered to support appointments to senior officer roles as well as for 40 people shortlisted for a graduate development programme in a County Council. This has been so successful that it is likely to be continued as a virtual approach in future years.

Pillar 2: Policy Development

To support councils' engagement in key areas of policy development East Midlands Councils undertook the following work, not solely to inform a 'regional position' on policy, but also to ensure that policy is better informed by, and reflects, local priorities, concerns and opportunities.

a) Employers' Board and Regional Joint Council

The Regional Employers' Board provides political leadership on employment issues and forms the Employers' side of the Regional Joint Council. East Midlands Councils (EMC) through its role as the region's Employers Organisation, has the responsibility of supporting employment relations through the operation of the Regional Joint Council. The Regional Joint Council (RJC) provides a forum for joint trade unions and leading Members to discuss employment matters and to agree areas for joint working.

The following workforce priorities for 2020/21 were agreed:

- Coronavirus response and planning
- Supporting Change and Transformation
- Employee Wellbeing – mental health, supporting attendance
- Attracting & Developing Talent
 - Apprenticeships - supporting councils to maximise return on the levy and identify apprenticeships to assist with skills shortage areas
 - addressing skills shortage areas promoting local government as an employer
 - modernising recruitment & selection
 - officer and councillor development
- Pay and Rewards - national pay negotiations, pay benchmarking, revisions to NJC JE scheme, refreshing approaches to job evaluation
- Supporting diversity and addressing the gender pay gap
- Brexit: maintaining a watching brief and reviewing the value of CEEP UK
- Local Government Reform

Meetings of the Regional Joint Council covered the workforce implications of Covid – including employee wellbeing and new working arrangements, local government reform in Northamptonshire, national pay, union and union learning representatives.

Significant employment issues during the year have been the COVID implications on the local government workforce and the public sector exit pay cap which was introduced in November 2020 and revoked in January 2021.

The workforce implications have centred on navigating the requirements to support employee safety and wellbeing and sickness absence provisions/policies, the regulations relating to furloughing, managing casual and relief workers, redeployment and transforming working arrangements. As the pandemic and response developed, then new and changing issues arose affecting the workforce and how services could be delivered. To support councils with these challenges, EMC has provided regular briefings and newsletters and ensured that feedback from councils were used to inform the development of national guidance.

On the public sector pay cap, EMC supported councils with their responses to the consultation and submitted a regional response to represent the views of local authorities. This emphasised concerns relating to the practical implications and unintended consequences which included potential adverse and unfair impact on certain employees. When the legislation was implemented in November, a major issue was that it put councils at legal risk by contradicting prevailing pension legislation. The exit pay cap was revoked ahead of judicial reviews that were due to take place in early 2021. It is expected that the government will introduce new regulations to restrict exit pay over the coming year and this would be subject to consultation.

Within the context of Brexit, along with its fellow subscribers, EMC has been reviewing the ongoing value of membership of CEEP UK, which represents the interests of UK public service employers as a negotiating body for the development of EU directives. Options are currently being explored before a final decision is taken on the viability of CEEP UK.

The Employers Board and Joint Council have been kept informed of the Local Government Reform in Northamptonshire and will be working to capture any key learning points that may be useful for any future significant transformation/reforms.

b) Asylum and Refugee Resettlement

Asylum and refugee resettlement is an important issue for local communities and councils, particularly in the effective planning for and delivery of public services.

Asylum and refugee resettlement programmes have become an increasingly important area of work. With the onset of the pandemic and the unprecedented

increase in spontaneous arrivals, the asylum estate nationally witnessed significant pressures on available bed spaces. As a result, contingency accommodation was commissioned nationally including within the East Midlands to increase bed space capacity. The focus in the coming year is to ensure contingency accommodation is exited as swiftly as possible but to meet this end, there is an urgent need for additional dispersal areas and dispersal accommodation across the region.

The National Transfer Scheme for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) has seen the transfer of over 120 children from Kent, Portsmouth and London Boroughs, in region transfers from Northamptonshire, via the 'Dubs' amendment (children already in Europe) or the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme (VCRS) (from the Middle East and North Africa). The focus over the past year has been on unaccompanied children arriving on small boats across the Channel, and the region has offered support to those local authorities on the south coast which have been particularly affected.

Our comprehensive review of the costs of supporting UASC was a factor in the Home Office providing additional funding for local authorities supporting UASC. That uplift represented an estimated additional £2.25m p.a. into East Midlands Children's Services. More recently, EMC completed a companion paper - the first of its kind - analysing the costs and pressures of supporting former UASC care leavers and has worked with the Home Office to ensure councils are better funded to meet these responsibilities, including a meeting of the East Midlands Lead Members for Children's Services Group and the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Immigration Compliance and Courts. The Home Office announced additional funding for former UASC care leavers, which now stands at £240 per care leaver per week, up to 60% increase. For the East Midlands, this is an additional £4.4m p.a. for councils' Leaving Care Services.

Councils in this region have every reason to be proud of their record in resettling vulnerable people fleeing the conflict in Syria. As part of the Vulnerable Persons and Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme, councils have now resettled over 930 refugees.

With the Vulnerable Persons and Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Schemes now ended, the UK has continued their commitment to resettling the most vulnerable refugees overseas by agreeing to resettling refugees through the UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS). We are pleased to announce that several councils have agreed to continue participation in the UKRS with families due to arrive in the coming months.

Another significant development has been the UK's response to new laws affecting citizens of Hong Kong. The government announced its intention to provide a route for Hong Kong citizens with British National (Overseas) status to come to the UK and live and work. With some uncertainty around the numbers arriving from Hong Kong and more importantly, the locations people are likely to be resettled, East Midlands Councils will play a key role in supporting local authorities but also assisting new arrivals by delivering one of twelve national Welcome Hubs. The hubs will provide a one-stop shop for new arrivals to support in accessing statutory services and voluntary organisations.

Wider work included:

- The Regional Migration Board has continued to support effective leadership and accountable decision-making on all matters relating to asylum and refugee resettlement programmes in the East Midlands.
- Strengthened EMC's role as a key regional partner for Government in the management and delivery of asylum and refugee resettlement programmes.
- Developing a regional response for the prevention and response to UASC that may become/are missing from care.
- Operating a region wide UASC foster carer recruitment project with Leicestershire County Council, in partnership with all Children's Services in the East Midlands which has received regional and national media interest.
- Recruiting to a regional immigration solicitor post – the first of its kind in the UK – providing legal advice, guidance, and training to local authorities on asylum and immigration matters, particularly in relation to UASC, former UASC care leavers, the EU Settlement Scheme, and families with no recourse to public funds (NRPF).
- Provided the platform for senior officer and political engagement for all councils involved in the delivery of these programmes.
- Represented the local authority concerns and priorities in the development and delivery of national programmes.
- Put in place improved working arrangements between local authorities and key sectors, e.g., health, education providers, employers and the voluntary and community sector.
- Continue to support partners in widening participation in English as A Second Language (ESOL) courses.
- Continue to promote and advise partners in ensuring European Union nationals residing in the region are provided with information relating to the European Union Settled Status (EUSS).

Pillar 3: Collective Work and Lobbying

The past year has seen the organisation continue to place significant effort on its collective, partnership work and lobbying activity. It is important that East Midlands Councils provides an effective platform for councillors' leadership; to speak authoritatively on the important issues for the region and to establish a more effective joint approach with the region's MPs, MEPs, and business leaders.

The leadership by the region's transport board, 'Transport for the East Midlands' (TfEM) chaired by the Mayor of Leicester, Sir Peter Soulsby has continued to provide a strong focus for our work on strategic transport investment supported by Cllr Richard Davies (Lincolnshire CC).

Cllr Kay Cutts MBE (Nottinghamshire CC) has led the HS2 Executive Board supported by Cllr Simon Spencer (Derbyshire CC) leading on mitigation issues and Cllr Trish Gilby (Chesterfield BC) leading on Chesterfield/Staveley growth proposals.

a) EMC Infrastructure Priorities

EMC undertakes an annual review of Treasury Statistics that continue to show the extent that the region is losing out in terms of funding for economic growth, transport and wider infrastructure. TfEM is leading the region's work with Midlands Connect in lobbying for the Government funding to match our ambitions as set out in six key priorities for transport investment in the East Midlands.

- Making the most of HS2
- A Midland Main Line fit for the 21st Century
- Improving access to East Midlands Airport
- A46 Growth Corridor & Newark
- A5 Growth Corridor
- Transforming East-West Connectivity



The document is available [here](#):

b) Road Investment

TfEM continues to work with Midlands Connect to promote DfT investment into the Major Road Network and for 'Large Local Major' transport projects from across the

Midlands for the period 2020-25. Priorities for this period 2020-25 agreed by TfEM comprise:

- A614 (MRN): Nottinghamshire County Council (development funding secured).
- A511 Growth Corridor (MRN): Leicestershire County Council (development funding secured).
- North Hykeham Relief Road (LLM): Lincolnshire County Council (capital grant secured – see below).
- Chesterfield-Staveley Regeneration Route (LLM): Derbyshire County Council (development funding secured).
- Newark Northern Bypass (RIS2): Highways England (Committed for delivery in RIS2/3).

In November 2020, the Government announced a capital grant of £110 to Lincolnshire County Council towards the delivery of the North Hykeham Relief Road Large Local Major Scheme.

TfEM responded to a non-statutory consultation by Highways England on proposals for the Newark Northern Bypass and made a comprehensive submission to the Government's Union Connectivity Review highlighting the importance of investment into the A1.

c) Midland Main Line Upgrade & Electrification

EMC continues to promote the delivery of Midland Main Line upgrade and electrification, working closely with Network Rail and individual councils.

The upgrade work, including enhancements to Derby, Leicester and Market Harborough continue, along with the electrification of the line to Corby – and then to Market Harborough by 2023. Combined with the commitment to electrify between Clay Cross and Sheffield, this means that 62% of the MML will be electrified over the next decade or so.

The business case for the full electrification of the Midland Main Line remains strong as it will significantly reduce the running costs of the railway, reduce CO2 emissions, improve air quality and enable the faster acceleration and deceleration of trains. It will also promote the future integration of the HS2 and existing rail networks by enabling high speed conventional-compatible running.

EMC continues to work closely with a range of delivery partners and MPs to make the case for a rolling programme of incremental electrification.

d) East Midlands Rail Services

In September 2020, TfEM (through EMC) signed a multi-year Collaboration Agreement with DfT to provide local input into the management of the East Midlands Franchise, following earlier collaboration with DfT on the franchise competition: [Greater voice for rail passengers in new collaboration between Government and East Midlands transport leaders \(emcouncils.gov.uk\)](https://emcouncils.gov.uk/news/greater-voice-for-rail-passengers-in-new-collaboration-between-government-and-east-midlands-transport-leaders)

This landmark agreement is the first outside of metropolitan England and builds in a process of collaboration with DfT which started during the earlier franchise competition. It is also consistent with the emerging recommendations of the Williams Review (subsequently published as the Williams-Shapps Rail Plan in May 2021). The key elements of the Collaboration Agreement comprise:

- The ability for TfEM to develop incremental improvements to the franchise working directly with DfT officials.
- The ability for TfEM to report performance issues directly to DfT officials and to secure resolution.
- Quarterly meetings with the DfT franchise management and LTA lead officers to oversee the implementation of the Collaboration Agreement (the Steering Group) - with a reporting line into the TfEM Board.
- Annual meeting between the Chair of TfEM and Ministers to review franchise performance and the potential for further improvements.
- Agreement to last the length of the franchise - with a 12 month notice period on either side.

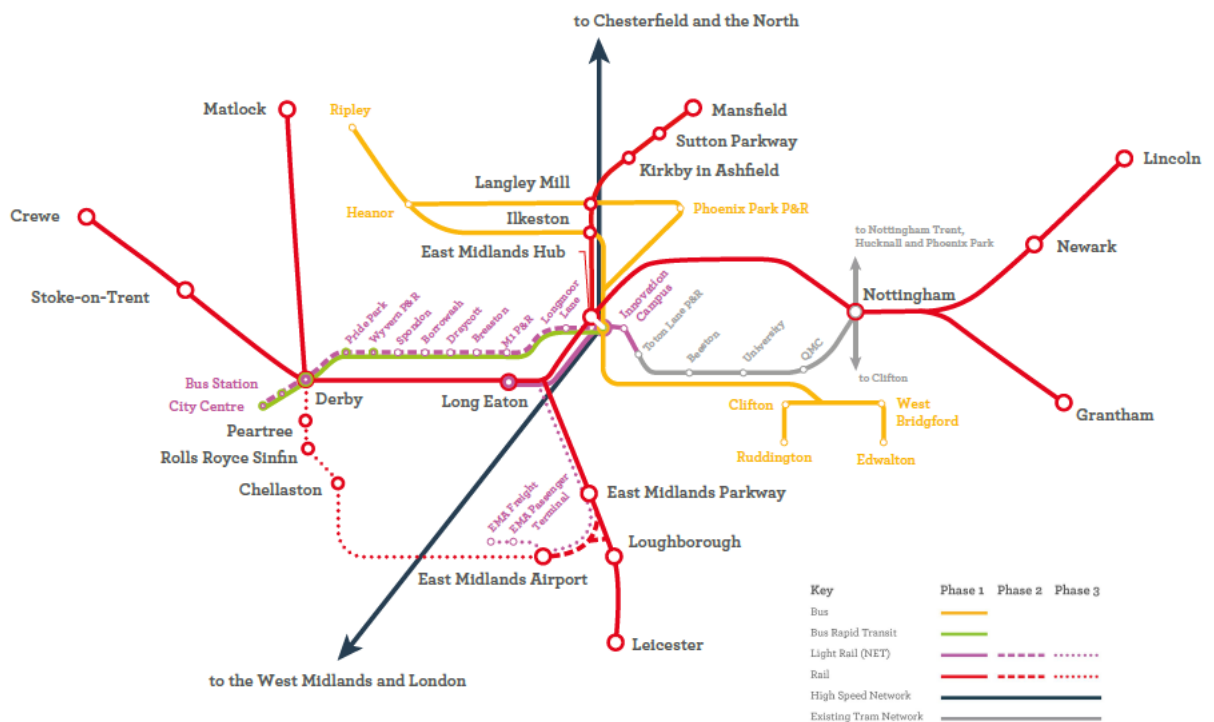
The Collaboration Agreement enables the creation of two new TfEM posts 50% funded by DfT with match from Local Transport Authorities and EMC. Whilst the focus on both posts will be services delivered by EMR, they will also support TfEM's input into other relevant routes, consultation exercises and wider rail processes and structures, which will evolve over time. Recruitment to the senior post, Head of Rail Improvement was successfully completed in January 2021.

e) HS2

We are grateful to the work of Cllr Kay Cutts MBE, Chair of HS2 Executive Board, Cllr Tricia Gilby, Chair of the Chesterfield & Staveley Delivery Board and Cllr Simon Spencer, Chair of the Mitigation Board for their leadership on HS2. The way the region has established and maintained a clear and strong position on HS2 is a credit to all those involved.

EMC has worked closely with councils, LEPs and other stakeholders to take forward the East Midlands HS2 Growth Strategy which sets out proposals to use HS2 investment in the East Midlands to create an additional 74,000 jobs and £4 billion of GVA across the region.

EMC has promoted the development on local connectivity proposals to ensure that all parts of the East Midlands have the opportunity to benefit from HS2 investment through the '[Access to Toton](#)' Study, which formed a key part of the region's submission to the National Infrastructure Commission's Rail Need Assessment Call for Evidence.



EMC was extremely disappointed in the NIC's final Rail Needs Assessment published in November 2020 which failed to recognise the benefits of the Hub Station at Toton as part of a wider Development Corporation proposition, or the regeneration potential of HS2 connectivity to Chesterfield and the proposed Infrastructure Maintenance Depot at Staveley.

EMC continues to advocate strongly to influence Integrated Rail Plan which will confirm the Government's approach to HS2, and which was originally due to be published by the end of 2020, but which is now expected sometime during 2021.

In particular, EMC has continued to work as part of the HS2 East Partnership to promote the delivery of the Eastern Leg of HS2 and the improved connectivity to

the North-East and Scotland, Co-Chaired by Cllr Cutts MBE and Cllr Judith Blake (Leeds City Council). Further information is available at www.hs2east.co.uk.

f) Midlands Engine

The Midlands Engine, chaired by Sir John Peace, was established in late 2015. In rebalancing the UK economy and supporting economic growth, trade and investment across the East and West Midlands, the Midlands Engine has a significant role to play.

The region has been represented on the Midlands Engine Board by four local authority leaders: Cllr Martin Hill (Lincolnshire County Council), Cllr Chris Poulter (Derby City Council), Cllr Barry Lewis (Derbyshire County Council) and Cllr David Mellen (Nottingham City Council).

g) Midlands Connect

EMC continues to work closely with LEPs and Local Transport Authorities across the Midlands to develop the Midlands Connect Initiative, which aims to develop a strategic economic case for boosting strategic transport investment across the Midlands.

The region has been represented by Sir Peter Soulsby (Leicester City Council), Cllr Kay Cutts (Nottinghamshire County Council) and Cllr Nick Rushton (Leicestershire County Council), with Cllr Simon Spencer as an 'alternate' member.

Key areas of activity this year have included initial work to refresh the Midlands Connect Strategy last published 2017, proposals for decarbonisation of transport including analysis of the current deployment of EV charging facilities, and further business case development for the Midlands Rail Hub and Nottingham – Leicester - Coventry Rail Enhancement

h) Working with East Midlands MPs

East Midlands Councils, in conjunction with East Midlands Chambers of Commerce, continues to work with the region's MPs to support the East Midlands All-Party Parliamentary Group, co-chaired by Nigel Mills MP (Conservative, Amber Valley) and Alex Norris MP (Labour, Nottingham North).

Pillar 4: Improve Communication

EMC must ensure that its Members are kept abreast of the work it does on their behalf - and it is our responsibility to better communicate with our membership to enable this. Alongside the weekly policy brief sent to over 2,000 councillors and officers in the region, we've now updated our website and make greater use of our virtual networks.

EMC Business Plan 2021/22

The business plan reflects the priorities that our membership wants EMC to focus upon and deliver. EMC has reviewed its business plan and associated work programme to ensure we meet the needs of our membership. This will be kept under review to ensure responds to future priorities and challenges faced by the sector.

East Midlands Councils Councillor-Led and Voice for the Region

Pillar 1: All-Member Organisation

Outcomes:

- Councillors are more informed on issues that matter to them.
- Councillors are able to plan for and implement new policies in their local council.
- Councillors have greater 'ownership' of EMC.

Services:

- Every councillor offered opportunities for member development and to inform the policy work of EMC.
- New councillor inductions after council elections.
- Online forums.
- Member Development events, action learning and peer mentoring.
- Provision of bespoke and cost effective HR and organisational capacity support.
- Provision of discounted services for member councils, e.g., pay benchmarking database, IT security and online recruitment portal.

Actions:

- Meet the learning and development needs of new and existing members.
- A further expansion of the member development programme (delivered both regionally and locally).
- Member briefing and consultation events on key/significant issues.
- Delivery of mentoring/coaching offer and support.
- Widen opportunities for member-leads on specific issues/priorities.
- Facilitating personal development plans for councillors.

Pillar 2: Policy Development

Outcomes:

- Councillors have a better understanding and engagement with policy of relevance and importance to the region.
- Councillors, MPs, MEPs or other partners (e.g., business leaders) have an effective relationship and joint approach.
- Policy is better informed by, and reflects, local priorities, concerns and opportunities.
- EMC is able to more effectively represent member councils at the national level.

Services:

- Policy Briefs (EMC members and MPs).
- All councillors offered the opportunity to inform the development of EMC policy/response.
- Reviews focused upon clear conclusions and recommendations.
- Represent the region on a range of key issues of collective concern; economic growth and infrastructure [e.g., HS2, Midlands Engine/Connect], asylum/refugee resettlement, health and well-being, children's and adult's services, apprenticeship levy, regional pay negotiations and consultation.

Actions:

- Respond to changing policy environment and provide platform for Councillor leadership on key policy issues: e.g., Covid & vaccinations, public investment and government funding, affordable housing investment, apprenticeship levy, health and asylum/refugee resettlement.
- Develop policy forward plan that reflects risk, opportunities and actions required.
- Regular meetings with MPs through APPG.
- Regular councillor and officer briefing opportunities.
- Collaborative approach on specific issues; health, asylum/refugee resettlement and 'Brexit'.
- Promote more effective co-ordination with key partners, e.g., Midlands Engine/Connect, LEPs, BEIS, MHCLG.
- Management role for East Midlands Rails Franchise (TfEM).

Pillar 3: Collective Work & Lobbying

Outcomes:

- Councillors better able and supported to provide leadership on key issues.
- Councillors are more effective in lobbying on key regional issues and securing a better funding deal/investment and resources for the region.
- Collective leadership on strategic issues for the region.
- More effective and collective approach between councillors, MPs, MEPs, business leaders and other partners.
- Enhanced public profile for EMC and its leadership.
- The East Midlands has a greater profile and 'speaks' authoritatively on key issues.

Services:

- High quality briefings and support for councillors on priority issues.
- A greater number of events on specific issues to provide a platform to influence and lobby.
- Enhanced councillor leadership and support for 'portfolio leads' amongst Executive Board members.
- Enhanced links with the national (trade press), regional and local media.
- Update prospectus on investment and infrastructure opportunities.
- Secretariat and co-ordinating role for EM APPG (MPs).
- Provide an ongoing 'Limited Management Role' for TfEM in the next franchise agreed by the TfEM Board in January 2018.

Actions:

- More active approach to communications and media work.
- Coordinate joint external/lobbying work of EM APPG, business, trades unions and VCS, Government Departments.
- Identify lobbying opportunities and provide a platform for councils' voice.
- Undertake specific and time-limited reviews, led by task and finish groups, on growth and infrastructure, regional investment and funding, housing, asylum and refugee resettlement.
- Respond to consultations/calls for evidence/select committees to provide single voice on issues of common concern.
- Campaign of key issues that include increasing levels of public investment.
- Providing leadership and governance for key regional initiatives, e.g., Regional Employers', Hs2 Strategic Board, Midlands Engine/Connect, East Midlands Rail Franchise.
- Focused work to secure a greater share of investment through delivery against regional investment priorities: Making the most of HS2, Midland Mainline fit for the 21st Century, A5 Growth Corridor, A46 Growth Corridor and wider Newark Enhancement, Improving Access to East Midlands Airport, Transforming East-West Connectivity.
- Focused work on employment priorities: recruitment/retention; pay & rewards; wellbeing & resilience; workforce change; apprenticeships.

Pillar 4: Improve Communication

Outcomes:

- Councillors better able to promote and adopt best practice locally and regionally.
- Councillors better able to engage and inform the work of EMC.
- Secure greater resources/benefit to the region through an enhanced profile.

Services:

- Highlight best practice and case studies.
- Online forum for councillors, officers and partners.
- Peer challenge and support.
- Joint procurement to secure efficiencies for sector.
- Opportunities for councillors to share thinking with wider sector.
- A weekly Policy Brief for EMC members, and on a monthly basis for the regions' MPs.

Actions:

- Better use of EMC website including a discussion facility, Twitter and other social media.
- Targeted promotion of specific regional/sub-regional issues.
- Calls for evidence from the sector to identify best practice within region and nationally.
- Specific events on best practice and wider opportunities for the sector.
- Further develop links with partner organisations, e.g., Government Departments, voluntary and community sector, business organisations.

**Governance: Full EMC Membership
Management Group, Executive Board and Regional Boards
EMC budget 2021/2022 - £1,044,300**

EMC Budget 2021/22

The following EMC budget 2021/22 was approved by the Management Group and by the Executive Board in March 2021.

	Core Services	Contracts & Grants	Member & Learning Development	Consultancy	Fee Paying Events & Services	TOTAL
INCOME	£	£	£	£	£	£
Subscriptions	259,100					259,100
Grants Earned		447,700				447,700
Income	1,000		12,100	165,000	160,000	338,100
Total	260,100	447,700	12,100	165,000	160,000	1,044,900
EXPENDITURE	£	£	£	£	£	£
Staffing Members	182,300	424,300	44,400	119,600	63,500	834,100
Allowances	25,700					25,700
Direct Costs	31,500	46,100	6,750	32,250	67,900	184,500
Total	239,500	470,400	51,150	151,850	131,400	1,044,300
Surplus / (Deficit)	20,600	-22,700	-39,050	13,150	28,600	600

Our Leadership (July 2020 - June 2021)

Executive Board	
Cllr Martin Hill OBE (Chairman)	Lincolnshire County Council
Cllr David Mellen (Vice Chairman)	Nottingham City Council
Cllr Jonathan Morgan (Vice Chairman)	Charnwood Borough Council
Cllr Jason Zadrozny	Ashfield District Council
Cllr Tricia Gilby	Chesterfield Borough Council
Cllr Chris Poulter	Derby City Council
Cllr Barry Lewis	Derbyshire County Council
Cllr David Bill MBE	Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council
Cllr Sarah Russell	Leicester City Council
Cllr Nicholas Rushton	Leicestershire County Council
Cllr Roger Blaney	Newark & Sherwood District Council
Cllr David Lloyd	Newark & Sherwood District Council
Cllr Richard Wright	North Kesteven District Council
Cllr Jonathan Nunn	Northampton Borough Council
Cllr Matthew Golby	Northamptonshire County Council
Cllr Kay Cutts MBE	Nottinghamshire County Council
Cllr Alan Rhodes	Nottinghamshire County Council
Cllr Oliver Hemsley	Rutland County Council

Management Group	
Cllr David Mellen	Chairman
Cllr Martin Hill OBE	Vice Chairman
Cllr Jonathan Morgan	Vice Chairman
Cllr Roger Blaney	Conservative Party Group Leader
Cllr Jason Zadrozny	Independent Group Leader
Cllr Alan Rhodes	Labour Party Group Leader
Cllr David Bill MBE	Liberal Democrats Party Group Leader

Regional Employers' Board	
Cllr Tom Beattie (Chair)	Corby Borough Council
Cllr Byron Rhodes (Vice Chair)	Leicestershire County Council
Cllr Gale Waller (Vice Chair)	Rutland County Council
Cllr Matthew Relf	Ashfield District Council
Cllr Mick Barker	Derby City Council
Cllr Garry Purdy	Derbyshire Dales District Council
Cllr Phil King	Harborough District Council

Cllr Ian Jelley	Kettering Borough Council
Cllr Terri Eynon	Leicestershire County Council
Cllr Ian Fleetwood	Lincolnshire County Council
Cllr Robert Parker	Lincolnshire County Council
Cllr Dave Saunders	Mansfield District Council
Cllr Kate Foale	Nottinghamshire County Council
Cllr Jen Walker	Rushcliffe Borough Council
Cllr Kelham Cooke	South Kesteven District Council

Regional Migration Board	
Cllr Alex Dale (Chair)	Derbyshire County Council
Cllr Sarah Russell (Vice Chair)	Leicester City Council
Cllr Paul Goodale	Boston Borough Council
Cllr Mick Barker	Derby City Council
Andy Keeling	Leicester City Council
Cllr Lee Breckon	Leicestershire County Council
Cllr Patricia Bradwell	Lincolnshire County Council
John Robinson	Newark & Sherwood District Council
Cllr Richard Wright	North Kesteven District Council
Cllr Matthew Golby	Northamptonshire County Council
Alison Challenger	Nottingham City Council
Cllr Rebecca Langton	Nottingham City Council
Linda Sellars	Nottingham City Council
Cllr Philip Owen	Nottinghamshire County Council
Colin Pettigrew	Nottinghamshire County Council
Cllr John Boyce	Oadby & Wigston Borough Council
Cllr Mike Gaunt	Rushcliffe Borough Council
Cllr Tony Aslam	Wellingborough Council

Our Staff

Lisa Bushell	Learning & Development Advisor
Lisa Butterfill	HR & Development Manager
Kyle Butterworth	Head of Rail Improvement
Matthew Clarke	Senior UASC Policy Advisor
Brein Fisher	Regional Migration Manager
Lisa Hopkins	PA to Executive Director
Kirsty Lowe	Learning & Development Advisor
Sam Maher	Director of HR & Councillor Development
Mila Pereira	HR & Learning and Development Co-ordinator
Andrew Pritchard	Director of Policy and Infrastructure
Hannah Smith	Programme Officer
Jaswinder Thapar	Immigration Solicitor
Stuart Young	Executive Director