

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

### Top items this week

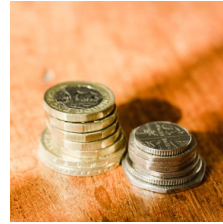
06 JANUARY 2023



**£32.9 million to create national network of active travel experts**



**Number of defibrillators to be increased with new funding**



**New Cost of Living Payments from Spring 2023**



**Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill Consultation**

## After another 'unprecedented' year, we're ready to take on 2023!

Reflecting upon the last year, we commend the dedication and commitment of authorities across the region for their continuous ability to adapt and change along with the fast-moving policy and wider political landscape.

We have continued to face profound and unprecedented challenges over the last year, such as Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February, which was met with an unwavering response from members, with many going above and beyond to adapt and support new arrivals into our communities.

We've continued to see migration through other popular visa routes, such as from Afghanistan and [Hong Kong](#), with authorities working with the voluntary and community sector to ensure there is an opportunity for integration, community support, education, and work.

Aside from [migration](#), we're working to address the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, the current cost-of-living crisis, and continuing to provide essential services for our communities.

At East Midlands Councils, we will continue to support each of our members through these times, offering advice and support at every turn through our successful [CPD programmes, virtual knowledge exchanges, councillor development, and leadership training programmes](#).

Last year's Kickstart programme was hugely successful, offering a significant number of placements to people at risk of long-term unemployment across the region, with nearly 50 per cent of those securing work in local authorities. This year, we'll continue to support members to grow their own and attract new talent through EMC's services on [recruitment, psychometric assessments, and coaching and mentoring](#).

Our face-to-face [East Midlands Challenge](#) event will also be returning this March, offering a fantastic opportunity for aspiring leaders to gain exposure to issues outside of their normal work, giving them a taste of what senior management is really like.

Over the year, as new policies were brought forward for housing and planning, and continued structural changes to the rail industry progressed, including the refresh of the HS2 growth strategy, colleagues have had to adapt quickly to support vital transport networks.

[Transport for the East Midlands](#) and Midlands Connect launched eight strategic [transport priorities](#) to help 'Level Up' the region, addressing historic underfunding and ensuring greater transport connectivity across the East Midlands by both rail and road.

As we race ahead into 2023, we can do so having learnt more, gained new skills and resilience, and ready to take on the next challenge.

We are looking forward to working with you all over this coming year.

Here's to 2023!

**Cllr Martin Hill, Chair of East Midlands Councils  
& Stuart Young, Executive Director of East Midlands Councils**

## Transport

### £32.9 million to create national network of active travel experts



Funding for local authorities to train engineers and planners to conduct high-quality engagement and consultation sessions with local communities.

This week, Active Travel Minister Jesse Norman has announced a £32.9 million investment to create a national network of experts to work with communities, enhance high streets and make places truly walkable and cyclable for everyone.

The fund aims to drive thousands of well thought-through local plans, co-created with the communities who will use them.

The Capability Fund will support local authorities across the country to train and retain local engineers and planners, creating a skilled active travel workforce able to collaborate effectively with local communities and conduct high-quality engagement and consultation sessions.

As well as enabling local authorities to hire and retain skilled professionals, this multi-million-pound investment will deliver specialised training, driving up skills and ensuring consistent, high-quality schemes can be delivered across England.

The funding will also be used to give travel choice to a wider demographic by engaging under-represented groups, provide cycle training and bike rental schemes.

[Find out more.](#)

### £2 bus tickets for thousands of routes until end of March

Starting this week (1st January 23) over 130 bus operators outside of London will charge no more than £2 for their single tickets across over 4,600 routes, helping families, commuters and other passengers save money on travel.

The Government hopes the initiative will encourage people to get back on the bus to help the industry continue its recovery from the pandemic, as well as reduce CO2 emissions and tackle congestion by taking an estimated 2 million cars off the road.

[Read more.](#)

### HS2 opens recruitment for 40 graduate jobs

Last month, HS2 Ltd launched its search for 40 talented graduates to join its 2023 programme.

With a two-decade long construction programme ahead, HS2 is bolstering its technical services directorate and offering engineering graduates the chance to join the teams charged with delivering the stations, tunnels and viaducts along the route of the new railway. There will be further opportunities in HS2's Environment, Hybrid Bill, Project Management, Procurement and Commercial teams.

Applications for HS2's 2023 graduate recruitment programme will close on 22nd January 2023.

[More information.](#)

## Health

### Number of defibrillators to be increased with new funding

The number of life-saving defibrillators will be increased with new £1million fund.

The Department of Health and Social Care will invest the funding through an independent partner who will manage grant applications from bidding organisations. Those selected will be asked to match the funding they receive fully or partially, potentially doubling the number of new defibrillators created by the fund.

Applicants will also be asked to demonstrate that defibrillators will be placed in areas where they are most needed, such as places with high footfall, vulnerable people, rural areas, or due to the nature of activity at the site.

Examples could include town halls, community centres, local shops, post offices and local parks, to ensure that defibrillators are evenly spread throughout communities and easily accessible if someone is experiencing an unexpected cardiac arrest.

[Read more.](#)



## Cost of Living

### Millions of low-income households to get new Cost of Living Payments from Spring 2023



This week, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has announced more detail on the payment schedule for the next round of cost of living support unveiled in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement, building on payments made to over eight million people in 2022.

The new £900 cash boost for over eight million eligible means-tested benefits claimants, including those on Universal Credit, Pension Credit and tax credits, starts in Spring and will go direct to bank accounts in three payments over the course of the financial year. There will also be a separate £150 for over six million disabled people and £300 for over eight million pensioners on top of their Winter Fuel Payments.

[Find out more.](#)

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## Planning

### Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill Consultation

On 22 December, DLUHC launched a consultation to seek views on the department's proposed approach to updating to the National Planning Policy Framework.

DLUHC is also seeking views on preparing National Development Management Policies, how we might develop policy to support levelling up, and how national planning policy is currently accessed by users.

The consultation closes on 2 March.

[Consultation.](#)

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### UK subsidy control regime commenced today

The UK subsidy control regime began earlier this week. It enables public authorities, including councils and devolved administrations, to give subsidies that are tailored to local needs, and that drive economic growth while minimising distortion to UK competition and protecting international obligations.

Subsidies are financial assistance – such as grants, loans or tax credits – that authorities can offer to companies to support policies that are in the public interest, to address a market failure or equity concern.

[More information.](#)

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## January EMC training

### IOM UK Refugee Information Session on Somalia—25 January 2023

History and current events in Somalia, as well as Somalis' experiences in displacement.

### IOM UK Refugee Information Session on Syria—31 January 2023

Experiences in Conflict and Displacement and Society

[More training and events.](#)



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## EMC Leadership

Chair: Cllr Martin Hill OBE

Vice Chair: Cllr Sarah Russell

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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