

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

Top items this week

11 SEPTEMBER 2020



Transport for the East Midlands



Regional Employers' Board and Regional Joint Council



Housing news



EMC Events for Councillors and Officers

EMC Boards

Transport for the East Midlands

The Transport for the East Midlands (TfEM) Board met on the 9th September chaired by the City Mayor of Leicester Sir Peter Soulsby. The Board received an update from the new MD of East Midlands Airport Clare James and from East Midlands Railway on the impact of the pandemic on existing services and future plans. The Board then agreed the basis for a TfEM submission to the Comprehensive Spending Review to boost transport spending in the East Midlands, including pressing for the upgrading to three lane motorway standard of the A1 through the East Midlands whilst also addressing existing safety issues in the short term.

Regional Employers' Board and Regional Joint Council

The Regional Employers' Board and Regional Joint Council met this week. The meetings focussed on latest developments including the exit pay cap, current workforce issues relating to COVID, local government reform in Northamptonshire and elsewhere, working jointly to support employee wellbeing. The Joint Council agreed to increase caretakers' letting fees in line with the national local government services pay award. Following feedback from the Employers' Board meeting, EMC will be providing councillor development on themes to include new proposals for planning regulations, climate change and learning lessons from COVID and new ways of working. Details of these events will be provided in future EMC Policy Briefs.

EMC News

Transport for the East Midlands (TfEM), Job Opportunities - TfEM is working in collaboration with the Department for Transport to provide local input into the management of the East Midlands Railway Franchise which started in August 2019 and will run for eight years with the option of a two-year extension. We are now looking to recruit to these two new roles, based in the attractive Leicestershire town of Melton Mowbray, with opportunities for home and mobile working.

The roles are;

- [Head of Rail Improvement \(East Midlands\)](#)
- [Rail Monitoring & Performance Officer](#)

EMC Boards Activity East Midlands Councils AGM - EMC's AGM is scheduled for 10.00am on Friday 9 October and will be held virtually via MS Teams. For further information on how to access the meeting please contact lisa.hopkins@emcouncils.gov.uk

EMC Support Activity

Councillor Development Network - This week EMC hosted a regional Councillor Development network meeting, where colleagues from across the East Midlands were able to share their priority areas and fourth coming virtual development programmes for councillors. Details of the network can be found [here](#).

EMC Councillor Events

Councillor Workshop on Chairing and Effective Meetings - EMC is hosting a 3 hour virtual session on Chairing and Effective meetings, there are two dates and times to select from. The workshop is suitable for new and continuing chairs. This virtual session will be interactive, drawing on people's experience and insights from the tutor with some group work. It covers formal roles such as chairing full council or a planning committee, as well as less formal approaches to chairing eg. for scrutiny activity and public meetings. Dates are; 16 Sep 2020 17:30 and 18 Sep 2020 13:30. Information available from [here](#).

Infrastructure, Planning & Housing



£30 million boost to help unlock land for new homes - New government funding will help kick-start the building of thousands of new homes by transforming surplus public sector land.

In a speech at the Chartered Institute of Housing's annual conference, Cabinet Office Minister Lord Agnew has announced today (9 September 2020) that the government is boosting its Land Release Fund (LRF) and the One Public Estate (OPE) programme with an additional £30 million to help release surplus land for housing and support local economies to bounce back from the pandemic.

The LRF will offer councils the opportunity to bid for £20 million for remediation works and infrastructure to bring their surplus sites forward for housing. The LRF targets small sites with a focus on supporting SME builders [details [here](#)].

Government sets out support for renters this winter - Renters affected by coronavirus will continue to be supported over autumn and winter through comprehensive measures [details [here](#)].

Jenrick unveils huge £12 billion boost for affordable homes - Housing Secretary Robert Jenrick has announced that the prospectus inviting bids for the government's massive investment in affordable housing and new measures to make it easier to get a foot on the property ladder are being launched this week [details [here](#)].

Economic Growth Roundtables for county and district councils to inform the LGA's economic growth support offer and give councils the chance to discuss the challenges and opportunities available to them in their economic recovery – 24 September for district councils and 29 September for county councils – please see attached.

Explore and apply to take part in our Net Zero Innovation Programme – The Net Programme provides training and project funding to equip councils and universities to work in partnership to help achieve the local carbon reduction goals of councils. The deadline for applications is 25 September 2020 at 17:00. Details [here](#).

Migration, Asylum Support, Refugee Resettlement

Earlier this year, the Government set out plans for the [UK's new points-based immigration system](#) which will come into force on 1 January 2021. It will be a fair system, that treats people from all parts of the world equally.

On Thursday 10 September, the Government laid [Immigration Rules](#) in Parliament and announced that the UK's new Student and Child Student routes, which are part of the UK's new points-based immigration system, will open for applications on 5 October. These routes will replace the existing Tier 4 (General) and Tier 4 (Child) student routes.

From 5 October, all prospective international students, including those from Europe coming to study in the UK after the end of the transition period, will need to apply through the Student route before coming to UK. Further guidance for EEA students can be found on [GOV.UK](#)

EEA students resident in the UK on or before 31 December 2020 do not need to apply through the route. They, and their family, are eligible to apply for the EU Settlement Scheme and have until 30 June 2021 to do so. More information on the EU Settlement Scheme can be found [here](#).

Employers' Information



Exit Pay Cap - Local Government Consultation - MHCLG's Exit Pay consultation has gone live this week, the link is available [here](#). The deadline is 11:45pm on 9 November 2020. East Midlands Councils will be supporting a response to this consultation, and have contacted HR leads to collate information. For further information contact Sam Maher at samantha.maher@emcouncils.gov.uk

Home Working Allowances (National) Survey - A national survey is being conducted by regional employer organisations in conjunction with the LGA, to provide a comprehensive insight into approaches and allowances relating to home-working. This intelligence can help inform your local decision-making on home working, and will not be used for national negotiations. East Midlands Councils has sent to the survey to HR leads. The deadline date for completion is Friday 18 September, for more information contact Lisa.butterfill@emcouncils.gov.uk

Learning and Development Network, Agile working workshop - This week EMC facilitated a networking session for learning and development professionals on the area of agile working. Colleagues were able to hear from two case studies from the region and were able to share tips around supporting agile working. Details of the network can be found [here](#).

European Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion, Social Europe Newsletter - available [here](#).

CEEP News - CEEP UK's newsletters provide an update on recent developments at European level on workforce matters and the most recent newsletter is available from [here](#).

Local Government News



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 [details [here](#)].

Revisiting the four principles of good scrutiny blog by Ed Hammond, Centre for Public Scrutiny -

The blog covers the four things that we thought were essential to make scrutiny effective. The blog can be found [here](#).

East Midlands Scrutiny Network - The East Midlands Scrutiny Network will meet next on 25 September using MS Teams. For more information on the network visit [here](#). If you would like to attend please contact Kirsty.Lowe@emcouncils.gov.uk

A tourist levy: what, where and how - This briefing note looks at the process for introducing a tourism levy by using two pieces of analysis [details [here](#)].

The role of scrutiny in climate change programmes, scoping and designing effective reviews Friday 18 September - Drawing on the LGAs recent publication '[10 questions to ask if you are scrutinising climate change](#)', this event will outline a practical approach for scrutineers to understand and seek oversight on climate action in their localities. It is designed to explore questioning, identify key stakeholders, plan effective scrutiny work and consider the impacts that scrutiny can expect to deliver on this issue. For more information visit [here](#).

Health & Social Care



The COVID-19 dashboard: bringing together data and statistics in one place - The dashboard now not only gives a detailed picture of what is happening on a national level – but also what is happening in your neighbourhood [details [here](#)].

Public Health England launches new Every Mind Matters campaign - Most families have experienced upheaval in their daily lives during the pandemic. With children and young people now back at school or college, the new Public Health England (PHE) [Better Health – Every Mind Matters campaign](#) provides NHS-endorsed tips and advice to help children and young people's mental wellbeing, and equip parents and carers with the knowledge to support them [details [here](#)].

Mental health and wellbeing in the time of coronavirus, tracking the impact - To ensure the right help is provided we need to understand what is happening at a population level by collecting and reporting on as much relevant data as possible. Health surveillance is a core role for Public Health England (PHE), and that includes mental health and wellbeing. PHE has developed a new routine COVID-19 [mental health and wellbeing \(MHW\) surveillance report](#) [details [here](#)].

EMC Events

EMC Wellbeing Conversations Development for Managers - EMC has commissioned the development of two workshops for managers in local authorities. These two-hour interactive workshops will be held virtually, and will offer a practical opportunity for managers to explore and develop skills in effective Wellbeing conversations with staff. Further details on these practical workshops and information on how to book are [here](#). The two workshops are;

- **Wellbeing Conversations Development for Managers – Workshop 1 (16 September)**
- **Develop skills for effective Wellbeing Conversations – Workshop 2**

Solving Workplace Problems using Action Learning, 24 Sep 2020 - This autumn EMC will be hosting and facilitating virtual sessions for officers across local government, providing a focused opportunity for individuals who want to make progress, perhaps exploring work challenges where they feel stuck, or need space to be able to refocus and move forward. For more information on the programme and offer from EMC please visit [here](#).

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
Lib Dem Group: Cllr David Bill MBE
Independent Group: Cllr Jason Zadrozny
Executive Director: Stuart Young

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