

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

**Top items this week**

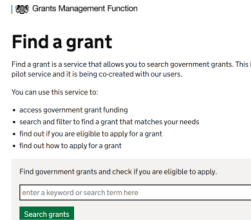
17 MARCH 2023



**EAST MIDLANDS CHALLENGE 2023**



**SPRING BUDGET ANNOUNCEMENTS**



**'FIND A GRANT' DIGITAL SERVICE LAUNCHED**



**English Devolution Accountability Framework**

**DEVOLUTION ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK**

# EAST MIDLANDS CHALLENGE 2023



Yesterday, Thursday 16 March, over 100 members of staff from councils across the region participated in this year's East Midlands Challenge event.

Taking on the role of senior management, teams were required to prioritise a series of challenges, gaining exposure to issues outside of their normal work and expanding their skill set in the process.

A special congratulations to our winning teams:

- Best overall team: Newark & Sherwood District Council
- Behaviours Award: Melton Borough Council
- Leadership Award: Newark & Sherwood District Council
- Communications Award: South Kesteven District council
- Shining Star Award: Shanice Senghor – Blaby District Council



Thank you to everyone who participated, we hope you enjoyed the day and benefited from the experience.

## MARCH 2023 BUDGET

On Wednesday, The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP, presented his Spring Budget to Parliament.

The Chancellor also announced that the Office for Budget Responsibility has stated that the UK will now not enter a technical recession this year, as inflation is expected to half and reduce to 2.9% by the end of 2023.

A package of measure for childcare, a £27 billion tax cut for business and a trio of freezes to help families with the cost-of-living headlined the Chancellor's Spring Budget.

Keeping the Energy Price Guarantee at £2,500 for the next three months, cancelling the planned 11 pence rise in fuel duty and the removal of the Lifetime Allowance charge on pensions were also key talking points following the announcement.

For local authorities, the Budget made it clear that the Government views councils as crucial in leading economic growth by looking to move powers from LEPs to local government, and by giving more power to mayoral combined authorities.

While many of the plans are set for the future, the Budget also contained some announcements for the present, including additional funding to tackle potholes.

### KEY ANNOUNCEMENTS:

12 new Investment zones announced, including potential East Midlands Investment Zone, eligible for £80m in funding to boost business

Extra £200m for authorities to tackle potholes

Levelling up:

- £200m to local regeneration projects
- £161m for regeneration projects in Mayoral Combined Authorities
- £400m for new Levelling Up Partnerships in areas including Bassetlaw

Functions of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) to be delivered by local government in the future

- Government will look to withdraw central government support for LEPs from April 2024. DLUHC and the Department for Business and Trade will now consult on these proposals, before confirming a decision.

£8.8 billion for a second round of City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) for English city regions to transform their local transport networks, covering the period 2027/28 to 2031/32.

£63 million fund to keep public swimming pools afloat

Boost for mayoral financial autonomy

- West Midlands and Greater Manchester combined authorities to gain greater control over transport, skills, employment, housing, innovation and net zero, including retention of 100% of their business rates
- Ministers have said the deals will act as a blueprint for other areas to follow

£11.5 million to offer intensive English language courses and employment support to up to 10,000 Ukrainians fleeing the war who have arrived in the UK under the Ukraine Visa Schemes

£4.1 billion by 2027-28 to deliver 30 hours a week of free childcare for eligible working parents of children aged 9 months up to 3 years in England, where eligibility will match the existing 3-4 year old 30 hours offer

## 'Find a Grant' digital service launched

The Cabinet Office has launched a 'Find a Grant' digital service, a single place for eligible individuals and organisations to find and apply for government grants and gain access to financial support.

The government has recently decided to make it mandatory, which means central government departments and their arms-length bodies must advertise their competitive grant schemes via the service from 1 April.

The Cabinet Office is also offering councils the opportunity to advertise their grants on the service.

As well as advertisements, the service has an application function, which will enable councils to build an application form to suit their grant's requirements.

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## Council tax valuation of Houses in Multiple Occupation consultation

DLUHC has launched a consultation to consider whether the existing arrangements provide the appropriate certainty and consistency in the way that HMOs are banded for council tax, or whether alternative arrangements should be introduced.

The consultation seeks views on the scope of the issue, the current landscape for the valuation of HMOs and the government's proposals to achieving these objectives.

The consultation closes on 31 March.

[READ MORE >](#)

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## English Devolution Accountability Framework

Yesterday, DLUHC published guidance which sets out how areas with devolution deals will be held to account through local scrutiny, by the public and by the government.

The English Devolution Accountability Framework delivers on the Levelling Up White Paper commitment to publish a new accountability framework to apply to all English institutions with devolved powers.

The framework is an element of the broader Local Government Accountability Framework which applies to all councils, including combined authorities.

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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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