

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

Top items this week

18 MARCH 2022



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UK Support for Ukrainian Refugees

The UK support programme for Ukrainian refugees, in effect, comprises 2 elements:

- Under the Ukrainian Family Scheme (UFS), British nationals and people of any nationality settled in the UK will now be supported to bring parents, grandparents, adult children, siblings, and wider family members, to the UK.
- A new sponsored humanitarian visa route (Homes for Ukraine) is launched to allow communities, private sponsors, or local authorities to bring people to the UK from Ukraine (for those that have no existing family ties).

Government is due to publish its guidance on the sponsorship route and there are many issues to be worked through. At the time of the release of this week's policy brief, this guidance was not yet available. However, we can provide the following further detail as we understand it:

- The visa scheme for both the Ukrainian Family Scheme and Homes for Ukraine went live earlier today.
- Over 150,000 expressions of interest have been registered. It is not anticipated that all this interest will necessarily translate into offers of accommodation.
- Eligibility for the scheme requires a named sponsor, this may be extended later to include NGOs and local authorities to act as sponsors.
- At the point where a visa application is made, data will flow direct to the upper-tier council who will be responsible for sharing with their respective district authorities.
- Local authorities will then be responsible for undertaking safeguarding and property checks. If a child is included within the group to be housed, then an enhanced DBS will be required to be undertaken. The Home Office will prioritise these DBS checks
- The £350 'thank you' payment is per sponsoring household, irrespective of numbers being accommodated. This will be administered through unitary/district authorities. Sponsors cannot charge rent.
- The £10,500 per individual refugee is payable to the respective upper local authority who then will work with their districts ref apportionment.
- An upfront payment will be made to councils based on estimates and then adjusted quarterly based on actual numbers.

In summary, for local authorities perhaps the immediate task will be to assess the suitability of the household/ accommodation – both in terms of accommodation standards and safeguarding.

We cannot be clear at this stage on actual numbers and whether there will be a gentle curve of applications being received and resettled, or whether the curve will be more steep. We will, of course, keep councils updated.

EMC Councillor Events

The Role of the Civic Head, 31 May 2022 - EMC is hosting a one day workshop for incoming Civic Heads. The intended audience for this event will be this coming into civic office at their Annual Meetings at the end of May, their deputies and their support staff. **How to book** – visit [here](#). This interactive workshop will explore;

- Expectations from a range of perspectives, including; yours as incoming Mayor/Chair, the public's and the council's
- Measures of success for your terms of office
- Skills and Qualities of a great civic head
- Short introductory sessions touching upon; Chairing Full Council, Public Speaking and Social Media

Cyber Security workshop for Councillors in the East Midlands - EMC, working collaboratively with the East Midlands Special Operations Unit is hosting two free webinar for Councillors on cyber security.

Cyber Security is the protection of your hardware, software and data from unauthorised access and cyber-attacks. We recognise the value and responsibility you bring to our communities as a councillor, with this in mind we want to ensure that you have strong cyber security protection available to you. With the current news around global conflicts, we are seeing a real increase in targeted cybercrime, to combat this, we will cover topics around securing your digital footprint, securing your social media, how to work in public using technology and practical tips. You will gain a broad understanding of what additional services law enforcement can offer you! Hear from East Midlands Special Operations Cyber Protect Officers on the latest threats and on how you can keep yourself safe online.

EMSOU - A collaborative unit of officers and staff from Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire and Nottinghamshire police forces tackling the most serious, organised and violent crime, countering terrorism and extremism and providing forensic services on behalf of the region.

Dates and times- 27 May 2022, 10am - 11am or 8 June 2022, 3pm - 4pm (Virtual workshop using MS Teams)

How to book – to book a place please use the online booking form available [here](#).

Infrastructure, Planning & Housing

Commission highlights "slow progress" on infrastructure plans to deliver levelling up and net zero goals - The Infrastructure Progress Review 2022 assesses the current state of infrastructure policy and delivery in pursuit of long term aims. The government is at risk of failing to deliver the aims of its National Infrastructure Strategy unless it picks up the pace with detailed policy design and implementation, the UK's official independent infrastructure adviser has warned.

The National Infrastructure Commission says that clear, long term goals are now in place across most infrastructure areas and gives credit for increased investment – a £100 billion commitment over the next three years, alongside an indication of increased spending in the long term.

[The Commission's annual review of government progress on infrastructure](#) also notes that some of the advisory body's key recommendations have been delivered this year, including the creation of the UK Infrastructure Bank, and that both gigabit broadband coverage and renewable electricity capacity have continued to increase.

Environment

Delivering on the Environment Act: new targets announced and ambitious plans for nature recovery - Targets and Green Paper proposals will protect and enhance our natural world.

New, [long-term environmental targets](#) have been announced by the government today. The proposed targets are a cornerstone of the government's [Environment Act](#) which passed into law in November last year [details [here](#)].

Asylum Support and Refugee Resettlement

'Homes for Ukraine' scheme launches - UK individuals, charities, community groups and businesses can now record their interest in supporting Ukrainians fleeing the war through the government's new Homes for Ukraine scheme [details [here](#)].

Health & Social Care



Impact Assessment of the Implementation of Section 18(3) of The Care Act 2014 and Fair Cost of Care - County Councils Network (CCN) has released a new independent report by healthcare market specialists LaingBuisson, which analyses two key aspects of the government's adult social care reforms: proposals to allow private payers (self-funders) to ask councils to arrange care on their behalf at lower local authority rates and the intention to introduce a new 'Fair Cost of Care', which aims to increase care fees paid by councils to make the care market sustainable [[here](#)].

Integration White Paper – the LGA has [published a briefing](#) which summarises the key proposals outlined in the Health and Social Care Integration White Paper, "joining up care for people, place and populations," which was published on 9 February. The briefing also gives the LGA's initial key messages on the proposals. The LGA is keen to hear views on the proposals as they develop our response to the White Paper consultation, so please do share them with alyson.morley@local.gov.uk.

COVID-19 regulations review, February 2022 - The LGA has published a full review of all legislation resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic which has come into force since the Coronavirus Act (March 2020) – outlining new or amended powers and duties of local authorities [available from [here](#)]. The Act is now winding down and the LGA review highlights the changes that have been made to the Act so far.

Local Government News



Clive Betts, Chair of the Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee, has written to Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, about the Chancellor's announcement that millions of households will receive a council tax rebate.

The [correspondence](#) (16 March) from Clive Betts, LUHC Chair, is the latest in a series of letters from the LUHC Committee to press the Government on details of how the council tax rebate will be administered, the process for people to receive the £150 rebate, and the measures in place to ensure tenants receive the payment rather than it go to their landlord. The Chair's correspondence also calls for the Department to provide monthly updates on how many payments are getting to households [details [here](#)].

Government launches Inclusive Britain strategy - The [Inclusive Britain strategy](#) sets out 70 actions to tackle racial disparities, boost opportunity and promote fairness;

- New measures announced today include policing reforms, targeted support for children at risk, a new Model History Curriculum, and action on the ethnicity pay gap
- Inclusive Britain was developed in response to the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities' groundbreaking independent report which made 24 recommendations to tackle ethnic disparities. Inclusive Britain addresses every single one of these recommendations and goes further, setting out a detailed Action Plan to build a fairer and more inclusive society in the long-term.

Further information available from [here](#).

Funding available for cyber security qualifications, apply now - During this period of [heightened cyber threat](#), building a skilled and knowledgeable workforce is more important than ever to ensure your council is protected and prepared when it comes to cyber security. The LGA has been awarded funding from the National Cyber Security Programme to deliver a sector-wide cyber security qualifications uplift. We are now inviting all councils to [apply for grant funding](#) for an officer to undertake a professionally certified cyber security qualification. Please make your IT and security teams aware of this offer. To apply for funding please fill out an [application form](#) by 1 April, 5pm.

LGA Personal safety webinar for councillors Monday 21 March 2022, 4.00pm - 5.30pm – this final councillor personal safety webinar hosted by the LGA will cover principles of personal safety, risk assessment, use of technology, safe approaches to canvassing, visits, surgeries and travelling, alongside how to manage harassment and stalking incidents. The session will be introduced by Cllr Hannah Dalton, Chair of Epsom and Ewell Borough Council Majority Group and Deputy Leader of the LGA Independent Group, and presented by Miranda Smythe from the Baikie-Wood Consultancy.

EMC Events



Local Government Apprentice of the Year 2022 - This is a national event with participants across the country competing to become the Local Government Apprentice of the Year 2022. All Councils in England are encouraged to send one apprentice or more, to take part in the event, to make this a truly National celebration of our apprenticeship talent. The event will take place on 25 May (08:30 – 16:30), with colleagues returning on the morning on 26 May (10:00 – 11:00) to celebrate the successes of the day and crown our Local Government Apprentice of the Year.

EMC colleagues will be supporting the delivery of the event and hope to see many apprentices from across the East Midlands take part. This national event is open to all level 2 and level 3 apprentices in local government across England (current apprentices or recently qualified within last 12 months). Further information and to book a place [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 Rob Parker
Lib Dem Group: Cllr David Bill MBE
Independent Group: Cllr Jason Zadrozny
Executive Director: Stuart Young

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