

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

Top items this week

1 APRIL 2022



UK Support for Ukrainian Refugees



EMC HR Bulletin, April 2022 Edition



The Role of the Civic Head, 31 May 2022



EMC Events for Councillors and Officers

## EMC HR Bulletin, March 2022 Edition

The latest edition of the EMC HR Bulletin is now available from [here](#). Employment Law expert, Darren Newman's article can be found [here](#). This month article addresses “fire and rehire tactics” along with the new Statutory Code of Practice aimed at addressing the issue.

The March Bulletin includes:-

- Regional Employers’ Board & Regional Joint Council Update
- East Midlands Virtual Information Exchange – “Grow Your Own”
- Pay Negotiations
- COVID-Related News
- Cyber security qualifications
- T Levels – Newsletter and Survey
- Apprenticeships News



## EMC News

### EMC Support Activity

**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Network Launch, 18 May 2022** - EMC is delighted to announce the launch of a new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Network. The network will launch on 18 May 2022 as a virtual network meeting. Building on EMC’s extensive experience of developing practitioner networks, the network will bring individuals from across organisations together to learn and share. For further information visit [here](#).

**Pay and Rewards Network, 11 May 2022** - A meeting of the Pay & Rewards network will be held on 11 May 2022 at 10.30am. For more information contact [Sam.Maher@emcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:Sam.Maher@emcouncils.gov.uk)

### 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; and 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. **Dates and times**- 27 May 2022, 10am - 11am or 8 June 2022, 3pm - 4pm (Virtual workshop using MS Teams). To book a place please use the online booking form available [here](#).

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## Asylum Support, Refugee Resettlement

**UK Support for Ukrainian Refugees** - a central repository and summary of current information and resources as guidance develops is being formulated by East Midlands Councils, with initial information available from [here](#).

### Information on UK Response

**Ukraine Family Scheme (UFS):** Allows applicants to join family members or extend stay in UK.

**Homes For Ukraine (HFU):** Enables sponsors to offer sanctuary to Ukrainians without family links.

**Ukrainian Sponsorship Scheme (USS):** Allows Ukrainian nationals to enter the UK if a named sponsor identified under HFU.

**Ukraine Extension Scheme (UES):** Application route for Ukrainians to extend various visas, opening 3 May 2022.

**Ukraine Nationals with Pets:** Process to support migration of pets, meeting costs of quarantine, transport and treatment.

Bulk data around current visa application numbers can be accessed from [here](#). Headlines (as at 29 March 2022) are as follows:

- a. Total Ukraine Scheme applications: 59,500
  - i. Of which, 31,200 are Ukraine Family Scheme
  - ii. 28,300 are USS (ie, Homes For Ukraine)
- b. Total Ukraine Scheme visas issued: 25,500
  - i. Of which, 22,800 are Ukraine Family Scheme
  - ii. 2,700 are USS (ie, Homes For Ukraine)

**Minister questioned on support for Ukrainian refugees** - The Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee examines the routes for Ukrainian refugees to the UK and concerns about the support available for Ukrainian refugees and for councils helping those seeking sanctuary in the UK.

The session examined the Ukraine family and Homes for Ukraine schemes and look at the Government guidance and administrative and financial support being made available to local authorities [details [here](#)].

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## Infrastructure, Planning & Housing

**New fund gives communities power to deliver affordable homes** - Over 1,200 new affordable homes will be delivered across England with communities put in charge of where and how they will be built, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities announced on Friday 25 March 2022.

The £4 million Community Housing Fund (CHF) programme helps community groups build homes in their local area by covering a range of costs incurred in the process - including renting the town hall for a public meeting, paying for searches, administration costs or legal advice, design work and planning applications. Once planning permission is granted, community groups can fund the build through the government's Affordable Homes Programme, a Housing Association or developer or via a bank loan [details [here](#)].

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## Midlands Connect

**Three projects shortlisted as Midlands Connect's rural mobility competition moves forward** - Three Midlands-based mobility solutions have reached the next stage of a regional project to find new, innovative ways to improve transport in rural areas. The initiative - run by regional transport body Midlands Connect - was launched in January, with businesses encouraged to submit initial ideas for how technology could be deployed to tackle rural transport issues and enhance local connectivity [details [here](#)].

Three entries selected to share £40,000 and progress to the next stage, including from the East Midlands:

- **EV car and charging point sharing – put forward by Cenex (will now be developed in partnership with Derbyshire County Council)**
- **Demand responsive transport app – submitted by DB Engineering & Consulting (will now be developed in partnership with East Lyndsey District Council and Lincolnshire LEP)**

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## Housing

**Committee seeks the views of tenants on Social Housing quality** - The Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee wants to hear from social housing tenants in England about their views and experiences regarding the condition of their homes and the service provided by landlords.

The survey is open until 14 April, and will help inform the cross-party Committee's ongoing inquiry into the regulation of social housing in England. In this inquiry, MPs are examining the quality of social housing, the adequacy of the regulatory regime, how effectively residents' complaints are handled, and the proposals in the Government's Social Housing White Paper to make housing providers more accountable to tenants [details [here](#)].

**Failing landlords to be named and shamed as government steps up support for social housing tenants** - The government will "name and shame" failing social housing providers as part of major reforms to give residents a stronger voice and drive up standards [details [here](#)].

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## Economic Development

**Local Growth Funds, Research Briefing, House of Commons Library House** - This briefing is a short summary of current government administered funds designed to support local economic growth. It includes descriptions of, and where applicable, funding results of the following funds: The Levelling Up Fund, the Towns Fund, the Community Renewal Fund and the Shared Prosperity Fund. Included within the report is information on regional allocations that show signs of an improving position of the East Midlands from recent funding rounds.

It also includes a summary of the assessment of the effectiveness of these funds published by the National Audit Office and a summary of future government plans for these funds described in the Levelling Up White Paper [[here](#)].

**Supporting high streets, Levelling Up Committee Chair writes to Government on impact of ending commercial evictions ban** - Clive Betts, Chair of the Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (LUHC) Committee has written to Neil O'Brien, Levelling-Up Minister, on supporting high streets after Covid-19, calling for an update on the likely impact of ending the commercial evictions ban and an assessment of how businesses are likely to be affected following the reversion of VAT rates for hospitality, accommodation, and visitor attractions.

The Chair's correspondence to the Minister (29 March) also presses the Government to improve transparency around the full range of competitive funds which are available to high streets, including the publication of a list of local authorities whose bids who are unsuccessful [[details here](#)].

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## Local Government News

**Public sector to investigate cutting contracts with Russian suppliers** - The Cabinet Office has published a Procurement Policy Note for public sector organisations holding contracts with Russian or Belarusian suppliers.

The guidance issued this week to public sector buying team recommends that public bodies, including Government departments and hospitals, immediately seek to identify any contracts with Russian and Belarusian companies and, if possible to switch suppliers with minimal disruption, pursue legal routes of cancelling them [[details here](#)].

**Council tax energy bills support, Government needs to address 'complex' delivery issues to ensure households are protected** - Clive Betts, Chair of the Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (LUHC) Committee, has fired off the latest correspondence from the LUHC Committee to Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, seeking clarification about the operation of the Chancellor's announced policy that millions of households will receive a council tax rebate [[details here](#)].

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## Health & Social Care

**Care providers to receive fairer costs for providing care** - Local authorities in England will be supported to pay a fairer rate of care to adult social care providers.

- Government guidance sets out how £1.36 billion will support local authorities to pay a fairer rate of care
- Market Sustainability and Fair Cost Fund will help create a stronger and more sustainable adult social care market across England

Local authorities in England will be supported by £1.36 billion from the Health and Social Care Levy to pay a fairer rate of care to adult social care providers [[details here](#)].

**Government sets out next steps for living with COVID** - New guidance outlines free COVID-19 tests will continue to be available to help protect specific groups once free testing for the general public ends on 1 April [[details here](#)].

- Free COVID-19 tests will continue to be available to help protect specific groups including eligible patients and NHS and care staff once the universal testing offer ends on 1 April and next steps for adult social care set out
- Plans in place to enable rapid testing response should a new health threat emerge, such as a new variant of concern emerge
- Vaccines and treatments mean we can transition to managing COVID-19 like other respiratory illnesses, with updated guidance published on 1 April

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## 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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Click on our [Twitter](#) & [YouTube](#) accounts for further information.

