

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

Top items this week

23 JULY 2021



Student Planner Placements:
Expressions of Interest

Levels of Public
Investment in the East
Midlands Analysis

EM Virtual Exchange

EMC Events for Councilors
and Officers

Levels of Public Investment in the East Midlands Analysis

The most recent HM Treasury [report](#) illustrates the importance of a levelling up agenda with the data confirming the East Midlands is continuing to lose out in terms of public investment. Of particular concern is the comparably low levels of infrastructure and economic development funding – with an obvious implication for future rates of local and regional economic growth.

In summary, it remains that the East Midlands has:

- The lowest level of public expenditure on ‘economic affairs’.
- The lowest level of public expenditure on transport, in total and per head.
- The lowest level of public expenditure on services per head.

Between 2014-15 and 2019-20, total expenditure on services has remained consistently below the England average (£725 per head lower in 2019/20). If the Northern Powerhouse is seen as a primary competitor for investment funds, then it has been given a head start (£1,084 per head better funded than the East Midlands). And there’s an imbalance within the pan-Midlands partnership with the West Midlands, at a little over £691 per head better off, faring comparably well too.

The EMC Regional Investment Briefing Note is available from [here](#).

Some Reflections

This is HM Treasury data - official, national statistical analysis. It is therefore robust and incontrovertible; being consistent, credible, and comparable (and independent from regional and local partners).

The data confirms ongoing underfunding of the East Midlands, both in real terms and when compared to other regions. Clearly measures taken to increase levels of investment have had little effect over the past few years, even allowing for any time lag in data sets.

If the East Midlands was funded to a level equivalent to the UK average, over the 3 years since 2017, the region would have benefited from an extra £3.5bn of funding for ‘economic affairs’, or £2.5bn if matched to the levels of the West Midlands; and similarly, the region would have an extra £1 billion a year to spend on transport if funded at a level equivalent to the UK average.

The low levels of relative and absolute public investment in the East Midlands, particularly transport spend, remains an important and concerning issue because of the impact that poor transport can have on productivity.

The region remains at the bottom of the table, and our funding levels are clearly decoupling from other regions, particularly the West Midlands and the North West have seen notable uplifts in levels of investment – perhaps related to the establishment of powerful Metro-Mayors.



EMC News
Student Planner Placements: Expressions of Interest - East Midlands Councils is seeking expressions of interest from councils who may be willing to offer a 45 week paid work placement to an undergraduate planning student from Loughborough University - starting from July 2022.

Further details are set out in the enclosed prospectus - available from [here](#).

If your council is interested in offering a placement, please register your details on the form at the end of the prospectus and return it to: Samantha.maher@emcouncils.gov.uk by Thursday 30th September 2021.

City Council on their workplace transformation programme which aims to see the authority transition through a future ways of working programme with their employees.

This meeting will also be an opportunity for authorities to share their current approaches on workplace and working arrangements, following the lifting of COVID-related restrictions and rules on 19th July when we reach the next stage of the Government's Roadmap. If you would like to participate in the Exchange on 29 July, please email mila.pereira@emcouncils.gov.uk by 23 July. Feedback will be included in the July edition of the EMC HR Bulletin.

EMC Councillor Events

Virtual Communication Skills for Councillors, 23 September 2021- EMC is offering a one-hour virtual communication session for Councillors. This one-hour session offers an interactive introduction to online communication skills [details [here](#)]. While set in the virtual environment the course content will be applicable to communication in the face to face environment.

The focused session explore the following all set within the virtual environment; Awareness of online communication skills; Engagement, perception and impact; Warmth; Gestures; and Behaviour and reputation.

Infrastructure, Planning & Housing



Vision for building beautiful places set out at landmark design event - A range of measures launched which will improve communities' infrastructure, champion neighbourhood design and support walking and cycling to boost health and wellbeing [details [here](#)].

- New Office for Place to help councils and communities banish ugly developments and deliver beautiful, green homes and places using Britain's world-class design expertise
- Updated national planning policy framework (NPPF) published, putting beauty at the heart of the planning system
- Publication of the National Model Design Code (NMDC) to put communities in the driving seat of development plans and create local, binding standards

The government has today announced:

- The [National Model Design Code](#) - a toolkit to enable every council and community to create their own local design requirement. Guidance is provided across all aspects of new development including tree-lined streets, sustainable drainage and design to support walking and cycling.
- Updated [planning framework](#) published which will place greater emphasis on beauty, place-making, the environment, sustainable development and underlines the importance of local design codes.
- The [Office for Place](#) which will drive up design standards, testing and piloting the National Model Design Code with more than 20 local councils and communities.
- The Advisory Board, made up of industry experts and chaired by Nicholas Boys Smith, which will advise on the work of the Office for Place and options for a potential independent body.

Intervention from government and lenders to support leaseholders - A step forward for leaseholders in medium and lower-rise buildings who have faced difficulty in selling, anxiety at the potential cost of remediation and concern at the safety of their homes [details [here](#)].

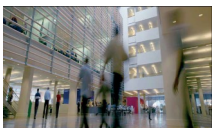
Permitted development rights:– "Government should review role of certain PDRs", say MPs - The Government should pause any further extensions of permitted development rights (PDRs) for change of use to residential and conduct a review of the role of such PDRs in the wider planning system, says the Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee in a report published this week.

The report highlights concern that some homes built under PDR policy are of poor quality and that recent changes to PDR could undermine attempts to revitalise the high street and the ability of local authorities to plan development and shape communities. It also says the prior approval process for residential PDRs might have become so complicated it is now little different from the full planning process [details [here](#)].

New plans to put UK at front of global innovation race - New Innovation Strategy sets out plans to cement the UK's position as a world-leader in science, research and innovation. The Innovation Strategy is the government's long-term vision to put innovation at the heart of building back better, as a key pillar in our Plan for Growth. It aims to boost private sector investment in R&D across the whole of the UK, and create the right conditions for all businesses to innovate so they have the confidence to do so [details [here](#)].

Scoping the role of local authorities in the provision of electric vehicle charging infrastructure - The LGA has commissioned Local Partnerships to carry out a research project into the role of local authorities in delivering the electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure [details [here](#)].

Health & Social Care



Coronavirus (COVID-19) in the UK - The official UK government website for data and insights on coronavirus (COVID-19) including data on Testing, cases and vaccinations. With case information by region and local authorities [[here](#)].

Local authority powers to impose restrictions under coronavirus regulations - This document provides guidance for local authorities in England on:

- what the new regulations allow them to do and how they should exercise those powers
- how those powers should be enforced
- guidance for those affected by local authority directions

Information is available from [here](#).

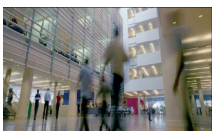
Employers' Information



NHS Test and Trace in the workplace - In the small number of situations where the self-isolation of close contacts would result in serious disruption to critical services, a limited number of named workers may be able to leave self-isolation under specific controls for the purpose of undertaking critical work only.

This process is only intended to run until 16 August 2021, when fully vaccinated close contacts will be exempt from self-isolation [detail [here](#)].

Local Government News and wider



£1 million education programme for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children announced - The programmes will focus on boosting educational attainment, tackling exclusion and drop-out rates and improving pathways to employment for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children [details [here](#)].

Mapping Support and Liability for Economically Vulnerable Households - This LGA report sets out the key mechanisms in place at both national and local levels to support economically vulnerable households through the COVID-19 crisis, and present modelling results of the potential impact of the removal of these support mechanisms [details [here](#)].

Skills training boosted across the country - Free skills courses expanded for adults across the country to upskill or retrain for better paid jobs. Further measures to boost the nation's skills, level up opportunities and get more people into better paid jobs have been announced.

The Government's successful [Skills Bootcamp](#) training programmes will be expanded across the country, offering an extra 16,000 fully funded places for adults to upskill or retrain [details [here](#)].

EMC Events



EMC Leadership Development Programme, cohort two - EMC are offering the opportunity to join the programme, with new dates starting in October 2021. The overall aim of this unique and focused programme is to provide senior and middle managers with the skills, knowledge, and capability to lead their people through turbulent times. Delivered virtually, this programme provides a flexible approach to learning through short webinars, action learning and a resource library, which address key issues and provide practical tools to support managers.

The programme will start on **13 October**. For further information on the programme visit [here](#), alternatively if you would like to have a conversation about the programme please contact Kirsty.lowe@emcouncils.gov.uk

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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