

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

Top items this week

24 JULY 2020



Secondment Opportunities for East Midlands Test, Trace & Contain Hub



New laws to extend homes upwards and revitalise town centres



Exit Pay Cap Update



EMC Events for Councillors and Officers

Powers and framework to help contain coronavirus (COVID-19) locally

A new framework setting out how to manage COVID-19 outbreaks through the use of national and local expertise has been published by the government.

The [COVID-19 contain framework](#) is the blueprint for how NHS Test and Trace is working in partnership with local authorities, Public Health England, the NHS, other local business and community partners and the wider public to take action against outbreaks.

Local authorities experiencing spikes in coronavirus cases will continue to work with NHS Test and Trace, developing incident management plans and leading on local interventions to stop transmission where required. The interventions they take will be closely monitored and issues escalated for further action to a national level if they have not led to a significant reduction in cases [details [here](#)].

Local authority powers to impose restrictions under coronavirus regulations (Statutory Guidance) - details [here](#).

Other COVID-19 announcements

New plans to ensure pubs, restaurants and cafes offer both smoking and non-smoking outdoor options - People using pubs, restaurants and cafes will soon have greater freedom to choose non-smoking outdoor areas following an amendment tabled to legislation in Parliament last week [details [here](#)].

The announcement also builds on measures to help businesses get back on their feet, including:

- Simpler licensing process for outdoor seating for pubs, restaurants and cafes
- Councils encouraged to reduce red-tape and create more outdoor markets
- Part of comprehensive plan to revive high streets, support the hospitality industry and help get people back to work
- Helping councils and businesses transition from crisis response and lockdown, towards economic recovery

LGA brief guidance note, Licensing of outdoor drinking and dining - This sets out the immediate first steps for councils to consider taking to help ensure they have processes and procedures in place for when the Act comes into force, and outlines some wider reopening issues for councils and business to consider. It builds on the licensing guidance published previously by the LGA, in particular the key principles which councils can base their work on [details [here](#)].

EMC News

East Midlands APPG - The East Midlands APPG met (virtually) for the second time since the last General Election on the 21st July 2020, chaired by the Conservative MP for Amber Valley Nigel Mills. The meeting considered an update on the economic impact of COVID 19 in the East Midlands, the [Access to Toton](#) report and the National Infrastructure Commission's recently published [Rail Assessment Interim Report](#). The APPG will look to meet again after the summer recess. In other Parliamentary news, a new Midlands Engine APPG has been formed, co-chaired by Darren Henry MP (Con Broxtowe) and Crossbench Hereditary Peer Lord Ravensdale.

Secondment Opportunities for East Midlands Test, Trace & Contain Hub - As part of the national COVID-19 response the Test, Trace and Contain programme has been established to support local authorities and public health departments in managing outbreaks. Testing is a core part of managing and minimising COVID and Mobile Unit Testing plays a key role. The East Midlands has recently established a hub which will be the main team undertaking this work. We are now seeking to fill two key roles on a 12-month secondment basis. Further details will be available in next Policy Brief.

Delivering Councillor Learning and Development Programme - EMC has developed a 4 part programme of support for Democratic Service/Councillor Development officers in the East Midlands. This programme is to be delivered virtually over the autumn. The virtual sessions will be highly interactive in nature.

- **What do we mean by Councillor Development and why is it important? (Workshop 1)**, 07 Oct 2020 10:00 - [\[here\]](#).
- **Approaches to identifying councillor learning and development needs (Workshop 2)**, 04 Nov 2020 10:00 - [\[here\]](#).
- **Councillor Learning and Development Provision including evaluation (Workshop 3)**, 02 Dec 2020 10:00 - [\[here\]](#).
- **Delivering a training-briefing session (Workshop 4)**, 13 Jan 2021 10:00 - [\[details here\]](#).

Infrastructure, Planning & Housing

New laws to extend homes upwards and revitalise town centres - Full planning applications will not be required to demolish and rebuild unused buildings as homes. The new rules, which will come into effect by September, will mean full planning applications will not be required to demolish and rebuild unused buildings as homes and commercial and retail properties can be quickly repurposed to help revive our high streets and town centres.

Homeowners will also be able to add up to 2 additional storeys to their home to create new homes or more living space for growing families through a fast track approval process, with a requirement to carefully consider the impact on neighbours and the appearance of the extension [details [here](#)].

Changing Places toilets for severely disabled people to be compulsory in new public buildings - [details [here](#)].

Employers' Information

Exit Pay Cap Update - This week HM Treasury published the [government's response](#) to the consultation and laid the [implementing regulations](#) in Parliament. As this is an affirmative process, these regulations will need to be debated in Parliament before they come into force. The response does not indicate a date for implementation and it recognises that pension regulations will need to be amended.

EMC has been liaising with our workforce colleagues at the LGA, who will consider the text of the regulations and any government guidance that is produced and will provide updated information in due course.

EMC Fortnightly Summary of COVID-19 Guidance & Information for HR Colleagues - EMC continues to provide a summary to HR colleagues in the East Midlands updating on latest developments on workforce issues relating to COVID-19. This information can be found [here](#).

Local Government News and wider

Public Accounts Committee Report 'Government "blind" to "extreme risks" of investment by cash-strapped councils'

- In a report published this week, the Commons Public Accounts Committee says that some councils have exposed themselves to commercial investments which risk cuts in local services and a big bill for local taxpayers [details [here](#)].

£266 million housing fund for vulnerable people - Next Steps Accommodation Programme launched makes resources available to councils to help ensure 15,000 people continue to have a safe place to stay. Councils and their local partners can apply for funds from the government's Next Steps Accommodation Programme to cover property costs and support new tenancies for around 15,000 vulnerable people who were provided with emergency accommodation during the pandemic [details [here](#)].

Chancellor launches Comprehensive Spending Review - The Review, which will be published in the autumn, will set out the government's spending plans for the parliament [details [here](#)].

Exploring the impact of COVID-19 on the health visiting service, 23 July 2020 - The session will focus on the impact of the scaling back of support for families, service prioritisation and the ability of the health visiting service to keep vulnerable children safe at a time when their needs were increasing due to the secondary impact of "lockdown" [[here](#)].

Tackling problem drinking after lockdown, 27 July 2020 - This webinar will provide an opportunity to understand the latest evidence on alcohol consumption as we emerge from lockdown and possible social and health impacts [[here](#)].

Public Health England Chief Executive Duncan Selbie's Friday Message - The 17 July message is available from [here](#).

Migration, Asylum Seekers, Refugee Resettlement and Modern Slavery

EMSMP Updates - The East Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership is providing updates on their webpage in relation to asylum seekers, refugees and migrants in the East Midlands [details [here](#)].

EMC Events

Taking Your Training Remote – A Regional virtual training programme - EMC is holding a programme of workshops on 'taking your training virtual'. This programme is split into two workshops, each 2.5 hours long and delivered over Zoom. Both workshops are highly interactive and practical, for more information visit [here](#).

EMC Leadership

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Vice Chair: Cllr Jonathan Morgan

Conservative Group: Cllr Roger Blaney

Labour Group: Cllr Alan Rhodes

Lib Dem Group: Cllr David Bill MBE

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