

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

Top items this week

8 MARCH 2019



Stronger Towns Fund launched



HS2 East News



Brexit Update



EMC Events for Councillors and Officers



Boost for the East Midlands as Minister pledges government support for Eastern Leg of HS2

Transport Minister Nusrat Ghani has reinforced Government’s commitment to delivering HS2 in its entirety. Speaking at an event in Westminster this week hosted by Turner & Townsend on behalf of HS2 East, a partnership representing towns and cities along the eastern leg of the Phase 2b route, Ms Ghani stated “let no one doubt my department’s full commitment to the entire project.”

Highlighting the far-reaching benefits of this once-in-a-lifetime transport investment, she was also joined by HS2 chair Allan Cook and Lord Kerslake, former head of the Civil Service, as well as speakers from organisations across the Midlands and the North.

The eastern leg of HS2 is a high speed connection between Birmingham, Toton in the East Midlands, Sheffield, Leeds and Newcastle, and will improve journey times up to Scotland. These collective destinations have a combined population of 15 million people and already contribute over £320billion a year to the UK economy.

HS2’s construction also comes hand in hand with swathes of development and regeneration, including the creation of a state-of-the-art innovation campus at Toton, as well as plans to double the size of Leeds city centre, transforming the area around the city’s new HS2 station. To read the full press release visit [here](#).



Brexit Update

MHCLG have asked Local Authorities to support in the identification of local concerns should mitigation planning be necessary as a result of Brexit. Included within the issues raised by local authorities this week and information circulated;

EU Settlement Scheme - The pilot is showing that supporting an applicant through the application process could take up to 6 hours, there are concerns that the capacity of both Local Authorities and civil society will be able to meet the anticipated level of need.

Stronger Towns Fund - You will have seen that the government announced its Stronger Towns Fund. This £1.6 billion funding (from 2019-2026) will be targeted at places that “have not shared in the proceeds of growth in the same way as more prosperous areas”. The first £1bn has been allocated according to formula allocations which are based on a combination of productivity, income, skills, deprivation metrics and proportion of the population living in towns. This targets funding at those places with economies that are performing relatively less well to the England average. A further £600 million will be available through a bidding process to communities across the country. More information on the bidding process will be available in due course. Note - the Stronger Towns Fund may well be managed and distributed through Local Enterprise Partnerships, not local government.

Region	Allocation (£m)	Region	Allocation (£m)
North West	281	East Midlands	110
North East	105	South West	33
Yorkshire and The Humber	197	South East	37
West Midlands	212	East of England	25

Stronger Towns Fund launched - Government press release [here](#).

Data: Guidance for local authorities on data protection has now been issued to all LA Chief Executives [[here](#)].

The following sector thematic workshops are planned for in the coming weeks:

- Adult Social Care, London – 13th March [[details here](#)]:
- Trading Standards, London – 15th March: [[details here](#)]

East Midlands LA Challenge 2019

On 21 March 19 teams from local authorities in the East Midlands will take part in the East Midlands Local Authority Challenge. This year the awards are; East Midlands Local Authority Challenge Winners for 2019, Best Chief Executive Officer, Best Presentations Award, Best Media Award and Best Partnerships Award. This year the Best Chief Executive Award is sponsored by the MJ. Authorities taking part this year are;

- Ashfield District Council
- Blaby District Council
- Chesterfield Borough Council
- City of Lincoln
- Corby Borough Council
- Derby City Council
- Derbyshire Dales District Council
- East Northamptonshire Council
- Gedling Borough Council
- Leicester City Council
- Lincolnshire County Council
- Melton Borough Council
- Newark and Sherwood District Council
- North Kesteven District Council
- North West Leicestershire District Council
- Rushcliffe Borough Council
- South Holland District Council
- South Kesteven District Council
- South Northamptonshire District Council

EMC Councillor Events

Working in partnership with authorities in the East Midlands, EMC will this summer provide four chairing skills events for Councillors, with events being hosted by Newark and Sherwood District Council and Blaby District Council.

Chairing and effective meetings, 18 June 2019 - Newark and Sherwood District Council, sessions at 14:00 and 18:00 - for more information visit [here](#).

Chairing and Facilitation Skills Councillors, 18 September 2019 - Blaby District Council, sessions at 13:30 and 17:30 - for more information visit [here](#).

Infrastructure, Planning & Housing



East Midlands Development Corporation moves a step closer after £2m government fund is approved - Plans to establish an East Midlands Development Corporation have moved a step closer – after the government signed off a £2 million fund to start to establish a body to deliver development opportunities, and define its scope and powers.

The funding was announced by the Chancellor Philip Hammond at last year's Conservative Party Conference.

The focus will be on facilitating development around the East Midlands Hub Station at Toton, East Midlands Airport and Ratcliff Power Station.

An Oversight Board including key council leaders chaired by Sir John Peace met on the 4th March 2019 with East Midlands Councils in attendance. A further meeting will take place in June 2019 [details [here](#)].

Future High Streets Fund: call for proposals - The Future High Streets Fund will support and fund local areas' plans to make their high streets and town centres fit for the future.

The Future High Streets Fund is an essential part of 'Our Plan for the High Street', providing co-funding towards capital projects that bring transformative change. We want to see the regeneration of our town centres through innovative proposals around transport, housing delivery and our public services.

The Fund will operate as a two-stage application process. Applications for Phase 1 calls for local authorities to submit Expressions of Interest to highstreetsfund@communities.gov.uk by 22 March 2019 setting out their challenges and strategic approach to regenerating town centres [details [here](#)].

Long-lasting repairs to stop potholes - Transport Secretary Chris Grayling has launched a consultation on increasing the guarantee on utility firms' roadworks, so that if a pothole forms as a result within 5 years, the company must return to bring the road surface back to normal [details [here](#)].

Employers' Issues



Pay Spine Survey #2 - The LGA have requested information regarding the implementation of authorities 2019/20 pay awards. The survey requests information whether local authorities have local pay bargaining or are on national pay. The link to the survey has been circulated to local authority HR contacts, it should take just a few minutes to complete the survey. The closing date is 5pm on 29 March 2019.

If you have any questions about this survey or require further assistance please contact Lisa Bushell from East Midlands Councils, lisa.bushell@emcouncils.gov.uk. Lisa will collate questions and refer to the LGA.

Housing



Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 - Guidance for tenants, landlords and local authorities. Guidance to help tenants, landlords and local authorities understand the [Homes \(Fitness for Human Habitation\) Act 2018](#). For tenants, this non-statutory guidance will help them to make use of their rights under the Act.

For landlords and local authorities, this non-statutory guidance will ensure that they are aware of what the Act means for them. The Act comes into force on 20 March 2019 [details [here](#)].

New rules to better protect renters' money - All private rented property agents will have to sign up to a scheme protecting both renters' and landlords' money under new laws [details [here](#)].

Local Government News and wider



Rushcliffe Chief Executive to stand down after 13 years - Rushcliffe Borough Council's Chief Executive Allen Graham is to stand down at the authority after nearly 13 years in the role [the full Rushcliffe Borough Council press release is available from [here](#)].

Strategy to end violence against women and girls: 2016 to 2020 - The ending violence against women and girls strategy: 2016 to 2020 provides an overview of the wide range of actions the government is taking over a period of four years to end violence against women and girls. It was launched on 8 March 2016.

In March 2019 a refreshed strategy was published to re-affirm commitments to tackling violence against women and children. The refreshed strategy sets out additional actions to strengthen our response through to 2020. The action plan update provides detail of progress made against the actions set out in the 2016 strategy [details [here](#)]

'Outsourcing Playbook' published - The government's [Outsourcing Playbook](#), which has been designed to improve how government works with industry and deliver better public services, launched by Cabinet Office Minister this week [details [here](#)].

Culture-led regeneration: achieving inclusive and sustainable growth - The LGA Culture, Tourism and Sport Board commissioned this guide to see how cultural-led generation can be done, so councils across the country can look at examples that work for them and possibly do something similar [details [here](#)].

Breaking the cycle of youth violence - This LGA report includes a variety of case studies. As the case studies in this report show, councils are stepping up to the challenge. There are universal interventions that target whole populations. [details [here](#)].

Voter ID pilots for local elections in May 2019 - Voter ID pilots will run in 10 local authorities in the May 2019 local elections, and will require voters to present personal identification before casting their ballot [details [here](#)]. Authorities involved in the pilot from the East Midlands ; Broxtowe Borough Council, North West Leicestershire District Council, North Kesteven District Council and Derby City Council.

Publication of councillors' and candidates' home addresses: letter to local authorities - Local Government Minister Rishi Sunak's letter to leaders of local authorities drawing attention to changes the government has introduced to the rules applying to local government elections and which are now in force [details [here](#)].

Twenty-first Century Councils - This LGA toolkit has been developed to help councils create the underlying policies, procedures, ethos and environment that encourages and empowers women, parents and carers to become local councillors and take on leadership positions [details [here](#)].

EMC Events

Developing a Mentoring and Coaching Strategy Workshop, 16 May 2019 - A workshop to explore and develop a mentoring and coaching strategy for those authorities interested in setting up their own programmes [details [here](#)].

Charting your course: How to define success and achieve it! 12 Jun 2019 - This full day workshop help delegates to explore what it meant to them to be successful; the psychology behind goal setting; how to set goals they could achieve and how to quieten negative thoughts [details [here](#)].

EMC Leadership

Chair: Cllr Martin Hill OBE
Vice Chair: Cllr Jon Collins
Vice Chair: Cllr Chris Millar
Conservative Group: Cllr Roger Blaney
Labour Group: Cllr Anne Western CBE
Lib Dem Group: Cllr David Bill MBE
Independent Group: Mayor Kate Allsop
Executive Director: Stuart Young

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