

## POLICY BRIEFING FOR EMC MEMBERS: 25 NOVEMBER 2011

### Laying the Foundations: a housing strategy for England



The Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister have launched 'Laying the Foundations: a housing strategy for England'. The Strategy details how Government is aiming to help people get on the property ladder, address unfairness in social housing and try to ensure homes that have been left empty for years are lived in again.

A key element of the strategy is a new build indemnity scheme to help up to 100,000 prospective buyers who are currently frozen out of the housing market because of the need for large deposits. Under the proposals, homebuyers will be able to secure loans on newly built homes with only a 5% deposit.

Another element of the Strategy is a new £400 million 'Get Britain Building' fund to re-start housing schemes stalled by the economic downturn. This fund has been designed to unlock the

construction of up to 16,000 homes, including up to an estimated 3,200 new affordable homes delivered through planning obligations.

EMC is hosting a free seminar on 8<sup>th</sup> December to look at the implications of the housing strategy, aimed at housing and planning colleagues. Nick Stripe, Policy Advisor, Housing Strategy and Cross-Cutting Policy (CLG) and Henry Cleary, Adviser to the Growth Best Practice Network, will be addressing the seminar, which will run from 2 - 4.30pm. Attendance is limited to 50 people. To reserve a place please email [cathy.jones@emcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:cathy.jones@emcouncils.gov.uk).

Laying the Foundations: a housing strategy for England is available from [DCLG's website](http://DCLG's website).

### Planning & Transport (Officer Contact: [andrew.pritchard@emcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.pritchard@emcouncils.gov.uk))

The report of the **independent review into the strategic road network in England**, led by Alan Cook, has been published. The Report, which is available [here](#), considers how best to achieve the Government's objectives for operating, maintaining and enhancing the strategic road network.

**Harborough District Council has adopted its Core Strategy** planning document. After a public examination, the Core Strategy – which will map out the amount and type of housing and development up to 2028 – was declared as 'sound' by a planning inspector. It is available [here](#).

### Housing (Officer Contact: [cathy.jones@emcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:cathy.jones@emcouncils.gov.uk))

The Tenant Services Authority, as the **Social housing regulator**, has published proposals for a new approach to regulation, reflecting the changes to their role in the Localism Act and the Government's published Directions on Standards. Details of the proposals, which are open to consultation until 10 February 2012, are available [here](#).

### Economic Development, Skills & Education (Officer Contact: [peter.williams@emcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:peter.williams@emcouncils.gov.uk))

The Government has published a report on the responses to the call for evidence on **extending data sharing powers between DWP and local authorities** in relation to the provision of welfare services and housing benefit. The report is available [here](#).

Two firms based in Derbyshire have announced **new investment which is expected to lead to the creation of a significant number of new jobs**. Toyota, based in Burnaston, have announced investment of more than £100 million to manufacture their new generation of hatchback cars, which is expected to create up to 1,500 new jobs over the next two years. Meanwhile Nestle, based in Hatton, have announced an investment of £110 million to extend their coffee manufacturing facility, creating 300 new jobs. Details of the Toyota investment are available [here](#) and Nestle's investment available [here](#).

### Public Health (Officer Contact: [cathy.jones@emcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:cathy.jones@emcouncils.gov.uk))

An independent review aimed at reducing **the cost of sickness to employers, taxpayers and the economy** has reported to the Government. Dame Carol Black, National Director for Health & Work and David Frost, former Director General, British Chamber of Commerce, outline the human and financial costs of sickness and present evidence strongly suggesting that work is good for health and may aid recovery. The full Review is available [here](#).

**Employers' Issues** (Officer Contact: [sam.maher@emcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:sam.maher@emcouncils.gov.uk))

In preparation for industrial action planned on 30 November, **the LGA have produced an 'Industrial Action Guide'** to enable local authorities to assess the impact and implications of an industrial dispute, and to decide upon the appropriate response within the context of employment legislation and good industrial relations practice. The Guide is available [here](#). **EMC have been asked on behalf of the national employers to collect data on the impact of the strike action.** A template has been circulated to Heads of HR across the East Midlands with details of the information required. For further details contact [sam.maher@emcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:sam.maher@emcouncils.gov.uk).

BIS have issued a **call for evidence to establish the advantages and disadvantages of the current rules on collective redundancy consultation**, what effect they have on business confidence and flexibility to respond effectively and appropriately to market opportunities and challenges. The deadline for responding is 31 January 2012. Full details are available [here](#).

**Climate Change & Sustainable Development** (Officer Contact: [mike.peverill@emcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:mike.peverill@emcouncils.gov.uk))

Twenty-four social housing providers across Britain have been awarded a share of a **£4 million fund to install green heating systems** in the homes of their tenants. The successful applicants will receive up to £175,000 to install systems such as biomass boilers, solar hot water panels and heat pumps. In the East Midlands the current list of confirmed social landlord winners are the Hastoe Housing Association, New Linx Housing Trust (Projects 1 & 2) and South Derbyshire District Council. Further details are available from [DECC](#).

**DECC are consulting on the details of the Green Deal and energy company obligation policies.** The consultation is open until 18 January and DECC are particularly interested in views from organisations with an interest in operating within the framework and members of the general public who might be considering investing in energy efficiency. The consultation documents are available [here](#). **£200 million of new and additional funding has also been announced by DECC** to provide an 'introductory' offer to boost the early take-up of the Green Deal energy efficiency scheme, details of which are available [here](#).

**Local Government Policy:** (Officer Contact: [jan.sensier@emcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:jan.sensier@emcouncils.gov.uk))

The Office for Civil Society (OCS) has recently launched the **£80 million Community First programme** which offers a mix of grant and endowment funding to local areas to establish neighbourhood panels and build endowments. A large number of wards in the East Midlands are eligible for funding. The Cabinet Office has written to all upper tier Local Authorities in the East Midlands asking them to liaise with their districts with a view to actively encouraging local areas to engage. Further information is available [here](#). The OCS has also announced a new **£16.8 million fund to help not-for-profit free advice services in England** to be delivered by the 'Big Fund'. The fund will provide immediate support to debt, welfare benefits, employment and housing advice services. Further details are available [here](#).

**The Equality and Human Rights Commission has published its findings into the home care system in England.** The inquiry revealed evidence that the treatment of some older people is breaching their human rights, with many of those being cared for finding it difficult to voice their concerns or to have a say over the delivery of their care. The report 'Close to home: older people and human rights in home care' is available [here](#).

**Other EMC Events**

**Negotiation Skills Training - 13 December 2011:** This one day course will provide a thorough understanding of the theory of successful negotiation, backed up by a range of high quality reading material and references.

**Time Management - 12 January 2012:** EMC is holding a one day Time Management workshop with the emphasis on people developing an action plan, with practical tasks and habit changes, to which they feel committed.

For further information on these events or to book your place please use this link to [EMC's website](#) or contact [lisa.bushell@emcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:lisa.bushell@emcouncils.gov.uk).

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