

POLICY BRIEFING FOR EMC MEMBERS: 3 FEBRUARY 2012

Views being sought on the Future Direction of East Midlands Councils



At this week's meeting of East Midlands Councils, the Chairman Cllr David Parsons CBE [launched a 'conversation'](#) with councils to develop and agree the priorities for the organisation in 2012/13. Initial discussions with member councils and partners have highlighted two key priorities:

- **supporting economic growth**; and
- **sector-led transformation and improvement**.

Member councils are invited to highlight these or any other issues that EMC should focus on over the next 12 months, particularly where the impact of collaborative action is likely to be greatest. Please send your authorities' views to stuart.young@emcouncils.gov.uk.

Planning & Transport (Officer Contact: andrew.pritchard@emcouncils.gov.uk)

Justine Greening MP, Secretary of State for Transport has launched a consultation paper to take forward discussions for deciding a new devolved system for **prioritising and funding local major transport schemes** for the next Spending Review period – post 2015. Details of the Secretary of State's statement together with the consultation document can be found on DfT's website [here](#). The consultation closes on 2 April 2012.

Housing (Officer Contact: cathy.jones@emcouncils.gov.uk)

East Midlands GREEN is supporting Councils, ALMOs and Registered Social Housing Providers to maximise benefits from the Green Deal. Information is being requested by 10 February on potential existing energy efficiency projects across the East Midlands, to understand potential interest in participating in a regional approach to financing and delivery of energy efficiency improvements. Contact cathy.jones@emcouncils.gov.uk for details.

The Chartered Institute of Housing has published a **briefing note on tenure reform**. It covers issues such as fixed-term tenancies and the relevant powers in the Localism Act. The Briefing Note is [available here](#).

Ministers at DCLG have confirmed the allocation of the **£500 million Growing Places Fund** to LEPs, designed to boost economic growth by providing infrastructure to create new homes and jobs. Details, including a link to individual allocations, are available [here](#). In addition the Minister for Housing and Local Government Grant Shapps has announced details of the **New Home Bonus Scheme Grant Determination 2012-13**. Details of awards to individual local authorities are available [here](#).

The government has highlighted a number of measures which come into effect this month following the implementation of the **Localism Act**, with full implementation from April 2012. These include HomeSwap Direct and changes to social housing regulation. Further details are available [here](#).

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

The Government has published the **Financial Services Bill** which includes measures to give the Bank of England responsibility for protecting financial stability; abolishes the FSA and fosters an improved regulatory culture. The press release from the Treasury is available [here](#).

Employers' Issues (Officer Contact: sam.maher@emcouncils.gov.uk)

Top Pay Event - 9 February 2012 10.30-1.30: EMC is holding a FREE practical session on the impact of the **Localism Act** when preparing **Pay Policy Statements**. The session will give feedback to those authorities who have already prepared statements, share examples from around the country and provide strong guidance on producing pay policy statements. To book your place please [click here](#) or contact lisa.bushell@emcouncils.gov.uk.

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

Elected members are invited to five morning events in February and March which conclude different streams of work on the £1 million **Climate East Midlands Skills Programme**: Planning for Adaptation (21st February), Schools Collaboration on Resource Efficiency (7th March), Decentralised Energy (12th March), Community Climate Skills (17th March) and Hydropower (23rd March). Please see the [flyer](#) giving further details. Portfolio Holders are also invited to an LGA consultation workshop on adaptation (one of three nationally) in Leicester on Fri 24th February (am). Further details are available from jessica.david@local.gov.uk.

The Association of British Insurers (ABI) has analysed Environment Agency data to reveal areas that could struggle to access **affordable flood insurance** if the Government fails to agree a way forward with the insurance industry. Boston and Skegness top the list of parliamentary constituencies with the most homes at significant flood risk (7,550) with Nottingham (South) in 8th place (5,043 properties at risk). Further details are available [from the ABI](#).

Local Government Policy: (Officer Contact: stuart.young@emcouncils.gov.uk)

Communities Minister Bob Neill has announced an additional £22 million to help former coalfield communities secure economic growth up to 2015, which comes on top of £30 million already allocated to the organisation by DCLG. The funding will allow the **Coalfields Regeneration Trust** to transform into a self-sustaining organisation to champion the interests and needs of coalfield communities. Further details are available [here](#).

DCLG are consulting on **measures to allow government to pass on costs incurred when councils fall foul of European directives**. The measures to involve local government in the process follows successful LGA lobbying to amend part of the Localism Act. Details of the consultation, which is open until 22 April 2012, are available [here](#).

The **Local Government Finance report** has been published, setting out the Secretary of State's determination, of the amount of Revenue Support Grant he proposes to pay to receiving authorities for the financial year 2012/2013. The Report is available [here](#).

The **East Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership** (EMSMP) was formed in 2007 to consider the impact of migration on the region by linking with member organisations on economic migration, asylum and refugee issues. The current funding period ends in March 2012 and new funding arrangements will in place for the financial year 2012/13. In order to ensure the EMSMP continues to respond effectively to the changing patterns of migration in the East Midlands we would like you to take ten minutes to respond to a **survey** by clicking [here](#).

The government has launched an experimental trial ('beta') replacement for Directgov as the first step towards a **single government website**. Go to www.gov.uk to find out more.

Over half the councils in the region were represented at a **Performance Management Benchmarking seminar** on 26 January, hosted by Rushcliffe Borough Council and organised by the East Midlands Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (EM IEP) Presentations on LG Inform and on the work carried out by the cities and counties in the region can be found [here](#). A feedback note to Chief Executives is being sent out and EMC will continue to develop and support this council led network. Further details from jan.sensier@emcouncils.gov.uk.

During 2012-2013, EM IEP are providing part or fully funded support for **Councillor Development** via a Knowledge Based Programme of 6 events covering topical issues such as health; planning and community budgets; fully funded skills workshops for councillors delivered locally; and Community Leadership Awards that recognise the development of skills, knowledge and experience. For more information visit [EMC's website](#).

Other EMC Events

Staying Brilliant - 28th February 2012: This workshop aims to build on 'The Art of Being Brilliant', reviewing progress and taking the messages one step further. The aim is to stop the slide back and instill permanent change.

Managing Empty Properties in the Private Sector - 25th April 2012: This course provides delegates with the skills, knowledge and techniques to deploy the various options for managing empty properties.

For further information on these events or to book your place please use this [link](#) to EMC's website (Staying Brilliant) or this [link](#) (Managing Empty Properties in the Private Sector) or contact lisa.bushell@emcouncils.gov.uk.

EMC Management Group

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