



Executive Board

17th March 2017

**Report of Management Group
Draft EMC Business Plan 2017/18**

Summary

The following report provides details of the proposed work programme/business plan of Management Group, as the focus for EMC activity during 2017/18.

Recommendations

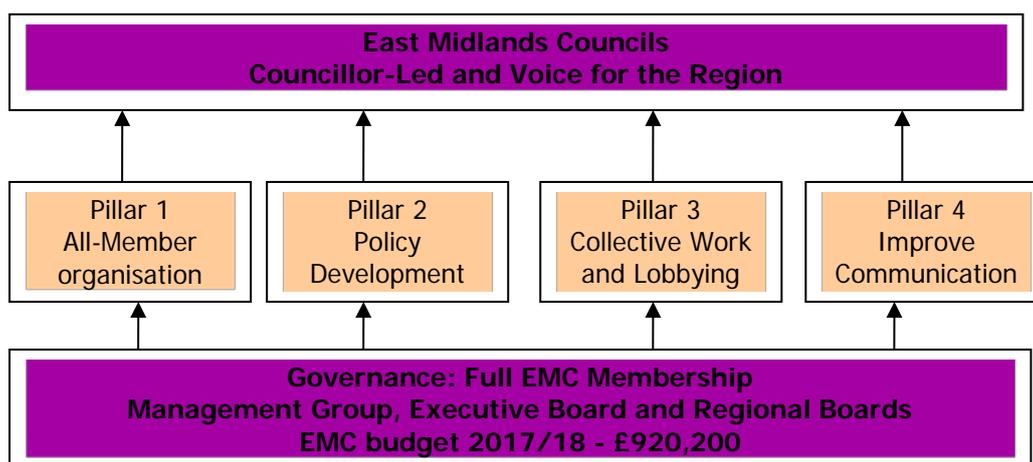
Members of the Executive Board are invited to consider and endorse the draft EMC business plan.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The draft Business Plan 2017/18 is a formal statement of EMC's objectives and proposed activity over the next 12 months. As a membership body, the priorities of EMC should be developed and agreed by member councils and clearly presented for review, not just in order to promote an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of EMC, but also as a measure against which our performance and value as an organisation should be judged.
- 1.2 Against this business plan, EMC must be flexible and respond to the changing priorities and challenges faced by the sector, e.g. as evidenced by responsibilities for the UASC national transfer system. Therefore, the activities within any business plan may change if Members require it to. However, within this context, the business plan should reflect issues highlighted through initial consultation with our membership and so provide the basis for work in the coming year.

2. Focus of Business Plan

- 2.1 The focus for the Business Plan is suggested to continue by the agreed '4 pillar' approach unanimously agreed by Members, as shown by diagram below and summary attached as Appendix 8A(a):
- All-Member Organisation.
 - Policy Development.
 - Collective Work and Lobbying.
 - Improve Communication.



- 2.2 The 4 pillar approach will continue to provide the framework for the proposed programme of work. While some issues inevitably relate to more than one pillar of work, this approach does provide clarity on the focus of organisational activity against

the priorities identified by the independent review and unanimously agreed by Members.

a) Pillar One

2.3 EMC has adopted an 'all-member' approach and secured greater member involvement – however, there is some way to go before a significant number of the 2000 councillors in this region regularly engage. A fundamental change is that instead of an organisation that focuses on the limited number of councillors who comprise the actual membership of East Midlands Councils, EMC has become more of an 'all member' organisation through offering opportunities for all councillors in the region to be actively involved in some way in the work of EMC.

2.4 For 2017/18, EMC should continue to offer further opportunities for councillors to engage and influence the work of EMC, including policy development, attendance at Parliamentary events and full EMC meetings.

2.5 This should include the delivery of a comprehensive member development programme and 'all-member' events on issues of significant importance to councils that may include:

- The implications of 'Brexit'
- HS2 and wider Rail Investment; connectivity, capacity and wider Hs2 Growth Strategy
- Midlands Engine and Midlands Connect, strategic investment and transport infrastructure priorities
- Asylum and Refugee Resettlement
- Local Government as Employers – e.g. implications of apprenticeship levy and targets.

b) Pillar Two

2.6 A focus on policy development, with the membership providing the mandate for action (based upon an annual work programme). In discussions with Members, the following issues have been highlighted for policy development work (with its links to collective work and lobbying):

- Housing and Planning – informed by EMC's review and set within the context of the Housing White Paper, 'Fixing our Broken Housing Market'.
- Health – Implications of STPs and health engagement in wider work, e.g. asylum/refugee resettlement.
- Lead member networks for children, adult social care, and health & wellbeing boards.
- Asylum and refugee resettlement – specifically asylum dispersal, Syrian and UASC resettlement programmes.

c) Pillar 3

- 2.7 More effective collective work and lobbying. The identification of practical solutions and policy responses should link campaigning to the collective work of member councils, specifically in conjunction with the work of the All-Party Parliamentary Group of MPs (East Midlands) and LEPs.
- 2.8 The core elements of this pillar of work are proposed to include:
- HS2 Phase Two (Eastern Leg) and development of Growth Strategy.
 - Midlands Engine.
 - Midlands Connect.
 - A focus on the delivery of the 5 agreed regional strategic infrastructure schemes, with the development of successor programmes.
 - Asylum and refugee resettlement programmes.
 - Regional Employers' Organisation.
- 2.9 A particular focus will be on ensuring leadership and engagement on Midlands Engine and Midlands Connect. There will be increasing influence from the elected mayor for the West Midlands Combined Authority. As part counterbalance, EMC needs to provide the strong voice for East Midlands, ensuring the priorities of councils are reflected in investment and infrastructure planning.
- 2.10 This work will be led by:
- Midlands Engine Leadership Group – including the nominated local authority leaders on the Midlands Engine Supervisory Board and Midlands Connect Board (and potentially working with political representatives from the West Midlands).
 - Transport for the East Midlands - A regional transport board will be established to ensure political oversight and ownership for the development and delivery of strategic transport infrastructure activity.

d) Pillar 4

- 2.11 The objective remains to improve communication with the membership and outside partners to better promote the identity and profile of the region alongside the value of the organisation. In particular, there is an opportunity to:
- Further support the platform for councillors' leadership, either through meetings of EMC or focused summits, the promotion of good practice and encouraging the better use of online forum, social media and the wider use of EMC website. Further develop links with locally based Government Departments and partner organisations, e.g. BEIS, DCLG, PHE, LEPs.
 - Promote a more effective working relationship with MPs and MEPs.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 Members of the Executive Board are invited to consider and endorse the draft EMC business plan for 2017/18.

Cllr Martin Hill
Chairman

Stuart Young
Executive Director

**East Midlands Councils
Councillor-Led and Voice for the Region**

Pillar 1: All-Member Organisation

Outcomes:

- Councillors are more informed on issues that matter to them.
- Councillors are able to plan for and implement new policies in their local council.
- Councillors have greater 'ownership' of EMC.



Services:

- Every councillor offered opportunities for member development and to inform the policy work of EMC.
- New councillor inductions after council elections.
- Online forums.
- Member Development events, action learning and peer mentoring.
- Provision of bespoke and cost effective HR and organisational capacity support.
- Provision of discounted services for member councils, e.g. pay benchmarking database, IT security and online recruitment portal.



Actions:

- Meet the learning and development needs of new and existing members.
- A further expansion of the member development programme (delivered both regionally and locally).
- Member briefing and consultation events on key/significant issues.
- Delivery of mentoring/coaching offer and support.
- Widen opportunities for member-leads on specific issues/priorities.
- Facilitating personal development plans for councillors.



Pillar 2: Policy Development

Outcomes:

- Councillors have a better understanding and engagement with policy of relevance and importance to the region.
- Councillors, MPs, MEPs or other partners (e.g. business leaders) have an effective relationship and joint approach.
- Policy is better informed by, and reflects; local priorities, concerns and opportunities.
- EMC is able to more effectively represent member councils at the national level.



Services:

- Policy Briefs (EMC members and MPs).
- All councillors offered the opportunity to inform the development of EMC policy/response.
- Reviews focused upon clear conclusions and recommendations.
- Represent the region on a range of priority issues; economic growth and infrastructure [e.g. HS2, Midlands Engine/Connect], housing and planning, asylum/refugee resettlement, health and well-being, children's and adult's services, apprenticeship levy, regional pay negotiations and consultation.



Actions:

- Respond to changing policy environment and provide platform for Councillor leadership on key policy issues: e.g. welfare reform, local government funding, affordable housing investment, apprenticeship levy, health and asylum/refugee resettlement.
- Develop policy forward plan that reflects risk, opportunities and actions required.
- Regular MP and MEP briefings.
- Regular councillor and officer briefing opportunities.
- Councillor-led task and finish groups develop collaborative approach on specific issues; health, asylum/refugee resettlement and 'Brexit'.
- Promote more effective co-ordination with key partners, e.g. LEPS, BEIS, DCLG.
- Promote social care and NHS integration.



Pillar 3: Collective Work & Lobbying

Outcomes:

- Councillors better able and supported to provide leadership on key issues.
- Councillors are more effective in lobbying on key regional issues and securing a better funding deal/investment and resources for the region.
- More effective and collective approach between councillors, MPs, MEPs, business leaders and other partners.
- Enhanced public profile for EMC and its leadership.
- The East Midlands has a greater profile and 'speaks' authoritatively on key issues.



Services:

- High quality briefings and support for councillors on priority issues.
- A greater number of events on specific issues to provide a platform to influence and lobby.
- Enhanced councillor leadership and support for 'portfolio leads' amongst Executive Board members.
- Enhanced links with the national (trade press), regional and local media.
- Update prospectus on investment and infrastructure opportunities.
- Secretariat and co-ordinating role for EM APPG (MPs).



Actions:

- More active approach to communications and media work.
- Coordinate joint external/lobbying work of EM APPG, business, trades unions and VCS, Government Departments.
- Identify lobbying opportunities and provide a platform for councils' voice.
- Undertake specific and time-limited reviews, led by task and finish groups, on growth and infrastructure, local government funding and housing.
- Respond to consultations/calls for evidence/select committees to provide single voice on issues of common concern.
- Campaign of key issues that include increasing levels of public funding.
- Providing leadership and governance for key regional initiatives, e.g. Regional Employers', Hs2 Strategic Board, Midlands Engine/Connect, Transport for the East Midlands.
- Focused work to secure a greater share of investment through:
 - * Midland Mainline Market Harborough Enhancement
 - * A5 (M42-M69) Strategic Enhancement
 - * Newark Strategic Road and Rail Enhancement
 - * Access to East Midlands Airport (EMA) & East Midlands Hub Station
 - * A14 Enhancement



Pillar 4: Improve Communication

Outcomes:

- Councillors better able to promote and adopt best practice locally and regionally.
- Councillors better able to engage and inform the work of EMC.
- Secure greater resources/benefit to the region through an enhanced profile.



Services:

- Highlight best practice and case studies.
- Online forum for councillors, officers and partners.
- Peer challenge and support.
- Joint procurement to secure efficiencies for sector.
- Opportunities for councillors to share thinking with wider sector.
- A weekly Policy Brief for EMC members, and on a monthly basis for the regions' MPs.



Actions:

- Better use of EMC website including a discussion facility, Twitter and other social media.
- Targeted promotion of specific regional/sub-regional issues.
- Calls for evidence from the sector to identify best practice within region and nationally.
- Specific events on best practice and wider opportunities for the sector.
- Further developed links with the LGA, e.g. peer review.
- Further develop links with partner organisations, e.g. Government Departments, voluntary and community sector, business organisations.



**Governance: Full EMC Membership
Management Group, Executive Board and Regional Boards
EMC budget 2017/18 - £920,200**