



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

Top items this week

15 MARCH 2024



Lincolnshire County Council votes to proceed with devolution



Just 10% of £10bn Levelling Up funding spent by councils



HKBNO Welcome Programme: Year 4 funding announced



Upcoming EMC Training & events, including regional pay briefing

LINCOLNSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL VOTES TO PROCEED WITH DEVOLUTION

Council members of Lincolnshire County Council have approved a devolution deal for the area which will see the establishment of the Greater Lincolnshire Mayoral Combined County.

The deal is set to bring increased local decision-making and funding, with an extra £24m per year for the next 30 years.

A public consultation received around 4,000 responses from the 1.1 million residents of Greater Lincolnshire.

North Lincolnshire Council also approved the deal last night and North East Lincolnshire councils are meeting today to vote.

Leader of LCC, Cllr Martin Hill, said: "All three councils see this as a great opportunity to be the masters of our own destiny and not be left behind when it comes to government investment.

"I'm really grateful to all those who took part in the consultation. There was some incredibly useful feedback that was given including innovative ideas that can be taken forward as part of the work that will now be done."

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JUST 10% OF £10BN LEVELLING UP FUNDING SPENT BY COUNCILS

In a report published today, the Public Accounts Committee were critical that the Government is unable to provide any compelling examples of what Levelling Up funding has delivered so far, warning that councils have been able to spend just a fraction of the Government's promised Levelling Up funding.

The report stated that just over 10% of the funds provided under the Levelling Up agenda were actually spent and making a difference on the ground.

The report also warned of concerns regarding transparency and waste of public resources in the funding approach.

The review considered the impact of the Towns Fund (consisting of Town Deals and the Future High Streets Fund, Levelling Up Fund and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

The full report is available here:

[READ MORE](#)

CLLR DAVID MELLEN TO STEP DOWN AS NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL LEADER

This week, Cllr David Mellen announced that he will not seek re-election as the Leader of Nottingham City Council in May 2024.

Cllr Mellen has worked closely with East Midlands Councils during his tenure as Leader of NCC, and we would like to extend our thanks to him for his continued support over that time in particularly through his role on EMC Executive Board and as Vice Chair of the Organisation.

Cllr Mellen will continue to serve as a Labour councillor for the Dales ward in the city, and we look forward to continue working with him in this role.

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ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE PENALTY NOTICES: COUNCILS TO RECEIVE GRANT FUNDING FROM DEFRA

Following the introduction of legislation to provide local authorities with the option to issue penalty notices as an alternative to prosecution for a range of animal health and welfare offences, the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has agreed with HM Treasury to support local authorities to introduce and implement these notices.

There may be some disappointment amongst the sector in regard to the level of funding.

The grant funding totals £148,601 covering the period January 2024 to March 2026.

Funding will be shared equally across all local authorities with each authority receiving £52.08 for January 2024 to March 2024, £208.34 for April 2024 to March 2025 and £208.34 for April 2025 to March 2026.

Payment will be made in each respective financial year.

HKBNO WELCOME PROGRAMME—YEAR 4 FUNDING ANNOUNCED

The Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has announced the fourth year of funding for the HKBNO Welcome Programme, supporting Hongkongers who have arrived in the UK via the Hong Kong British National (Overseas) Visa route.

This year, DLUHC have announced that Hongkongers will benefit from more support with wellbeing, mental health and employability, as such the VCSE funding worth circa £1 million will be targeted towards these two priority areas, with no funding for regional VCSE projects.

Regional Welcome Hubs, including the East Midlands HKBNO Welcome Hub, will continue to receive funding, as will funding for councils to provide English language and destitution support.

More information about year four funding:

[READ MORE](#)

More information about the East Midlands HKBNO Welcome Hub:

[READ MORE](#)

EAST MIDLANDS CHALLENGE 2024

The East Midlands Challenge returns in April and is a fantastic opportunity for aspiring leaders to gain exposure to issues outside of their normal work and giving them a taste of what senior management is really like, identifying priorities and dealing with politically sensitive issues, all while maintaining a customer focus and delivering services.

There's still time to enter into this year's Challenge taking place on **Tuesday 23 April 2024**.

The Challenge is open to teams of six from Public Sector organisations across the East Midlands. If you're considering entering this year, watch this short video by participants from last year's winning team, Newark and Sherwood District Council!

[WATCH VIDEO](#)

[READ MORE](#)

EAST MIDLANDS CHAMBER PRESENT GROWTH MANIFESTO FOR THE REGION TO GOVERNMENT

Improvements to taxation, infrastructure, skills alongside reform of the planning system are among key asks that EM Chamber took to Westminster earlier this week.

Under the proposals taxation and regulation would see reforms to make them simpler, transport would benefit from electrification of the Midland Main Line and upgrades to key road networks, while acceleration of full-fibre broadband roll-out across the East Midlands would boost digital growth.

The document also identifies the 'Big Opportunity' for the East Midlands – to develop the region as a centre for the future of energy production, storage and provision.

[READ MORE](#)

REGIONAL PAY BRIEFING

East Midlands Councils is supporting councils across the region to participate in the consultation exercise on this year's national pay negotiations

A regional pay briefing is taking place on **Tuesday 26th March** to discuss pay negotiations for 2024.

The briefing provides an opportunity for senior officers, particularly Finance and HR Directors, and lead Members to meet with the national negotiators to discuss the claims from the joint trade unions and to inform the National Employers' response.

The briefing will be a virtual meeting, from 10.00am -12.00 noon. To book a place please email Mila Pereira:

[EMAIL MILA](#)

UPCOMING EMC TRAINING

[The Role of the Civic Head](#), Thursday, 6 June 2024, 10am—3pm, North Kesteven District Council

This session will benefit Elected Members who anticipate election to the office of Mayor or Chair of Council at Annual Meetings in May 2024. Attendance by civic office support staff has also proved useful and beneficial in understanding the role and building effective working relationships.

[Vicarious Trauma Training](#), Monday, 15 April 2024, 9am—4pm, Online

To support the development of skills in the prevention and management of burnout and vicarious traumatization while providing assistance to the Refugee & Asylum Seekers (RAS) population, including Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC).

IOM UK: Iran Refugee Information Session, 16 April & 17 April, 10am—12pm, Online

[Session One: Geography, History, Current Events and Services](#)

[Session Two: Cultural Norms, Family and Social Life](#)

[ALL TRAINING & EVENTS](#)

EMC Leadership

Chair: Cllr Martin Hill OBE
Vice Chair: Cllr Sarah Russell
Vice Chair: Cllr Tricia Gilby
Conservative Group: Cllr Phil King
Labour Group: Cllr Jewel Miah
Liberal Democrat Group: Cllr David Bill MBE
Independent Group: Cllr Matthew Relf
Executive Director: Stuart Young



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