



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

Top items this week



Government to Consult on National Development Management Policies



Consultation on Ending Core Funding for Pan-Regional Partnerships



New Powers to Revitalise High Streets

22 NOVEMBER 2024



Online immigration status (eVisa) update

GOVERNMENT TO CONSULT ON NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES IN 2025

The housing minister has announced plans to consult on new national development management policies (NDMPs) next year, followed by the release of a new “slimmed down” version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) focused on plan-making.

Introduced through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act, NDMPs aim to set national policies to replace some local plan policies in areas of frequent decision making. Housing minister Matthew Pennycook stated that the consultation would clarify the scope and implementation of NDMPs. He also confirmed the government’s intention to respond to its recent consultation on NPPF changes and publish a revised framework by the end of the year, following analysis of over 10,000 responses. EMC’s response to the consultation is available here:

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ENVIRONMENTAL AUDIT COMMITTEE

Cllr Richard Wright, Leader, North Kesteven District Council joined Dr Hugh Ellis, Director of Policy, Town and Country Planning Association, at the Environmental Audit Committee earlier this week to discuss the National Planning Policy Framework reforms.

The full meeting can be watched here:

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CONSULTATION ON ENDING CORE FUNDING FOR PAN-REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

The government has launched a consultation on the potential impacts of ending core funding for Pan-Regional Partnerships (PRPs). Announced in the 30 October Budget, the consultation was confirmed by Minister for Local Government and English Devolution, Jim McMahon MP, in letters to PRP Chairs and Chief Executives. This process aims to assess the financial, equalities, and environmental impacts of the proposal and explore whether any PRP functions could be maintained or integrated elsewhere. The four-week consultation, which closes at midday on 16 December 2024, invites input from local authorities. Following the consultation, the government will notify PRPs and their accountable bodies of the outcome and final decision, with a statement also published online.

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FINANCE POLICY STATEMENT

It is understood that the Finance Policy Statement will be published w/c 25th November, and the Devolution White Paper is scheduled for w/c 2nd December (although this of course could change).

NEW POWERS TO REVITALISE HIGH STREETS

Councils will soon gain new powers to revitalise high streets and bring long-term empty shops back into use. From 2 December, High Street Rental Auctions (HSRAs) will enable local authorities to auction leases on persistently vacant properties in city, town, and village centres. This initiative aims to curb the impact of disengaged landlords by targeting properties that have been empty for over 365 days within a two-year period, offering businesses and community groups the opportunity to rent commercial spaces.

With one in seven high street shops currently vacant, the government is investing over £1 million to support the HSRA process, which is expected to create local jobs and drive trade by reinvigorating town centres.

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OVER £40M INVESTMENT IN EMCCA BUS SERVICES

East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) has been awarded over £40 million in government funding to improve bus services across Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham, and Nottinghamshire. As the Local Transport Authority, EMCCA will use the funding to keep fares affordable, safeguard local routes, and deliver more reliable services.

Plans are underway to work closely with partner councils and bus operators to develop the network and maximise the impact of the investment.

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NATIONAL RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

East Midlands Councils is proud to have supported the Local Government Association and our member authorities in preparing for the launch of the national recruitment campaign for jobs in local government, which began on Monday 4 November 2024.

To support the campaign we are pleased to have re-launched our regional jobs platform East Midlands Jobs, where authorities can advertise their roles, and residents can see opportunities available throughout the region.

For more information about the campaign, or East Midlands Jobs, please contact [Lisa Bushell](#).

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[EAST MIDLANDS JOBS](#)

ONLINE IMMIGRATION STATUS (eVISA) UPDATE

From 31 October, new visa applicants are being issued eVisas, and existing visa holders must create a UK Visa and Immigration (UKVI) account to access theirs. By 31 December, all visa holders currently using a Biometric Residence Permit (BRP), Biometric Residence Card (BRC), or passport visa vignette must transition to eVisas. Guidance, resources, and a list of organisations offering support are available at www.gov.uk/eVisa. Councils are encouraged to share this information with employers and stakeholders to support affected individuals.

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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

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