



Darren Newman  
Employment Law Update –  
to follow



2025 Sickness Absence  
Survey



EMC Learning &  
Development Programmes



National Pay Negotiations &  
Other National Update

## SICKNESS ABSENCE BENCHMARKING 2025

Each year, EMC conducts a benchmarking exercise of sickness absence levels across the region. The information is often requested by councils throughout the year to help compare sickness levels with similar organisations. The results are also discussed at the Regional Joint Council, to identify any trends at a regional level and opportunities for working jointly to support employee wellbeing and attendance.

We will be conducting this year's survey in September and so you will be hearing from us soon. We keep the survey short so that it is quick and easy to respond to in order to get good quality information for you. Last year the response rate was 90%.

The survey also requests information on your key concerns and the support that you would find most useful in addressing absence levels and supporting employee health and wellbeing. Last year, many councils referred to this benchmarking activity as being of real benefit to them. In the previous year, the survey highlighted issues relating to occupational health, and in response we arranged a free webinar with leading employment lawyers who gave information on how to get the most from occupational health providers.

For Councils that subscribe to Infinistats, the online benchmarking system, we will be sending you a shorter survey to avoid any duplication of time/resources on your part in providing information that is already available from that system.

CONTACT SAM

## PROJECTS WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES

During August EMC has supported authorities with:

- Independent coaching
- Grievance investigation
- Job evaluation of senior manager roles

Contact Sam or Lisa if you would like any support in your organisation.

CONTACT SAM

CONTACT LISA



## LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

### COLLABORATION AND MANAGING CHANGE – TWO PRIORITY SKILLS AREAS!

**Collaborative Working – Getting Ahead of the Game! – 18<sup>th</sup> September 10am – 4pm @ Pera Business Park, Melton Mowbray, LE13 0PB**

Increasingly in organisations people are working across teams, with internal and external stakeholders and on multiple projects, tasks and activities. The concept of static teams is giving way to a need for everyone to be able to collaborate within a diverse workforce and with key stakeholders.

The changing local government landscape will also require greater collaboration now and in the future and this development will help develop the capability and confidence to collaborate effectively to achieve outcomes.

This one day workshop will develop your knowledge and understanding of the enablers of collaborative working, building trust and co-operation and mobilising around common goals using collaborative behaviours. We will also explore the barriers to collaboration and increase your understanding of the difference between willingness and ability to collaborate.

For more information and to book please click this link - [Collaborative Working – getting ahead of the game!](#)

**Managing Change in an Uncertain Landscape - 25<sup>th</sup> September 10am – 1pm virtual workshop and 1<sup>st</sup> October 10am – 1pm with lunch @ Pera Business Park, Melton Mowbray**

Managing change alongside business as usual has become a fact of life for managers, yet many have never received development to support them.

This course is designed to support middle managers to more effectively manage and embed change, in particular ‘top down’ change as a result of strategic decision making, helping the effective implementation and engagement of their people with change, particularly in the current context and climate.

Exploring the challenges of delivering change alongside “business as usual” will be a key feature as well as learning approaches to change management that will help the implementation and embedding of change. Understanding what can get in the way of change and how to overcome common barriers will help you make progress coupled with an increased self-awareness of your own attitude and response to change. A key part of the course will also involve how to bring people with you through change and the importance of influencing during change, both upwards and downwards

Delivered in two parts, the first virtual workshop will focus on the underpinning knowledge needed to manage change, whilst the second face to face workshop will focus on the practical applications of managing change effectively.

For more information and to book please click this link - [Managing Change in an uncertain landscape](#)

For the full range of accredited leadership and management and coaching and mentoring programmes from supervisory to senior levels please visit our website:

[READ MORE](#)

In house course options are available – contact [lisa.butterfill@emcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:lisa.butterfill@emcouncils.gov.uk) to discuss further



## IN DEEP WITH DARREN

### EMPLOYMENT LAW UPDATE FROM DARREN NEWMAN – COMING SOON!

Darren Newman's latest article will be circulated separately this month.

However, we are pleased to let you know that we are arranging an employment law update session with Darren later this Autumn.

Darren's webinars are always popular, as they are tailored to our sector and delivered with his pragmatic approach.

The event will feature the latest developments in employment law, with a focus on implications for local government.

If there are any specific topics you would like covered, then please let us know.

Email Sam at [sam.maher@emcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:sam.maher@emcouncils.gov.uk)



## NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

## NATIONAL PAY NEGOTIATION DEVELOPMENTS

## Coroners' Pay Developments

This month, the Management Side of the NJC for Coroners issued an advisory circular to provide information in the context of the withdrawal of the Coroners' Side of the NJC. This was shared with relevant Councils by EMC. EMC has also been working with its counterparts in other regions to support a co-ordinated response to the situation.

[READ MORE](#)

## Teachers' pay 2026/27 Consultation

The 2026 cycle has already begun, with the School Teachers' Review Body now seeking evidence and views. The National Employers' Organisation for School Teachers has launched its consultation by inviting lead stakeholders to respond to its survey. The deadline for responses is noon on 24th September 2025.

## JNC for local authority Craftworkers

There is no further news on pay negotiations for Craftworkers.

## NATIONAL LIVING WAGE AND NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE 2026

The Government has set out the new remit for the Low Pay Commission (LPC) when recommending the National Living Wage (NLW) and National Minimum Wage (NMW) rates that will apply from April 2026. The LPC will consult with employers on narrowing the gap between the 18–20-year-old rate of the NMW and the NLW (currently payable to those aged 21 and over) and will put forward recommendations on moving to a single adult rate in the future. The Government says the cost of living is at the heart of the LPC’s new remit. The cost of living was first included in the LPC’s remit last year.

The LPC will recommend the new rates for April 2026 to the Government in October, which are usually accepted by the Government. We expect the 2026 rate to be confirmed by the Chancellor in her Autumn Budget statement later this year.

The latest forecast for the NLW for 2026 indicated a higher rate than previously. In May, the LPC issued its initial forecast for next April. It projected a rate of £12.65 (a 3.60 per cent increase from the current £12.21), within a range of £12.50 to £12.80. Earlier this month, the LPC issued an updated forecast that now projects a rate of £12.71 (4.10 per cent), within a range of £12.55 to £12.86. The recently agreed national pay award for Local Government Services (Green Book employees) will achieve a bottom rate of £12.85 from 1 April 2026 (for the period until the 2026 pay round is concluded).



## LGA EVENTS

### **Local government reorganisation support: Workforce transformation (virtual event)** **Wednesday 17 September 2025, 10am–11.15am**

This is a virtual event that will be an opportunity to hear how you can support the resilience of your workforce and how to lead and manage change effectively within the context of the local government reorganisation process. It will also consider issues around recruitment, retention and employee engagement. The session will feature presentations from officers and time will be allocated for questions and discussion.

[READ MORE](#)

### **AI virtual masterclass for Human Resources in partnership with CIPD (virtual event)** **Wednesday 17 September 2025, 10.30am–12pm**

In this forward-thinking and refreshingly human-centered virtual workshop, participants will explore the evolving role of AI in HR. This isn't a tech bootcamp or a sci-fi prediction panel; it's a practical, real-world session designed for HR professionals who want to stay ahead of the curve and keep empathy, ethics, and culture at the core of their work.

[READ MORE](#)

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## LATEST LGPS BULLETIN

The latest LGPS Bulletin (from July 2025) is available at the link below. This issue covers:

- the latest on the MHCLG Access and Fairness consultation which will bring changes for LGPS members, employers and administrators
- 2025 versions of HR and Payroll guides to the LGPS and automatic enrolment template letters
- updates on HM Treasury changes to inheritance tax and unused pensions
- Government plans to review the State Pension age and the UK pension system.

[READ MORE](#)