



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

Top items this week

29 AUGUST 2025



LRF Pandemic response
exercise



Councils to help more
people get online with
£9.5m Digital Fund



New Grant Funding
opportunity for ESOL in
the East Midlands



Leadership & management
development to support
transformation and LGR

LRF PANDEMIC RESPONSE EXERCISE

All of England's Local Resilience Forums (LRFs) will take part in Exercise Pegasus, a nationwide simulation designed to test how the country would respond to a future pandemic. Running from September to November, it will involve government officials, councils, and emergency services. The exercise follows findings from the Covid-19 Inquiry that local government had not been adequately involved in previous planning. Unlike Exercise Cygnus in 2016, where only eight of 42 LRFs took part, every LRF will now be engaged. Ministers have described Pegasus as one of the most comprehensive exercises of its kind, aiming to assess both local and national response plans.

LOCAL COUNCILS AND CHARITIES URGED TO HELP MORE PEOPLE GET ONLINE WITH £9.5M DIGITAL INCLUSION INNOVATION FUND

Yesterday (13 August), the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) launched the Digital Inclusion Innovation fund (£9.5m) to tackle digital exclusion and support economic growth.

The fund aims to help the 1.6m people in the UK who remain offline, and the 7.9m lacking basic digital skills. Local councils, charities and research organisations in England can apply for grants ranging from £25,000 to £500,000 to deliver initiatives such as workshops and device donation schemes. The devolved governments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland will determine their own arrangements for the distribution of funding to best support local digital inclusion initiatives. The initiative builds on the Digital Inclusion Action Plan and supports the government's Plan for Change. By empowering local organisations, the fund seeks to improve employment opportunities, accessibility to essential services and reduce the cost-of-living gap faced by digitally excluded individuals.

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PREPARING FOR THE RENTERS' RIGHTS REFORMS

Operation Jigsaw is a network helping local councils prepare for the Renters' Rights Bill. They have launched K-Hub, a new space to collaborate with your peers. Public sector employees can sign up to K-Hub for free. Through the tool, you can access updated information, guidance, and webinars on the Renters' Rights Bill, all designed for a local council audience. You can also stay informed of upcoming in-person training events and provide feedback and suggestions.

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NEW GRANT FUNDING OPPORTUNITY FOR ESOL IN THE EAST MIDLANDS

East Midlands Councils has received funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to increase and improve the provision of community-based ESOL. Training. Grants of up to £10,000 are available for VCSE groups in the region to provide English language training, build ESOL capacity, and upskill volunteer tutors.

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TENDER OPPORTUNITY FOR ESOL IN THE EAST MIDLANDS

EMC has launched a tender opportunity for local businesses to provide technical and advisory support for the delivery of ESOL programmes in the East Midlands, working with local government and voluntary and community groups in the development of proposals.

More information can be found on our website here:

[READ MORE](#)

COACHING THROUGH UNCERTAINTY AND CHANGE

Wednesday 10 September | 10:00am—12:30pm | Virtual

For the public sector, change has always been a fact of organisational life. The pace of change has however, increased significantly and is alongside a turbulent external environment. A term often used to describe this external environment is VUCA – Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous. Against this backdrop organisations are going through sector transformation, increased constraints, a need to improve efficiency and effectiveness and to innovate, whilst also ‘doing the day job’. How can coaches best support their coachees within this context, especially when, as internal coaches, they are often experiencing this same uncertainty?

[BOOK NOW](#)

MANAGING CHANGE IN AN UNCERTAIN LANDSCAPE

Thursday 25 September | 10:00am—13:00pm | Virtual

Managing change alongside business as usual has become a fact of life for managers, yet many have never received development to support them. Poorly managed change leads to lowered resilience at organisational, team and individual level, disengagement, failure to achieve outcomes and inefficiency. 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.

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EAST MIDLANDS COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK

Tuesday 23 September | 10:00am—13:30pm | Nottinghamshire County Hall

The next LGcomms East Midlands regional network meeting will take place on Tuesday 23 September 2025 at Nottinghamshire County Hall. The session, open to communications professionals across the region, will focus on creative budget management. Members are also invited to suggest additional topics or agenda items for discussion by contacting

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EMC Leadership

Chair: Cllr Sean Matthews
Vice Chair: Cllr Elly Cutkelvin
Vice Chair: Cllr Tricia Gilby
Conservative Group: Cllr Phil King
Labour Group: Cllr Jewel Miah
Independent Group: Cllr Ashley Baxter
Lib Dem Group: Cllr Gale Waller
Reform UK Group: Cllr Martin Griffiths
Executive Director: Stuart Young



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