



JANUARY 2026



Employment Law Update –
17th March 2026

East Midlands Challenge
2026

EMC Leadership
Development

National Developments &
Regional Pay Briefing

EAST MIDLANDS CHALLENGE – 29TH APRIL 2026 – REGISTER YOUR INTEREST!

Secure your Council's Team's place at this valuable learning event alongside the other councils who have already registered theirs at our early bird rate of £1850.00 + VAT. We will accept your team at this discounted rate if you email Lisa Bushell at lisa.bushell@emcouncils.gov.uk by close of play on Tuesday 3rd February 2026. At this stage, we don't need details of team members, just an email to Lisa giving us your commitment to enter a team. Any bookings after this date will be charged at £2250.00 + VAT.

The Challenge offers a fantastic opportunity for aspiring leaders to gain exposure to issues outside of their normal work, giving them a taste of what senior management is really like and testing their skills in running a Unitary council.

Teams work with stakeholders and partners to deliver a new strategy for their organisation. They'll have to identify which areas to prioritise, deal with politically sensitive issues and maintain customer focus when determining how to provide the public with the best services possible despite limited resources. Taking on the role of senior management, teams of 6 people are required to prioritise a series of challenges, gaining exposure to issues outside of their normal work and expanding their skill set in the process.

Previous participants in this event describe the benefits and positive impact it has had on their confidence as well as their personal and career development.

[READ MORE](#)



PROJECTS WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES

During January EMC has supported authorities with:

- Mediation
- Chief Executive Appraisal Facilitation
- Coaching
- Investigations relating to grievances and disciplinary issues

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

[CONTACT LISA](#)

[CONTACT SAM](#)





PROVIDING LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT AT ALL LEVELS

Supporting leadership and management development needs in the lead up to LGR is a key priority and EMC are providing a range of ILM accredited courses for people to access working alongside other councils.

For **Team Leaders/Supervisors**, we have an ILM 3 Award in Leadership and Management with two programmes to choose from – the full content, dates and delivery methods can be found on the links below along with booking information:

[ILM 3 Award in Leadership and Management Cohort 1 \(6 days\)](#) 4th February

[ILM 3 Award in Leadership and Management Cohort 2 \(6 days\)](#) -12th March

We also have a number of **Coaching & Mentoring options** on offer:

[ILM 7 Certificate in Executive Coaching and Mentoring \(9 days\)](#) – 2nd June

[ILM 5 Certificate in Coaching and Mentoring Cohort 1 \(7 days\)](#) – 17th June

All these programmes provide knowledge and skills to improve understanding and confidence, as well as collaboration opportunities, when leading others and EMC have negotiated significant discounts

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SENSE-MAKING IN AN UNCERTAIN WORLD

Given the context of LGR and connected to our previous support on leading change, we have been working with several councils to support their senior leadership teams who are leading in an unfamiliar, complex space where they will be place shaping and transforming the way work is done, whilst still ensuring service delivery.

Tailored to each specific local authority we have been exploring the mindset shifts and approaches needed to make sense of this new, complex, uncertain environment, helping leaders to engage in collective sensemaking and to recognise and explore the human impact of transformation, including impact on themselves.

Themes focused on through this development support have included sense making and sense giving; relationship building, collaboration and resilience.

To discuss these opportunities further, please contact lisa.butterfill@emcouncils.gov.uk

[CONTACT LISA](#)



IN DEEP WITH DARREN



IN DEEP WITH DARREN ARTICLE

Our employment law update article from Darren Newman will be circulated separately this month.

In the meantime, we wanted to make sure that you are aware the opportunity to hear from Darren and put forward any questions you have for him at the Employment Law Update Seminar in March that we have arranged – the details are provided below.

EMPLOYMENT LAW UPDATE – 17TH MARCH 2026

EMC's popular Employment Law Update, tailored for our sector and facilitated by Darren Newman will take place on 17th March 2026. This session will enable Councils to prepare for the provisions within the Employment Rights Act 2025 and hear about the latest developments in employment law.

Date and Timings: 17th March 2026, 10.00am-12.30pm. The event will be held virtually using MS Teams

Costs: Places will be available at a cost of £75 per delegate.

We are also offering a discount for multiple bookings – so you will be able to **BUY ONE PLACE, GET ONE HALF PRICE. Please note this offer is only available to member organisations.**

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NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

NATIONAL PAY DEVELOPMENTS

2026 Pay Negotiations

It was good to see so many colleagues who joined us on 20th January for the regional pay briefing. There was a pre-meeting with lead officers from Unison and GMB who gave a presentation on their pay claim for Green Book employees. At the main meeting, there was a comprehensive presentation from Harry Honnor, Senior Advisor (Workforce & Negotiations) from the LGA. Two Councillors who are members of the Employers' Side of the National Joint Committee also attended the briefing to hear views and comments of councils to help inform their response to the pay claims.

Just a reminder to complete and return the online pay survey that was sent directly to councils from the LGA. The deadline is next Friday 6th February 2026.

The next steps will be for the Employers Side of the NJC to meet and consider the feedback from the regional pay briefings and the survey results. Those meetings have been arranged for 24th February and 24th March 2026.

[READ MORE](#)

PATHWAYS TO PLANNING

Councils can now apply to hire a graduate planner or surveyor through the Pathways to Planning programme that is starting in September 2026.

The programme selects high achieving candidates from a pool of thousands to create interview shortlists for employers at no cost. All graduates hired through the programme receive an educational bursary to help fund their part-time study alongside work.

Local authorities with high housing delivery and local plan needs will be considered for salary bursaries when requesting a graduate planner. More information about this scheme is available through the link below, or you can email pathways.planning@local.gov.uk

[READ MORE](#)



REVIEW OF DISABILITY CONFIDENT SCHEME

Earlier this month the Government announced that it is looking to overhaul the Disability Confident scheme so that sick and disabled people will have more opportunities to move into work. The Government will be engaging closely with current Disability Confident scheme members, SMEs, and larger businesses, as well as the recently announced Independent Disability Advisory Panel to ensure that reforms are both impactful and realistic.

The information on this development has been shared with our EDI Network members by Suzanne Boulby.

See below for further information:-

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/disability-confident-scheme-overhauled-to-boost-workplace-standards-for-disabled-people>

NATIONAL RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN IS NOW LIVE

The national recruitment campaign Make a Difference, Work for Your Local Council has now been live for three weeks, promoting careers in local government and highlighting how rewarding working in the sector can be.

The campaign, funded by UK Government, runs from 5 January to 15th February 2026 and includes promotion across a range of media channels including outdoor billboards, radio, social media, podcast adverts and many more.

Information shared by the LGA earlier this week has outlined the impact of the campaign so far:

- 20,000 visitors in the first two days of the campaign to the website localcounciljobs.gov.uk to find jobs in local government – and 110,000 in the first two weeks.
- Our paid media campaign has generated over 3.5 million impressions in the first week, and is on track to exceed 70 million impressions by the end of the campaign.
- Over 200 councils have accessed the campaign toolkit so far, and it has been great to see so many councils using the materials locally.