

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

Top items this week

13 MARCH 2026



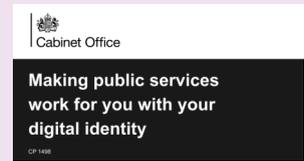
PropTech
Innovation Fund



EMC Councillor
Development
Programme



EMC Networks and
development
opportunities



Consultation launched on
Digital ID

PropTech Innovation Fund

MHCLG is encouraging councils to take part in Round 6 of the PropTech Innovation Fund. The Fund supports local planning authorities (LPAs) to test and adopt digital tools that can improve plan-making, unblock planning decisions and accelerate housing delivery. It provides direct funding for participating LPAs and connects them with innovative technology partners.

Applications for Round 6 opened on 4 March, and MHCLG is looking for up to 12 pilot projects across two challenge areas:

- Aligning evidence and policies across plan-making boundaries using scalable digital approaches
- Reducing delays in Section 106 negotiations (including viability) through digital interventions to speed up decision-making.

All project teams must include at least one local planning authority, and dedicated funding is available for LPAs that take part.

Councils are encouraged to register to attend the matchmaking event in London on 17 March, where they can learn more about the challenges and meet potential technology partners.

Applications close on 29 April.

If you have any questions, please contact: proptechinnovation@communities.gov.uk.

[READ MORE](#)

EMC Councillor Development Programme

The Role of the Civic Head

Back by popular demand, East Midlands Councils is once again delivering its Role of the Civic Head development session, taking place on 8 June 2026 at Melton Borough Council.

This practical session is designed for elected members who may be appointed as Mayor or Chair of Council at Annual Meetings in May, as well as the officers who support them.

Joint attendance by members and support staff is encouraged, with a 50% discount available on the third place booked.

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Chairing Skills for Councillors

Continuing our Councillor development programme for 2026, EMC will be hosting a virtual session on chairing skills. This session is suitable for chairs or vice chairs looking to strengthen their skills, from preparation through to structure and participation.

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EMC low-cost CPD for Planners

Yesterday, over 65 local authority Planners attended a low-cost CPD webinar on the topic of Planning for Nature. Delegates heard some interesting presentations on planning from a Natural England perspective, case studies on managing nature in public open spaces and the work of Boothby Wildland site. This webinar was part of the low-cost CPD subscription-based programme for Planning Officers. If you would like to find out more about signing up to the programme for 2026/27, please contact lisa.bushell@emcouncils.gov.uk.

EMC Scrutiny Network

On Friday 6th March over 44 councillors and officers met virtually for the East Midlands Scrutiny Network where a useful and interesting presentation and discussion took place regarding Scrutiny's role in a changing governance world, in the context of LGR and focusing specifically on Neighbourhood Governance. Leading this discussion, Ian Parry, Director of Governance Services at the CfGS, explored what is meant by neighbourhood governance, the links with overview and scrutiny, the opportunities and challenges for councils and the practical roles for members and officers. If you would like to attend and/or receive information from the quarterly scrutiny network, then please contact lisa.butterfill@emcouncils.gov.uk.

National Consultations

Consultation on Digital ID

This week, the government launched a consultation asking the public to share their views on how the new digital ID could help them access public services more quickly, easily and securely. The consultation closes on 5 May.

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Consultation seeking views on major measures to protect children on social media, gaming platforms and AI chatbots

This week, the government has launched a consultation on social media seeking views from parents, guardians, and young people in the UK to help shape the country's next steps on children's digital wellbeing. The consultation will gather insights from the public on how to keep children safe online across social media, AI chatbots and gaming platforms.

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Lincolnshire Public Sector Challenge

Colleagues across East Midlands local authorities are invited to take part in the Lincolnshire Public Sector Challenge on Saturday 13 June, a walking event for public sector staff following the Ridges and Furrows Trail from North Hykeham to Sleaford.

Participants can choose between two routes, a 26.5 mile route and a 14 mile route.

There will be refreshment and comfort breaks along the route, with facilities also available at the finish in Sleaford.

Entry costs £20 for adults and £10 for under 18s (under 18s must be accompanied by an adult). A £5 contribution from each entry will be donated to the British Heart Foundation and Cancer Research UK.

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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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