

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

Top items this week

20 MARCH 2026



Understanding the decisions that will shape our energy future



Westminster Hall: Productivity and economic growth in the region



East Midlands APPG holds AGM

EMC Councillor Development 

The Role of the Civic Head

EMC Councillor Development Programme

Have we got the Energy?

Understanding the decisions that will shape our energy future

Yesterday, more than 80 East Midlands councillors and officers came together for 'Have we got the energy?', a session focused on understanding the systems, infrastructure and decisions shaping the region's energy future.

Hosted by EMC alongside Midlands Net Zero Hub, the session brought together national and regional expertise to explore how the UK energy system and markets operate, the increasing complexity of energy distribution and grid capacity, the opportunities for community energy and neighbourhood-scale approaches, and the role of local authorities in planning, influencing and delivering change.

A clear theme throughout the day was the scale of change ahead. Energy systems are becoming more decentralised, more complex, and more closely linked to local growth, housing and infrastructure decisions. Sessions like this are essential to building shared understanding across the region, so that local leaders can make informed, confident decisions.

A huge thank you to everyone who attended the session, our presenters, panellists and exhibitors. All of the presentations from the event can be found here:

[READ MORE](#)

And the pre-briefing document can be found here:

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Westminster Hall debate: Productivity and economic growth in the East Midlands

On Tuesday, MPs from across the East Midlands and beyond came together in parliament to discuss the productivity and economic growth in the East Midlands region.

Opening the debate, James Naish MP highlighted the East Midlands' strong economic foundations, including advanced manufacturing, logistics and energy, but stressed that these strengths have not been matched by fair levels of government investment. He pointed to persistent gaps in productivity and transport funding, arguing that these are holding back the region's full potential.

Contributions from MPs across parties reinforced these concerns, with a clear consensus around the need for improved infrastructure, better alignment of skills provision with local labour markets, and greater devolution. Members highlighted the impact of underinvestment on both urban and rural communities, particularly in relation to transport connectivity and access to jobs and training, while also calling for more coordinated, place-based approaches to growth.

Responding for the Government, Miatta Fahnbulleh MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at MHCLG acknowledged historic underinvestment and reaffirmed a commitment to boosting regional growth through increased funding, devolution and closer partnership with local leaders.

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East Midlands APPG

Following the Westminster Hall debate, East Midlands MPs held the AGM of the APPG for the East Midlands.

At the meeting, James Naish MP (Rushcliffe) was re-elected as Chair, with Lord McLoughlin and Jonathan Davies MP (Mid-Derbyshire) re-elected as vice-chairs.

Baroness Verma was also elected as a vice-chair, replacing Rosie Wrighting MP (Kettering) who had to step down from the position due to parliamentary commitments.

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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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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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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