

# EMC POLICY BRIEF

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

Top items this week

22 JANUARY 2016



Resettling Syrian Refugees  
Event with  
Richard Harrington MP



HS2 News in the  
East Midlands



National Living  
Wage Update



EMC Events

## Sir David Higgins, Executive Chair of HS2 Visits the East Midlands



Sir David Higgins visited the region this week, meeting with a range of Council Leaders and LEP representatives providing an update on current HS2 developments in the East Midlands.

Sir David Higgins shared details of the next steps for HS2 over the coming months and continued to support the strong working relationships in the East Midlands and progress of the HS2 Programme Board over the last few months.

In other HS2 News from the East Midlands, the HS2 Programme Board took place last week and agreed the funding submission for East Midlands HS2 Growth Strategy for an initial £625,000 tranche of funding. The HS2 Growth Strategy will set out how the region will maximize the economic benefits of HS2 in the East Midlands. For further details of the HS2 Programme Board

visit [here](#).

This week Andrew Pritchard from EMC, Ruth Hyde and Stephan Saunders from Broxtowe Borough Council presented an update on HS2 to the East Midlands branch of the Institution of Civil Engineers.



**Resettling Syrian Refugees: delivering a multi-agency, Resettlement programme in the East Midlands** - The programme for this event will be published on Monday 25 January available from [here](#). The programme includes presentations from;

- **Richard Harrington MP**, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State jointly for the Home Office, the Department for Communities and Local Government, and the Department for International Development.
- **John Robinson, Chief Executive, Gedling Borough Council** on the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Experience of Syrian resettlement programme

To book a place at this free event please visit [here](#).

### EMC Boards Activity

**EMC General Meeting** - The EMC General meeting will take place on Friday 5 February at Nottinghamshire County Council. Those attending the meeting will have the opportunity to hear from **Lord Gary Porter, Chair of the LGA** on 'Current Challenges and Opportunities Facing Local Government'.

The agenda for this meeting also includes;

- Regional Infrastructure and Investment Priorities, with updated on HS2 and Midlands Engine and Midlands Connect
- East Midlands Housing Review
- International Migration (Asylum Dispersal and Syrian Resettlement) in the East Midlands

Councillors from across the East Midlands are invited to attend this meeting, to confirm your place please contact [Lisa.Bushell@emcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:Lisa.Bushell@emcouncils.gov.uk)

### EMC Support Work

**Facilitation Skills Workshop** - Next week EMC staff will be supporting a member authority by delivering a Facilitation Skills workshop, designed to support the authority with embedding their newly launched organisational values and behaviours. For further information about this workshop please contact [Kirsty.Lowe@emcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:Kirsty.Lowe@emcouncils.gov.uk)

**Community Leadership in the East Midlands, 2 February 2016** - This event is a great opportunity to engage with Councillors from across the East Midlands, to hear from an expert in Community Leadership and to spend an interactive day exploring how you can maximise your impact in your community. For further information and for details of how to book a place please visit [here](#).

**Making Progress on Problems, 26 Feb 2016** - East Midlands Councils is running an action planning session for Councillors, which will provide an opportunity for Councillors to experience directly how action learning works and understand what the benefits are of working with fellow Councillors using action learning to make progress on issues. For further information and for details of how to book a place please visit [here](#).

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## Economic Development, Skills & Education



**Unemployment Information – December 2015, Released 20 January 2016** - The December 2015 labour market figures have been released this week – please [here](#) for more details. The unadjusted claimant count (combining those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance and those claiming Universal Credit who are not in employment) showed a small decrease of 0.9% across the Group as a whole.

**Claimant Count Register (Seasonally Adjusted)** - The seasonally adjusted claimant count across the UK showed a small fall of 0.5% in the past month. The DWP definition of 'claimant count' is the combination of Jobseeker's Allowance claimants and Universal Credit claimants who are not in employment. The register fell by 0.3% in the West Midlands, **by 1.3% in the East Midlands** and by 1.4% in the East of England and by.

**Claimant Count Register – Districts (Unadjusted)** - The unadjusted claimant count across the Central England Group fell by 0.9% over the past month. This combines Jobseeker's Allowance claimants plus those receiving Universal Credit who are not in employment. Changes include a fall in unemployment **of 3.1% in Leicestershire & Northamptonshire**.

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## Infrastructure, Planning & Housing



### **Report urges Town Centre Investment Zones to Rejuvenate High Streets**

Better asset management of the high street could unlock much-needed investment for local authorities and help communities transform town centres, a report part-funded by the Department for Communities and Local Government has highlighted.

The report advocated the establishment of so-called Town Centre Investment Zones where the pooling of a critical mass of property assets into an investment vehicle would allow the assets to be managed better, in the process helping rejuvenate the high street.

This approach has been trialled in three areas in England, at **Melton Mowbray**, Weston-Super-Mare and Dartford. For further details visit [here](#).

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## Employers' Issues



**Employers' Circular re Temporary Pay Uplift for the National Living Wage** - As you may be aware, it is unlikely that a conclusion will be reached on national pay negotiations in time for the implementation of the National Living Wage, which sets a compulsory minimum hourly pay rate of £7.20 and will come into effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016.

In light of this, please visit [here](#) to access a Circular from National Employers that advises local authorities to begin making preparations for employees currently paid on SCPs 6, 7 and 8 to have their pay temporarily increased in accordance with the National Living Wage, which in local government will be £13,891 per annum with effect from 1 April. EMC will keep you informed of any further developments in the pay negotiations as they arise.

**Local Government Services Job Evaluation Scheme: Technical Note: Market Supplements** - The NJC recognises that financial pressures and pay restraint have impacted on the competitive position of public sector organisations as employers. Where organisations find it difficult to recruit to specific posts and / or retain employees in those posts, the payment of a market supplement to base salary may be necessary. The technical note is available from [here](#).

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## Local Government Policy



**Local Government Funding** - Seven of Leicestershire's Conservative MPs have joined the Leader at Leicestershire County Council in challenging the Government on funding for county council services.

All but one of the county's Tory MPs met local government minister Marcus Jones on 18<sup>th</sup> January to discuss the funding situation faced by Leicestershire CC, a meeting that Cllr Rushton described as "very, very positive", and described the support of the local MPs as "fantastic".

**Derby's Conservative Group Changes** - The leader of Derby's Conservative opposition group, councillor Philip Hickson, has stepped down from the role with immediate effect. It was also confirmed that he will not be defending his seat at the next city council elections in May.

Councillor Matthew Holmes, who was the group's deputy leader, will now take over as leader. He was unanimously elected by Conservative city councillors on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January.

**Stonewall - Top 100 Employers** - Leicestershire County Council has been named the most gay-friendly local authority to work in the country. Leicestershire Police was the second highest ranked force in the country. Nottinghamshire County Council, Nottingham City Council, Nottinghamshire FRA and Police were also ranked in the top 100. For further information visit [here](#).

**Northern Lincolnshire Business Connect to be launched in April 2016** - Two District Councils just outside of the East Midlands have this week launched their shared service plans this week. North and North East Lincolnshire Councils are to launch 'Northern Lincolnshire Business Connect' estimated to save more than £12m by 2026. The shared service will combine back office services such as information technology (IT), accounts, internal audit, human resources (HR), legal services, and graphic design/publications services.

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## Health & Social Care



### **District Councils' Network responds to Local Government Finance Settlement 2016/17**

England's district councils should be given the same chance as other local authorities to tackle growing health and care demands and help save hundreds of million pounds in needless NHS spend, the District Councils' Network (DCN) has urged this week.

In its [response to the provisional local government finance settlement 2016/17](#), the DCN, a cross-party network of 200 district councils, has asked the Government to widen the 2% adult social care precept to fund preventative health schemes with the potential to shave millions off health care costs. For further information visit [here](#).

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## EMC Events



**Speed and Effective Reading, 10 Feb 2016** - East Midlands Councils is holding a half day seminar on Speed and Effective Reading. For more information on this event and details of how to book please visit [here](#).

**Employment Law Update, 8 Mar 2016** - EMC are pleased to confirm that Darren Newman will be returning again to deliver an Employment Law Update. This event is aimed at senior HR and Legal professionals in the public sector and Elected Members with Portfolio responsibility for HR. The discounted rate of £99 available until the end of January. For more information and for details of how to book a place visit [here](#)

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## EMC Leadership

Chair: Cllr Martin Hill OBE  
Vice Chair: Cllr Jon Collins  
Vice Chair: Cllr Neil Clarke MBE  
Conservative Group: Cllr Chris Millar  
Labour Group: Cllr Robert Parker  
Lib Dem Group: Cllr David Bill MBE  
Independent Group: Cllr Alan Walters  
  
Executive Director: Stuart Young

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