

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

26 FEBRUARY 2016



Midlands Engine Update



Councillor Commission
De Montfort University



Exit Pay Cap Update



EMC Events



Councillor Commission Led by De Montfort University, Leicester Review of the Role and Work of Councillors

The Local Government Research Unit, part of De Montfort University has launched a Councillor Commission to conduct an independent review of the role and work of the councillor and of the contribution made by councillors to the governance of their communities and the country. The Commission's aim is to provide policy-makers, that take decisions about the structure, function, role and purpose of local government and democracy, with a better understanding of the office of councillor and of the contribution councillors make to their communities. Its aim is also to further public and policy debate and understanding about local government and local democracy.

The terms of Reference of the Commission are: To explore and consider the roles, functions, tasks, responsibilities and powers of the councillor so as to assess their relevance and effectiveness in enabling councillors to sustain a viable system of local democracy, local leadership and local government. It will examine the daily experiences of the councillor in their office as a politician and representative, to understand how far and to what effect councillors can shape their communities and the actions, activities and policies of private and public organisations operating within and beyond the boundaries of the council. The commission will examine the quality of support councillors receive from their councils in conducting their activities and examine ways of strengthening and enhancing the role and status of the office of councillor.

East Midlands Councils is supporting this Commission through the provision of a regional workshop for Councillors to attend on 16 March 2016. The session will be led by Professor Colin Copus, De Montfort University Leicester and will provide Councillors with an opportunity to engage with the Councillor Commission.

For further information about this event visit [here](#).



EMC News

HS2 Programme Board - The HS2 Programme Board met this week and discussed the East Midlands HS2 Growth Strategy and the HS2 Economic Opportunities Study Brief. The meeting included a presentation on HS2 Skills & Supply Chain opportunities, including working with schools to inspire the next generation, and a presentation on Bus Connectivity to the Hub Station. To view the papers visit [here](#). The next meeting of the Board will take place on 12 April 2016.

BBCs East Midlands Today will be covering HS2 on tonight's programme (Friday 25 February).

East Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership Board Meeting - This week members of the East Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership Board met and discussed the context of the Immigration Bill in which discussion on progress on widening asylum dispersal are taking place and the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement programme. For further information about the Board and the work of the wider partnership visit [here](#).

East Midlands Independent Group Meeting - Staff from the East Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership attended the East Midlands Independent Group meeting this week. Topics discussed included asylum dispersal, Syrian refugees and the Immigration Bill and how the EMSMP is working with the LGA to lobby Government on migration issues.

East Midlands APPG - Informed by EMC's work on the 5 agreed infrastructure priorities and Midlands Connect submission to Treasury in advance of the March 2016 Chancellor's Budget announcement, the East Midlands APPG will meet in Westminster on 2 March to consider their approach for lobbying on behalf of the region's strategic infrastructure priorities.

Additional work will be confirmed next week but will include the region's share of wider public investment, housing needs in the region and whether the East Midlands gets its fair share of National Lottery funding for good causes.

Improvement and Transformation Board - EMCs Improvement and Transformation Board will meet on 2 March, the Board will discuss the two reviews undertaken by EMC and colleagues, the Housing Review and the Health review.

Design for Life! Are we making places and creating legacies? - EMCs latest CPD event for Planners took place on 25 February, with 84 delegates taking part in the event from across the East Midlands. The next event in the programme will take place on 28 April on Landscape Planning. For further information visit [here](#).

EMC Support

Chief Executive Appraisal - Next week EMC staff will be working with an authority on their Chief Executive Appraisal. For more information on how EMC can support authorities with Chief Executive appraisals please contact Sam Maher, Sam.Maher@emcouncils.gov.uk

Councillor Development Charter Assessment - Next week EMC will be working with an authority on their Councillor Development Charter re-assessment. The re-assessment process involves a team of experts analysing evidence and information provided by the authority against the Councillor Development Charter requirements, the assessment day next week will see the team interview and discuss the evidence with Councillors and Officers within the authority. 14 authorities have achieved the Councillor Development Charter and 19 have signed up to it. For more information about the Charter or supporting Member learning and development visit [here](#).

Councillor Events

Future Councillors, Making change happen in a complex world, 16 March 2016, 10:30, Blaby District Council

The final event in the 2015/16 Regional Programme of Policy Events for Councillors provides Councillors in the East Midlands with a two great sessions in one day. Manny Gatt, Shared Service Architects will explore the role of the Councillor in the current political context of devolution and the collaboration agenda. The session will explore the collaboration spectrum and how authorities are working together. For further information visit [here](#).

East Midlands Scrutiny Network - The next Scrutiny Network will take place on 18 March 2016 at Corby Borough Council. Chris Heaton-Harris MP will be the guest speaker at this meeting and will discuss with delegates his experiences of being a past member of the Public Accounts Committee and European Scrutiny Committee.

Employers' Issues



EMC HR Bulletin, February Edition - EMC has published its February HR Bulletin. Employment Law Expert Darren Newman's article this edition focuses the risks of age discrimination when making decisions about redundancies/early retirements. Available from [here](#).

Negotiations for Local Government Pay - In the latest developments on national negotiations for local government pay for 2016, UNISON has issued a [newsletter](#) to its branches to inform them that the Employers' pay offer for "Green Book" employees has been rejected by 64% to 36%. In

response, the Employers have issued the following statement:-

"The National Employers are disappointed that UNISON has today announced that its members have rejected the final pay offer. However, we shall await the results of GMB's and Unite's pay consultations, which are due in the next few weeks, before commenting further"

Apprenticeship Levy and Targets - EMC will be providing an opportunity for authorities to actively participate in consultation on the Government's proposals for an apprenticeship levy and targets. Officers who would like to be involved should contact Sam Maher at sam.maher@emcouncils.gov.uk

Exit Payment Cap - On 23 February at the House of Commons committee stage for the Enterprise Bill, the Government confirmed that the £95k [exit payment cap](#) for public sector workers will not come into effect until 1st October 2016 at the earliest. EMC recently circulated an update on developments with the proposed exit pay cap as it goes through the parliamentary process. A further update on this and other key legal developments will be provided at EMC's [employment law event on 8th March 2016](#). Further information is available from [here](#).

Infrastructure, Planning & Housing



East Midlands RTPI Awards - DCLG Chief Planner Steve Quartermain CBE was the guest speaker at last night's East Midlands Royal Town Planning Institute Awards, co-sponsored by EMC. Around a hundred planners from across the East Midlands gathered at the Nottingham Contemporary to celebrate planning excellence in both the public and private sectors. The main winners were:

- **Plan of the Year:** Northamptonshire Community Flood Resilience Project
- **Development Scheme of the Year:** Richard III Visitor Centre, Leicester City Council
- **Consultancy of the Year:** Fisher German
- **Local Planning Authority Team of the Year:** Central Lincolnshire Local Plans Team
- **Young Planner of the Year:** Charlotte Robinson, Central Lincolnshire Local Plan Team
- **Chairman's Award for Planning Excellence:** East Midlands Young Planners Network

Infrastructure, Planning & Housing

Strategy examines future of rail services - An ambitious 25-year strategy has been drawn up to shape the future of rail services for Leicester and Leicestershire. A new report has been jointly drawn up by Leicester City Council, Leicestershire County Council and the Leicester and Leicestershire Economic Partnership (LLEP), setting out how changes and improvements to rail services and routes would help boost the area's economy. To read the press release visit [here](#).

PAS round table discussions with DCLG - PAS will be hosting two round table events in March for authorities to discuss, with DCLG, some of the planning reforms: starter homes, alternative providers and s106s (affording housing restriction and dispute resolution). The sessions are intended to be practical and informative, helping officials at DCLG understand sector concerns and some of the practicalities around implementing the measures, and for you to understand the proposals. To sign up to the two events (7 March in Birmingham and 8 March in Leeds, one per council please), email pas@local.gov.uk.

Local Government News



Local Government Reorganisation - There's debate in Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire and Northamptonshire given the interest of districts' in reorganisation - with South Northamptonshire DC reported to be exploring the potential of forming a unitary with Cherwell DC.

Employment Rate - The Department for Work and Pensions has published its State of the Group Report for Central England. This report provides data on Employment, Unemployment and Universal Credit. At a regional level, employment rates for the period October to December 2015 are detailed below, further information can be found from [here](#):

- **West Midlands** 71.4% (down 0.1%pts from previous quarter)
 - **East Midlands** 74.3% (down 0.6%pts from previous quarter)
 - **East of England** 78.0% (up 0.5%pts from previous quarter).
-

Midlands Engine



Midlands Engine Update - Work to deliver greater regional economic growth and productivity improvement continues. To develop a strong Midlands Engine brand, recent work has focused on creating the right arrangements to best reflect regional diversity and strength, and take forward schemes in the Midlands Engine [Prospectus](#). This document contains the key proposals to help Midlands Engine pool together and drive forward the region's economy.

Midlands Engine Steering Group - The 23 February Senior Steering Group meeting discussed principles of transparency, balance and commitment, to establish effective governance arrangements. It also updated on steps to develop more detailed plans and appoint a Chair for the Strategic Leadership Group. Themes include Economic planning, Promotion, Midlands Connect, Innovation, Finance for Business and Skills.

EMC Events



Planning Masterclass: Preparing for EIPs into Local Plans, 14 Mar 2016 - EMC is holding a very practical one day Planning Masterclass on 14 March 2016 at our offices in Melton Mowbray to help local authority planning officers prepare for and perform well at EIPs into local plans. For further information please visit [here](#).

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children - Age Assessment Training, 22 Mar 2016 - This practical event will cover the legislative background to asylum claims; looks at the relevant guidelines applicable; look at the Merton and other relevant decisions, and issues involved in preparation for the assessment and then the assessment itself. For further information and to book a place please visit [here](#).

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

East Midlands Councils

First Floor Offices, South Annexe
Pera Business Park
Nottingham Road
Melton Mowbray
Leicestershire
LE13 0PB



Click on our [Twitter](#) & [YouTube](#) accounts for further information.