

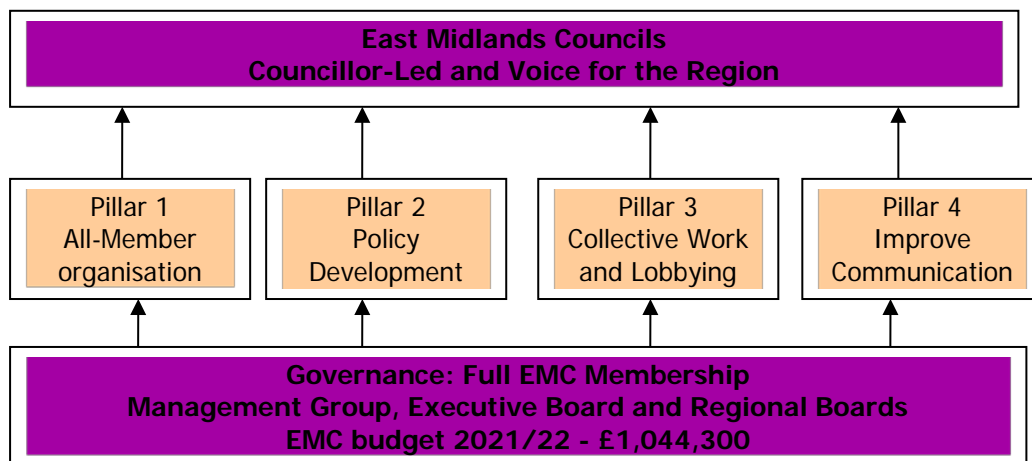
EMC Business Plan 2021/22

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Executive Board are invited to consider and agree a draft business plan for 2021/22 that will include a statement of EMC's objectives and proposed activity over the next 12 months. As a membership body, the priorities of EMC should be developed and agreed by member councils, and clearly presented for review, not just in order to promote an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of EMC, but also as a measure against which our performance and value as an organisation should be judged.
- 1.2 Against this business plan, EMC must be flexible and respond to the changing priorities and challenges faced by the sector, not least the management of the Covid pandemic. Therefore, the activities within any business plan may change if Members require it to. However, within this context, the business plan should reflect issues highlighted through initial consultation with our membership and so provide the basis for work in the coming year.

2. Focus of Business Plan

- 2.1 The focus for the Business Plan has been informed by EMC colleagues. It is suggested to continue by the agreed '4 pillar' approach unanimously agreed by Members, as shown by diagram below and summary attached as Appendix 8(b):
- All-Member Organisation.
 - Policy Development.
 - Collective Work and Lobbying.
 - Improve Communication.



2.2 The 4 pillar approach will continue to provide the framework for the proposed programme of work. While some issues inevitably relate to more than one pillar of work, this approach does provide clarity on the focus of organisational activity against the priorities identified by the independent review and unanimously agreed by Members.

a) Pillar One

2.3 EMC has adopted an ‘all-member’ approach and secured greater member involvement – however, there remains some way to go before a significant number of the 2000 councillors in this region regularly engage. The policy brief and all-member events help in this regard as it enables EMC to engage more widely than solely on the limited number of councillors who comprise the actual membership of East Midlands Councils.

2.4 For 2021/22, EMC should continue to offer further opportunities for councillors to engage and influence the work of EMC, including policy and skills development, and full EMC meetings.

2.5 An ‘all-member’ organisation not only relates to members/councillors but relates also to council membership, and so this area of activity should, importantly, also include officer development programmes and wider engagement work. Our officer development programme, building up the successes of the environmental health and planning CPD, and the programme of Covid related workshop events, will further develop our officer networks that include HR and scrutiny. This will be initially through the use of ‘virtual’ events moving to a more blended approach with face-to-face events when appropriate to do so.

2.6 This should include the delivery of a comprehensive member and officer development programme including 'all-member' events on issues of significant importance to councils that may cover:

- Covid, Contain, Test and Trace and Vaccination Programme.
- Devolution and structural reform
- Asylum and Refugee Resettlement
- Local Government as Employers, e.g. pay, rewards & apprenticeships.
- HS2, Connectivity and delivery of the Growth Strategy
- Midlands Engine and public investment into the East Midlands
- Midlands Connect, strategic transport infrastructure priorities

b) Pillar Two

2.7 A focus on policy development, with the membership providing the mandate for action (based upon an annual work programme). In discussions with Members, the following issues have been highlighted for policy development work (with its links to collective work and lobbying):

- HS2, Development Corporation and wider connectivity.
- Management role in relation to East Midlands Rail franchise.
- Regional Employers – including supporting councils to respond to the workforce implications of Covid, maximising opportunities from the Kickstart scheme, sector pay and rewards, wellbeing and resilience, recruitment and retention within planning, building control and social care, managing change and introducing new ways of working, including digitalisation and commercialisation.
- Lead member networks for children, adult social care, and health & wellbeing boards.
- Asylum and refugee resettlement – specifically asylum dispersal, Post-2020 Resettlement Scheme, VCRS, UASC resettlement programmes and ESOL.

c) Pillar 3

2.8 More effective collective work and lobbying. The identification of practical solutions and policy responses should link collective work of member councils, specifically in conjunction with the work of the All-Party Parliamentary Group of MPs (East Midlands) and LEPS.

2.9 The core elements of this pillar of work are proposed to include:

- HS2 Phase Two (Eastern Leg) and delivery of HS2 Growth Strategy.

- East Midlands Rail Franchise management agreement with DfT.
- Midlands Engine Development Corporation
- Support in the delivery of Midlands Engine vision and strategy.
- Midlands Connect.
- A focus on the delivery of the 6 agreed regional strategic infrastructure schemes, with the development of successor programmes.
- Asylum and refugee resettlement programmes.
- Roll out of Kickstart employment support scheme to improve youth employment opportunities and wider schemes to address skills shortage/recruitment and retention pressures.
- Responses to consultation on employment law.

d) Pillar 4

2.10 The objective remains to improve communication with the membership and outside partners to better promote the identity and profile of the region alongside the value of the organisation. In particular, there is an opportunity to:

- Further support the platform for councillors' leadership, either through meetings of EMC or focused summits, the promotion of good practice and encouraging the better use of online forum, social media and the wider use of EMC website. Further develop links with locally based Government Departments and partner organisations, e.g. BEIS, MHCLG, DHSC & PHE, Development Corporation, Midlands Engine/Connect and LEPs.
- Promote a more effective working relationship with MPs.

3. Recommendation

3.1 Members of the Management Group are invited to inform the development of the draft EMC business plan for subsequent consideration and endorsement by the Executive Board.

Cllr Martin Hill OBE
Chairman

Stuart Young
Executive Director

