

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

Top items this week

17 MAY 2019



HS2 Reports



Northamptonshire Reorganisation



Midlands Engine £6.8 million funding to support employee mental health



EMC Events for Councillors and Officers

Government makes unitary and children's trust announcement

Two new unitary councils will be established in Northamptonshire on 1 April 2021 (Vesting Day), the Government has confirmed.

The North Northamptonshire unitary will cover Corby, East Northants, Kettering and Wellingborough and the West Northamptonshire unitary will cover Daventry, Northampton and South Northamptonshire. The existing district and borough councils and Northamptonshire County Council will all be abolished.

Parliamentary Orders will follow later this year and there will be elections to the Shadow Authorities in May 2020. Shadow Executives for the two unitaries will be selected from those elected and will determine the structure, budget and service delivery models for the new councils.

In a joint comment, the council leaders of Corby Borough Council (Tom Beattie), Daventry District Council (Chris Millar), East Northamptonshire Council (Steven North), Kettering Borough Council (Russell Roberts), Northampton Borough Council (Jonathan Nunn), Northamptonshire County Council (Matt Golby), South Northamptonshire Council (Cllr Ian McCord) and Borough Council of Wellingborough (Martin Griffiths), said:

“We have been working hard towards an anticipated 2020 Vesting Day but that was always going to be a tight timetable to meet if we were going to transform services as well as ensuring that they were safe and legal on that date.

“We therefore welcome the announcement that Vesting Day will be 1st April 2021. That gives us more time to plan carefully and confidently for the future to ensure that we create two sustainable unitary councils that, while being very different in nature, will be exemplars of how to provide excellent services for our residents.”

Implementation of the proposal is subject to the Secretary of State for Education issuing a statutory direction requiring the establishment of a Children’s Trust (a single trust covering both unitaries) and for Parliamentary approval of the necessary secondary legislation.

The Secretary of State has also decided to make one modification to the councils’ proposal, this is to extend the period for fully implementing the new arrangements so that the new councils are operational from 1 April 2021 [consultation details [here](#)].

Government Press Release [here](#).

Northamptonshire children's services: commissioner's report - [here](#).



East Midlands Councils

EMC News

EMC Political Nominations

- East Midlands Councils seeks nominations and expressions of interest once a year in May (after the elections) for the following: EMC - These 46 places are

appointed by ‘one place per authority’ which is usually the Leader of the Council unless otherwise specified. In addition to this there are an additional 46 added places that are allocated on the basis of the political balance of the region (not authority) and members are invited to express an interest in these places. Further information can be found [here](#). The deadline for expressions of interest is **7 June**. All expressions of interest will be passed to the relevant EMC Political Group Leaders. For more information or questions please contact Lisa.Hopkins@emcouncils.

Political Balance for the East Midlands -

Following the results of the local elections on 2 May the political balance for the East Midlands has been calculated.

	All authorities
Political balance	
CON	48.80%
LAB	34.10%
LIB DEM	7.40%
OTHER	9.70%
TOTAL	100.00%

EMC Boards Activity

Migration Board - 4 June 2019

Executive Board - 21 June 2019

Transport for the East Midlands - 5 June 2019

Annual General Meeting - 12 July 2019

East Midlands Employers' Board - 11 June 2019

EMC Councillor Events

Chairing and effective meetings, 18 Jun 2019 - EMC working in partnership with Newark and Sherwood District Council to offer 2 Chairing skills workshops on 18 June 2019. The workshop is suitable for new and continuing chairs and is interactive, drawing on people's experience and insights from the tutor to lead into group work. It covers formal roles such as chairing full council or a planning committee, as well as less formal approaches to chairing for scrutiny activity. 18 Jun 2019 14:00 - details [here](#). 18 Jun 2019 18:00 - details [here](#).

Infrastructure, Planning & Housing



HS2 Reports – Like Buses? - You wait for ages, then 2 reports come along in one week – one from the Taxpayers Alliance and one from the House of Lords Economic Affairs Committee.

The Taxpayers Alliance Report is available [here](#). The House of Lords Committee Report is available [here](#) and considers the business case for HS2, following up on its earlier report 'The Economics of High Speed 2'.

Scrutiny and accountability should be welcomed – but many are left wondering how the report misses out the importance of the Midlands, the transformative potential of improved connectivity and that it's not about getting to London(!) but importantly its capacity and connectivity between the cities and towns of the Midlands and the North. In the East Midlands, EMC colleagues have been working with partners in order to put in place arrangements for maximising the benefits of HS2, with its Toton hub station [details [here](#)] and Chesterfield and Staveley [available [here](#)].

HS2 needs rethinking, says Lords Committee - The Economic Affairs Committee publishes its report Rethinking High Speed 2. The report considers the business case for High Speed 2, following up on the Committee's 2015 report The Economics of High Speed 2. The report is available from [here](#).

In the East Midlands EMC colleague have been working with partners on how the East Midlands are planning to make the most of HS2 [[here](#)] Chesterfield [[here](#)]

Bulletin from the government's neighbourhood planning team about the latest news and policy developments - This bulletin from the Development Plans team at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government provides an update on the latest neighbourhood planning news and policy developments [details [here](#)].

Aggregate Performance Ratings of LEPs following the 2018-19 APR process - In order to provide the public more information around the performance of LEPs, this year the Government has decided to publish performance ratings for LEPs by each category, rather than providing an overall aggregate performance rating. The performance ratings resulting from the 2018-19 process are included in the table below. These will be published on GOV.UK in due course. These are disclosed in a letter from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government permanent secretary Melanie Dawes to Meg Hillier (Lab), chair of the Public Accounts Committee, published this week. The letter is available from [here](#). The table of performance ratings;

Midlands Engine



Midlands Engine award £6.8 million funding to support employee mental health and increased productivity - Midlands Engine are delighted to announce during Mental Health week its intention to award £6.8 million in funding to a partnership of Midlands organisations for a three-year programme of work to address the impact mental health in the workplace has on productivity.

As part of the Midlands Engine strategy, a Midlands Skills Challenge was set up to discover ways to close the skills gap between the Midlands and the rest of the country. As part of the Skills Challenge, the new Mental Health and Productivity pilot will find innovative ways to reduce levels of sickness absence and the number of people falling out of work due to mental health conditions.

The funding, which has come via central government, was awarded after a competitive tender process to a partnership will be led by Coventry University and supported by the University of Warwick and the West Midlands Combined Authority [details [here](#)].

Health & Social Care

New funding for rough sleepers living with mental illness and substance misuse - The Health and Social Care Secretary has announced that £1.9 million will be given to councils by Public Health England to help improve the health of rough sleepers. The funding will be awarded to projects that improve access to health services and continuity of care for people with mental ill-health and substance misuse problems who are sleeping rough or at risk of returning to rough sleeping. For more information visit [here](#).

Local Government News



Government unveils new support for survivors of domestic abuse - Thousands of survivors fleeing abusive and violent relationships will receive greater protection thanks to a new package of support, confirmed by Prime Minister, Theresa May.

For the first time ever, councils across the country will be legally required to provide vital life-saving support in secure accommodation for survivors of domestic abuse and their children – ensuring need in their local area is met.

Domestic abuse is a devastating crime which shatters the lives of over 2 million survivors and their families every year. While many local authorities are already providing tailored support to those fleeing violent relationships, more needs to be done to end the variation across the country in support and ensure a consistent approach across the country so all families are able to recover and overcome their experiences.

Local authorities will also be required to work together with neighbouring councils to ensure domestic abuse services reflects the needs of local people – including targeted, specialist support for BAME, LGBT and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller survivors [details [here](#)].

Support for victims of domestic abuse in safe accommodation - Consultation on the future delivery of support to victims and their children in accommodation-based domestic abuse services in England. This consultation closes at 11:45pm on 2 August 2019 [consultation details [here](#)].

LGA Highlighting Political Leadership Update – May 2019, Leadership Academy - The Leadership Academy is the LGA's flagship development programme for councillors in leadership positions. To book or for more information on the Highlighting Political Leadership development programmes /events mentioned here contact grace.collins@local.gov.uk

Local authorities must maintain governance, audit and assurance, according to Public Accounts Committee -

According to their report published this week "Government has not done enough to ensure that, at a time when local authority budgets are under extreme pressure, governance systems are improved.

Local authority governance is critically important in this era of financial pressure and rapid change. Local governance arrangements are being stretched and tested as local authorities take on more risks and look for innovative ways to deal with funding pressures and growing demand for services. As we reported in February 2019, many councils are overspending on social care and reducing spending on other key services. They are also, for example, pursuing shared services, expanding outsourcing and taking on commercial activities, at the same time as making a significant reduction in the resources available to support corporate activities like governance. Council spending power fell by 29% in real terms between 2010-11 and 2017-18". For full details visit [here](#).

LGA Shared Services Map 2019, Submission deadline extended to 24 May - Every year the Local Government Association produces an interactive map of shared services providing a compendium of council shared service examples across England. The 2018 map can be found at <http://www.local.gov.uk/shared-services-map>. Building on this success, the LGA wants to continue to evidence how local government is leading the public sector in efficiency and innovation through sharing services and collaborative working and reinforce councils' reputation as the most efficient part of the public sector.

If you wish to submit [data for a new collaboration/partnership/shared service](#), you can complete the online questionnaire at [Survey Monkey](#) by [clicking here](#). We have now extended the submission deadline to **24 May**.

EMC Events

LEAN Practitioner Training, 4 Jul 2019 - LEAN Practitioner Training is a two-day module to develop your understanding of how using a variety of LEAN thinking and improvement tools can achieve improved services and outcomes [\[here\]](#).

Supervision using Interpersonal Process Recall, 25 Sep 2019 - EMC is offering Coaches across the East Midlands the opportunity take part in Coaching Supervision. For more information visit [here](#).

EMC Leadership

Chair: Cllr Martin Hill OBE
Vice Chair: Cllr Jon Collins
Vice Chair: Cllr Chris Millar
Conservative Group: Cllr Roger Blaney
Labour Group: Cllr Anne Western CBE
Lib Dem Group: Cllr David Bill MBE
Independent Group: to be confirmed

Executive Director: Stuart Young

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