

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

## Top items this week

18 JANUARY 2019



East Midlands Councillor Development Network



East Midlands LA Challenge, 21 March 2019



£70 million Homes England funding brings thousands of new homes to Northants



EMC Events for Councillors and Officers

## East Midlands LA Challenge, 21 March 2019

On 21 March 2019 East Midlands Councils will once again bring the Local Authority Challenge to the East Midlands. In 2017 South Kesteven District Council became the Local Authority Challenge Winner for the East Midlands, winning the coveted prize for the second year running.

16 teams have already registered to take part in the 2019 EM LA Challenge, the deadline for team registrations is 7 February.

The challenge is open to teams of six people. Delegates will spend the day as the management team of a fictional local authority, encountering many of the tasks that a real corporate team would deal with. They will have to work as a team, with neighbouring councils and with partner organisations to deliver a new strategy for the council.

This year the Challenge will be held at Derby Arena the home of the Derby Velodrome.

The deadline for team registrations is **7 February 2019**.

For more information on the Local Authority Challenge, or to provisionally book a team contact Kirsty Lowe, at [kirsty.lowe@emcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:kirsty.lowe@emcouncils.gov.uk) or call 01664 502 637.



## East Midlands Councils EMC News

**East Midlands Councillor Development network** - The East Midlands Councillor Development network will meet next on 31 January, the focus of this meeting will be Induction programmes for Councillors post local authority elections on 2 May 2019. In addition, network members will hear from colleagues at the East Midlands Special Operations Unit on their offer of Cyber Awareness Training for Councillors. This network is open to Councillors and Officers, for more information contact [kirsty.lowe@emcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:kirsty.lowe@emcouncils.gov.uk)

**East Midlands IT Security network** - The next meeting of the East Midlands IT Security Network meeting (known as the EMGWARP) will take place on 30 January at Nottinghamshire County Council. This network meeting will include a presentations from the National Cyber Security Centre and the LGA on the recent Cyber Resilience Stocktake.

For more information on this network contact [kirsty.lowe@emcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:kirsty.lowe@emcouncils.gov.uk)

### EMC Boards Activity

**EMC General Meeting** - the EMC General meeting will take place on 1 February 2019 at Nottinghamshire County Council. The agenda will be available in due course, all councillors are welcome to attend.

### EMC Support Activity

**Assessment Centre Support** - This week EMC staff have supported an authority with their recruitment activity, providing support to the authority through the provision of an assessment centre. For more information on Assessment Centre support contact [Sam.Maher@emcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:Sam.Maher@emcouncils.gov.uk)

### EMC Councillor Events

**Writing Press Releases, 26 Feb 2019** - EMC is holding a full day workshop for Councillors and Officers on Writing Press Releases. Whether you're an officer or a councillor, a well written news release can get you in the editorial media for free. But how you actually write that news release can make the difference between success and failure. For more information on this workshop visit [here](#).

## Employers' Issues

**Government Launch New Apprenticeships Campaign** - the Department for Education has launched a new apprenticeships campaign "Fire It Up". A toolkit has been developed to enable the promotion of the Apprenticeship campaign [[here](#)]. In addition, a full campaign pack is available on the DfE partnership website [here](#). A free service for promoting apprenticeship vacancies available [www.findanapprenticeship.service.gov.uk](http://www.findanapprenticeship.service.gov.uk), this site receives over half a million visitors per month.

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## Infrastructure, Planning & Housing



### **£70 million Homes England funding brings thousands of new homes to Northamptonshire -**

Investment will help create 5,500 homes in Kettering and 3,000 in the initial phase of building out a site in Wellingborough. The Developments will generate up to 3,000 jobs. Around 8,500 new houses will be built in Northamptonshire following a funding injection from Homes England, the government's housing delivery agency.

The developments in Kettering and Wellingborough have been made possible with a £70 million loan from Homes England.

The schemes have a projected combined value of £2.5 billion over their lifetime, which is estimated to be 20 years. The agency has agreed the loan as part of its £4.5 billion Home Building Fund, which provides development and infrastructure finance to home builders. The investment will be used to create roads, utilities and other works to enable the delivery of homes at Kettering and at phase one of the site at Wellingborough [details [here](#)].

**Housing Minister confirms funding for councils to crack down on rogue landlords** - More than 50 councils across the country will share nearly £2.4 million of extra funding to crack down on rogue landlords, Housing Minister Heather Wheeler has announced this week.

The new funding will be used to support a range of projects that councils have said will help them to ramp up action against criminal landlords – for example, to build relationships with external organisations such as the emergency services, legal services and local housing advocates.

Councils may also decide to support tenants to take action against poor standards through rent repayment orders, or develop digital solutions, helping officers to report back and make decisions quicker.

Councils that receive funding will be encouraged to share best practice and examples of innovative approaches, to help improve enforcement in other areas. For more information visit [here](#).

**Nottingham City Council** - An innovative data modelling tool to target rogue landlords in Nottingham more effectively has won financial backing from the Government.

The new system, which received £43,821 from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, aims to make the work to tackle rogue landlords more efficient than the current approach, which is time-consuming and labour-intensive. The online tool will help prioritise high-risk properties for enforcement action by using multiple layers of data from council departments and partner organisations such as Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue and Nottinghamshire Police. This new approach is being delivered in partnership with the University of Nottingham [details [here](#)].

**LGA work into Innovation in council housebuilding, research findings into council housebuilding** – case studies and learning points from action on the ground. The information includes a case study from North Kesteven in the East Midlands. For more information visit [here](#).

**People eligible for Blue Badges can apply via a new online service** - The new service will mean applicants can complete the entire process without the time-consuming task of sending their supporting documents in the post, allowing people to upload documents instead, including proof of identity, and photographs [details [here](#)].

**Planning guidance: letters to chief planning officers** - Guidance on various aspects of the planning system, given in letters to chief planning officers of local planning authorities. The department regularly writes to chief planning officers of local planning authorities in England, providing guidance about various aspects of the planning system [available [here](#)].

**Moving on: the costs of high staff turnover in the civil service** - The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) lost almost a quarter of its staff last year, a report by a think-tank has found. [Moving on: the costs of high staff turnover in the civil service](#), by the Institute for Government, examines the levels of staff turnover in UK government departments, and the impact this has on the functioning of government.

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## Environment

**Consultation explores opportunities for flood and coastal erosion management at a local level** - Government is beginning a conversation on increasing local funding for flood and coastal erosion management and is keen to hear ideas, as outlined in a government consultation [details [here](#)].

**Government has launched a new strategy to clean up our air and save lives** - the strategy is available from [here](#). To inform development of this new target, the government will publish evidence early this year on what action would be needed to meet WHO guidelines.

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## Asylum, Refugee Resettlement and Modern Slavery

**Home Office announces repayment scheme for victims of modern slavery** - The government has announced a [repayment scheme for potential victims of modern slavery](#) who received asylum support in England and Wales between 1 March and 8 November 2018. This comes after a High Court ruling on 8 November found those affected had lost out on support. Following the ruling, the Home Office immediately reinstated a top up payment to this group and has put in place a process for contacting all affected individuals who are entitled to a back-payment [details [here](#)].

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## Local Government News and wider



**Corby agree official response to SoS's unitary consultation** - Councillors at Corby Borough Council have agreed a response to the Secretary of State's consultation on unitary proposals for Northamptonshire at the Full Council meeting this week.

After consultation with residents and businesses in Corby, the Borough Council decided back in August 2018 not to sign up to the proposals of unitary councils to be created which was submitted to the Secretary of State by the seven other Northamptonshire local authorities.

The response to the consultation reiterates the Council's position that it continues to want to remain as distinct principal local authority, and it does not support the submission made by the other seven principal authorities in the county.

The Leader of Corby Borough Council, Cllr Tom Beattie, said: *'We have always been clear that we do not support the unitary proposals, we believe that there are benefits from current and future joint working arrangements that can be achieved without Unitarisation.*

*'That being said if this is what is decided by the Secretary of State we will of course continue to work with the other Northamptonshire local authorities to ensure that our residents get the best possible outcome and services that they deserve. We do believe, however, that in order to achieve a successful reorganisation of this scale that the proposed vesting day of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 is extended and this is proposed within our response and proposed 'Evolutionary Model'.* To read the press release visit [here](#).

**Third meeting of Northamptonshire County Council improvement board** - The meeting focused on two critically important challenges for the county council: the ongoing work to stabilise and strengthen its financial position; and the need to address areas of poor performance within children's services highlighted by the recent OFSTED inspection. The Board also discussed the progress of preparations for the expected local government reorganisation within Northamptonshire [details [here](#)].

**LGA information for Councillors, 'National child measurement programme: briefing for elected members'** - The National Child Measurement Programme provides a valuable opportunity to engage children, schools, parents and other partners in tackling health inequalities. For more visit [here](#).

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## EMC Events



**EMC People Conference 2019, 6 February 2019** - For the inaugural regional People Conference, the focus is on **Managing and Developing People in a Changing World**.

The Conference is an opportunity for HR, L&D and OD professionals to hear from Chief Executives, leading experts and practitioners on issues such as transformational culture change, improving performance and productivity and leadership for the 21st Century.

Chaired by Chief Executive of North West Leicestershire, Bev Smith, the programme offers a blend of thought-provoking keynote speakers and workshops, so that delegates gain insights and access practical models that help build capacity and performance within the context of change. For more information on the speakers and workshops visit [here](#).

**Employment Law Update, 13 March 2019** - EMC's popular Annual Employment Law event will take place on 13 March 2019, covering all the topical issues and developments, tailored to local government. Once again Darren Newman, Employment Law Expert and guest contributor to the EMC HR Bulletin will lead the update.

This event is aimed at senior HR and Legal professionals in the public sector and Elected Members with Portfolio responsibility for HR. Early Bird Offer - EMC are delighted to be able to offer authorities the opportunity to take advantage of an early bird offer, if you book a place before the end of January the cost per delegate is just £99 + VAT for EMC members (this rate is available until 31st January 2019. After this date the charge will be £175). More here.

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## 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

Lib Dem Group: Cllr David Bill MBE

Independent Group: Mayor Kate Allsop

Executive Director: Stuart Young

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