

# 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

5 FEBRUARY 2016



EMC Housing Review



EMC Meeting - 5 February 2016



National Association of Regional Employers



EMC Events



## Cllr Roger Begy OBE

It is with great sadness to learn that Cllr Roger Begy OBE has died following his short battle with cancer. Councillor Begy passed away at Leicester Royal Infirmary on the morning of Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2016. He was 72. As a member of the East Midlands Councils Executive Board and Chairman of the Regional Improvement & Transformation Board, we've had the pleasure of working alongside Roger for a number of years. His commitment and support will be a loss; but to put it simply, Roger was a very decent man who will be missed by everyone. Our thoughts are with his family.

At the EMC Meeting on Friday 5 February members paid their respects with a minute's silence.



## EMC Housing Review

In March 2015 the EMC Executive Board agreed to take forward a review of housing delivery in the East Midlands to be led by Cllr Chris Millar and supported by a small expert group drawn from councils and the National Housing Federation. The Review has been drafted by John Conway, Head of Housing at Kettering Borough Council, with support from officers at East Midlands Councils. The review is split in to four main sections:

- An analysis of the housing market across the East Midlands and current challenges;
- An analysis of the Government's housing agenda;
- An analysis of the changing role of councils as local housing authorities – including examples of best practice from across the East Midlands; and
- Recommendations for change that will enable local housing needs to be more effectively met.

### Key Messages for Government

- A robust supply of affordable rented housing is essential part for balanced housing market.
- The Government's investment plans for new homes need to focus more on affordable rented homes, including new council housing.
- Local councils should have the same flexibilities and freedoms to manage council housing as those enjoyed by housing associations.
- Councils which have undertaken large scale voluntary transfer should have the option to become landlords again
- The Government should consider how best to facilitate higher levels of house building by private developers with existing unused planning consents.

### Key Messages for Councils

- Consider a 'hybrid' service model combining the strategic and enabling role with direct provision of housing both within and outside the HRA.
- Build new council housing.
- Set up local housing companies to meet the need for affordable homes and generate income for your council.
- Invest in your older homes so they remain easy to let, viable and fulfil a useful long term role in your local housing market.
- Lobby MPs and DCLG on the likely impact of the Housing and Planning bill on your community.

The EMC Housing Review was presented to the EMC General meeting today, papers can be viewed [here](#).

**EMC General Meeting, 5 February** - Councillors from across the East Midlands have met today as part of the East Midlands General Meeting at Nottinghamshire County Council. The meeting included a presentation from Lord Gary Porter, Chair of the LGA. To view the

papers visit [here](#).

### EMC Activity in the coming week

- MBTI Workshop Delivery, 8 February
- HS2 Station Delivery Board, 9 February
- East Midlands All Party Parliamentary Group, 9 February
- Speed and Effective Reading course for Councillors and Officers, 10 February
- Resettling Syrian Refugees Event with Richard Harrington MP, 11 February

### EMC Support

**Mediation** - In the last week EMC staff have supported an authority with Mediation. EMC has three qualified Mediators, if you would like further information please contact [Lisa.Butterfill@emcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:Lisa.Butterfill@emcouncils.gov.uk)

### Councillor Events

In the last week EMC has held two events in our Councillor Development Programme, over 30 Councillors from across the East Midlands have attended events on Community Leadership and Influencing Skills.

**Making Progress on Problems, 26 Feb 2016** - EMC 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. Information [here](#).

**Conflict Resolution and Mediation, 11 Mar 2016** - EMC is holding a half day workshops for local authority Councillors on Conflict Resolution and Mediation on 11 March 2016. For further visit [here](#).

### Employers' Issues



**National Association of Regional Employers** - Members of the National Association of Regional Employers have met this week at a meeting in London chaired by Cllr Tom Beattie, Leader of Corby Borough Council and Chair of the East Midlands Regional Employers Board. The meeting included an overview of Key Legal Developments impacting on Local Government and Employers' Organisations by Phil Bundy, Senior Employment Law Adviser, LGA.

The National Association of Regional Employers will be Chaired by the East Midlands for the next year.

EMC continues to work to maximise the influencing opportunities presented through involvement in CEEP UK and CEEP and is particularly pleased to support the activities of Cllr Tom Beattie in his roles as President and Vice President respectively.

**Employment Law Update, 8 Mar 2016** - EMC will be running its annual Employment Law event in March, to featuring Darren Newman, Employment Law Specialist. For more information and for details of how to book visit [here](#)

**National Living Wage Regulations** - The Regulation have now been made and will come into force on 1 April. For further information visit [here](#).

**CEEP UK News Alert : 29 January 2016** - This edition [[available here](#)] includes details of Digitalisation Working Group 1st meeting taking place on 19 February 2016.

Following up on the call for interest issued on the 22nd of December 2015, the working group will gather experts on digital matters from CEEP members in order to develop a strong case on the digital transformation of public services. The aim is to agree on work objectives, priorities, working method and calendar of the working group for 2016.

### Infrastructure, Planning & Housing



**Midlands Connect News** - Sir John Peace held the first meeting as Chairman of Midlands Connect on 4 February. [The press release can be viewed [here](#)]. The Board agreed proposals in the 'Emerging Opportunities Report', to support a bid to the 2016 Budget for £50m of preparation costs for 6 strategic transport schemes already in the Network Rail and Highways England forward programme for delivery post 2020, but for which no money is currently available. Without some investment now, these schemes are unlikely to be deliverable in the foreseeable future. 5 of these schemes are in the East Midlands; including rail investment for Nottingham/Derby-Birmingham Capacity and Journey Time Enhancements; and the following road schemes:

- **M1 Junctions 19 – 23A** – upgrading the M1 to smart motorway between junction19 (M6 Catthorpe Interchange) and Junction 23A (East Midlands Airport).
- **A46 Newark northern bypass** – widening of the A46 north of Newark to dual carriageway, raising the last section of the A46 between the A1 and M1 to Expressway standard. Improvement of the A46/A1 junction to allow for better traffic movement to Newark and Lincoln.

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## Infrastructure, Planning & Housing

- **A45 Stanwick to Thrapston** – upgrading the existing single carriageway section of the A45 between Stanwick and Thrapston, so the A45 can provide a continuous Expressway between the A14 and the M1

Mike Ashworth (Director, Derbyshire County Council) was also appointed as Vice Chair of the Midlands Connect Steering Group.

The Board are pressing DfT for Midlands Connect to be given the same level of priority within Government as Transport for the North; Board Members also pressed DfT to set out a clear ‘road map’ for how Midlands Connect could develop into a ‘Transport for the Midlands’ by 2017.

**RTPI East Midlands, Duty to Co-operate** - On 19 April 2016 the RTPI East Midlands is holding an event on the Duty to Co-operate in Melton Mowbray. For further information visit [here](#).

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## Economic Development, Skills & Education



**Economic Performance of the Midlands** - The BCU-MEF Output Model indicates that the Midlands outperformed the national economy in the fourth quarter of 2015. Turbulent global conditions will prove a drag on growth in the short term but there are opportunities as well as risks for the region.

- UK growth modest at 0.5%: The Midlands is growing more strongly
- Global trade is fragile due to Chinese slowdown, but market worries appear overdone
- Deflation is an ongoing concern but opportunities remain
- Regional labour market shows strength
- Industry in Focus: Automotive
  - Midlands stellar export performer nationally
  - Supply chain seeing benefits of major expansion

For a comprehensive view on the regional economy, you can read the latest Midlands Perspectives [here](#):

**Lincolnshire’s Rural Economy – Making Connections Conference**, 1 March 2016, 9.30am to 3.00pm, North Kesteven District Council’s Civic Suite - The Campaign to Protect Rural England is sponsoring this free event which will seek to identify the various inter-relationships and issues that exist within Lincolnshire’s rural economy. Further information is available from [here](#).

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## Local Government News



### Cities and Local Government Devolution Act

The government's deadline for submission of devolution bids was September last year, so far deals have been announced with: Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Sheffield City Region, West Yorkshire Combined Authority, Cornwall, North-East Combined Authority, Tees Valley Combined Authority, West Midlands Combined Authority, Liverpool City Region and Aberdeen City Region

Partners in the East Midlands are keen to conclude discussions with Government and have the go-ahead for Devolution deals in this region. To read more about the above deals visit [here](#).

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## EMC Events



**‘Design for Life’ (are we making places and creating legacies?), 25 February 2016** - The next event in EMCs programme of events for Planners in the East Midlands will focus on design. Delegates will get the chance to hear from Dudley MBC who won the 2015 RTPI Award for Excellence in Planning for Built Heritage and Phill Skill from BBC2’s ‘The Planners’. For further information please contact Lisa Bushell [Lisa.Bushell@emcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:Lisa.Bushell@emcouncils.gov.uk) or visit [here](#).

**“Animal Licensing”, 10 March 2016** - The next event in the Environmental Health CPD programme is scheduled for 10 March 2016, entitled “Animal Licensing”. For further information please contact Lisa Bushell [Lisa.Bushell@emcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:Lisa.Bushell@emcouncils.gov.uk) or 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

## 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.

