

Building Resilience to Severe Weather



EMC Events for Councillors

Community Safety - 22 January 2015. An update event on Police and Crime Commissioners and Panels, exploring community safety issues facing local government. Further details are available [here](#).

Employment Matters - local authorities driving jobs and skills - 24 February 2015. An event focusing on employment issues, particularly youth unemployment. Further details are available [here](#).

Local Government Finance Event – Councillors attended an event last week to gain a better understanding of finance within local government and how this impacts on the role of the councillor. The feedback from the event was excellent with councillors commenting that the information they had received was invaluable.

As the winter weather sweeps in, there is never a better time to raise awareness of the importance of building resilience to severe weather. Last winter's storms, and the [Lincolnshire tidal surge](#), had a major impact on businesses. There are actions that companies – big and small – can take to increase their resilience in order to survive and thrive whatever the weather, and [Climate East Midlands is running a project](#) that is currently in its fourth year, to support businesses to take these important steps.

Climate East Midlands is organising a series of events to support businesses to become more resilient to severe weather and climate change, focusing on specific sectors: Construction, Food & Drink, and Waste. These will take place in January and February 2015, and are aimed at the private sector. For more information about these events please see the [Climate East Midlands website](#) or email alex.hopkinson@emcouncils.gov.uk.

Planning & Transport (Officer Contact: andrew.pritchard@emcouncils.gov.uk)

A committee of MPs has called for new planning guidance to ensure local authorities prioritise **air quality in planning decisions**. The Environmental Audit Committee's report, [Action on Air Quality](#), recommends that new schools, hospitals and care homes must not be built next to air pollution hotspots such as road intersections to help reduce tens of thousands of deaths caused by nitrogen dioxide and particulate pollution each year.

Draft regulations to introduce variable mandatory speed limits as part of the **planned upgrade to the M1 in Northamptonshire** have been [published](#) for consultation. The consultation closes on 30 January 2015.

New guidance has been launched by the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) which aims to improve collaboration between public health and planning to ensure lifestyles in the UK are healthier. [Planning Healthy Weight Environments](#) is designed to help planners and public health professionals identify common ground and areas for collaboration by presenting an idea of how a healthy-weight environment could be planned.

The Highways Agency has [launched](#) its **five-year business plan** for England's motorways and major A roads which sets out how they will be modernised, maintained and operated between 2015 and 2020.

Housing (Officer Contact: cathy.jones@emcouncils.gov.uk)

DCLG has [announced](#) that older people will receive support to stay independent for longer from a **£1 million investment in housing advice services**. The £1 million funding for [FirstStop](#) next year builds on more than £3 million already invested by government since 2011. FirstStop works with partners such as Age UK, local authorities and home improvement agencies in 15 areas across England – including Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire and Nottinghamshire - to provide tailored advice and practical support for older people who remain determined to keep living independently.

Economic Development, Skills & Education (Officer Contact: peter.williams@emcouncils.gov.uk)

The Government has published [research](#) highlighting the **value of educational performance to the economy**. The proportion of pupils achieving 5 A* to C GCSEs, including English and maths in the East Midlands in 2010 was 41%, climbing to 44% in 2014 (an increase of 1,349 pupils) adding £80.9 million to the regional economy.

Ofsted has [published](#) its report covering **schools and further education and skills inspections** carried out in the East Midlands during 2013/14.

The Government has [published](#) interim findings on the **administrative reform of business rates**. The government would like to continue an open discussion with stakeholders and invites views on their interim findings and responses to questions in the paper by 28 February 2015.

DWP is [consulting](#) on measures to allow information to be shared between DWP and local authorities, citizens advice bureaux, credit unions, social landlords and relevant registered charities to enable information to be shared to help identify **Universal Credit claimants who need support**. The consultation closes on 12 January 2015.

Health & Social Care (Officer Contact: cathy.jones@emcouncils.gov.uk)

Complaints about health and social care should be taken more seriously, the Care Quality Commission has said. In a report, called **Complaints Matter**, the regulator said there was a wide variation in the way complaints were handled across the NHS, primary care and adult social care services in England. The report is available [here](#).

The Health & Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) has [published](#) its **Personal Social Services Adult Social Care Survey, England - 2013-14**. It found that 62.9 per cent of service users who responded said they were either extremely or very satisfied with the care and support services they receive in England (compared with 63.0% in the East Midlands) and 27.5 per cent in England said they were quite satisfied (28.4% in the East Midlands). However, 5.9% said they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied in England (East Midlands 5.4%), 1.9% said they were quite dissatisfied (East Midlands 1.7%) and 1.8% said they were extremely or very dissatisfied (1.4% East Midlands). A report on the social care activity of Councils with Adult Social Services Responsibilities (CASSRs) in England has also [published](#).

Meanwhile, HSCIC has also [published](#) the **Health Survey for England 2013**. The 2013 edition includes chapters about: - end of life care - need and receipt of social care - shift working - eye care - medications - child and adult obesity - adults' smoking, nicotine replacement and e-cigarette use and exposure to others' smoke - children's smoking and exposure to others' smoke - fruit and vegetable consumption.

Employers' Issues (Officer Contact: sam.maher@emcouncils.gov.uk)

DCLG has launched a [technical consultation](#) on the draft **local government pension scheme** amendment regulations and other related questions. It closes on 30 January 2015.

HM Revenues and Customs has [published](#) details of measures which will introduce a new **exemption from income tax for travel expenses paid to councillors** by their local authority. There will be a corresponding National Insurance contributions disregard. This measure comes into effect on 6 April 2015.

The LGA has launched a new [career guide](#) aimed at encouraging young people to think about a **career in local government**. The guide describes the important work that councils do within the places that young people live, work, learn, socialise and exercise. It highlights the huge variety of interesting and meaningful jobs that councils have to offer and includes information on apprenticeships and graduate schemes.

Climate Change & Sustainable Development (Officer Contact: mike.peverill@emcouncils.gov.uk)

The Government has [announced](#) that the **Green Deal is again open to new applications**, with up to £5,600 available to households to help with the cost of installing energy saving measures such as solid wall insulation, double glazing, boilers, cavity wall and floor insulation. Up to £30 million in vouchers will be available and details of further releases will be announced on a quarterly basis with the next release expected in February 2015.

Local Government Policy (Officer Contact: stuart.young@emcouncils.gov.uk)

Following its publication in December 2013 of a [waste prevention programme for England](#) which set plans for reducing how much waste is produced, Defra has [published](#) a report which sets out the progress made over the last twelve months on some of the main actions highlighted in the Programme.

Local Government Policy (cont.) (Officer Contact: stuart.young@emcouncils.gov.uk)

The All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Hunger in the United Kingdom has made a joint call for a new body to be set up tasked with eliminating hunger in the UK. Their report [Feeding Britain](#) also campaigns to end food waste, make the welfare state more responsive to the needs of the most vulnerable, and help to create food banks that offer a range of support – from debt advice to housing support.

Following the successful **Rural Network East Midlands (RNEM) Annual Conference** at Scaford Hall, in Melton Mowbray, on 20 November, a summary note of the event, along with the presentations, are now available on East Midlands Councils' [website](#). This year's event focused on emerging outcomes from the independent Rural Housing Policy Review and the Defra led Rural Proofing Review. RNEM's Steering Group will now be reflecting on discussions at the event when setting its priorities for activity in 2015.

Around 700 more jobs could be cut at Leicestershire County Council over the next four years, as the Council looks to save £120m. Proposals out for consultation will leave Leicestershire with £9m of cuts still to find over 2018/19. The local authority has already found £103m of savings over the past five years.

DCLG has [announced](#) that seven projects been awarded a share of up to **£15 million of Fair Chance Funding** over 3 years from January 2015 to help turn around the lives of the most vulnerable young homeless people. Funding comprises £10 million from DCLG and £5 million from the Cabinet Office [Social Outcomes Fund](#). The winning Fair Chance Fund bids include a bid led by The Y – working in Leicester, Leicestershire, Derby and Derbyshire.

The LGA and Arts Council England are holding a free one-day **Libraries Leadership Seminar** on 5 February 2015 at Exeter Central Library aimed at Cabinet Members/Portfolio holders with responsibility for libraries. This event will explore radical new approaches and partnerships that put libraries at the centre of achieving wider political outcomes, from economic growth to healthier and stronger communities. Places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Please email cts@local.gov.uk to book your place or see further details and full programme by clicking [here](#).

Following the continued success of the **Sports Leadership Academies** (now Essentials), Sport England and the LGA are offering a further leadership event to assist councillors lead transformational change in their sport and leisure services. For further details of the event, which takes place in Leeds on 11/12 February 2015, and to see the full programme, click [here](#). There is no delegate fee and accommodation/food is available. There are a maximum of 20 places on a first come first served basis. To book a place, please email grace.collins@local.gov.uk.

EMC Events, Training & Development

East Midlands Councils has two **Planning Masterclasses** aimed at Chief Planners and Planning Policy Managers/Officers coming up in the New Year. *Planning for Onshore Wind*, led by Simon Randle from 4-5 Gray's Inn Square, will set out the issues concerning the planning process for onshore wind development and the reforms introduced since 2008. *Planning our Future Town Centres*, led by Dr Steve Norris from Strategic Perspectives, will provide practical advice on how to plan for competitive, attractive and diverse town centres where people want to live, work, visit and shop. Click [here](#) to book on 'Planning for Onshore Wind' taking place on 23 January 2015 and [here](#) for 'Planning for Town Centres' on 12 March 2015.

EMC Leadership

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