**EMC POLICY BRIEF**

**A weekly roundup of local government news in the East Midlands brought to you by**

**East Midlands Councils**

**28 MARCH 2025**

**Top items this week**

* East Midlands - Level 4 Town Planning Assistant Apprenticeship
* Strategic Road Network: Interim Settlement 2025 to 2026
* Community Sponsorship Event Raises Awareness in Derby
* Funding to support social and affordable housebuilding announced

**EAST MIDLANDS—LEVEL 4 TOWN PLANNING ASSISTANT APPRENTICESHIP**

East Midlands Councils, Nottingham Trent University, and Bolsover District Council are working in partnership to explore the development of a Level 4 Town Planning Assistant Apprenticeship. A recent stakeholder event provided an opportunity to discuss the scope of the programme and gather insights from local planning authorities.

The next stage of the project involves assessing regional interest from local planning authorities and other planning organisations. To support this, a further in-person stakeholder event will take place on 10 April at the NTU University Centre in Mansfield.

Representatives from local planning authorities are encouraged to attend to *hear more about the development of the course* help shape the course and consider the potential apprentices who may benefit from this new training route.

For organisations within the EMCCA area, there may be an opportunity to secure bursary support if a first-year cohort of at least 12 apprentices can be formed. Those interested in attending the event or discussing next steps are encouraged to contact Sarah Kay at Sarah.Kay@bolsover.gov.uk. The event will include a networking lunch at 12:30 pm, followed by discussions from 1:15 pm onwards.

**STRATEGIC ROAD NETWORK: INTERIM SETTLEMENT 2025 TO 2026**

The strategic road network (SRN), which includes England’s motorways and major A-roads, is funded through the Road Investment Strategy (RIS). The current investment period, RIS2, will conclude on 31 March 2025, and until a new strategy is set, an interim settlement will govern investment in the network for 2025-2026.

The interim settlement outlines a £4.842 billion investment plan, including statutory directions for National Highways, strategic priorities for the SRN, and performance expectations for the year. It also details how funds will be allocated across maintenance, renewal, and enhancement projects to ensure the network continues to operate efficiently.

For the East Midlands, the A46 Newark Bypass and A38 Derby Junctions remain under review, with future delivery dependent on the 2025 Spending Review. Meanwhile, work on the A52 Nottingham Junctions is currently listed as "in construction,".

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategic-road-network-interim-settlement-2025-to-2026>

**LOCAL COUNCILS AND BUSINESSES PROVIDE EVIDENCE TO APPG**

On Tuesday, representatives from councils and businesses across the East Midlands provided evidence to the East Midlands APPG on the regional priorities ahead of the 2025 comprehensive spending review. MPs will review the evidence presented, alongside the 36 written submissions, to inform a forthcoming report. Many thanks to all of those who attended this session and provided evidence.

**COMMUNITY SPONSORSHIP EVENT RAISES AWARENESS IN DERBY**

East Midlands Councils, in collaboration with Reset, recently hosted a Community Sponsorship event in Derby to raise awareness of the Community Sponsorship scheme.

Representatives from Reset shared insights into their work, explained the sponsorship process from application through to supporting families once they arrive, highlighting the impact that local communities can have in helping refugees integrate and build successful futures.

The event provided a valuable platform for discussions, with attendees sharing experiences and learning more about the practical elements of this scheme.

**FUNDING TO SUPPORT SOCIAL AND AFFORDABLE HOUSEBUILDING ANNOUNCED**

The government has announced £2 billion in funding to support the construction of up to 18,000 new social and affordable homes across the country. This investment serves as an initial allocation from HM Treasury, with further long-term funding expected later this year to support housebuilding beyond 2026-27.

New affordable homes will start construction by March 2027 and will complete by the end of this Parliament. The government is encouraging providers to come forward as soon as possible with projects and bids to help increase the delivery of new housing supply.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/2-billion-new-investment-to-support-biggest-boost-in-social-and-affordable-housebuilding-in-a-generation>

**GUIDANCE FOR COUNCILS ON FLEXIBLE USE OF CAPITAL RECEIPTS**

MHCLG has updated the direction and statutory guidance on flexible use of capital receipts. This extends the freedom for councils to use eligible capital receipts to fund the revenue costs of projects that deliver ongoing savings or improved efficiency.

Capital receipts are the money councils receive from asset sales, the use of which is normally restricted to funding other capital expenditure or paying off debt. The receipts cannot usually be used to fund revenue costs.

The direction extends the flexible use of capital receipts to 2030. Since 2016, this direction has allowed councils to use the proceeds from asset sales to fund the revenue costs of projects that result in ongoing cost savings or improved efficiency.

**MIDLANDS MAYORS SIGN COMPACT**

The Mayors of the East Midlands CCA and West Midlands CCA have signed a Compact to strengthen collaboration between the two regions. This agreement aims to deliver economic and social benefits for businesses and communities while reinforcing the Midlands’ role in the UK’s economic landscape.

West Midlands CCA Mayor Richard Parker and East Midlands CCA Mayor Claire Ward formally launched the West and East Midlands Compact at an event held at the Manufacturing Technology Centre (MTC) in Coventry.