

What is the Combined County Authority and how do District & Boroughs fit into its governance?

East Midlands Combined County Authority

May 2024

Purpose

This guidance note has been developed to provide District and Borough Councils across Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire with key information on the East Midlands Combined County Authority.

What is devolution?

Regional devolution refers to the process by which specific powers and decision-making authority are transferred from central government to subnational regions within a country. It aims to empower local communities and enhance their ability to address regional needs and priorities.

It is not about taking powers away from local authorities that already exist, rather bringing powers to the region from central government to empower regions, fostering better local governance and responsiveness to regional concerns.

What is the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA)?

The East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) has been created as part of the devolution deal between the Government and the four upper tier councils of Derbyshire County Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, Derby City Council and Nottingham City Council.

EMCCA has been given powers, functions and funding worth £1.14 billion from the Government. It means that decisions about investment in our areas, which are currently taken by central government, will be made locally. However, it is estimated that the region will unlock around £4bn of funding over the coming years because of this devolution deal.

Local authorities still exist as individual councils but the new Combined County Authority, led by a new regional Mayor, will work with all councils across the area to deliver the best possible outcomes for the residents and businesses. There would also be opportunities for private, public, and voluntary sector organisations to contribute and have their voices heard

How does this differ from a Combined Authority?

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act creates a new type of combined authority for England. The new Combined County Authorities (CCAs) are designed for more rural areas, whereas the existing Combined Authorities (CA) typically cover metropolitan areas.

Combined County Authorities are made of Constituent Councils (upper tier authorities) who are called constituent members, and Non-Constituents such as district or borough councils who are key partners and play a key role in its ability to deliver.

A Mayor of the Combined County Authority

As part of the devolution deal, EMCCA must have a directly elected mayor. The Government believes a Mayor means clearer accountability over local powers, functions and funding.

A key part of the role is to act as an advocate and global ambassador for the Combined County Authority area and the 2.2 million residents who live here.

The Mayor leads the Combined County Authority, working with partner councils, business representatives and stakeholders on areas like transport, housing, regeneration, employment and skills, economic investment and the net-zero ambition.

The Mayor's term of office will run for four years.

The Mayor is directly elected by residents in Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Derby and Nottingham. The first election for a regional mayor is happening on Thursday 2 May.

What powers does EMCCA, and the Mayor have?

EMCCA has significant devolved powers and funding across several critical areas:

- **Transport:** Overseeing transportation infrastructure and connectivity.
- **Housing:** Addressing housing needs and development.
- **Skills and Adult Education:** Enhancing educational opportunities for adults.
- **Economic Development:** Promoting economic growth and job creation.
- **Net Zero:** Contributing to environmental sustainability

EMCCA is conferred with functions related to housing, regeneration, and planning. These include improving the supply and quality of housing in the area and securing the regeneration or development of land and infrastructure as well as compulsory purchase, land acquisition and disposal and development of land powers (the exercise of compulsory purchase functions is subject to the consent of all the local planning authorities affected).

EMCCA exercises local transport functions under the Transport Act 1985 and the Transport Act 2000. It can enter into agreements with strategic highways companies and enforce road traffic contraventions. Additionally, EMCCA has the power to implement a workplace parking levy and provide grants to bus service operators.

EMCCA has the power to borrow, a duty to prepare an economic assessment of the Area, will become responsible for Adult education and training functions which will be transferred from the Secretary of State.

The Mayor will chair the new Combined County Authority. The mayor's powers will include the power to designate a Mayoral Development Area and then set up a Mayoral Development Corporation as well as an ability to set a precept on Council Tax to fund mayoral functions and an option to charge a business rate supplement, subject to a ballot of local businesses.

What difference can EMCCA make?

Local decision making tends to result in better local economic performance, as policies are tailored to the needs of specific areas.

Local leaders often know and understand the areas much better than politicians and civil servants based in London, and their knowledge and experience can deliver what is appropriate and what will work for their region, especially when they work with nearby public and private sector partners.

EMCCA has already identified a number of key strategic aims through a strategic framework that sets out an initial broad vision rooted in inclusive growth. It aims to create a prosperous, sustainable, and fairer region by empowering people and businesses to seize opportunities.

The East Midlands underperforms against the national average across a number of core economic indicators, EMCCA will set to utilise its powers, funding and regional profile to tackle these issues and deliver on its objectives.

When will the Mayor take office?

The election for the first regional mayor will take place on 2 May 2024, The official list of candidates for the first East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) mayoral election is now confirmed and can be viewed by clicking: [**Elections 2024 – East Midlands Devolution**](#)

Where will the Mayor's office be located?

The Mayor will initially have an office based in Chesterfield, which will provide a hub for the Mayoral Office and EMCCA operations. EMCCA will also have hubs of operation right across Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire in existing local authority locations and elsewhere, the location of these hubs is yet to be identified but will seek to ensure appropriate geographical coverage.

How does the establishment of EMCCA affect local councils?

Councils will continue to have the responsibilities they do now, providing vital services to their communities and championing their towns, rural communities, and cities. This is about moving powers and money from Whitehall to the East Midlands for the benefit of all our communities.

District and Borough Councils will be represented right across in EMCCA governance arrangements as Non-Constituent Members and will play a key role in working with EMCCA to deliver better outcomes for the region.

Will this mean extra bureaucracy and higher cost to taxpayers?

Devolution is about reducing bureaucracy. By taking decisions closer to where they will have an impact, we can reduce the lengthy processes involved with dealing with the Government and secure better outcomes, offering better value for money.

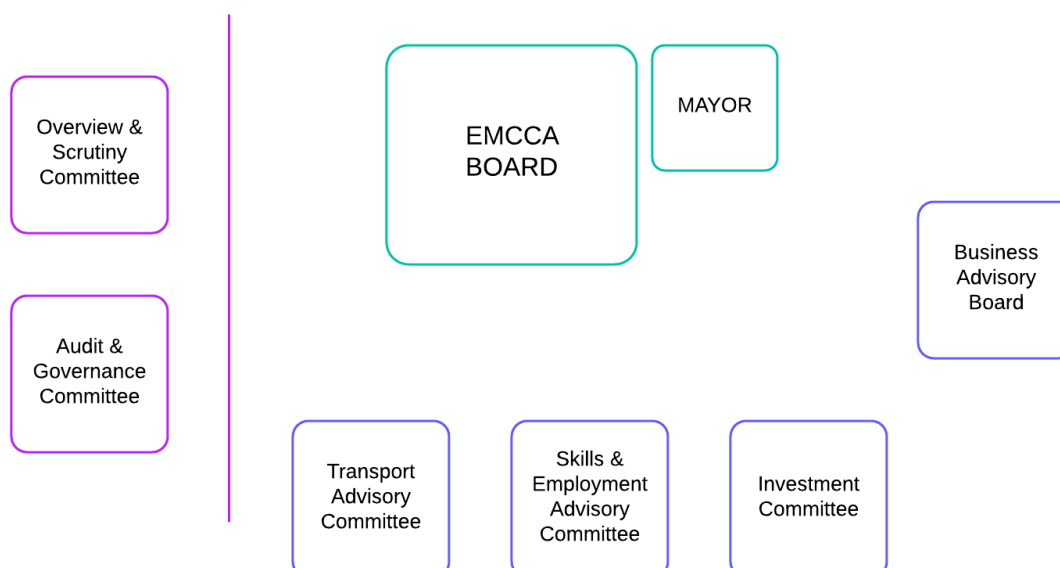
This isn't about adding a layer of unnecessary bureaucracy but moving resources and decision-making powers which already exist from London to the East Midlands and making all this democratically accountable to the people who live here.

As part of the devolution deal, funding has been secured to meet the additional costs of the new arrangements. The mayor will have limited tax-raising powers and would be accountable to the electorate for that decision and how that money is spent. Of the nine existing mayoral combined authorities, eight have this power, but only two have ever actually used it.

What are the governance arrangements at EMCCA?

EMCCA Board agreed the initial version of its governance arrangements at its first meeting on 20 March 2024, this version is based around enabling a minimal governance structure at first that will provide the platform for effective decision-making, strategy development and appropriate oversight and scrutiny, with the potential to build on that as the Combined County Authority develops.

In agreeing the initial version of its governance approach the intention of the Board was not to overcommit on governance arrangements before a Mayor is in place, and propose arrangements that whilst aligning with principles will allow the Mayor to be part of the evolution. The Committee structure at EMCCA initially looks as follows:



The EMCCA Board is the key decision-maker in the structure, it has responsibility for all decision-making outside of mayoral functions. It consists of the Leaders plus one other representative from each Constituent Council

Responsibilities across the structure are as follows:

Sets the strategic objectives	Board
Approves strategy, key policy and frameworks	Board
Sets the Medium-Term Financial Plan	Board
Non-Mayoral function decision-making	Board
Develops strategy, framework and policy proposals	Board and Advisory Committees
Provides investment guidance and advice	Investment Committee
Undertakes strategic level scrutiny	Overview & Scrutiny
Drives Mayoral and Board accountability	Overview & Scrutiny
Provides oversight and assurance of Standards and the Constitution	Audit & Governance
Provides oversight and assurance of sound financial management, governance and supporting frameworks	Audit & Governance
Provides the business voice	Business Advisory Board

How will District and Boroughs be involved?

Constituent Councils have formally emphasised a commitment to a principle of inclusivity when it comes to the involvement of District and Borough Councils, this commitment agreed on 20 March by the Board recognises District and Borough Councils as key partners and commits to:

- collaborate and engage on matters of strategy;
- co-design approaches where appropriate;
- continuously review arrangements to ensure the ability to influence is effectively enabled;
- provide opportunity to impact decision-making through effective Overview & Scrutiny; and
- work collaboratively to ensure communities feel engaged.

District & Borough Councils will be represented on EMCCA Board and all of its wider committees through two seats for each County area, the nominating bodies for each County will agree who these representatives are. The nominating bodies are the Nottinghamshire Economic Prosperity Committee and the Derbyshire Strategic Leadership Board.

There is also a statutory consents process in place that ensures that certain EMCCA decisions are subject to the consent of the local planning authorities affected.

For more information on EMCCA Governance please contact:

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