

It's been a busy and significant period across local government, with the recent elections bringing both change and opportunity for councils across the region. We recognise the importance of supporting newly elected and returning Members to lead with confidence, and we are ready to assist with tailored new councillor development and training to help build strong, effective leadership at this critical time.

We were also delighted to recently host our third Local Government Essentials East programme. Thank you to all who attended and contributed as speakers and workshop leads. The programme explored key issues including the Employment Rights Act 2025, Local Government Reorganisation, and the workforce implications of change, alongside practical approaches to supporting teams through transition. The strong engagement reflects the shared commitment across our councils to learning, collaboration and resilience.

Demand for our Talent Bank continues to grow, with councils drawing on our network of over 140 Associates to provide additional capacity and specialist expertise. We have been able to respond to our member's needs, in some cases supporting whole programmes of work through coordinated teams of Associates, covering areas such as transformation, asset management, and organisational redesign. This breadth of expertise means we can now support most areas of council business with flexible, high-quality solutions.

Alongside this, our Events Team has continued to deliver a wide range of support to member councils, alongside coordinating major regional events. We are now looking ahead to our flagship conference on 15 October and are excited to announce Climate East 2026, the first regional climate conference, this is focused on the priorities set out in Opportunity East. We would welcome conversations with member authorities interested in showcasing their work within the exhibition space.

At a time of continued change and reform, investing in people remains essential. We continue to offer a comprehensive suite of coaching and development support, including executive coaching, leadership development, psychological safety, and resilience training, all designed to help organisations and individuals thrive.

We look forward to continuing to support you in the months ahead and are pleased to share some of our recent highlights in this edition.



Sharon Bleese
Head of Communications and
Commercial Services

Quick overview of upcoming events and training (July - Sept 2026)

- **2 July 2026:** Talent Bank Lunch and Learn: An Introduction to BS 30480 Suicide and the Workplace (free to attend)
- **7 July 2026:** Local Government Drinks Reception at the LGA Annual Conference 2026 (invitation only)
- **14 July 2026:** Talent Bank Lunch and Learn: Difficult Conversations in the Workplace (free to attend)
- **15 July 2026:** LGR and Local Government: Creating Psychologically Safe Workplaces During Organisational Change
- **16 July 2026:** LGE Roundtable Discussion: LGR and Children's Services (free to attend)
- **10 September 2026:** LGE Roundtable Discussion: Making space for prevention within tight budgets (free to attend)
- **15 September 2026:** Practical AI Skills for Local Government Staff
- **16 September 2026:** Supporting Neurodivergent Colleagues Through LGR in Local Government

For more information please visit the event section of our website - www.localgoveasteng.gov.uk/events/

Events Mailing List

Stay in the loop with our upcoming events in the region by joining our Events Mailing List.

If you haven't signed up already, simply email events@localgoveasteng.gov.uk with your name and email address and we will add you.

You will receive updates on upcoming events and training sessions emailed directly to your inbox so you never miss out.





Introducing Climate East 2026: A First for the Region

Climate East 2026 will bring together public sector leaders and practitioners from across the East of England along with partners and strategic groups for the region's first dedicated climate collaboration conference.

This FREE event is taking place on **15 October 2026** at Newmarket Racecourse.

Focused on enabling meaningful action, the conference aims to inspire new conversations, strengthen partnerships, and create the conditions needed to tackle some of the region's most pressing climate challenges. Key themes will include water, health, transport, flood and coastal risk, nature and the environment, and energy.

At its heart, Climate East 2026 is about connection. Alongside a dynamic conference programme, an interactive exhibition will be organised around these challenge areas, showcasing innovation, expertise and real-world solutions. Designed to encourage engagement, the event will provide dedicated spaces for networking and informal discussion, supporting the exchange of ideas and the development of practical collaborations.

If you have any queries please contact Jayne Cole, Events Manager, LGA, email: jayne.cole@localgoveasteng.gov.uk



Sponsorship Opportunities

Main event and theme sponsorship opportunities available – showcase your commitment to climate leadership.

Contact:

sharon.bleese@localgoveasteng.gov.uk

Exhibition Stands

Would you like to showcase your work at this event? Exhibition stands are free to member councils and allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. Don't miss out, contact Jayne Cole, email: jayne.cole@localgoveasteng.gov.uk

BOOK NOW

Be part of the conversation. Be part of the change.

Register now and help shape a sustainable future for the East of England: <https://www.localgoveasteng.gov.uk/event/climate-east-2026/>

Confirmed speakers include:

Craig Bennett OBE, Chief Executive of The Wildlife Trusts
Beatrice Filkin, Director Major Projects, Ofgem

LGR and Local Government – Creating Psychologically Safe Workplaces During Organisational Change

(15 July 2026, 12:00 - 1500, virtual via MS Teams)

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) brings significant change for leaders, teams, and services. New structures, changing roles, and increased pressure can affect morale, communication, and performance if people are not properly supported.

This practical training programme helps leaders and managers create psychologically safe teams where staff feel supported, confident to speak up, and able to adapt positively during periods of uncertainty and transition.

For further details visit the event section of our website - www.localgoveasteng.gov.uk/events/

LGE Roundtable Discussions 2026/ 2027

The sessions are open to all councils in the East of England and their partner organisations. At the LGE Roundtable Discussions, you will hear from a guest speaker on each theme and have the opportunity to learn from, and share, your own examples of best practice, opportunities, and challenges.

For details on upcoming sessions, please visit the event section of our website - www.localgoveasteng.gov.uk/events/

If you have any queries please email policy@localgoveasteng.gov.uk

Looking to organise an event?

Our experienced event team delivers flexible, tailored support – from full end to end management to streamlined attendee coordination through our bespoke booking system.

Please get in touch with Jayne Cole, Events Manager, who would be happy to help discuss this with you in more detail and help bring your event to life. jayne.cole@localgoveasteng.gov.uk

To learn more about our Event Management Service and the range of support we offer, please visit our website: <https://www.localgoveasteng.gov.uk/events/>



Talent Bank Lunch and Learn sessions are free, practical, interactive sessions designed for local government leaders, officers and councillors. They provide expert insights, hands-on guidance and real-world tools on topics ranging from leadership and workforce development to scrutiny, wellbeing and organisation change.

For queries or further information, please contact: Rachel Heathcock, Specialist Training Manager, email; rachel.heathcock@localgoveasteng.gov.uk

Future sessions:

- 2 July 2026 (12:30 - 13:30, virtual) - An Introduction to BS 30480 Suicide and the Workplace
- 14 July 2026 (12:00 - 13:00, virtual) - Difficult Conversations in the Workplace

Unlock More with the LGE Members' Area

If you're part of a member authority, the LGE Members' Area is your gateway to valuable insight, learning and connections across the East of England.

Designed exclusively for our members, this dedicated space brings together a wealth of resources to support your work and development. Here you'll find outputs from LGE Roundtable discussions, capturing key themes, challenges and shared learning from across the region. You can also access recordings and materials from our popular Member Lunch and Learn sessions, helping you stay informed on priority topics in a flexible, practical way.

The Members' Area is also home to content from Local Government Essentials East training days, offering access to skills development and professional learning beyond the event itself. In addition, resources from the Strategic Migration Partnership and other programmes and networks provide valuable context, guidance and insight to support your priorities.

Whether you're looking to learn, share or connect, the Members' Area is there to help you make the most of your membership and stay close to the latest thinking across the sector.

If you haven't explored it yet, now is the time. Visit www.localgoveasteng.gov.uk and start making the most of what's available to you.

Spotlight on Talent Bank Associates

Martin Willoughby – Moveworks – Talent Bank Associate

We are thrilled to have Martin Willoughby, founder of Moveworks, on our Talent Bank who brings nearly 20 years of specialist experience supporting councils and public sector organisations with office transformation, relocation and accommodation strategy.

His expertise spans hybrid working, space reduction, floorplan redesign and the delivery of complex workplace change programmes that balance commercial outcomes with people-focused transformation.

Through Moveworks, Martin has worked with a wide range of clients including London Councils, Cambridgeshire County Council, Thurrock Borough Council and Essex Fire and Rescue. Alongside delivering workplace transformation, relocation and space consolidation projects, he is now shaping a Local Government Reorganisation offer built on Moveworks' proven council consultancy model.

This structured, evidence-based approach helps leaders understand future working patterns, team integration, space requirements, floorplans, costs and delivery timescales, providing a practical route from high-level reorganisation plans to clear workplace strategy and implementation. His work has already helped councils unlock major value, including freeing up £6 million in assets, generating £250,000 in additional annual income and delivering £280,000 in ongoing annual savings.

With LGR fast approaching, Martin is on hand to offer his expert advice and office move solutions for your council.



Zoe Challis – HR/OD Talent Bank Associate

We're delighted to welcome Zoe Challis, a highly experienced senior HR and organisational development professional with over 25 years' experience across the NHS, public sector, retail, hospitality, and consultancy sectors.



A Chartered Fellow of the CIPD (FCIPD), Zoe brings a strong blend of strategic leadership and operational delivery. Her expertise spans workforce planning, organisational development, employee relations, change management, leadership and talent development, job evaluation, pay banding, recruitment, retention, and people strategy.

Most recently, Zoe has been supporting NHS organisations through specialist HR consultancy, advising on job evaluation, organisational design, workforce structures, and fair pay frameworks. Her previous leadership roles include Head of Training and Development, HR Manager (Training and Workforce Development), and Senior HR Business Partner, where she led significant workforce transformation, learning innovation, and people strategy programmes across large and complex organisations.

Zoe is particularly valued for her ability to work in partnership with senior leaders, build trusted stakeholder relationships, and deliver practical people solutions that strengthen engagement, capability, retention, and overall organisational effectiveness.

Zoe has recently joined Talent Bank and is wanting to expand her offer in Local Government and is already proving to be an incredible asset to Talent Bank.

How can we help?

The landscape of local government is changing.
Talent Bank can support you through those changes.

We're here to help with the credibility and expertise you can trust.



For further information visit: <https://www.localgoveasteng.gov.uk/consultancy-training/talent-bank/>

Contact Sharon Bleese sharon.bleese@localgoveasteng.gov.uk

Talent Bank

The Teckal Exemption

Did you know?



The Talent Bank

Talent Bank has been providing support to member councils and public bodies for well over a decade.

We provide a sector-led service through a comprehensive bank of professional, experienced and knowledgeable Associates who will work with you to deliver what you need, when you need it.

Procurement

The Local Government East Talent Bank supports local authorities and other public bodies by providing a comprehensive range of consultancy services, available through public-to-public procurement exemptions.

For our member authorities this is through a Teckal exemption.

What is a Teckal Exemption?

The Teckal exemption (vertical arrangement) allows public authorities to directly award contracts to controlled 'in-house' entities without competitive tender.

Carried over to the Procurement Act 2023, this exemption requires the entity to be under strict authority control with over 80% of its activities dedicated to the owner authority. This is covered under Schedule 2 of the Act.

Who owns us?

We are entirely governed by our member councils, who have full control over how we operate.

Our Management Committee is cross-party and made up of councillors from across the region. The Assembly is made up of all Leaders from member councils across the region.

Contact Us

- **Head of Communications and Commercial Services** - Sharon Bleese
sharon.bleese@localgoveasteng.gov.uk
- **Commercial Coordinator** - Paige O'Connell
paige.oconnell@localgoveasteng.gov.uk
- **Training Manager** - Rachel Heathcock
rachel.heathcock@localgoveasteng.gov.uk

Why Choose LGE?

- No need for individual tenders for each engagement
- Faster access to skilled professionals
- Reduced procurement burden
- Lower costs through a shared resource model
- Consistent quality from experts
- Stronger regional collaboration across all authorities

Regional EQIA Forum - 20 October 2026

The EQIA Forum will continue to meet regularly to build regional knowledge, share best practice, and support ongoing learning across local authorities, NHS organisations, fire services, and other public sector partners. By working collaboratively, the group aims to strengthen equality analysis across the region and ensure that public policies and services better meet the needs of diverse communities.

We encourage colleagues across the region to join the conversation and contribute to this growing network of practice.

Our next EQIA Forum meeting will take place virtually on 20 October 11:00 – 12:30. For further information and to register your place visit:
www.localgoveasteng.gov.uk/event/east-of-england-eqia-forum-meeting/

Procurement East Network

The Procurement East Network was brought back to life by demand in 2025, and it's quickly becoming the go to space for procurement leaders across the region. Designed for Heads of Procurement and Procurement Managers, the network offers a trusted forum to share insights, solve challenges together, and stay ahead of what's new in procurement regulations, innovation, and regional initiatives.

We meet quarterly online, creating a convenient space for regular connection, and we host an annual in-person event to strengthen relationships and spark fresh collaboration.

If you'd like to join the network, we'd be delighted to welcome you. Please email sharon.bleese@localgoveasteng.gov.uk.

Subscribe to LGE Bulletins, by emailing the following:

- Policy: policy@localgoveasteng.gov.uk
- HR Dispatches: es@localgoveasteng.gov.uk
- Strategic Migration Partnership: SMPCcommunications@localgoveasteng.gov.uk
- Commercial Services: events@localgoveasteng.gov.uk

Meet the Commercial Services Team



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Jayne Cole

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Currently on maternity leave and re-joining in 2027



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