

BOLSOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL

LOCAL GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ON 28TH OCTOBER 2025

EAST MIDLANDS INVESTMENT ZONE (EMIZ) – SPRINT PROJECT UPDATES

**REPORT OF THE INTERIM DIRECTOR – PLANNING, DEVOLUTION &
CORPORATE POLICY**

Classification	This report is Public
Contact Officer	Sarah Kay – Interim Director – Planning, Devolution & Corporate Policy

PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT

To provide an update on the progress / completion of the East Midlands Investment Zone (EMIZ) sprint projects:

- Bolsover Green Skills Hub Shirebrook (BDC).
- Engaging Supply Chain Database (BDC).
- Planning Capacity Builder (BDC and NTU).

REPORT DETAILS

1. Background

- 1.1 Through the EMIZ programme the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) invited applications for their Year 1 Sprint Funding in late 2024, with Bolsover District Council (BDC) submitting a number of bids across the three strands of the programme.
- Sprint A: Planning and Development – Over £2 million allocated to pre-development activity and business case preparation across EMIZ sites.
 - Sprint B: Research and Innovation – Innovation Roadmaps and 10–12 pilot projects delivered by University of Nottingham and University of Derby.
 - Sprint C: Skills – Skills Roadmap and pipeline of interventions developed by University of Derby.
- 1.2 BDC successfully secured three funding awards, two directly awarded to BDC and one delivered in partnership with Nottingham Trent University (NTU).
- i. Engaging Supply Chain Database (BDC) - £75,000.
 - ii. Planning Capacity Builder (BDC and NTU) - £45,521.
 - iii. Bolsover Green Skills Hub Shirebrook (BDC) - £249,914.25.

2. **Project Updates**

2.1 **Bolsover Green Skills Hub Shirebrook**

2.1.1 Alongside the £2m capital funding already secured for the construction of a green and retrofit skills hub in Shirebrook, funding through the EMIZ sprint programme funding stream was secured to undertake critical pre-development activity to explore the potential delivery model, business case and programme for the Skills Hub with potential partners from further and higher education providers and local enterprises.

2.1.2 A funding agreement between BDC and EMCCA was signed in March 2025 and Rider Levett Bucknall (RLB) were appointed by BDC to undertake this work, with invitations to various partners to work alongside RLB and BDC to develop a delivery concept for the Skills Hub.

2.1.3 Through the project RLB worked with partners to prepare potential delivery plans / options for their use of the Skill Hub. Submissions were received from:

- RNN Group (North Notts College)
- Vision West Notts College
- Chesterfield College
- University of Derby
- Nottingham Trent University
- Elmhurst Energy
- NAPIT

2.1.4 A final report from RLB dated July 2025 (see Appendix 1) has been prepared and received by BDC, documenting the feasibility work undertaken to seek a wider understanding of the potential delivery partners for this project. In accordance with our grant funding agreement, Q1 and Q2 monitoring submissions have been sent to EMCCA alongside submission of the final report.

2.1.5 Current spend position:

Elmhurst Energy Systems Ltd	£2,500.00
RNN Group	£9,166.00
West Nottinghamshire College	£9,166.00
Napit Training Ltd.	£2,500.00
Direct Education Business Partnership CIO,	£7,500.00
University of Derby	£9,166.00
Chesterfield College	£9,166.00
Rider Levett Bucknall UK Limited	£96,130.08
East Midlands Chamber (Derbys, Notts, Leics)	£23,800.00
Bassetlaw CVS	£7,500.00
Nottingham College	£9,166.00
Nottingham Trent University	£9,166.00
Bolsover District Council	£52,083.00
Total:	£247,009.08

2.1.6 An internal project team has been assembled to move the project forward. Project progression beyond the expenditure of the sprint funding is a tied to the

construction phase of the regeneration fund capital project. The Head of Business Growth and the Interim Director have met with representatives at EMCCA and NTU in September 2025 to ensure ongoing project alignment with future funding opportunities and partner delivery models can be progressed.

2.2 Engaging Supply Chain Database

- 2.2.1 Funding of £75,000 was secured through the EMIZ sprint programme funding stream to develop a strategy to improve engagement of supply chain SMEs in the housing industry's procurement process. Engaging SMEs in the procurement process is crucial for regional economic growth, especially in the East Midlands where SMEs constitute a significant portion of the workforce. The project explores barriers to SME participation in construction procurement and proposes a platform to facilitate better engagement, supported by industry bodies and aligned with recent procurement reforms.
- 2.2.2 A funding agreement between BDC and EMCCA to deliver the project was signed in March 2025, with BDC partnering co-consultant specialists of NTU (Ecologic Homes Consultancy) to support delivery of the project.
- 2.2.3 Progression on this project has been delayed owing to resourcing challenges faced initially by BDC, and evolving market insight about SME engagement by the co-consultant partners at NTU.
- 2.2.4 Project reporting to EMCCA issued in August 2025 showed engagement to date with 27 SMEs locally, plus a wide range of procuring companies and industry bodies. The project is to be endorsed by EMCCA, with a final report and prototype database targeted for completion by the 30th September. A copy of the draft report is attached at Appendix 2.

2.2.5 Current spending position:

Bolsover District Council	£15,000.00
Nottingham Consultants	£30,683.00
Ecologic Homes Consultancy	£15,000.00
Dr Rose Deakin	£5,180.00
Total	£65,863.00

- 2.2.6 Whilst the anticipated engagement means and project outcomes have evolved during the project process, EMCCA has been updated throughout and remain satisfied with the reported monitoring outputs of this project to date. Future funding to develop from the trial database to a fully functioning model will be explored.

2.3 Planning Capacity Builder

- 2.3.1 In partnership with NTU, this project undertook a feasibility study to explore whether NTU could prepare an academic curriculum to deliver a Level 4 apprenticeship programme based upon the Royal Town Planning Institute's (RTPI) accredited Level 4 apprenticeship standard for a Town Planning Assistant.

- 2.3.2 Market analysis and stakeholder engagement sessions were conducted throughout March and April 2025 with regional professionals in public and private practice to consider course design and delivery models. Follow up course compilation / approvals were progressed by NTU, who alongside a BDC representative, met with the RTPI education in May 2025 to discuss the delivery of the apprenticeship programme.
- 2.3.3 A final report was prepared by NTU and BDC and was submitted to EMCCA on 23rd May 2025 (see Appendix 3) to satisfy the monitoring / reporting requirements on the sprint funding award. BDC received £20,000 of the sprint funding award for their involvement in the project to cover officer time and associated expenses.
- 2.3.4 In August 2025 NTU and BDC representatives met with EMCCA to support submission of a further expression of interest for Year 2 and 3 funding to launch the course from September 2026 and support a first year dedicated cohort of 10 students employed across regional Local Planning Authority's (LPA). An outcome decision is awaited.

DOCUMENT INFORMATION:

Appendix No	Title
1.	EMIZ Green Skills Hub – Final Report July 2025
2.	Engaging Supply Chain SMEs in the Housing Industry's Procurement Process – Final Report 30 th September 2025
3.	Planning Capacity Builder for Net Zero – Final Report 23 rd May 2025