

**REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL****PLANNING FOR POSSIBLE NO-DEAL EXIT FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION****Purpose of the Report**

1. To advise Members of the arrangements being made to respond to the implications for Nottinghamshire from a possible no-deal UK exit from the European Union.

**Information**

2. In a letter dated 6<sup>th</sup> August to the leaders of all local authorities in England (attached as an appendix), the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), the Rt Hon. Robert Jenrick MP, advised that although the Government would prefer to leave with a deal, all necessary preparations are being made to be ready to leave without a deal. Central government departments have intensified preparations, in advance of 31 October, and he requested that local government should also do so to ensure that departure is as smooth as it can be.
3. The Secretary of State asked all Councils to designate a senior officer as Brexit Lead Officer. The role has been assigned to the Service Director, Place and Communities, as he chairs the Council's Risk, Safety and Emergency Management Board (RSEMB) and oversees the work of the Emergency Planning team, which is supporting Brexit activities across the Council.
4. The Brexit Lead Officer role is intended to ensure that the County Council has taken all reasonable steps, in line with relevant guidance, to prepare for EU exit on 31 October. This includes ensuring communication with local residents and businesses to support their preparations, and overseeing communication with stakeholders. The role will also oversee the expenditure of the specific Brexit funding allocated to the Council. A further aspect of the role will be to bring together local public service providers, the voluntary and community sector, community groups and businesses to plan and prepare for potential local impacts of the UK leaving the EU without a deal. Also, the County Council is now facilitating weekly meetings with Brexit Lead Officers of the other Councils in Nottinghamshire.
5. The County Council, in concert with our Local Resilience Forum (LRF) partners, has a well established suite of emergency plans to respond to the impact of any emergency. These plans can be activated as required in response to any unforeseen impacts from the UK's exit from the European Union.

## Local Risk Assessment

6. in the lead-up to earlier potential EU exit dates, managers of our critical services monitored technical notices and other information issued by central government to identify any potential impacts from a no-deal departure. Contingency arrangements were made, as appropriate, facilitated through the RSEMB and associated departmental groups. The work was informed by risk assessment work within the County Council and through the LRF and is being re-visited as 31 October approaches. Key elements of this are as detailed in the following paragraphs, and concern potential impacts to:
  - Food supplies (particularly school meals)
  - Adult social care
  - Medicines
  - Congestion on the roads
  - Local businesses, particularly involving imports and exports
7. In respect of food supplies and school meals, our Catering and Facilities Management managers (working with internal and external colleagues and suppliers) have considered potential implication for schools meal menus. The government is advising that, in the case of no-deal exit, there will be no overall shortage of food but there could be reduced choice, particularly in respect of certain types of fresh produce. This has been addressed in planning so that suitable alternative menus can be provided. Also, County Enterprise Foods have created a two-week contingency supply of frozen meals for the Meals at Home service.
8. Adult Social Care and Health staff who have moved to this country in the last three years have been briefed about the implications of EU-exit in order to alleviate concerns and anxieties in relation to their employment status. EU nationals living and working in the UK will have a period of time to apply for Settled Status or will be able to apply for a biometric passport. At the same time, the Quality & Market Management Team are working with independent sector management and associations to ensure employees who believe they are at risk in a 'no deal' scenario are reassured. Information received from central government is sent to providers when it is received. All providers have been asked to confirm they have contingency plans to maintain service provision.
9. With regard to medicines, NHS England have offered assurance (through the LRF) that business continuity arrangements have been developed and are being consolidated in the run-up to 31 October.
10. Highways managers (working with Leicestershire colleagues) have considered what risk there may be of congestion on Nottinghamshire roads arising from freight transiting through East Midlands Airport. East Midlands is the the second-busiest UK airport for freight traffic after London Heathrow. The main roads used to access East Midlands Airport (A453, A52, M1) fall under the auspices of Highways England and so the responsibility for making arrangements to ensure the continuity of vehicle movements along those roads rests with that agency. A review of the County roads on the western side of Nottinghamshire nearest to the Airport has been undertaken, and has determined that there are unlikely to be any significant risks to the continuity of vehicle movements along them. Highways/Via EM Ltd. have made arrangements to mitigate against the potential risks which may arise. They will continue to monitor events and review their arrangements to determine whether additional

actions are necessary. Based on government information and local risk assessments, we are not expecting difficulties in securing fuel supplies for Council/Via EM vehicles.

11. A Brexit page has now been created on the County Council's public website to assist Nottinghamshire residents and businesses to find central government and other information that will be of use to them.
12. Individual County Council teams are continuing to assess risks and impacts, in comparison with Technical Notices published by the Government, and are actively considering actions ahead of potential 'no deal' and other scenarios that could have local impacts. In addition, the County Council will continue to play its part in preparation being made through the LRF. EU exit preparations is a standing item for Corporate Leadership Team meetings. Also, the County Council's Chief Executive is the designated EU exit lead chief executive for the East Midlands, and is linking with government (mostly through MHCLG) on behalf of all the Councils in the region. He is assisted in that role by Stuart Young at East Midlands Councils.

#### **Brexit Funding – Financial Implications**

13. The County Council received £87.5k additional central government funding for Brexit related work in 2018-19 and the same for 2019-20, plus an additional £10k share of funding provided to the LRF and funding to support the Chief Executive's role as the Regional Hub Chief Executive, which includes Brexit-related activities. A further tranche of £87.5k has been announced for the current year.
14. The funding is being paid directly under Section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003. The expectation is that the funding will be used to enhance capacity and capability within local authorities to aid Brexit preparations. It is intended to help provide each council's Brexit Lead Officer with the resources they need to fulfil their role, as described by the Secretary of State in his letter to Council Leaders on 6 August 2019. Whilst this funding is not ring-fenced, we are advised that the funding should not be used for matters unrelated to Brexit.

#### **Other Options Considered**

15. The County Council is ready to step up preparedness as necessary on planning and delivery. This will include liaison with the LRF to:
  - maintain local service delivery – business as usual;
  - respond to local Brexit related impacts such as supporting local businesses affected by export/import control and materials/product shortages;
  - respond to national issues that impact upon residents and businesses;
  - step up communications on Brexit preparedness – ensure residents and businesses are fully informed.

#### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

16. To ensure that Members are aware of the work that the County Council is undertaking in relation to the UK's planned departure from the European Union on 31 October.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

17. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

That the Committee:

- 1) endorses the planning and preparations being taken in readiness for a possible no-deal UK exit from the European Union.

**Cllr Mrs Kay Cutts MBE**  
**Leader of the Council**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:** Robert Fisher, Group Manager for Emergency Planning and Registration

### **Constitutional Comments (SLB - 02/08/2019)**

18. Policy Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report.

### **Financial Comments (SES – 06/09/2019)**

19. The financial implications are set out in paragraphs 13 and 14 of the report. The Authority has received £87,500 for EU Exit Funding for Local Government in 2018/19 and £175,000 in 2019/20. In addition, £10,000 has been provided to the Caounty Council from the funding provided to the LRF, and further funding has been provided for the Chief Executive's role as the Regional Hub Chief Executive – which includes Brexit related activities.

20. The funding is being used to cover set-up and running costs for the Registration Service to offer a European Settlement Scheme Service, and will reimburse a range of functions that have re-directed resources to Brexit work, including Emergency Planning, Trading Standards, Highways, Catering and Facilities Management and Economic Development.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- Brexit Risks and Opportunities Register

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

- All