

Motion on Notice – No-Deal Brexit

To be proposed by Councillor Philip Black, seconded by Councillors Oliver Robinson, Jack O'Dwyer Henry, Jean Parr and Sandra Thornberry.

This council notes that;

The UK is scheduled to leave the European Union on 31st of October 2019.

Parliamentary legislation has been passed that seeks to diminish the likelihood of a No-Deal Brexit.

Despite this the Government is determined that we should exit the EU by any means, regardless of consequences, therefore a No-Deal Brexit remains a very real possibility.

Preparations for the impact of a No-Deal Brexit in this authority area are being conducted by the disaster and emergency planning body – the Lancashire Resilience Forum.

According to The Institute for Government, advice from the Local Government Association, and crucially the Government's own publicly available guidance papers - residents in our district can anticipate difficulty and disruption affecting:

- *Heysham Port (as part of the UK border, customs and movement of people)*
- *Higher Education Institutions (research funding, income from EU students' fees)*
- *Nuclear Power Stations (importing plutonium & uranium radioactive fuel products)*
- *NHS Services (availability of medicines, staffing and waiting times for procedures)*
- *Businesses in the following sectors: Food and Drink (including school meals), Manufacturing, Farming, Agriculture, Animals, Fisheries, Forestry, Legal & Professional Services, Charities & Voluntary Organisations, Construction, Environmental, Defence, Energy, Entertainment, Arts, Culture & Heritage, Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Health & Social Care, Telecoms and Information Services, Chemicals, Mining, Public Administration, Retail, Tourism & Hospitality, Couriers and Shipping Services. Especially where these businesses import/export, hire staff from the EU or have employees who need to travel or work in the EU.*

This Council believes that;

Taken as a whole, and based on the Government's own advice papers, it reasonable to infer that a No-Deal Brexit will have a detrimental impact on our authority district, its businesses, communities and residents.

A No-Deal Brexit is highly likely to expose the Council to additional challenges, costs and pressures.

Opposing a No-Deal Brexit is the right and proper stance for this authority to adopt.

The Government should respect the will of Parliament and rule out the possibility of a no-deal Brexit.

This Council resolves that;

The Chief Executive of the Council will write to the Brexit Minister, the Minister for Local Government and the Prime Minister. The letter will outline our concerns, explain our position and call for the Government to take whatever steps are necessary to categorically rule out the possibility of a No-Deal Brexit.

Officer Briefing Note

The motion raises some of the possible implications of a no- deal Brexit that have been considered.

The Council is taking all reasonable steps, in line with relevant guidance and messaging coming from Government and its agencies, to prepare for an exit from the EU on October 31.

We are working with the Lancashire Resilience Forum (LRF), which brings together representatives from the public sector, including the emergency services, local authorities and the NHS.

Working with the LRF ensures a comprehensive approach to planning for the different scenarios, and identifying potential risks, that might occur from Brexit, to mitigate, as far as possible, their impact on our communities.

We have also appointed a lead officer to work with central government and act upon information as and when it is received, and appropriate teams are in regular contact with businesses to monitor their own preparations and highlight any concerns.

The government has allocated funding of £150,000 to the Council for continued preparedness activities, including additional staffing costs, for issues that might require the Council to allocate additional resource to Heysham Port.

The GOV.UK website 'Get ready for Brexit' pages provide the Government's direct advice on what businesses, organisations, individuals and families should do to prepare.

STATUTORY OFFICER COMMENTS

Section 151 Officer

As part of the statutory requirement, the s151 Officer is required to review the adequacy of the Councils Reserves, an amount of £0.500m has been included in this assessment to address any short-term risks around Brexit. In addition, financial modelling around a number of scenarios, including reductions in Business Rates, Council Tax and loss of Government funding were included the Councils Medium Term Financial Strategy.

In order to provide protection against the level of Business Rates losses the Council could be exposed to Central Government operates a "Safety Net" scheme. Under this scheme losses are "capped" to 92.5% of the Councils Baseline Funding Level. The Council holds a Business Rate Retention Reserve in order to help manage any peaks and troughs in its Business Rates income. The current level held in the reserve is sufficient to meet a worst case scenario.

The **Deputy Monitoring Officer** has been consulted and has no comments.