

Name of meeting: Economy & Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Panel

Date: 17 July 2019

Title of report: Leaving the EU Preparations

Purpose of report

This paper provides a position statement for Scrutiny on the current situation regarding Kirklees' preparations, as the UK makes preparations to leave the EU. The information is provided within the context of the UK being granted an extension of the Article 50 process meaning the official Leave date is now 31 October 2019. The UK can leave before this date if the withdrawal agreement is ratified by the UK and the EU before then.

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	N/A
Key Decision - Is it in the Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?)	N/A
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	N/A
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name	Rachel Spencer-Henshall
Is it also signed off by the Service Director (Finance)?	N/A
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?	N/A
Cabinet member portfolio	Councillor Carole Pattinson

Electoral wards affected: All

Ward councillors consulted: N/A

Public or private: Public

No personal information contained in report.

1. Summary

It is understood now that the UK will leave the EU on 31 October 2019. There will be risks and impacts for Kirklees whatever the final outcome of ongoing negotiations; however, at present the full local, regional and national impacts of the UK leaving the EU are unknown. With the timetable to leave being pushed back activity on this agenda has been reduced in the last two months following preparation in advance of March original date.

Across the Council

A Leaving the EU tactical group, drawing officers from across the Council and partner organisations, has been formed and operational for several months. Chaired by the Council's Service Director for Housing Economy & Infrastructure, it provides support and regular updates to the Council's Executive in its role of ensuring we are assured of an appropriate level of preparedness for both likely and potential scenarios following the UK's exit from the EU.

Business Continuity Champions have been contacted with a series of questions which are designed to identify response to the potential business disruptions that may arise as a result of Brexit, these being:

- People Issues
- Premises Issues
- Process Issues
- Provider Issues (including fuel, suppliers, contractors and commissioned services)
- Equipment Issues

A full set of responses has been developed to the issues identified by the Business Continuity Champions.

We have also developed a "Kirklees Council Tactical Plan "The UK's EU Exit" (Appendix 1) which provides the following:

- A framework for Kirklees Council to plan for and respond to the impacts of the UK's EU exit
- An outline of arrangements that will enable Kirklees Council to effectively plan for and respond to the impacts of the UK's EU exit.

To support and complement the Tactical Plan there is also an internal operational Action Plan which helps monitor and address key issues in relation to:

- Business continuity
- Businesses
- Supply chains and logistics
- Workforce
- Vulnerable people
- Cohesion
- Communication

The council's Corporate Risk Log (see Appendix 2 for relevant extract) gives Brexit due prominence as a heightened risk and provides management actions already in place to mitigate the risk. These risks are managed through the aforementioned Tactical Group.

Regional Resilience and Planning

We actively take part in the West Yorkshire Resilience Forum including attending Hub meetings, participating in teleconferences with MHCLG and contributing to regional returns to government on key issues affecting authorities in the region.

Around the original date for leaving the EU, 29 March, we were reporting on a daily basis. More recently with the extension to Article 50 we have moved to reporting by

exception. Plans are in place to increase activity the nearer we get to October Leave date.

2. **Information required to take a decision**

This report provides an overview for the Scrutiny Panel on the council's preparedness for leaving the EU and is provided for consideration and comment.

3. **Implications for the Council**

3.1 **Working with People**

We have established channels through which we conduct a weekly temperature check of community issues and potential tensions. This route is used to check whether there are any Brexit related issues arising in our communities.

3.2 **Working with Partners**

As above, there are some key partner arenas into which our preparations connect, in order to ensure a joined-up response in both Kirklees and the wider region. We are actively working with key partners such as KNH, the CCGs and others to ensure we are co-ordinated in our activity.

3.3 **Place Based Working**

Communication to members will be vital ensuring they are based on an understanding of their critical role as place leaders, able to provide appropriate assurance messages within our diverse communities linking to our Migration and Refugee Resettlement Delivery Plan.

3.4 **Improving outcomes for children**

As corporate parent we are working to ensure the residency status of EU national looked after children. Social workers have identified children and young people who may meet the criteria, including those with interim and full care orders, Section 20 and those who are in the leaving care stage.

3.5 **Other (eg Legal/Financial or Human Resources)**

In January, the Secretary of State for housing, communities and local government announced an allocation of resources to local authorities. While not ring-fenced, the strong expectation is that Local Authorities will use it to fund preparatory work for Brexit-related activities. Kirklees has received £210,000, split across 2018/19 and 2019/20. We have put these monies in reserves and have a process for drawing it down

4. **Consultees and their opinions**

We have actively engaged with local businesses to ensure we understand the impact on this sector.

5. **Next steps and timelines**

To keep a watching brief on national developments with a view to re-engaging our planning processes when the need arises. We are also continuing to assess the ongoing issues relating to Social Care and in particular recruitment and retention in the workforce.

6. **Officer recommendations and reasons**

For the panel to note and comment on the preparedness of the Council to leave the EU.

7. **Cabinet portfolio holder's recommendations**

Portfolio Holder has been briefed and agrees with the report to be submitted to Scrutiny in this format.

8. **Contact officer**

David Bundy - Corporate Policy Officer, Strategy and Policy

9. **Background Papers and History of Decisions**

Discussion at Full Council on the implications of Brexit, 12 December 2018.

10. **Service Director responsible**

Naz Parkar - Service Director for Housing Economy & Infrastructure