

LEEDS STRATEGIC RESPONSE PLAN – UNITED KINGDOM’S EXIT FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION

This plan is a framework for a response to Brexit to enable the council and city to be as prepared as possible given the resources and information available. It is intended to be adaptable to a range of exit scenarios as required, including a ‘no deal’ scenario or a delay in the exit date. It builds upon the work that has been done since previous Executive Board papers in July 2016, December 2018, March 2019, September 2019 and October 2019, and will continue to develop as further preparations are undertaken by directorates and city partners, and as further guidance and planning assumptions are issued by central government.

Aims and objectives of this plan:

- Demonstrate the values, ambition and vision of the council, city and beyond.
- Co-ordinate a joined-up and proactive response in the city, suitable for the short, medium and long term within the resources and information available.
- Effectively support individuals, families, businesses and communities affected.
- Keep it simple and avoid duplication.
- Stay flexible and learn from experience and best practice.

CURRENT POSITION AS AT NOVEMBER 2019

- New government formed in July 2019, a deal has been agreed between the UK and the EU but has not been passed by the UK Parliament. An extension has been granted by EU until 31st January 2020 and a UK general election called for 12th December 2019.
- National planning for the UK’s Exit from the EU has increased significantly including planning for a ‘No Deal’ scenario under Operation Yellowhammer. Guidance and information primarily comes from .gov.uk website along with feedback from direct contact with central Government. Following the granting of an extension the no deal preparations have been stood down.
- Impact continues to be significant given ongoing uncertainty with possible economic and community impacts, understanding and responding to the Leeds Economic Brexit Impact Assessment, the potential for national elections to be called at short notice, and wider policy implications such as the EU Settlement Scheme, officially launched in March 2019, with the council continuing to provide support to those citizens affected.
- The Brexit Officer Working Group has continued to meet regularly, maintaining oversight of council Brexit preparations.
- The Member’s Brexit working groups has met again in September 2019 continuing to inform local Brexit preparations.
- Leeds City Council’s designated Brexit Lead Officer is Mariana Pexton (Chief Officer, Strategy and Improvement).
- Active engagement with the West Yorkshire Local Resilience Forum and city partners (as part of business as usual arrangements) has been maintained, as well as Leeds playing an active role in Yorkshire and Humber given the lead role the Chief Executive performs.
- Priorities for the council continue to be:
 - Maintaining momentum on the council and city’s preparations;
 - Dealing with uncertainty and its impacts;
 - Supporting EU citizens in Leeds to secure their rights;

- Taking a proportionate approach over the coming weeks and months.

The table below details a range of actions being taken as part of the council’s Brexit response, structured around five interrelated headings. Communications and reporting arrangements in support of these actions will continue to meet the local, regional and national demands. The plan is supported by an accompanying communications strategy and activity plan.

Each action has a named lead officer within Leeds City Council. These individuals will liaise with other internal colleagues, partner organisations and others as required in order to provide the assurance needed on progress.

Item no.	Action	Officer lead(s)	Status / Comments <i>As of 12th November 2019</i>
1. Infrastructure and supplies impact			
1.1	Work with relevant authorities, agencies and partners including emergency services, WYCA and Highways England to respond to disruption to key infrastructure such as the motorway network, ports, airports etc.	Gary Bartlett	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans are ready and relationships with key partners are in place. • Leeds Bradford Airport is low risk due to low level of air freight. Preparations more likely to be focussed around possible increase in passenger flights. • Discussions and preparations around supplies especially fuel and resources taking place. • Humber LRF continue to work on a range of scenarios for dealing with potential issues at the ports, updating this when new information becomes available. Effective liaison is in place between the LRFs across Y&H.
1.2	Assess the potential impact on key digital infrastructure and required action.	Andrew Byrom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further information expected from government imminently. Service being proactive. • International Data Transfers Working Group headed by Head of Information Management and Ethics to identify and remedy those situations where data transfers will be affected by No Deal Brexit.
1.3	Assess the possible impact on key supply chains and required actions, in particular regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Fuel supplies, including emergency provision b) Food shortages, for both consumers and contracted catering services 	Terry Pycroft Mandy Snaith Andrew Byrom Ian Cameron	Fuel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans and procedures in place and relevant stakeholders aware of arrangements under the national and local fuel emergency plan. • A table top exercise is planned to test the fuel plan. However based on planning assumptions we do not anticipate it will be activated. Food

	<p>c) Power supplies, including availability of IT equipment</p> <p>d) Supplies of medicines and medical equipment, including stockpiling arrangements</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and assessment continues about supply chain and alternative. • Ongoing concerns about food banks and food poverty given national planning assumptions which suggest limited/localised shortages but some price increases. • School meals provision - service formulated a risk register to assess and mitigate any potential impact to schools meal provision as a result of disruption to the food supply chain and any potential for increased costs as a result of increased demand to supply. Additionally, reviewing ability to change menus should supplies be affected and also to consider any potential financial implications, although this remains difficult to forecast at the present time. <p>Supply of medicines and medical supplies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing to be monitored through Health and Social Care EU Exit task group as national information is updated and local issues considered.
2. Business and economic impact			
2.1	Explore ways that financial support packages can be provided to business should they be required, including whether existing schemes can be 'flexed'.	Fiona Bolam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing to work with West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) and the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) colleagues about relevant schemes being flexible, how larger businesses can be supported, and voucher schemes for SMEs. Utilising local capacity to support businesses where possible.
2.2	Ensure effective dissemination of relevant information to businesses, e.g. specific sectoral/issues-based guidance issued by central government.	Fiona Bolam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and signposting is on WYCA website and to the gov.uk website.
2.3	Prompting and supporting businesses to undertake their own Brexit preparations, including signposting to support.	Fiona Bolam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and signposting is on WYCA website and to the gov.uk website.
2.4	Utilise key existing relationships with business and representative bodies to ensure effective two-way communications	Eve Roodhouse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business roundtable events in March 2019, September 2019 and October 2019 for both business representative organisations and business intermediaries.

	and sharing of relevant data and information. In particular consider intelligence required to inform decisions at regional and national level.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further business engagement continues with a further events scheduled in November 2019 for businesses and intermediary organisations, and the provision for more frequent contact where needed. • Further consultation has been undertaken through the economic impact study.
2.5	Monitor sectoral economic impacts using business intelligence and potentially through commissioning external analysis.	Fiona Bolam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brexit Economic Impact Assessment has been published in September 2019. • Monitoring is continuing through local intelligence gathering.
2.6	Provide proactive business support activity to respond to emerging challenges, build resilience and reduce risks to normal business operations – in particular considering the effects of uncertainty.	Phil Cole	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prolonged uncertainty remains a key challenge. • Business support team officers allocated to specific funded projects where possible. Considering how to scale additional capacity.
3. Citizens and Communities impact			
3.1	Ensure community understanding of their rights and the EU settlement processes, including implementing clear signposting.	Shaid Mahmood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several events have taken place, including events led/supported by Ambassadors to the UK. • Council signed up to provide digital assistance to the community, as well as ID checking service (free service) in five community hubs. • St Vincent's in Leeds has applied and been successful. LCC communities' team referring EUSS complex cases to St Vincent's. • LCC website page with guidance and toolkits for residents and businesses. (Link to website is here.) • LCC EU Settlement Scheme Outreach project to support "hard to reach" EU communities. Scheme expected to be live in September where local VCFS organisations apply. £20k has been allocated to a total of six organisations covering a variety of geographic areas and client groups. • Regular engagement with Home Office officials regarding aspects of the EU Settlement Scheme such as looked after children and vulnerable adults.
3.2	Proactively monitor community tensions, provide reassurance and respond appropriately when required.	Shaid Mahmood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross Council working group led by Communities and Safer Leeds progressing and monitoring community tensions.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community tensions monitoring process set up with WY Police to understand and respond to any intelligence.
3.3	<p>Effective liaison and engagement with partners to ensure a joined up approach to Brexit preparation and response, including with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools Higher/further education institutions Health sector Social care Third sector Faith organisations/leaders 	<p>Tim Pouncey Sue Wynne Ian Cameron Steve Hume / Caroline Baria Shaid Mahmood Shaid Mahmood</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surveys and events with social care providers to understand implications of EU Exit, support preparations and to understand direct impact on care providers. The sessions covered three main areas: business continuity planning, the EU Settlement Scheme and any relevant government advice that has been given on such issues as medicines, fuel etc. LCC assessing business continuity plans for providers where possible. Regular engagement with partners (e.g. health and schools) regarding Brexit preparations continuing including in relation to the EU Settlement Scheme. Health and Social Care EU Exit Task and Finish Group reconvening after national NHS event on September 5th 2019; met on 9th October 2019 and further event in December 2019. Third Sector Action Plan produced following March 2019 event. Schools – DfE survey responded to in September. ADASS survey re: the effect on adult social care staffing completed September 2019.
3.4	Ensure capability to respond to increased demand for hardship payments if required.	Andrew Cameron	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Welfare Support Scheme has the capacity and ability to respond to increases in demand. Robust monitoring in place and flexibility of support is built into the scheme.
3.5	Ensure appropriate information is provided to elected members to enable them to support the community in their wards.	Shaid Mahmood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Event with elected members around counter extremism and hate crime and advice available. Advice issued to elected members about safety.
4. Media and communications			
4.1	Develop and implement a Brexit communications strategy to support response.	Danielle Clayton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communications strategy and supporting activity in place, including primary source webpage (here) to signpost to government website. Targeted local messages to be developed around emerging issues as they occur, such as around support for foodbanks within the council.
4.2	Monitor, respond and support traditional and social media on Brexit at a city level – communicating developments while highlighting Leeds as open for business.	Nick Moore/Danielle Clayton /Donna Cox (via all channel owners)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing – no major issues flagged.

4.3	Capture the scale of enquiries, activity and impact through communications channels.	Danielle Clayton /Donna Cox	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing – no major issues flagged.
4.4	Regularly update key stakeholders across the council and city, in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cabinet, other elected members and MPs. - CLT, BCLT, Brexit working group - Key partners including WYCA, LEP, LRF and Health - Regular updates to Executive Board 	Mariana Pexton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Board reports – March/September/October 2019 • Corporate Governance and Audit report. • Members Brexit Working Group – March/September 2019. • Full Council and R&H Scrutiny Board – September 2019. • Update sent to Leeds MPs September 2019.
4.5	Ensure Government returns are handled and responses issued in a timely manner including Yorkshire and Humber LA regional returns.	Mariana Pexton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met all deadlines.
4.6	Use existing relationships with local media to seek to mitigate community tensions which may arise.	Donna Cox	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing
4.7	Ensure effective dissemination of public information, relevant advice and support to individuals, communities and partners.	Danielle Clayton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilise government-produced communications toolkit for materials. • Updated our guidance documents and internet landing page with “Get Ready for Brexit” communications toolkit that Government has shared. • Other communications tools, e.g. email footers developed to share key messages. • Toolkits for schools, children’s centres, care homes. • Social media promotion • Key message bulleting and e-newsletters
5. Organisational impact			
5.1	Ensure joined-up cross-departmental approach to Brexit preparation and response within the council.	Neil Evans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officer working group met fortnightly until June and worked effectively. Engagement with Working Group members continued where appropriate. • Working Group reconvened again and meeting approximately every two weeks. Considering the extension to 31st January, meetings still to occur as required.

5.2	Agree clear roles and responsibilities amongst key public sector partners for preparation and response phases.	Neil Evans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitated through this response plan with LCC leads liaising with partner organisations as appropriate. The Environmental Health Team are responsible for ensuring that private water supplies to both businesses and residential dwellings are safe and useable. Water companies have confirmed they will be able to support private companies in the event of a shortage of treatment chemicals.
5.3	Facilitating effective information sharing and communication between the council and the West Yorkshire LRF.	Mariana Pexton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being effectively co-ordinated through active role in LRF and sub groups. Table top LRF exercises conducted September 2019
5.4	Ensuring effective information sharing between the Council, Local NHS Partners and the West Yorkshire Local Health Resilience Partnership (LHRP).	Ian Cameron	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being effectively co-ordinated through co-chair arrangement of WY LHRP. Engagement and follow up from national NHS event on 5th September.
5.5	Ongoing assessment of the robustness and readiness of business continuity plans for the council's critical services – to be implemented as required.	Nigel Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete review was undertaken by Resilience and Emergencies team and plans refreshed where needed.
5.6	Agree in advance the temporary structures and ways of working which will come into play should an emergency situation arise – including at both centre corporate co-ordination and directorate/service levels.	Neil Evans / CLT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing.
5.7	Identify council service budgets which may require additional financial investment or underwriting as a result of reduced income or increased expenditure. Consider most effective use of funding from central government.	Victoria Bradshaw	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council awarded funds as per formula. Used for priority areas (Brexit economic Impact Assessment, Settlement Scheme, coordination and communication). Recently informed of further allocation of funds and this is being considered.
5.8	Track impact on council workforce affected by Brexit, including staff welfare, intervening as required.	Emma Browes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LCC staff alerted to Settlement Scheme including via internal website (InSite). Messages issued to reassure staff and provide options for welfare support through HELP. Trade Union working group established to maintain dialogue on Brexit and address issues as needed.

5.9	Consider the impact of staff redeployment due to Brexit response activity and/or wider related loss of staff.	Emma Browes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starters/leavers tracked monthly to establish if turnover patterns and labour demand are being affected – no evidence at present. • Dialogue with health partners and schools ongoing. • Current and emerging work permit schemes to be tracked and considered with advice given to LCC managers, plus schools. • Options for flexible deployment and other cover arrangements to release capacity to support response activity to be considered as required.
5.10	Consider need to review Best Council Plan, other relevant council strategies and our risk management approach as new intelligence arises.	Coral Main	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of strategies has been undertaken – majority very high level so not affected, underpinning activity may be however. • All corporate risks recently reviewed to ensure in particular consideration of Brexit-related community resilience and economic risks.
5.11	Ensure regular dialogue with council contractors and suppliers to identify any potential supply chain challenges early.	Dean Backhouse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement continue to engage with suppliers/contractors as required; updating procurement and tender documents to ensure future bidders must take Brexit risk into account in their tenders.
5.12	<p>Review ongoing regulatory changes as a result of Brexit to understand consequences, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data protection and data transfers - Export certificates - Procurement regulations 	Louise Whitworth Paul Spandler Dean Backhouse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officers are authorised and procedures are in place to issue export certificates for food products on request by food businesses. Additionally, Environmental Health have contacted known potential exporters of animal products to EU to discuss their future export certification requirements and provide guidance. • Food Standards Agency have released further guidance on Brexit which is currently being reviewed to determine any further requirement for changes to Environmental Health processes (review ongoing). • Environmental Health currently arranging a visit by the Food Standards Agency Imports Delivery Branch in August, including to Environmental Health and Leeds-Bradford Airport, to discuss current arrangements and any future potential direct importation of food to the airport (date to be confirmed). • The draft public procurement regulations relating to EU exit have been published and will mostly come into force on exit day, but may be revoked or amended if there is a Withdrawal Agreement.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A draft explanatory memorandum published with the above indicates that the framework and principles underlying the existing UK procurement regime remain unchanged in most respects. • Procurement unit will review the documents above and provide guidance to procurement/commissioning officers within the Council. They will also undertake a review of procurement documentation to ensure the terms used are appropriate post-Brexit. • Data protection guidance issued to local authorities by MHCLG on 4/3/19. DIS considering and progressing required action. • LCC have completed the Government survey on personal data flows in the event of a no-deal Brexit on 13th September and are analysing any potential business impact on our data storage arrangements being affect in this event.
5.13	Working with the Electoral Commission and partner organisations, ensure all relevant contingency plans are in place for the possibility of elections/public votes.	Susanna Benton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European elections successfully delivered in May 2019. • Elections team ready to respond to national developments. • Brought forward the annual canvass in 2019 to accommodate potential general election. • Discussions with MHCLG and Cabinet Office regarding potential impact of winter election on resources. • Preparations for 12th December General Election are being implemented; count venue and polling stations booked.