

REPORT FROM: CORPORATE DIRECTOR

TO: POLICY and RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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Report Author: Philip Mousdale
Tel. No: 01282661634
E-mail: Philip.mousdale@pendle.gov.uk

PREPARATIONS FOR NO DEAL BREXIT

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To update the Committee on recent developments.

1. The attached letter has been received from the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government. It signifies the new Government's intention to bring Brexit to a conclusion on 31st October and in doing so it is placing more onus on local authorities to be involved in No Deal preparations.
2. In response to the request in the letter the Corporate Director has been designated as Brexit Lead Officer.
3. The letter refers to a further £20 million funding. We have now been informed that our allocation is £17,484 the same as for all district councils. This is in addition to an allocation of £34,000 in February. So far none of this has been used. Most likely for backfilling for officers.
4. Mention is also made of the Local Resilience Forum. The Lancashire LRF consists of senior staff from the police and other emergency services, all the Lancashire councils, the NHS and Environment Agency together with representatives from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).
5. It started to hold meetings on Brexit on a weekly basis at the end of 2018 but called these to a halt in April when Article 50 was extended to 31st October. It has now re-scheduled weekly meetings which started on 5th September.
6. The challenge arising out of the letter is that councils are expected not simply to work within the LRF but proactively to identify local issues (for example shocks in the local economy or problems with supply chains) and escalate them to the LRF; and also communicate with, assist and provide reassurance to local voluntary, community and business sectors.

7. As a start we now have a prominent page on the Council website signposting readers to advice and information on other sites such as GOV.UK. We have already been promoting the EU Settlement scheme for some months.
8. To complement this work expected of us MHCLG is promising major public information campaigns starting in September and improved and better directed information for councils.
9. Attached is an action plan for Pendle. It is largely based on LRF assessments of risks in Lancashire. It will need further regular review and no doubt expansion over the coming weeks and months.
10. Preparations for No Deal Brexit will now be a standing item on Management Team agendas and further reports will be brought to this Committee as appropriate.