
Report To:	Environment and Regeneration Committee	Date:	29 August 2019
Report By:	Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration and Resources	Report No:	ENV043/19/MM
Contact Officer:	Martin McNab	Contact No:	01475 714246
Subject:	Withdrawal From the European Union - Update		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on actions taken to mitigate the potential risks arising from EU withdrawal including a 'no deal' Brexit.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Members will be aware that the current date of EU withdrawal is 31 October 2019. The risks arising from EU withdrawal and specifically from a no-deal EU exit remain largely unchanged from those pertaining in March 2018.
- 2.2 Officers are reviewing Inverclyde's readiness for a no-deal EU exit in light of this and in relation to updates from partners including COSLA, the Scottish Government and the Scottish Resilience Partnership (SRP). At the time of writing this report officers are also reviewing Inverclyde Council's position in relation to Audit Scotland's Preparedness criteria.
- 2.3 The Council's Crisis & Resilience Management Team (CRMT) has met to discuss Inverclyde's preparedness and will continue to do so in the run up to 31 October. Members will be updated as appropriate in the run-up to 31 October.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That Members note the contents of this report.

Martin McNab
Head of Environmental & Public Protection

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Following the extension of the UK's membership of the EU to 31 October 2019 in May this year preparations for EU withdrawal both nationally and at UK level were largely put on hold. There have been exceptions to this in certain regulatory areas where the impact of a "no deal" Brexit would be potentially catastrophic for exporters. At a Scottish level the seafood industry is a particular case in point. Inverclyde Council has kept a watching brief on the arrangements being proposed for the certification of exports although the impact on businesses in Inverclyde is likely to be minimal.
- 4.2 With the revised EU withdrawal date now coming closer preparations have resumed both within Inverclyde and with multi-agency partners to mitigate the impact of a possible 'no deal' Brexit. These preparations remain centred around the Reasonable Worst Case Scenarios (RWCS) envisaged in both the UK and Scottish planning assumptions. At present these remain as they were in April this year albeit the six month delay will alter the risks in different sectors.
- 4.3 Audit Scotland produced a report on this issue in October 2018 called "Withdrawal from the European Union – Key audit issues for the Scottish public sector". This report poses a number of key questions for Scottish public authorities to answer on preparedness for EU withdrawal both in a 'no deal' and more orderly scenario. Inverclyde Council's position with respect to the preparedness criteria was reported to the Committee in March and is currently under review by the Council's CRMT.

5.0 PLANNING FOR A 'NO DEAL' EXIT

- 5.1 Planning has resumed in earnest both within Inverclyde and nationally to deal with the possibility of a 'no deal' Brexit. The corporate arrangements for this remain as reported to the Committee in March 2019. Members may be aware that the UK Government has been pressing for the appointment of a "Brexit Lead Officer" in each local authority. In officers' opinion the arrangements reported to the Committee in March this year with a tactical and strategic lead meet these requirements. Should there be a need for a single Brexit lead this role would be taken by the strategic lead. Officers are also aware that a small number of Scottish authorities are recruiting specific officers to take on this role. This is not currently under consideration in Inverclyde. Members should also note that COSLA is recruiting a Local Authority EU-Exit Planning Co-ordinator to assist in planning and co-ordination. The post is funded by a contribution from each LA's Brexit funding.
- 5.2 The Council's Resilience Management Team (CRMT) has met in August to revisit the issues raised by the UK and Scottish Planning Assumptions for a 'no deal' Brexit. These are based upon a "Reasonable Worst Case Scenario" and the CRMT has looked afresh at each and the implications for Inverclyde. The CRMT has also reviewed the Council's preparedness based upon the LA readiness dashboard and will contribute to the Local Resilience Partnership's (LRP) multi-agency EU Exit planning.
- 5.3 A number of documents are currently being reviewed and updated under the auspices of the Scottish Resilience Partnership (SRP) sub-group on EU Exit Contingency Planning. These include:
- The Local Resilience Partnership preparedness checklist
 - The Risk & Mitigation document
 - The Multi-Agency Brexit Contingency Plan

The CRMT will continue to meet as appropriate in the run up to 31 October to discuss all of the outputs from this group and any action arising for Inverclyde.

6.0 AUDIT SCOTLAND PREPAREDNESS

- 6.1 Members will recall that the March 2018 report updated the Committee on the Council's status with regard to the Audit Scotland Preparedness criteria. Since that meeting the Council's Tactical Brexit lead has met with the external auditor to discuss Inverclyde's position with respect to the preparedness criteria. This will be kept under review in CRMT meetings.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Finance

There are no immediate financial implications arising from this report.

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report £000	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

Annually Recurring Costs/(savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With effect from	Annual net impact £000	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

7.2 Legal

There are no immediate legal issues arising from this report.

7.3 Human Resources

There are no immediate HR issues arising from this report.

7.4 Equalities

Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES (see attached appendix)
X	NO - This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

7.5 Repopulation

There are no impacts on repopulation arising from this report.

8.0 CONSULTATIONS

8.1 None

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 Withdrawal From the European Union, Environment & Regeneration Committee March 2018
ENV018/19/MM