

Briefing: Audit & Governance Committee

From: J Waggott

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BREXIT

1. Issue

- 1.1 To consider the implications of yesterday's MHCLG announcement on local government preparedness for Brexit and associated additional funding.
- 1.2 To note the proposal to adopt a formal corporate risk around preparing for a no deal Brexit.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 A special ELT will be arranged in the next couple of weeks to:
 - consider our planning for a no deal Brexit;
 - consider any resource implications that may draw on the funding recently made available; and
 - formalise the adoption of a corporate risk on a no deal Brexit.

3. Considerations

- 3.1 Guidance from MHCLG to assist local authority preparedness for exiting the European Union (EU) was published 28 January 2019. The guidance acknowledged that local government is critical to delivering a successful Brexit and focused on implications for:
 - Statutory services – principally focused on health and care services
 - Regulatory services – including environmental health
 - Border areas – not a significant issue for SDC
 - Supply chains – principally focused on medical/clinical
 - Data handling – referencing the ICOs advice which essentially covers GDPR (which will be incorporated into UK legislation at the point we leave the EU) and the transfer of data/information between the UK and EU/EEA (not an issue for us – although raising organisational awareness would be useful to make sure)
 - Local partnership working – LRF engagement and refers to existing guidance on Local authorities' preparedness for civil emergencies
 - Communications – recommends we have appropriate plans and activities to provide community assurance and provision of timely information, citizens' rights – including voting and candidacy rules, settlement status and workplace rights
 - Regional and local growth - developing the local economy, helping businesses to prepare for a future outside the European Union, and making use of development funding.

The announcement links to current guidance to aid ongoing Brexit preparations. ELT will be reminded to review the guidance and highlight any pertinent issues and risks and identify required actions.

- 3.2 MHCLG stated objective is to champion local government and help them to influence, prepare, adapt and innovate in response to Brexit and ensure a successful transition phase with minimal impact on council services and local people. To support this, additional funding for local government was announced. For district councils this amounts to £17.5k for each of 2018/19 and 2019/20. In the light of planning for Brexit ELT will be asked to consider what we spend this on.
- 3.3 A draft corporate risk around a no deal Brexit is appended to this briefing. In formalising this, we must consider how to develop, manage and communicate such a risk. We are arranging with other local councils to attend the LGA Comms event on this on 6 February.

4. Expectations of Audit & Governance Committee

- 4.1 To note the above information.

Draft corporate risk on Brexit

Risk:

- No Deal Brexit

Description:

- The Council fails to prepare effectively for the impact of a no deal Brexit on our communities and the delivery of council services.

Causes:

- Lack of awareness and/or understanding
- Failure to engage effectively with emergency planning partners
- Failure to consider the impact of key issues potentially arising
- Failure to plan, resource the plan and implement the plan
- Failure to communicate – to all stakeholders

Consequences

- Increase in costs
- Failure to secure adequate resources, e.g. staffing
- Failures/reductions in service delivery – and subsequent reduction on customer satisfaction
- Civil unrest

Controls – or mitigating actions in place:

- Horizon scanning – including how other local councils are responding – with regular updates to LT/HOS
- Agreed roles and responsibilities – Chief executive as strategic lead (emergency planning 'gold')
- Internal engagement across all council services
- Full participation in LRF planning activities
- A fully resourced plan for 29 March????
- Communications plan

Risk assessment:

- Impact – 1-5 – where 1 is low [to be agreed with ELT]
- likelihood – 1-5 – where 1 is low [to be agreed with ELT]