



AGENDA ITEM:

SUMMARY

Report for:	Cabinet
Date of meeting:	19th March 2019
Part:	Part I
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	Brexit Preparedness
Contact:	Cllr Andrew Williams, Leader of the Council Author/Responsible Officer; Sally Marshall, Chief Executive
Purpose of report:	For Cabinet to consider the Council's preparedness for Brexit
Recommendations	That Cabinet consider the work undertaken by officers in preparedness for Brexit
Corporate Objectives	Modern and Efficient Council
Implications:	<u>Financial</u>
Value For Money Implications'	The Secretary of State for MHCLG has announced Government funding of £35,000 for each District Council towards preparation for Brexit. This will be payable in two instalments, half in the current financial year and half in the financial year 2019/20.
	<u>Operational</u>
	The Corporate Management Team have been reviewing the implications of Brexit for the Council and have this as a standing item for discussion on the agenda for Corporate Management Team. A review of operational service business continuity plans has been undertaken.
	<u>Value for Money</u>
	Keeping service plans and business continuity plans under review should ensure that the Council can address any implications arising from Brexit and in particular a no deal situation in the most efficient and effect way possible.
Risk Implications	The implications of Brexit has been incorporated within the Council's Strategic Risk Register.

	Service Business Continuity Plans have been reviewed and updated by Group Managers.
Community Impact	The report has been prepared to respond to an issue outside of the Council's control and which may have a wide variety of possible implications. In these circumstances a Community Impact Assessment has not been prepared. The actions set out seek to minimise disruption to all parts of Dacorum's communities.
Health And Safety Implications	Health and Safety implications have been considered as part of business continuity and civil contingency planning.
Monitoring Officer/S.151 Officer Comments	<p>Monitoring Officer:</p> <p>The Council's preparations for Brexit are being continually monitored. Potential impacts and mitigations are being assessed at a service and strategic level and this will continue as progress is made towards the withdrawal date.</p> <p>S.151 Officer</p> <p>The council is continually monitoring the progress towards a final Brexit agreement. The potential financial impact is being assessed at a strategic and operational level with mitigations implemented if required.</p> <p>The MHCLG grant for Brexit preparation is available to fund any mitigating actions required as a result of the final withdrawal agreement.</p>
Consultees:	<p>The following stakeholders have been consulted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet • Corporate Management Team
Background papers:	Corporate Management Team report 21 st January 2019 Letter from Secretary of State for Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	Dacorum Borough Council (the Council) Eastern Region Local Government Association (EELGA) European Withdrawal Act 2018 (EWA18) European Union (EU) Hertfordshire Local Resilience Forum (HLRF) Local Government Association (LGA) Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)

1. Background & Context

- 1.1 Members will be aware that the European Withdrawal Act 2018 (EWA18) received Royal Assent on 26th June 2018. This Act repeals the European Communities Act 1972 on the day that the UK leaves the European Union (EU) and the EWA18 provides a functioning statute book on the day of exit. In the event that an EU Withdrawal Agreement is not agreed with the EU and approved by UK Parliament, then a 'no deal scenario' remains a possibility.
- 1.2 Representatives from the Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) wrote to Chief Executives in October 2018 regarding preparedness for Brexit stating whilst they were confident a deal would be obtained it would be prudent to prepare for a no deal scenario.
- 1.3 The Secretary of State wrote to Local Authority Leaders on 31st January providing an update on the Government's preparedness for Brexit and provided a checklist for members.
- 1.4 Further votes are due on the Brexit deal in Parliament prior to the Cabinet meeting and therefore, it may be necessary to provide a verbal update at the meeting.
- 1.5 This paper summarises action taken to date in preparation for Brexit.

2. Preparation for Brexit

- 2.1 The Council's Chief Executive and Corporate Management Team (CMT) have been keeping under review the implications of Brexit for some time.
- 2.2 In the Autumn of 2018 The Council's Strategic Risk Register was reviewed. It has been updated to include a strategic risk (Appendix A) relating to the potential implications of a no deal scenario for Brexit.
- 2.3 Work has been ongoing at a local, county, regional and national level to consider the implications for Local Government of a "no deal Brexit". The output from this work has been kept under review.
- 2.4 In particular, the LGA and District Council's Network have been representing local government's interests at a national level during the EU exit negotiations and preparations. Briefing papers have been provided by LGA and EELGA and the LGA have set up an advice hub.
- 2.5 At a County level, the Chief Executives Co-Ordinating Group have had discussions on Brexit and are being represented on the Hertfordshire Local Resilience Forum (HLRF) by Rob Bridge the Chief Executive of Welwyn Hatfield Council.
- 2.6 On a Regional Level Richard Carr, Chief Executive of Central Bedfordshire and Chair of Eastern Region Chief Executive's Group is representing the Eastern Region in meetings with MHCLG. EELGA

are also collating and providing weekly briefing notes to Chief Executives to and from MHCLG.

- 2.7 The Chief Executive has presented a paper to CMT and various work streams have been undertaken by officers in preparation for Brexit. Brexit is a standing item for discussion on the CMT agenda, a template has been prepared to enable the review of potential key implications and consideration given to required mitigations.
- 2.8 In addition, Cabinet have received a briefing on this matter.
- 2.9 The Secretary of State wrote to Local Authority Leaders on 31st January providing an update on preparedness and confirmed that District Councils will receive £35,000 funding towards the cost of preparing, this will be paid in two instalments, half in 2018/19 and half in 2019/2020. He also provided a preparedness checklist this has been incorporated into the template reviewed by CMT on an ongoing basis as referred to in paragraph 2.7 above (Appendix B).

3. Summary

- 3.1 At the time of writing this report the EWA18 has received Royal Assent but the EU Withdrawal Agreement has not been agreed. Therefore, a 'no deal scenario' remains a possibility, subject to the various votes planned in Parliament between now and 29th March 2019.
- 3.2 The Council's Corporate Management Team will continue to liaise with the LGA, EELGA and other public sector partners to ensure that the Council is as prepared as possible in the event of a 'no deal scenario' and utilise existing arrangements for Business Continuity and Civil Contingencies planning as appropriate.