

From: Roger Gough, Leader

Barbara Cooper, Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport

To: Cabinet, 30 November 2020

Subject: **EU Transition Preparedness – Update**

Summary: This report updates Cabinet Members on the work Kent County Council (KCC) is undertaking, internally and with local and national public agencies through the Kent Resilience Forum, to prepare for EU Transition on 31 December 2020. This update builds on the County Council reports from July 2018, December 2018, March 2019, September 2019 and October 2020, and several Member briefings.

Recommendation:

Cabinet is asked to:

(1) Note the KCC and local preparations for the end of the EU Transition phase.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Cabinet will recall that Members have previously received reports on Kent County Council's EU Transition preparedness, in July and December 2018; March and September 2019; and October 2020. This is alongside several Cabinet Committee reports, and All Member briefings on 5 August and 13 October 2020.
- 1.2 The EU Transition period ends on 31 December 2020. As has been stated previously, Kent's position as the gateway to Europe means that the UK's readiness for the end of the EU Transition phase relies to a great extent, on Kent's readiness. KCC along with our national and local partners is continuing to review and refine out preparations, which are being shaped by national planning assumptions. Consequently, our planning is as robust as it can be against a continuing evolving landscape, and there are still various strands of work to be delivered which are part of our ongoing dialogue with Government. These strands of work will be addressed in a paper to the December County Council.
- 1.3 This paper seeks to assure Cabinet Members that KCC is working with our partners to plan for the potential combined impacts of EU Transition, the continued response to COVID-19, and winter pressures. All Directorates are actively involved in ensuring that the Council can meet its statutory obligations and Kent's public services can continue to be delivered. Importantly, our EU

Transition plans have been strengthened and tested by our response to COVID-19.

2. Local Resilience and Preparedness

2.1 County Infrastructure and the Traffic Management Plan

Operation Fennel

2.2 A Traffic Management Plan has been developed by the multi-agency Kent Resilience Forum (KRF) to deal with the Government's reasonable worst-case scenario (RWCS) of up to 7,000 HGVs delayed within Kent. The plan allows for various 'triggers' depending on the overall quantity of HGVs that are delayed in crossing the short straits:

- Between 27 and 29 December, Highways England (HE) will install the Quick Movable Barrier (QMB) on the M20 between Junction 9 at Ashford and Junction 8 at Hollingbourne, thereby ensuring M20 Brock is ready to be used should it be necessary from 1 January.
- On Day One (1 January 2021) Freight will initially continue to use existing routes to the ports via M2/A2 & M20/A20. New Inland Border Facilities (IBF) will be open at Ebbsfleet and Sevington to enable HMRC checks as required. KCC is managing the construction works at the Sevington site on behalf of the Department for Transport (DfT).
- The first trigger will be the requirement for TAP A20 approaching Dover, which can hold up to 500 HGVs. All Port Traffic will be directed to use M20/A20.
- All port-bound freight will use the coastbound carriageway between M20 J8 & J9 in 'free flow' within Brock.
- The second trigger will be when TAP20 is filling and/or Eurotunnel freight is likely to queue onto M20 at J11A, at this point Brock will become 'active' with HGVs held at traffic lights prior to J9 with Port of Dover traffic using lane 3 and Eurotunnel freight using the hard shoulder. In addition, the IBF at Sevington can hold freight; total capacity for the two locations is around 3,200.
- If Brock is reaching capacity, then Dover-bound HGVs will be diverted to Manston. Manston can hold up to 4,000 HGVs, with an additional 300 held at TAP256, on the A256 at Whitfield.

Traffic Compliance and Enforcement

2.3 Key to the Operation Fennel Traffic Management Plan is compliance and enforcement. To ensure that any impact on local communities, the local road network and key NHS locations is minimal, HGVs heading to the ports will only legally be allowed to use specified routes to the ports and the following measures will be in place:

- All freight heading to the ports must be border ready and have a Kent Access Permit (KAP). Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras will be located on the M2 & M20 to monitor port-bound freight. Non-border ready freight can be stopped by Kent Police or DVSA and fined up to £300 per offence.
- KCC will work with local District, Borough & Parish councils to identify locations where non-compliant HGVs may be leaving the prescribed routes and parking anti-socially on residential roads. KCC is currently exploring a scheme with the DfT for those areas particularly impacted by Brock, TAP20, the route to Manston and TAP256, to tackle anti-social HGV parking on residential roads during the first six months post-EU Transition. We have asked the DfT to grant KCC a temporary power that would enable KCC to provide a robust deterrent to HGVs parking on residential roads.
- Haulage companies based in East Kent and around Faversham and Teynham will be supplied with a Local Haulage Permit (LHP) to enable them to travel directly to the ports without having to travel through M20 Brock. LHPs are supplied by KCC to all local companies that have registered vehicles that are licenced to travel to Europe, however they must be compliant with a KAP.

Prioritised Freight

- 2.4 Plans are being developed to enable Scottish fish and day-old chicks that must arrive in France within a specified time to be allowed to avoid the queues at Brock.
- 2.5 Kent Resilience Forum Multi-Agency Activity**
- 2.6 A programme of events in support of preparedness is being undertaken by the Kent Resilience Forum (KRF) partners, including KCC, to train, test and exercise the plans which will continue until the middle of December. These events include:
- Peer review briefings and challenge on all aspects of the Operation Fennel plan, involving KRF partners including KCC, Kent Police, Kent Fire and Rescue Service, NHS, Department for Transport, and the Cabinet Office.
 - Constant review of the plans and cross linkages with other plans, for example winter weather plans
 - Command and control walk-through to validate structures and operational communications
 - Media and communications exercise
 - Driver welfare exercise
 - Stress test of what would happen were there to be a COVID-19 outbreak in a lorry park
 - Exercise Lundy IV, a comprehensive virtual exercise with small breakout groups working through scenarios to test the deployment of the plan and the various tactical options available to commanders

3. KCC Readiness

3.1 Cross-Directorate Resilience Forum

- 3.2 The Cross-Directorate Resilience Forum (CDRF) continues to meet monthly and consists of the chairs of each of the four Directorate Resilience Groups as well as other key officers from across the organisation including Emergency Planning, Risk, Procurement, Infrastructure, People & Communications, Internal Audit, and Health and Safety. It is chaired by the Director for Environment, Planning and Enforcement, who is the Director with responsibility for Emergency Planning. Its purpose is to ensure the whole organisation's preparedness and resilience for any type of emergency or incident that may impact KCC as an organisation, the residents and businesses we serve, or the outcomes we deliver.
- 3.3 When necessary, daily meetings of 'Extraordinary CDRF' are stood up informed by the prevailing risk level. This would also usually trigger and/or meet daily reporting requirements into both the KRF and from there into Government, depending on the nature of the incident.
- 3.4 With professional advice and assistance provided by KCC's Resilience and Emergency Planning Team, the CDRF is responsible for securing and ensuring robust Business Continuity Plans (BCPs) across all KCC services, and ensuring that robust and timely Situation Reports ('Sit Reps') are produced daily/weekly depending on the incident. These in turn create the KCC 'Common Operating Picture' which is shared with partner and Government agencies, as appropriate.

4. Resilience and Emergency Planning

- 4.1 KCC's Resilience and Emergency Planning Service (REPS) has operated the County Emergency Centre (CEC) at County Hall throughout the pandemic, ensuring an appropriate level of tactical command and control across KCC services and single point of contact for partners.
- 4.2 The REPS team co-ordinate Business Continuity Planning, ensuring all services are prepared for any disruptions to service delivery, with a current particular focus on the pandemic, EU Transition, and winter pressures.
- 4.3 To ensure preparedness across KCC for EU Transition, the REPS team has facilitated seven EU Transition themed emergency planning exercises since 1 April 2019. A 'virtual' EU Transition exercise has also been developed and is accessible via KNet. 210 colleagues from across KCC participated in these exercises, which have focused on both response and recovery from foreseeable potential challenges from EU Transition.

5. The Cumulative Impacts

- 5.1 The REPS team have proposed an enhanced corporate emergency planning and business continuity model, to ensure optimal preparedness for impacts arising from the pandemic, EU Transition, and winter pressures. This includes enhanced County Emergency Centre (CEC) operation, the introduction of a 24/7 Senior Duty Officer (SDO) function, increased frequency of situation reporting, and establishment of a corporate EU Transition/Pandemic/Winter Pressures Business Continuity Group.
- 5.2 The REPS team's proposed model also includes the following:
- that an enhanced CEC operation rota starts from 28 December 2020 and runs, if required, until 31 March 2021. The rota identifies a REPS emergency co-ordinator as single point of contact for any urgent EU Transition, pandemic and winter pressures related issues.
 - that the CEC will operate between 08:00 and 20:00 from Monday to Friday and transfer to the Duty Emergency Planning Officer and proposed Senior Duty Officer overnight, at weekends and on Bank Holidays.
 - the REPS emergency co-ordinator will be added to the established weekly Command Rota
 - a rota will be compiled by REPS and populated by key individual KCC services, identifying an on-call resilience single point of contact between 08:00 – 20:00 from Monday to Friday, with overnight, weekend and Bank Holiday periods covered by routine/existing duty, standby and call out systems.
- 5.3 The REPS team currently collate data from individual services into weekly situation reports (Sit Reps) relating to COVID-19, EU Transition and winter pressures. Sit Reps will more than likely move to daily reporting once EU Transition initiates, which the REPS team will continue to manage, making sure any issues which arise are responded to appropriately and swiftly. These Sit Reps provide KCC's Corporate Management Team (CMT), Kent Resilience Forum (KRF) partners, and Government Departments with an informed overview of KCC's current position and issues.
- 5.4 Daily meetings of the KCC EU Transition/Pandemic/Winter Pressures Business Continuity Group will be reinstated in December. Individual Directorate Resilience Groups will also establish increased meeting frequencies informed by individual operational requirements.

6. Business Continuity Plans (BCPs)

- 6.1 The REPS team monitors all KCC Business Continuity Plans (BCPs). The REPS team are currently contacting all plan owners, with BCPs due to be reviewed early next year, to ensure they are updated ahead of EU Transition.

6.2 The REPS team has advised that BCP plan owners learn lessons from the initial pandemic response, assess and critique how their team worked and ensure this is reflected in their BCPs. Work has also been undertaken with the Internal Communications team to develop messages for KMail and KNet, encouraging Business Continuity Planning, and sharing various forms of support and assistance.

7. Directorate Preparedness

7.1 Adult Social Care and Health (ASCH)

7.2 Adult Social Care and Health (ASCH) undertook extensive planning in preparation for EU Exit during 2019/20, including tabletop exercises with all ASCH services and business partners, and creating the ASCH EU Exit Management Action Plan which contributed significantly to the Directorate's response capabilities leading up to COVID-19. Further work in preparation for the end of EU Transition includes:

- The Directorate's resilience programmes have been reviewed against the UK government's Reasonable Worst-Case Scenarios for the end of EU Transition. ASCH is reflecting on operational and strategic lessons arising from the response to COVID-19 and a recent internal audit. This looked at the Directorate's response to the pandemic. Key strengths identified included the effectiveness of ASCH's System Resilience Plan, and the extensive preparations for the UK leaving the European Union on 31 January 2020, which benefitted the response, as well as effective communication between the System Resilience Group and the connectivity with KCC's and KRF's systems. Areas for development included better recording of training, and closer links to Public Health.
- The annual review for all service BCPs will be completed by the end November 2020 and the Senior Management Team will participate in the KRF's command and control training.
- ASCH's capacity and demand management plan has been reviewed and updated alongside the cold weather plan with the aim of reducing pressure and managing demand for critical services. The Directorate remains vigilant to the potential for short-term disruption to local deliveries and supplies including food and fuel across Dover, Thanet and the M20 corridor, including Ashford. Established structures will continue to be used to maintain a two-way flow of information between the Directorate Resilience Group and teams, services and providers operating within the communities most likely to experience local transport disruption.
- The Directorate continues to engage in multi-agency testing opportunities, for example, Exercise Lundy III and the upcoming Lundy IV.

Public Health

7.3 The Coronavirus pandemic is making planning for the end of EU Transition more complicated as all operations related to EU Transition are now required to be conducted in a COVID-19 secure way and existing infrastructure related to the provision of testing for the virus is able to continue to function through ongoing COVID-19 impacts. Currently the whole country had been put into a national lockdown to manage a universal rising number of COVID-19 positive cases across the country.

7.4 Planning for EU Transition and the ongoing management of COVID-19 includes:

- Public Health England and local NHS input into ensuring local operations related to EU Transition are COVID-19 secure, especially provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to workforce and hygiene installations for drivers when queued
- Accessibility to testing for COVID-19, especially for the key infrastructure providers, such as the Port of Dover and Eurotunnel in order to maintain business continuity in the two critical operations
- Development of joint exercises to ensure shared understanding of how systems will work to keep staff and residents as safe as possible in relation to COVID-19 and EU Transition
- Working with the NHS to ensure the local infrastructure is protected from potential additional demands from the Inland Border Facility sites, such as the Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother Hospital (QEQM) in Margate and near Manston, and the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford which is critical for a number of acute conditions including major trauma, heart attacks and stroke

7.5 Children, Young People and Education (CYPE)

7.6 The CYPE Resilience Group, which feeds into the KCC cross-directorate group, has continued to keep the withdrawal from the EU as a standing item on the agenda. Many of the suggested actions and solutions that were advised to schools in KCC briefings last year have already been put in place due to COVID-19, particularly the implementation of some form of remote learning, and managing staff and student absenteeism.

7.7 The CYPE support and advice systems, as advised in last year's briefings remain in place, and link closely with the planning advice received from the KRF, for example, CYPE officers have participated in Exercise Lundy III and are fully apprised of the plans in Operation Fennel. CYPE has identified schools in the vicinity of the Inland Border Facility (IBF) sites, Manston, Ebbsfleet and Waterbrook sites - and remains ready to support these schools,

and any others, should they be impacted by the escalation of Operation Fennel.

- 7.8 A comprehensive briefing and FAQs will again be provided to schools as an update to guidance previously received. These will include the additional challenges of COVID-19 and winter weather. The guidance provides answers to questions that staff and parents may raise and encourages the schools to consider what further measures they may need to put in place. The Fair Access service is working with the Transport Integration Unit and Special Schools to ensure adequate transport provision for Special Educational Needs pupils. In addition, Integrated Children's Services are updating their guidance to their teams, including managing support to Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers, responding to Safeguarding and Child Protection cases and coordinating teams to have a presence at Manston and Sevington.
- 7.9 Any advice to schools and other education providers will be published on Kelsi and will be updated as additional intelligence is received.
- 7.10 Recently the Leader of the Council met with the Department for Education (DfE) Minister responsible for EU Transition planning; a member of the DfE's Transition Team has been invited to participate in the fortnightly CYPE Resilience Group meetings.

7.11 Growth, Environment and Transport (GET)

Highways and Transport

- 7.12 In addition to County Infrastructure and the Traffic Management Plan, there are BCPs in place for the services. These have all been reviewed to consider EU Transition as well as COVID-19 and Winter pressures within the last 30 days.
- 7.13 Congestion which might impact services remains the biggest risk from EU Transition; however, in conjunction with all partners, full plans have been drawn up to ensure that all statutory services can continue with a phased approach to reducing non-essential services in the event of continued disruption, if required.

Trading Standards

- 7.14 Kent Trading Standards have a number of workstreams in preparing for the end of EU Transition. This includes putting in place a permanently staffed Ports Imports Compliance Team in Dover, which has been in full operation since April 2019 and comprises five Import Compliance Officers and a Senior Import Compliance Officer. KTS has also been working directly with Government Departments on areas that include product safety, animal health and movement, and feeds.

- 7.15 Further information on Trading Standards' preparations is provided in the paper that was presented to the Growth, Economic Development and Communities (GEDC) Cabinet Committee on 17 November 2020. The paper can be accessed through this [link](#) to the Committee papers.

Kent Scientific Services (KSS)

- 7.16 There is likely to be at least one new border control point established close to the key Short Straits crossings at Dover and Eurotunnel. This new control point is likely to facilitate the importation of both food and feed of a high-risk nature via the Short Straits, and KSS provides the Public Analyst service to all those likely to be involved.
- 7.17 COVID-19 secure facilities and work practices have been introduced to enable the laboratory to continue to provide these services at the capacity likely to be required in a safe and sustainable way.
- 7.18 KSS continues to maintain stocks and supplies sufficient to provide continuous operations beyond the reasonable worst-case disruption period envisaged. The supplies are relevant to all aspects of KSS's work including that for the Kent Coroners.

Business Support from Economic Development and Public Protection

- 7.19 The Economic Development team is in contact with business support organisations via the 'Kent International Business' programme. This monitors and shares up-to-date information about likely changes affecting Kent exporters.
- 7.20 KCC is working with organisations such as the Federation of Small Businesses and the British Chambers of Commerce to cascade relevant information on preparing for the new arrangements to Kent businesses and will continue to do so as appropriate.
- 7.21 Businesses are also being signposted to 'gov.uk/transition' and a Kent.gov.uk site set up by Public Protection. Public Protection is implementing an End of Transition Campaign aimed at preparing exporters for the end of Transition. The campaign focusses on three main issues where it is likely there will be no concession to non-compliance and goods will be turned back at the border: authorised representation in the EU, labelling and testing. Further information about this campaign is provided in the 17 November GEDC paper.
- 7.22 Public Protection is also creating new content for Kent.gov.uk, using business Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn channels for the key messages, and working with partners (Produced in Kent, Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce and others) using 'Live Events' on Zoom to give exporters very specific regulatory

advice. Short films explaining legislation and compliance are also being developed for the KCC website business hub.

Community Safety

- 7.23 The Community Safety BCP has been updated in preparation for the end of EU Transition. The Community Warden Service is prepared to provide targeted support to vulnerable and isolated residents if required with the appropriate PPE and emergency supplies being put in place.
- 7.24 The emergency supplies consist of basic food and drink provision which can be utilised where wardens come in contact with those residents who have been cut off from supplies and the service can then directly link them into local community/food hubs and services as appropriate. Community Wardens are 'Bronze' level Community Liaison Officer trained and able to assist on the frontline if required.

Coroners

- 7.25 The Coroners service is updating its BCP to ensure that it has a workflow for ongoing operational delivery in preparation for potential traffic disruption that could affect access to funeral directors' premises, scenes of death and mortuaries, leading to delays and a knock-on effect on mortuary capacity. It is also carrying out work on its contractual arrangements with funeral directors and mortuaries to address some of the potential risks.
- 7.26 Additionally, the KRF's Death Process Management Group which has representation from all the relevant agencies and partners, has oversight of mortuary capacity and temporary body storage, and has protocols and systems in place from its ongoing work on COVID-19 response.

Libraries, Registration and Archives

- 7.27 Staff will continue to work flexibly, as developed in response to COVID-19 with front of house staff working at the closest/most accessible location. Registration of birth/death locations will also be prioritised, with District Hub libraries as the highest priority. Ceremonies could have timings disrupted so the service will engage with external venues and manage arrangements in our own Register offices to allow for flexibility if travel delays are an issue.

Waste Management

- 7.28 Waste management have liaised with District Authorities to understand the extended collection requirements they may have and have conducted extensive preparation discussions with the Transfer Station operators, the Final Disposal Outlets, and waste off-takers. This will ensure continuity of service, with increased accessibility into the Transfer Stations and onward

movement of waste during the evening, as well as the late-night acceptance of the materials at the end destinations.

- 7.29 It should be noted that there is a risk associated with the resourcing of extended hours at the Transfer Stations which require specialist plant operators, hauliers and weighbridge personnel, all of which are in high demand throughout Kent. A period of intensive training is being undertaken to mitigate the risk where possible, however the operating hours will need to be determined by the availability of professional and trained resources.

7.30 Strategic and Corporate Services

Infrastructure - Property

- 7.31 Many of the measures implemented to maintain business functionality during the COVID-19 lockdown have continued as measures to mitigate any disruption to property operations, particularly the capital programme delivery and facilities management services as a result of the EU Transition.
- 7.32 Established contingency plans are in place to ensure that key property contractors can continue to deliver services. There are regular communications with key supply chain partners to raise and discuss any issues throughout the supply chain of both labour and resources. Steps taken to support critical business activity include:
- stockpiling commonly required materials and consumables
 - seeking UK based suppliers and workforce
 - Devising logistics plans in the event of any disruption to the transport or road network.

Infrastructure - Technology

- 7.33 We continue to support a remote workforce with approximately 6,500 staff regularly using systems from home or remote locations rather than from designated KCC buildings. The systems are stable and all services report business continuity as being maintained. Systems are in place to enable the distribution and availability of IT kit.
- 7.34 The impact on data sharing between the EU and UK is being assessed. All existing contractual arrangements should be covered by previous data sharing regulations, but new contracts will need to be reviewed with data clauses reflecting the UK/EU Transition restrictions.

Finance

- 7.35 As the detail of the arrangements post-EU Transition are established, impacts could emerge for government aid, grants and funding, i.e. sources of income

for KCC. The Finance Team has the relevant policies and processes in place and is well placed to manage and mitigate potential scenarios.

- 7.36 The government has provided grant to support authorities with the additional costs associated with planning for EU Transition. The initial grant was paid as flat rate per authority in 2018/19 and 2019/20. The amount for each county council was £87,500. Further grants were announced in August 2019 which provided an additional £87,500 for each county council and a targeted allocation for authorities with major ports; KCC's share of this targeted funding for ports was £1million. In total KCC has received £1,262,500 in EU Transition grants plus the £293,387 for Kent Resilience Forum. Total spending on preparations was £458,400 in 2018/19 and £1,710,800 in 2019/20. Forecast spending in 2020/21 on preparations is £619,100. This results in an overall shortfall of £1,232,400 compared to grants received which would need to be financed from the Council's reserves.

People and Communications

- 7.37 Planning is well embedded and additional staff are being recruited to Kent Communications to provide additional resources to support all communications relating to EU Transition in the county. A multimedia marketing campaign is planned in partnership with the Kent Messenger Group and a campaign co-ordinator is being recruited. It is anticipated that there will be additional pressures on the Contact Centre and plans are underway to recruit and train additional resources if required.
- 7.38 The work of People & Communications that has supported the transition to home working due to COVID-19 will also mitigate some of the potential impact on the workforce.

8. Increased Activity to Address Potential Scenarios

- 8.1 The weekly KCC Command Rota now includes an out-of-hours contact from Public Health, and work is ongoing to incorporate a single point of contact for Trading Standards, with proposed changes to County Emergency Centre operation also to be reflected in this rota. This will be in conjunction with the proposed new rota for key contacts across individual KCC services, this will allow the REPS team to co-ordinate and address all foreseeable potential scenarios.
- 8.2 The enhancements of CEC operation, including the 08:00-20:00 working hours, increased out-of-hours cover and potential for assimilation of a REPS emergency co-ordinator, will help address potential scenarios, such as any unforeseen emergencies that will have to be dealt with simultaneously to Transition, winter pressures and issues arising from COVID-19.

- 8.3 As previously referenced, it is proposed that the existing 24/7 Duty Emergency Planning Officer function is supplemented and enhanced through the introduction of a new Senior Duty Officer role, provisionally operating from 28 December 2020 until 31 March 2021, when its operation will be reviewed. This proposed innovation reflects the system successfully operated by Kent Highways colleagues.
- 8.4 It is envisaged that daily Sit Reps will be reinstated in December, with the specific start date to be informed by the prevailing risk level and KRF/Government Common Operating Picture reporting requirements.

9. Impact on Supply Chains & Commissioning

Strategic Commissioning

- 9.1 Since the last update on preparedness for the end of the EU Transition period, Strategic Commissioning and Service Directorates have continued to work closely with the Council's partners, trade associations and providers across sectors, in order to develop a detailed understanding of potential impacts and to prepare for any new arrangements that may be required. Preparations have included a focus on the variety of potential impacts that could result from a convergence of the end of the EU Transition, national and local lockdowns, and winter events.
- 9.2 The continued supply of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) has emerged as a new risk due to the outbreak of COVID-19. However, central government now has extensive supplies of PPE and the Council holds a 12-week stockpile at its Aylesford depot that will cover both KCC's own requirements and those of key services including, but not limited to, Adult Social Care services. To mitigate the risk of distribution from Aylesford being disrupted, the Council has been working closely with the Department of Health and Social Care to deliver additional quantities of PPE to key service providers during December to last several weeks. KCC is also making arrangements for stockpiles of PPE to be held at several locations across Kent that can be accessed locally.
- 9.3 Contingency plans for the continuation of key commissioned services have been developed with providers over some time and have now been used extensively in practice during recent major incidents, including the COVID-19 outbreak. There has been a particular emphasis on our vulnerable residents and the remote delivery of services, wherever possible. As a part of our ongoing engagement with providers, several scenario planning workshops have been run and further are planned in the future, with learning points from the impact of COVID-19 assimilated into business continuity plans across sectors.

9.4 As the end of the EU Transition period approaches, business continuity, the associated risks, and appropriate mitigations will continue to form a part of our contract management and regular conversations with providers. Recording and monitoring systems are also in place to ensure the earliest warning of any potential impact to the provision of key commissioned services, which will enable swift action to be taken, where required. In the future, we will continue to rely on our good and longstanding relationships with providers and, as necessary, we can take a flexible approach to contractual arrangements to ensure continuity as also evidenced during the COVID-19 outbreak.

10. Conclusion

10.1 The County Council, along with our local and national multi-agency partners, is confident our preparations for parallel emergencies and incidents on, and after, 31 December 2020, are as robust as they can be against the current environment.

10.2 As detailed in the above sections, all Directorates have plans in place to ensure that the Council can meet its statutory obligations and Kent's public services can continue to be delivered. These plans have been strengthened and tested by our response to COVID-19 and from previous emergencies; for example, the joint learning across all partners who dealt with the 2015 Operation Stack event and winter pressures in previous years.

11. Recommendation(s)

Recommendation:

Cabinet is asked to:

(1) Note the KCC and local preparations for the end of the EU Transition phase.

12. Contact Details

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13. Background Documents

- Brexit Preparedness - Kent County Council Position to County Council (July 2018)
- Business Preparedness for Brexit update to Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee (July 2018)
- Trading Standards update to Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee (September 2018)

- Brexit Preparedness - Kent County Council Update to County Council (December 2018)
- Preparations by HM Government and the European Commission for a No-Deal Brexit to Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee (January 2019)
- Corporate Risk Register in relation to Brexit to Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee (January 2019)
- Supporting Kent Exporters to Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee (March 2019)
- Brexit Preparedness - Kent County Council Update (March 2019)
- Risk Management: Growth, Environment and Transport Directorate to Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee (March 2019)
- Brexit: Strategic and Corporate Services Business Continuity Arrangements to the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee (March 2019)
- Brexit Preparedness – Kent County Council Update (September 2019)
- EU Transition Preparedness – Kent County Council Update (October 2020)
- Trading Standards Activity and Preparations for the end of Transition - Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee (November 2020)