

# BREXIT

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# Background

- On 23 June 2016 the UK voted in the EU referendum on whether the UK should 'remain' in the EU or 'leave'.
- 52% of those that took part in the referendum voted to leave the EU. The Government triggered Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty on 29 March 2017, initiating the start of EU and UK negotiations.
- The timeline for negotiations was two years as stated in the Treaty meaning the deadline to leave the EU is 29 March 2019.
- In Southwark over 72% of the residents who took part in the referendum voted to remain in the EU. Southwark is home to 41,000 non-Irish EU citizens, whose status in the UK following the departure from the EU is unclear. Providing certainty to those citizens and ensuring their rights are protected is a priority for the council.
- Continued Uncertainty

# Council Preparations

- Southwark Council has taken a number of steps to prepare for the impact of the UK leaving the EU on the borough and our residents:
- The council allocated the responsibility for Brexit Preparedness to the Director of Communities to look at how leaving the EU would impact the local economy and the legal status of Southwark's 41,000 non- Irish EU nationals.
- Following the local elections in May 2018, the Leader of the Council created a cabinet member portfolio with responsibility for Brexit (cabinet member for finance, performance and Brexit). The Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance and Brexit, Cllr Victoria Mills, established the Southwark Brexit Panel on 9 July 2018 to enable a cross party group of councillors to examine the impact of Brexit in Southwark.
- Over the last six months the panel has taken evidence from a wide range of individuals and organisations, including businesses, local public services, and voluntary and community organisations.

The panel made a number of recommendations, based on the evidence it gathered, to Southwark's cabinet to prepare for the impact of Brexit on the council. These recommendations were agreed by cabinet on 22 January.

# Cabinet decisions

- Accept the recommendations from the Southwark Brexit Panel.
- In accepting the recommendations, note that further work will be undertaken by officers in particular relation to:
  - a. Collating information and resources about support for EU citizens, the settled status application process and other relevant information, and signpost to voluntary and community sector organisations offering support;
  - b. Identify vulnerable individuals and groups who may struggle with the settled status process or be unaware of what they need to do, including older people (including in care homes or supported housing) and some people with disabilities, and work with voluntary and community groups to ensure those people are communicated with effectively;
  - c. Use the outcomes of this work to help establish the process for a one-off fund that will make grants to voluntary and community groups to support vulnerable people through Brexit;
  - d. Work with London First and other relevant groups to develop a plan for, protect and enhance our local tourist offer including undertaking work that seeks to promote the strong cultural offer in Southwark.
- Publish the Council's risk register. Including making sure contractors have continuity plans in place and that the council is working closely with the GLA and other London Boroughs to ensure we have robust emergency planning in place especially in the event of no deal.

# The Risk Register

- The register was published on the council's website alongside advice for residents, businesses, staff and partners.
- The government is responsible for leading the withdrawal process. At the point of publication the likely outcome remains unclear. There are theories about the impact of different scenarios, and the government is responsible for mitigating the potential risks such as disruption to food and medical supplies.
- Southwark's responsibility is continuing to provide local services, and manage disruption to residents, businesses and the borough as a whole. To do this we need to remain alive to the impact of different scenarios and, where possible, put measures in place to mitigate any impact. The risk register sets out the broad areas of concern, and the actions we are taking to manage those.
- The risk register assumes scenarios and the impact on our borough that range from a managed deal between the UK and EU through to no deal.
- It recognises residents and business may turn to the council for support, advice and assistance . To ensure we can do that effectively it remains imperative that proper guidance and financial support is provided by central government at this time of great uncertainty for all in the borough.
- The risk register sets out risks which the council has identified as being particularly pertinent with regard to any Brexit impact on our borough. The register is consistent with the council's corporate approach to risk management whereby the council identifies its risks using a framework that is agreed annually under our decision making processes.

# Risks

- Detrimental impacts on communities
- Detrimental impact on staff and students who live, work and study in Southwark
- Increased service demand due to economic downturn
- Greater impact on vulnerable people and groups
- Resident awareness
- Business uncertainty
- Recruitment and retention issues
- Health sector impacts

# Risks

- Consumer protection and regulation
- Food shortages
- Fuel shortages
- Shortages of medical equipment and supplies
- Loss of teaching staff
- Waste and environment
- Increasing costs of goods
- Legal & Regulatory changes
- Civil contingencies
- Children in Care
- Voting