



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

To: All Leaders of English local authorities

The Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP
*Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and
Local Government*

**Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local
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Preparations for Brexit

I wanted to take the opportunity to write to update you on preparations for Brexit.

The Government remains focussed on securing a deal with the EU allowing both national and local government the agreed implementation period, until December 2020, to manage a successful transition. However, Government also believes it to be responsible and prudent to prepare for a potential 'No Deal' scenario. Indeed, Cabinet recently discussed this point and has agreed that we must step up our 'No Deal' preparations.

A significant amount of work has been undertaken nationally and I know local government has similarly risen to the challenge. However, whichever scenario develops in 2019, Government is clear about the important role local government will play in ensuring our successful transition, but you are not alone.

As I set out at the LGA conference last year, I am absolutely committed to both support local government and champion the sector's interests across Whitehall as we prepare for Brexit. At the same time, it is essential you are all undertaking the necessary local planning and preparations. As elected representatives responsible for the public services upon which all our citizens rely, no matter our political views, I am sure we can agree that maximising the opportunities of Brexit whilst mitigating any potential short-term adverse impacts must be our priority. As such, I wanted to write to you to set out:

- i) the support that the Government is committed to providing local authorities; and
- ii) the Government's expectations in terms of local authority preparedness between now and the end of March.

Support from Government - EU Exit Local Government Delivery Board

As you may be aware, last year I established a Board which brings together sector leaders from the LGA, County Councils Network, District Councils Network, London Councils and the Core and Key City Groupings with Ministers from a range of departments to discuss the most pressing Brexit issues for local government. This Board has proved to be invaluable and will continue throughout 2019 as the key forum for Brexit concerns and opportunities to be discussed and for sector preparedness and Government support to be reviewed.

Support from Government – Technical advice

My officials, working with colleagues from across Whitehall recently hosted a series of regional workshops to provide appropriate technical advice to your chief officers and heads of service. To date, I understand that in excess of 350 officers from over 200 local authorities have attended four events across the country, with very positive feedback received. I am pleased to confirm that we will build on these events and the provision of advice and guidance from government officials to your officers will continue at pace throughout 2019.

Councillors are often the first port of call for queries from local businesses and residents and therefore need and want access to Government's Brexit advice. To this end, I am pleased to confirm that MHCLG has developed a dedicated webpage for local government that signposts to all published Government guidance on the Government's website (Gov.uk)¹.

In addition, attached to this letter, you will find a check-list based on the guidance above, which sets out the main ways in which Brexit is expected to affect your council's business. I hope this will help you in identifying and prioritising the actions you need to take. My officials will be writing to your officers with more detail and supporting information.

Support from Government – funding

I am pleased to confirm that MHCLG has been successful in securing additional resources from HMT as part of the Brexit funding announced by the Chancellor at Budget, to which I have added from Departmental resources. This week I announced £56.5 million of funding to help you prepare for EU Exit. Councils will receive £20 million this financial year as well as £20 million to spend in the next financial year to fund additional planning and capacity. Across the two years, all district councils will receive £35,000, all county councils will receive £175,000, all unitaries will receive £210,000 and all combined authorities will receive £182,000. £1.5 million will be allocated in 2018/19 only to specific local authorities facing immediate impacts from local ports, with details of the allocation and distribution of that funding to be announced shortly. I am retaining £10 million for allocation during 2019/20 to respond to specific local costs that may only become evident in the months after we exit the EU. Finally, £5 million will be split between teams in my Department and the local government sector for specific purposes such as strengthening resilience preparations and supporting communities. My officials will write to your officers with details. This funding will help councils to adapt to changes caused by Brexit, while still protecting vital local services.

¹ [Local Government Brexit Preparedness](#)

Finally, I would like to thank you for your resilience throughout this uncertain period and for the ongoing work you are undertaking within your authority and with your local partners to prepare for EU exit.

If you would like to further discuss content of this letter, please do get in contact with my office via LSEngagement@communities.gov.uk

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'James Brokenshire', is centered on the page. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a small horizontal line under the first few letters.

RT HON JAMES BROKESHIRE MP