



The Rt. Hon James Brokenshire MP
Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and
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Ministry of Housing, Communities and
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Dear Secretary of State

Sustainable Communities Act 2007: A Proposal relating to the impacts on communities of the withdrawal of the UK from the European Union

This is a Proposal made by Plymouth City Council in response to your invitation under section 5A(b) (subsequent invitations) of the above Act. Whilst this proposal relates to the area of Plymouth, I am aware of similar proposals from other local authorities.

The Proposal

Immediate receipt by Plymouth City Council of all government departmental information and analysis pertaining to the impacts upon Plymouth's communities and businesses of the UK's withdrawal from the European Union, including any information deemed by the government to be confidential.

Rationale for the proposal

The Council has identified a number of risks to the economic and social wellbeing of its communities as a result of the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018. In order to properly mitigate these risks, the Council seeks to obtain sufficient information to inform its engagement with businesses, institutions and communities, decision-making and resource allocation. The issues identified where the Council is seeking further information pertaining to Plymouth include, but are not limited to:

- The detail of EU powers affecting local government that will be incorporated into domestic law, and the extent to which devolution of such powers to local authorities is planned.
- The likely impacts on the supply of EU migrant labour based on all the likely withdrawal scenarios, given the city's significant reliance on EU migrant labour in the academic, advanced engineering, manufacturing, construction, tourism and care sectors, and concerns about the future of circa 18,000 citizens of the city born outside the UK.
- Likely impacts on foreign direct investment, given half of the city's twenty largest companies are foreign owned and half of these are located here specifically to access EU markets

- Domestic and international connectivity, specifically the risks posed by new customs requirements to existing routes for goods including agricultural and fishing produce and the timeliness of any transitional arrangements.
- Loss of direct EU financial support, including plans for the continuing support of ERDF, ESIF and EMFF funded projects after 2020.
- Impact on the Higher Education Sector, including the reduction of EU student numbers, classification of international students and impacts on the supply of EU based academic professionals.
- Likely impacts on social cohesion under different withdrawal scenarios and plans to mitigate these.

Consultation

In May 2018, Plymouth City Council put in place the Brexit, Infrastructure and Legislative Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee with a specific remit to:

- Review the impact of Brexit on the city of Plymouth
- Propose measures that Government should take to provide stability for the council and partners in light of Brexit
- Explore powers that could be devolved from the EU directly to local authorities

The above Committee is the vehicle by which the Council has, and continues to engage over this proposal with persons who in the opinion of the authority are representatives of interested local persons in the interpretation of the Sustainable Communities Regulations 2012 (the Regulations). These persons include representatives of the manufacturing, Higher Education, technology, engineering, catering, fisheries and tourism sectors, as well as Plymouth's diverse communities.

Next Steps

I look forward to the publication of your decision and reasons in relation to this proposal as set out in the Regulations. In light of the significant issues set out above, and the potential for significant impacts on our city, its businesses and citizens, I'm sure that you'll agree the importance of an early response.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Tudor Evans OBE
Leader, Plymouth City Council