

Councillor Peter Jones
Convener, Brexit Scrutiny Working Group

Please ask for: Councillor Rob Stewart
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Our Ref: RS/JW
Your Ref:
Date: 22 October 2019

BY EMAIL

Dear Councillor Jones

Thank you for your letter dated 8 October 2019 following the Brexit Scrutiny Working Group, which met on 23 September 2019 to enable discussion and questions about Council preparedness for Brexit and resilience.

I am pleased that you found the briefing informative and that we reassured you on our resilience and preparedness for Brexit. We are as ready as we can be although no organisation can prepare for every eventuality that may arise as a result of Brexit.

The likelihood of any disruption to fuel supplies is very low and this is agreed by all partners who have business continuity plans in-place; many of the emergency services have significant fuel reserves like ourselves in addition to our electric vehicle fleet. Public transportation has also been planning for some time and have contingency plans in-place to ensure service delivery. There has also been a significant amount of work around communications, a part of which will be reassurance messaging to help prevent any false emergency being caused through panic buying.

Although we are focussed on ensuring that the risks from Brexit are mitigated, we are cognisant of potential opportunities, such as those that may arise for the port in Swansea; there will be an increasing concentration on this and on the post-Brexit situation as the Brexit deadline approaches.

Officers have prepared for Brexit whilst undertaking their existing work and all of this has been done within current budgets; this activity is difficult to differentiate and quantify. However, whilst the additional work has proved very challenging for the staff involved there have been some spin-off benefits that will be more widely useful and applicable beyond Brexit; for example, Brexit has provided a good opportunity to review and revise business continuity plans and improve confidence that these arrangements are robust.

Good communication with staff, stakeholders and citizens – including EU citizens living in Swansea – is vital to our preparations. A communications plan is in place, which aims to signpost people to UK and Welsh Government information on preparing for Brexit and to do so in a measured way that informs, reassures and does not create unnecessary anxiety and associated problems, such as panic fuel buying I mentioned earlier. This will continue after Brexit as we deal with any consequences and seek to identify and exploit any opportunities that may emerge.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rob Stewart', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**COUNCILLOR ROB STEWART
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**