



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Clive Betts MP
Chair of the Housing, Communities and
Local Government Committee
House of Commons
London
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Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP

*Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and
Local Government*

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Dear Clive,

I am writing to inform you and the members of the Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee that I have recently written to the Leaders of all local authorities in England and to the chairs of Local Resilience Forums about local Brexit preparations.

In its report on Brexit and Local Government, the Committee recommended we maintain our existing systems for mutual engagement and information sharing with local government. The measures set out below aim to build on and strengthen those arrangements.

The UK will be leaving the European Union on 31 October 2019. We would, of course, prefer to leave with a deal and we will work in an energetic and determined way to get that better deal. If it is not possible to reach a deal, we will leave without one and we will make all necessary preparations to do so. Local authorities have a vital role to play, and I will be working closely with them to ensure that we are ready for our departure from the European Union at local level.

To help us to work together, I have asked the Leaders of all local authorities in England to designate a senior officer in their authority as Brexit Lead Officer. That officer's role will include ensuring the council has taken all reasonable steps to prepare for our exit from the EU on 31 October. The Brexit Lead Officer will oversee the expenditure of the specific Brexit funding allocated to their council, and act as the principal contact point for central Government.

On 3 August, I announced £20 million of funding for all local authorities in England to aid Brexit preparations, which will support the work of this critical post. This is in addition to the £40 million previously allocated to all local authorities. The Government recognises that certain areas are more likely to face pressures, and I am currently considering how best to allocate this funding. Funding will go directly to councils, enabling them to increase their capacity, staffing and resource spending on Brexit as best suits local need. In addition, the Government's overall £2.1 billion package of Brexit funding includes many other measures which will support local readiness including for capital spending. HM Treasury has announced £344 million to help get

new border and customs operations ready, for example by improving transport infrastructure around ports, and £108 million to promote and support business.

I am keen to listen to councils' ideas and concerns and to promote collaboration and best practice on how councils can effectively prepare for Brexit. Today I hosted a Brexit Briefing for over 300 council Leaders, Chief Executives and Brexit Lead Officers. I am most grateful for the hard work and cooperation of Councillors and Officers.

I have also written to Local Resilience Forum (Forum) Chairs about strengthening our resilience plans. Forums are multi-agency partnerships made up of representatives from local public services, including the emergency services, local authorities and others. They work to identify potential risks and produce emergency plans to either prevent or mitigate the impact of any incident on their local communities. I have asked Forums to produce a Brexit specific plan during August that demonstrates full and robust consideration of local resilience impacts. I have asked that the plans contain local planning assumptions specific to preparing for our exit from the EU and an explanation of how the Forum works with local government, including the new Brexit Lead Officers. I have also confirmed Government will be releasing £4 million in additional funding for Forums to support them in this work. I have spoken to a number of Forum chairs since my appointment and will remain in close contact should they need assistance or guidance.

My top priority is to ensure local communities are prepared for our departure from the European Union. These measures will help us to strengthen local Brexit preparations, working in partnership with local government. I would be happy to discuss the above with colleagues who would like further information. Please feel free to contact me if you would find this useful.

I am copying this letter to Hilary Benn MP, Chair of the Exiting the EU Committee.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Jenrick." The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a short horizontal line.

RT HON ROBERT JENRICK MP