

Guidance to Kent Schools to plan for any logistical or organisational challenges following the UK leaving the European Union on Friday, 31 October 2019

Background

The government has stated that the UK will leave the EU on 31 October 2019, regardless of whether there is a formal agreement in place.

The official position is that the government would seek a formal agreement or treaty in preference to leaving without one. If this is the case then there will likely be a transition period, during which time, things will in the main, continue as they are.

If there is no agreement on a final deal, then the likely scenario is that the UK will simply leave the EU with no formal agreement in place. Although there will likely be last-minute fixes put in place to alleviate some of the challenges, the likelihood is that there will be a period of disruption.

Kent's position as host to Dover, Sheerness, Kent Thameside, Dartford crossing, Eurotunnel, two Eurostar stations, the M20, M25, M2/A2 and M26 might mean that any impact could be greater here than elsewhere in the UK.

Potential Challenges to Schools and Communities

- Increase in border checks at the Channel ports and Eurotunnel possibly resulting in a slowdown of operations and build-up of freight transport around the ports and surrounding areas, and along the M2, M20, A20 and Manston (Op Brock, Brock-Manston and Brock-M26). The mitigation and control measures for such a build-up of freight are shown in appendices 1 to 3. The level of disruption caused by this build-up of freight on the Kent road network will differ from district to district but it is fair to assume more parts of Kent could be affected. The main effects of severe road network congestion would likely be:
 - Staff, parent and pupil/student transport challenges
 - School & settings closures or part closures due to staff shortages
 - Increased use of public transport beyond current capacity (including air, train and bus)
 - Possible disruption for local communities and businesses
 - Possible disruption to school and special school pupil/student transport
 - Possible disruption to out of school and extra-curricular activity
 - Potential for late collection of pupils/students from schools
- Logistical delays causing possible supply-chain disruption, resulting in challenges in maintaining service delivery including food, fuel, medicines and essential contractors.
- Potential for increased numbers of migrants arriving in Kent as a consequence of the increased opportunity afforded by congestion on the Continent, including unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.
- Possible reduction to air quality due to more traffic congestion.

Period of Disruption

The government considers that the disruption could continue for up to three months. During this time, the level of disruption could fluctuate. The reduction in the level of disruption will likely be gradual and it may take weeks for services to return to stability.

KCC CYPE has also provided a detailed FAQ to advise schools of the issues and how to function during periods of disruption.

November heralds the autumn period, where the weather starts to impact on normal operations. The following three months will see the County in winter, where any disruption caused by Brexit could be exacerbated by weather-related factors. Some long-range weather forecasts suggest that temperatures could be lower than last winter.

Disruption in the first week is likely to revolve around increased traffic congestion due to freight not moving through the terminals as quickly as it needs to. This would likely be localised in Eastern and Southern Kent but could spread if the freight delays become worse than forecast.

The impact on schools would likely be restricted to staff and pupil delays, but this would impact more on the M20 and M2/A2 corridors, and in and around the port areas.

Affected schools may need to:

- Reschedule meetings and other planned events
- Ensure that all internal communications are clear, relevant and timely
- Consider implementing more efficient waste management solutions
- Initiate any agreed emergency, Business Continuity Plans
- Maintain close and regular liaison with contractors on their continuing ability to provide their services.

KCC has received advice from the Government that other parties may consider their own action during the period of disruption. This could include European industrial action, cyber-attacks, etc.

What Can Schools and Settings Do Now?

- Business continuity
 - Review your BCP in line with the potential challenges
- School Management
 - Ensure that all internal communications are clear, relevant and timely
 - Look at your Winter Planning Guidance and implement the measures suggested
 - Consider what you can do to reduce your school waste
 - Liaise with contractors on their Business Continuity arrangements, especially food, fuel and utilities, specialist contractors and site security
 - Consider planning for possible restricting movement around the school site if air quality deteriorates
 - Consider planning for additional security if there is traffic congestion nearby
 - Consider road safety, with the increased traffic and impatience of drivers
 - Review the school travel plans
- Staffing

- Check which staff might be affected, before they are affected
- What mitigation can you put in place? Alternative transport arrangements, i.e. walking, cycling, train, bus, car share?
- Consider scheduling meetings and other planned events, especially off-site.
- Reminder of Emergency Planning for Kent Schools Guidance
- These issues should be a standing item on staff and Governor meeting agendas
- Consider whether staff can be shared? Consider contractual, insurance and curriculum issues

Students/Pupils

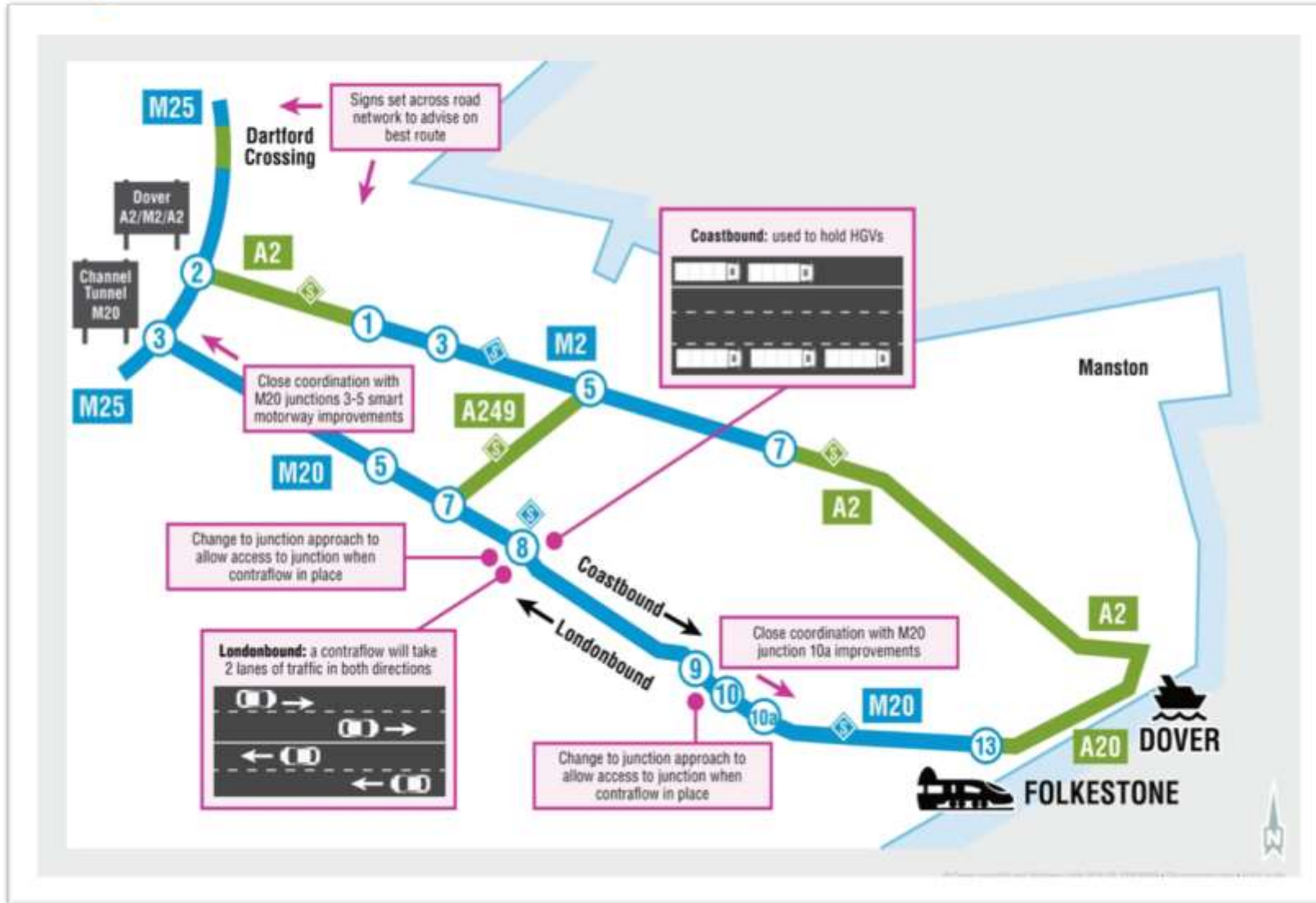
- How will Pupil/Student absences be managed?
- Examinations – be mindful of possible disruption through pupils/staff absence, even delivery of examination materials
- Consider postponing off-site activities, such as pre-booked trips, residentials, travel to other events, sports matches, etc.
- Speak to home to school transport providers (KCC is liaising with public transport)
- Liaise early with EHPS/Social Workers as absences may affect their ability to manage specific cases
- Liaise with health services re: medication availability and staff logistics
- Initiate a dialogue with parents to ask what they can do to support schools
- Review school closure process, including part closure alternatives and 'child care' only scenarios?
- Staff: pupil/student ratios & risk assessments – e.g. for partial school opening
- Consider reviewing your Code of Conduct/staff practice during an emergency
- Late collection arrangements/policies to be reviewed/introduced
- Consider the effect on vulnerable or disabled students/pupils

Other Issues

Following your initial discussions, it is important that if you identify an issue or service that you cannot mitigate for, you should inform your Area Education Officer.

KCC has been asked to calculate the approximate cost of planning for Brexit. We would, therefore, ask that you keep a record of how many staff hours you dedicate to planning for Brexit and what level of staff were involved. Ideally, a total cost calculated by hours/salary would be even more useful.

Operation Brock



M26 Lorry Parking Capacity



Map showing Op. Brock, Op. Stack, Lorry Park locations (red) and Ports (orange)

