

Guidance to Kent Schools to plan for any logistical or organisational challenges following the UK leaving the European Union on Friday, 29 March 2019

Background

The government has stated that the UK will leave the EU on 29 March 2019 and has published a leaving agreement.

The leaving agreement must be passed by Parliament and if so agreed, a transition period of 20 months will begin, during which time things will in the main, continue as they are.

However, the transition period conditions are likely to be subject to the UK parliament voting to pass the Government's deal. If there is no agreement on a final deal, then a 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 to many areas of life in Kent.

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 all parts of Kent will be affected. The main effects of severe road network congestion would be:
 - Staff, parent and pupil/student transport challenges
 - School & settings closure 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 Continent, including unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.
- Reduced air quality due to more traffic congestion

Period of Disruption

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

KCC CYPE are using a three-stage measure to describe the severity of the disruption and the action that schools and settings need to take. These are low, moderate and severe.

We will be providing detailed guidance in January on how we would advise schools to function during periods of disruption, when the picture is more clear.

The 29th March is a Friday. The following week (week commencing 1 April) is for many schools, the last week before schools break up for the two-week Easter holiday, returning on Tuesday 23 April.

Disruption in the first week is likely to revolve around seeing increasing amounts of traffic congestion due to freight not moving through the terminals as quickly as it needs to. This would likely be localised in the Eastern part of 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 ports 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.

These two weeks are school holidays for most schools, with 23rd April being the most likely return date. It is quite possible that during this week (week 4), day to day school management issues could be considerably more disrupted from Week 1.

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
 - Consider introducing more efficient waste management solutions
 - Liaise with contractors on their Business Continuity arrangements, especially food, fuel and utilities, specialist contractors and site security

- Consider planning for possible lock down if air quality deteriorates
 - Consider planning for additional security if congested traffic 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 meeting agendas
 - Consider whether staff can be shared? Consider contractual, insurance and curriculum issues.

Students/Pupils

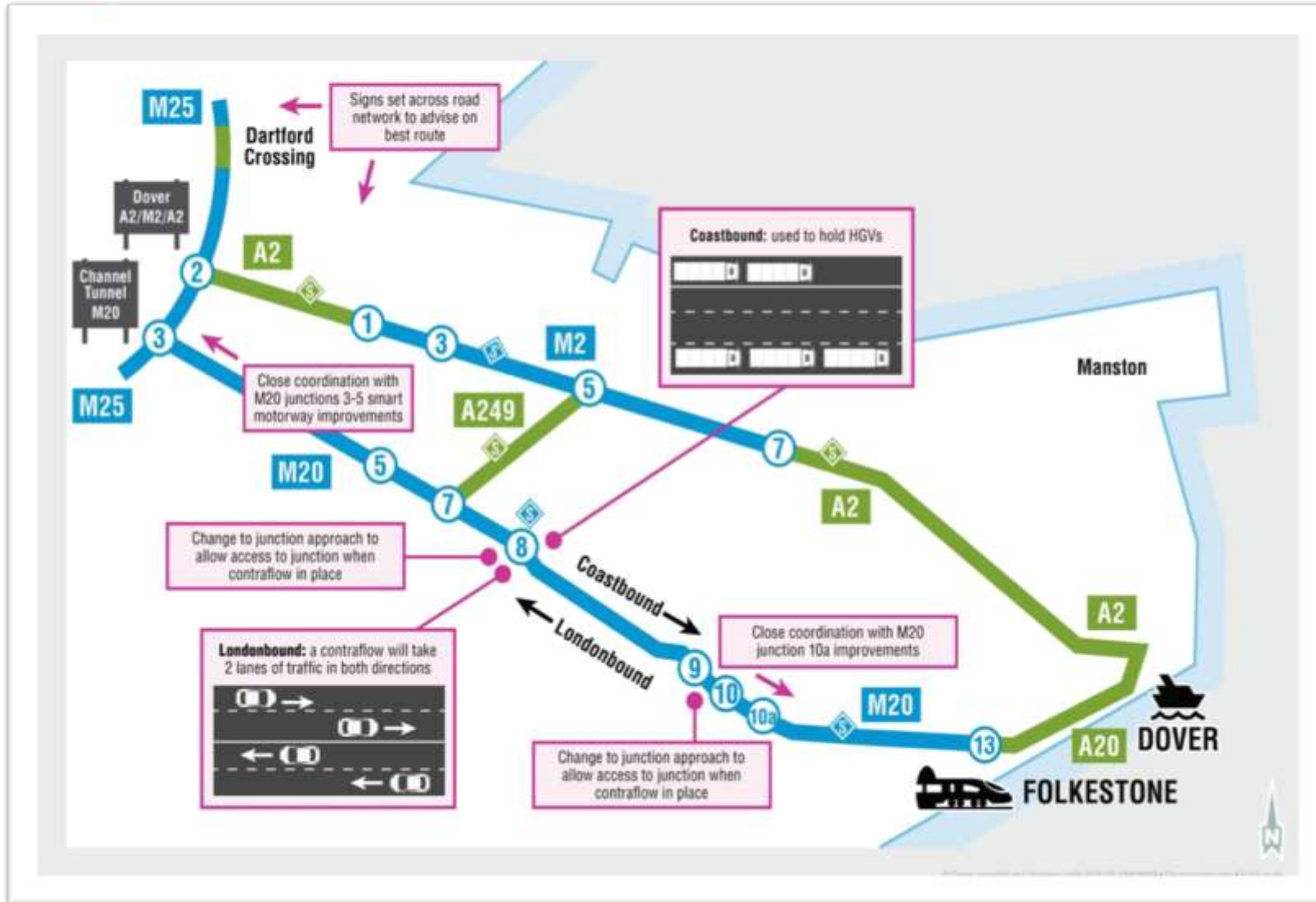
- How will Pupil/Student absences be managed?
- Examinations – be mindful of possible disruption through pupils/staff absence, even delivery of examination materials
- Consider postponing off-site activities, such as pre-booked trips, residentials, travel to other events, sports matches, etc.
- Speak 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



