

**Written evidence submitted by Roger Gough Leader of Kent County Council (FRE0148)**

Thank you for your letter dated 12 November asking for information for the Committee on the Future Relationship with the EU. I have provided answers for each of your questions below.

As you quite rightly say in your letter Kent's readiness for dealing with potential increased friction at the Port of Dover and Eurotunnel is key to the UK's readiness.

We have worked closely with the national departments, particularly BPDG, DfT, HMRC, DEFRA and MHCLG as well as our local partners as part of the Kent Resilience Forum (KRF) in defining the traffic management plans for 1 January 2021 – referred to as the Operation Fennel Plan. We have used as the basis for our assumptions the Government's Reasonable Worst Case Scenario of 7000 freight delayed in Kent for up to 2 days.

The plans have also been defined by the Government leasing and purchasing sites in Kent including Ebbsfleet, Sevington, Waterbrook, Manston and a future site in Dover for traffic operations post 1 July.

**Traffic disruption**

**Q1. What assessment has Kent County Council and its partner organisations made of possible traffic disruption in Kent when the UK leaves the Transition period on 1 January 2021? And is it possible to anticipate when the most likely period for disruption in Kent might be?**

We have based our planning on the Government's Reasonable Worst Case Scenarios (RWCS) of 7000 freight delayed in Kent for up to 2 days. The assumptions state that there could be a significant drop in disruption and improvement in flow capacity within the first three months as fewer unready HGVs arrive at the border.

Based on the national planning assumptions, local analytical work is continuing in relation to possible length of queues, their locations, and the impacts on the local roads.

**Q2. What is Kent County Council's strategy for managing any traffic disruption in Kent once the UK leaves the Transition period on 1 January 2021?**

KCC's is a key partner of the Kent Resilience Forum (and

chairs the Strategic Co-ordinating Group) and it is the KRF that has worked on the traffic management plans.

The KRF's Operation Fennel Plan describes the traffic management plan for Kent taking account of RWCS, and the sites procured by HMG.

The Op Fennel plans define the trigger points for moving through the various stages of the plan. However, the KRF will continue to assess the prevailing conditions and risks and threats and if circumstances demand (i.e. serious fire/Road Traffic Accident) the plan can be varied.

**Q3. Do you have the necessary powers and resources to direct freight traffic? If not, what powers and resources are needed and when do you expect to have them?**

It is important to understand that currently only Kent Police and DVSA have the powers to direct freight traffic.

KCC are working with DfT to employ traffic marshals that are accredited to direct, hold and restrict traffic on the public highway. This additional resource is essential to assist existing authorities with traffic management on the roads in Kent and will be available for January 2021.

In addition, KCC is seeking temporary powers for the highway authority to be able to clamp HGVs parking anti socially on our residential areas. DfT have been very positive and we are expecting a positive outcome shortly.

**The Kent Access Permit**

**Q4. When will guidance on the operation of the Kent Access Permit be published?**

Information on the KAP is included in the HMG Border Operating Model and we understand that BPDG have been testing the model with stakeholders and that it will be available to trade and hauliers from 14 December.

**Q5. In your traffic management plan, what assumptions have you made about levels of compliance with the Kent Access Permit (KAP)?**

This would be for BPDG or DfT to share.

We as local partners do not have any assumptions for level of compliance. But the traffic management plan whilst planned for compliance with the KAP includes a Compliance and Enforcement Plan which is designed to deal with any non-compliance. Use of HMG agreed Statutory Instruments defines the strategic and local roads to be used by freight crossing the Straits and allows fines of £300 to be charged to freight using other roads in Kent or for not having a valid KAP.

**Q6. Who will be responsible for enforcing the Kent Access Permit? How will the enforcement authorities know which lorries entering Kent do or do not have a Kent Access Permit? And how many enforcement officers will be needed to properly enforce the Kent Access Permit?**

The DfT have led a local multi agency compliance and enforcement cell and have prepared a plan involving ANPR and interceptions of non-compliant freight by the Police and DVSA.

Important to this plan will be the powers to clamp HGVs leaving the prescribed routes and parking anti socially on our residential roads.

**Q7. How will the local hauliers permit work? And how will the enforcement authorities distinguish between lorries carrying goods for export and those whose destination is in Kent?**

Local Haulier permits (LHPs) will be supplied by KCC to local haulage companies with an 'O' licence to cross the channel in East Kent (Canterbury, Thanet, Dover, Folkestone & Hythe, and Ashford) as well as the eastern part of the borough of Swale including Faversham and Teynham. These companies will have a unique permit to be displayed in the windscreen. DVSA and Kent Police will receive information from the ANPR system of freight heading to the ports without a Kent Access Permit.

Generally, those working within Kent have a different type of licence so would not be stopped. If they are stopped, they will simply need to show their delivery details.

### **Kent's Traffic Management Plan**

**Q8. Kent's Traffic Management Plan expects the Government to divert HGVs and prevent further freight from entering Kent as the number of HGVs being held approaches 7000. How will this be done?**

This is an area of key concern for KCC and the KRF. To date we have not received any details of the Government's national plans should it look as if the level of HGVs entering Kent to use either the Port of Dover or Eurotunnel threaten to overwhelm our capacity.

Our plans for 1 January onwards include daily and ongoing communication with the national Border Impact Centre and BPDG. But we still do not know the national plans for diverting freight away from Kent if it became necessary.

**Q9. What are the criteria for deciding which freight might benefit from having priority routes to avoid traffic queues? How do you expect priority freight to be**

## **managed in Kent?**

HMG has defined prioritised freight as Scottish seafood and day old chicks.

Freight will be mustered at Ebbsfleet and then allocated a unique permit that must be affixed to the HGV and be clearly visible to enforcement agencies to allow the vehicle to bypass M20 Brock by using the contraflow to Port of Dover.

### **Q10. How will priority freight be managed in the event of disruption? And what will happen to coaches and other tourist traffic as those flows hopefully restart? How do you plan to balance the relative priorities?**

KRF retains ultimate decision making as to how the traffic management plans are deployed locally.

The KRF traffic management plan contains options for managing non-freight traffic (passengers and tourists). If there is disruption at the ports, and taking account of the prevailing conditions, the KRF will make the decision on whether to prioritise passengers over freight

## **Infrastructure**

### **Q11. Please list the sites in Kent where new infrastructure is being developed in order to facilitate exports from 1 January 2021 and imports from July 2021. For each site, what activities are expected to take place, has construction started and when will the site be fully operational?**

HMG is responsible for securing the sites necessary for the end of transition on 1 January and for the introduction of import controls from 1 July. Significant progress has been made to prepare the sites for 1 January

The following sites have been secured and the latest progress is summarised below:

- Sevington – DfT procured the site as an Inland Border Facility (IBF) and for lorry parking. KCC is undertaking the construction works on their behalf. Work commenced in July. All of the groundworks are complete as is much of the parking and internal roads. Acoustic fencing, landscaping including ponds, perimeter secure fences, the diversion and improvement of Public Rights of Ways are in progress.  
To date, over 300,000 tonnes of aggregate from local quarries has been used, over 20 sub-contractors have been involved, mainly from local companies, 14km of kerbing and 60km of ducting has been laid.
- The Waterbrook site was available from last year and all works are complete to enable use by HMG if required as a contingency for the Sevington site.

- HMG has extended its use of Ebbsfleet and the site is available for HMRC checks as well as being able to allow prioritised freight to congregate.
- HMG have confirmed the availability of the site at Manston for 6 months. The site has capacity for 4,000 freight and will be available as an IBF if required.
- Works on TAP256 are completed thereby enabling HGVs to be held close to the Port.
- There will be an additional site in Dover for 1 July but DfT is still in commercial negotiations with the site owners.

**Q12. What contingency plans are in place in the event that the sites identified in your answer to the previous question, reach capacity?**

The Op Fennel plan has worked to the Government's RWCS of 7000 freight for up to 2 days for a period of 3 months. The KRF will be in close contact with BPDG and the Border Impact Centre closely monitoring freight flows and delays. Should Kent face a situation where capacity is likely to be exceeded the expectation is that HMG will seek to divert/advice freight not to travel to Kent.

**Q13. Please can you outline what facilities will be provided for drivers in lorry parks and as part of Operations Brock and Stack?**

HMG is responsible for providing on site facilities for freight drivers at both Manston and Sevington. The KRF is seeking assurances that appropriate medical and welfare facilities are available for drivers, thereby protecting local communities and importantly the local NHS and health infrastructure.

For freight drivers in Op Brock, the KRF has a Driver Welfare Plan which can be activated if required. The plan covers the provision of food, water, warmth and sanitation. The facilities that may be provided will depend on the dynamic situation.

**Port Infrastructure**

**Q14. What changes are being made to the infrastructure, including to access roads and parking facilities, for**

**a) the Port of Dover**

This is a matter for BPDG who are in the process of assessing the bids to the Port Infrastructure Fund

**b) Eurotunnel**

See above

**c) any other port in Kent? And when will any works be completed?**

See above

**SPS checks**

**Q15. What physical structures and resourcing decisions are you putting in place in order to carry out the necessary sanitary and phyto-sanitary checks on imports?**

Kent County Council Trading Standards Service is not involved in this aspect of import control. These checks are carried out by DEFRA, the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA), and the Port Health Authorities. The Government's Border Operating Model provides a phased approach of checks required on these products originating from the EU. Initial checks from 1 January 2021 will be carried out by APHA, and in Kent, will only involve Plants and Plant Products. On 1 April 2021, additional document checks will begin on Phytosanitary products imported from the EU. From 1 July 2021 full checks on all EU imports begin with the Border Control Posts at Sevington, Ashford with another BCP planned for a site in Dover. Discussions on the resources required (both facilities and staff) are currently being conducted between DEFRA and the respective district authorities - Ashford and Dover councils.

**Q16. What will happen in practical terms to HGVs arriving in the UK with loads that will need to be checked? How will they be re-routed from their port of entry to the relevant border control point and how will they be tracked?**

Discussions are taking place with DEFRA, BPDG, HMRC and DfT around where inbound freight will be directed to from 1 July 2021 when full import controls are implemented.

***December 2020***



# Committee on the Future Relationship with the European Union

House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA

Email: [freucom@parliament.uk](mailto:freucom@parliament.uk) Website: <https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/366/committee-on-the-future-relationship-with-the-european-union/>

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12 November 2020

Dear Roger,

Yesterday the Committee held an evidence session on border arrangements. I'm sorry that no one from Kent County Council was able to take part but I appreciate that this is a difficult and busy time for all. A transcript of the session will be available on the Committee's website shortly and it can be watched using the [parliamentlive.tv](http://parliamentlive.tv) archive.

It was clear from the evidence we heard that the situation in Kent has national significance. It would help the Committee's deliberations if you were able to answer the following questions.

## **Traffic disruption**

- Q1 What assessment has Kent County Council and its partner organisations made of possible traffic disruption in Kent when the UK leaves the Transition period on 1 January 2021? And is it possible to anticipate when the most likely period for disruption in Kent might be?
- Q2 What is Kent County Council's strategy for managing any traffic disruption in Kent once the UK leaves the Transition period on 1 January 2021?
- Q3 Do you have the necessary powers and resources to direct freight traffic? If not, what powers and resources are needed and when do you expect to have them?

## **The Kent Access Permit**

- Q4 When will guidance on the operation of the Kent Access Permit be published?
- Q5 In your traffic management plan, what assumptions have you made about levels of compliance with the Kent Access Permit?
- Q6 Who will be responsible for enforcing the Kent Access Permit? How will the enforcement authorities know which lorries entering Kent do or do not have a Kent Access Permit? And how many enforcement officers will be needed to properly enforce the Kent Access Permit?
- Q7 How will the local hauliers permit work? And how will the enforcement authorities distinguish between lorries carrying goods for export and those whose destination is in Kent?

## **Kent's Traffic Management Plan**

- Q8 Kent's Traffic Management Plan expects the Government to divert HGVs and prevent further freight from entering Kent as the number of HGVs being held approaches 7000. How will this be done?
- Q9 What are the criteria for deciding which freight might benefit from having priority routes to avoid traffic queues? How do you expect priority freight to be managed in Kent?
- Q10 How will priority freight be managed in the event of disruption? And what will happen to coaches and other tourist traffic as those flows hopefully restart? How do you plan to balance the relative priorities?

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- Q12 What contingency plans are in place in the event that the sites identified in your answer to the previous question, reach capacity?
- Q13 Please can you outline what facilities will be provided for drivers in lorry parks and as part of Operations Brock and Stack?

## **Port Infrastructure**

- Q14 What changes are being made to the infrastructure, including to access roads and parking facilities, for a) the Port of Dover b) Eurotunnel and c) any other port in Kent? And when will any works be completed?

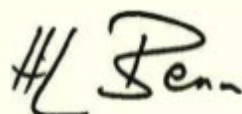
## **SPS checks**

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- Q16 What will happen in practical terms to HGVs arriving in the UK with loads that will need to be checked? How will they be re-routed from their port of entry to the relevant border control point and how will they be tracked?

It would help the Committee if we could have a response by 30 November 2020. I expect that the Committee will wish to publish this correspondence.

Should you need any further information, the Committee staff will be happy to discuss the inquiry or this request. You can contact Gordon Clarke, the Clerk of the Committee at [clarkeg@parliament.uk](mailto:clarkeg@parliament.uk) or on 020 7219 2712.

Yours,



**Hilary Benn**  
**Chair of the Committee**