Oldham Borough Council

Council Meeting
Wednesday 13 July 2016

OLDHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

To: ALL MEMBERS OF OLDHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL,
CIVIC CENTRE, OLDHAM

Tuesday, 5 July 2016

9 European Union Referendum - Impact on Oldham and Greater Manchester (Pages 1 - 30)

PROCEDURE FOR NOTICE OF MOTIONS
NO AMENDMENT

MOTION – Mover of the Motion to MOVE

↓

MOTION – Seconder of the Motion to SECOND – May reserve right to speak

↓

DEBATE ON THE MOTION: Include Timings

↓

MOVER of Motion – Right of Reply

↓

VOTE – For/Against/Abstain

↓

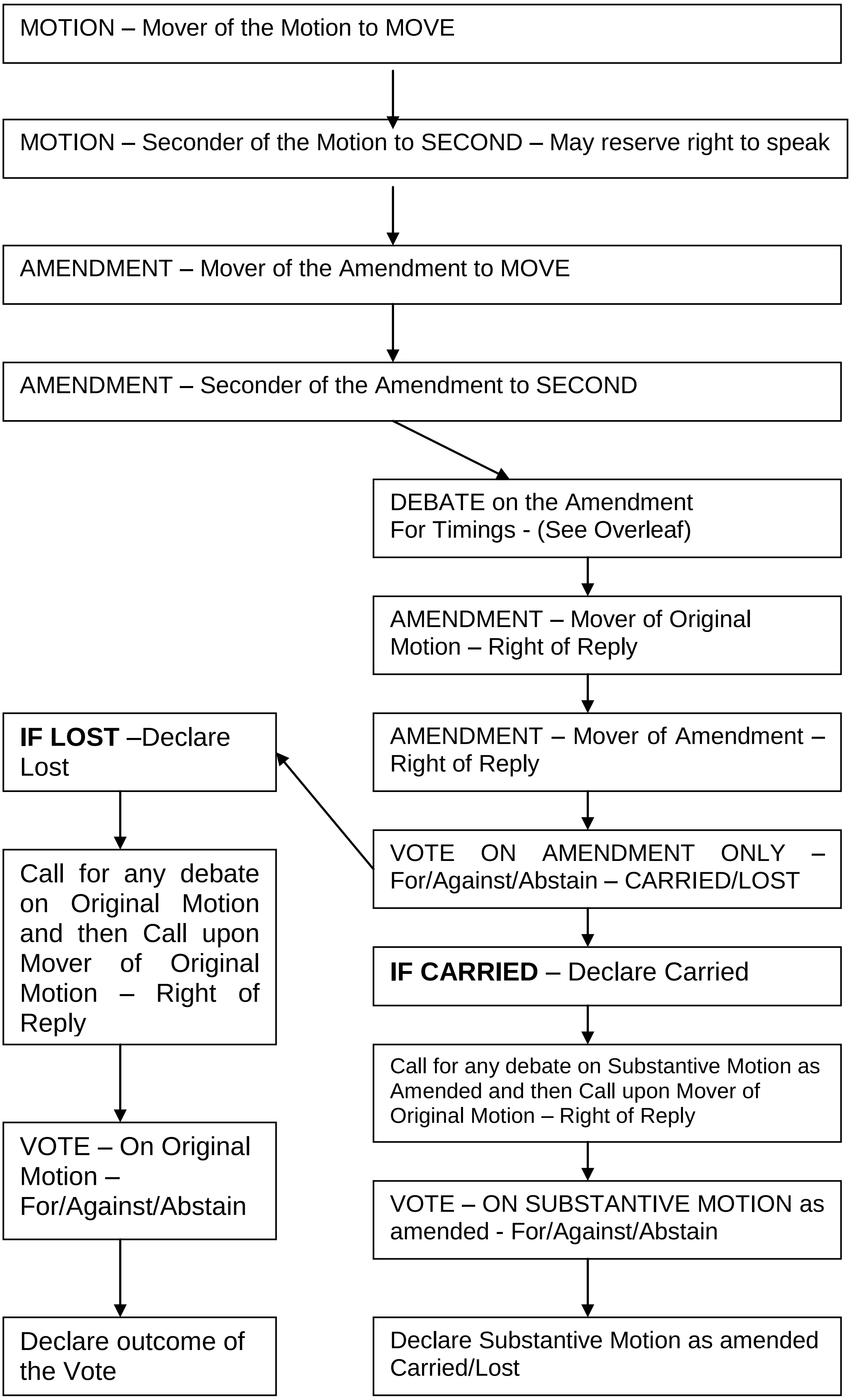
Declare outcome of the VOTE

RULE ON TIMINGS

(a) No Member shall speak longer than four minutes on any **Motion or Amendment**, or by way of question, observation or reply, unless by consent of the Members of the Council present, he/she is allowed an extension, in which case only one extension of 30 seconds shall be allowed.

(b) A Member replying to more than question will have up to six minutes to reply to each question with an extension of 30 seconds

WITH AMENDMENT



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Oldham Council

Report to COUNCIL

European Union Referendum – Impact on Oldham and Greater Manchester

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Jean Stretton, Leader of the Council

Officer Contact: Dr Carolyn Wilkins OBE, Chief Executive

Report Author: Tom Stannard, Director of Enterprise and Skills
Ext. 4846

13 July 2016

Reason for Decision

Following the UK referendum on continuing membership of the EU held on 23rd June, the implications of the "leave" result are now starting to be better understood. This report sets out a summary of the implications of leaving the EU on Oldham's economy and Greater Manchester, in the context of the recent independent economic review of the Northern Powerhouse.

Executive Summary

Following the UK referendum on continuing membership of the EU held on 23rd June, the implications of the "leave" result are starting to be better understood. This report sets out a summary of the implications of leaving the EU on Oldham's economy and Greater Manchester, in the context of the recent independent economic review of the Northern Powerhouse.

It is important to emphasise that the implications cannot and will not be precisely understood for some time due to the protracted period of political and economic uncertainty resulting from the UK "leave" vote. This report deals principally with some of the known and predicted economic and business implications. Alongside these are wider social cohesion implications and risks caused by the negative focus of the campaign on immigration issues. These will continue to be carefully monitored and managed in partnership with GMP and other local partners over the coming months.

A week after the referendum on 30th June, the Government received the report of the Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review (NPIER). This was commissioned by Transport for the North (TfN) on behalf of Leaders across the North, and found that:

- the North's economic performance gap is persistent and entrenched, averaging about 25% below the rest of England (10-15% when London is excluded);
- productivity differences account for the majority of the performance gap; and
- the poor productivity performance is explained mainly in terms of workforce skills – although issues relating to technology, investment and connectivity also have a bearing.

NPIER identified distinctive sector capabilities in the North, which is highly productive and can compete on national and international stages. The four 'prime' capabilities are in advanced manufacturing and materials, health innovation, energy and digital. These are supported by three 'enabling' capabilities of financial and professional services, logistics and education (with a focus on higher education). Each of these sectors aligns closely with the Council's new Strategic Investment Framework (SIF) and Work and Skills Strategy, agreed at Cabinet on 27 June 2016. NPIER concluded that a step change in economic performance is possible with substantial improvements in transport connectivity, skills, innovation, and inward investment across the North. By 2050, this could mean that:

- GVA is 15% (£97bn) higher than it would otherwise have been;
- productivity is 4% higher; and
- some 850,000 additional jobs are created.

The uncertainty surrounding the future economic performance of the UK as a consequence of the EU referendum now provides a considerably more challenging macroeconomic context for delivery of the NPIER's aspirations. Greater Manchester is working rapidly to seek to safeguard the national and international competitiveness of the city region against the backdrop of the referendum result, and to help to achieve the NPIER aspirations in Oldham and across GM.

Recommendations

- Council is asked to discuss and note the contents of this report

European Union Referendum – Impact on Oldham and Greater Manchester

1 Background

1.1 Following the UK referendum on continuing membership of the EU held on 23rd June, the implications of the "leave" result are starting to be better understood. This report sets out a summary of the implications of leaving the EU on Oldham's economy and Greater Manchester, in the context of the recent independent economic review of the Northern Powerhouse.

1.2 It is important to emphasise that the implications cannot and will not be precisely understood for some time due to the protracted period of political and economic uncertainty resulting from the UK "leave" vote. This report deals principally with some of the known and predicted economic and business implications. Alongside these are wider social cohesion implications and risks caused by the negative focus of the campaign on immigration issues. These will continue to be carefully monitored and managed in partnership with GMP and other local partners over the coming months.

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2 Current Position

2.1 The Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) considered a report on 18 March which set out the potential implications of the UK leaving the EU. This report is attached as ***appendix one*** for information purposes.

2.2 The report describes the overall benefits of EU Membership focussing on access to the single market (and via this to wider international markets) for foreign direct investment, lower prices for consumers, the benefits of migration and free labour movement to UK businesses and skills shortages, and the substantial benefits from structural funding and other sources of EU income to the UK.

2.3 The GM analysis cites substantial evidence of investor confidence in the UK as a consequence of EU membership, provides an analysis of current inward investment flows to GM as a consequence of membership of the single market, and provides a sectorial analysis forecasting greater impact of EU departure on those sectors prioritised for growth in the GM strategy and Oldham Strategic Investment Framework (such as digital, financial and professional services). It also cites evidence of potential damage to GM performance in export markets with particular impacts on SMEs across the city region who often export within the EU in the first instance, which could have a particular impact on exporters within Oldham's predominantly SME business community.

2.4 In respect of EU structural funds, the report highlights that GM currently benefits from European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) representing some £350M of funding for the current 2014-20 programme, which with match funding included creates a GM programme of close to £650M. This covers two main programmes, ESF for skills and ERDF for business growth, both of which benefit Oldham. It is widely known that substantial delays in Government agreeing the Operational Programmes for ESIF prior to the referendum have resulted in very small amounts of this funding currently being contracted bringing into doubt significant amounts of EU-supported investment in skills and business growth activity in Oldham and across GM currently scheduled for later in this programme.

2.5 The GMCA report highlights additional known risks in respect of non-structural funding, R&D investment and universities, and other matters with similar levels of risk.

2.6 In respect of contributions to the EU budget, GMCA were advised that although at one level, UK Government would accrue savings as a consequence of leaving the EU based on a net budget contribution of £9.8BN p/a (2014 figures), "there is a risk that these savings will be absorbed by HM Treasury to contribute towards deficit reduction, and any financial gain would not be felt at all by cities such as Greater Manchester, which would also lose access to ESIF funding." (para 3.43)

2.7 The GM report summarises the implications of UK departure from the EU as follows:

- A reduced flow of EU nationals into the city region for work which will impact on the ability of Greater Manchester to provide the skilled workforce to support economic growth

- A potential reduction in the attractiveness of Greater Manchester as a place to invest, relative to cities within the EU, impacting on overall levels of FDI activity, given greater restrictions to access to European markets

- An impact on levels of exporting to Europe (a significant marketplace for Greater Manchester businesses) due to the re-introduction of tariffs and other barriers to trade

- Dependent on the success or otherwise of the UK negotiating new trade agreements with other major markets outside the EU, there could be an impact on the ability of businesses in the conurbation to trade with these growing economies

- Reduced access to new markets including the Single Digital Market, financial services market and the forthcoming trade agreement with the United States

- Reductions in the number of EU national university students due to the potential for increases in tuition fees and less flexibility to remain in the UK following their studies

- The loss of European research funding which plays an important role in university activities, including in internationally significant research areas such as graphene and advanced materials

- The loss of ESIF funding which has played a significant role in building workforce skills, moving people into work, supporting businesses and providing new innovation focused facilities.

2.8 It is important to emphasise that many of these issues will be subject to the precise renegotiation terms to be agreed by a new UK government from autumn 2016 onwards, and that the levels of uncertainty prior to the new government taking office, alongside the protracted uncertainty for the duration of a renegotiation period currently of unpredictable length, will also potentially exacerbate some of the economic uncertainty effects.

2.9 GM leaders are taking collective action to maintain business and investor confidence in EU and international markets as well as starting work immediately on the implications of the potential risks to EU funding in negotiations with government on forthcoming growth and investment deals for the city region.

3 Current ESIF funding in Oldham

3.1 The following are examples of close to £1.5M of existing or potential ESIF funded/supported activity managed by Oldham Council. Whilst there is a degree of certainty around these contracts due to their status in the current 2014-20 programme, contracts beyond these programmes are presently in doubt. There is not yet a complete picture of activity across the council, or across GM programmes such as the forthcoming Work and Health Programme which may also be affected. Alongside this will be a significant number of non-public sector providers (eg in further education/skills and the voluntary sector) who also benefit from commissioned programmes with EU funding supporting Oldham residents that are equally facing an uncertain future.

- European Social Fund Skills for Employment contract - c. £640K until December 2017. Intention to extend via GM devolved Growth Fund (August 2017 – July 2019). Both would be co-financed via ESF. This contract supports Oldham residents into employment and skills training

- Skills for Workforce – currently in procurement across GM with anticipated value £250k for Oldham

- European Regional Development Fund - £550K programme (£275k OMBC funding matched to £275k of ERDF monies). Delayed start date awaiting BIS sign off. This contact supports expanded business support advice in Oldham.

3.2 **Business opinion and market reaction**

3.2.1 The UK Institute of Directors polled immediately following the referendum result and showed a significant negative opinion amongst UK business leaders on the outcome of the referendum. The IOD remained neutral during the referendum, and its survey received results from 1,092 members between 24– 26 June, revealing:

- Nearly two-thirds (64%) of IoD members think the result is negative for their business, against 23% who think it is positive (only 9% say it makes no difference)

- A third (32%) say hiring will continue at the same pace, but a quarter (24%) will put a freeze on recruitment, and 5% will make redundancies

- 1 in 5 (22%) are considering moving some of their operations outside of the UK; only 1% say they will bring operations back

3.2.2 Results from the Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce (GMCC) Quarterly Economic Survey were also released on 30th June. This is a wide-ranging and statistically reliable quarterly survey including contributions from the Oldham membership of the GMCC. Although the Q2 fieldwork was undertaken largely ahead of the referendum taking place, the headline findings included:

- GM growth slowed in Q2 to closer match the UK average

- Exports, manufacturing and business-facing services slowed in Q2 2016

- British Chamber of Commerce growth forecasts of 2.2% in 2016, 2.3% in 2017, 2.4% in 2018 are now seen as being too high

- Some forecasters are suggesting just 0.4% growth for 2017

3.2.3 Although impossible to predict with certainty, some of these obvious signals of slowing growth across the UK will potentially be exacerbated by the continuing period of uncertainty facing business and investment during the period of renegotiation. It will also be important for Oldham to continue to provide a message of confidence to the business and investor community both in relation to indigenous businesses, new operators coming into the borough imminently through our regeneration programme, and potential inward investors looking specifically to Oldham and/or to GM as an investment destination.

3.2.4 Overall, the message from the GM Chamber of Commerce is that business reaction is higher degrees of uncertainty and postponement of investment decisions, as opposed to panic and/or investment flight. This opinion will continue to be tested at two forthcoming business events in Oldham during July – the Insider Manufacturing Champions event on 5th July, and the Chamber's Action for Business Oldham on 12th July. Both will also give opportunities for the Council to provide business and investor reassurance in Oldham and to aim to stabilise confidence levels in the business community.

3.2.5 National Stock market reaction to the referendum result continues to fluctuate. As of 30th June, the FTSE 100 had recovered to above the level it closed at a week previously, recovering the ground it lost in the wake of the referendum result, closing up 3.6% at

6,360.1. At the close of trade on the day of the referendum vote, the FTSE 100 had ended the day at 6,338.10. Clearly FTSE values give only a partial picture of economic and business confidence, given that the FTSE100 is priced in £ pounds sterling but 75% of its revenue is from outside the UK, meaning the index can register an artificial boost from devaluation of the pound. The picture can be expected to continue to fluctuate over time.

3.2.6 Regarding currency markets the pound strengthened against the dollar and euro, albeit not yet recovering all of the value lost since the referendum. Also as of 30th June, the pound rose 1.2% against the dollar to about $1.35, although it also remained well below levels reached before the referendum. It had risen as high as $1.50 on the day of the referendum as the market anticipated a 'Remain' vote, but by Monday it had reached a 31-year low against the dollar. Sterling rose 0.8% against the euro on 29th June to €1.2159. Before last week's referendum it had been trading around €1.30. By the time of the Council meeting these figures will be out of date, and will continue to be monitored over the coming months as regards both FTSE and currency markets.

3.3 **Central Bank and UK Government reaction**

3.3.1 The Government and the Bank of England sought immediately to calm market nerves and to reassure investors following the referendum. The BoE announced the availability of £250BN of additional funding to support the UK economy and also sent clear market signals in respect of potential additional reductions in UK interest rates. Each of these is designed to provide strong stability and confidence boosting measures to support the economy and investment environment.

3.3.2 On 1st July the Chancellor announced the UK Government was abandoning its objective to reach a budget surplus by 2020. On 4th July, an announcement was also made regarding the Chancellor's aspiration to further reduce UK corporation tax from 20% to 15% but with an as yet unknown timescale for achieving this ambition. Both represent potentially significant moves as far as UK economic confidence and the future direction of public spending is concerned.

3.3.3 Analysts suggest that the abandonment of the fiscal target may see the government increase borrowing for investment in infrastructure and to mitigate the need for tax rises, spending cuts and/or any "emergency budget" processes, if the economy does head more obviously towards recession as some predict. KPMG analysis also demonstrates that the UK corporation tax rate is already amongst the lowest of advanced economies internationally, and with a greater reliance on business rate income for local government finance planned for future years, any further reduction in corporation tax levels could increase risk to public service income and the Council's budget in future years. However, these are potential risks as the precise implications of these announcements for the Council's budget are not yet known.

3.4 **Local government finance**

3.4.1 Across local government, commentators have also suggested that leaving the EU would have significant damaging ramifications for public sector funding, and that the financial environment would become too unstable to rely solely on business rate revenues, a major part of the Government's reform agenda for Council finances. They warn that future income for councils, including the devolution of business rates, needs to be reconsidered in a more volatile economic climate, and that Councils could be more prone to the effects of recession should the referendum see business rates and growth slump, raising the prospect of further reform to the local government funding settlement rules. This is of concern for the Council as it works towards bridging the already significant budget savings requirement for 2017/18 and future financial years. Any further reduction in Central

Government funding and even greater instability to the already volatile business rates retention arrangements would increase the financial pressure on the Council.

3.4.2 It is essential for the Council that its investments are secure and the Treasury Management Strategy approved at Council on 24 February 2016 is framed to have security of investment as the highest priority. The Council currently has around £77m placed with various counterparties in the form of fixed term deposits and Money Market Funds. The credit quality of these counterparties remains strong and their ratings/limits for size and duration of investment complied with the criteria set out in the Council's Treasury Management Strategy at the time they were taken out. Counterparty ratings are being monitored to see whether the referendum result has any long term impact on perceived creditworthiness. Clearly, the result has ushered in a period of uncertainty which has prompted volatility in financial markets. However, commentators have differing views as to whether the result will have lasting consequences for the UK economy.

3.5 **Legislative context for renegotiation of EU membership**

3.5.1 Again, considerable uncertainty is anticipated during the period of renegotiation both on the terms on which withdrawal from the EU will be effected, and the plethora of legislation requiring amendment and/or repeal. There is legal opinion which parliamentary consent is likely to be required for triggering Article 50 in order for the period of renegotiation itself to commence, and additionally for repeal of the Single European Act. It is understood that a claim to the High Court is being prepared on this issue. Neither faces a simple or rapid parliamentary passage in a period of political uncertainty.

3.5.2 Initial analysis across the Council suggests three key areas affected in significant measure by EU legislation, directives and guidance, all of which will be affected by any process of EU departure and/or the terms of renegotiation. These are:

- Environmental regulation including on air quality, trading standards and consumer protection
- Employment law including on equal pay, fair treatment, and trade union matters
- Procurement and contracting including EU contract law, public procurement and state aid.

3.5.3 Significant changes and/or disruption across each of these areas is likely to result in significant disruption to the normal conduct of council business and significant consumption of Member and officer time in navigating any changes resulting from the terms of renegotiation of treaties and ultimately UK withdrawal from the EU. At the recent LGA conference the Association has lobbied for strong local government involvement in any forthcoming negotiations over UK membership of the EU in recognition of this issue.

3.6 **Conclusion and recommendations**

3.6.1 Greater Manchester is working rapidly to seek to safeguard the national and international competitiveness of the city region against the backdrop of the referendum result, and to help to achieve the NPIER aspirations in Oldham and across GM.

3.6.2 It will be important for Oldham to continue to provide a message of confidence to the business and investor community both in relation to indigenous businesses, new operators coming into the borough imminently through our regeneration programme, and potential inward investors looking specifically to Oldham and/or to GM as an investment destination.

3.6.3 The wider social cohesion implications and risks caused by the negative focus of the campaign on immigration issues should not be underestimated, and their consequences have already been seen in Greater Manchester and elsewhere in the country. These will continue to be carefully monitored and managed in partnership with GMP and other local partners over the coming months.

3.6.4 Additional business community engagement and detailed analysis of the impacts on Oldham will continue to be undertaken and reported to Members over the coming months.

3.6.5 The prospect of an early general election in autumn 2016 is also being widely discussed and would need to be managed locally in the event of this being called.

3.6.6 Council is invited to discuss and comment on the issues raised in this report and in the appended GM analysis.

4 Options/Alternatives

4.1 The report is for information.

5 Preferred Option

5.1 N/A. The report is for information.

6 Consultation

6.1 N/A

7 Financial Implications

7.1 At this stage it is difficult to be definitive about the financial impact for the Council of the outcome of the UK referendum, however some key issues which are apparent at this time are:

- The volatility of the financial markets is clearly a cause for concern. Should this initiate an economic downturn and prompt Government to a further round of public spending reductions, there would be significant financial implications for the Council as it still has to address substantial budget reduction targets up to 2020/21 based on the current austerity programme.
- The Councils existing investments are being managed in accordance with the Treasury Management Strategy which places security of investment as the highest priority and creditworthiness of counterparties is being monitored
- Whilst current EU project funding would appear secure, the opportunity to extend further programmes or to bid for future funding and this will deprive Oldham of funding for activities that cannot be funded from alternative sources.

7.2 The implications will become clearer over time as negotiations begin and specific issues are dealt with by the Government. The Council's Finance Team will monitor the position and provide updates and reports to the Council as required.

Anne Ryans, Director of Finance

8 Legal Services Comments

8.1 The strategic legal issues are highlighted in paragraph 3.5 of the report.

Paul Entwistle, Director of Legal

9 **Co-operative Agenda**

9.1 The impact of the EU referendum will have implications across the Borough, highlighting the key role of the Oldham Leadership Board in understanding potential impacts/opportunities and the importance of partners (including businesses and communities) working together to address what this means locally and taking action to ensure the best outcome for residents.

Jackie Wilson, Head of Strategy, Partnerships and Policy

10 **Human Resources Comments**

10.1 The impacts for the Council as an employer are principally twofold:

- As per paragraph 3.5 of the report, the 'leave' decision and/or terms of renegotiation following the triggering of Article 50 will impact employment legislation and regulation vested in, or emanating from, European authority in that there will be opportunity and potentially government interest in revisions to employment law and re-regulation. In turn, this suggests a consequential impact on the Council's employment policy. This will be monitored in conjunction with Legal Services and via the LGA and North West Employer's Organisation to assess impact and inform the prioritisation of work. Any and all requirements subsequently to amend Council employment policy will be consulted both strategically and through working jointly with the recognised trade unions in the normal way.
- The concerns expressed at paragraph 1.2 for social cohesion caused by the negative focus of the Referendum campaign on immigration issues apply equally within the Council's' workforce and future workforce. Accordingly, inclusivity and the equalities monitoring of the candidate and employment experience of ethnic minority (as well as other) groups will continue using a developing set of metrics which are designed to highlight issues and risks and prompt their timely resolution and mitigation where needed.

Other issues which may impact the economic prosperity of the Borough may also directly impact the Council's workforce and their families since over 70% of our employees live in Oldham. It is critical that senior leaders remain cognisant of this and monitor impacts on staff at the local, as well as policy or corporate, levels.

Cathy Butterworth, Assistant Director of People

11 **Risk Assessments**

11.1 N/A

12 **IT Implications**

12.1 N/A

13 **Property Implications**

13.1 N/A

14 **Procurement Implications (including local authority trading companies)**

14.1 There are 3 sets of procurement Regulations including Public Procurement, Utilities and Concessions which will continue to apply across the UK. These will still apply and in the longer term it will be a matter for UK Governments to decide whether or not they would wish to continue with regulations over public procurement matters. It would be reasonable to assume that these matters will form part of the negotiations with the EU.

14.2 There are also other areas of international regulation to which the UK is signatory such as World Trade Organisation agreements on procurement.

14.3 During this period true value of procurement can be demonstrated in business as usual (reassuring suppliers that the referendum will take at least two years). The Council will need to consider more fully contract lengths, enable clear change mechanisms and break clauses.

14.3 Prioritisation and Contract Review to impact and risk of those contracts likely to be affected and possible impact of future contracts.

14.4 Strategic Sourcing will continue to monitor issues as more information arises by consulting with stakeholders in the council for transparency and to provide accurate and timely information.

14.5 Not withstanding 14.1 to 14.4 inclusive due consideration needs to be given to the wider commercial considerations of the council and its strategic partners.

Nicola Wadley, Head of Strategic Sourcing (Interim)

15 **Environmental and Health & Safety Implications**

15.1 N/A

16 **Equality, community cohesion and crime implications**

16.1 The Council are working closely with the police in monitoring any community tensions as a result of the EU Referendum, and has well established processes for responding together should the need arise. While it appears that there is a level of fear and anxiety within some sections of the community – particularly Eastern European people – there has been no evidence of a significant upsurge in hate incidents in Oldham linked to the Referendum or its outcome.

Bruce Penhale, Head of Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, Stronger Communities and Oldham District Team

17 **Equality Impact Assessment Completed?**

17.1 No

18 **Key Decision**

18.1 No

19 **Key Decision Reference**

19.1 N/A

20 **Background Papers**

20.1 N/A

21 **Appendices**

21.1 The report referenced in the above, which was discussed at the GMCA meeting in March which set out the potential implications of the UK leaving the EU, is attached as appendix one to this report.

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

Date:	18th March 2016
Subject:	European Union (EU) Referendum – Potential implications for Greater Manchester of the UK leaving the EU
Report of:	Sir Richard Leese, Portfolio Lead for Economic Strategy and Sir Howard Bernstein, Head of Paid Service

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The Government has announced an "in out referendum" on the UK's membership of the European Union (EU) on 23rd June 2016. This report identifies a number of issues associated with the planned referendum, and the possibility of a vote to leave the EU, that are of particular relevance to Greater Manchester. The report aims to inform debate on this issue in advance of the planned referendum, the outcome of which will have significant implications both nationally and locally.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Leaders are recommended to:

- Note the analysis contained in this report
- Consider what other action the Greater Manchester Combined Authority should take in the period prior to the planned referendum.

CONTACT OFFICERS:

Jessica Bowles (j.bowles@manchester.gov.uk)
John Holden (john.holden@neweconomymanchester.com)

TRACKING/PROCESS		
Does this report relate to a Key Decision, as set out in the GMCA Constitution or in the process agreed by the AGMA Executive Board		No
EXEMPTION FROM CALL IN		
Are there any aspects in this report which means it should be considered to be exempt from call in by the AGMA Scrutiny Pool on the grounds of urgency?	No	
AGMA Commission	TfGMC	Scrutiny Pool
n/a	n/a	n/a

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Government has announced an "in out referendum" on the UK's membership of the European Union (EU) on 23rd June 2016.

1.2. In September 2015, Manchester City Council commissioned an economic impact study to understand the effects of EU membership on Manchester and Greater Manchester and the risks of the UK leaving the EU ('Brexit'). Ekosgen undertook the study working closely with New Economy. Based on this study, this paper:

- sets out the long-term benefits of European Union (EU) membership to the UK, as outlined in research to date;
- considers Greater Manchester's current relationship with the EU across a range of subject areas, taking account of both direct transactions and the wider role that membership plays in international relations (e.g. the attraction of foreign investment due to providing a gateway to the EU); and
- identifies the risks and likely economic implications of leaving the EU for Greater Manchester.

2. EU MEMBERSHIP: OVERALL ECONOMIC IMPACTS

2.1. Assessing the overall impacts of EU membership is a complex task. The difficulty is summarised in the extract below from a document produced for the House of Commons Library in 2013 which states:

"There is no definitive study of the economic impact of the UK's EU membership, or equivalently, the costs and benefits of withdrawal. Framing the aggregate impact in terms of a single number, or even irrefutably demonstrating that the net effects are positive or negative, is a formidably difficult exercise. This is partly because many of the costs and benefits are, in certain respects, subjective, diffuse or intangible; and partly because a host of assumptions must be made about the terms on which the UK would depart the EU, and how Government would fill the policy vacuum left in areas where the EU currently has competence." (House of Commons Library, 2013)

2.2. Some recent studies and press commentary surrounding EU membership have focused on the costs and perceived negative consequences arising from some aspects of European legislation. Such analysis often points to the net direct budgetary cost to the UK of membership which the Office for Budget Responsibility estimates as amounting to £9.8 billion in 2014 and the perceived negative impacts on the UK economy arising from certain EU regulations. There is also recognition of important economic benefits associated with the UK's membership. Research suggests that such long-term benefits of the UK's membership of the EU include:

- being part of the world's largest Single Market of over 500 million people, presenting an economic force on a global scale and providing a substantial marketplace for UK businesses and workers;
- securing access to wider international markets through EU negotiated trade agreements that make it easier for UK businesses to trade overseas;

- businesses having clarity and a single set of rules to comply with when selling goods and services across a substantial marketplace which helps to support business growth;
- roughly doubling investment flows inside the EU as a consequence of the Single Market, including attracting investment from non-EU countries seeking access to the Single Market: in terms of individual countries, the USA remains the single largest source of FDI projects in the UK. During 2014/15 a total of 564 FDI projects were recorded from the USA, up more than 12% on the previous year;
- consumers benefitting from lower prices as a consequence of economies of scale enjoyed by businesses;
- helping businesses to address skills gaps by allowing for the free movement of labour between Member States and giving UK nationals greater flexibility in where they can work;
- the benefits of professional qualifications gained in one member state being recognised in another, thereby promoting labour market flexibility and assisting in filling skills gaps;
- Greater Manchester is designated as the European City of Science in 2016 bringing a European focus to the city region's scientific achievements and attracting many additional visitors; and
- net migration from the EU is helping to underpin economic growth by providing a growing work age population at a time when the number of dependents is increasing in the UK.

2.3. The presence of international companies in the city region and an increasing international workforce has led to Greater Manchester's economy becoming increasingly connected to the wider European economy.

2.4. However, it is difficult to assess which of these benefits could continue to flow if the UK was outside the EU but had trade and cooperation agreements with the EU. Looking beyond successful negotiation of new trade agreements, proponents of 'Brexit' focus on the economic benefits that could arise from a reclamation of UK sovereignty – particularly in relation to migration, greater economic independence in an increasingly volatile/dynamic global economy, and a direct reallocation of EU-bound money to priority domestic infrastructure. It is also argued that – though not formally bound to the Eurozone – the Pound and UK economic policy levers are vulnerable to an increasing conflation of Eurozone monetary decisions and broader EU policy.

2.5. A further important factor to consider is the major changes that are taking place in patterns of world trade. It is likely that the coming decades will witness an increasing proportion of global economic growth being concentrated in North America and in emerging economies such as China and India. In this increasingly competitive situation if European nations are to earn their way in the world, they will need to respond by increasing their productivity and competing effectively in key sectors. A key question is how the EU, as an institution, can respond to these challenges and support its member states in competing during the coming years. A question for the UK is whether its competitive position is likely to be supported or hindered by being a member of the EU.

2.6. The remainder of this report focuses on identifying some of the potential implications or risks of leaving the EU from the perspectives of:

- business investment;
- access to markets;
- sector by sector analysis;
- labour impacts; and
- access to funding.

2.7. The paper also reviews current EU Policy and legislation as it affects Greater Manchester and sets out some of the advantages and disadvantages to the city region arising from this framework.

2.8. It should be noted that the Core Cities Cabinet has recently considered a paper on this subject. The Cabinet agreed to adopt a common position and to argue for the UK to remain a member of the EU during the period prior to the referendum.

3. EXPLORING THE POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS OF LEAVING THE EU

3.1. Greater Manchester has established itself as an important UK and European location for business investment, effectively competing for business in a competitive marketplace. The achievement of continued growth plans will in part be reliant on the attraction of investment in both the expansion of existing operations and the development of new business bases in the city region by both domestic and international businesses.

Economic Uncertainty and Company Investment

3.2. The EY Attractiveness Survey, 2015, shows that 72% of investors cited access to the European single market as important to the UK's attractiveness. Nationally, more than half of all European headquarters of non-EU firms are in the UK, with the UK hosting more headquarters than Germany, France, Switzerland and the Netherlands put together. Greater Manchester itself has a considerable number of foreign owned companies in a wide range of sectors. In some situations, where office and plants are in competition with other company locations elsewhere in Europe, there is a risk that uncertainties related to the referendum (and an exit in the longer term) could result in Greater Manchester losing out to other countries.

3.3. Manchester Airport and strong connectivity to other major cities gives Greater Manchester a significant advantage as a gateway to the EU, for both HQ and regionally significant employment centres. Although a benefit at present, this suggests that the implications of a withdrawal could be greater for Greater Manchester than for much of the remainder of the country. A number of major airlines that operate from Manchester Airport have indicated that they are strongly in favour of the UK remaining a member of the EU and have spoken about the importance of EU wide agreements that have led to a big increase in routes between EU destinations.

Capturing Inward Investment

3.4. UKTI figures for 2014/15 highlight the importance of EU Member States as a source of Foreign Direct Investment in the UK. The UK is Europe's leading destination for FDI stock, flows and projects, benefiting from significant investment from Europe, the United States and increasingly from Asia. In 2014/15 there were 1,988 FDI projects (including re-investment), supporting 84,603 new jobs. This included 1,058 new investments and 740 related to expansions.

3.5. A wide range of projects are being supported with the primary sectors for FDI in the UK being:

FDI in Key Industries and Sectors, 2014/15 – Number of Projects			
Software & Computer Services	253	Food and Drink	104
Financial Services	222	Biotechnology and pharmaceuticals	85
Business and Customer Services	143	Mechanical, Electrical & Process Engineering	80
Creative and Media	124	Clothing, Footwear and Fashion	77
Automotive	117	Electronics and IT Hardware	75
Source: Inward Investment Report 2014/15, UKTI			

3.6. A number of these sectors reflect strengths in Greater Manchester's business base, including in financial/business services and creative/digital. UKTI data for 2013/14 shows that 55 FDI projects were set up in Greater Manchester by foreign businesses, creating and safeguarding more than 3,500 jobs. In this context, the EY Attractiveness Survey 2015 found that Manchester was the third most successful city in the UK in attracting FDI projects in 2014, behind London and Belfast.

3.7. In total, FDI projects in the UK were recorded from over 70 countries and territories. FDI investment from EU Members States included 124 projects from France, 97 from Germany, 91 from Italy, 59 from Spain and 51 from Ireland. Links to other EU Member States are therefore strong. In 2013 over 50% of inward investment to the UK came from EU countries[1] and UKTI figures show that the UK remains a popular destination for headquarters functions (370 projects in 2014/15).

3.8. A large proportion of GM's international inward investment originates from the single market. 44% of international projects landed by MIDAS from 2011-2015 were from EU-headquartered companies. These projects have created and safeguarded more than 3000 jobs, contributing approximately £121m per year to the GM economy. Additionally, GM is home to over 2,000 foreign-owned companies, with European headquarters of Kelloggs, Heinz, Brother and Etihad all major employers and critical assets for GM's future economic growth. GM's current strong performance in attracting inward investment in part reflects the strength of the GM and UK economies in their own right but also the UK's role as a gateway to the Single Market.

Potential Implications for Access to Markets

[1] http://www.alliotts.com/site/blog/international-blog/economic-impact-of-brexit-fromthe-eu

3.9. The Single Market is a market of 500 million customers. As a member of the EU it is effectively our 'home' market with products and services being subject to the same base regulatory standards and employment legislation without tariff barriers. Free trade within an open market sits at the core of EU's remit and principles. Departure from the EU would result in the loss of the existing common trade terms with other Member States and access to negotiated trade agreements for the UK. A UK independent of the EU would negotiate trade agreements with the EU and other countries, although the terms of these cannot be not known at this point. This carries a series of potential risks and implications, as outlined below.

Exports

3.10. The CBI reports[2] that the UK exports £227 billion of goods and services to the European Union each year – equivalent to 45% of all UK exports[3]. Seven of the UK's top 10 export markets are in the European Union and it is often the place smaller businesses look to export to in the first instance[4]. A survey of CBI members[5] found that 76% rate the ability to freely buy and sell products in the EU as a positive impact on their business, including 74% of SMEs.

3.11. The EU is GM's main market for goods exports. GM exported £3.1bn worth of goods to the EU in 2014, more than the combined total of GM's exports to all non-EU countries. The EU is a growth market for GM's exporters, with a 5% increase in goods exports to the EU between 2013 and 2014. This is particularly important for Greater Manchester's strong and growing manufacturing base, which employs 100,000 people. Moreover, as a result of its strong financial and professional services sector, GM exports an estimated £3bn of services to the EU each year.

3.12. Annual Business Survey provisional figures for 2014 suggest that across the North West almost 8% of businesses directly export goods and/or services and almost 9% import goods and/or services. A higher proportion are part of business chains that feed into key export sectors such as aerospace or vehicle manufacture. Within Greater Manchester, the GM Business Survey 2014 found that one in five (19%) businesses had dealings with international markets and of these over half (58%) export and just over two fifths (42%) import. Europe is the primary market place, reported by 78% of businesses that export and 81% that import.

3.13. Research undertaken by BIS in 2011[6] further emphasises the scale of connections saying at that time around 3.5 million jobs were linked to the export of goods and services to the EU. The same report estimated that EU countries trade twice as much with each other as they would do in the absence of the Single Market, generating income gains for the UK of between 2% and 6%. These findings would be expected to broadly apply to Greater Manchester and other locations across the UK.

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[2] http://news.cbi.org.uk/news/cbi-makes-case-for-being-in-a-reformed-eu/choosingour-future/
[3] ONS Statistical Bulletin, Balance of Payments, 2015
[4] ONS Statistical Bulletin, UK Trade, April 2015
[5] http://news.cbi.org.uk/campaigns/our-global-future/factsheets/factsheet-2-benefitsof-eu-membership-outweigh-costs/
[6] The UK and the Single Market: Trade and Investment Analytical Papers Topic 4 of 18, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

3.14. Whilst a departure from the EU would not affect the ability of Greater Manchester businesses to export to the EU per se, there is a risk that a series of tariffs and barriers to trade could return which would serve to reduce levels of trade relative to the current position. As considered in the sectoral impacts section below, there would be particular implications for heavily regulated sectors and those with high export tariffs.

3.15. The position of Norway is often cited as an example of a country that is outside the EU but which continues to trade successfully with it. Norway has however, in order to retain access to European markets, agreed to retain the EU's product standards, financial regulations and employment regulations. It also continues to make a substantial contribution to the EU budget while having no direct influence over key EU decisions.

Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership

3.16. The EU and the USA are currently in the middle of lengthy negotiations on a free trade agreement (the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership). This aims to open up access for nearly all services and goods markets between the two continents – reducing customs duties on goods, reducing restrictions on services, and further opening up public procurement markets. It is also designed to improve regulatory coherence between EU and US standards and ensure greater EU-US cooperation in setting international standards. Similar arrangements are also proposed with Japan and will build on approximately 30 trade deals already negotiated by the EU which give UK firms access to a $24 trillion market[7]. The US is a key market for GM for both exports (£1.4bn of goods exported in 2014) and inward investment (around 600 jobs created in 2014/15).

3.17. Some aspects of these proposals, particularly those concerning their application to healthcare and other public services, have provoked concern and public protests have taken place across Europe. EU officials claim that there are safeguards in the proposed Agreement that would protect local health services and enable any member state *'the right to adopt or maintain any measure with regard to the provision of all health services which receive public funding or State support in any form, and are therefore not considered to be privately funded.'* Critics of TTIP argue however that this provision is inadequate. Discussions are continuing on this and other aspects of the TTIP between the EU and the US.

3.18. Assuming agreement is eventually reached the UK, with historic close ties to the United States, is expected to be a major beneficiary of the increased trade from the Trade and Investment Partnership. Leaving the EU would mean the UK would sit outside the agreement. There would be challenges to the UK negotiating comparable terms in its own right. Both the US and Chinese Governments have indicated that their preference would be for the UK to remain a member of the EU. This could make other European cities more attractive trade and investment propositions for US businesses relative to Greater Manchester.

Single Digital Market

[7] Quoted in http://news.cbi.org.uk/campaigns/our-global-future/factsheets/factsheet- 2-benefits-of-eu-membership-outweigh-costs/

3.19. The European Commission is in the process of taking policy and legislative action to open up the digital single market. The UK has Europe's biggest ecommerce market and the world's second biggest market for audio-visual content. In addition, the UK Government estimates that there are in excess of 120,000 UK businesses in the digital economy[8].

3.20. Almost 55,000 people are working in the sector in Greater Manchester with job numbers having grown by 4.1% per annum between 2010 and 2013. Furthermore there are over 9,000 Digital and Creative businesses in GM, the vast majority (over 90%) of which employ fewer than 10 people. The digital single market could therefore generate significant opportunities for Greater Manchester business.

Tourism and Conference Market

3.21. Greater Manchester has seen significant growth in the hospitality, tourism and sport sector over the past 10 years. The sector now provides 8% of all Greater Manchester jobs. The sector is concentrated in Manchester, Salford and Trafford, but also has a presence in town centres and areas of countryside on the outskirts of the conurbation.

3.22. In 2005 the Greater Manchester visitor economy generated £4.6 billion of economic impact for the sub-region and by 2013 this had risen to £7.0 billion[9]. This growth is driven by business coming from both domestic and overseas markets. Manchester is the third most visited city in the UK by international visitors, behind London and Edinburgh and the City has seen a 21% rise in the number of international visits since 2005.

3.23. Greater Manchester's hospitality, tourism and sport sector has a particular strength in hosting conference and business events. Valued at £573 million in 2009, this activity grew to be worth £823 million by 2013. Investments such as the £30 million refurbishment of Manchester Central, and other venues such as Manchester Conference Centre, and academic and sporting conference facilities, have supported the city to grow its conference business and in being a leading choice for hosting national and international conferences. Recent years have shown a considerable growth in the association business[10] conferences hosted with 31% of delegates to Greater Manchester coming from association business in 2013[11]. There is a risk that EU exit would marginalise the UK as a key venue for European wide conferences and if this were to occur there is the potential for this to disproportionately impact on Greater Manchester.

Sectoral Implications

3.24. Disruption in the event of an exit is expected to be most significant for financial services (due to high levels of regulation which could serve as a barrier to trade and would be outside the UK's control) and those sectors with high export tariffs (above 4%) such as cars, chemicals and food which account for approximately 35% of the UK's exports to the EU.

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[8] http://euromove.org.uk/britaingainsDSM
[9] The Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor (STEAM), 2005 & 2013
[10] Refers to a group of people organised for a joint purpose
[11] Conference Value and Volume Study, Marketing Manchester, 2014

3.25. The sectors most likely to be affected are:

- **Financial Services** there were 47,600 employed within the Financial Services subsector in GM in 2013.[12] This represents almost half (47.7%) of the sector's total employment in the North West, and 5% of the national total. The sector's location quotient suggests that GM has 1.2 times the national average number of employees in the local economy.
- **Professional Services** includes specialised professional, scientific and technical activities, with 100,300 employed within the conurbation. Global competition and technology has allowed the UK to establish itself as a premium destination for Financial and Professional services. It is already a world-leading provider of Professional services, and London is already one of the main Financial Services Centres of the global economy. There is potential for Greater Manchester to exploit the UK's position to become a global Professional Services hub in its own right, continuing to build on GM businesses' areas of specialism, within existing markets in Europe and the US, and opening up new markets in the Middle East and Asia.
- **Food and Drink Manufacturing:** There were just under 20,000 employed within the Food and Drink Manufacturing industries in GM in 2013, representing 39.6% of the sector's employment in the North West, and 5.2% nationally. The main concentrations are found within Manchester, Tameside, Bolton, Trafford Park, and Wigan. Well-known international brands such as Kellogg's (Trafford), Warburton's (Bolton) and the Heinz baked bean canning plant (Wigan) are headquartered in Greater Manchester.
- **Capital goods and machinery, chemicals and pharmaceuticals.** There were just under 50,000 employed within Advanced Manufacturing in GM in 2013, representing 31.7% of the sector's employment in the North West, and 3.9% nationally. Within the Advanced Manufacturing subsector, there is over twice the national average percentage of employment within the Manufacture of Chemicals and Chemical Products (excluding pharmaceuticals) within Greater Manchester.

3.26. If the UK were to leave the EU there may be opportunities to negotiate bespoke preferential trade deals for selected sectors with the EU but the terms of such an approach cannot be determined at this time.

Potential Implications for Labour Movement and Availability

3.27. The free movement of people is a further central tenet of the European Single Market. All residents of Member States have the flexibility to live and work where they choose in the EU with minimal formalities to complete or challenge. Withdrawal from the EU could have the following implications for Greater Manchester and the UK overall.

Labour Force Movement

[12] New Economy, November 2013, The Financial & Professional Services Sector in Greater Manchester: Sector Profile, P13 http://neweconomymanchester.com/downloads/2640-Sector-profile-FPS-FINALdocx

3.28. Between April 2014 and March 2015 there were over 824,000 National Insurance number registrations in the UK (allowing people to work or claim benefits/tax credits) by overseas nationals[13] . This marked an increase of over a third in a year and was the highest annual level since reporting started in 2002. Approximately half (47%) of registrations were by overseas nationals from the EU's 28 Member States (excluding the UK). While the top two countries were Romania and Poland, strong flows were also recorded from Italy and Spain, accounting for over 110,000 registrations.

3.29. In 2015, over 28,400 registrations were recorded in Greater Manchester. EU nationals recorded the highest numbers of registration. In total, two thirds of registrations in the city region were to EU nationals.

3.30. Many EU migrants tend to be young and highly skilled such as university graduates and young professionals who are seeking overseas career enhancing experiences, in the same vein as many British young people. Most EU migrants come to the UK for work purposes as opposed to family resettlement reasons. Many EU migrants offer job-specific or language skills which are highly sought after by employers. At a time of recognised skills shortages in the city region and nationally, having access to a substantial mobile labour force is a distinct advantage.

3.31. A report by University College London[14], revealed that European migrants made a net contribution of £20bn to UK public finances between 2000 and 2011. Those from the 15 countries which made up the EU before 2004, including France, Germany, Italy and Spain, contributed 64% – £15bn more in taxes than they received in welfare – while east European migrants contributed 12%, equivalent to £5bn more.

3.32. Changes to migration rules would be expected to have an impact on the flow of overseas nationals into Greater Manchester. In the context of strong economic growth forecasts and an ageing population, restrictions on labour movement could impact on the ability to deliver growth ambitions both in respect of the total workforce required and demand for skilled labour. Research by Di Giovanni et al[15] found that restricting mobility could restrict trade and reduce UK welfare equating to a loss of 1.5% of income.

Supply of Students

3.33. The reputation of Greater Manchester's universities acts as a strong draw for both domestic and overseas students. HESA statistics for 2013/14 show that the four Greater Manchester universities had 4,430 EU students. Research conducted for the NUS[16] suggests annual per capita spending by students, including tuition fees, of £20,175, suggesting EU students in Greater Manchester spend in the region of £90 million per annum with elements of the expenditure re-circulated through the local economy. Due to free movement of

[13] DWP StatXplore data reported in National Insurance Number registrations to overseas nationals, 2014/15, August 2015
[14] http://www.cream-migration.org/files/FiscalEJ.pdf
[15] Quoted in http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/europpblog/2015/03/24/should-the-uk-stay-or-gothe-economic-consequences-of-britain-leaving-the-eu/ (LSE) Student Contributions to the UK Economy, nef consulting, 2013.
[16] Student Contributions to the UK Economy, nef consulting, 2013.

labour regulations, EU national graduates are able to stay in the UK after graduating providing a valuable supply of skilled labour.

3.34. Any changes to the entitlement of EU nationals to study at UK institutions would impact on the number of students attracted and levels of associated expenditure. The tuition fees that EU nationals could be charged could however increase in the event of an exit to equal those for other international students.

Potential Implications for Access to Funding

European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF)

3.35. The European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) are the main funding instrument used to implement EU regional and cohesion policy. The programme provides funds to support the economic development of local areas and to help rebalance the European economy. The funds support investment in innovation, businesses development, skills and employment.

3.36. Historically Greater Manchester has been a significant beneficiary of these funds. Between 2007 and 2013 over £150 million was received and during the current ESIF for 2014 – 2010 Greater Manchester has an allocation of £356m and will also attract significant match funding. The funds will play an important role in delivering economic development objectives, including skills development, business growth and the development of new innovation facilities. It is important to note that currently ERDF represents the only long term funding stream that is available to Greater Manchester to support its economic growth objectives.

3.37. Each year ESF typically supports tens of thousands of young people and older workers in Greater Manchester and is now a major contributor to all of the workforce related skills plans. As such ESF contributes to the city's growth and reform agenda.

3.38. The 2014-20 ESF programme has only recently opened for bids. There is scope for awards from this programme to be made until the end of 2020, with funds to be spent before the end of 2022. A decision on the UK's future membership will therefore come at an important time in the programme's delivery. The implications of a departure during the mid-point of the programme are unclear but would likely result in significant confusion and disruption for supported parties and the potential for funds not to be available for draw down in full.

Non - Structural Funding

3.39. In addition to the above structural funds, Greater Manchester has had considerable success in accessing non – structural funds through the EU's Horizon 2020 programme and other similar initiatives. Recent successes in these terms have included the Triangulum project focused on Smart City solutions in Corridor Manchester.

Research and Technological Development

3.40. The EU has a considerable impact on UK research and technological development in the form of the Framework Programme (FP), which is the European Union's primary funding instrument for supporting collaborative, transnational research and development, with a primary focus on science and technology. The 2007–2013 programme distributed over €53.2 billion (£45.5 billion) to as many as 10,000 research projects. The UK has consistently secured a disproportionately large share of available funding and maintained a leading position in terms of the share of all FP projects in which it is involved. The UK received €5,205 million in funding through the first six years of FP7 (2007-2012) which is greater than the spending power of five of the seven UK Research Councils.

3.41. Examples of European research funding successes in Greater Manchester include contributions to the Cancer Research UK Manchester Institute and participation in both the Graphene Flagship and the Human Brain Flagship. With budgets of €1bn each these Flagships are the largest R&D and Innovation investment ever made in the EU and the University of Manchester is a key partner in both projects. For the 2014-20 programme period, support will be available to science researchers through the Horizon 2020 programme. An exit from the EU would result in the loss of an important R&D funding stream with implications for Greater Manchester's HE sector and business base. This could lead to longer term competitiveness challenges for the universities and the loss of both academic and collaborative research activity to institutes outside the UK.

3.42. Set against the financial benefits of membership are of course the current costs both in terms of financial contribution and some of the administrative burdens that membership imposes. The UK's net contribution to the EU Budget in 2014 was estimated at £9.8 billion. The benefits of cities being able to attract EU funding need to be seen against the context of this. However, it is worth noting that being outside of the EU would not necessarily mean the UK would no longer be required to contribute to the EU, as this would depend on the terms of any alternative relationship the UK was to negotiate with the EU. For example, Norway is the tenth highest contributor to the EU, despite not being a member, with per capita contributions of €100, over half of the UK's contributions (€180).

3.43. The UK would, though, make savings in no longer having to pay into the EU to the same level (although this does not take into account the wider benefits of having full access to the Single Market, and the EU's international trade deals). There is a risk that these savings would be absorbed by HM Treasury to contribute towards deficit reduction, and any financial 'gain' would not be felt at all by cities such as Greater Manchester which would also lose access to ESIF funding.

3.44. Finally, one of the main issues cities face in implementing ESIF is having to navigate and abide by EU state aid rules which are outlined below in the section on EU Policy and legislation.

4. EU POLICY AND LEGISLATION

4.1. The balance of policy and legislative competencies between the UK and the EU is complex, with different policy areas being subject to different degrees of EU competency. For instance competition policy is an area of EU exclusive competence; areas such as environment and consumer protection policy are areas of shared competency between the EU and the member state and member states can act only if the EU has chosen not to; in areas such as health and culture the EU has competence to support, coordinate or supplement the actions of the member states but the EU cannot adopt legally binding acts; and on employment, economic and social policy the EU has powers to provide arrangements, within which EU member states must coordinate policy.[17]

4.2. In addition, it should be noted, that Britain already has derogations in relation to monetary union, the banking union, the Schengen agreement (EU internal border control), and justice and home affairs.

4.3. Policy development at EU level is arguably more consultative and open to the input of diverse stakeholders than policy development at national level. Indeed, there are various instances of the EU level being more receptive to the views of cities than the national level is. Cities often find themselves in the position of making arguments to the European Parliament or European Commission and influencing their national governments via the EU level.

4.4. There are also examples of cities using their EU level influence to call for EU legislation to go further than national governments would like it to. For instance, through the EUROCITIES network[18], cities are currently calling for the EU to ensure there is a strong National Emissions Ceiling Directive with binding targets that are actually more strict than national governments would like to see in place. This is a direct response to air quality and associated health issues in cities, and the fact that cities have limited means to effectively deal with the full problem as it also strongly relates to vehicle emission industry standards. EUROCITIES have also taken a similar stance on EU climate change policy where cities' own targets often exceed the ambitions and actions of national government.

The EU Urban Agenda

4.5. Over the past 18 months, the European Commission has re-launched discussions on the EU Urban Agenda which seeks to strengthen its capacity in relation to urban issues and improve the direct involvement of cities in EU policy development.

4.6. The EU Urban Agenda aims to:

- foster the role of the European Union as a facilitator of urban development;
- further integrate sector policies and make them better adapted to urban realities;
- act as leverage to strengthen national urban agendas;
- be a framework to guide action, to bring coherence to a diversity of initiatives and policies;
- be an instrument to involve cities and their political leaders in EU policymaking and policy implementation; and

[17] A full list of EU competencies by policy area is available here: http://ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative/public/competences/faq

[18] All the Core Cities with the exception of Leeds and Nottingham are members of EUROCITIES

- be a tool to develop methodology to integrate the goals of the EU2020 strategy with cities' own strategies.

4.7. The EUROCITIES network is using this process to also call for national governments to play their role in facilitating the joining up of policies both at EU level and at home and to better involve their main cities in strategic policy development and programming. More needs to be done on the EU Urban Agenda though and, as yet there are no firm proposals put forward from the European Commission about how it will be implemented. A stronger EU Urban Agenda would reinforce the principle of subsidiarity, and would provide the EU and national Governments with a mechanism through which they could systematically work in true partnership with cities to ensure that as EU policy and legislation is being developed its practicality in on-the-ground situations in cities is properly assessed to ensure that there is early identification of any unintended consequences.

4.8. The EU's response to the increasing trend for city clusters to emerge, both within and between states, has so far been disappointing. The work of Transport for the North to bring about a step change in levels of connectivity across the North of England is an example of an initiative that has been developed independently from EU structures and which has the potential to transform the economy of the North. Similar initiatives are being developed in the Netherlands and Denmark. So far there has been little evidence of the EU developing mechanisms to support such collaborations which are likely to become ever more important as European city regions attempt to increase their trade with emerging economies, particularly in Asia.

Better regulation

4.9. Burdensome and costly red tape, particularly for businesses and in areas of employment and procurement, is one of biggest criticisms of EU policy and legislation.

4.10. In October 2013 the Government's EU Business Taskforce published a report which contained 30 recommendations addressing barriers to overall competitiveness. In November 2014, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills published an update on progress. This reported that 10 of the 30 recommendations had been implemented, "saving UK businesses around £100 million a year, preventing additional costs of at least £100 million a year and banking one-off savings to firms of another £40 million.[19]

4.11. The European Commission has also started to take more positive steps in this area. The European Commission has now appointed a Vice-President, Frans Timmermans, with specific responsibility for better regulation. Timmermans launched the European Commission's Better Regulation Package in May 2015 which aims to provide greater transparency in EU law making and to more closely scrutinise the consequences and cost of EU regulations throughout the policy making process. Timmermans has already proposed scrapping 80 of 450 pending EU legislative proposals. But reform in this area arguably needs to go further and at a quicker pace.

[19] http://www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/SN06091.pdf

4.12. Open Europe[20] estimates that the cost of the 100 most burdensome EU derived regulations to the UK economy stands at £33.3bn a year in 2014 prices and that the UK government estimates of £58.6bn a year benefits are either over-estimated or fail to materialise and conclude that there is “plenty of scope to cut regulatory cost to business and the public sector.”

4.13. However, Open Europe also points out that leaving the EU and joining the European Economic Area (EEA) like Norway would not resolve this as 93 out of these 100 costliest EU-derived regulations would remain in place at a cost of £31.4bn (94.3% of the total cost). Moreover, the UK would lose any influence in shaping new laws and regulations.

‘Gold plating’ of EU legislation

4.14. While EU membership has undoubtedly brought regulatory burdens, successive UK Governments have also chosen to go beyond the minimum requirements when implementing certain pieces of legislation, a process known as ‘gold plating’. This has been particularly common in the UK’s transposition of EU employment legislation. The Institute of Directors provides examples of how UK government has gold plated EU employment directives such as the Temporary Workers Directive and the Working Time Directive[21].

State aid

4.15. EU state aid rules set out whether and on what basis aid (grants, loans, tax breaks etc) can be given through or with state resources on a selective basis to any organisation that could potentially distort competition and trade in the EU. This can include private organisations, and also public or third sector bodies engaged in commercial activities. Public authorities are responsible for ensuring their policies and projects comply with state aid rules.

4.16. The rules can be complex and getting it wrong can mean recovery of state aid and suspension or withdrawal of aid schemes. This can have serious consequences for the recipients of aid and the delivery of policy objectives. There are mechanisms such as assisted area maps, block exemptions and notifications which determine how state aid can be granted and to what level. A number of state aid block exemptions could be reformed to make them more flexible so that cities can more effectively support economic growth.

4.17. One of the main ways in which state aid is given is by using the ‘de minimis’ block exemption where aid can be granted as long as the beneficiary does not receive more than €200,000 in state aid over 3 years. The exchange rate has a significant impact on de minimis levels as these are calculated in Euros. For example, two years ago the de minimis threshold of €200,000 was worth £180,000 and is now worth only £140,000.

Procurement

4.18. All public bodies are required to comply with EU procurement rules, an important aspect of the Single Market. Historically EU procurement processes have been time-consuming and have often been off-putting to potential bidders.

[20] http://openeurope.org.uk/intelligence/britain-and-the-eu/top-100-eu-rules-costbritain-33-3bn/
[21] http://www.iod.com/~/media/Documents/PDFs/Influencing/Regulation%20employment/2013/

4.19. The EU has recently undertaken a review of public procurement legislation and has introduced Directives aiming to simplify procurement. These were transposed into UK law earlier in 2015, and it remains to be seen whether these changes have provided the practical level of simplification and flexibility required.

4.20. EU public procurement rules enable contract opportunities to be promoted to local providers as long as the opportunity is openly advertised according to procurement rules, and as long as the contract is fairly awarded.

5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1. Although the detailed implications of an exit from the European Union will be dependent on a wide range of factors, and will depend on what reforms are delivered as part of the current renegotiation process, this paper shows that Greater Manchester has strong connections and in places dependence on its membership of the EU.

5.2. The Single Market is a market of over 500 million customers and whilst a departure from the EU would not prevent Greater Manchester businesses from exporting to the EU per se, a series of tariffs and barriers to trade could return which might serve to reduce levels of trade relative to the current position, and the UK could become a less attractive place to work and invest. In summary, implications for the city could include:

- A reduced flow of EU nationals into the city region for work which will impact on the ability of Greater Manchester to provide the skilled workforce to support economic growth;
- A potential reduction in the attractiveness of Greater Manchester as a place to invest, relative to cities within the EU, impacting on overall levels of FDI activity, given greater restrictions to access to European markets;
- An impact on levels of exporting to Europe (a significant marketplace for Greater Manchester businesses) due to the re-introduction of tariffs and other barriers to trade;
- Dependent on the success or otherwise of the UK negotiating new trade agreements with other major markets outside the EU, there could be an impact on the ability of businesses in the conurbation to trade with these growing economies;
- Reduced access to new markets including the Single Digital Market, financial services market and the forthcoming trade agreement with the United States.
- Reductions in the number of EU national university students due to the potential for increases in tuition fees and less flexibility to remain in the UK following their studies;
- The loss of European research funding which plays an important role in university activities, including in internationally significant research areas such as graphene and advanced materials

- The loss of ESIF funding which has played a significant role in building workforce skills, moving people into work, supporting businesses and providing new innovation focused facilities.

5.3. While some of the negative effects of a UK exit from the EU could be reduced by a series of new agreements with the EU bloc, it is unclear how long these would take to conclude.

5.4. While there are reasons to believe that withdrawal from the EU could be damaging to Greater Manchester's economy, certainly in the short to medium term, this does not mean that there are not important improvements that could be made to key areas of policy and process that would reflect Greater Manchester priorities. These are discussed in the body of the report and include the following:

- Development of a clearer medium to long term strategy to support the global competitiveness of Europe and its member states in the context of the burgeoning economies of Asia in particular;
- Clearer support at the EU level for initiatives developed by clusters of cities, such as those in the North of England, to develop critical economic mass and strengthen regional economies through enhancements to connectivity and investment in key growth sectors ;
- Further work to reduce unnecessary red tape at the EU level and to simplify procurement and State Aid rules in ways which speed up internal processes and better support business and growth.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Recommendations appear at the front of this report.