

**Item 12: Question Time**

To the Chair of Environment, Development and Infrastructure

**“What steps has the Council taken to ensure that fish landed at our harbours will have the correct paperwork for ease of access to the continent after Brexit?”**

Response to Mr D Loudon

The exact circumstances of the customs arrangements following Brexit are unknown and as such much of this will be hypothetical, however here are a couple of scenarios:

If foreign (EU) vessels are permitted to fish under licence within UK waters and continue to land into Council ports, the fish that are destined to be transported to the EU will not be considered as an export until the point of leaving the country, therefore no paperwork will be required at the point of landing. Although the consignee and their agents may decide that the landing port is the best place to complete the customs paperwork to avoid unnecessary delays at the channel ports.

If the UK remains within the customs union and/or the CFP customs paperwork may not be necessary.

If there is no deal and (EU) vessels are not permitted to carry on fishing in UK waters, the spare fishing effort may (in time) be taken up by UK vessels, for their landings that are destined for the EU markets (and assuming the EU will permit imports of UK fish after Brexit) customs paperwork will again be required, possibly prepared at the landing ports to avoid unnecessary delays at the channel ports.

In all circumstances the onus to provide customs export paperwork is the responsibility of the consignee and vessel agent, much of the paperwork needed is already compiled for consignment purposes and can be duplicated into customs paperwork.

On the other side of the channel import paperwork may well be required and again consignee and agents will need to liaise with the country of destination to ensure smooth transit.

For all customs paperwork completed at the landing port the Harbours Staff are experienced in completing and facilitating customs paperwork and will be in a position to assist wherever possible and whatever Brexit looks like.