



Lancashire businesses have less than a month to prepare for a potential no-deal Brexit.

The UK is expected to leave the European Union on October 31. The county's businesses have been advised to urgently assess how they will be affected and plan accordingly, whether they trade directly with the EU or not.

The calls come as the Government-backed Help for Brexit service, which is being delivered by the North and Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce, begins across Lancashire today (October 1).

The free service offers a wealth of workshops, seminars and webinars aimed at helping businesses understand the implications of an October 31 exit from the EU.

Babs Murphy, chief executive at the North and Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce, said: "Brexit will bring fundamental changes to the way we do business. If there is indeed a no-deal Brexit on October 31, Lancashire companies have very limited time to implement the significant changes expected.

"Those who fail to plan at this crucial time will have little idea of how their goods, staff, raw materials and finances will be affected. This will create a huge regulatory burden with the potential to significantly impact their bottom line."

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The Help for Brexit service includes more than 20 events which will all be held during the month of October at venues in Preston, Blackpool, Fylde, Leyland and Chorley.

They will be delivered by experts and cover areas including cross-border trade, people, skills, immigration, regulatory compliance, accounting, taxation and insurance.

The first events, two workshops designed to help businesses plan for implementing operational changes in a no-deal Brexit, will be held in Preston and Lytham St Annes today.

More than 80 businesses have already registered to attend Help for Brexit events since the service was launched last week.

Babs added: “Many companies are already planning for the challenges and opportunities ahead but a substantial number are not. Every company in Lancashire, even those who do not think they will be directly affected, should be undertaking no-deal preparation as a matter of urgency.

“The Help for Brexit programme will be an incredibly useful basis for business planning at both operational and board level. I would urge all businesses to use the events to prepare for each Brexit scenario.”

The service is free to all businesses operating in Preston, Wyre, Fylde, Blackpool, Lancaster, Chorley, South Ribble and West Lancashire.

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Help for Brexit is funded by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy's Brexit Readiness Fund. The £10m Government fund has been allocated to business support organisations across the UK to help businesses get ready for Brexit on October 31.

Full details of the programme are available at www.helpforbrexit.co.uk.

The North and Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce has more than 1,600 members across Lancashire. Contact the Chamber to find out about the support and advice on offer.

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