

Re: Remembrance Sunday 2020

Dear Organiser

We are writing to you today to inform you of necessary changes to the management of Remembrance Sunday commemorations in west Cheshire this year.

You may recall that, ahead of Remembrance Sunday in 2019, Cheshire Police informed Cheshire West and Chester Council that it would begin to withdraw from providing a traffic management service for Remembrance parades and commemorative events.

This year, Cheshire Police has confirmed it will be withdrawing fully from providing traffic management at all Remembrance events.

This means all event organisers will be required to apply to hold an event, while also making their own traffic management arrangements where a road closure is granted.

When lockdown was introduced, all events across west Cheshire stopped.

As lockdown is easing and to protect the public from the ongoing spread of the virus, there is now legislation and guidance that allows some events to be delivered where clear social distancing plans are put in place and managed.

Therefore, in addition to requesting and organising an event, event organisers must also submit a completed COVID-19 risk assessment. This must prove that event organisers are protecting those attending the event by ensuring people are adhering to Government guidance on social distancing of two metres within the area to be used.

Without a completed COVID-19 risk assessment and suitable social distancing arrangements in place, an application to hold a Remembrance Sunday event would be declined. We advise that if, in this circumstance, an organiser proceeds to deliver an event they would be in breach of COVID law.

The process for events to be considered is outlined below:

- The event organiser would make an application to the Council.
- If the event has more than 30 people attending, the organiser must be part of a company, charity or constituted group to organise the event.
- For all events with more than 30 people, the organisation leading the event will be bound by the health and safety at work act, even if normally this does not apply to that group.
- Along with the application, the organiser will need to submit a COVID-19 risk assessment, a site map of all areas to be used, the numbers attending, how the event is to be managed and the measures to be implemented to protect public health. The two metre social distancing rule applies, as is the case if a place of worship is being used for indoor activity.
- The application will initially be considered by the events team, public health, regulatory services and the police. They will examine whether the plan for social distancing is reasonable and likely to be adhered to by the people attending. If the scale and complexity of an event poses a risk to public health, then these events will be declined. If the plans are satisfactory, this progresses to the event planning stage involving the safety advisory group.
- The safety advisory group would then consider normal event planning, traffic management arrangements and insurance. Any gatherings on the public highway would require a request to close a road, if required.

The timeline for this process would be as follows.

- Event applications including a COVID risk assessment would need to be sent to the Council events team by 25 September. This would need to be electronic as post will not be collected from offices due to home working.
- The COVID assessment and SAG review would take place by 6 October.
- Event organiser would be informed of the outcome on 9 October.
- Closure orders would be processed for successful events by 16 October where a traffic management company has been contracted by the organiser.

It is important that we take the time each year to remember the fallen in past conflicts but this year we are all facing unprecedented circumstances and must change our arrangements to protect public health, especially those who typically attend Remembrance events who are among the most vulnerable in society.

Yours Sincerely

Cheshire West and Chester Council