

Making West Sussex a better place

Framework for co-ordinating and approving events on West Sussex highways

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1. Introduction

During the past few years West Sussex has seen an increase in events taking place on the highway and generally across the County. West Sussex County Council and our partners recognise that to realise the benefits from such events the impacts on the community must be adequately considered and mitigated.

The increase in events taking place on closed and open roads has led to some concerns from local communities regarding their impact, especially in rural areas. This has demonstrated a clear need for:

- Good consultation with local communities regarding road closures and events.
- Effective management of the increase of events so they do not adversely impact communities.
- Comprehensive, multi-channel communications and engagement with West Sussex residents and businesses, both impacted and wider
- Consideration of the cumulative impact of events on rural areas of the county.
- Clear evidence of the benefits of events for local or wider communities, including targets.

This guidance note sets out a Framework for the management and approval of events on the highway, or events that have a major impact on the highway network in West Sussex.

The Framework sets a clear timeline and process for the consideration of road closures under Section 16A of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (Special Events Act 1994) for events on the highway, to ensure it is consultative and transparent, whilst balancing the impacts and the benefits. It also sets out expectations in relation of how partners and event organisers communicate and co-ordinate to minimise any adverse impact attributed to events.

The Framework is aimed at key stakeholders¹ and event organisers and specifically refers to the approval of road closures for events on the highway under Section 16A (Special Events) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (Special Events Act 1994) which is used for large sporting event, social event or entertainment which is held on a road.

This guidance note does not include the process for approvals of road closures under Town and Police Clauses Act 1847 which is administered by the district and borough councils and is used for small events such as street parties or carnivals.

This Framework has been produced by West Sussex County Council, in consultation with the district and borough councils and Sussex Police.

¹ WSCC, district and borough councils, parish councils, Private Landowners, Sussex Police and Local members

1.1 Key Objectives

Below are the key objectives which underpin this Framework and enable the County Council and partners² to manage both the positive and negative impacts of events:

- To ensure events which bring benefits to the people of West Sussex and result in a net benefit to the county and its residents can be supported (taking into account factors such as economic growth, health and transport benefits)
- Decisions in relation to events are supported by evidence based business cases
- Event applications for road closures will be assessed under Section 16A Road Traffic Act 1984 (Special Events Act 1994)³ on a set of principles⁴, in which the benefits outweigh the impact
- Events are planned so as to ensure full and transparent organiser requests for road closures under Section 16A of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (Special Events Act 1994). Organisers will be required to undertake and provide results of consultation with stakeholders, local authorities, local communities and elected members before an application for road closures is submitted
- Events are supported through effective communications and organisers will be required to submit a proposed public, business and media communications and engagement campaign plan before an application for road closures is submitted, appropriate to the scale of the event
- The County Council will proactively engage with event organisers and National Governing Bodies of Sport to ensure they reduce the impact of events on local communities
- Impact and benefits realisation are properly evaluated

² District and borough councils, Sussex Police and private landowners

³ Does not include Town and Police Clauses Act

⁴ See page 6

2. Context

2.1 Types of Road Closures and Legal Powers

There are many organisations that provide approval of road closures for events on the highway. The table below shows the breakdown of this and what legal powers are available to do this by event type.

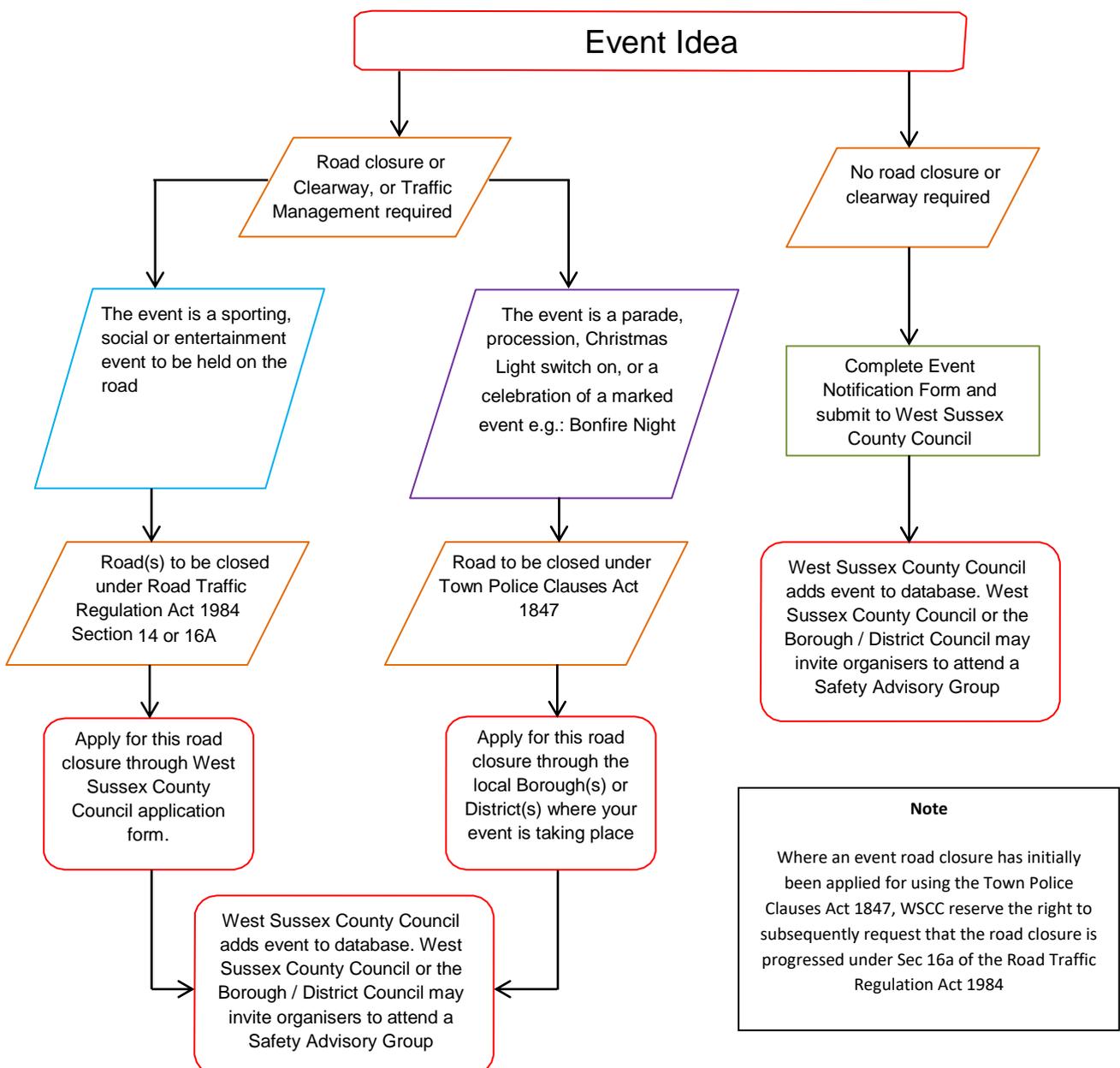
TTRO (Temporary Traffic Regulation Order) to close a road.

Event Type	Legal Powers	Approver	Closure	Duration
Sporting Event	Section 16a Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (Special Events Act 1994)	West Sussex County Council (if WSCC is the authority for that road)	Roads Use TTRO and provide alternative route	3 days can be extended to 6 days by Secretary of State agreement
Entertainment Event				
Public Procession	Town Police Clauses Act 1847	Local/Parish Council in consultation with West Sussex County Council	Roads Use TTRO and provide alternative route	No limit defined
Rejoicing & Thronging Event				
Fair				
Social Event & Street Party				
Illuminations Event				
Road Racing Event	Road Traffic Act 1988 sections 12a-12f and 13	West Sussex County Council (if WSCC is the authority for that road)	Roads Use TTRO and provide alternative route	No limit defined
Cycle Racing Event	Road Traffic Act 1988 section 31			
Play Street	Town Police Clauses Act 1847	Local/Parish Council in consultation with West Sussex County Council	Roads Use TTRO and provide alternative route	No limit defined
Off Highway event affecting passing traffic	Section 14 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (Special Events Act 1994)	West Sussex County Council (if WSCC is the authority for that road)	Roads Use TTRO and provide alternative route	3 days can be extended to 6 days

2.2 Do you require a road closure for your event?

If the answer is No – If an event organiser does not require a road closure, then they are advised to consider the impact of the event on other roads and are asked to research and ensure no other events are using or affecting the same roads that your event will be taking place on. This is done by checking roadworks.org on the internet. It is recommended that event organisers advise West Sussex County Council of their planned event to events@westsussex.gov.uk. This ensures that West Sussex County Council is aware of the event taking place and enables advice to be provided to other organisers who may apply to use the same part of the highway network.

If the answer is Yes – If the event does require a road closure then please consult the flow chart below which will determine the type of road closure, what you need to do, who to apply to and the relevant process.



3. Process for West Sussex County Council approving events on closed roads using Section 16A of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (Special Events Act 1994)

Under the Traffic Management Act 2004, Highway Authorities such as West Sussex County Council are under a duty to effectively manage their road network. This duty includes managing their road network with a view to securing, as far as may be reasonably practicable, the expeditious and safe movement of traffic on their own network and to facilitate it on others.

Under West Sussex County Council's powers as A Highway Authority, it can close roads under Section 16A of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (Special Events Act 1994). There is currently no legal requirement for consultation with residents or businesses before making an order.

West Sussex County Council recognises that an event organiser, when requesting road closures must demonstrate that the benefits of the event outweigh the impact and it also recognises that there should be a transparent and consultative approach to approving the the planning of the event.

3.1 Approval process for road closure requests made under Section 16A of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (Special Events Act 1994)

Event applications requiring road closures will be assessed based upon any likely impact on the expeditious and safe movement of traffic on the authority's road network.

Decisions on granting the application will be taken by the Director of Highways Transport and Planning, on the advice of the relevant Traffic Manager, informed by and on the advice of the relevant Safety Advisory Group.

The WSCC Safety Advisory Group (an officer level group which advises on the safety of events and considers any licences needed for events) and chair, sits outside of any district and borough Safety Advisory Group process and its intention and purpose is to concern itself with the WSCC public highway network and considerations of safety and suitability of any event on the highway network. A WSCC Safety Advisory Group will occur as an exception, due to the scale or impact of a proposed event, rather than the norm and is not aimed at replacing the work of existing district and borough Safety Advisory Groups. Its role is to consider the network impact of an event that crosses districts or offers such impact that a WSCC Highways Safety Advisory Group is considered necessary. When deployed it will be chaired by the Resilience & Emergencies Team.

Where an event is considered to be significant in terms of its effects on communities, or where the event covers two or more electoral divisions, a decision on granting is likely to be referred to the West Sussex County Council Cabinet. The assessment process will include consultation with local members, using the County Local Committee if practicable to do so.

Consultation and engagement with the public, communities, businesses, public services and other persons likely to be affected for events will be undertaken and evidenced by the event organiser, before an application for road closures is made. This must be undertaken in a timely and transparent way so that all such persons:

- Are aware of the plan with sufficient notice
- Have the opportunity to prepare for any such impact
- Have the opportunity and means to comment on and influence the plan
- Have their representations recorded and evaluated by the organiser
- Are able to see and consider any action or mitigation taken in response

The output from this consultation process and any ongoing consultation will need to be provided by the event organiser in support of any road closure request.

3.2 Principle Evidence for assessing events on closed roads under Section 16A of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (Special Events Act 1994)

West Sussex County Council recognises that events which adverse impacts on communities must be removed. The following principles must be evident in an event application from an event organiser for it to be considered for road closures:

- The record and reputation of the event organiser (references will be sought)
- Support from the Governing Body (if a sport event)
- Community benefits (charitable, leisure, health, wellbeing and social)
- Economic benefits (local area or West Sussex as a whole)
- Cumulative impact of events on an area (one closed road event per calendar year)
- Benefits to the image of the area (enhance the reputation of West Sussex tourism and the visiting economy, innovation and responsiveness to change)
- Feedback from local councillors representatives (County, D&B, Parish)
- Consultation with community undertaken by the event organiser and evidenced

There is no weighting to be placed on any of the above specific principles, however all will need to be addressed as part of the review before a decision is taken.

Events with significant evidence of community benefits may be considered to take precedence over other new smaller events with lower net benefits where competing for road use or where the two events cannot easily be accommodated in terms of road safety.

Event organisers considering holding a new event requiring a road closure on the same route as a major event considered to bring significant net benefits within the same calendar year, would require a high level of local support from local residents/businesses and local elected representatives before it would be considered to support the benefits assessment.

3.3.1 Consultation with County Council services

The event organisers will have to consult with the following as a minimum prior to the submission of a request for road closure and shall provide the outcome of such consultation with the request:

County Council Departments

- Highways (to identify road safety and route planning matters)
- Transport (to consider impact on public and private transport road use)
- Resilience & Emergency Team (for event management)
- Adult Social Care (for impact on local communities and essential services)
- West Sussex Fire & Rescue (for emergency response and event management)
- Communications Team (for event promotion and public engagement)

3.3.2 Consultation for events requiring road closures using Section 16A (special events) of the Road Traffic Act 1984 (Special Events Act 1994).

West Sussex County Council will require event organisers to consult with the following stakeholders before making formal application to the County Council for road closures (under Section 16A of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (Special Events Act 1994)). All

comments from stakeholders will be presented to WSCC as part of the event organiser's application and will be taken into consideration when a decision is taken.

The event organiser will have to consult with the following as a minimum:

- District and Borough Councils (for the areas affected)
- Parish Councils (for the areas affected)
- County and Local Councillors (including local committee chairmen and D&B)
- Sussex Police
- South East Coast Ambulance
- Bus companies
- Business interests likely to be affected
- Residents along the proposed route and those otherwise directly affected

3.4 Fees charged to event organisers with road closures under Section 16A of the Road Traffic Act 1984 (Special Events Act 1994)

West Sussex County Council and partners must recover event related expenditure necessarily incurred in discharging the processes set out in this framework. Event organisers will be charged fees in relation to the following services:

- Officer time: Reviewing event plans, consultation sessions on event plans pre Safety Advisory Group and decision making process
- Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders: Drafting and advertising
- Street Cleansing (as required from D&B): Planning and delivery
- Crowd Management/Public Safety surrounding event (as required): Advice, planning, deployment and management
- Any additional hours for services requested or required by the event organiser will be charged at an hourly rate
- Any promotional advertising of the event (print and digital), unless this is included as part of the organiser's campaign plan, and funded by the organiser

Event organisers will be notified of the projected fees and of any potential additional charges, following notification of their planned event and further upon formal receipt of their application for a road closure.

Events may be given a waiver against some of these charges in exceptional circumstances, which will be agreed in consultation by the Director of Highways Transport and Planning on the advice of the relevant Traffic Manager. This will apply where the community or economic benefits of an event are considered to align significantly with the aims and outcomes of the West Sussex Plan.

3.5 Withdrawing support for road closures

In certain circumstance West Sussex County Council may have to withdraw support for an event after an application has been approved or once the process for approval is underway.

Events could be jeopardised if any of the following matters arise and may be refused permission to continue:

- The scope of an event changes significantly and/or it differs considerably from the original application
- There are major changes to the plan which mean that the event is no longer compatible with our policies objectives and principles of this framework or the council's core duty in relation to traffic management
- The date changes to one that coincides with other events, road or building works that would increase the impact on the surrounding area
- The venue changes to an inappropriate location where the adverse impact is greater
- A licence application⁵ is refused (where critical to the event)
- Any of the timelines agreed are not met
- A major contractor withdraws critical support with a significant effect on the net benefits assessment
- Failure to comply with any conditions or actions agreed
- A partner such as the Police will not support the application
- Failure to sufficiently consult and engage with local communities in relation to the event plans
- Any actions that damage the reputation of West Sussex County Council or its partners
- Failure to pay fees charged by West Sussex County Council
- Adverse weather conditions affecting the safety of the event
- Failure to sufficiently promote the event to the general public

Where such matters are expected to arise the event organiser will be advised verbally as well as in writing by West Sussex County Council, other local authority or Safety Advisory Group of the need to correct any matter as soon as it appears likely to become an issue.

If at any time during this process West Sussex County Council or associated partners decide to refuse permission for planning to proceed, or for the event to go ahead, the event organiser will be informed as soon as that decision is made and then provided with the reason in writing.

⁵ Administered by the District or Borough council

4. Co-ordination and communication of events which have an impact on the highway.

It is recognised that there are hundreds of events taking place on the county's roads every year and there are various organisations that are responsible for approving them see table on page 4.

In respect of contact for West Sussex County Council this will include a single point of contact which both event organisers and stakeholder organisations can send event information to events@westsussex.gov.uk

In addition to this, district and borough councils, Sussex Police, private landowners and other relevant bodies are being encouraged to share information on events taking place in their area, so that they can be recorded within roadworks.org. This will ensure that there is a comprehensive picture of events taking place in the county which should support the management of impacts to communities and ensure, where possible, that multiple events do not take place at the same time and place.

5. Sports events on open roads (sportives)

Sportives are sporting events which take place on open roads and all participants should adhere to the Highway Code. Whilst not produced to manage such open road events, this framework and the guidance included within it will be of relevance to organisers of any event which may have an adverse effect on any community or other road users and the principles of early and transparent communication and engagement should apply.

Event organisers do not need any approvals for their events from the Highway Authority or Police. Event organisers do often register their events with their National Governing Body (NGB) of sport, for promotion and insurance purposes.

The Home Office produced the [HSE/GOV good practice guide](#) for small and sporting events taking place on the highway, roads and public places which most major sporting governing bodies endorse and promote.

It is recognised that sportives contribute to the health and wellbeing of West Sussex residents, by offering people the opportunity to take part in physical activity. Some of these events also raise money for charities and good causes. High profile sportives which take place in West Sussex include the Palace to Palace cycle ride.

In order to address longstanding issues with sportives in relation to:

1. Event organisers not informing the highway authority
2. Event organisers not adhering to the Home Office guide
3. Participants not adhering to the Highway Code
4. The cumulative impact on certain communities

It is proposed that West Sussex County Council will work with event organisers and the National Governing Body to encourage greater responsibility and to reduce the impact, through the following measures:

1. Record the event after receipt of notification to events@westsussex.gov.uk
2. Recommend that the event is recorded on www.roadworks.org
3. Work nationally with other local authorities who are experiencing similar issues, to influence central government policy on sportives and open road events

5.1 Better communication and working relationship between authorities and sportive organisers

The County Council will seek to improve communication between event organisers of sportives and the relevant authorities. This is to ensure there is better awareness of events

impacting communities and to ensure that the event organiser is being responsible and respectful towards the participants and also local communities.

It is proposed to do this via the following methods:

Method	Action	Operational Detail
Notification	Event organisers will be encouraged to notify relevant authorities at least 12 months before their event	This will be promoted through National Governing Bodies and the authorities via event guidance documents
Communication	West Sussex County Council will communicate information regarding events to the relevant stakeholders upon request	Via events@westsussex.gov.uk
Advisory	Event organisers will be referred to this West Sussex County Council 'Framework for Co-ordination of events on the highway'	westsussex.gov.uk
Review	West Sussex County Council will periodically conduct a review to determine the effectiveness of this process	

Appendices - Timelines for significant events on closed roads

Appendix 1

Timeline – Year 1 of Sec 16A Road Closure for an event

An event requiring a Section 16A road closure for the first time should give the West Sussex County Council a minimum of 12 months’ notice before the event takes place. This will allow the County Council to carefully consider any application and ensure enough time for each stage to be completed.

The timescales suggested are fixed and applicants will need to ensure an application is received within these timescales. It is Officer discretion as to whether the Council will accept an application after the 12-month notification period. Acceptance and consideration will be dependent upon a number of factors such as number of road closures required, type of road and if there is enough time to ensure all stages are fully complete in time for the event.

The table below outlines the timescales for the completion of each stage of the first year application.

Months/weeks from event	Activity	Action by
12+ months from event	Submit event detail. Complete the event application form and submit to West Sussex County Council events@westsussex.gov.uk	Event Organiser
	Initial internal consultation takes place. Any objections raised will be discussed with the event’s organiser before moving onto the next stage. Internal consultation includes consulting the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic Manager (WSCC Highways) • Head of Resilience & Emergency Team (WSCC) • West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service • Head of Road Safety and Traffic Management (Sussex Police) • Area Highway Managers (WSCC) • Traffic Management Events Officer (WSCC Highways) • WS SAG Chair • Communications manager (WSCC communications team) 	West Sussex County Council
	In principle support and conditions given, or reasons for refusal via email or letter. Statement of relevant legislation to be used. Organiser is allowed to issue ‘save the date’ communications, but at their own risk	

Months/Weeks from event	Activity	Action by
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12 months from event	Outline public and business awareness communications campaign plan to be submitted to West Sussex County Council	Event Organiser
11 months from event	West Sussex County Council will provide a list of appropriate contact details	West Sussex County Council
	Evidence of communications and responses to Consultation process as detailed in 3.3 of this framework to be submitted to West Sussex County Council	Event Organiser
8 months from event	Attendance at Safety Advisory Group (SAG) – Frequency to be established	Event Organiser (invitation will be sent from WSCC)
6 months from event	Public and business awareness communications campaign progress review	Event Organiser and West Sussex County Council's communications team
5 months from event	Traffic Management Plan to be submitted to West Sussex County Council	West Sussex County Council
2 months from event	Attendance at Safety Advisory Group (SAG)	Event Organiser (at the discretion of the SAG Chair)
	Intention to make road closure advertised	West Sussex County Council
	1st road closure order published	West Sussex County Council
1 month from event	Road closure paperwork complete	West Sussex County Council
	Public and business awareness communications campaign progress review	Event Organiser and West Sussex County Council's communications team
3 weeks from event	Road closure signs displayed (if required)	Event Organiser
2 weeks from event	Final road closure orders published	West Sussex County Council
Post event		
1 month post event	Feedback and debrief from event. All relevant stakeholders should be invited to take part	Event Organiser

Appendix 2

Timeline – Year 2 of Sec 16A Road Closure for an event

After year one of introducing Sec 16A road closures the application process is shortened for any subsequent road closure applications for that event. This allows time for a debrief to be held for the event where the road closures will be discussed amongst stakeholders. Any alterations necessary for the following years will be recommended.

Months/weeks from event	Activity	Action by
9+ months from event	Organiser can promote intentions to re-run the event ('save the date'), but at own risk	Event Organiser
9 months from event	Submit event detail. Complete the event application form and submit to West Sussex County Council events@westsussex.gov.uk	Event Organiser
	Public and business awareness communications campaign plan to be submitted to West Sussex County Council	Event Organiser
	Initial internal consultation takes place. Any objections raised will be discussed with the event's organiser before moving onto the next stage. Internal consultation includes consulting the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic Manager (WSCC Highways) • Head of Resilience & Emergency Team (WSCC) • West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service • Head of Road Safety and Traffic Management (Sussex Police) • Area Highway Managers (WSCC) • Traffic Management Events Officer (WSCC Highways) • WS SAG Chair • Communications manager (WSCC communications team) 	West Sussex County Council
	In principle support and conditions given, or reasons for refusal via email or letter. Statement of relevant legislation to be used	
6 months from event	West Sussex County Council will provide a list of appropriate contact details	West Sussex County Council
	Evidence of communications and responses to Consultation process as detailed in 3.3 of this document to be submitted to West Sussex County Council	Event Organiser
	Public and business awareness communications campaign progress review	Event Organiser and West Sussex County Council's communications team

Months/weeks from event	Activity	Action by
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5 months from event	Attendance at Safety Advisory Group (SAG) – Frequency to be established	Event Organiser (invitation will be sent from WSCC)
4 months from event	Traffic Management Plan to be submitted to West Sussex County Council	West Sussex County Council
2 months from event	Attendance at Safety Advisory Group (SAG)	Event Organiser (at the discretion of the SAG Chair)
	Intention to make road closure advertised	West Sussex County Council West Sussex County Council
	1st road closure order published	West Sussex County Council
1 month from event	Road closure paperwork complete	West Sussex County Council
	Public and business awareness communications campaign progress review	Event Organiser and West Sussex County Council's communications team
3 weeks from event	Road closure signs displayed (if required)	Event Organiser
2 weeks from event	Final road closure orders published	West Sussex County Council
Post event		
1 month post event	Feedback and debrief from event. All relevant stakeholders should be invited to take part	Event Organiser

Glossary

Term	Meaning
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D&B	District and Borough councils
events@westsussex.gov.uk	E-mail address for communicating event details within WSCC
H&TP	WSCC's Highways, Transport and Planning Directorate which has responsibility for implementing road closures.
Major Event	Any event that falls under Section 16A of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
NGB	National Governing Body of Sport, including British Cycling, UK Athletics, British Triathlon.
Regulated events	Events which fall within the jurisdiction of the following legislation; Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, Road Traffic Act (Cycle Racing on Highways Regulation 1960, amended 1980 & 1995) and Town Police Clauses Act 1847.
roadworks.org	A website that shows planned events.
ROW	The Rights of Way network.
Safety Advisory Group (SAG)	Safety Advisory Group – an officer level group which advises on the safety of events and consider any licences needed for events.
Sportive	An unregulated organised, mass-participation event. A sportive is a ride rather than a race, although participant times will normally be recorded.
TTRO	Temporary Traffic Regulation Order
Unregulated events	Events which are not governed by legislation and as such West Sussex County Council and partners have no power to prevent.
WSCC	West Sussex County Council