

Framework for managing planned events requiring road closures of 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.

The increase in events taking place on closed and open roads has demonstrated a clear need for:

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

This guidance note sets out a Framework for managing planned events requiring road closures of West Sussex highways, 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 for events on the highway, to ensure it is consultative and transparent, whilst balancing the impacts and the benefits. It also sets out expectations of how partners and event organisers communicate and coordinate to minimise any adverse impact.

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 which is used for large sporting, social or entertainment events 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 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.

1.1 Objectives

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

- To ensure events which result in a net benefit to the county and its residents can be supported.
- Decisions in relation to events are supported by evidence based business cases.
- Events are planned so as to ensure full and transparent consultation and engagement with all stakeholders.
- Events are supported through effective public, business and media communications and engagement.
- Impact and benefits realisation are properly evaluated.

2. Legal powers and procedures available

2.1 Types of Road Closures and Legal Powers

The table below shows the legal powers available by event type.

TTRO (Temporary Traffic Regulation Order) to close a road

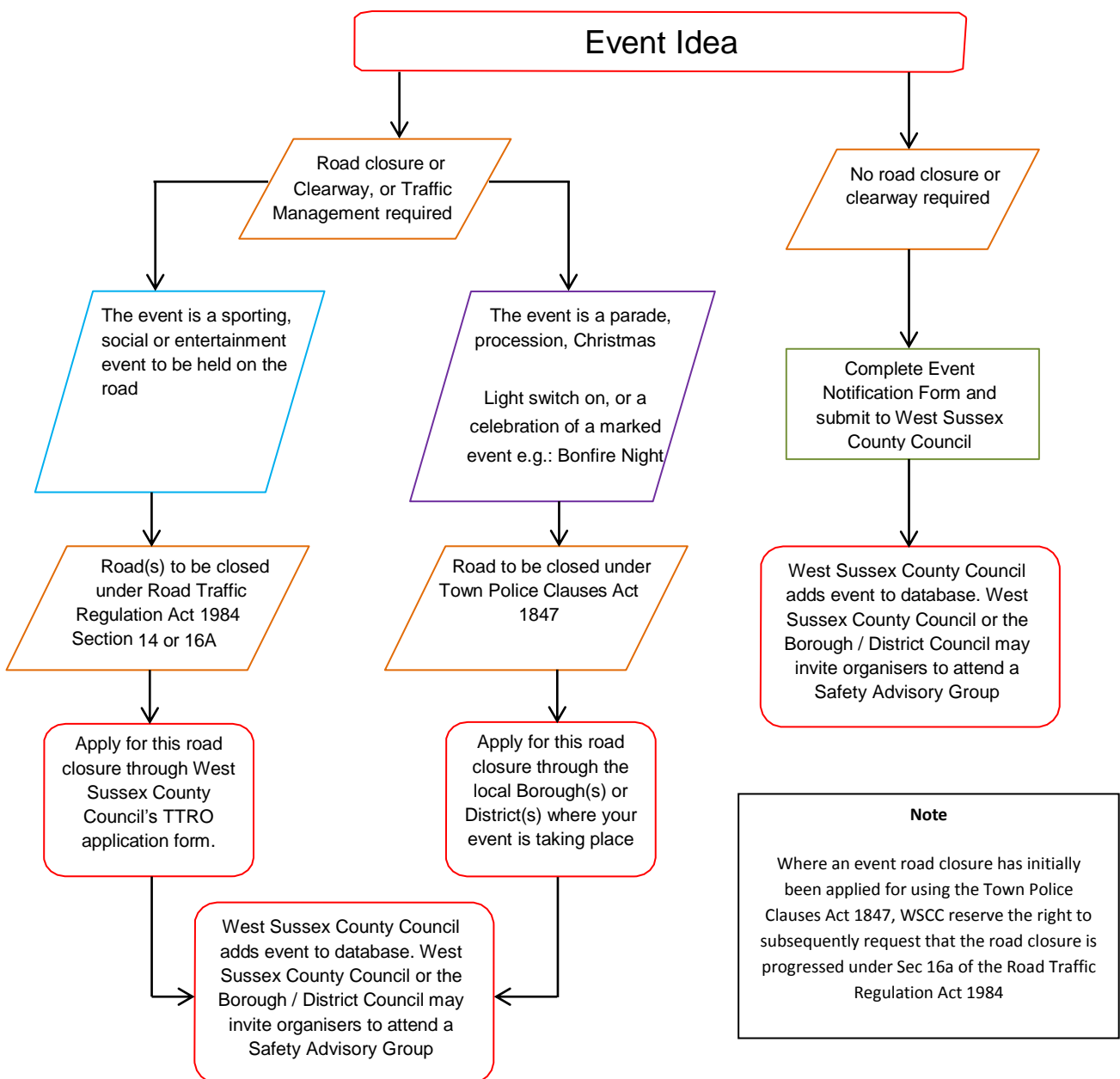
| Event Type | Legal Powers | Approver | Closure | Duration |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| Sporting Event | Section 16a Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 | West Sussex County Council (if WSCC is the authority for that road) | Roads Use TTRO and provide alternative route | 3 days can be extended to 6 days by 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 | West Sussex County Council (if WSCC is the authority for | Roads Use TTRO and provide | 3 days can be extended to 6 days |

| | | | | |
|--|--|------------|-------------------|--|
| | | that road) | alternative route | |
|--|--|------------|-------------------|--|

2.2 Does the event require a road closure 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 asked to research and ensure no other events are using or affecting the same roads. 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 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 the flow chart below will determine the type of road closure and relevant process.



3. Process for West Sussex County Council considering events on closed roads

Under the Traffic Management Act 2004, Highway Authorities are under a duty to effectively manage their road network. This includes managing the 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.

A Highway Authority can close roads under Section 16A of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. Whilst there is no legal requirement for consultation with residents or businesses before making an order, the County Council recognises that an event organiser, when requesting road closures must demonstrate that the benefits of the event outweigh the impact and that there should be a transparent and consultative approach to the planning of the event.

The Director of Highways, Transport and Planning will after any necessary or appropriate consultation with the elected member/s and lead Cabinet member make the final decision on an event occurring on West Sussex County Council closed roads.

3.1 Assessment process for road closure requests

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 the application will be taken by the Director of Highways Transport and planning on the advice of the relevant Traffic Manager informed by 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 consider any licences needed for events) is concerned with the 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 the assessment process will include consultation with local members, using the County Local Committee if practicable to do so.

Consultation and engagement

The consultation with public, communities, businesses, public services and other persons likely to be affected will be undertaken 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 on-going consultation will need to be provided by the event organiser in support of any road closure request.

3.2 Evidence for assessing events on closed roads

West Sussex County Council recognises that adverse impacts on communities must be removed or sufficiently outweighed by the economic, social and health benefits. The following 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
- Benefits to the image of the area (tourism, the visiting economy, innovation and responsiveness to change)
- Feedback from local 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 events with lower net benefits where competing for road use or where the two events cannot be easily accommodated in terms of road safety.

Event organisers considering holding a new event requiring a road closure on the same route as an 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 to support the benefits assessment.

Arrangements for the assessment of the comparative benefits of competing events for the same road space within the same calendar year will be undertaken by reference to the same factors for consultation and benefits evidence as set out above, the presumption being to favour events with a broader or more significant overall net benefit to the area.

3.3 Consultation with County Council services

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

- 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 and Rescue (for emergency response and event management)
- Communications Team (for event promotion and public engagement)

3.4 Consultation for events requiring road closures.

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. 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.

- District and Borough Councils (for the areas affected)
- Parish Councils (for the areas affected)
- Sussex Police
- Network Rail
- South East Coast Ambulance
- Bus companies
- Business interests likely to be affected
- Residents along the proposed route and those otherwise directly affected
- Highways England

3.5 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 charge fees for processing and offering road closure orders and details of these charges can be found on our web site at this link <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-licences/temporary-road-closures/> these charges cover reasonable time to process the legal orders only.

Large scale events on the public highway involving multiple diversions of traffic will require further officer time to carry out site visits and meetings with event organisers to ascertain the impact of the requested closures/diversions and applicants will be made aware of any additional time required to process an order when they apply.

Event organisers will be charged for the costs incurred by the County Council and its partners 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 actions of the organiser: The event organiser will be charged at an hourly rate
- Any public 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 on receipt of their formal application for road closure.

Events may be given a waiver against some of these charges in exceptional circumstances, which will be agreed by the Traffic Manager and the Director of Highways, Transport and Planning. 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

3.6 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 the 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 adverse impact on the surrounding area
- The venue changes to location where the adverse impact is greater
- A licence application 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 are likely to 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

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.

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 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. This 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) – planning and impact

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 impact 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.

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 required to notify relevant authorities at least 18 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 County Council a minimum of 12 months’ notice before the event takes place. This will allow the County Council to carefully consider an application and ensure enough time for each stage to be complete.

Timescales suggested are fixed and you 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 of 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 |
|---------------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| 18+ 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 |
|--|---|--|
| 12 months from event 18 months notice required for large scale / county wide event | Outline public and business awareness communications campaign plan to be submitted to West Sussex County Council. Consideration of the event as a key decision for the council to be made at this time. | 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 SAG to report to WSCC Elected members on the suitability of the event for the county. | 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 |
|--------------------------------|---|--|
| 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 |
| | 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 3

Legislation covering events on the Public Highway

| <u>Activity</u> | <u>Legislation</u> | <u>Responsible Authority</u> | <u>Max Duration</u> | <u>Notice Required</u> |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|---------------------|------------------------|
| Emergency Incident | Police powers | Police Authority | 1 days | None |
| Emergency Road works | Road Traffic Regulation Act – Section 14 | West Sussex County Council | 5 days | Yes |
| Planned Road Works | Road Traffic Regulation Act – Section ? | West Sussex County Council | 18 Months | Yes |
| Sporting Event (Major) | Road Traffic Regulation (Special Events) Act 1994 | West Sussex County Council | 3 days | Yes |
| Social Event (Major) | Road Traffic Regulation (Special Events) Act 1994 | West Sussex County Council | 3 days | Yes |
| Local Social Event | Town Police Clauses Act 1847 – Section 21 | Borough / District Councils | 1 day | Yes |
| Motor Sports Event | Motor Vehicles (Competitions and Trials) Regulations 1969 (as amended), or the Motor Vehicles (Off Road Events) Regulations 1995. | AA, RAC, West Sussex County Council | | Yes |
| Cycle Race / Time Trial / Triathlon | Road Traffic Act 1988 – Section 31 | West Sussex County Council, (authorisation from Secretary of state required) Police Authority | 3 days | Yes |
| Sportive | Road Traffic Act 1988 – Section 31 | Police Authority | 3 days | Yes |
| Filming on the Highway | Road Traffic Regulation (Special Events) Act 1994 | West Sussex County Council | | |