

Report to Licensing Committee

Date of meeting: 1st November 2022



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Subject: Road Closures/Street Parties

Officer contact for further information:

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Committee Secretary: A Hendry

Recommendations: For Information

Background

In June 2022, Her Majesty The Queen became the first British Monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee after 70 years of service.

The UK has a long history of organised street parties to celebrate national events and this year residents were encouraged to come together as part of the official Platinum Jubilee celebrations and to organise and host street parties across the bank holiday weekend.

To facilitate this, local authorities were asked to encourage these events by promoting them through their communication channels and by facilitating any necessary road closures etc.

In a letter to Local Authorities from Rt Hon Michael Gove MP on the 6th January 2022, he states;

“Street parties should be encouraged, and you can play an important role in supporting residents who want to organise parties for their neighbours. For example, relaxing road closure rules to enable street parties to take place as easily as possible will be important.”

In March this year a proposal was put to the Licensing Committee to streamline the existing road closure process and make it more accessible for residents. This was agreed and the following changes were implemented;

- Waive the £194 fee for community/charitable events. This is in line with the previous decision on 29th July 2014 and in respect of VE Day celebrations.
- 6-week application period - there are no legal deadlines, and whilst applicants should be encouraged to submit applications at the earliest stage, we can adopt a minimum 4 week notice cut off period. However, where objections are received this may not allow sufficient time for the Licensing Sub-Committee to determine the application and therefore, they may have to be refused outright.
- The Councils Licensing Team to undertake consultation with Essex Highways. The applicant is responsible for notifying neighbours, businesses, Town Parish Council and anyone who will be affected by the road closure.
- Risk Assessments – remove the need for risk assessments to be submitted at application stage and substitute with the following advice; *If your event is for 500 people or less, we won't normally ask for a risk assessment to be submitted as part of the application. However, you should ensure that you consider all the risks involved and document these. This will help you to identify any particular areas where problems may occur and that you have addressed them. Documenting this process and demonstrating that you've prepared to mitigate risks offers you protection if*

something happens at your event. Please refer to the 'Guide to Street Party and Planning' for further guidance. You can get further advice from the Health and Safety Executive at www.hse.gov.uk

- Removal of the requirement for public liability insurance. There is no requirement from central government to have public liability insurance and many councils don't insist on this. However, applicants are advised that if they wish to obtain insurance for their own peace of mind, information about public liability insurance is available on third party websites including; the Streets Alive, streetparty.org.uk and the Big Lunch etc.

This recommendation is in line with Governments guidance to organising a street party [Your guide to organising a street party - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Guidance notes specific to Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations were drafted and sent out to residents along with the relevant application form. Guidance was also published on the Councils website and wider engagement is being undertaken via Corporate Communications.

Outcome/Feedback

In total the Councils Licensing Team processed 47 applications and issued 45 road closure notices (some were withdrawn as no longer required) which I believe is the highest number of closures that we have ever processed.

The Licensing team also worked with and provided guidance to many event organisers including schools, resident's associations, and Town/Parish Councils etc. where road closures were not required. For example, the use of Ongar Sports Centre car park, School premises and green space for a Jubilee Big Lunch etc.

Feedback has been positive:

"Thank you very much for your advice. This is all very helpful and informative. I am sure many people in Epping Forest will have great parties!"

"Once again thank you for all you did during the Jubilee period. Our street part was amazing!"

His Majesty The Kings Coronation

Following the sad passing of Her Majesty The Queen, it has now been confirmed that His Majesty King Charles The III's coronation will take place on Saturday 6th May 2023.

At this time, it is not known if the proceeding Friday or following Monday will be made a bank holiday. Irrespective of a bank holiday or not it is anticipated that residents will again be encouraged to celebrate this momentous occasion and accordingly local authorities will be expected to make the process as easy as possible.

Given the success of the process adopted for Her Majesty The Queens Jubilee, it is proposed that we adopt the same application process for His Majesty King Charles The III's coronation.