

Cabinet – 14 December 2016

Remembrance Day Parades

Portfolio: Councillor Lee Jeavons (Deputy Leader) – Regeneration

Service: Planning, Engineering and Transportation

Wards: All

Key decision: No

Forward plan: No

1. Summary

- 1.1 Remembrance Day is traditionally the day for the nation to remember and honour those who have sacrificed themselves to secure and protect our freedom. Historically, Remembrance Day parades in Walsall have taken place at multiple locations within the borough.
- 1.2 Until 2015 the Royal British Legion applied to the Police to arrange for appropriate Temporary Traffic Management (TTM) to be put in place to facilitate all of the Borough wide parades. The Police informed the Council's Traffic Management Team of the applications and the Council then made the Street Closure Order under Section 21 of the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 to facilitate the Parades.
- 1.7 The only Parade that the Council is the Organiser, and applies for, is for the Town Centre Parade (via the Mayoral office) and the TTM for this Parade had been shared between the Council and the Police. Official Council resources had only been available to assist with the Walsall town centre parade at a cost of circa £1,000 with additional support coming from voluntary commitment from individual members of staff/operatives
- 1.3 In summer 2016, following a full review, the Police published their updated Safety First Policy and advised that, in line with this Policy, they would no longer support any Remembrance Day parades nor provide temporary traffic management which involves road closures for any future parades in line with the updated Safety First Policy. The Police would, however, continue to carry out their normal community policing at the events.
- 1.4 Subsequent to discussions in September between the Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) it was agreed that the costs for traffic management would be shared between the PCC and Council, for the 2016 Parades only. Ten Parades successfully took place in November 2016.

- 1.5 An interim report of the Remembrance Sunday Working Group (a working group of the Corporate and Public Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee) was presented to the Cabinet meeting on October 26th 2016. It was resolved that Cabinet would receive a report at the next available Cabinet meeting.
- 1.6 Cabinet is requested to consider its approach for funding future Remembrance Day Parades following the one-off provision made for 2016 in combination with the Police & Crime Commissioner.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To give certainty to event organisers in their event planning and fundraising efforts, Cabinet agrees to make a financial contribution to the Event Organisers to assist with traffic management arrangements for Parades in 2017; further that this same arrangement shall be in place to support 2018 and 2019 parades. That financial contribution shall be 30% of traffic management costs up to a cap per parade of £1,000. This arrangement is only available for those parades which took place in 2016 (see section 3.12).
- 2.2 Cabinet agrees to review this financial contribution during the course of the financial year 2019/20, in line with the Medium Term Financial Outlook, and to determine any future arrangements through this review.

3. Report detail

- 3.1 Following the Police's publication of their updated Safety First Policy and in line with this Policy they advised that they would no longer support any Remembrance Day parades or provide temporary traffic management which involves road closures for any future parades. The police will, however, continue to carry out their normal community policing for such Remembrance Sunday events.
- 3.2 The Council continues to support and organise the provision of one Remembrance Day Parade that takes place in Walsall town centre. The Council will consider applications from event organisers for other Parades and would only advertise road closures under appropriate regulations. These road closures to be funded by any event organiser who would be responsible to undertake the necessary temporary traffic management.
- 3.3 The Council does not have the resources or funding to organise and manage ten Remembrance Day Parades within the borough. One main Parade in Walsall town centre could be supported and organised by the Council with appropriate traffic regulation orders and traffic management put in place. A special Safety Advisory Group meeting took place in July where the position of support for Remembrance Day Parades from the West Midlands Police and Walsall Council was communicated.
- 3.4 The Safety Advisory Group (SAG) is a specialist advisory body that oversees the safety arrangements for public events. Remembrance Day events are normally considered by the Council's SAG, where Council Officers from Environmental Health, Traffic Management, Town and District Management and Clean and Green Services, together with colleagues from the Police, Fire and Ambulance

services provide safety advice on appropriate matters such as routes, traffic management arrangements, and insurance requirements.

- 3.5 The cost of traffic management would therefore need to be met by the event organiser i.e. the Royal British Legion, Scout Groups etc or the Council. It should be noted that the event organiser is responsible for health and safety and as such responsible for arranging temporary traffic management, using an approved Traffic Management company, all public liability insurance and organisation.
- 3.6 The Corporate and Public Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee identified the need to consider the changed approach of the Police to manage traffic at the parades, and a Scrutiny Working Group was established in July.
- 3.7 The Corporate and Public Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee received an interim report at its meeting held on 8 September 2016. At this time, it had just been announced that Walsall Council and the PCC would jointly fund traffic management costs for Remembrance Day events in Walsall. At this meeting the Council also offered to facilitate meetings between its partner, Tarmac, and traffic management companies.
- 3.8 On 16 September 2016 the SAG met to consider applications for Remembrance Day events and was informed of the commitment by the Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner to pay for traffic management companies to manage road closures for 2016. Event organisers were informed that they were able to use any traffic management company they wished to employ. They were also given the opportunity to engage with the Councils partner, Tarmac, who had agreed to assist event organisers with identifying suitable traffic management companies to work with.
- 3.9 The Corporate and Public Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on 18 October and considered an interim report of its working group which had made the following recommendations:
 1. A process be developed whereby traffic management companies employed to assist with Remembrance Day events in 2016 claim their costs directly from Walsall Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner;
 2. In order to ensure their long term sustainability Walsall Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner continue to jointly fund the traffic management costs of Remembrance Day events in Walsall from 2017 onwards. In order to meet this cost:
 - a. Walsall Council should consider top slicing the Area Panel Project Funding budget;
 - b. The Police and Crime Commissioner should meet the cost through his council tax precept.
 3. The working group seek an audience with the Home Secretary to discuss the situation that has arisen in Walsall;

4. The working group continues to meet until a sustainable solution to meeting the costs of the traffic management costs of Remembrance Day events has been identified and agreed.

The Scrutiny Committee also received a letter from the Home office confirming that the Police will not be changing their approved Policy in this regard. The Committee subsequently Resolved:

That:

1. The final report and recommendations of the Remembrance Day Working Group be approved and forwarded to Cabinet for consideration;
2. Councillor T. Wilson be appointed to the working group as a nonvoting co-opted member;
3. All Members be advised on the arrangements for funding traffic management at Remembrance Day events in 2016.

3.10 Cabinet received the recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 26 October 2016 and resolved:

- (1) That the interim report and recommendations of the Remembrance Day Working Group be noted at this stage.
- (2) That a report in response to the recommendations be submitted to Cabinet in December.

3.11 Arrangements and preparations continued with the approval of the Council's Traffic Management Team which led to the ten successful Remembrance Sunday Events and Parades for November 2016.

3.12 In 2016 Parades took place in:

- Walsall Town Centre – Council Organised & Tarmac Traffic Management
- Streetly – Traffix Traffic Management
- Willenhall – Traffix
- Short Heath - Traffix
- Darlaston - Traffix
- Brownhills - Traffix
- Pelsall - Traffix
- Aldridge – Astar Traffic Management
- Bloxwich - Traffix
- Walsall Wood – Astar Traffic Management

4. Council Priorities

4.1 As described in the Council's Corporate Plan 2016-20 its commitment to working with the community and help communities make a positive difference to their own lives through active civic engagement and cooperation.

- 4.2 It is essential that all events held on or adjacent to the public highway are carried out in a safe manner to ensure people's health and wellbeing. Safe carriageways and footways reduce the potential for accidents and associated injuries. In addition, independence for older people, the infirm and disabled is enhanced.

5. Risk management

- 5.1 The Council organises the single Civic Remembrance Day Event and for this considers all matters of safety through the Safety Advisory Group process which considers and reviews all proposals for the events.
- 5.2 The Council ensures that it has current Public Liability Insurance in place and manages the process appropriately.
- 5.3 The Organisers for each parade will be responsible for ensuring appropriately qualified traffic management companies are employed and all necessary Public Liability Insurance is in place.
- 5.4 The facilitation of one major event within the borough would support the continuation of Remembrance Day parades in Walsall. There is a risk that if only one main event was supported, events in other district centres and parts of the borough may not go ahead.
- 5.5 The withdrawal of support from Remembrance Day parades would likely be a significant concern for the general public.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1 There is no current allocated budget available for facilitating Remembrance Day Parades within the borough other than the Town Centre Civic Parade. The Council does not currently have the available resources to support and organise 11 events/10 Parades within the borough at the same time. The Council is currently out to consultation on a 4-year budget which seeks to reduce costs by approximately £86m. There are no proposals within that budget to increase resources to fund Remembrance Day parades.
- 6.2 It is estimated that the total cost for the preparation and works by the Council and the two traffic management companies will total approximately some £35,000 for the 10 parades. As indicated earlier this has been agreed to be shared by the PCC and the Council for 2016 only. The average total cost for each parade in 2016 is approximately £3,000, though costs can vary between £2,000 and £4,000
- 6.3 In agreeing to recommendation 2.1, the Council will need to make provision for up to £9000 per year for 2017/18, 2018/19, and 2019/20.
- 6.4 There would be further hidden costs for peoples' time, diverted from other work which are not quantifiable but would only increase with time.

7. Legal implications

- 7.1 There is no legal requirement for the Council to fund Remembrance Day parades.
- 7.2 As the Police are no longer assisting with any Road Closures, the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 will no longer be the appropriate legal Order and if necessary and appropriate the Council will advertise road closures under the Highways Act or Special Events Act. It is for the Event Organiser who is responsible to undertake the necessary temporary traffic management.
- 7.3 The Parades for 2016 were carried out in accordance with the Council's Special Events Traffic Regulation Order 2016 as confirmed by Section 16(A) of the Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

8. Property implications

- 8.1 None arising

9. Health and wellbeing implications

- 9.1 None specifically resulting from this report

10. Staffing implications

- 10.1 No direct staffing implications

11. Equality implications

- 11.1 As part of the Safety Advisory Group process all authorised events will have made due facilities for all members of the community.

12. Consultation

- 12.1 Discussions have taken place between Council Officers and colleagues from West Midlands Police with regards to reduced resources and impact for event organisers.
- 12.2 The Council's Corporate and Public Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee has considered the matter and also established the Working Group as detailed earlier.
- 12.3 Councillors and Organisers have been kept apprised of preparations throughout for 2016.
- 12.4 Full liaison with all councillors and through communications with the Press has been maintained.

Background papers

Cabinet and Scrutiny Reports

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