

THE CHARTER TRUSTEES FOR POOLE



Report subject	Remembrance Day Events - Poole
Meeting date	23 June 2021
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	This report outlines the current activities supported by the Charter Trustees in relation to Remembrance Services across the former borough and asks Trustee Members to determine the level of support to be provided in future, including the potential financial support to the Broadstone Branch of the Royal British Legion.
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The Charter Trustees continue to organise and fund the Remembrance and Armistice Day events at the Mayoral Office and Poole Park; (b) A single wreath be supplied upon request to ward trustee members to lay at local events on behalf of the Charter Trustees; (c) The Charter Trustees determine whether to allocate the sum of £2,000 in the 2022/23 base budget and from the 2021/22 in-year unallocated reserves to provide financial support towards the Remembrance activities in Broadstone.
Reason for recommendations	The recommendations will provide clarity on the activities supported by the Charter Trustees in relation to the Remembrance events held within the former borough boundary of Poole.
Honorary Clerk	Graham Farrant
Report Authors	Richard Jones, Head of Democratic Services
Wards	Not applicable
Classification	For Decision

Background

1. The Charter Trustees at their meeting on 27 January 2021 requested a report outlining the options for Remembrance and Armistice Day events within the Charter Trustee boundary area.
2. Remembrance services take many forms in different towns and parishes, including very large processional parades, church services, formal wreath laying at war memorials and local memorial gardens.
3. Prior to the last decade or so, remembrance events involving processions on the highway were typically organised by local British Legion Branches and supported locally by volunteers marshalling and temporarily stopping traffic, with the occasional assistance of local police officers at major traffic junctions. However, increases in traffic volumes, constraints on police budgeting, increased awareness and challenges by drivers regarding rights of way and some incidents of processions breaching highway rules and risks to public safety, formal road closure orders were required to be made for such events. Associated risk assessments, public liability insurance and trained marshalls were also required at all closure points.
4. Although there is no legislation dictating who should organise remembrance events, major community events, akin to those organised in Poole Park, are often organised by the relevant local authority*, whilst other more localised events are typically organised by local British Legion Branches.
5. The *relevant local authority is the lowest level of authority for the given area (e.g., the parish, town or charter trustee where they exist, district or borough in a two-tier arrangement, or a unitary authority).
6. Since most local processions associated with Remembrance and Armistice Day events are organised by local branches of the British Legion, the cost of funding road closures fell to the British Legion. This led to a significant dent in the fund raising activities and as a consequence the British Legion, in association with the Government, recommended that the relevant authority for the given area, should consider funding the costs associated with enabling formal remembrance processions organised by British Legion Branches.
7. There are currently two local British Legion Branches within the Charter Trustee boundary, Broadstone and Poole. The Mayoralty team liaises closely with both branches but predominantly the Poole Branch for events within Poole Park.

Current Activities Supported

8. The Charter Trustees currently support and fund the following activities in relation to Remembrance events:-
 - Observation of the two minutes silence on Armistice Day at Civic Centre
 - Remembrance event in Poole Park including the laying of wreaths at the War Memorial
 - Attendance and laying of wreaths upon request at other local remembrance services in settlements throughout the former borough. Currently this includes events in Broadstone and Hamworthy.
9. Where local remembrance services are held, ward trustee members are provided with wreaths to lay on behalf of the Charter Trustees, however, it is anticipated that some events take place at which the Charter Trustees are not currently represented.

It is suggested that where such events are held within a ward, a single wreath shall be supplied upon request to the ward members collectively on behalf of the Charter Trustees.

Broadstone Remembrance Activities

10. The Broadstone Branch of the British Legion organises all activities relating to the remembrance activities including the procession on the public highway. Historically the road closure was managed informally as detailed above, however, over time this has evolved to comply with the requirements for formal road closures, insurance and trained marshalls, etc.
11. During the transition period of Local Government Reorganisation, BCP Council provided additional assistance in 2019 to allow events to continue, however, it is for the Charter Trustees to determine whether to formally support events in Broadstone as the relevant authority.
12. If the Charter Trustees were minded to provide financial support for the Broadstone British Legion Remembrance events, it is estimated that the annual budget will need to be increased by £2,000 to cover the costs associated with the formal road closure, etc. Payments would be made against valid invoices for costs incurred. The costs for 2021/22 could be met by in-year reserves.

Conclusion

13. The Charter Trustees are asked to review the Remembrance activities financially supported and consider whether to allocate an annual budget to support the Broadstone British Legion. Whilst Charter Trustees may be concerned that this could set a precedent for other areas, such a policy could be limited to events organised by established Branches of the British Legion of which there are only two (Poole and Broadstone).

Summary of financial implications

14. If the Charter Trustees determined to support the Broadstone British Legion Remembrance events an annual budget would be required to the sum of £2,000. In 2021/22 this cost could be met from unallocated in-year reserves.

Summary of legal implications

15. There is no legal requirement for the Charter Trustees (or any local authority) to organise or fund any Remembrance Service activities, however, such events are seen as important community occasions and civic attendance is traditionally expected.
16. There is a risk of reputational damage and negative media attention if remembrance services are not supported.

Summary of human resources implications

17. There are no direct human resource implications arising from this report.

Summary of sustainability impact

18. There are no sustainability or environmental implications arising from this report.

Summary of public health implications

19. There are no public health implications arising from this report.

Summary of equality implications

20. There are no equality implications arising from this report.

Background papers

None

Appendices

There are no appendices to this report.