

Geoff Raw - Chief Executive
Brighton and Hove City Council

15 June 2017

Dear Geoff,

I am submitting the following letter under Council Procedure Rule 23.3 to be included on the agenda for the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee meeting of 27 June 2017.

I write to express my concern at the council's current highways consenting regime on street closures for parties and events.

Successful community-led street closures /parties, organised with the support of residents, are a fantastic way of getting communities together and in my ward there are numerous examples of when this has worked very well.

Unfortunately in my ward we also have experience of street closures /parties that have caused tensions and frustration for residents. This has resulted in – for example – some residents feeling it necessary to leave their homes for the duration of the event and also move their vehicles for fear of damage.

My understanding is that under the current regime, in order to successfully request a street closure for a party or event, organisers need to be able to demonstrate to council highways officers that a 2/3 majority of residents are in favour of the street closure.

What is less clear are the following:

- What evidence is required by council officers to demonstrate 2/3 majority i.e. who checks and verifies?
- What monitoring is undertaken (by officers and police?) about street closure /party implementation?
- Under the existing policy is there a provision for rejection of street closures if previous closures at that location have caused problems? If not, do you think there should be?
- How does the current policy differentiate between street closures requested by residents and those requested by businesses (i.e. between community and 'for profit' events)?
- How should officers consider street closures on networks of small streets in which achieving the necessary 2/3 support may be very easy (there may be only 3 or 4 homes) but the impact of a closure far wider?
- What provision is there for organisers to request that residents' vehicles be moved, as has happened in my ward?

I'm totally supportive of street closures for parties and events where there is a clear mandate from affected residents. My concern, as indicated above, is that the current

council rules and enforcement allow a different type of street closure /party to take place and one that may not be fully supported by residents.

I look forward to your response.

Kind regards

Cllr Ollie Sykes