Littlehampton Town Council
Adverse Weather Event Policy and Procedure
Outdoor Event Cancellation

1. Purpose

This policy establishes a clear and consistent process for assessing and, where necessary, cancelling outdoor events in Littlehampton organised by Littlehampton Town Council due to adverse weather conditions. The priority is to protect public safety, minimise risk, and ensure effective communication with all stakeholders.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Littlehampton Town Council outdoor events held within the Littlehampton town boundary that have received permits or approvals from West Sussex County Council or Arun District Council.

3. Definitions

- Adverse Weather: Severe or unsafe weather conditions including, but not limited to, heavy rain, high winds, thunderstorms, lightning, flooding, extreme heat, or cold.
- Event Manager: the person responsible for the planning, setup, and operation of an outdoor event. The Event Manager is responsible for advising and consulting with the Designated Safety Officer with regards to postponing, modifying or cancelling an event, including monitoring weather conditions and assessing the risks to inform decision making.
- Designated Safety Officer: The council-appointed or event-specific safety lead responsible for deciding on event continuation or cancellation. In accordance with the Town Council's Health and Safety Policy, the Town Clerk or, in their absence, a member of the Senior Management Team, is the Designated Safety Officer.

4. Procedure

4.1 Pre-Event Planning

- Weather Monitoring: Begin continuous weather monitoring a minimum of 72 hours prior to the event using reliable forecast sources (e.g., Met Office).
- Risk Assessment: Review the event risk assessment to identify potential weather-related hazards and develop mitigation plans.

- Communication Plan: Establish clear lines of communication between the Safety Officer, Event Manager, Event Team, vendors, and contractors to ensure timely updates and responses.

4.2 Trigger Points for Event Cancellation

Events should be postponed, modified, or cancelled if any of the following conditions are forecast or occur:

Weather Condition	Trigger Point / Response
High Winds	Sustained winds or gusts that could cause instability of temporary structures, trees, or signage. LTC Gazebo – Maximum wind gust limit 35mph Inflatable play equipment – Maximum wind gust limit 24mph Beacon Lighting - Maximum wind gust limit 10mph MEWP use - Maximum wind gust limit 24mph
Thunderstorms / Lightning (Forecasted)	If lightning is forecast within a 10-mile radius of the event site during the event period, organisers should postpone or cancel the event.
Lightning (Unforecasted, During Event)	Immediately evacuate attendees, stallholders, and contractors to safe indoor or sheltered areas. Suspend activities. If lightning activity continues for more than 30 minutes, cancel the event. If thunder and lightning occur immediately before the event starts, the start time may be delayed while conditions are assessed.
Heavy Rain / Flood Risk	Where Met Office Yellow or higher rainfall warnings are issued and flooding or ground saturation is likely, assess and consider cancellation due to site access considerations.
Extreme Heat or Cold	If a heat or cold weather alert is in effect, review safety provisions (hydration, shelter, medical support). Cancel if attendee welfare cannot be adequately safeguarded.

4.3 Decision-Making Process

- 48-Hour Review:
  Conduct an initial weather and site risk review to identify potential issues and develop contingency options.
- 24-Hour Confirmation:
  Hold a decision-making call involving the Event Manager and the Designated Safety Officer to confirm go/no-go status.
- Event-Day Final Check:
  The Event Manager will inspect the site and review the Event Management Plan and current forecasts before the event starts. Once this review has been completed, the Event Manager, will consult with the Designated Safety Officer, who will make the final decision on whether the event can proceed. This decision must be documented and communicated immediately.

4.4 Communication of Cancellations

- Internal Notification:
  Notify all key stakeholders (Chair of relevant committee, all councillors, organisers, contractors, vendors, volunteers, emergency services) of the decision and reasoning.
- Public Announcement:
  Publish updates through Littlehampton Town Council's website, social media channels, and local media outlets.
- On-Site Signage:
  If event is cancelled last minute, display clear cancellation signage on the day of the event at main access points if the public may arrive unaware of the decision.

5. Alternative Arrangements due to adverse weather conditions.

Where feasible, the event manager should consider:

- Relocating parts of the event to an indoor or sheltered location.
- Postponing the event to a later date.
- Any revised details must be communicated promptly to all stakeholders and the public.

6. Post-Event Review

Following any weather-related cancellation or disruption:

- Conduct a debrief with contractors, organisers, stallholders and council representatives.
- Review the effectiveness of decision-making, communication, and contingency measures.
- Record lessons learned and update this procedure as required.

7. Relevant Guidance and Legislation

HSE Website

The Purple Guide to Health, Safety and Welfare at music and other Events.

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974