

## Appendix

### Expert Evidence Standard Template – Report of the Director of Public Health

<b>Date</b>	14.10.20	<b>Version</b>	V2
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<b>Type of Direction</b>
Event
<b>Name and address/location of setting</b>
Stow Horse Fair also known as Stow Fayre, located on the fields between Maugersbury Road and Oddington Road, Stow-on-the-Wold, Gloucestershire,  Due to take place on : 22nd October 2020
<b>Name and address of organiser(s)/owner(s)</b>
Names and contact details redacted
<b>Name and addresses of any other persons involved</b>
As above
<b>Detail of restrictions to be imposed</b>
Prohibit the event from taking place altogether
<b>Timing and duration of the direction</b>
Based on experience from previous events, Gloucestershire Constabulary believe that attendees tend to arrive ahead of the event date and therefore the timing and duration of the direction is recommended to have effect from 0001hours Saturday 17 <sup>th</sup> October to 2359 hours Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> October.
<b>Background</b>
<p>Stow Fayre is a Gypsy Fayre that takes place twice annually at Stow, Gloucestershire and has taken place for many years, originally dating back to the 14<sup>th</sup> century. It is one of the biggest gatherings of its kind in England. Gypsies gather from all corners of England to meet socially and for the sale of horses and horse equipment. There are other stalls that sell wares such as crockery and carpets. It is held away from the town centre in a field of 38 acres. In previous years enforcing agencies have provided support to the organisers to enable the event to take place safely.</p> <p>The numbers attending are unclear from documentation provided but appear to state anything from 100 up to 420 caravans/trailers/vans/cars.</p> <p>By tradition the Fayre is held on the closest Thursday to 24<sup>th</sup> October, which is 22<sup>nd</sup> this year, however experience of the Fayre in previous years indicates that attendees start to arrive around a week ahead of the event.</p>
<b>Action taken by enforcement agencies to date</b>

Representatives from Gloucestershire Constabulary, Cotswold District Council and Gloucestershire County Council (including the Traveller Liaison Officer) first met on 16<sup>th</sup> September to discuss the implications of the coronavirus pandemic on the viability of the event.

Following this a police officer and environmental health officer met with the event organisers and their legal advisor to explain concerns and request them to submit a Covid-Secure Risk Assessment and an Event Plan to CDC EHO by 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2020. The event organisers submitted an Event Plan; however, it was not considered to provide the level of detail required and the infection prevention and control measures proposed were considered to be inadequate. The EHO responded in writing to the legal advisor to this effect and provided an example template to provide further guidance as to what was required. It is not known whether the organisers received this advice as the legal advisor ceased to be involved.

Two further meetings between officers were convened on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> October and a warning letter was issued from the Director of Public Health to advise the organisers of the powers held by Local Authorities to prohibit events if they are felt to pose a serious and imminent threat to public health. This was handed to the organisers in person on 9<sup>th</sup> October and read out to them to ensure comprehension. The organisers were asked to provide additional information to assure partners that the event would be held in a Covid-secure manner by 14<sup>th</sup> October. No further documentation was received.

Gloucestershire Constabulary completed a Safety Advisory Group risk assessment checklist on 9.10.20. This assessment concluded:

- That the Event Plan provided by the Lead Event Organiser satisfies very few of the SAG checklist criteria due to a lack of detail and inadequacy of preventative infection control measures proposed.
- There are a number of additional risks due to the nature of the population that attend this event:
  - Literacy levels within community
  - Some Non-compliance (testing/isolation)
  - “Mis-information” - (differing names/dates of birth)
  - Reluctance to cooperate with contact tracing
  - Dual residency on various traveller sites (Wales/England)

In addition, a concern was raised over attendees travelling from areas outside Gloucestershire, where rates of infection are likely to be much higher, to attend the Fayre.

#### **Justification for making the direction**

##### **1. The direction responds to a serious and imminent threat to public health in the local authority’s area**

Cases of Covid-19 are increasing across England and in Gloucestershire. The England rate for the last 7 days (7-13th October) is 115.6 cases per 100,000, with many areas having rates much higher than this. The South West R value range is

between 1.3 and 1.6, more than the previous week estimate (1.1 and 1.4). As it is above 1 this means the number of new infections is accelerating.

Gloucestershire's rate of coronavirus is currently at 43.0 per 100,000 with rates having risen for several weeks. Rates in Cotswold District are currently 74.6 per 100,000 and have increased significantly on the previous weeks (23rd to 29th September there were 15 cases; 30th- 6th October there were 46 cases; 7th-13th October there were 67 cases to date, and data is likely to be incomplete for this time period). The largest number of cases is amongst those aged under 30. Rates in counties near the Cotswolds border are also higher than in Gloucestershire and increasing (Oxfordshire, Worcestershire and Warwickshire).

The proposed plans for the event are highly likely to lead to mixing between 'household' groups and the information provided does not give adequate assurance that mixing will be prevented. Attendees will have travelled from locations across England. This means the risk of transmission of the virus is very high and poses a serious and imminent threat to the health of local residents, event attendees and to those in the local area they will return to following the event.

In the time since initial discussions were held in mid-September, the coronavirus situation has worsened to a point that all events which have people attending who have travelled from a wide geographical area, involve overnight stays, include large numbers of people from multiple households and risks due to difficulties in controlling human behaviour are being advised not to take place.

**2. the direction is necessary to prevent, protect against, control or provide a public health response to the incidence or spread of infection in the local authority's area of coronavirus**

Enforcement agencies have engaged with the event organisers, explained their concerns and requested information on how the risk will be mitigated. The information provided has been insufficient to provide assurance to the enforcing agencies and district and county councils. Therefore, the issuing of a direction is necessary to prevent the spread of the virus.

**3. the prohibitions, requirements or restrictions imposed by the direction are a proportionate means of achieving that purpose**

The enforcement agencies, district and county council do not believe that it would be possible for this event to be run in an adequately Covid-secure manner, therefore prohibiting the event is a proportionate response to prevent transmission.

### **Equality Impacts**

The County Council considered the equality implications during the development of the Gloucestershire Local Outbreak Management Plan which set out the Council's plan for preventing, containing, responding to and monitoring local outbreaks of Covid-19 in Gloucestershire.

This decision also involves wider equality considerations supplementing those which

are set out in GLOMP equality assessment as the organisers and attendees for the Stow Fayre are from the Gypsy Traveller community. To ensure that the individuals have not been disproportionately disadvantaged through this process, enforcing agencies have ensured that communication has taken place verbally and face to face and Traveller Community Link Workers have been used to facilitate communications where possible.

There are some characteristics of this population group which mean that risk of transmission of coronavirus may be higher than in the general population. This means that the health impacts of increasing transmission of the virus in this community may disproportionately adversely affect them.

It is worth noting that the primary concerns around this event are not related to the Gypsy community but instead relate to the size, duration and plans for overnight stays. Other events in Gloucestershire have been voluntarily cancelled on these grounds, however a Direction has not yet been required.

**Recommendation from Director of Public Health**

As Director of Public Health for Gloucestershire County Council I recommend that on the basis of the evidence provided herein, that a direction is served to prohibit the Stow Fayre event scheduled for 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2020 from taking place altogether.



Signed ..... Date 14/10/20.....

Sarah L. Scott  
Director of Public Health