

Remembrance Sunday Arrangements 2026

Purpose of Report

To advise Members of changes to the status of the Kingsclere Branch of the Royal British Legion (RBL) and to consider the Parish Council's role in organising the annual Remembrance Sunday Parade and Service.

Background

The Parish Council has received correspondence from Mr Jason Hart, Chairman of the Kingsclere Branch of the Royal British Legion, advising that a request has now been submitted for the Branch to become a County Supported Branch under Hampshire County RBL.

This change has become necessary due to the lack of volunteers and committee members required to continue operating as an independent branch. It is anticipated that the request will be approved as the alternative would be closure of the Branch.

Should the application be approved, the Kingsclere Branch will continue to exist locally and represent the interests of veterans, beneficiaries and members. However, under the County Supported Branch model, the Branch will no longer be able to organise, manage or take responsibility for local Remembrance activities in the way it has done previously.

Current Position

Mr Hart has advised that whilst the Royal British Legion will continue to support Remembrance activities where possible, responsibility for organising the annual Remembrance Parade and Service rests with the Parish Council as the local civic authority.

He has also confirmed that, although the Parish Council has historically been the applicant for the temporary road closure, he has undertaken a substantial amount of the organisational work associated with the annual event, including:

- Completing the risk assessment supporting the road closure application.
- Liaising with local organisations regarding attendance, timings and parade arrangements.
- Coordinating wreath requirements through his role as Poppy Appeal Organiser.
- Liaising with local schools regarding participation.
- Organising participants before the parade.
- Coordinating the parade to the War Memorial.
- Managing the Order of Service and wreath-laying arrangements.
- Conducting the Remembrance Service alongside the local clergy.

Mr Hart has kindly offered to support a smooth transition of responsibilities.

Considerations

Remembrance Sunday is one of the Parish Council's principal civic events and attracts significant participation from residents, veterans, schools, youth organisations, community groups and elected representatives.

To ensure the continued success of the event, arrangements will need to be coordinated well in advance and responsibilities clearly allocated.

The Council will need to consider matters including:

- Overall event coordination.
- Temporary road closure application.
- Risk assessments.
- Event management and stewarding.
- Liaison with Hampshire Constabulary and Hampshire Highways where required.
- Invitations to participating organisations.
- Wreath-laying protocol.
- Order of Service.
- Publicity and communications.
- Insurance and health and safety arrangements.

The continued involvement and support of the Royal British Legion, particularly in relation to the Poppy Appeal and ceremonial aspects of the event, will remain an important part of the day's proceedings.

Financial Implications

There may be some administrative costs associated with organising the event, although many of these have historically been met by the Parish Council. Any additional expenditure would be reported to Council in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Council:

1. Notes the correspondence received from the Kingsclere Branch of the Royal British Legion.
2. Acknowledges that the Parish Council will take the lead in coordinating the 2026 Remembrance Sunday Parade and Service as the village's civic authority.
3. Records its appreciation to Mr Jason Hart and the Kingsclere Branch of the Royal British Legion for their many years of service in organising and supporting Remembrance activities within the village.
4. Authorises a nominated councillor to work with representatives of the Royal British Legion, local churches, schools and other participating organisations to develop arrangements for the 2026 Remembrance Sunday event, with any significant decisions or expenditure to be referred back to Council.