

Epsom and Ewell Alcohol PSPO: Summary of Conclusions of Consultation 2021

About the consultation

A Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) is designed to stop individuals or groups committing anti-social behaviour in a public space. Epsom and Ewell Borough Council can use PSPOs to address anti-social behaviour by prohibiting specific activities in defined public areas.

PSPOs must be drawn up in consultation with the community and reviewed at least every three years. We introduced a PSPO "Public Spaces Protection Order (Epsom & Ewell Borough Council) 2018 No.1" in effect from 24 December 2018 to parts of the borough. A consultation began on 21 July 2021 and ended on 6 September 2021.

This Summary of Conclusions explains how we consulted on the proposal to renew a PSPO and sets out the conclusions relied on by the Council's officers in recommending that the Committee make a PSPO in the terms contained in the draft order attached to the Committee Report together with Summary of Conclusions.

How we consulted with the community

In addition to consulting statutory consultees, the Council adopted the approach found in 'A Common Purpose' Guidance from DEFRA and consulted the wider public. Between 21 July and 6 September 2021, the Council carried out an online survey aimed at a broad cross section of society and various groups that would be interested in the making of an alcohol PSPO. We promoted the survey through social media and on our website. Business groups in Epsom were reached via the Business Improvement District and contact was made with the various Friends of the Parks groups via the Council's Community Liaison Officer.

In addition to asking [Question 1] the participants to confirm their status (e.g., local resident) we asked the following questions.

2. In the past 12 months have you been affected by problem behaviour related to alcohol consumption in public spaces in Epsom & Ewell?

2.1. If 'Yes', please share with us the location of the incident (e.g. the name of the street or park) and how it has affected you below

3. The proposed PSPO covers specific public places in Epsom & Ewell. Do you agree with the areas to be covered by the PSPO?

3a. Please specify areas to be included or excluded in the PSPO explaining your reasons below.

4. If you have any other comments on the proposed PSPO, please include your comments below

Participation

63 people participated in the survey as follows

Local resident – 49

Some one who works in the borough – 5

Local Councillor – 1

Representative of a community group – 4

Other - 4

Key findings

The main themes identified by respondents have been extracted from the consultation responses and appear below

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| <p>Suggestion to include alleyway under Hudson house.</p> | <p>This is considered to be a useful suggestion and is supported by evidence of alcohol related litter at this location therefore the replacement proposed PSPO includes this provision</p> |
| <p>Suggestion to include Hook Road because of student presence.</p> | <p>This is not proposed since there is no data relating to Hook Road and the presence of a greater proportion of students does not itself provide sufficient reason to designate this road</p> |
| <p>Suggestion to include Court Recreation Ground</p> | <p>Court Recreation Ground is present in the existing PSPO and is proposed to remain</p> |
| <p>Suggestion to include Epsom Common and Stamford Green</p> | <p>This was suggested by two respondents, one based on occasional unlicensed events “raves”, which have taken place and the other based on the opinion that “these are areas appealing to those drinking/smoking cannabis” It is not proposed to include these areas since there are pre-existing dispersal powers to address the issue of raves more directly and an area appealing to drinking does not satisfy the threshold set out in law</p> |
| <p>Suggestion to include the Hogsmill at Cuddington owing to the presence of littering</p> | <p>No independent evidence was found for this issue and therefore it has not been included in these proposed area.</p> |
| <p>Concern that a blanket approach has been taken and the PSPO is Borough wide</p> | <p>This is incorrect, the approach is deliberately constrained to those geographic areas identified</p> |

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| Suggestion to include Stoneleigh Broadway | This has been carefully considered. Whilst Stoneleigh Broadway has commonality with both Epsom and Ewell centres in its appearance and purpose, it records only a fraction of crime attributed to the other two main areas of the Borough across all crime types including antisocial behaviour. For this reason the recommendation is not to include it at this stage. |
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Certain comments made the point about the effectiveness of the proposed measures in the context of their opinions on the state of policing and resources available to both Surrey Police and the Council, that late night clubs ought to be shut down and that there are too few opportunities for younger people to attend supervised social activities. These are not necessarily relevant to the proposals at hand but do provide an opportunity to elicit the opinions on wider community safety issues. These comments have been passed to the Police borough Commander and the Council’s Community Safety and Enforcement Officer.

Other comments invited the Council to consider matters which are controlled by existing legislation such as possession of cannabis and the sentencing arrangements for young offenders. These are not subjects which are within the scope of Public Space Protection Orders and have been discounted for the purposes of this exercise.

Awareness and views of the PSPO

- 95% of participants supported the renewal of the PSPO with 25% of those who supported also suggesting further areas for consideration which have been dealt with above.
- Significantly, 41% of those who chose to answer the question “In the past 12 months have you been affected by problem behaviour related to alcohol consumption in public spaces in Epsom & Ewell?” stated that they had been so affected. This is considered to be unusually high and may be influenced by a proportion of the business community who had responded, promoted by the Business Improvement District.

What happens next?

Officers and have reviewed the results of the consultation, including feedback from businesses and local community groups.

Given that the effect of Public Spaces Protection Orders is to restrict the behaviour of everybody using the public place, the close or direct involvement of elected members will help the Council to ensure openness and accountability. Accordingly, officers have referred the decision whether to renew the PSPO and on what terms to the Council in accordance with the Council's committee procedures.

If the Committee adopts the officers' recommendations found in the Committee Report, then this Summary of Conclusions will be updated and published together with the final PSPO.

Once final terms of any PSPO as approved by the Council are published the PSPO will take effect. Existing signs will be sufficient in the event the committee agree to retain the existing area but may require additional signs in any new areas.

The proposal is that the Order will be renewed so as to provide an unbroken period of cover for a period of up to 3 years.