

Hastings and St Leonards Local Strategic Partnership Agenda

Monday, 29 January 2018 at 10.00 am

Council Chamber, Muriel Matters House, Breeds Place, Hastings. East Sussex, TN34 3UY

For further information, please contact Michael Courts on 01424 451764 or email: mcourts@hastings.gov.uk

		Page No.
10.	Update on Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) Mike Hepworth, Assistant Director, Environment and Place, Hastings Borough Council) (10 minutes plus 10 minutes Q&A)	1 - 4

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Agenda Item 10

PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER - UPDATE FOR THE LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

29TH JANUARY 2018

**MIKE HEPWORTH – ASSISTANT DIRECTOR ENVIRONMENT AND PLACE,
HASTINGS BOROUGH COUNCIL**

BACKGROUND

On 12th June 2017, following extensive consultation earlier last year, the Council made 2 Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs).

One related to dog control measures and was largely a like for like replacement of the existing dog controls. Whereas the other was an entirely new initiative for the Council, and aimed to deter anti-social behaviour (ASB), such as that caused by groups of young people and street drinkers, and which had begun to seriously affect the town centre in 2016.

The ASB PSPO prohibited the consumption of alcohol and use of psychoactive substances in parts of our various town centres, the seafront and some parks and open spaces. It also prohibited 'aggressive begging' borough wide, and enabled authorised officers to seize alcohol borough wide, if a person was consuming it in public places and this was leading to ASB.

UPDATE

Although the Council made the PSPOs and is the primary enforcement resource for the Dog Control PSPO, the Police have been the primary enforcement resource for the ASB PSPO. However, the Council's Warden Service has been going through a significant change process, applying for Community Safety Accreditation from Sussex Police so that it can start to enforce the ASB PSPO.

In late December Sussex Police approved the application for accreditation. But during the process several of the Warden Team left the service, and it is now in the process of recruiting to fill these posts, so that the service can start a period of shadowing and joint working with the local Police.

During the Summer and Autumn the Police carried out numerous patrols and visits to the town centre ASB hotspots, issuing warnings and in some cases Fixed Penalty Notices to people in breach of the ASB PSPO, and gathering evidence of persistent offenders to build a case for escalating enforcement action with them.

At the same time the Police worked with the Council and colleagues from housing, substance abuse, and mental health outreach services to ensure that irrespective of

whether or not the offenders wanted help, their needs were assessed and where appropriate offers of help were made.

By late Autumn evidence had been gathered in respect of about a dozen persistent offenders and enforcement action such as Civil Injunctions and ASB Contracts are being considered. Civil Injunctions can include a requirement for the offender to positively engage with health and wellbeing outreach and support services, and this is being considered in several cases. Although much of the direct evidence has been gathered by the Police, the Council's Legal Services are working with them to initiate the legal action, and the positive engagement requirements are being formulated with the active participation of the appropriate support services.

Last summer the Police and Council observed an improvement with far less ASB in the York Gardens Roundels, but a degree of displacement to Harold Place. However, since the closed public conveniences were boarded up and the street community were no longer able to shelter around them, ASB in Harold Place also appears to have reduced significantly.

CONCLUSIONS

It is too early to tell whether or not the ASB PSPO has had a significant positive impact on reducing ASB in our public spaces. They are part of a wider package of measures targeting ASB.

For example in the York Gardens Roundels outside Pound Stretcher and Sports Direct, the 2 pop up retail outlets appear to have had a significant positive impact. The Council is in the process of commissioning an options appraisal to identify potential longer term and more sustainable ways of utilising this space.

It is also hoped that the site of the closed public conveniences in Harold Place will also be redeveloped, making this area more attractive, and far less likely to be affected by ASB.

From Easter 2018 it is hoped that the newly accredited Council Warden Service will be able to increase the 'ASB enforcement offer' as part of the wider Police family.

A formal review of the ASB PSPO should be initiated in Autumn 2018 to consider matters such as:-

- How effectively the powers have been used;
- Whether the geographical scope of the PSPO needs changing, perhaps to deal with displacement;
- How the various agencies have worked together, for example the enforcement agencies and the outreach/support agencies;

- Whether some of the prohibitions and restrictions need amending or removing;
- Whether new prohibitions or restrictions need adding; Impact on ASB in the areas covered;
- Impact on offenders;
- Impact on public and business perceptions of ASB in the areas concerned.

It is envisaged that the Council will lead the review, and that it will be conducted with the participation of the various key stakeholders.

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