

# **Shrewsbury PSPO Consultation**

## **Shrewsbury BID Response**

### **May 2023**

Anti-social behaviour and low level crime in Shrewsbury Town Centre has escalated in the last 3 years to a point where it is having to have a serious impact on the atmosphere and economic vitality of the town centre.

An escalation in crime and ASB affects businesses all over the town centre, not only in the immediate vicinity of particular incidents. Clear feedback from businesses is that it is negatively impacting upon the economic potential of our Shrewsbury and often creates an unwelcoming trading environment that discourages repeat visits, and reduces dwell time and footfall.

Shrewsbury BID is therefore strongly supportive of the renewal of the town centre PSPO for a further three years. Additionally we fully support all new measures proposed with the aim of reducing anti-social behaviour in the town centre.

We have received 52 responses to the request for feedback regarding the PSPO consultation which have been directly shared with Shropshire Council.

A main theme of the responses is a concern around an escalation of activity within certain groups, and how this is leading to people feeling unsafe in the town centre both during the day and at night. The responses also highlighted a level of frustration that there are not more tools or resources available to effectively combat these issues. Without exception all responses were supportive of the renewal of the PSPO.

The Shrewsbury BID team are increasingly receiving feedback from businesses regarding feelings of safety in the day to day. We regularly receive reports of threats, verbal abuse, drug dealing and taking, urination and defecation, shouting and general disturbances.

It seems clear that additional powers and resources are required to help tackle these issues, alongside the drug and mental health support that is available from partners in the town. We believe by increasing the number of individuals or organisations authorised to issue PCRs, the PSPO would act as a stronger deterrent.

The Shrewsbury Rangers, Taxi Marshall's and Quarry Security are recent additions to the security infrastructure of Shrewsbury, working 7 days a week in the town centre to help reduce crime and ASB. These teams work closely with the police and other local partners and have been hugely welcomed by businesses in the town. Shrewsbury BID members recently rated the Rangers project as the 2<sup>nd</sup> most valuable project (of over 25) that the BID delivers. We believe extending PSPO powers to authorised individuals within these teams will increase the overall effectiveness of the PSPO by increasing the actual and perceived authority of these teams.

Whilst Busking generally has a positive impact on the vitality of the town centre, we are aware of increasing use of loud amplification which can dominate the street scene, impact on the operation of businesses (e.g. workspace) and can make people feel uncomfortable or avoid particular areas of the town. We therefore support the addition of a provision within the PSPO for an authorised officer to request that amplification not be used. We think the PSPO as a deterrent in this case will be effective in stopping unacceptably loud busking.

The Shrewsbury BID Board met on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2023 and agreed their strong support for the PSPO renewal and all of the proposed new measures within it. At this meeting it was also suggested that Shropshire Council's own Civil Enforcement Officers, who are already authorised officers of the council could also be trained in identifying PSPO offences, communicating acceptable behaviour to individuals, and where necessary issuing PCR's.

We have also received representation from a number of businesses in Coleham and would support the expansion of the PSPO to encompass the high footfall pedestrianised area on the Coleham side of Greyfriars Bridge.

Without a PSPO provision in place in the town centre, Shrewsbury runs the risk of allowing unacceptable behaviour to continue to escalate which could lead to long term damage to vitality, viability and reputation of Shrewsbury.

### **A selection of quotes from members of the business community:**

*'The Homeless people in the local area are a threat to my team and my business. I have had staff quit as they have been threatened or harassed.'*

*'we have drug paraphernalia frequently on our fire exit steps/bin.. human toileting also , frequently witness anti social behavior in the square, cannabis is smoked right outside the shop front access... and groups of unsavory people also use the two benches to sit and get drunk on.. puts off customers coming in to store ..and it can feel quite unsafe too.'*

*'There needs to be a BLANKET BAN on open alcohol containers on Pride Hill, The Square and Shoplatch. Too many Homeless basically 'partying' and causing disruption and being anti-social and leaving litter behind. This is not good to encourage shoppers and tourism.'*

*'As a town centre business that is open 6 days a week, we are seeing more anti social behaviour in the town each day. Shouting, drinking, drug use, rubbish, empty bottles, used needles, sick and urination.'*

*'The order needs renewing so that the local authorities can continue to manage the ever growing homeless population in the town centre.'*

*'Regularly have homeless sleeping in the shop doorway overnight. They urinate over the shop entrance and leave syringes. Have had a curved window smashed at a cost of £8,000 to replace, another window kicked & cracked, and a drunk intruder smashed through the front door during the night. ALSO: walking up Pride Hill at 5.30pm - 6pm is like The Wild West outside Tesco Express. Sat on the benches around Tesco are drunks and druggies and the language and noise is really unsettling. A lot of customers talk about this new unsettling behaviour and how it puts them off shopping in Shrewsbury.'*

*'As a business in Shrewsbury we get to hear feedback from our customers on the town (why they are visiting, why they dont visit as often etc..). The overall feedback is that they do not find Shrewsbury to be as pleasant as it used to be. One of the main factors is the drinking / homeless on pride hill. They are often fighting, drinking midday and making a mess. We have a shop down Roushill bank often there is a smell of urination overnight, and in some cases human defecation. I think the top priority is banning drinking on Pride Hill. Roushill bank needs keeping cleaner, cigeratte butts, chewing gum; it almost needs a weekly pressure washing.'*

*'My business is on Princess Street; the anti social behaviour is severely escalating at the moment. It is effecting business and residents daily, and we feel not enough action is being taken.'*

*'The amplified music and number of drunk/ loud people has increased over the past 3 years and the level of rubbish on the high street is disgusting!'*

*'There's more issues in the town centre than ever before with anti-social behaviour. So it's vital that the order is extended.'*

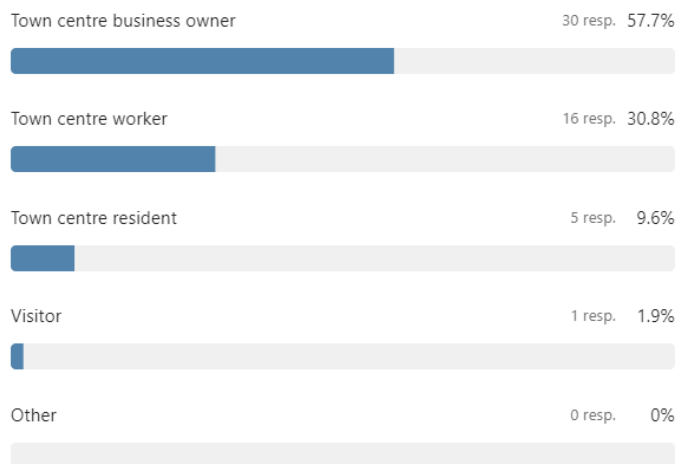
*'The bigger groups can be problematic, we've had people arguing and attacking each other outside our store on quite a few occasions.'*

*'We think people should not be allowed to drink on the street or drink recklessly in the town centre as it makes employees feel unsafe, also those under the influence of drink or drugs should be removed immediatly from centre and outside the centre as it makes a very unpleasant atmosphere.'*

## Summary of responses received by Shrewsbury BID (and already shared with Shropshire Council)

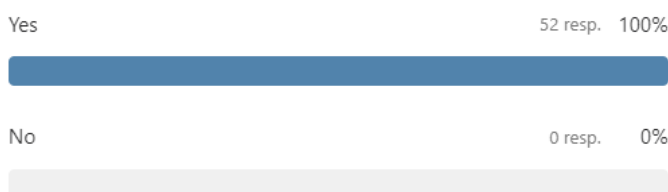
✓ 1 I am responding to this consultation as a

52 out of 52 people answered this question



✓ 3a Do you support the renewal of the Shrewsbury Town Centre Public Space Protection Order for a further three years?

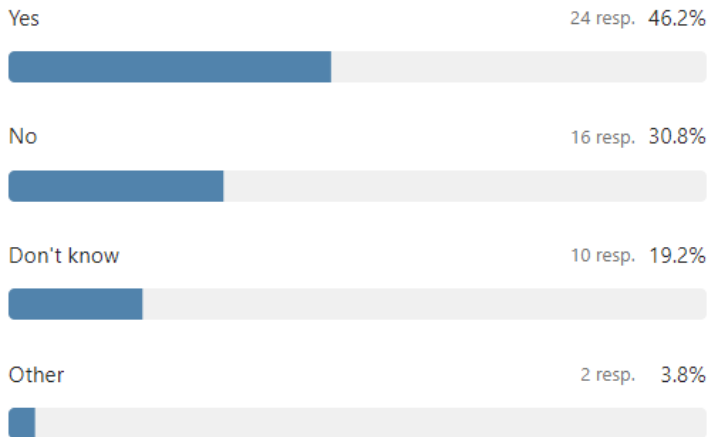
52 out of 52 people answered this question



✓ 3c

### Do you think the existing PSPO has helped to reduce instances of anti-social behaviour?

52 out of 52 people answered this question



✓ 4a

### As part of the consultation the below are suggested to be included in the PSPO renewal. Please select the additional provisions you think should be included:

51 out of 52 people answered this question (with multiple choice)

