

Resident's Comment on Proposed Extension of Public Spaces Protection Order
May 2023

Council Contribution	Comment
<p>The Shrewsbury Town Centre Public Spaces Protection Order (No.1) 2017 ('the Order'), which is attached, was originally approved by Shropshire Council on 21 June 2017 with an effective commencement date of 1 August 2017. The Order implemented four prohibitions relating to anti-social behaviours in a public space (shown by the map accompanying the Order), specifically:</p>	
<p>(a) urinating/defecating;</p>	<p>Obviously neither of these should be tolerated in built-up areas. Enforcement should be strict.</p>
<p>(b) leaving personal belongings;</p>	<p>I am less concerned about this sort of problem than with (a). Littering is different and should be more strongly enforced than leaving possessions.</p>
<p>(c) a wider enabling provision to require a person to stop drinking alcohol and/or hand over alcohol if causing anti-social behaviour; and</p>	<p>Should continue. There should be additional similar ASBO provisions, particularly to disrupt suspected trading in recreational drugs, or their use in the town centre. See also comments under (2) and (3) on Council provisions allowing too many get-outs.</p>
<p>(d) a wider enabling provision to require a person to leave an area and not to return for 48 hours if causing anti-social behaviour.</p>	<p>I would have thought repeat offences should attract longer enforcement, measured in weeks and perhaps months.</p>
<p>All Public Spaces Protection Orders expire at the end of three years unless extended by the Local Authority (maximum period of up to 3 years). The Order was extended for a further three years in August 2020 and we're now seeking views and comments on extending the Order for a further 3 years (from August 2023) and/or whether to make any amendments to the existing order.</p>	

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The following amendments/additions are proposed:	
(1) To extend the persons able to enforce the PSPO to ‘any person authorised by Shropshire Council’.	Sensible addition that will help enforcement. However this is only effective if there is greater coverage, in both time and area, by authorised persons.
(2) To include a wider enabling provision to require a person to stop sitting or lying within the area if causing anti-social behaviour i.e. - ‘No person, who is sitting or lying on any footpath or pedestrian area or in any fire escape, stairway or other entrance or exit to any premises within the protected area, shall refuse to move when required to do so by an authorised officer, provided that officer has reason to believe that that person is causing or likely to cause nuisance, alarm, harassment or distress to any other person or in order to prevent public disorder.’	The Council seems excessively keen on wording that provides a potential get-out for the person behaving anti-socially, by allowing them to dispute details, delay the officer from enforcement, potentially causing the officer to give up enforcement. No person, who is sitting or lying on any footpath or pedestrian area or in any fire escape, stairway or other entrance or exit to any premises within the protected area (31 words defining wrong activity) shall refuse to move when required to do so by an authorised officer, (13 words on stopping the activity) provided that officer has reason to believe that that person is causing or likely to cause nuisance, alarm, harassment or distress to any other person or in order to prevent public disorder. (32 words weakening the definition of wrongful activity).
(3) To include a wider enabling provision to require a person to leave a public toilet if causing antisocial behaviour namely - ‘No person shall refuse to leave a public toilet when required to do so by an authorised officer, provided that officer has reason to believe that that person is causing or likely to cause nuisance, alarm, harassment or distress to any other person or in order to prevent public disorder.’	A further example of the Council seeming excessively keen on wording that provides a potential get-out. It should be enough that public toilet use be limited to its obvious intended functions, and in a timely fashion.
(4) To include a wider enabling provision to require a person to stop using a sound amplifier if causing anti-social behaviour namely - ‘No person shall refuse to stop using a device intended to amplify sound when required to do so by an authorised officer, provided that officer has reason to believe that that person is causing or likely to cause nuisance, alarm, harassment or distress to any other person or in order to prevent public disorder.’	Definitely in favour of this provision. Otherwise there is ongoing distress to local residents – and those town centre visitors with quiet enjoyment in mind. There should also be very strong provision against unlicensed street trading, including breaking the excuse of giving away merchandise and then (not really separately) receiving a donation.

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We welcome comments to address the following questions:	
1. Do you believe the existing order should be extended for three years. Please provide any further information to help justify your response.	Yes. It is obvious from the deterioration in the town centre (and Particularly in Pride Hill) of quiet enjoyment and other pleasantness
2. Do you think the existing PSPO has helped to reduce instances of anti-social behaviour. Please provide any further information to help justify your response.	Slightly, but not as much as might be hoped for. On this weak enforcement looks to have been a major deficiency. On enforcement, there would be benefit from installation and use of CCTV (with audio recording); also with radio-communications between enforcement officers, staff monitoring CCTV and the local police.
3. Do you think the existing PSPO should be amended to include any of the proposed new provisions. Please state which, if any, of the 4 provisions should be included and provide any further information to help justify your response.	Yes. All of them. (1) For better enforcement. Also suggest greater staffing by authorised persons, with sufficient coverage from around 0700 to 2330 every day - including festival days. (2) Wider provision against sitting or lying; also any other disruptive mode of presence, such as shouting. Also against preaching, lecturing, etc except for severely limited specific timed licencing – with suggested overall limitation to 2 timed slots of 15 minutes each (say between 10am and 3pm) on each on 2 specified days per week, shared between all interested persons and organisations. (3) It should be enough that public toilet use be limited to its obvious intended functions, and in a timely fashion. This for proper availability to those with legitimate need when in the town. (4) Definitely no sound amplification, beyond that specifically licencing by the Council, just on festival days.
4. Please state whether you are a resident of Shrewsbury Town centre, a Town centre business owner, an employee in the Town centre or a visitor.	I am a resident, near the junction of Pride Hill and St Marys Street

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