

Shrewsbury Town Centre Public Spaces Protection Order

Executive Summary

This report presents the findings from the consultation on the proposed extension of the Shrewsbury Town Centre Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) for a further three years from August 2026. The PSPO has been in place since 2017 and covers Shrewsbury town centre within the river loop, as well as part of Mountfields including Frankwell car park and the adjacent playing fields. The consultation ran from 2 June to 16 June 2026 and received 31 online responses and one email response.

Overall, the consultation indicates strong support for extending the PSPO. Most respondents had read the accompanying Evaluation Report and demonstrated a clear understanding of the purpose of the PSPO, the reasons for considering an extension, and the consultation process. Respondents also showed strong agreement with the seven existing PSPO categories, suggesting that the current conditions continue to be viewed as relevant and necessary.

The feedback shows that anti-social behaviour continues to affect residents, businesses, workers and visitors in Shrewsbury town centre. Key concerns included drinking and drug use, urination and defecation in public spaces, intimidation, threatening behaviour, littering, rough sleeping, groups congregating, and reduced feelings of safety. Some respondents reported avoiding parts of the town centre or feeling less confident using certain areas, particularly where anti-social behaviour is perceived to be concentrated.

Example comments

- *Having to walk around drunks and druggies who have no concept of the issues they are causing and frightening it can be for some.*
- *Still have people using quiet side streets as a toilet.*
- *Drunks, Drugs, Human excrement and urine. Rubbish left by groups.*
- *Shouting and swearing in front of my children. Refusing to leave an area. Drunk people are still drinking even though collapsing. Belongings such as sleeping bags in doorways. Urine in shop doorways. Begging on Frankwell carpark bridge.*
- *The congregation of drunk, homeless people is intimidating for many people. This has improved, but I notice they are still congregating in doorways of closed down shops e.g. Furniture scheme shop on Castle Gates.*
- *Clouds of cannabis smoke from people congregated in front of library, threatening behaviour and foul language meaning I feared for my safety and could not access the library. Can no longer use any of the shuts for easy pedestrian access across town as I used to. Actively avoid pride hill, prefer to walk along Smithfield Road and up castle gates. Area immediately in front of bus station door by premier inn also a big problem with loitering and drug taking during the day.*

There was evidence that the PSPO is seen as having had a positive impact. Many respondents felt it had helped to reduce anti-social behaviour and contributed to a safer, quieter and more pleasant town centre, particularly in areas such as Pride Hill. A clear majority of respondents supported extending the PSPO, with many stating that not extending it could lead to a return or worsening of previous issues.

However, the consultation also highlighted important areas for consideration. A high proportion of respondents who had experienced issues had not reported them, suggesting a need to improve awareness of reporting routes, simplify reporting processes, and build public confidence that concerns will be acted upon. Feedback also raised concerns about the consistency and visibility of enforcement, the role of different agencies, and whether the PSPO is being implemented effectively in practice.

Example comments

- *The PSPO is clearly aimed at tackling homelessness and associated issues, despite guidance that it should not be.*
- *Issues in Coleham, after being given a PSPO banning from town, they then come and carry on in Coleham.*
- *I don't know whom to contact about this issue, which is frustrating.*
- *It is not easy to identify the correct agency. My example is that I found syringes in the town and tried to telephone to get these safely removed. What followed was a debate between the two councils about who was responsible for that particular location. So where do you report it? How do you report it? Perhaps adopt a system similar to that on the trains - 'see it sort it' with contact details and signs.*
- *I would increase the visibility of the police at hot spots and PCSO's as a first step.*

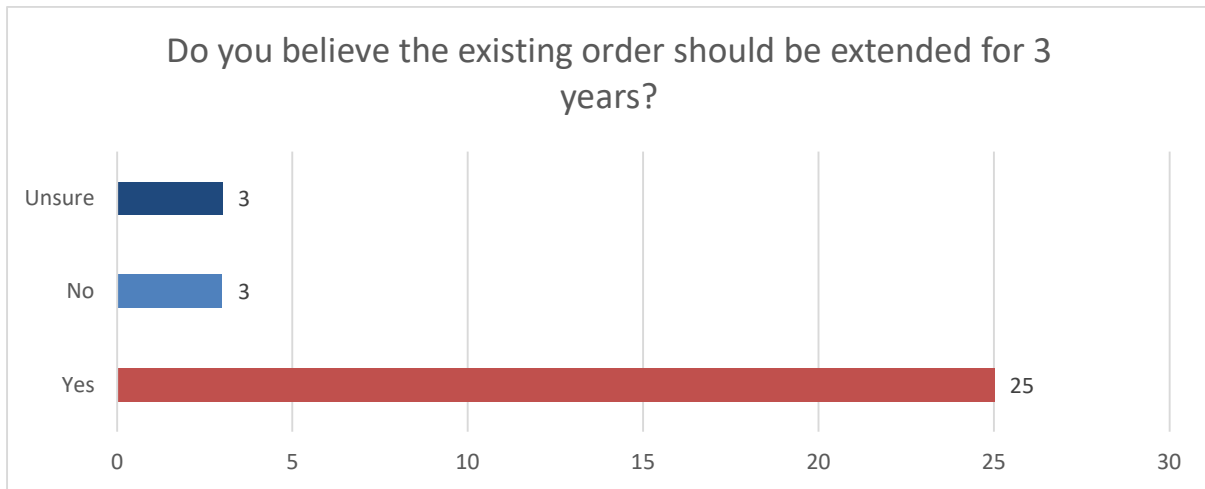
Respondents also raised concerns about displacement of anti-social behaviour into neighbouring areas, particularly Coleham. This was reflected in both the online survey and the email response from a local business owner. Future monitoring and consultation should therefore consider whether the PSPO boundary remains appropriate and whether surrounding areas are being affected by displacement.

The feedback also emphasised the need to balance enforcement with support for vulnerable people, including those who are homeless or experiencing substance misuse. Respondents highlighted the importance of public toilet provision, seating, accessibility, and links with housing, public health, drug and alcohol services. These issues suggest that the PSPO should continue to operate as part of a wider multi-agency approach rather than as a standalone measure.

The respondent profile indicates that most feedback came from people with a clear connection to Shrewsbury and Shropshire, particularly local residents. However, the response was weighted towards older age groups, with younger people less represented. The short consultation period should also be noted when interpreting the findings, particularly if future consultation is required on any changes to the PSPO boundary or conditions.

In conclusion, the consultation provides a clear basis for recommending that the Shrewsbury Town Centre PSPO is extended for a further three years. The PSPO is valued by many respondents as a tool for reducing anti-social behaviour and supporting a safer, more welcoming town centre. Alongside extension, the Council and partners should focus on clearer communication, accessible reporting routes, visible and consistent enforcement, monitoring of displacement, consideration of town centre infrastructure, and appropriate support for vulnerable people.

Figure 1 – How many respondents agree to the extension of the PSPO



Example comments

- *There's still work to be done esp. with young people rampaging around just to make trouble*
- *Anything that will help to reduce ASB in the town is a good thing. However, having security at licenced premises simply moves drug activity onto the streets.*
- *Particularly important as Shrewsbury is being recognised nationally as a great place to visit and live.*
- *If the order is not in place, then the anti-social behaviour will rapidly increase.*
- *I think we need a PSPO but it needs to be changed so you're simply not redirecting anti-social behaviour to other parts of Shrewsbury.*
- *Don't stop now. We lost a lot of repeat visitors when things were bad. We need to encourage visitors to come back.*
- *The current PSPO obviously works well & should continue.*