

PSPO Consultation Plan

Introduction

- 1 We are consulting on the introduction of a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) to tackle low level antisocial behaviour within Surrey Heath.
PSPOs were introduced in October 2014 by the Antisocial Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 and are designed to deal with a particular nuisance or problem in a particular area (a public space) that is detrimental to the local community's quality of life, by imposing conditions on the use of that area which apply to everyone.

Present Situation

- 2 In Camberley town centre, Old Dean, St Michaels, Heatherside, Frimley Green Recreation ground we have existing alcohol control powers in place, which have enable Surrey Police to enforce appropriately when necessary. These orders will expire in October 2017.

The Local Priority Areas and Issues

- 3 The issues that highlighted are within Surrey Heath are:

Street drinking.

This does not mean that it is an offence to drink alcohol in a public space, but it is an offence if you fail to comply with a request by an authorised council officer or Police Officer to cease drinking or surrender alcohol within the designated areas outlined on the maps attached.

Psychoactive substances (Formerly known as Legal Highs).

There is evidence as to the impact psychoactive substances can have on our health. There have been incidents where people have taken these substances and they have been in need of immediate medical help. Many of these substances are not intended for human consumption, and the effects of taking them have led people to behave in a very erratic manner which is often seen as anti-social. Intoxicating substances are defined as substances with the capacity to stimulate or depress the central nervous system.

Begging.

In recent months Camberley town centre has witnessed an increase in begging and homelessness. We would encourage those who are genuinely homeless to contact the council housing needs team for help and assistance. The council is considering introducing measures that will deter begging in the shaded areas of Camberley Town Centre only. This measure outlined is that no one will be able to make verbal, non-written or written requests for goods money or donations, unless they are authorised at an appropriate location e.g. authorised charity collections. In some instances, we are aware of some who have relocated to Camberley to beg while they have accommodation elsewhere.

Begging is a criminal offence that dates back to the vagrancy act of 1824 and our intention is to introduce a more current restriction.

Encourage Responsible dog owners/walkers who use the councils 35 parks and greenspace areas to ensure their dogs are under control, on a lead when necessary, a maximum of 4 dogs per walker/owner, and to clear up their dog faeces.

We are seeking to implement control orders within all parks and countryside areas within the council's ownership. The power extends beyond the Byelaws made by the council under section 164 of the Public Health Act, 1875. The new powers will enable the enforcement team to issue fixed penalty notices to those who do not comply.

The consultation

4 This will canvas local opinion on the plans to introduce the Public Spaces Protection Orders in the key locations where alcohol, psychoactive substances (formerly known as legal highs) that can result in anti-social behaviour. These locations are: Camberley Town Centre, Old Dean, St Michaels, Frimley Green Recreation ground and Heatherside.

We also seek to introduce PSPO's in all 35 Parks and greenspaces relating to responsible dog owners and walkers. Frimley Green Recreation ground will be part of both control orders.

We are also seeing an emerging local issue relating to begging in Camberley Town Centre, and would like to utilise the powers available to sensitively deal with this growing issue.

All locations relating to the above are detailed within the background paper P1.

We will ask:

- A whether you agree with the proposals
- B If there are any alterations that can be made to areas in which the PSPO's are planned
- C what impacts the order may have on the area or local people

The PSPOs are centred on improving and protecting the local area for the people of Surrey Heath whether you live or visit or work here.

The questionnaire is designed to be fully inclusive with a completed equality assessment.

All opinions are valued in helping shape the future of Surrey Heath.

Timescales:

5. The council will analyse the feedback to the consultation with the outcomes being publicised in late spring 2017 following ratification by the council. The new PSPO's will be implemented by October 2017.