

This report is public	
Bicester Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) Implementation Report	
Committee	Executive
Date of Committee	7 October 2025
Portfolio Holder presenting the report	Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities, Councillor Rob Parkinson
Date Portfolio Holder agreed report	6 August 2025
Report of	Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety, Tim Hughes

Purpose of report

A consultation was recently undertaken on a proposal to renewal the current Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) for Bicester town centre. This report provides the Executive with the background to the proposal, a summary of the consultation undertaken and the feedback from stakeholders and the details of the potential scope of the Order. The report asks the Executive to decide whether to renew the current PSPO in Bicester town centre.

1. Recommendations

The Executive resolves:

- 1.1 To renew the Public Spaces Protection Order for Bicester town centre taking into consideration the outcomes of the public consultation and the feedback received from stakeholders.
- 1.2 The basis of the order will be items (a)-(e) as set out in the consultation in section 4.14 and the order will apply to the area set within the red border in appendix 1.
- 1.3 To agree the order can remain in place for up to 3 years.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Council's Community Safety Team have been working extensively with Thames Valley Police on problems of anti-social behaviour in and around Bicester town centre for several years. The current PSPO was put in place on 21 June 2022 and has had a positive impact on the centre of Bicester and proven a useful tool for both CDC and TVP to use to tackle ASB.
- 2.2 A consultation has been completed on a proposal to renew the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) for Bicester town centre. This report provides the

Cherwell District Council

Executive with the background to the proposal, a summary of the consultation undertaken and the feedback from stakeholders and the details of the potential scope of the Order. The report asks the Executive to decide whether to introduce a PSPO in Bicester town centre.

Implications & Impact Assessments

Implications		Commentary		
Finance		<p>The renewal of a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) to Bicester town Centre will be met by existing budget.</p> <p>Kelly Wheeler, Finance Business Partner, 06 August 2025</p>		
Legal		<p>The report sets out in detail the statutory framework for a PSPO in section 4, including the statutory tests/conditions for whether a PSPO can be put into effect (see 4.10 of the report). A PSPO will be in place for a period of no more than 3 years in accordance with the legislation.</p> <p>Careful consideration should be given to whether these tests have been met before approving the PSPO.</p> <p>S72 of the 2014 Act referred to in the report sets out the required consultation process to follow before making the order, and the report indicates that the required consultation requirements have been followed.</p> <p>S59.5 of the 2014 Act, set out in full in paragraph 4.10 of this report notes that the restrictions within the PSPO should be reasonable in order to prevent the detrimental effect identified from continuing, occurring or recurring, or to reduce that detrimental effect or to reduce the risk of its continuance, occurrence or recurrence.</p> <p>The committee should be satisfied that the restrictions are reasonable in order to achieve the desired objectives before continuing.</p> <p>Denzil – John Turbervill, Head of Legal, 2 September 2025</p>		
Risk Management		<p>There are no risk implications arising directly from this report. Any related risks arising in the future will be managed through the service operational risk and escalated to the Leadership Risk Register as and when deemed necessary.</p> <p>Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 02 September 2025</p>		
Impact Assessments		Positive	Neutral	Negative
		Commentary		

Equality Impact		x		<p>There are no equalities nor inclusion implications arising from this report. All proposals and projects developed by the council are done in line with our Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Framework, an Equalities Impact Assessment related to this proposal has been completed to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 02 September 2025</p>
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		x		
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		x		
Climate & Environmental Impact		x		N/A
ICT & Digital Impact		x		N/A
Data Impact		x		N/A
Procurement & subsidy		x		N/A
Council Priorities	The recommendations within the report will support the council priority 2 - Community leadership – to strengthen community collaboration and resilience and to promote health and wellbeing with a focus on inequality.			
Human Resources	N/A Anna Thornicroft, Trainee HR Business Partner, 03 September 2025			
Property	N/A Mona Walsh, Assistant Director Property, 26 August 2025			
Consultation & Engagement	A public consultation has been carried out. No further consultation required.			

Supporting Information

3. Background

- 3.1 Anti-social behaviour can directly affect the day to day lives of communities and create an environment in which more serious crime can take hold. These outcomes are at odds with priorities within the Council Plan and the drive to support the health and well-being of our communities. In looking to address issues including, anti-social behaviour, the Council has an emphasis on early intervention, collaboration, and leadership. Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) can support this way of working. In line with the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 PSPOs can be implemented by Local Authorities and used to prohibit specified activities within a defined public area. Breach of a PSPO without a reasonable excuse, is an offence.
- 3.2 A PSPO restricts what people can do in an area and how they behave. As such it is important to ensure that any such restrictions are focussed on problem behaviours, are proportionate to the detrimental impact that the behaviour is having or could cause and are considered necessary to prevent it continuing, occurring or reoccurring. The restrictions and requirements included in a PSPO may be comprehensive or targeted on specific behaviours by particular groups and/or at specified times.
- 3.3 A PSPO can be in force for any period up to a maximum of three years and can be extended for a further period of up to 3 years at any time before expiry. Before introducing a PSPO the council is required to conduct consultation with relevant parties on the scope of the PSPO

4. Details

Anti-Social Behaviour in Bicester Town Centre

- 4.1. The table below shows the figures for the total number of reported offences which is then broken down into ASB and public order around the town centre in Bicester recorded since 01/06/2022

Occurrence Type	Count of Occurrences	% of Grand Total
ASB – Community	113	14%
ASB – Environmental	11	1%
ASB – Personal	10	1%
Assault with injury	154	19%
Assault without injury	233	29%
Public order	285	35%

Since 01/06/2022 there have been 806 reports of ASB, Assault or Public Order in Bicester Town Centre.

- 4.2 Further data provided by TVP comparing years is as follows. There was a 71% increase in ASB between 2022-2024, a 44% increase in assault between 2022-2024, a 30 % increase in public order between 2022-2024. In contrast to these increases occurrences been reported have declined by 17% between 2023-2024.
- 4.3 In an attempt to tackle ASB in the town centre and surrounding areas, Thames Valley Police and the Council's community safety team have in recent years undertaken a number of specific operations. This has included increasing our presence in the town centre, listening to and acting upon social media reports of ASB by groups and liaised with businesses to address their concerns. These have had some effect on the behaviour of certain individuals, the continuation of the PSPO should maintain the ability for incidences of ASB to be effectively addressed.

Benefits of Public Spaces Protection Order

- 4.4 A significant proportion of the ASB reported or witnessed in the town centre relates to groups. Activity to address this has mainly relied on the Police working with the individual and (where necessary) their parents/ guardian to reduce the harmful behaviour. Acceptable Behaviour Contracts can only be issued on a voluntary basis and community protection notices cannot be issued to anyone under 16 years of age. Therefore, non-criminal options for tackling the problematic behaviour of young people are limited.
- 4.5 Continuing with the PSPO would provide the council and the Police with further legal options to tackle the behaviour of individuals which is causing concern in Bicester town centre. In particular it would permit the service of fixed penalty notices for behaviours which would not meet the thresholds or legal requirements for other formal action. In addition, it would provide opportunity for us to promote the restrictions through warning signs providing a deterrence and raising public awareness of the actions that we are taking to improve the town centre.
- 4.6 If the PSPO is renewed the Community Safety Team would continue with the existing approach to engage and advise first but the PSPO would provide an option for an immediate and non-criminal escalation should this be necessary.

The Legal Framework for a PSPO

- 4.7 Local authorities have the power to create PSPOs under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 ('the Act'). In deciding to make a PSPO, the Act requires that the local authority must have regard to the rights of freedom of expression and freedom of assembly set out in the Human Rights Act 1998.
- 4.8 The two issues which must be addressed for every proposed restriction in the PSPO are whether the statutory criteria are met and whether the restrictions proposed are proportionate having regard to the legitimate aim of preserving the quality of life for everyone who lives or works in, or who visits, the town centre.
- 4.9 A local authority can make a PSPO in respect of any public space within its administrative boundary. The definition of public space is wide and includes any

place to which the public or any section of the public has access, on payment or otherwise, as of right or by virtue of express or implied permission.

4.10 Section 59 of the Act sets out the basis on which local authorities may make a PSPO. It provides as follows:

(1) A local authority may make a public spaces protection order if satisfied on reasonable grounds that two conditions are met.

(2) The first condition is that:

- (a) activities carried on in a public place within the authority's area have had a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality, or
- (b) it is likely that activities will be carried on in a public place within that area and that they will have such an effect.

(3) The second condition is that the effect, or likely effect, of the activities:

- (a) is, or is likely to be, of a persistent or continuing nature,
- (b) is, or is likely to be, such as to make the activities unreasonable, and
- (c) justifies the restrictions imposed by the notice.

(4) A PSPO is an order that identifies the public place referred to in subsection (2) ("the restricted area") and

- (a) prohibits specified things being done in the restricted area,
- (b) requires specified things to be done by persons carrying on specified activities in that area, or
- (c) does both of those things.

(5) The only prohibitions or requirements that may be imposed are ones that are reasonable to impose in order:

- (a) to prevent the detrimental effect referred to in subsection (2) from continuing, occurring or recurring, or
- (b) to reduce that detrimental effect or to reduce the risk of its continuance, occurrence or recurrence.

4.11 In establishing a PSPO, appropriate signage must be displayed in accordance with the requirements of the Act and details of the PSPO must be published.

4.12 A breach of the PSPO can be dealt with through the issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice of up to £100, a level 3 fine of up to £1000 on conviction, or £500 upon conviction for consuming alcohol in breach of the Order.

Consultation

4.13 Before introducing, extending, varying or discharging a PSPO local authorities are obliged to consult with the local chief officer of police; the Police and Crime Commissioner; owners or occupiers of land within the affected area where reasonably practicable, and appropriate community representatives.

4.14 A 2-week public consultation on the renewal of the PSPO for Bicester town centre was undertaken between 18 May and 2 June 2025.

4.15 The scope of the PSPO consulted on include:

- a) No person shall loiter in the restricted area either as an individual or in a group if they are causing or likely to cause anti-social behaviour. If asked to disperse by a Police Constable, PCSO, or an authorised officer of the Council that person must not return to the restricted area for a period of 24 hours.
- b) No person shall beg (using either active or passive methods of obtaining alms) or ask members of the public for money in the restricted area.
- c) No person shall consume alcohol in the restricted area (other than premises specified in Section 62(1) of the Act) in a manner which causes nuisance or annoyance to other persons in the locality.
- d) No person shall continue to consume alcohol when directed by an officer to stop in the restricted area.
- e) No person shall fail to surrender alcohol or a container for alcohol when requested to do so by an officer in the restricted area.

4.16 The proposed area that the PSPO will cover is included as Appendix 1. The map formed part of the consultation to identify where the proposed prohibitions would be introduced by the order.

4.17 This consultation included an online survey promoted by a press release and on the council's social media platforms, face-to-face engagement with visitors to the town centre, visits to the main town centre businesses and direct communication with key stakeholders.

4.15 A summary report of the consultation is attached (Appendix 2). The summary analysis identifies that there were 344 responses to this consultation. In response to the key questions the answers were as follows:

Question	Response – 'Yes'	Response – 'No'	Response – 'Don't know'
"Should Cherwell District Council continue to prohibit anti-social behaviour (that causes alarm, distress or concern) in Bicester town centre through the renewal of Public Spaces Protection Order?"	310 (92.81%)	6 (5.39%)	18 (5.39%)
"Should Cherwell District Council seek to prohibit aggressive begging in) in Bicester town centre through the renewal of Public Spaces Protection Order?"	297 (62.87%)	7 (2.10%)	117 (35.03%)
"Should Cherwell District Council seek to prohibit Antisocial behaviour associated to drinking in	302 (90.42%)	12 (3.59%)	20 (5.99%)

Bicester town centre through the renewal of Public Spaces Protection Order?"			
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Thames Valley Police formally responded to the consultation in support of the renewal of the PSPO.

- 4.16 If the PSPO is renewed it will remain in force for 3 years. During the third year it will be evaluated through reviewing the use of the powers introduced through the Order and by reference to the data relating to ASB in the area over the years preceding the introduction of the PSPO and during the time it is in force. The impacts of the PSPO on other areas outside the geographic scope of the Order will be monitored during this period to ensure that we identify if the Order has simply moved the problem to other areas. A further consultation will be required if it is intended to renew the Order.

5. Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 5.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: Not renew the PSPO.

This option is not recommended. The information gathered to support the renewal of the PSPO for Bicester town centre demonstrates that there is a persistent problem with ASB occurring in and around Bicester town centre. The consultation outcomes show very strong support for the renewal of the PSPO to continue to tackle this problem and stakeholders, including Thames Valley Police, support the proposal.

Option 2: Introduce a PSPO with a more limited scope.

This option is not recommended. The consultation outcomes show support for all aspects of the proposed PSPO, and the information collected provides evidence that the prohibitions to be included are proportionate to the issues that the PSPO will look to address.

6 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 6.1 The results of the consultation show overwhelming support for the introduction of a PSPO in Bicester Town Centre from the public and stakeholder organisations. The responses support including all three prohibitions that were included in the consultation.
- 6.2 Crime and incident data from the Police evidence supports the conclusion that prevalent and persistent problem of anti-social behaviour in and around Bicester town centre and that the legal requirements for the introduction of a PSPO are met. Therefore, the Executive is recommended to approve the renewal of the PSPO for Bicester town centre.

Decision Information

Key Decision	Yes
Subject to Call in	Yes
If not, why not subject to call in	N/A
Ward(s) Affected	Bicester South and Ambrosden, Bicester East

Document Information

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Map of area covered by Bicester PSPO
Appendix 2	PSPO Consultation Summary Report for Bicester 2025
Background Papers	None
Reference Papers	None
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Corporate Director Approval (unless Corporate Director or Statutory Officer report)	Ian Boll Corporate Director for Communities, 03/09/2025