



Devon & Cornwall
POLICE

Superintendent Antony Hart

Exeter Police Station, Exeter, Devon, EX2 7RY

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Sent by email

Mr Simon Lane
Service Lead
Environmental Health & Community Safety
Exeter City Council
simon.lane@exeter.gov.uk

29 December 2021

Dear Simon

Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 ('the Act') Consultation on varying the Public Spaces Protection Order for Exeter City Centre ('the PSPO')

I am writing in response to your letter dated 15 November 2021, seeking the views of Community Safety Partnership members on the proposed variations to Prohibition E of the Public Spaces Protection Order (the PSPO) currently in place in Exeter. The proposed variations you outlined are as follows:

- Prohibition E is varied so that any individual who behaves in a manner that has caused or is likely to cause a member of the public to suffer harassment, alarm or distress by that behaviour can be dispersed. At present this prohibition can only be applied to individuals whilst in a group.
- Varying the time that a dispersal from the PSPO area may last, from the current six hours to a maximum of 24 hours.

As the policing commander for Exeter, I am very aware of the daily issues caused by anti-social behaviour in the city and the detrimental effect that this behaviour can have on the quality of life for those who experience it. The PSPO has provided a very effective tool for preventing and disrupting anti-social behaviour since its introduction in 2017, allowing police officers, working in partnership with colleagues from Exeter City Council, to respond to anti-social behaviour in a proportionate and timely way. The current dispersal power is frequently used with 189 dispersals made under the power so far (until mid-December) in 2021, and the seizure of alcohol is a daily occurrence.

I am supportive of the proposed variations to the PSPO, as outlined below:

The proposed variation to the PSPO to allow an individual causing anti-social behaviour to be dispersed, rather than a person who is part of a group, will prevent the escalation of anti-social behaviour which is often currently experienced. This escalation can be in terms of the length of time that the behaviour is experienced, or in the number of people who are drawn



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into carrying out anti-social acts. The proposed variation will allow a quicker and more proportionate resolution of incidents.

The proposed extension to the dispersal period will allow the police and partner agencies to disrupt anti-social behaviour more effectively. The current six hour dispersal period is often found to be too short with those who have been dispersed returning later the same day and continuing to engage in anti-social behaviour or causing an escalation in the behaviour of others. A longer twenty-four hour dispersal period will greatly assist in preventing further incidents of anti-social behaviour.

Your sincerely

Antony Hart
Superintendent