

22 December 2021

Exeter City Council
Simon Lane

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

InExeter is the business improvement district representing over 650 businesses located within the city centre. The business community invest circa £2.5million over the five-year term in projects and services designed to drive footfall, promote Exeter, activate the city with events adding to its vibrancy, and support, engage and connect the business community. The BID plays a vital role in helping shape Exeter.

Anti-social behaviour (ASB) and business crime affects business on a daily basis, in terms of negative customer experience and poor perception of the city resulting in lower footfall and a damaged reputation. ASB affects the health, wellbeing and safety of teams and staff members and has a negative economic impact through its disruption, damage to and theft from businesses. ASB and business crime is a key and growing concern for our businesses. Aggressiveness, drug use and dealing and intoxication are very evident and a constant problem in the city and reported on a constant basis.

We therefore welcome the consultation of the PSPO enabling the city to reduce-the tolerance of anti-social behaviour.

InExeter support varying Prohibition D of the order so that any individual (rather than just those in groups) 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.

InExeter also note that the current 6-hour dispersal is not robust enough nor does not it send out a sufficiently strong enough message for those causing anti-social behaviour or crime in the city.

InExeter strongly support extending the dispersal time to no less than 24 but with preference for up to 48 hours. This is a strong message that ASB will not be tolerated in our city. Offenders can be dispersed for the whole weekend period and is therefore a far greater deterrent.

It is also crucial that the PSPO is upheld and that it is properly enforced with resource.

We look forward to an ongoing dialogue with Exeter City Council on the PSPO and working collaboratively together to help tackle anti-social behaviour in the city.

Your sincerely,

Ann Hunter, InExeter
cc. InExeter Board of Directors.