
Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities

10th January 2019

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities - Councillor A S Khan

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Deputy Chief Executive (Place)

Ward(s) affected:

Foleshill

Title: Extension of Public Space Protection Order for Edgwick Park

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive Summary:

An application is being made to extend the existing Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) for Edgwick Park.

A PSPO was granted for Edgwick Park on 22nd April 2016. The order was created to address concerns at the park regarding Child Sexual Exploitation, exacerbated by drugs, alcohol and anti social behaviour.

The order gave agencies powers to request that groups in the park that were felt to be acting in a manner to the detriment of other park users, if they refuse to leave they will be committed an offence and liable to enforcement, either a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) or a summons to court.

Whilst the order has not entirely eliminated incidents of anti social behaviour, mainly due to the difficulty of consistently dedicating resources to patrol, having the PSPO gives officers powers to deal with issues quickly and effectively. Were the order to expire this would make enforcement at the park far harder than it currently is.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet Member is recommended to:-

- (1) Note the draft order attached to this report and agree to renew the existing order for a period of three years from the date when the current order expires
- (2) Request that all partner agencies continue their current actions and patrol plans and also monitor the surrounding areas for any potential displacement of the issues.

List of Appendices included:

Appendix 1 – Proposed draft order for Edgwick Park

Appendix 2 – Impact statements

Background papers:

None

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Proposed Public Space Protection Order for Edgwick Park

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 Edgwick Park is a relatively small park located in the Foleshill ward. It is bounded by the Foleshill Rd, Eld Road and Cross Road. There is a primary school, Edgwick Community Primary School that is located within the park. The park has a children's play area and the park itself is particularly intended to be a community park where families with children will come to use the facilities.
- 1.2 In the residential areas surrounding the park it is acknowledged that there are a higher than average number of houses where often groups of males are living in very crowded properties. As a result, these properties often have no communal areas within them and as such the occupants will often leave the properties in the evening.
- 1.3 Occasionally there are groups of males noted as congregating in the park. Often people are noted drinking alcohol in the park, the presence of alcohol cans and similar littering the park and found within bins confirms this. The whole of the City of Coventry is covered by a Designated Public Place Order (DPPO) This order does not make it an offence to drink alcohol in public, but it does mean that someone commits an offence if they do not surrender any opened container of alcohol to a Police officer should they request them to do so.
- 1.4 Local residents still express concern from time to time about gatherings of groups in the park. Primarily these groups congregate because of their living conditions outlined in 1.2 Whilst it is felt that the risk and incidents regarding CSE has greatly reduced it is not something agencies can be complacent about. It is still felt that the presence of such groups is a deterrent to others from using the park as regularly as they would otherwise.
- 1.5 Patrols to the park from several agencies have been increased. Whilst those patrols are not as regular as when the concerns were initially received it is still a location that Police and support workers from agencies such as Horizon (CSE) and similar attend and speak to individuals and groups.
- 1.6 There have been physical alterations in and around the park to address matters. Significant amounts of vegetation and undergrowth have been cut back and a toilet block has been demolished. This has decreased the locations where it was felt there was potential for activities that would cause concern.

2 Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1 The Council could extend the existing Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 to prohibit congregations or specific behaviours within the park. Breach of such an order could result in a person being issued with a fixed penalty notice up to the value of £100. Should someone continually breach or if the breach is felt to be serious enough then the matter could be referred to court where an increased fine or custodial sentence could be passed.
- 2.2 It should be noted the use of a PSPO is intended to be an additional tool for officers to use to manage situations that could potentially escalate. The order in itself is not going to solve any particular issue on its own, that will often need a number of different methods, used jointly. The order will be valid for a period of three years and can be further extended or amended, providing due process is followed.

2.2 The existing PSPO could be allowed to expire and no further action taken. This option is not recommended. As previously stated, the fact a PSPO is in place is not enough on its own to solve all issues at the park, but it is an important tool for officers to use, and is effective immediately

2.3 Cabinet Member is recommended to:

- (1) Note the draft order attached to this report and agree with the rationale for extending the order.
- (2) Request that all partner agencies continue their current actions and patrol plans and also monitor the surrounding areas for any potential displacement of the issue.

3 Results of consultation undertaken

3.1 As the PSPO is already in place following an extensive consultation exercise, the renewal requires us to consult with key local partners and agencies. We consulted with West Midlands Police, Parks and Greenspace colleagues and the adjoining primary school. Their responses can be seen in appendix 2.

3.2 All consultees were in agreement that the existing PSPO has been effective in reducing instances of Anti Social Behaviour in the park and whilst not completely solving issues, a renewal of the order is recommended by all respondents.

4 Timetable for implementing this decision

4.1 Once approved there will need to be a draft order publicised at the site for up to 30 days and notification published on appropriate Council websites. Following that process the order can be implemented and operational.

4.2 Patrols and patrol plans are already in place for the location and will be continuing.

5 Comments from Executive Director of Resources

5.1 Financial implications

There are not believed to be any financial implications for renewal of the order or any expenditure will come from existing budgets

5.2 Legal implications

The renewal of the order will not have any additional legal implications.

6 Other implications

None

6.1 How will this contribute to the Council Plan (www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/)?

Crime and Disorder

Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour through partnership working is central to the delivery of the Community Safety Plan and Strategic Assessment 2015/16.

6.2 How is risk being managed?

Officers from several agencies continue to monitor the area.

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

None

6.4 Equalities / EIA N/A 6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

The purpose of taking action to address behaviours in the park should increase usage of the park for legitimate purposes, in an attempt to improve the environment and wellbeing of the community.

6.5 Implications for partner organisations?

The multi-agency action plan outlines the individual and collective commitments from agencies to respond to the issues raised.

Report author(s):

Liam Nagle

Name and job title:

Liam Nagle – Strategic Lead for Offender Management.

Directorate:

People Directorate

Tel and email contact:

02476 832063

Liam.Nagle@coventry.gov.uk

Contributor/approver name	Title	Directorate or organisation	Date doc sent out	Date response received or approved
Contributors:				
Craig Hickin	Head of Environmental Services	Place	3 rd Dec 2018	3 rd Dec 2018
Graham Hood	Head of Street Pride and Green Spaces	Place	3 rd Dec 2018	4 th Dec 2018
Michelle Rose	Governance Services Officer	Resources	3 rd Dec 2018	3 rd Dec 2018
Names of approvers for submission: (officers and members)				
Finance: Cath Crosby	Lead Accountant	Resources	3 rd Dec 2018	3 rd Dec 2018
Legal: Gill Carter	Senior Solicitor	Resources	3 rd Dec 2018	4 th Dec 2018
HR: Karen Mihajlovic	Senior HR Manager	Resources	3 rd Dec 2018	3 rd Dec 2018
Andrew Walster	Assistant Director	Place	3 rd Dec 2018	4 th Dec 2018
Martin Yardley	Executive Director	Place	3 rd Dec 2018	3 rd Dec 2018
Members: Name				

Cllr A. Khan	Cabinet Member Culture, Leisure, Sports and Parks		3 rd Dec 2018	3 rd Dec 2018
--------------	--	--	-----------------------------	--------------------------

This report is published on the Council's website:
www.coventry.gov.uk/councilmeetings