



To: Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

Date: 21st August 2024

Subject: Update on City Centre Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO)

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 To provide a progress report on the action taken in relation to the City Centre Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) further to the Order being amended on the 21st November 2023, to include restrictions to e-bikes and e-scooters in the City Centre.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee is requested to consider the Briefing Note and its findings and support the recommended next steps as set out in section 8 below.

3 Information and Background

- 3.1 Cabinet approved the renewal of the City Centre PSPO on 13th June 2023. Cabinet also approved the submission of a progress report to the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee to enable them to monitor the impact of the Order.
- 3.2 At their meeting on 7th November 2023 Cabinet considered a report on the amendment of the City Centre PSPO which included the requirement for e-bikes and e-scooter riders to dismount when entering the designated area in the City Centre.
- 3.3 Cabinet approved the amendment to the Order, and authorised officers to bring the Order into effect from the 20th November 2023.
- 3.4 At that meeting, Cabinet noted Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee's concerns regarding enforcement of the amendments to the PSPO in terms of police capacity and priority within the City Centre.
- 3.5 Since the authorisation of the Order, a range of measures have been taken to require e-bike and e-scooter riders to dismount when entering the designated area in the City Centre. This has included:
- An engagement and education campaign with the public, local businesses and e-bike/scooter riders;
 - The erection of new signage surrounding the designated area;
 - Training and authorising Business Improvement District (BID) officers;
 - Completing Enforcement Patrols within the city centre; and
 - Completing joint action days with the Police and other partner agencies.

4 Progress Update – Education

- 4.1 Two weeks before the Order was enforced, an education campaign was launched. This involved visiting all the takeaway businesses which were likely to use delivery services. Business operators were asked to display a poster which explained the new Order. Business operators were also asked to remind their delivery riders to adhere to the new rules.
- 4.2 Officers spoke to groups of delivery riders when they were waiting in the City Centre to collect delivery orders. Officers also spoke to e-bike riders using the designated area to remind them of the new Order and to encourage them to use alternative routes.
- 4.3 Contact was made with the delivery companies lead authorities to explain the new Order. The lead authorities were able to engage with the delivery companies to make them aware of the new Order.

5 Signage

- 5.1 A range of signage was placed around the City Centre to make riders aware of the Order. This ranged from signage to pavement stencils. More permanent signage was placed on the pavement at the key entrance points to the designated area. Images of the signs and a map of the locations are provided in Appendix A of this Briefing Note.

6 Enforcement

- 6.1 To afford a consistent enforcement presence in the City Centre, the following actions have taken place:
 - a) A new rota has been introduced for the Neighbourhood Enforcement Officers (NEOs), City Services, who are responsible for enforcing the PSPO, being present in the City Centre.
 - b) Officers working for the BID conducted joint patrol/visits with NEOs, received formal training on PSPO enforcement and legal authorisation to issue Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs).
 - c) A new multi-agency agreement to afford Police officers to issue FPNs.
 - d) NEOs, Police officers and BID officers have completed 17 action days which resulted in either the issuing of FPNs or the seizure of any e-bike which would be legally classed as a motor vehicle.

7 Results

- 7.1 The results are summarised in Appendix 2 of the Briefing Note. During the first three months, there was an immediate improvement of e-bike riders complying with the Order. There were a large number of e-bike riders dismounting. The number of offences witnessed increased from 17 to 21 between December 2023 and January 2024 and fell to 12 in February 2024. The improvement is likely to be the impact of the initial education campaign and the impact of bikes being seized during partnership action days.
- 7.2 During March 2024, the level of offences increased. This is likely to be because of more demand for delivery services, the weather improved, riders getting complacent with the Order and new riders being employed. April 2024 saw a

reduction in offences, however the number of patrols reduced during this period so there was less opportunity to witness and record an offence. There was a significant spike (55) in May when e-bike riders were not dismounting in the designated area. This spike could be explained because of the increased level of patrols and partnership days during May leading to more offences being witnessed and recorded.

- 7.3 During June 2024 and July 2024, the number of recorded offences reduced, and the number of riders dismounting started to increase. It is encouraging to see a higher number of riders dismounting had been witnessed and this suggests a positive behaviour change.
- 7.4 Overall, the campaign has had a positive impact on the use of e-bikes/scooters in the pedestrian area. The number of e-bikes travelling through the restricted area has reduced, and e-bike riders are actively using other routes such as Corporation Street to exit out of the City Centre.
- 7.5 During the campaign, there have been peaks in offences. This is likely to be down to several reasons. This could be down to new delivery riders who are unaware of the rules and/or e-bike riders becoming complacent with the rules. On these occasions, increased action days seem to have an impact on curbing the spikes, particularly when e-bikes are seized by the Police.

8 Next Steps

- 8.1 There are several steps that will be taken to improve the compliance of the City Centre PSPO as follows:
 - a) We will continue to use action days with our partners in West Midlands Police and the BID. This will also include partners from Immigration Services to check the work status of riders.
 - b) The NEOs will continue to patrol in the City Centre, and we will continue to train BID officers to issue FPNs for e-bike offences.
 - c) As part of Operation Eternity, we will be using funding from the Home Office to employ an Environmental Case Officer for a 12 month period to focus on compliance of the City Centre PSPO. They will also be supported by a Business Compliance Officer, who will be focussing on educating businesses about the City Centre PSPO.

9 Health Inequalities Impact

- 9.1 A full Health Inequalities Impact assessment was completed as part of the implementation of the City Centre PSPO.

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