
To: Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

Date: 26th August 2026

Subject: Renewal of City Centre Public Spaces Protection Order (2026)

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 To inform Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee of the outcome of the Focus Group held on 15th July to identify feedback and comments on the consultation on the renewal of the City Centre PSPO

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee is recommended to:

- 1) Welcome the changes proposed within the renewal of the PSPO, including the focus on behaviour causing harassment, alarm, distress, obstruction or nuisance, rather than specific activities.
- 2) Welcome the additional capacity within the Community Warden team to support the enforcement of the PSPO
- 3) Note the following recommendations to Cabinet, which have been considered as part of the consultation responses.
 - a) Renew the City Centre PSPO, subject to the consultation feedback and consideration of the points raised by Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee.
 - b) Ensure e-bikes are explicitly included in the PSPO provisions relating to prohibited vehicles in the city centre.
 - c) Review the geographical scope of the PSPO, including whether it could cover areas outside the current pedestrian zone, such as the area around the Belgrade Theatre and the Transport Museum.
 - d) Gather and publish clear evidence data on e-bike and e-scooter use, compliance levels, enforcement activity.
 - e) Explore technological solutions with relevant partners, including geospatial speed-limiting for hire e-bikes in pedestrian areas.
 - f) Consider measures to require the removal of face coverings to assist identification of riders.
 - g) Ensure there are suitable permission-based exemptions for amplification for legitimate events and activities.

- h) Include clear provisions to address persistent nuisance behaviour from professional beggars, while ensuring those in genuine need are offered appropriate support and engagement.
- i) Improve public communication and signage, including clear information on PSPO rules, safe cycle routes, and expectations for cyclists, e-bike users and pedestrians.
- j) Clarify arrangements for temporary structures, including permissions, charges and any exemptions, ensuring the process is fair, transparent and proportionate.
- k) Lobby Government for stronger national regulation of e-bikes including licensing, registration and identification where local powers are insufficient.

3 Information and Background

- 3.1 The Coventry City Centre Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO), introduced under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, is due to expire in November 2026. The Order has provided an established framework for addressing anti-social behaviour and public nuisance within the city centre.
- 3.2 A public consultation on the renewal and revision of the current PSPO took place between 29 June and 26 July 2026.
- 3.3 Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee requested an opportunity to feed into the consultation process while it was still open. A Focus Group was held on 15th July to enable this to happen. Members present were:
 - Cllr Singh (Chair)
 - Cllr Beechey
 - Cllr Blundell
 - Cllr Gardiner
 - Cllr Lapsa
 - Cllr Reeves
 - Cllr Rehman
- 3.4 Apologies were received from Cllrs Kaur, Jobbar and Ruane. Cllr Ruane submitted comments and questions in advance which have been incorporated below.

4 Key discussion points

- 4.1 The following areas were discussed and considered by the group

5 E-Bikes, E-Scooters, and Enforcement Challenges

- 5.1 **Current Enforcement and Data Limitations:** Current assessments are based on personal observation rather than data, and members called for a formal study to gather accurate statistics on compliance and the volume of e-bike use.
- 5.2 **Expansion of Enforcement Capacity:** It was reported that only one community warden had been available previously, but this will increase to eight by the end of the summer, which is expected to significantly enhance enforcement of PSPO provisions related to e-bikes and other issues.

- 5.3 **Geographical Scope and Inclusion of E-Bikes:** The group discussed extending PSPO coverage to areas outside the current pedestrian zone, including the area by the Belgrade Theatre, and explicitly adding e-bikes to the list of prohibited vehicles to enable enforcement across the entire city centre.
- 5.4 **Face Coverings and Identification:** The issue of riders wearing face coverings was raised, as this complicates identification and enforcement.
- 5.5 **Joint Operations and Technological Solutions:** Joint operations with police to seize illegally modified e-bikes were described, alongside ongoing discussions with Lime Bikes and the West Midlands Combined Authority about using geospatial technology to limit e-bike speeds in pedestrian areas.

6 Noise Control and Amplification Restrictions

- 6.1 **Concerns About Blanket Ban:** It was argued that a total ban on amplification could unnecessarily restrict freedom of expression. Suggestions included setting enforceable decibel limits and duration caps for amplified performances to avoid arbitrary enforcement and maintain fairness.
- 6.2 **Rationale for Blanket Ban:** It was explained that a blanket ban is preferred due to practical enforcement challenges with measuring decibel levels, the need for equipment, and the risk of performers circumventing limits. It was noted that Birmingham and Leicester have successfully implemented similar bans.
- 6.3 **Permission-Based Exceptions:** It was clarified that individuals or groups wishing to use amplification can apply for permission, ensuring that legitimate events can still take place with council approval.
- 6.4 **Continuation of Busking and Preaching:** It was confirmed that acoustic busking and non-amplified preaching will be able to continue. Other cities where there has been a ban on amplification have not seen a reduction in acoustic busking.

7 Begging, Rough Sleeping, and Behavioural Distinctions:

- 7.1 **Non-Enforcement Against Rough Sleeping:** It was stated that the new PSPO will not be used to enforce against individuals who are rough sleeping, in line with the recent repeal of the Vagrancy Act, and that the council's approach is to offer support and engagement rather than fines or criminalisation.
- 7.2 **Distinction Between Rough Sleepers and Professional Beggars:** The need to distinguish between genuine rough sleepers and individuals posing as such for professional begging was highlighted. It was acknowledged that enforcement will focus on behaviour causing harassment or distress, not on the act of sitting or sleeping in public.
- 7.3 **Use of Other Legislation for Encampments:** It was explained that while the PSPO will not target lone rough sleepers, other legislation can be used to address larger encampments or situations where public spaces are obstructed by groups.
- 7.4 **Feedback on Nuisance Behaviour:** Members requested that the PSPO include clear provisions to address persistent nuisance behaviour, ensuring that problematic individuals can be dealt with effectively without penalising those in genuine need.

8 Public Engagement, Reporting Mechanisms, and Transparency

- 8.1 **Signage and Public Awareness:** The need for clear signage in the city centre outlining PSPO rules was agreed, alongside the use of information cards in multiple languages to educate the public about their rights and responsibilities.
- 8.2 **Safe Cycle Routes through the City Centre:** The need for better signage about where bikes should ride in the city centre as well as where to go when cycle routes end suddenly before they hit the city centre. The Council should be able to support both pedestrians and cyclists safely but need to be clear where each should be or the interaction can cause issues for both pedestrians and cyclists.
- 8.3 **Transparency in Enforcement Data:** It was requested that statistics on PSPO enforcement, including the number of penalty notices issued by officers and police, be regularly shared with councillors and the public to demonstrate the effectiveness and proportionality of the measures.

9 Licencing, Face Coverings, and Additional Suggestions

- 9.1 **Lobbying for E-Bike Licencing:** Previous council motions and public calls for e-bike licencing and registration were noted, with officers agreeing to use local authority processes to advocate for national legislative changes.
- 9.2 **Face Coverings:** It was requested that the PSPO include a provision requiring riders to remove face coverings in the city centre to aid identification and enforcement, with this to be considered as part of the recommendations to Cabinet.
- 9.3 **Permission and Charges for Temporary Structures:** Concerns were raised about potential charges for permission to erect gazebos or similar structures, and it was agreed that existing rules should be clarified and any new requirements should be fair and transparent.
- 9.4 **Designing out Crime:** The redevelopment of City Centre South, and any other future developments were an opportunity to use physical design of public spaces to design out hot spot areas.

10 Health Inequalities Impact

- 10.1 A full Equalities Impact Assessment was completed, including health inequalities, as part of the Cabinet Member Report requesting to go out to consultation and can be found here: [Equality Impact Assessment form](#)

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