

Policy Committee

17 November 2025



Reading
Borough Council
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Title	Proposal to implement a Borough Wide Public Spaces Protection Order – Post Consultation
Purpose of the report	To make a key decision
Report status	Public report
Executive Director/ Statutory Officer Commissioning Report	Melissa Wise, Executive Director for Communities and Adult Social Care
Report author	Jo Middlemass – Community Partnerships Service Manager Sarah Gardner – Community Safety Manager
Lead Councillor	Councillor Rowland, Lead Councillor for Environmental Services & Community Safety
Council priority	Promote more equal communities in Reading
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. That Policy Committee note the outcome of the public consultation that ran from 21 July 2025 – 7 September 2025.2. That Policy Committee agree that a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) is introduced as outlined in section 3.3. That Policy Committee delegate authority to the Executive Director for Communities and Adult Social Care in consultation with the Assistant Director of Legal & Democratic Services and the Lead Councillor for Environmental Services and Community Safety to finalise and publish the proposed conditions for the PSPO set out in paragraph 3.8, subject to final legal drafting.4. That Policy Committee agree the consequences of breach as being a Fixed Penalty notice of £100 as an alternative to prosecution which carries a maximum fine of £1,000.5. That Policy Committee note the creation of a PSPO Implementation Project Board to oversee implementation and communications activity.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. This report sets out proposals to introduce a Borough Wide Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) following a public consultation that was undertaken between 21 July 2025 – 7 September 2025.
- 1.2. Housing Neighbourhoods and Leisure Committee on 9th July 2025 agreed that officers should undertake a public consultation on a proposal to introduce a Borough Wide PSPO which would provide an additional tool to tackle four key types of behaviour: Begging, Street Drinking, Anti-social use of E-bikes and E-scooters and Dog Control and Fouling.
- 1.3. Local councils are responsible for making PSPOs, which is a power intended to address anti-social behaviour in a designated public space. PSPOs are intended to

improve the quality of life in communities by restricting or prohibiting certain activities in a public area which have caused the community a detrimental impact.

- 1.4. This report sets out the feedback from the public consultation, as well as concerns highlighted by respondents and the Council's responses to these concerns. The report proposes that a new PSPO is implemented to cover the whole Borough, based on the outcome of the consultation and the evidence provided in the initial report to Housing, Neighbourhoods and Leisure Committee in July 2025.

2. Policy Context

- 2.1. PSPOs are one of a range of powers that were introduced by the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 and are designed to restrict/prohibit or require certain things to be done by people engaging in certain problematic conduct within a defined area.
- 2.2. Reading's Community Safety Partnership's (CSP's) Community Safety Strategy 2023 - 2026 and associated three-year Plan acknowledges that Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) continues to be a concern and priority for residents, with the Strategy setting out a commitment for the Partnership to work with them to deal with issues that continue to impact neighbourhoods. The Strategy also clearly sets out that the Partnership will ensure effective collaboration and information sharing to tackle issues of crime, ASB and serious violence, and have in place problem solving forums to support this approach.
- 2.3. The Partnership approach throughout the current strategy period has focussed on how agencies, in particular Reading Borough Council (RBC) and Thames Valley Police (TVP), work together to both prevent ASB and deal with those individuals who continue to cause ASB in our Town, by making best use of the tools and powers available to the Council and Police. The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 introduced several new tools and powers for use by Councils and their partners to address anti-social behaviour in their local areas, with PSPOs being one of those powers.
- 2.4. As set out in the initial report to Housing Neighbourhoods and Leisure Committee in July 2025, the power is a wide-ranging and flexible power which is intended to deal with a particular nuisance or problem in a specific area that is detrimental to the local community's quality of life, to help ensure that the law abiding majority can use and enjoy public spaces, safe from anti-social behaviour. The Council is responsible for drafting, consulting on and implementing PSPOs, in response to the issues affecting their communities, provided certain criteria and legal tests are met.
- 2.5. PSPOs differ from other tools introduced under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, as it is the only power that is specifically council-led, and rather than targeting specific individuals or properties, they focus on the identified problem behaviour in a specific location. The legislation provides for restrictions to be placed on behaviours that apply to everyone in that locality (with the possible use of exemptions). Breach of a PSPO without a reasonable excuse or exemption is an offence.
- 2.6. The proposed PSPO will provide an additional tool to target those individuals who are acting in a manner that causes nuisance or disorder when engaging in the behaviours set out in this report in public spaces, providing reassurance to residents that action is being taken to tackle these issues. The proposal will also support the ongoing commitment of Reading's CSP and the Council's role as a member of the CSP to respond to issues of ASB by utilising the range of tools and powers at its disposal.

3. The Proposal

- 3.1. Following the completion of the consultation and review of the evidence provided to Housing, Neighbourhoods and Leisure Committee in the July 2025 report, an

assessment has been made to ensure that the Council is satisfied that, on reasonable grounds the two required conditions to implement a PSPO are met. These are:

- a. That activities being carried out within a public place have had a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality or it is likely they will.
- b. That the effect, or likely effect, of these activities is, or is likely to be, of a persistent or continuing nature, such as to make the activities unreasonable.

3.2. The feedback from the consultation has indicated that the majority of respondents agree with the proposed conditions set out in the initial report to Housing, Neighbourhoods and Leisure Committee in July 2025. The conditions that were consulted on are set out in the table below:

Targeted Behaviours	Proposed Conditions (Borough Wide) that were consulted on.	Lead Enforcement Agency
On street begging	<p>No Person (s) within the Exclusion Zone will be permitted to beg at any time.</p> <p>The act of begging is deemed as either approaching people for money, or being stationary and directly asking for money, or positioned on the floor to invite the offer of money or goods.</p>	Thames Valley Police
Street Drinking	<p>No person shall refuse to stop drinking, or refuse to hand over any containers (sealed or unsealed), which are believed to contain alcohol when required to do so by an authorised officer to prevent nuisance or disorder.</p> <p>Exemptions shall apply in cases where for the avoidance of doubt the consumption of alcohol is on premises or a public space licensed under the Licensing Act 2003.</p>	Thames Valley Police
Dog Fouling	<p><i>In circumstance where a dog owner must pick up and remove their dog(s) faeces:</i></p> <p>If a dog defecates at any time on land in the Reading Borough and the person who is in charge of the dog at the time fails to remove the faeces from the land forthwith, that person shall be guilty of an offence unless:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) That person has a reasonable excuse for failing to do so; or ii) The owner/occupier or other person or authority having control of the Public Place has consented (generally or specifically) to that person failing to do so; or iii) That person is subject to the exemptions listed below. <p>For the purposes of this Article being unaware of the defecation (whether by reason of not being in the vicinity or otherwise) or not having an Appropriate Means to for removing the faeces, shall not be a reasonable excuse for failing to remove the faeces.</p> <p><i>Requirement for dog(s) owner to have appropriate means to pick up and remove dog faeces:</i></p>	Reading Borough Council – Public Protection

	<p>An appropriate means is defined as any poop scoop bag, disposal bag or other suitable container for disposal of dog faeces. By way of guidance a trouser or coat or other pocket is not such an item. Neither is a handbag, rucksack, purse or sports bag.</p> <p>A person in charge of a dog on land in the Reading Borough, shall be guilty of an offence, if, at any time, that person does not comply with a direction given to them by an Authorised Officer of the Council to produce an Appropriate Means used to remove dog faeces and transport it to a bin (whether or not the dog has defecated) unless:</p> <p>a) That person has a reasonable excuse for failing to do so; or</p> <p>ii) The owner/occupier or other person or authority having control of the Public Place has consented (generally or specifically) to them failing to do so; or</p> <p>iii) that person is subject to the exemptions listed below.</p> <p>The obligation is complied with if, after a request from an Authorised Officer, the person in charge of the dog produces an Appropriate Means to pick up dog faeces.</p> <p>Exemptions:</p> <p>Nothing in this Order or the Schedule to this Order shall apply to a person who:</p> <p>i) is registered as a blind person in a register compiled under S29 of the National Assistance Act 1948; or</p> <p>ii) has a disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010 or its successor and who relies upon an accredited assistance dog trained by an accredited member of Assistance dogs International (ADI) or the International Guide Dog Federation (IGDF) or other Prescribed Charity.</p>	
Dog Control	<p>In this Order "an authorised officer of the Council" means an employee of the Council who is authorised in writing by the Council for the purpose of giving directions under this Order.</p> <p>A person in charge of a dog shall be guilty of an offence if, at any time, on any land to which this Order applies, they do not comply with a direction given them by an authorised officer of the Council to put and hold the dog on a lead, unless they have a reasonable excuse for failing to do so.</p> <p>For the purposes of this article -</p> <p>(a) a person who habitually has a dog in their possession shall be taken to be in charge of the dog at</p>	Reading Borough Council – Public Protection

	<p>any time unless at that time some other person is in charge of the dog.</p> <p>(b) an authorised officer of the Council may only give a direction under this Order to put and hold a dog on a lead if such restraint is reasonably necessary to prevent a nuisance or behaviour by the dog likely to cause annoyance or disturbance to any other person [on any land to which this order applies] or the worrying or disturbance of any animal or bird.</p>	
Anti-social use of e-scooters and e-bikes	<p>Riders must not use e-bikes, or e-scooters in an anti-social manner that causes alarm, harassment or distress. If requested by a police officer, the rider must dismount.</p> <p>It is illegal to ride any e-scooter, or an e-bike which exceeds the standards and legal requirements (subject to changes in the guidance* last reviewed in 2024), or which has been built or adapted to not require pedal assist, in a public place - perpetrators will face police enforcement.</p> <p>*https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/electrically-assisted-pedal-cycles-eapcs/electrically-assisted-pedal-cycles-eapcs-in-great-britain-information-sheet</p>	Thames Valley Police

- 3.3. The summary of the consultation responses and the Council's response to the themed comments can be found in Appendix D.
- 3.4. Given the strength of the evidence provided for each restriction proposed, which was provided to Housing, Neighbourhoods and Leisure Committee in July 2025, and the further evidence gathered as a result of the consultation, it has not been deemed necessary to remove any of the conditions that were consulted on, however, changes to the wording of two conditions have been made.
- 3.5. Based on the responses provided to the consultation, no changes have been made to the wording of the conditions relating to Dog Fouling, Begging or Street Drinking.
- 3.6. A slight amendment has been made to the Dog Control condition, with the reference to '*unless they have a reasonable excuse for failing to do so*' being removed from the condition wording.
- 3.7. The condition that relates to the anti-social use of vehicles commonly referred to as E-Bikes and E-Scooters has been rephrased, in consultation with Thames Valley Police, to provide more clarity on the intention of the condition, that being solely the focus on the behaviour of individuals who ride an Electric Scooter (E-scooter) or any type of Electric Bike in an anti-social manner.
- 3.8. The final conditions for the PSPO are set out below, subject to legal drafting, with a draft version of the Order set out in Appendix E.

Targeted Behaviours	PSPO Condition (Boroughwide)
On street begging	<p>No Person(s) will be permitted to beg at any time.</p> <p>The act of begging is deemed as either approaching people for money, or being stationary and directly asking for money, or positioned on the floor to invite the offer of money or goods.</p>
Street Drinking	<p>No person shall refuse to stop drinking or refuse to hand over any containers (sealed or unsealed), which are believed to contain alcohol when required to do</p>

	<p>so by an authorised officer to prevent nuisance or disorder.</p> <p>Exemptions shall apply in cases where for the avoidance of doubt the consumption of alcohol is on premises or a public space licensed under the Licensing Act 2003.</p>
<p>Dog Fouling</p>	<p>In circumstance where a dog owner must pick up and remove their dog(s) faeces:</p> <p>If a dog defecates at any time on land in the Reading Borough and the person who is in charge of the dog at the time fails to remove the faeces from the land forthwith, that person shall be guilty of an offence unless:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) That person has a reasonable excuse for failing to do so; or ii) The owner/occupier or other person or authority having control of the Public Place has consented (generally or specifically) to that person failing to do so; or iii) That person is subject to the exemptions listed below. <p>For the purposes of this Article being unaware of the defecation (whether by reason of not being in the vicinity or otherwise) or not having an Appropriate Means to for removing the faeces, shall not be a reasonable excuse for failing to remove the faeces.</p> <p>Requirement for dog(s) owner to have appropriate means to pick up and remove dog faeces:</p> <p>An appropriate means is defined as any poop scoop bag, disposal bag or other suitable container for disposal of dog faeces. By way of guidance a trouser or coat or other pocket is not such an item. Neither is a handbag, rucksack, purse or sports bag.</p> <p>A person in charge of a dog on land in the Reading Borough, shall be guilty of an offence, if, at any time, that person does not comply with a direction given to them by an Authorised Officer of the Council to produce an Appropriate Means used to remove dog faeces and transport it to a bin (whether or not the dog has defecated) unless:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) That person has a reasonable excuse for failing to do so; or ii) The owner/occupier or other person or authority having control of the Public Place has consented (generally or specifically) to them failing to do so; or iii) that person is subject to the exemptions listed below. <p>The obligation is complied with if, after a request from an Authorised Officer, the person in charge of the dog</p>

	<p>produces an Appropriate Means to pick up dog faeces.</p> <p>Exemptions:</p> <p>Nothing in this Order or the Schedule to this Order shall apply to a person who:</p> <p>it) is registered as a blind person in a register compiled under S29 of the National Assistance Act 1948; or</p> <p>ii) has a disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010 or its successor and who relies upon an accredited assistance dog trained by an accredited member of Assistance dogs International (ADI) or the International Guide Dog Federation (IGDF) or other Prescribed Charity.</p>
Dog Control	<p>In this Order "an authorised officer of the Council" means an employee of the Council who is authorised in writing by the Council for the purpose of giving directions under this Order.</p> <p>A person in charge of a dog shall be guilty of an offence if, at any time, on any land to which this Order applies, they do not comply with a direction given them by an authorised officer of the Council to put and hold the dog on a lead.</p> <p>For the purposes of this article -</p> <p>(a) a person who habitually has a dog in their possession shall be taken to be in charge of the dog at any time unless at that time some other person is in charge of the dog.</p> <p>(b) an authorised officer of the Council may only give a direction under this Order to put and hold a dog on a lead if such restraint is reasonably necessary to prevent a nuisance or behaviour by the dog likely to cause annoyance or disturbance to any other person [on any land to which this order applies] or the worrying or disturbance of any animal or bird</p>
Anti-social use of e-scooters and e-bikes	<p>No Person shall ride or operate an Electric Scooter (E-scooter) or any type of Electric Bike within the defined area in an anti-social manner. Anti-social Behaviour is defined as acting in a malicious and/or dangerous manner in a public place as to cause significant harassment, alarm or distress to any person within the Borough.</p> <p>Any person doing so may be subject to enforcement and, if requested by a police officer, the rider must dismount.</p>

Implications of introducing a PSPO

- 3.9. It should be noted that introducing PSPOs can raise public expectations and lack of enforcement can lead to a reduction in confidence in the Council and Police. It is therefore imperative that the implementation of a new Order and the monitoring of its

use and effectiveness is carefully planned and executed and that communication about the Order is clear, with information regularly provided to the public about the Order and its use. Lessons learnt from the Council's previous experience of introducing a PSPO are providing the foundations for how a new order will be implemented and managed, with clear governance and scrutiny built in. Information regarding this approach is set out in the remainder of this section and in section 6.

- 3.10. It is important to acknowledge that there are concerns that a PSPO could be used disproportionately, with some residents raising concerns that they could be targeted unfairly. The introduction of a PSPO provides the Council and Police with an additional tool to tackle specific issues of anti-social behaviour, providing flexibility to enforce against anti-social behaviour issues in an effective and targeted way. The introduction of an Enforcement Protocol will provide guidance to enforcing officers as to how to use the PSPO and ensure that it is used proportionately.
- 3.11. The introduction of a PSPO may be seen as a way of introducing a financial punishment to vulnerable individuals, particularly in respect of dealing with those who beg and are prolific street drinkers. This is not the intention of this proposal.
- 3.12. There are a range of support services provided both through services commissioned by the Council and who operate independently, therefore, it will be a requirement of enforcing officers to ensure that signposting to relevant support services is undertaken as part of the activity to enforce the PSPO.
- 3.13. The acknowledgement of public concerns relating to the enforcement of the PSPO will be factored into the Enforcement Protocol and a Communications Strategy, which are referred to later in this report.

Enforcement of the PSPO

- 3.14. Failure to comply with the PSPO is a criminal offence and carries a maximum fine of £1,000 if convicted. However, in most cases, where it is deemed necessary to take enforcement action, the breaches would be dealt with by a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN). It is proposed that the fine limit for the FPN is £100. A FPN will only be issued if an individual continues to breach the Order after being asked to desist by an authorised person.
- 3.15. As set out in the report to Housing, Neighbourhoods and Leisure Committee in July 2025, the proposed PSPO should be seen as an additional tool to address the issues identified. Its intent is to be used as a preventative measure, providing enforcing officers the ability to request that the behaviour is stopped before a breach occurs.
- 3.16. The Purpose of the Order is to deal with anti-social behaviour associated with the activities included in the Order, not the specific activities listed.
- 3.17. It is important to reiterate in this report that there are no new resources to enforce any proposed PSPO, so policing activity and Council activity will continue to be prioritised based on information and intelligence.
- 3.18. Officers will take a measured approach to enforcing the Order and will only enforce it as a last resort, focussing on engaging, explaining, and encouraging those at risk of breaching the Order through education and warnings. It is acknowledged that when dealing with beggars and in some cases, entrenched street drinkers, officers will be dealing with individuals with complex needs and therefore it may be considered more appropriate to signpost individuals to relevant support services.
- 3.19. To ensure effective messaging and awareness raising is undertaken and to allow the Council to complete relevant legal requirements, including the drafting and signing of the final PSPO Notice and to work with the Police to put in place the required monitoring process, procure signage and finalise the fact sheet and enforcement protocol, an **Education Phase** will commence, in the lead up to the Order coming into force. The education phase will entail people who are breaching the conditions being

advised that the Order will be coming into force and educated about what the PSPO means and why their behaviour would be considered a breach.

- 3.20. As recommended in the Statutory Guidance, at the point the PSPO comes into force, the implementation of the Order will move into a **Soft Launch** phase, allowing residents to be properly informed about the restrictions. Enforcing officers will follow the same approach applied during the education phase, talking to those individuals considered to be breaching the conditions and advising them of the Order and that they are breaching the conditions. Individuals will only be penalised in extreme circumstances, where the anti-social behaviour is significantly disruptive to the community. In situations whereby individuals are being dealt with for Begging and Street Drinking, the Police will consider issuing FPNs if individuals refuse to engage, where appropriate, with relevant support services. This phase will last for one month.
- 3.21. Following the **Soft Launch**, **Full Implementation** will be mobilised. As set out in paragraph 3.18, a measured approach will be taken when the PSPO is fully implemented. Engage, Educate, Explain and Enforce will be the approach used, with a Partnership Enforcement Protocol being introduced to ensure a consistent approach to the use of the Order. This will also include how support will be offered to individuals involved in Begging and Street Drinking, which will be set out in the form of referral pathways.
- 3.22. Whilst the ultimate sanction of breach of a PSPO is through the means of a Fixed Penalty Notice and/or Summons to the Magistrates court, the basis is to follow the approach set out in paragraph 3.21:
- **Engage** any individuals with vulnerabilities and signpost to relevant support services
 - **Educate** the suspect(s) on the conditions of the PSPO,
 - **Explain** the conditions and subsequent consequences,
 - If a persistent/repeat/significant breach occurs, then **Enforcement** will take place.
- 3.23. Signage and a PSPO Fact Sheet and FAQs will be produced if the Order is approved, so that members of the public are aware of the Order.
- 3.24. The timetable for implementation is set out in section 11. The lead enforcement agency for each condition remains the same as set out in the July 2025 report, being:
- Begging – Thames Valley Police
 - Street Drinking – Thames Valley Police
 - Dog Control & Dog Fouling – Reading Borough Council (Public Protection)
 - Anti-Social Use of Electronic Bikes and Electronic Scooters – Thames Valley Police
- 3.25. This PSPO contains no provision to seize or crush the vehicles referred to in the condition relating to Electric Bikes/Electric Scooters. It is recognised that most users of these types of vehicles use them responsibly and are compliant with the requirements set out for each type of vehicle. The importance of such electric propelled vehicles as positive sustainable transport is acknowledged and is to be encouraged. However, the introduction of a condition to address the anti-social use of these types of vehicles will provide the Police with an additional tool that allows them to deal with the small minority of individuals who cause anti-social behaviour at the time they witness it, through engagement and education and in the most severe situations, through issuing a fine there and then. It provides an immediate intervention to address reckless and dangerous behaviour that is causing anti-social behaviour to those in the area.
- 3.26. It is also important to note that as part of the evidence package put forward by Thames Valley Police, there is a correlation between the anti-social use of Electric Bikes and serious criminal activity, with the evidence provided showing the link between those being used anti-socially also being frequently used to facilitate crime. This PSPO

condition will provide another mechanism to engage with the minority of individuals involved in this type of behaviour.

- 3.27. In addition, the Council will continually keep informed on any changing legislation around the use of Electric Scooters on the public highway and it will be important that the Council engage users over the next 12 months, raising awareness and educating on the lawful, appropriate and safe use in the Town.
- 3.28. It is recommended that that PSPO is implemented for three years, after which it must be subject to a statutory review. If the review identifies that the concerns remain and the requirements for the PSPO are met, an extension can be granted for a further three years.

Monitoring and Data Collection and measuring success

- 3.29. During the period of which the PSPO is in place, it will be subject to regular and robust monitoring, with a proposed yearly review, to review effectiveness and ensure there are no unintended consequences because of its implementation. The PSPO Implementation Project Board will manage the monitoring and measuring of the PSPO.
- 3.30. Monitoring the use and impact of the PSPO is essential to its success and a clear programme of monitoring will be put in place. As set out in the July 2025 report:
- A data collection process will be put in place and managed by the Council.
 - The use and effectiveness of the PSPO will be monitored through the CSP's Performance Group.
 - An annual report will be presented to the CSP Executive Group on the impact of the PSPO.
 - An update to the Housing, Neighbourhoods and Leisure Committee will be provided annually as part of the CSP Annual Report to HNL at its summer committee meeting.
- 3.31. It is important to note that the effectiveness of the PSPO should not solely be judged on the number of enforcements, as its benefits are broader in terms of its preventative effect. Officers using the PSPO to intervene at an early stage by asking individuals in the first instance to desist engaging in the restricted behaviours is a good way to prevent unreasonable behaviour escalating and this information will also be captured.
- 3.32. The impact of the PSPO will be measured through the data collection process, taking into consideration the date of its use and the number of reports made about each of the issues. The data collected through the annual Community Safety Survey will also be used to measure public perceptions relating to anti-social being a problem as well. This will be fed back through to the Community Safety Partnership through its Performance Group and through the annual report mechanism.

Other Options Considered

- 3.33. The other option considered is to not proceed with a PSPO at all. This option is not recommended as it would show that consideration of the request from the Police, evidence gathered, and the concerns raised by the public through the Community Safety Survey and through community engagement activity have been disregarded.
- 3.34. Anti-Social Behaviour that impacts the public realm is visible to those who live in, work in and visit Reading and can unfortunately at times be one of the first things people notice when they come into the Town. The results from the 2025 Community Safety Survey show that 57.5% of respondents feel that anti-social behaviour has increased in their neighbourhood in the last 12 months. Whilst a range of powers continue to be used to tackle ASB through Civil and Criminal Courts, a case has been made for the Council, following feedback from Reading CSP's Community Safety Survey and

through Partnership Problem Solving discussions, to consider its power to introduce a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO).

- 3.35. Comments made by residents who responded to the consultation and supported the conditions proposed, referred to personal experiences of the issues consulted on, including being targeted by aggressive beggars, and in respect of the anti-social use of bikes and scooters, almost being hit or witnessing reckless riding, with those being impacted including children or vulnerable people.
- 3.36. The outcome of the consultation indicates that the majority of respondents are supportive of the proposal to implement a PSPO with the conditions consulted on, with comments from respondents referring to concerns that they have about the behaviours identified having a detrimental impact on the areas in which they live, work or visit. This feedback, alongside the evidence provided by Thames Valley Police and their request for a PSPO to deal with Begging, Street Drinking and Anti-Social use of Electric Bikes and Electric Scooters has been considered when reviewing if all the conditions consulted on should form the final PSPO.
- 3.37. The concerns raised by respondents to the consultation have been carefully considered and will inform the approach taken by the PSPO Implementation Project Board when putting in place measures to ensure effective communication and monitoring and measuring of the PSPO.
- 3.38. On this basis, the Committee is asked to approve the proposal to introduce the PSPO, subject to legal drafting.

4. Contribution to Strategic Aims

- 4.1. The Council Plan has established five priorities for the years 2025/28. These priorities are:
 - Promote more equal communities in Reading
 - Secure Reading's economic and cultural success
 - Deliver a sustainable and healthy environment and reduce our carbon footprint
 - Safeguard and support the health and wellbeing of Reading's adults and children
 - Ensure Reading Borough Council is fit for the future.
- 4.2. In delivering these priorities, we will be guided by the following set of principles:
 - Putting residents first
 - Building on strong foundations
 - Recognising, respecting, and nurturing all our diverse communities
 - Involving, collaborating, and empowering residents
 - Being proudly ambitious for Reading.
- 4.3. Full details of the Council Plan and the projects which will deliver these priorities are published on the Council's website - [Council plan - Reading Borough Council](#). These priorities and the Council Plan demonstrate how the Council meets its legal obligation to be efficient, effective and economical.
- 4.4. Reading Borough Council's Council Plan for 2025 – 2028 reaffirms its commitment to tackling crime and disorder, with its priority '**Promote more equal communities in Reading**' setting out that the Council will 'Reduce crime and antisocial behaviour, working with Thames Valley Police and other partners'. The strategic delivery of this partnership work sits within Reading's CSP, of which Reading Borough Council is a key delivery partner. The introduction of a PSPO, restricting the behaviours identified will

contribute to residents feeling safer, businesses feeling less impacted by Anti-Social Behaviour and public spaces looking cleaner and more welcoming.

- 4.5. The focus on restricting street drinking also supports the priority to **‘Safeguard and support the health and wellbeing of Reading’s adults and children’**. Whilst this proposal is intended to enhance the range of powers available to the Police to respond to street drinking, the approach that will be taken will also provide officers the means to engage more meaningfully with individuals who are street drinking regularly. Primarily by signposting them to the support available for those who excessively consume alcohol, therefore also working more proactively to reduce the harm of excessive alcohol consumption.
- 4.6. The Condition relating to dog fouling contributes to the Council’s priority on a **‘Sustainable and healthy environment’**. Dog fouling is detrimental to the natural environment. Encouraging the removal of dog fouling promotes a cleaner, safer environment for all. The proposed condition relating to dog fouling would have a positive environmental impact by establishing clear regulatory offences and penalties, encouraging dog owners keep our open spaces clean and increase compliance, and contributing to cleaner neighbourhoods and environments.

5. Environmental and Climate Implications

- 5.1. The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).
- 5.2. There are no Environmental and Climate Implications as a result of the proposals set out in this report.

6. Community Engagement

- 6.1. Following approval from this Committee to undertake a public consultation on proposals to introduce a Public Spaces Protection Order, the consultation was carried out between 21 July and 7 September 2025.
- 6.2. The consultation was undertaken in line with statutory guidance and went live on Go Vocal, the Council’s consultation platform and was shared with the following stakeholders:

- Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner
- Reading Cycle Campaign
- West Berkshire Council
- Wokingham Borough Council
- British Transport Police
- Reading Business Improvement District (BID)
- University of Reading and Reading Students’ Union
- Reading College
- Young Voices
- Safer Neighbourhood Forums
- Ward Councillors
- ACRE
- Homelessness and rough sleeping support services
- Change, Grow, Live
- Reading’s Community Safety Partnership.

- 6.3. The consultation was promoted via Reading Council communications channels via:
- Paid social media between 22 August – 6 September: reached 34,994 individuals, was seen 90,742 times, with 4,073 clicks on the survey link
 - Residents email 7 August: opened by 47,307 people, link clicks: 179
 - Residents email 21 August: opened by 50,672 people, link clicks: 199
 - Organic social media
- 6.4. It was also promoted via internal networks, including the Tenant Participation Team and via partner communication channels, including Young Voices, Reading BID, Thames Valley Alerts, and businesses who subscribe to the Town Safe Radio network.
- 6.5. In total, the Council received 425 responses to the consultation. In summary, 88.2% of respondents support the introduction of the proposed conditions to tackle the following issues:
- On Street Begging
 - Street Drinking
 - Dog Fouling
 - Dog Control
 - Anti-Social Use of E-bikes & E-Scooters
- 6.6. Based on the Council's previous experience of implementing a PSPO, it is acknowledged that having a PSPO in place can raise public expectations and that a perceived lack of enforcement can lead to a lack of confidence in the Council and Police in how anti-social behaviour is responded to. It is therefore essential that the communication plan, referred to in 6.10., that will be developed is clear and sets out that the PSPO is just one tool that is available to tackle issues of anti-social behaviour and articulates the principles as to how it will be enforced, in a proportionate way and as a last resort.
- 6.7. Concerns raised about vulnerable people being targeted by the Order are acknowledged. As set out in the July 2025 report and in this report, the Enforcement Protocol will ensure that individuals are signposted to appropriate support services and that enforcement action will only be used as a last resort.
- 6.8. A full response to the comments made by respondents to the consultation is attached in Appendix D and will be provided on the Council's website. It is proposed that the FAQs provided during the consultation are updated to address the feedback provided in the consultation and ensure clarity in relation to the enforcement of the Begging condition and the anti-social use of Electric bikes and Electric Scooters condition. These FAQs will be published alongside the PSPO.
- 6.9. A Communication Strategy will be developed to support the publication of the PSPO to ensure that key messages about the intention of the Order and how it will be enforced are publicised, at the point of the Order going live and throughout the lifespan of the Order. This will be informed by comments made by respondents to the consultation, particularly in relation to terminology used and where there have been comments about the need for clarification. A partnership PSPO Implementation Project Board will be formed to implement the Order, with a key focus being on communication.
- 6.10. The PSPO Implementation Project Board will be made up of key stakeholders, including RBC and TVP, and report into the Community Safety Partnership's Executive Group, and to the Housing, Neighbourhoods and Leisure Committee, as appropriate. It will oversee activity to ensure residents are advised through a communications

campaign that will include a press release, social media updates throughout the lifespan of the order and installation of signage across the Borough. A Fact Sheet will also be produced and made available at public buildings and on notice boards.

- 6.11. The Education Phase referred to in 3.19 will provide opportunities to engage with individuals who are found to be breaching the conditions to inform them that the Order will be coming into force and that their behaviour will be treated as a breach if they are found to be engaging in the behaviours again in the future.

7. Equality Implications

- 7.1. Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -
 - eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 7.2. An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (appendix 3) has been completed and concludes that introducing a Borough wide PSPO will not have a detrimental impact on any person with protected characteristics living, working or visiting Reading. The purpose of the Order is to ensure that everyone can enjoy Reading's open spaces free from anti-social behaviour.
- 7.3. Following implementation of the PSPO, the EqIA will be monitored to better inform the impact of the PSPO in practice and ensure that the Order is being enforced proportionately and not targeted towards any particular groups.

8. Other Relevant Considerations

- 8.1. There are no other relevant considerations.

9. Legal Implications

- 9.1. The power to make a PSPO is contained in section 59 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing 2014 Act (as amended) (the 2014 Act).
- 9.2. A local authority may only make a PSPO if it is satisfied on reasonable grounds that two conditions are met, those being:
 - (1) The activities seeking to be addressed by a PSPO are being (or are likely to be) carried on in a public place within the authority's area and have had a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality or it is likely that those activities will be carried on in a public place within the area and will have such an effect; and
 - (2) The effect, or likely effect, of the activities are, or likely to be, persistent or of a continuing nature, is or is likely to be, such as to make the activities unreasonable and such which justify the restrictions imposed.
- 9.3. In deciding whether to make/ extend/ vary or discharge a PSPO, the Council must have due regard to the rights of freedom of expression and freedom of assembly set out in Articles 10 and 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights.
- 9.4. Once the final PSPO measures are agreed, the PSPO will need to be published in accordance with the regulations made by the Secretary of State.
- 9.5. The Council must ensure that the powers are used in a reasonable, consistent, appropriate and proportionate manner and must comply with the consultation requirements set out in this report and as required in the 2014 Act. Whilst there is no statutory requirement for an Enforcement Protocol, a partnership Enforcement Protocol

will be introduced to ensure that Officers are using powers in line with the legislation and statutory guidance.

- 9.6. The area that the PSPO covers must be considered as part of the consultation and data collection, as the Council must be satisfied that there are activities in the area proposed to be covered by the PSPO that meet the statutory conditions for the making of a PSPO.
- 9.7. If the Council pursues a new PSPO it must ensure that its scope and the process for introduction is in accordance with the powers and requirements of the 2014 Act.
- 9.8. Any challenge to the validity of, or variation to a PSPO would have to be made by an interested person by way of an application to the High Court. 'Interested person' means an individual who lives in the restricted area or who regularly works in or visits that area. That application must be made within six weeks of the date that the PSPO is made or varied.
- 9.9. The Council must, in accordance with regulations 2 and 3 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (Publication of Public Spaces Protection Orders) Regulations 2014, publish the PSPO (as made, extended or varied) on its website and erect physical notices in or adjacent to the affected public places to which the PSPO relates to notify members of the public of the PSPO and the effect of it.

10. Financial Implications

- 10.1. The preparation of the Order and drafting of the enforcement protocol is being completed within existing officer resources.
- 10.2. There will be costs associated with the production, and installation of signage and designing and printing information leaflets. It is anticipated that these costs will be no higher than £7,000. A funding bid will be submitted to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to fund the signage through the Partnership Fund allocated to Reading. A proposed bid has been agreed in principle, subject to approval to proceed with implementing a PSPO at this Committee.

11. Timetable for Implementation

Task	Date
Report to Policy Committee	17 th November 2025
Establishment of PSPO Implementation Project Board	24 th November 2025
Education Phase begins	5 th January 2026
Publicise Order	Date to be confirmed – aim to publicise by 28 th Feb 2026
PSPO Comes into Force – Soft Launch	Date to be confirmed – aim to go live 2 nd March 2026 subject to confirmation with legal services and TVP
Full Implementation	24 th March 2026

12. Background Papers

- 12.1. There are none.

Appendices

- A. Consultation responses.
- B. Supporting evidence
- C. Equalities Impact Assessment
- D. Council response to consultation comments.
- E. Draft PSPO Order

Appendix A. Consultation Responses

General summary

- Total number of respondents – 425.
- Most respondents believe that the issues listed in the consultation are significant problems in Reading and agree with the proposed conditions.
- The majority of people who responded identified as White (72%).
- A slightly larger percentage of respondents are male (46%) compared to female (35%) and stating that gender is the same as their sex registered at birth (78%).

The demographics are more mixed regarding age and place of residence – full breakdown below.

Full demographics breakdown:



1. About you:

425/425 - Multiple choice - choose one - required

I live in the Reading Borough Area 85.2% (362 choices)



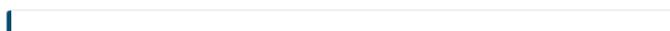
I work in the Reading Borough Area 7.8% (33 choices)



I live outside the Reading Borough Area 6.4% (27 choices)



I am a visitor to the Reading Borough Area 0.7% (3 choices)



Percentage responses per proposed condition

On Street Begging Restriction

- Of the total respondents, 85% said they thought begging was a problem in Reading and 74% supported the condition.
- 389 people out of the total 425 respondents took part in the question asking if this condition should apply to the whole Borough and out of those 389 responses, the majority (70%) said yes.

Dog Fouling Restriction

- Of the total respondents, 65% said they thought dog fouling was a problem in Reading and 87% supported the condition.
- 391 people out of the total 425 respondents took part in the question asking if this condition should apply to the whole Borough and out of those 391 responses, the majority (81%) said yes.

Dog Control Restriction

- Of the total respondents, 47% said they thought dog fouling was a problem in Reading and 79% supported the condition.
- 392 people out of the total 425 respondents took part in the question asking if this condition should apply to the whole Borough and out of those 392 responses, the majority (73%) said yes.

Street Drinking Restriction

- Of the total respondents, 66% said they thought street drinking was a problem in Reading and 80% supported the condition.
- 384 people out of the total 425 respondents took part in the question asking if this condition should apply to the whole Borough and out of those 384 responses, the majority (71%) said yes.

Anti-Social Use of Electric Bikes and Electric Scooters

- Of the total respondents, 91% said they thought anti-social use of e-bikes and e-scooters was a problem in Reading and 88% supported the condition.
- 398 people out of the total 425 respondents took part in the question asking if this condition should apply to the whole Borough and out of those 398 responses, the majority (86%) said yes.

Street Begging Restriction feedback

Out of 425 respondents, 264 commented on this condition. The vast majority of comments describe begging as a problem, particularly in the Town Centre and around the train station. Many comments expressed concern about aggressive or persistent begging, describing it as intimidating, uncomfortable, and contributing to a sense of lawlessness or decline in the town centre.

Page 2: Begging Restrictions

425/425 responses

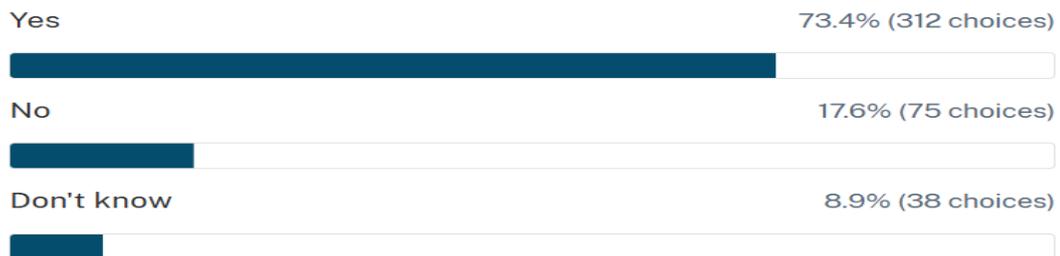
2. Do you think begging is a problem in Reading?

425/425 - Multiple choice - choose one - required



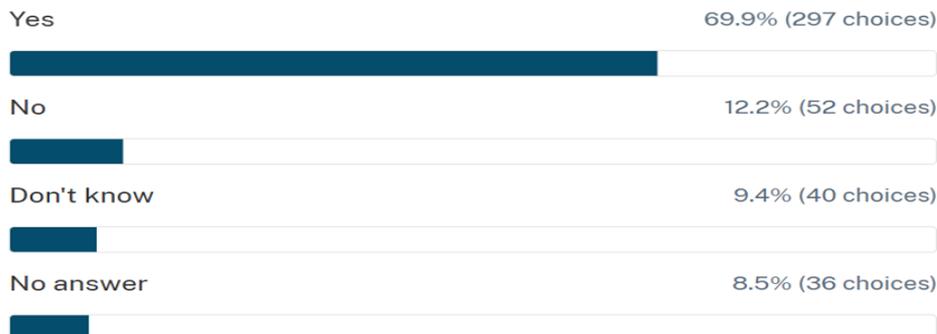
3. Do you support this condition?

425/425 - Multiple choice - choose one - required



5. Do you think this condition should cover the whole borough?

389/425 - Multiple choice - choose one - optional



Dog Fouling Restriction feedback

Out of 425 respondents, 202 commented on this condition.

There was a strong consensus that dog owners must be held accountable for cleaning up after their animals. Most comments highlighted dog fouling as a widespread and persistent issue, particularly in residential areas.

Page 3: Dog Fouling Restrictions

425/425 responses

6. Do you think dog fouling is a problem in Reading?

425/425 - Multiple choice - choose one - required



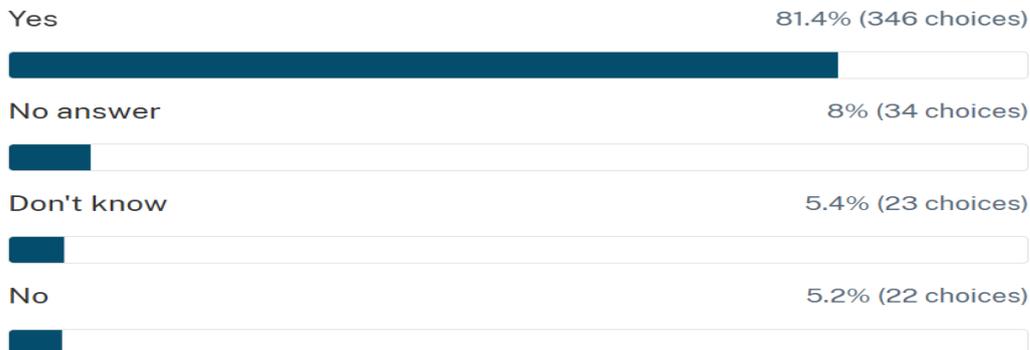
7. Do you support these conditions?

425/425 - Multiple choice - choose one - required



9. Do you think this condition should cover the whole borough?

391/425 - Multiple choice - choose one - optional



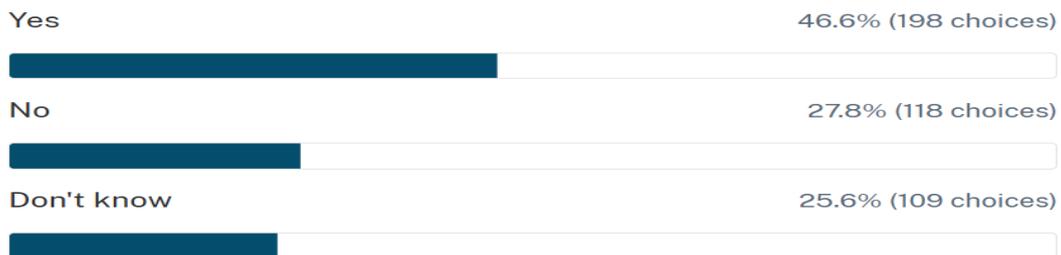
Dog Control Restriction

Out of 425 respondents, 160 commented on this condition. However, this was the only condition which did not have overwhelming support for the condition, with only 47% of respondents saying they thought dog control was an issue – although 79% supported the condition and 73% thought it should apply across the whole Borough.

Most comments expressed concerns about dogs being off-lead and not under control, with many highlighting an increase in such incidents since Covid. There was a strong consensus in the comments that dogs should always be under control, particularly in public spaces and around children, with several suggesting that leads should be mandatory except in designated, fenced areas for off-lead exercise.

10. Do you think dog control activity is a problem in Reading?

425/425 - Multiple choice - choose one - required



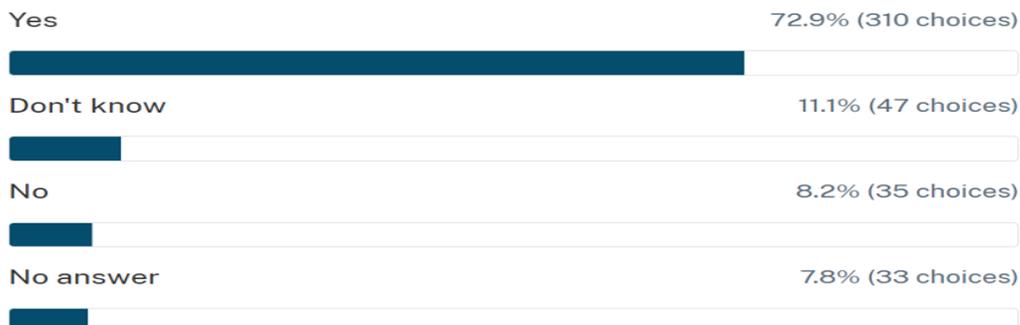
11. Do you support these conditions?

425/425 - Multiple choice - choose one - required



13. Do you think this condition should cover the whole borough?

392/425 - Multiple choice - choose one - optional



Street Drinking Restriction

Out of 425 respondents, 187 commented on this condition. Most comments expressed concern about street drinking, linking it to increased litter, anti-social behaviour such as noise, fighting, urination and defecation in public, and a general decline in the area's atmosphere. Several comments noted that street drinking makes public spaces feel less safe and welcoming, particularly in Reading town centre and around bus stops. The majority of comments give strong support to more effective regulation and enforcement.

Page 5: Street Drinking restriction

425/425 responses

14. Do you think street drinking is a problem in Reading?

425/425 - Multiple choice - choose one - required



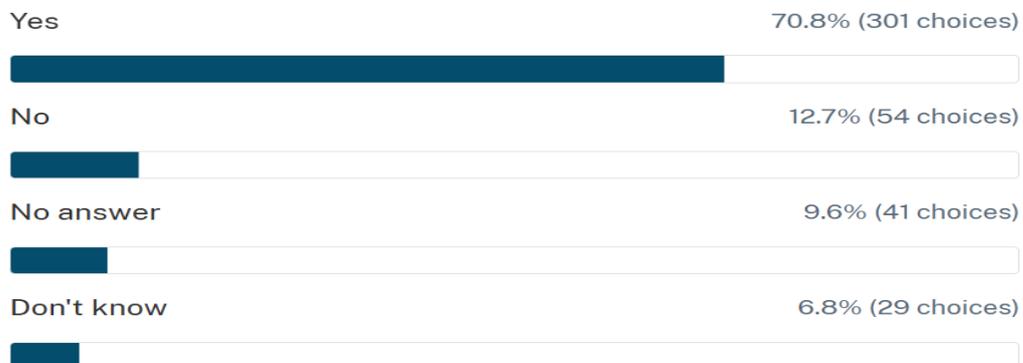
15. Do you support these conditions?

425/425 - Multiple choice - choose one - required



17. Do you think this condition should cover the whole borough?

384/425 - Multiple choice - choose one - optional



Anti-Social Use of E-bikes and E-scooters

Out of 425 respondents, 276 commented on this condition.

There was a strong call in the comments for clearer enforcement and stricter regulation, with several respondents urging the Police to enforce existing laws more robustly and to confiscate illegal vehicles. Many respondents highlighted frequent dangerous and antisocial use of E-bikes and E-scooters, particularly on pavements and in pedestrian areas, leading to near-misses and concerns for public safety. Many recounted personal experiences of almost being hit or witnessing reckless riding, sometimes involving children or vulnerable people. Some felt that without action, serious injury or death is likely.

A number of comments criticised the lack of clear definitions around “antisocial behaviour” and requested more specific wording in the condition to reduce unfair targeting of legal cyclists.

18. Do you think anti-social use of e-bikes and e-scooters is a problem in Reading?

425/425 - Multiple choice - choose one - required



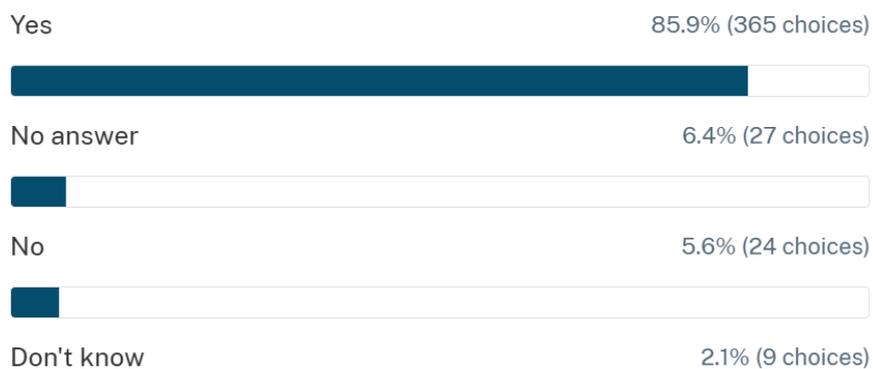
19. Do you support these conditions?

425/425 - Multiple choice - choose one - required



21. Do you think this condition should cover the whole borough?

398/425 - Multiple choice - choose one - optional



A number of comments criticise the lack of clear definitions around “antisocial behaviour” and requested more specific wording in the condition to reduce unfair targeting of legal cyclists.

Appendix B. Supporting Evidence.

Aggressive Begging:

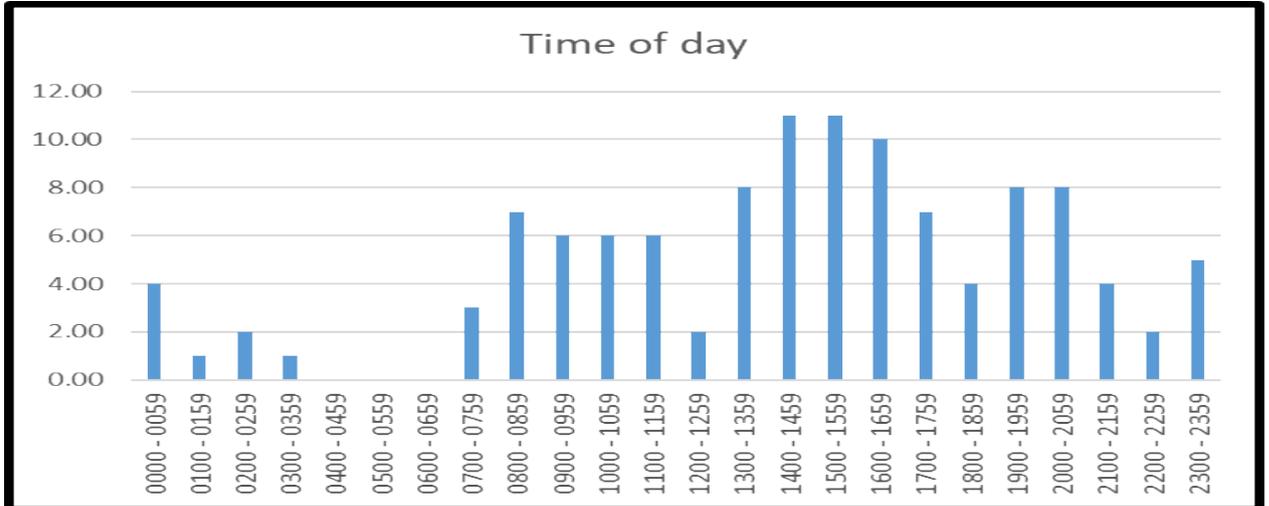
The data below covers a 6-month period from 1st June 2024 to 1st December 2024 – it should be noted that aggressive begging is often under-reported.

Data Source: Thames Valley Police.

Primary Recorded Locations

Police Neighbourhood	No. reports
ABBEY / BATTLE	91
COLEY / KATESGROVE	7
REDLANDS / PARK	6
SOUTHCOTE / NORCOT	4
WHITLEY / CHURCH	2
KENTWOOD / TILEHURST	2
MAPLEDURHAM / THAMES	2
PEPPARD / CAVERSHAM	2
Total	116

Times of day aggressive begging occurs



Offences or behaviour associated with aggressive begging

Occurrence type	No. reports
Anti-social Behaviour (ASB) - Community	23
Anti-social Behaviour (resulting in Community Protection Notice/Warning)	13
Suspicious – Person	12
Public Order	8

Theft	6
Assault with Injury	6
ASB - Breach of a Community Protection Notice	5
Adult Protection	4
Robbery	4
Risk Management Occurrence	4
Assault Without Injury	4
Concern For Safety / Collapse / Injury / Illness / Trapped	4
Criminal Damage	3
Harassment	2
ASB – Personal	2
Mental Health	2

Street Drinking:

There was a total of 149 offences across all wards, between June 2024 and January 2025, with particular attention applied to the Abbey and Battle wards, inclusive of the Town Centre. Data Source: Thames Valley Police

EA ABBEY / BATTLE	78
Assault with Injury	20
Assault Without Injury	19
Public Order	11
Criminal Damage	6
Rape	3
Sexual Assault	3
Robbery	2
Malicious Communications	2
Domestic Incident	2
Drug Offences	2
Theft From Vehicle	1
Sexual Activity	1
Homicide	1
Other - Any Indictable Or TEW Offence Not Separately Classified	1
Drink / Drug Drive	1

Concern For Safety / Collapse / Injury / Illness / Trapped	1
Assault Police / Other Emergency Worker	1
Harassment	1
EA REDLANDS / PARK	20
Assault Police / Other Emergency Worker	5
Public Order	3
Assault with Injury	3
Assault Without Injury	2
Theft From Vehicle	2
Theft	1
Burglary Business / Community	1
Harassment	1
Nuisance Messages	1
Domestic Incident	1
EA SOUTHCOTE / NORCOT	15
Assault Without Injury	5
Domestic Incident	3
Public Order	2
Assault with Injury	1
Sexual Assault	1
Theft From Vehicle	1
Assault Police / Other Emergency Worker	1
Criminal Damage	1
EA KENTWOOD / TILEHURST	11
Shoplifting	4
Assault Without Injury	3
Public Order	2
Assault with Injury	1
Criminal Damage	1
EA WHITLEY / CHURCH	10
Public Order	4
Criminal Damage	2
Harassment	2

Z - Out of force investigation	1
Domestic Incident	1
EA COLEY / KATESGROVE	8
Criminal Damage	2
Malicious Communications	1
Assault Without Injury	1
Public Order	1
Theft From Vehicle	1
Assault with Injury	1
Drunk and Disorderly PND - CRI	1
EA PEPPARD / CAVERSHAM	6
Assault Without Injury	3
Assault with Injury	1
Public Order	1
Harassment	1
EA MAPLEDURHAM / THAMES	1
Assault Police / Other Emergency Worker	1
Grand Total	149

Dog Fouling:

The Council receives many complaints about dog fouling every year, this is illustrated by the data below showing reports directly to the Animal Warden and via the Love Cleaning Reading Application. These reports are likely to only represent a fraction of the amount of fouling noticed by members of the public. Data Source – RBC’s Public Protection Service.

- 2019 – 140 reports.
- 2020 – 44 reports (believed to be reduced number due to covid pandemic).
- 2021 – 78 reports (believed to be impacted by the covid pandemic)
- 2022 – 106 reports.
- 2023 – 117 reports.

In addition to these reports, the Animal Warden Service receives many Councillor enquires regarding dogs, 90% of which are related to dog fouling. This indicates a high level of community concern regarding fouling. Dog fouling of public spaces including pavements and parks is not only unpleasant but can be hazardous to health.

Dog Control:

RBC's Environmental Protection & Nuisance data relating to reports of dogs out of control/dangerous dogs:

- 2022 – 40 reports
- 2023 – 32 reports
- 2024 – 23 reports
- 2025 – 22 reports to date.

Anti-social use of Electric Bikes and Electric Scooters.

Thames Valley Police evidence

Thames Valley Police has advised that E-bikes and E-scooters remain the most commonly complained about issue across the Borough, especially within the Town Centre footprint. They report that they have received complaints received from the public directly, via the office of the MP and directly to the Chief Constable's office over the last 12 months.

Thames Valley Police has shared the following data with regards to E-bikes and E-scooters, which covers the time period between 01/05/2024 – 31/08/2025.

During this time period, 839 occurrences recorded had a reference of "E Bikes" included in them. 258 of these occurrences relate to their involvement in anti-social behaviour.

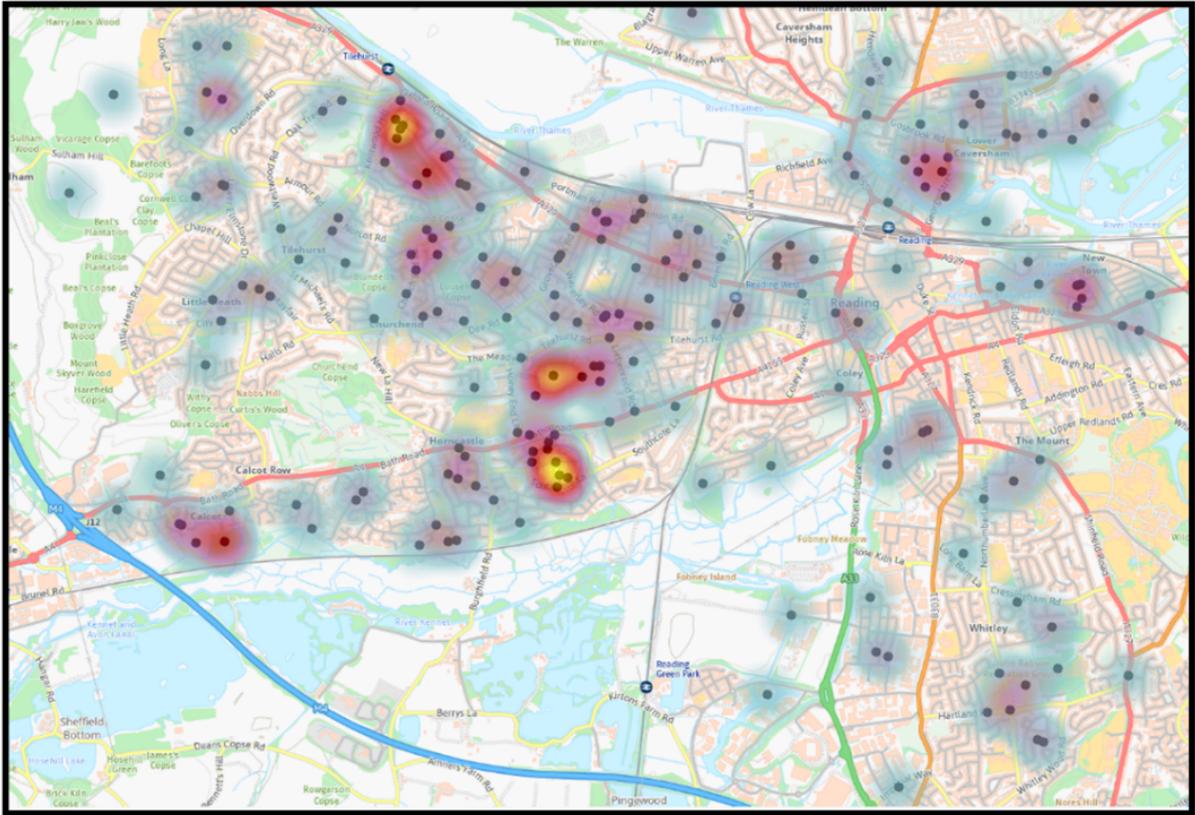
The Peak Days for these occurrences were Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, with peak hours being between 1200 and 1900 hrs.

The Hotspot map for these ASB related occurrences show that their anti-social use covers the whole Borough, although there are areas that are impacted more than others. These areas include:

- Thirlmere Avenue/Tilehurst Area
- Coronation Square
- Liebenrood Road.

There is also reference in some of the reports that these types of vehicles are used in drug dealing activity, with them being used as a mode of transport, with individuals involved in other ASB related reports involving these types of vehicles being involved in much wider issues including Knife Crime, Exploitation, Violence and Intimidation.

The following map shows the hotspots of all "E-bike" ASB Community Occurrences between May 2024 and August 2025.



2025 Community Safety Survey – feedback relating to electronic bikes and electronic scooters:

The 2025 Community Safety Survey results highlighted the anti-social use of electric bikes and scooters, often linked to drug distribution as a significant problem, with many respondents calling for stricter enforcement and regulation. In the open comments section of the survey, 30 comments referenced “e-bikes”, “e-scooters”, and similar electric vehicles in their comments. These references are negative, highlighting issues such as illegal use on pavements, excessive speed, intimidation of pedestrians, involvement in drug dealing, lack of police enforcement, and general anti-social behaviour. They mention delivery riders on Electric Bikes, youths riding recklessly, and the absence of consequences for illegal use. Full comments below:

1. "Masked, hooded youths racing around on illegal e-bikes"
2. "There is a lot of dangerous cycling by delivery couriers, and people on e-scooters/bikes which I understand to be illegal. Am quite worried someone is going to get seriously hurt by one of the latter and I can see no enforcement action happening at present. We have had some near misses, including when pushing a pram."
3. "We need proper policing on the streets with stop and search, powers, arresting people on illegal e-bikes and confiscating them."
4. "Get some of the drug dealers and electric bike riders going faster than the cars off the streets."
5. Reading is plagued with ... people on illegal e-scooters and motorbikes and antisocial driving."
6. "There are a growing number of youth along Oxford Road on e-scooters that regularly hold up traffic for their own pleasure."
7. "Delivery riders especially on Ebikes are out of control around Reading persistently breaking the law, speeding, mounting pavements and overtaking cars already travelling at the national speed limit."
8. "The presence of reckless e bikes is unacceptable to us."

9. "There is a lot of illegal e-bikes and motorbikes being ridden illegally. Nothing is being done, it is noisy and dangerous."
10. -"How about action (Police) on ... unrestricted eBikes."
11. "The increasing number of e-bikes and scooters (even children being taken to primary school as passengers on e-scooters) being ridden with no consideration to other road users or pedestrians in the likes of Broad Street. Absolutely nothing seems to be being done about the number of people cycling/using e-scooters at the West end of Broad Street which is no cycling. I have seen many near misses and experienced a couple myself. E-scooters are illegal but absolutely nothing seems to be being done about seizing them..."
12. - : "I wish you would reduce the incidences of daytime anti social behaviour esp scooters, drug dealing and racing cars around Caversham."
13. "Specific anti-social behaviour in my neighbourhood is mainly youths (exclusively boys at this point) on bicycles and illegal electric scooters riding on the pavement and pretending to ride at/into people, including elderly and infants, then swerving away at the last moment."
14. "Huge need to crack down on electric bike and scooter use for drug dealers and safety to other road users and pedestrians"
15. "Teenagers on electric bikes ... are the issue."
16. "Speeding electric bikes and roads and pavements are common here as well as being dangerous in how they are used"
17. "We also need a major clampdown on masked, intimidating delivery riders on illegally modified e-bikes."
18. "Electric powered bikes and scooters going too fast on roads and pavements and a general less tolerant society since covid. These comments relate more to Caversham and Reading centres, in fact I tend to avoid Reading shopping centre in the evenings as the number of delivery bikes can be an issue"
19. "I feel intimidated by e -bikes and e-scooter, often on pavement or in pedestrian areas, excessive speed and not sticking to traffic rules."
20. "There are considerable issues with local drug use, electric vehicle use."
21. "Bikes, scooters and ebikes buzz you from all directions and many pedestrian routes are just unpleasant."
22. "... vehicles being illegally ridden on the pavements eg bicycles, electric scooters and e-bikes."
23. "Antisocial behaviour ... illegal electric scooters, bicycles and electric bikes on pavements. I am a pedestrian and are sometimes made very anxious by such behaviour, on behalf of myself and other elderly or infirm residents"
24. "Too many people whizzing around on e-scooters and e-bikes, (delivering food, drugs or kids) no regard for pedestrians, no helmets, no hi-vis, no regard for the law."
25. "I have seen a vast increase in drug selling by street runners on electric bikes in the last year. They are able to use the run off streets along the Oxford Road and Tilehurst road at speed day and night without impunity..."
26. "The electric bikes (we see a lot of that on Henley road)"
27. "Last week, I was nearly run over by someone on an electric bike going at high speed on the pavement as I walked to the local shops."
28. "People wearing bandana's riding around on electric bikes down main roads, doing wheelies, intimidating people, riding on paths in front of pedestrians, i see this everyday and am not sure why police etc don't see this happening..."
29. "Motorised drug runners in the park on electric bikes are big concern"

30. "There should be more aggression in confiscating e-scooters and bikes, confiscating balaclavas, and cracking

For clarity, whilst e-scooters are easily identifiable by the public, it is acknowledged that the reports and comments from members of the public do not generally give clarity about the types of electric 2 wheeled cycle-type vehicles being used. However, the collected evidence is electric powered cycle -type vehicles with two wheels.

Appendix C – Equality Impact Assessment

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

For advice on this document please contact Clare Muir on 72119 or email Clare.Muir@reading.gov.uk.

Please contact the Project Management Office at pmo@reading.gov.uk for advice and/or support to complete this form from a project perspective.

Name of proposal/activity/policy to be assessed:

Implementation of Public Spaces Protection Order 2025

Directorate: Communities and Adult Social Care

Service: Community Partnership Service

Name: Jason Murphy/Jo Middlemass

Job Title: Community Safety Manager

Date of assessment: 05/05/2025 – finalised 17/09/2025

Version History

Version	Reason	Author	Date	Approved By
1	Draft	Jason Murphy	7.5.2025	
1.2	Updated draft following consultation	Jo Middlemass	17.09.2025	

Scope your proposal

- **What is the aim of your policy or new service/what changes are you proposing?**
-

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) continues to be a priority for residents living in the Town and for Reading's Community Safety Partnership (CSP). As key members of the CSP, Reading Borough Council and Thames Valley Police are committed to working together to ensure that issues of anti-social behaviour are tackled in the most effective and proportionate way possible, making full use of the tools and powers available.

Anti-Social Behaviour that impacts the public realm is visible to those who live in, work in and visit Reading and can unfortunately at times be one of the first things people notice when they come into the Town. Whilst a range of powers continue to be used to tackle ASB through Civil and Criminal Courts, a case has been made for the Council to once again consider its power to introduce a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) to tackle 4 key types of behaviour, following feedback from Reading CSP's Community Safety Survey, priorities put forward by Thames Valley Police and through Partnership Problem Solving discussions.

PSPOs are Orders which restrict or prohibit specified activities and can require certain things to be done by people engaged in these activities within a defined area, with breach of a PSPO without reasonable excuse being an offence and with the Order being enforced by Police Officers and Council Officers.

The Council is responsible for drafting, consulting on and implementing PSPOs in response to the issues affecting their communities, provided certain criteria and legal tests are met.

PSPOs differ from other tools introduced under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, as they are the only power that is specifically council-led, and rather than targeting specific individuals or properties, they focus on the identified problem behaviour in a specific location. The legislation provides for restrictions to be placed on behaviours that apply to everyone in that locality (with the possible use of exemptions). Breach of a PSPO without a reasonable excuse is an offence.

- **Who will benefit from this proposal and how?**

The general public will benefit from improved safety and cleanliness achieved by officers of Thames Valley Police and Reading Borough Council being able to enforce the Public Spaces Protection Order.

Breaching a PSPO is a criminal offence. Orders can be enforced by an officer authorised by the local authority including PCSOs and a Police Constable.

A breach of the PSPO can be dealt with through the issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice of up to £100 or by prosecution.

- **What outcomes does the change aim to achieve and for whom?**

The Public Spaces Protection Order would be implemented boroughwide to address the following behaviours with the following means:

Address On street begging

The act of begging is deemed as either approaching people for money, or being stationary and directly asking for money, or positioned on the floor to invite the offer of money or goods.

Address Street Drinking

No person shall refuse to stop drinking, or refuse to hand over any containers (sealed or unsealed), which are believed to contain alcohol when required to do so by an authorised officer to prevent nuisance or disorder.

Exemptions shall apply in cases where for the avoidance of doubt the consumption of alcohol is on premises or a public space licensed under the Licensing Act 2003.

Address Dog Fouling

If a dog defecates at any time on land in the Restricted Area and the person who is in charge of the dog at the time fails to remove the faeces from the land forthwith, that person shall be guilty of an offence unless:

- i) That person has a reasonable excuse for failing to do so; or
- ii) The owner/occupier or other person or authority having control of the Public Place has consented (generally or specifically) to that person failing to do so; or
- iii) That person is subject to the exemptions listed below.

For the purposes of this Article being unaware of the defecation (whether by reason of not being in the vicinity or otherwise) or not having an Appropriate Means to for removing the faeces, shall not be a reasonable excuse for failing to remove the faeces.

Means to Pick Up Dog Faeces

A person in charge of a dog on land in the Restricted Area, shall be guilty of an offence, if, at any time, that person does not comply with a direction given to them by an Authorised Officer of the Council to produce an Appropriate Means used to remove dog faeces and transport it to a bin (whether or not the dog has defecated) unless:

Address a lack of Dog Control

A person in charge of a dog shall be guilty of an offence if, at any time, on any land to which this Order applies, they do not comply with a direction given them by an authorised officer of the Council to put and hold the dog on a lead, unless they have a reasonable excuse for failing to do so.

Anti-social use of e-scooters and e-bikes

Any electric bicycle that does not meet the requirements of an electrically assisted pedal cycles (EAPC) is classed as a motorcycle or moped and is hence prohibited.

Other vehicles prohibited include:

- i. electric scooters
- ii. segways
- iii. quad bicycles
- iv. hoverboards

- **Who are the main stakeholders and what do they want?**

Residents, visitors, businesses and customers of businesses using open spaces in Reading.

An annual community safety survey has highlighted that Anti-social Behaviour, the use of e-scooters and illegal modification of e-bikes, and aggressive street begging have been consistent problems they expect the Reading Community Safety Partnership to address.

The Council's Environmental Protection Team respond to numerous complaints about dogs out of control, dog fouling and dog nuisance – only the imposition of a PSPO allows officers to address these behaviours.

Residents want these matters to be addressed in order to feel safer

Assess whether an EqIA is Relevant

How does your proposal relate to eliminating discrimination; advancing equality of opportunity; promoting good community relations?

- **Do you have evidence or reason to believe that some groups may be affected differently than others (due to race, disability, sex, gender, sexuality, age, religious belief or due to belonging to the Armed Forces community or care**

experience)? Make reference to the known demographic profile of the service user group, your monitoring information, research, national data/reports etc.

No

- **Is there already public concern about potentially discriminatory practices/impact or could there be? Make reference to your complaints, consultation, feedback, media reports locally/nationally.**

No

If the answer is **Yes** to any of the above, you need to do an Equality Impact Assessment.

If **No** you **MUST** complete this statement.

An Equality Impact Assessment is not relevant because:

The proposed measures apply to all residents and visitors to the Borough and are intended to create increased safety for all. Only those residents, who for reasons, officers of Thames Valley Police or Reading Borough Council, believe have displayed a behaviour or action that comes under the Public Spaces Protection Order can expect to be subject to the order.

The proposed PSPOs will deal with particular problems in an area that is detrimental to the local community's quality of life by imposing conditions on the use of that area that applies to everyone. It is designed to ensure people can use and enjoy public spaces safe from anti-social behaviour.

A graduated approach to enforcement will be taken, but a small minority of offenders can cause disproportionate nuisance and expense, so in some cases, prosecution or the threat of prosecution will be necessary and aim of the PSPO is to promote a consistent, effective and fair approach to enforcement and to protect the environment for the benefit for the community and provide a safe place to live, work and visit. The prominent people affected by the activities occurring across the Borough are those people that have witnessed the behaviours described above; these include other members of the public and those that live nearby.

Some people have been deterred from visiting and using public spaces because of the anti-social behaviour they have witnessed or been subjected to. The prominent people affected by the PSPO, which place restrictions on the activities occurring in our open spaces are all of the people engaging in the activities described above. It is hoped that it will result in a decrease or even a cessation of the nuisance, annoyance and disturbance that is occurring. Therefore, it is deemed that implementing the PSPO is likely to be a positive impact across all equality groups and that the needs of the broader community to feel safe and protected from anti-social behaviour in public spaces are greater than those who are causing anti-social behaviour.

The legitimate purpose of the PSPO is to ensure that people are able to use Reading's public spaces free from anti-social behaviour, which will contribute to better health and wellbeing for individuals.

Different racial groups experience disproportionality within the criminal justice system, however, the PSPO is not designed to target the behaviours of one or more group.

The Public Spaces Protection Order will benefit all of Reading's residents and is in no way linked to issues that arise from these protected characteristics.

Parents or caregivers using electric powered bike to transport children are exempt from the PSPO when using electric bikes or vehicles to discharge their care.

Disabled groups are exempt from provisions such as dog control and use of e-scooters/e-bikes in circumstances where:

- Disabled people and anyone with long term health conditions or restricted mobility uses an electric powered vehicle as a mobility aid
- Nothing in this Order or the Schedule to this Order (related to dog control or dog fouling) shall apply to a person who:

i) is registered as a blind person in a register compiled under S29 of the National Assistance Act 1948; or

ii) has a disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010 or its successor and who relies upon an accredited assistance dog trained by an accredited I member of Assistance dogs International (ADI) or the International Guide Dog Federation (IGDF) or other Prescribed Charity.

An Enforcement Protocol will be developed to provide guidance on how to enforce the PSPO, with a monitoring process to be put in place that will include monitoring how the Order is being used proportionately.

It is intended that the implementation of the PSPO will ensure that there would be a balance between proportionate enforcement and acceptable behaviour, with the provision that potentially vulnerable individuals would be referred or signposted for appropriate support. This will be a partnership approach and reflected in the Enforcement Protocol.

The public consultation has not presented any concerns that have not already been addressed above. The main concerns were about support for vulnerable people, which will be covered in the Enforcement Protocol. The PSPO may help to identify vulnerable individuals who require support. With consent, information will be shared with support services. Enforcement may encourage those not always in receipt of services and support to access said services to help those groups in a way we have not been able to thus far.

The introduction of the PSPO is necessary to reduce anti-social behaviour activity and to ensure the safety of all residents in the restricted wards. We will review this equality analysis assessment regularly and, on a case,-by-case basis when any negative impact on a particular protected characteristics is identified. We will also ensure that within the review process of the PSPO we will consider a formal review of the equality analysis assessment.

Appendix D: Themed consultation comments per condition

See below

Note: many comments touch on multiple themes; so the numbers of comments in the tables below reflect the number of responses mentioning each theme (i.e not unique respondents). For example, regarding the On Street Begging condition, 1 comment might refer to the theme of ‘intimidation’ and ‘drug/alcohol abuse’, which is then reflected as 2 separate comments relating to these separate themes.

Proposed Condition: On Street Begging

	Theme	Number of comments	Local authority response and intended actions.
1	Intimidation - respondents describe begging as aggressive and some mention being followed, harassed, or verbally abused when refusing to give money.	74	This information supports the need to Implement the PSPO condition along with a communications strategy which includes information on how the PSPO will be promoted and education around how it will be enforced (as per the enforcement recommendations).
2	Need to Address Root Causes – respondents state that banning begging does not address underlying issues such as homelessness, poverty, addiction, or mental health. They advocate for more support services and tackling root causes.	68	<p>The concerns raised about the root causes and underlying issues are noted. The approach to enforcing the begging condition will be measured and proportionate and will ensure that appropriate support is offered. The condition is intended to target those who do not engage with service and continue to cause harassment, alarm and distress to individuals through their begging behaviour.</p> <p>The communication activity that is already in place in relation to begging, including the Tap for Reading campaign, will be enhanced and factored into the wider PSPO communications strategy to support the implementation of the PSPO and will include information on the existing wrap-around support services delivered by RBC and partners for the street population, including homelessness prevention and rough sleeping initiatives; addiction and mental health services.</p> <p>The Enforcement Protocol will also include advice and steps to follow for the Police, particularly in relation to signposting to support services.</p>
3	Drug/Alcohol Abuse - responses associate begging with substance abuse. Some mention	54	The concerns raised are acknowledged and will form part of the intelligence picture for begging.

"professional" or "career" beggars, and concerns about organised gangs.

This information supports the need to Implement the PSPO condition along with communications on how the PSPO will be promoted, and education around how it will be enforced (as per the enforcement recommendations). This will include wider support services and addiction support for the street population. Partner agencies will use this PSPO alongside existing powers to disrupt organised crime gangs.

4 Negative Impact on Town Centre - respondents express concern that visible begging creates a poor impression of Reading, deters visitors and shoppers and negatively affects businesses. 38

This information will be fed into the new Town Centre Safety Group that will report into Reading's Community Safety Partnership to work through in terms of the wider concerns about Reading Town Centre.

This information supports the need to Implement the PSPO condition along with communications on how the PSPO will be promoted and education around how it will be enforced (as per the enforcement recommendations).

Within the communications strategy which will be delivered for the promotion of the PSPO, we will include information in relation to begging (Tap for Reading and homelessness/rough sleeping initiatives) and information on the wider safety of the Town Centre, including data and on partnership working, targeted at residents, visitors and businesses, communicated via partners such as REDA/BID.

5 Disproportionate impact on vulnerable people - respondents raise ethical concerns about criminalising poverty or homelessness, stating that enforcement risks targeting vulnerable people unfairly. 32

Reading continues to experience a persistent level of street begging, with a very small cohort of individuals aggressively begging, approaching members of the public to ask for money, and targeting vulnerable individuals to coerce them into giving them money at cashpoints, rather than sitting and passively begging. This behaviour can be aggressive and intimidating and has also led to a growing number of businesses reporting the negative impact that this type of begging is having on their businesses. Often the visible impact of street begging can contribute to a perceived lack of safety in busy areas and a misconception that individuals witnessed begging are homeless and rough sleeping.

The approach to enforcing the begging condition will be measured and proportionate and will ensure that appropriate support is offered. The condition isn't aimed at targeting individuals who are rough sleeping. The condition is

intended to target those who do not engage in services and continue to cause harassment, alarm and distress to individuals through their begging behaviour.

To ensure clarity of this, the communication strategy and enforcement protocol referred to in section 2 will clearly set out how the order will be enforced and what will be expected of enforcing officers. This includes information on the existing wrap-around support services delivered by RBC and partners for the street population, including homelessness prevention and rough sleeping initiatives, addiction and mental health services. It will also be made clear within the promotion of the PSPO that engagement will be a key part of enforcement, including signposting vulnerable people to relevant support services. It will also be made clear that powers will be used proportionately. The communication activity that is already in place in relation to begging, including the Tap for Reading campaign, will continue to be reviewed and improved.

6	Distinction between aggressive vs passive begging - respondents differentiate between aggressive begging (which they oppose) and passive begging (which they tolerate) or call for targeted rather than blanket measures.	27	This is acknowledged and will be covered in the Communication Strategy and Enforcement Protocol. This will include information on how the PSPO will be enforced (as per the enforcement recommendations) and it will be made clear that engagement will be a key part of enforcement, including signposting vulnerable people to relevant support services and being clear that powers will be used proportionately.
7	Doubts about effectiveness – respondents believe enforcement will simply move the problem elsewhere.	23	<p>The proposed order will cover the whole Borough; therefore, this will take into consideration any issues relating to displacement. The focus on signposting to support will be emphasised in the communication strategy and Enforcement Protocol.</p> <p>Reporting outcomes of any PSPO related education and enforcement activity will be factored into the PSPO communication strategy, which will include information on how the PSPO will be enforced and used alongside existing Police powers. Communications will also promote existing partnership working on crime and safety.</p>
8	Support for more Police powers to tackle begging and associated antisocial behaviour.	18	This is noted and informs the decision to Implement the PSPO condition along with a communications strategy which includes information on how the PSPO will

9	Begging not seen as a major problem	13	be enforced (as per the enforcement recommendations) and used alongside existing Police powers and existing partnership working on crime and safety. This is noted, however, a small minority of respondents to the survey responded to say they do not think begging is an issue. More respondents stated that they see this behaviour as concerning and intimidating and support the condition. This has not impacted the proposal to implement the Begging PSPO Condition.
10	Concerns about wording/policy - respondents criticise the survey wording and highlight a lack of clarity about the policy.	12	In response to the consultation on the Go Vocal platform, it is acknowledged that a small minority of respondents criticised the wording and the policy however, the majority of respondents support the condition. The evidence put forward and the wider feedback to the consultation indicates that there is still a need to proceed with the proposal to implement a PSPO, however, the FAQs will provide responses to why the PSPO is being implemented. This has not impacted the proposal to implement the Begging PSPO Condition.

Proposed Condition: Street Drinking

	Theme	Number of comments	How we intend to respond
11	Anti-social behaviour - respondents link street drinking to anti-social behaviour, aggression, intimidation, and making public spaces feel unsafe. Respondents also noted impact on vulnerable groups, including families, women, children and the elderly.	90	This is noted, with this information supporting the need to implement the PSPO condition. The communications strategy will include information on how the PSPO will be promoted and education around how it will be enforced (as per the enforcement recommendations). Communications will also highlight wider partnership working to improve safety of public spaces, and safety of vulnerable groups. Reporting outcomes of any PSPO related education and enforcement activity will be factored into the PSPO communication strategy.
12	Link to homelessness/begging/vulnerable groups - respondents mention street drinking among homeless people or people begging and some express concern for their	33	As per the comment made in section 5 relating to On Street Begging, Reading is continuing to experience a persistent level of problematic street drinking, which is also linked to an increase in alcohol related offences. This condition is to promote responsible drinking, and deal with those individuals who are causing harassment, alarm or distress whilst consuming alcohol in a public place. Often the visible impact of drinking alcohol and causing anti-social behaviour in a public place can contribute to a lack of perceived safety in busy areas.

welfare. Some call for support not punishment.

The approach to enforcing this condition will be measured and proportionate and will ensure that appropriate support is offered. The condition is intended to target those who consume alcohol in a public place and do not engage with services, and continue to cause harassment, alarm and distress.

To ensure clarity of this, the Communication Strategy and Enforcement Protocol referred to in section 2 will clearly set out how the Order will be enforced and what will be expected of enforcing officers. The communications strategy will include information on the existing wrap-around support services delivered by RBC and partners for the street population, including homelessness prevention and rough sleeping initiatives; addiction and mental health services. It will be made clear within the promotion of the PSPO that engagement will be a key part of enforcement, including signposting vulnerable people to relevant support services. It will also be made clear that powers will be used proportionately.

13 Environmental impact - respondents associated street drinking with increased litter (bottles, cans), urination/defecation in public and general environmental degradation. 22

This is noted, with this information supporting the need to Implement the PSPO condition along with a communications strategy that includes information on how the PSPO will be promoted and education around how it will be enforced (as per the enforcement recommendations), including wider information on existing services to reduce litter and environmental impact.

14 Negative image – respondents see street drinking as damaging to Reading’s reputation, deterring visitors/businesses, and contributing to a sense of decline. 23

This is noted, with this information supporting the need to implement the PSPO condition. As per the previous condition comments re On Street Begging in section 4, this information will be fed into the new Town Centre Safety Group that will report into Reading’s Community Safety Partnership to work through in terms of the wider concerns about Reading Town Centre.

The communications strategy will include information on how the PSPO will be promoted and education around how it will be enforced (as per the enforcement recommendations). The strategy will also cover activity which promotes the wider safety of the Town Centre, including data and information on partnership working, targeted at residents, visitors and businesses, communicated via partners such as REDA and the BID.

15 Support for targeted/proportionate enforcement only - respondents support action only where there is 24

This is noted. The condition wording does not state that consuming alcohol in a public place is prohibited. It is aimed at dealing with individuals who are involved or likely to be involved in nuisance or disorder. The Communication Strategy and

	actual nuisance/disorder and against blanket bans.		Enforcement Protocol will make this clear. It will set out that engagement will be a key part of enforcement, including signposting vulnerable people to relevant support services. It will be made clear that powers will be used proportionately. The Enforcement Protocol will provide advice and guidance to enforcing officers.
16	Concerns about overreach and impact on civil liberties/potential for abuse by authorities, targeting vulnerable groups, and infringement on personal freedoms.	20	This is noted. The response to this is as per the response to section 12. This is designed to deal with individuals who are persistently causing harassment alarm and distress because of consuming alcohol in a public place, not targeting specific groups. To ensure clarity of this, the Communication Strategy and Enforcement Protocol will clearly set out how the Order will be enforced and what will be expected of enforcing officers. It will also be clear that engagement will be a key part of enforcement and that powers will be used proportionately. A small minority of respondents to the consultation were concerned about overreach however, the majority of respondents support the condition. This has not impacted on the proposal to implement the street drinking PSPO condition.
17	Not a significant problem/rarely witnessed -some respondents say they rarely see street drinking or do not perceive it as a major issue in Reading.	18	This is noted. A small minority of respondents to the consultation responded to say they do not think street drinking is an issue; however, the majority of respondents do see it as concerning and intimidating and support the condition. This has not impacted on the proposal to implement the street drinking condition.
18	Context and distinction between responsible and irresponsible drinking – some respondents want to allow responsible drinking (picnics, festivals) but restrict problematic behaviour.	14	This is noted and will be reflected in the Communication Strategy and Enforcement Protocol.
19	Drug use is a bigger or related problem; suggest focus should be broader than just alcohol.	10	This is noted. At this time, there is insufficient evidence to support the need to include drugs in this PSPO, however this will be monitored. Communication Strategy and Enforcement Protocol will ensure reference is made to the wider prevention and support services around addiction, delivered by RBC and partners, including work to reduce alcohol harm amongst young people.
	Impact on children/young people – concerns about children	10	This is noted, with this information supporting the need to implement this PSPO condition. Communications will include information on how the PSPO will be

20	witnessing street drinking or being influenced by it.		promoted and education around how it will be enforced (as per the enforcement recommendations), including wider information on existing services to reduce litter and environmental impact.
21	Effectiveness - doubts about whether such measures will be enforced effectively or will simply move the problem elsewhere.	10	The proposed order will cover the whole Borough; therefore, this will take into consideration any issues relating to displacement. The focus on signposting to support will be emphasised in the Communication Strategy and Enforcement Protocol. Reporting outcomes of any PSPO related education and enforcement activity will be factored into the PSPO Communication Strategy, which will include information on how the PSPO will be enforced and used alongside existing Police powers. Communications will also promote existing partnership working on crime and safety.

Proposed Condition: Dog Fouling

	Theme	Number of comments	Local authority response and intended actions.
22	Dog fouling is a health hazard – unhygienic, antisocial, or a health risk, especially to children. Some explicitly mention public health risks (toxoplasmosis, disease spread).	88	This is noted and supports the proposal to implement the PSPO condition (as per the condition wording) along with a communications strategy which includes information on how the PSPO will be promoted and how it will be enforced (as per the enforcement recommendations).
23	Dog fouling is antisocial and owners should be responsible for cleaning up after their pets – this is expressed both as a matter of basic civic duty and hygiene.	62	As above.
24	Dog Fouling is a minor issue - respondents say the problem is not widespread or not a major issue.	32	This is noted, however, a small minority of respondents to the consultation responded to say they do not think dog fouling is an issue, however, the majority of respondents who do see it as a health hazard and support the condition. The number of people who support the condition should also be highlighted in the communications strategy.

25	Facilities/infrastructure Issues – respondents comment on insufficient bins, bins not emptied often enough, or issues with bag disposal (bags left on ground/trees). Respondents suggest more education, signage, bag dispensers, reporting via apps.	28	This is noted. The Communication Strategy and Enforcement Protocol will highlight awareness raising and education that already exists, including the role of the RBC Animal Warden and will emphasise that these powers will support that education and enforcement activity.
26	Enforcement concerns – respondents question how the PSPO will be enforced and the practicality of policing dog fouling	27	As above.
27	Worse in specific areas – respondents say that fouling is worse in parks, residential areas, outer Reading, or specific streets	22	This is noted. This information (including specifics on areas provided in the comments) will be shared with the Animal Warden to review and consider adding to hot spot patrols. We will liaise with the team to produce a response on the Go Vocal platform.
28	Support for stricter enforcement - including fines.	19	This is noted and supports the proposal to implement this PSPO Condition. Reference will be made in the communications to set expectations that enforcement will be proportionate.
29	Minority of owners are the problem – respondents feel most owners are responsible and that the issue is caused by a small minority.	18	This is noted. The Communication Strategy and Enforcement Protocol will include information on how the PSPO will be promoted and how it will be enforced, as per the enforcement recommendations, including the focus on education and engagement. It will set out that the enforcement approach will be proportionate.
30	Concerns about overreach / open to abuse – respondents express concern that the proposed order is too broad or excessive compared to the scale of the problem.	13	As above.
31	Dog fouling has increased recently – respondents note an	10	This information (including specifics on areas provided in the comments) will be shared with the Animal Warden to review and consider adding to hot spot patrols.

	increase in dog fouling in recent years or months.		
32	Dog fouling linked to street beggars, drug users, or people perceived as irresponsible.	7	As above.
33	Other waste issues more serious –respondents feel dog fouling is less important than drug use and littering.	6	This is noted. A small minority responded to say they do not think dog fouling is an issue; however, the majority of respondents do see dog fouling as a problem. This has not impacted the proposal to implement this PSPO condition.
34	Wording – respondents comment on ambiguous wording.	5	This is noted and has been reviewed with the Environmental Protection Team. Frequently Asked Questions will be produced to complement the introduction of the PSPO to ensure residents are aware of what constitutes a breach of this condition.
35	Comments on exemptions – respondents question scope of exemptions for assistance dogs.	3	The exemption for assistance dogs is set out within the condition. <i>Nothing in this Order or the Schedule to this Order shall apply to a person who is registered as a blind person in a register compiled under S29 of the National Assistance Act 1948; or</i> <i>has a disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010 or its successor and who relies upon an accredited assistance dog trained by an accredited member of Assistance dogs International (ADI) or the International Guide Dog Federation (IGDF) or other Prescribed Charity.</i>

Proposed Condition: Dog Control

	Theme	Number of comments	How we intend to respond
36	Dog control is necessary for public safety - respondents say dogs can be dangerous, intimidating and cause nuisance especially around children and vulnerable people.	54	This is noted and supports the proposal to implement the PSPO condition.

37	Dog owners should be responsible especially regarding recall.	37	As above.
38	Support for targeted/proportionate enforcement – concerns about blanket use/over-enforcement.	33	This is noted. The Communication Strategy and Enforcement Protocol will include information on how the PSPO will be enforced, with the Enforcement Protocol clearly setting out how officers will be expected to enforce.
39	Dog control is not a significant problem.	28	This is noted - a minority of respondents say they do not think dog control is an issue, however, the majority of respondents stated that the condition is necessary and support the condition. This has not impacted the decision to proceed with implementing this PSPO condition.
40	Dog attacks – respondents share personal experience of attacks, being frightened by out-of-control dogs.	18	This information supports the proposal to implement the PSPO condition.
41	Increase in irresponsible ownership – respondents say there are more dogs, more aggressive breeds and more irresponsible owners since Covid.	13	As above
42	Dog fouling and hygiene issues.	8	As per the response in the Dog Fouling section.
43	Concerns around loss of freedom for well-behaved dogs, need for off-lead areas/ fenced areas and a balanced approach between control and dog exercise.	7	This condition does not state that dogs have to be on leads all the time, but under control, which does still acknowledge a balance between responsible ownership and dog exercise. The information on off-lead areas (including specifics on areas provided in the comments) will be shared with the Animal Warden. The Communication Strategy and Enforcement Protocol will clearly set out that the key facts for this condition will be set out in awareness raising and in the Frequently Asked Questions.
44	Other – respondents mention dog barking at night, dog fouling on private property, dogs being	5	This information will be shared with the Animal Warden to review and produce a response on the Go Vocal platform on off-lead areas.

	restricted from shops/restaurants and attacks on wildlife.		
45	Dog owners feel unfairly targeted and concerned about an anti-dog rhetoric.	6	This is noted. The Communication Strategy and Enforcement Protocol will include information on how the PSPO will be promoted and how it will be enforced, as per the enforcement recommendations, including the focus on education and engagement. It will set out that the enforcement approach will be proportionate.
46	Other public order/social issues are more important – including homelessness and drug abuse.	4	This is acknowledged. A small minority of respondents to the consultation responded to say they do not think dog control is a major issue; however, the majority of respondents support the condition.

Information to be fed back to relevant teams and partners to ensure they raise awareness about what activity is being undertaken to tackle the other issues highlighted

Proposed Condition: Anti-social use of e-scooters and e-bikes

	Theme	Number of comments	How we intend to respond
47	Danger to pedestrians/public safety – especially on pavements, in parks, and pedestrianised areas. Includes mentions of near-misses, actual injuries, and fear for children, elderly, and disabled people. Many comment on speeding and reckless riding and a lack of safety gear.	190+	This is noted and supports the need to include a PSPO condition to tackle the issue.
48	Lack of enforcement/police inaction - comments expressing frustration that existing laws are not enforced, police do not act, or that new rules will be ineffective	90+	This is noted and has been fed back to Thames Valley Police, with clear information about enforcement to be set out in the Communication Strategy and Enforcement Protocol.

49	Illegal Use / Modified Vehicles - use by unlicensed/uninsured riders and a sense of lawlessness.	75+	This is noted and supports the proposal to implement a PSPO condition to tackle the issue.
50	Calls for stronger enforcement including confiscation and destruction of illegal vehicles, on-the spot fines, stricter penalties.	55+	This is noted. The introduction of a PSPO to tackle this issue is intended to provide an additional tool to target those who act in an anti-social manner. This will be included in the ongoing problem-solving approach that will be overseen through the work of Reading's Community Safety Partnership and its wider work to improve communication about action partners are taking to tackle crime and disorder in the town.
51	Association with crime - linking e-bikes/e-scooters to drug dealing, theft, mugging, gangs, intimidation (especially by masked/hooded riders), and general criminality.	45+	This is noted. This information has been shared with the Police and the Community Safety Partnership, with the intention to ensure that outcomes of Police operations will be shared with the public as and when appropriate.
52	Impact on vulnerable groups and risk to elderly, disabled people (including visually impaired), and children.	40+	This is noted and supports the proposal to Implement a PSPO condition to tackle the issue.
53	Delivery riders/gig economy issues – including food delivery riders as frequent offenders.	35+	This information will be shared with the Licensing Team and the Police to review. Some of the points raised relate to activity that needs to be addressed at a national and government level.
54	Suggestions for regulation so that e-bike/e-scooter riders have to have insurance, licences, wear helmets etc.	25+	This information will be shared with the Licensing Team and the Police to review. Some of the points raised relate to activity that needs to be addressed at a national and government level.
55	Need for clearer definitions- comments expressing concern about vague definitions of "anti-social", risk of over-policing or discriminatory enforcement (including ableism), or targeting legal users.	20+	<p>This is noted. Communications will set out the need to put in place a definition of anti-social use of e-bikes and e-scooters and that this is reflected in the awareness raising that will be undertaken, including the production of Frequently Asked Questions. This will also clearly set out how this condition will be enforced.</p> <p>It should be noted that there was a definition of ASB in the consultation documents and condition wording (“a person riding in a malicious and/or dangerous manner in a public place as to cause significant harassment, alarm or distress to any person within the Borough”). There is a comment</p>

			that suggests asking a person to dismount could be is discriminatory – in the response we will make it clear that if an officer would assist an individual if they had trouble dismounting.
56	Support for legal/responsible e-bike use for environmental benefits; concern that crackdown may harm sustainable transport.	18+	This is noted. The Communication Strategy and Enforcement Protocol will make it clear that the only people who will be targeted with these powers are those rising in a malicious and/or dangerous manner in a public place as to cause significant harassment, alarm or distress. It will also be made clear that Reading Borough Council has a Sustainable Transport policy and that responsible use of electric vehicles has clear environmental benefits.
57	Infrastructure issues – respondents noted lack of infrastructure for safe use (segregated cycle lanes), and/or better design to reduce conflict.	15+	This information will be shared with the Transport Team to review and produce a response on the Go Vocal platform on infrastructure and bike lanes/shared paths.
58	Association with nuisance/noise.	10+	This is noted and supports the need to include a PSPO condition to tackle this issue.
59	Cars are a bigger danger and that focus on e-bikes/e-scooters is misplaced.	10+	This is noted. This is an additional tool to deal with anti-social use of electric bikes and electric scooters. This power will be enforced proportionately and in line with the Enforcement Policy. This feedback will be shared with Thames Valley Police.
			These comments were made by a small number of respondents, with the majority support a condition to deal with this issue.

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Borough of Reading (Public Spaces Protection) Order 2026

Reading Borough Council (“the Council”) under Sections 59, 60, 62, and 64, of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (the 2014 Act) and after consultation under s72 of the 2014 Act has made a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) the effect of which is to introduce powers to restrict the activities as detailed below. The PSPO will be enforceable across the whole of the Borough of Reading unless otherwise stated.

Any person who fails without reasonable excuse to comply with an Authorised Officer or constable’s request under this provision may commit an offence and be liable to prosecution.

On street begging

No Person(s) will be permitted to beg at any time.

The act of begging is deemed as either approaching people for money, or being stationary and directly asking for money, or positioned on the floor to invite the offer of money or goods.

Street Drinking

No person shall refuse to stop drinking or refuse to hand over any containers (sealed or unsealed), which are believed to contain alcohol when required to do so by an authorised officer to prevent nuisance or disorder.

Exemptions shall apply in cases where for the avoidance of doubt the consumption of alcohol is on premises or a public space licensed under the Licensing Act 2003.

Dog Fouling

In circumstance where a dog owner must pick up and remove their dog(s) faeces:

If a dog defecates at any time on land in the Reading Borough and the person who is in charge of the dog at the time fails to remove the faeces from the land forthwith, that person shall be guilty of an offence unless:

- i) That person has a reasonable excuse for failing to do so; or

- ii) The owner/occupier or other person or authority having control of the Public Place has consented (generally or specifically) to that person failing to do so; or
- iii) That person is subject to the exemptions listed below.

For the purposes of this Article being unaware of the defecation (whether by reason of not being in the vicinity or otherwise) or not having an Appropriate Means to for removing the faeces, shall not be a reasonable excuse for failing to remove the faeces.

Requirement for dog(s) owner to have appropriate means to pick up and remove dog faeces:

An appropriate means is defined as any poop scoop bag, disposal bag or other suitable container for disposal of dog faeces. By way of guidance a trouser or coat or other pocket is not such an item. Neither is a handbag, rucksack, purse or sports bag.

A person in charge of a dog on land in the Reading Borough, shall be guilty of an offence, if, at any time, that person does not comply with a direction given to them by an Authorised Officer of the Council to produce an Appropriate Means used to remove dog faeces and transport it to a bin (whether or not the dog has defecated) unless:

- i) That person has a reasonable excuse for failing to do so; or
- ii) The owner/occupier or other person or authority having control of the Public Place has consented (generally or specifically) to them failing to do so; or
- iii) that person is subject to the exemptions listed below.

The obligation is complied with if, after a request from an Authorised Officer, the person in charge of the dog produces an Appropriate Means to pick up dog faeces.

Exemptions:

Nothing in this Order or the Schedule to this Order shall apply to a person who:

- i) is registered as a blind person in a register compiled under S29 of the National Assistance Act 1948; or
- ii) has a disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010 or its successor and who relies upon an accredited assistance dog trained by an accredited member of Assistance dogs International (ADI) or the International Guide Dog Federation (IGDF) or other Prescribed Charity.

Dog Control

In this Order "an authorised officer of the Council" means an employee of the Council who is authorised in writing by the Council for the purpose of giving directions under this Order.

A person in charge of a dog shall be guilty of an offence if, at any time, on any land to which this Order applies, they do not comply with a direction given them by an authorised officer of the Council to put and hold the dog on a lead.

For the purposes of this article -

(a) a person who habitually has a dog in their possession shall be taken to be in charge of the dog at any time unless at that time some other person is in charge of the dog.

(b) an authorised officer of the Council may only give a direction under this Order to put and hold a dog on a lead if such restraint is reasonably necessary to prevent a nuisance or behaviour by the dog likely to cause annoyance or disturbance to any other person [on any land to which this order applies] or the worrying or disturbance of any animal or bird.

Anti-social use of e-scooters and e-bikes

No Person shall ride or operate an Electric-scooter (E-scooter) or any type of Electric Bike within the defined area in an anti-social manner. Anti-social Behaviour is defined as acting in a malicious and/or dangerous manner in a public place as to cause significant harassment, alarm or distress to any person within the Borough.

Any person doing so may be subject to enforcement and, if requested by a police officer, the rider must dismount.

The Order will come into operation on 2026.

Dated: 2026