

Public
Key Decision – Yes

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Public Spaces Protection Order (Eynesbury)

Meeting/Date: Licensing and Protection Committee
5th June 2025

Executive Portfolio: Executive Councillor for Residents Services and Corporate Performance, Councillor S W Ferguson

Report by: Community Safety Partnership Delivery Officer

Ward(s) affected: Eynesbury

Executive Summary:

On 27th June 2024, the Licencing and Protection Committee supported the proposed implementation of a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) to tackle anti-social behaviour that was occurring in a localised area of Eynesbury, St Neots.

The PSPO came into place on 17th July 2024 and included the installation of a CCTV camera on the corner of Berkley Street, Montagu Street and St Mary's Street to assist in the prevention and detection of crime. Since this date, the Community Action Team and St Neots Neighbourhood Policing Team have worked in partnership to respond to reports.

On 16th October 2024, the PSPO was reviewed by the Committee, and statistics backed by the views of the public showed that the PSPO had been successful in reducing the number of incidents occurring at the location.

In January 2025, the second review of the PSPO was completed which confirmed that there had been 5 breaches between October-December 2024.

In March 2025, the third review of the PSPO was completed and there was a total of 1 identified breach for January and February 2025.

This report is the fourth, and the first annual review of the Eynesbury PSPO.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 On 27 June 2024 the Licencing and Protection Committee agreed with the recommendation for a proposed Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) for Eynesbury, aimed at tackling anti-social behaviour linked to street drinking and public camping in the churchyard. Committee Members requested that an update be provided, on enforcement outcomes following the implementation of the PSPO.
- 1.2 On 17th July 2024, the PSPO was introduced in Eynesbury with signage installed to notify residents/visitors to the area of the prohibitions and the area covered by the PSPO.
- 1.3 The Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant for Eynesbury has provided the following update for this report:

“From a Police perspective the PSPO has been positive and has had little in the way of any complaints regarding breaches from persons within the PSPO area. PCSO’s are patrolling the areas on a regular basis when on shift, and the PC is monitoring. In terms of resourcing, the team has been reduced so our capacity to patrol the area has reduced since the PSPO was introduced. We are effectively relying on calls for service and CCTV captures to progress any breaches now until numbers improve.”
- 1.4 In terms of reports of breaches of the PSPO to Huntingdonshire District Council, there have been 0 in the months of March, April and May 2025.
- 1.5 Cambridgeshire Constabulary received 1 potential breach of the PSPO between March, April and May 2025. This was a report of a tent in the churchyard of St Mary’s Church on 24/05/2025. Upon a site visit on 27/05/2025 by HDC, there was no evidence of a tent or anyone living in the area, therefore no breach was proven at this stage. However, this will be monitored by HDC and Police.
- 1.6 CCTV is still operating in the area provided by HDC’s CCTV service.
- 1.7 As this report is the first annual review of the PSPO, below is the annual figure from July 2024 – May 2025:

Total recorded breaches for the year: **8**

The District Council Housing Team have provided the following statement on the impact of the PSPO over the last year:

‘The Housing Needs Team found the PSPO a useful tool to help manage some of the issues that had emerged in the area from rough sleeping as well as the behaviours of some residents that were placed in emergency temporary accommodation that congregated in the area. The multi-agency approach required through the implementation of the PSPO helped bring some of these nuisance issues under control and meant that swift action was taken where other issues began to emerge. The provider of emergency housing in the area was also an active participant

in helping reduce behaviours of residents that may have led to nuisance for some of the residents in the area, with swift action being taken against any perpetrators in partnership with the Housing Needs Team’.

2. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

2.1 **Section 59** of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 makes Public Spaces Protection Orders a statutory provision of Huntingdonshire District Council. To make a PSPO, HDC must be satisfied that on reasonable grounds two conditions are met:

2.2

1. Activities carried on in a public place within the authority’s area have had a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality, or is likely that activities will be carried on in a public place within that area and that they will have such an effect.
2. The second condition is that the effect, or likely effect, of the activities –
 - a) is, or is likely to be, of a persistent or continuing nature,
 - b) is, or is likely to be, such as to make the activities unreasonable, and
 - c) justifies the restrictions imposed by the notice.

2.3 **Section 60** of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 sets the duration of a PSPO for no more than 3 years, unless extended under this section.

2.4 **Section 66** of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 provides an interested party the right to apply to the High Court to question the validity of a PSPO, or variation of a PSPO within 6 weeks from when the order or variation was made.

2.5 **Section 67** of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 makes it an offence for a person without reasonable excuse to do anything that they are prohibited from by the PSPO or fail to comply with a requirement of the PSPO. Conviction may result in up to six months imprisonment, or a fine of up to £1000.

3. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Continued enforcement of the proposed PSPO for Eynesbury will utilise resource from Cambridgeshire Constabulary and HDC’s Community Action Team.

3.2 HDC’s Community Action Team will respond to reports of anti-social behaviour, including PSPO breaches as part of their day-to-day duties.

3.3 A deployable CCTV camera has been provided by HDC’s CCTV Department, at a cost of £1800 for 6 months. Funding for this camera has been sourced and funded by HDC’s Communities Department.

3.4 HDC’s CCTV Department will continue to conduct 24-hour monitoring and review incidents at the location via HDC’s CCTV Control Room.

- 3.5 This order will remain in place until July 2027. In this time, HDC and Cambridgeshire Constabulary will continue to ensure the conditions of the PSPO will remain enforced proactively and reactively. The Community Action Team will provide Licensing and Protection Committee Members with an annual progress report to notify any amendments to the PSPO by the Public Protection Manager, and to demonstrate the effectiveness of the works undertaken to tackle anti-social behaviour in this area of Eynesbury. From July 2027 the Community Action Team will begin a process of consulting with members of the public and Elected Members to determine whether there is necessity to extend the duration of the PSPO. The results of this consultation will be shared with Licensing and Protection Committee members.

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