

# Review of Anti-Social Driving Public Spaces Protection Order in Eastbourne Consultation Report

August 2025

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## Background

### What Are Public Spaces Protection Orders [PSPOs]?

Legal tools that can be put in place by local councils to protect the community from different types of anti-social behaviour. They were introduced by the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime, and Policing Act 2014 and can put conditions or restrictions on what people can do within a specific area, where there is sufficient evidence to suggest that a problem exists. Breaching a PSPO can be a criminal offence punishable by a fixed penalty notice of £75 or prosecution, and upon conviction the court can impose a fine of up to £1,000. There are a number of active PSPOs in Eastbourne, put in place to tackle problems such as street drinking, dog fouling, and as is the case here, anti-social driving.

### What is the anti-social driving PSPO?

In 2022, Eastbourne Borough Council introduced a PSPO to help tackle anti-social driving, which set out a list of 'prohibited activities' most commonly identified in reports received by the Council and local police. These included the revving of engines, rapid acceleration, speeding, racing, excessive noise from vehicles, and off-road driving on public land. The order is active between April and October each year and prohibits the listed activities in 'restricted areas', these being those locations where issues of anti-social driving have been reported most frequently. The order is enforced by Sussex Police on behalf of the Council. A copy of the PSPO and relevant maps can be found [here](#).

## **Renewing the order**

Public Spaces Protection Orders expire after three years and can be extended subject to appropriate consultation in accordance with sections 60(2) and 72(3) of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing 2014 Act.

The orders can be extended if following consultation and a review of supporting evidence, it is satisfied on reasonable grounds that doing so is necessary to prevent:

- An occurrence or recurrence after that time of the activities identified in the order.
- An increase in the frequency or seriousness of those activities after that time.

## **How we consulted**

The anti-social driving PSPO is due for renewal in September 2025 and from the 4<sup>th</sup> July 2025 to the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2025, Eastbourne Borough Council carried out a public consultation over proposals to renew the order. To facilitate this the Council published information on its website which included the background, reasons for the proposed extension and links to the full order and associated maps. Responses were invited via e-mail or through a linked questionnaire.

## **Consultation responses**

The consultation received a total of 124 written responses, mostly by way of the questionnaire (123 responses). The majority of responses (95%) were received from individual residents of the town, with others submitted by a small number of local businesses and one resident association.

The overwhelming majority of residents (97%) recognised anti-social driving as an ongoing problem, agreed that the order should be renewed (94%) and felt that the list of prohibited activities contained within the order remained relevant (92%).

Just short of two-thirds of respondents felt that the roads covered by the 'restricted area' specified in the order were correct, whilst a number of other residents went on to suggest other roads or part of the town that they felt should be included. A smaller number of respondents stated that they felt that consideration should be given to extending the months covered by the order.

## **Review of evidence**

The PSPO was introduced to address a rise in complaints during the summer months. In the summer before its introduction in 2022, police received 185 reports of anti-social or dangerous driving. Between April and October 2024, police recorded a lower number (160) reports, which represents a 14% reduction compared to the period before the PSPO was introduced. This reflects the deterrent impact of the PSPO signage and targeted enforcement operations by Sussex Police.

A review of evidence was carried out with colleagues from the Council and Sussex Police, which showed the following:

- Anti-social driving remains a commonly reported issue.
- The restricted areas covered by the order remain a focus of reported incidents.
- The list of prohibited activities set out on the order provided officers with additional scope to tackle aspects of anti-social driving, beyond those covered by existing road traffic legislation.
- In addressing these issues officers have been able to issue numerous warnings and issue a number of fixed penalty notices - 15 in 2024 and a 21 between March and end of August 2025.

## **Recommendations**

Taking into account the strong public support for the renewal of the order and the 14% reduction in the number of reported cases, It is recommended that the Assistant Director of Customer Service & Delivery, in consultation with the Lead Cabinet Member for Community Safety, agree to renew the order and publicise in accordance with relevant legislation.

Officers are mindful of comments made in relation to varying the scope of the restricted area covered by the order, but the level of evidence required to reasonably consider updating this aspect of the renewed order is not currently available. Further consideration of evidence requirements and whether a review can be included in the Council's future work programme will be given in due course.

## **Decision to extend the order**

The Assistant Director Customer Services and Delivery on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2025 made the decision to extend the Anti-Social Driving PSPO (for three years). This decision was made under the authority delegated by Eastbourne Borough Council Cabinet on 9 February 2022 to extend the period the PSPO has effect if considered necessary on statutory grounds [Note: This authority was originally delegated to the Director of Service Delivery but has since been delegated to the Assistant Director following an Officer reorganisation and related changes to the Scheme of Delegation]. This decision was made in light of the consultation responses and upon the Assistant Director being satisfied that the statutory grounds have been met. This decision was taken in consultation with the Lead Cabinet Member for Community Safety.