

Meeting	Decision Session - Executive Member for Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods
Date	17 February 2022
Present	Councillor Craghill (Executive Member)

9. Declarations of Interest

The Executive Member was asked to declare, at this point in the meeting, any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests or any prejudicial or discloseable pecuniary interest that she might have in respect of the business on the agenda. None were declared.

10. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meetings held on 2 August 2021 and 16 December 2021 be approved and signed as a correct record by the Executive Member.

11. Public Participation

It was reported that there had been one registration to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

Cllr Fitzpatrick spoke on both agenda items. She agreed with a potential Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) within the City Walls but did not agree that a PSPO should be introduced around Union Terrace car park and Clarence Gardens. She highlighted her reasons for this and felt criminalising people who may require help for alcohol related illnesses or addictions was not the answer. She noted the options within the report and suggested that a third option, to look into rehabilitation programmes, should also be considered. She also suggested that lobbying take place for proposed funding for drug rehabilitation and supporting addictions. She noted that residents were concerned that the PSPO could negatively affect streets where they resided. She

welcomed involvement from Ward Members and confirmed she would work closely with officers, partners and agencies to address the issues within the Guildhall Ward.

12. Request to consult about the introduction of a Public Space Protection Order within the City Walls

The Executive Member considered a report that sought agreement to proceed to public consultation on the potential implementation of a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) to tackle the anti-social behaviour (ASB) associated with the excessive consumption of alcohol within the City Walls.

The Head of Community Safety was in attendance to present the report and she confirmed that:

- The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 included the power to issue a PSPO as part of a mechanism to approach anti-social behaviour.
- A PSPO served to protect a public space from persistent or continuing anti-social activity by individuals or groups that had a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those within that locality.
- ASB levels were likely to increase in the city centre following the lifting of Covid restrictions.
- Officers had worked with the police to consider alternative approaches and had utilised police dispersal powers.
- The PSPO would only apply to the drinking of alcohol where ASB was present.
- The consultation would allow local residents and businesses to input into the process and raise any concerns.

The Executive Member emphasized that York city centre was generally a very safe and welcoming place but that there were concerns about the behaviour of a minority, which was often related to excessive consumption of alcohol. It was noted that a PSPO was one of many tools available to tackle issues of ASB and was not used in isolation, but formed part of a multi-agency delivery plan.

In answer to questions raised, officers confirmed the public consultation would begin in March, would be widely publicised and that the results would inform how the proposed PSPO should be taken forward, if a PSPO was the preferred option.

Resolved:

- (i) That Option 1 be agreed. To consult with local businesses, residents and interested stakeholders on the introduction of a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) within the City Walls, which would mean that the council and the police would have greater powers to deal with anti-social behaviour in these areas.

Reason: To ensure that the council actively addressed the issue of anti-social behaviour in our communities.

- (ii) That a further report at the end of the consultation, which makes recommendations as to whether to introduce a PSPO taking into account the responses to the consultation, be received at a future Decision Session – Executive Member for Housing & Safer Neighbourhoods.

Reason: The council will need to have due regard to the results of the public consultation exercise and legal criteria in making a decision.

13. Request to consult about the introduction of a Public Space Protection Order at Union Terrace and Clarence Street Gardens

The Executive Member considered a report that sought agreement to proceed to public consultation on the potential implementation of a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) to tackle the problems caused by groups of people at Union Terrace car park and Clarence Gardens.

The Community Safety Manager was in attendance to provide an update and he confirmed that:

- Union Terrace car park was located just outside the City Walls and was a main parking area for coaches bringing visitors to the city.
- Clarence Gardens was a park, situated close to Union Terrace and the hospital.
- Some of the same individuals who had caused issues at Union Terrace had also been responsible for incidents within the park.
- The PSPO could include a ban on drinking alcohol in both areas, where it was associated with ASB and could have the ability to remove large groups of 3 or more people who were causing ASB.
- In 2021 there had been 528 incidents of crime and ASB reported across both Union Terrace and Clarence Street. Of these incidents, 180 were reports of alcohol related ASB and crime.
- The public toilets in Union Terrace car park were regularly damaged and officers continued to work with the police.
- The homeless hostel within this area would not be affected.

In answer to questions raised, it was confirmed that:

- The consultation would include Union Terrace Car Park, Union Terrace, Clarence Street and Clarence Gardens.
- Introducing a PSPO could result in displacement but should this occur, an overall multi-agency problem solving approach would create the resources and powers to tackle all aspects of ASB.
- The multi-agency problem solving group had developed an action plan focused on tackling anti-social and criminal behaviour experienced in this area and Ward Members had been invited to attend meetings of the multi-agency problem solving group.
- The council's directorate of Public Health would apply for government funding to support rehabilitation and substance misuse.
- The options listed within paragraph 10 of the report were suggested prohibitions that could be put in place.

- The results of the consultation would inform how the proposed PSPO should be taken forward.

The Executive Member noted that a PSPO was just one of the many powers available to tackle issues of ASB and that a PSPO was not used in isolation but was part of an overall multi-agency problem solving approach.

Resolved:

- (i) That Option 1 be agreed. To consult with local businesses, residents and interested stakeholders on the introduction of a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) for Union Terrace, Union Terrace Car Park, Clarence Street and Clarence Gardens, which would ensure that the police and the council would have greater powers to deal with anti-social behaviour in these areas.
- (ii) That a 4 week consultation process be undertaken and that the options within paragraph 10 of the report be referenced.

Reason: To ensure that the council actively addressed the issue of anti-social behaviour in our communities.

- (iii) That a further report at the end of the consultation, which makes recommendations as to whether to introduce a PSPO taking into account the responses to the consultation, be received at a future Decision Session – Executive Member for Housing & Safer Neighbourhoods.

Reason: The council will need to have due regard to the results of the public consultation exercise and legal criteria in making a decision.

Cllr Craghill, Executive Member

[The meeting started at 10.05am and finished at 10.35am]

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