

Evidence for Town Centre and Townsmoor PSPO

Outlined below is each prohibition with details of any evidence available to support the proposals.

Evidence has been collated via a number of sources, namely the Mall security staff and Town Centre security, Police and local businesses within the area.

Prohibitions:

1.

1. *Persons will not ingest, inject, smoke or otherwise use intoxicating substances within the area marked red on the plan. Intoxicating substances being defined as substances with the capacity to stimulate or depress the central nervous system or psychoactive substances - but does not include tobacco or prescription medication*

Operation Eden was set up to address community concerns raised regarding Blackburn Town Centre being subjected to an increase in incidents of Public Order, Theft, Begging, Drug Use and Juvenile Nuisance. The operation has allowed for figures relating to the consumption of intoxicating substances (including alcohol) to be collated

There have also been numerous reports that directly involved the consumption or distribution of intoxicating substances within the area from Town Centre and mall staff.

Current available figures relating directly to intoxicating substances within the Town Centre and Townsmoor areas are as follows:

Source of Logs	Period	Number of Logs
Mall Security	September 2019 – October 2019	87
Police – Op Eden	May 2019 – July 2019	22
Police logs (i.e. calls to 101, 999)	January 2019 - November 2019	72
		181

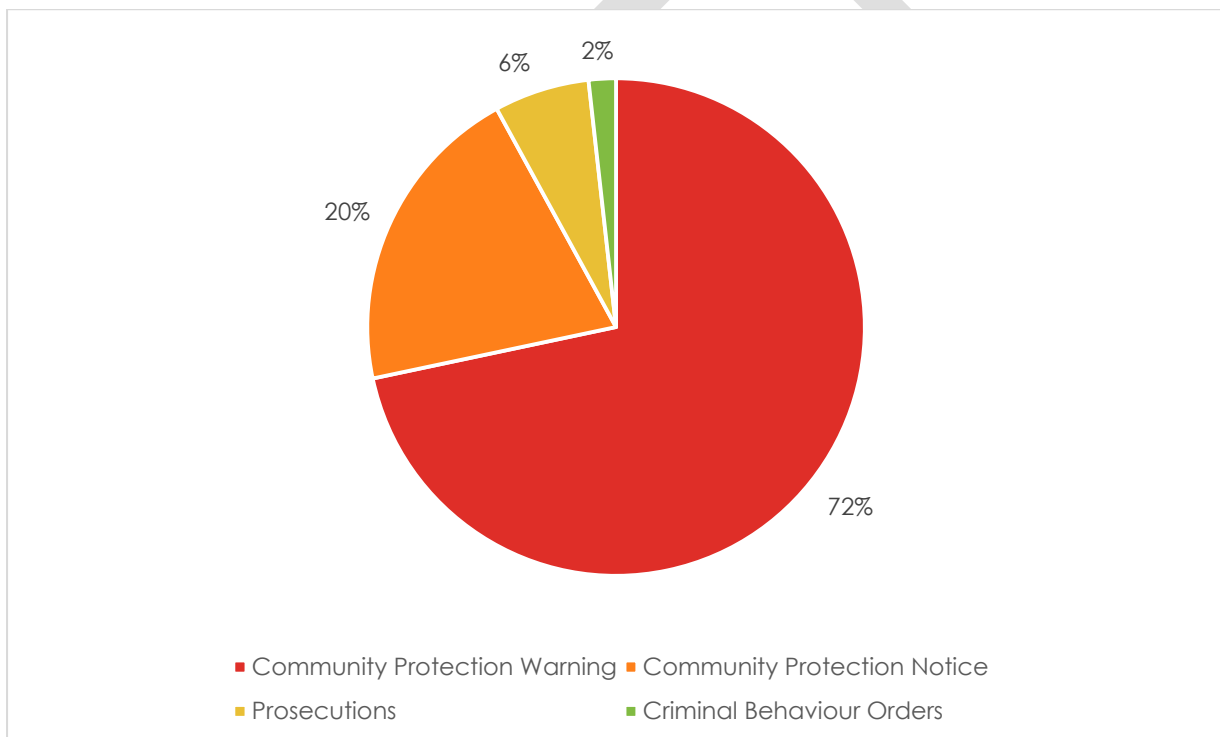
In addition to Operation Eden, The Spice Operation has been running since May 2018 and was put in place to address the rising issues of Spice use in Blackburn Town Centre and Townsmoor area. The operation has specifically targeted the behaviour

which is associated with this type of substance misuse. This behaviour includes intoxication in public places, locally known as Spice Zombies, intimidation by users towards businesses, staff, shoppers and the connected begging activity by users.

It is to be noted that whilst the operation has been in place to target antisocial behaviour, officers have also used the operation to engage with complex individuals in order to offer support around addressing substance misuse, accommodation issues, accessing the correct benefits and reconnecting individuals with families. The Community Safety Team have used their connections with local service providers to achieve these aims.

In order to address persistent ASB, Community Protection Warnings and Notices have been utilised.

Since the operation began in May 2018 the following actions have been taken:



It is of note that all of those prosecuted were in receipt of benefits and were all in accommodation. The court's decision was that the individuals were not vulnerable and were engaging in ASB which was negatively affecting the area.

The PSPO will continue to be used to target these behaviours whilst attempting to support the individual

2. *No persons shall urinate or defecate in any public place (other than a public toilet).*

This issue has been escalating over recent months and there have been numerous reports of people using areas of the town centre to urinate and/or defecate. In particular, the King William Street and Lord Street areas are highly affected. Businesses and town centre/Mall staff have raised serious concerns about the number of times they have had to cleanse an area and the significant health risk this poses. Figures over the past month are as follows:

Source of Logs	Period	Number of Logs
Mall Security	September 2019 – October 2019	16
Police – Op Eden	May 2019 – July 2019	1
Total including Police logs	1 Police log January 2019 - November 2019	18

3.

3. *No persons shall, whilst in the Prohibition Area, place themselves in a position that implies they are begging for money or attempting to solicit.*

Although street begging has reduced over the past year by 55%, begging within the town centre and the Townsmoor area, remains an ongoing issue with 25 known offenders currently operating within the area

Their actives and conduct towards members of the public, along with the other prohibitions noted above, have contributed to a reduced footfall within the town centre of approximately 7000 people a week

Prolific offenders are well known to officers within the area and often have access to or have been offered, suitable accommodation as well as having benefits in payment. This prohibition will be used to target any known offenders who are believed to be begging under these circumstances. In conjunction with this, the Town Centre Offender Panel will continue to look at individuals from both an engagement and enforcement perspective. The Public Space Protection Order will provide a valuable enforcement route / tool in managing these individuals when engagement options are unsuccessful.

On 24th November 2018 a well-known beggar and drug user was found deceased outside a Boots shop on Townsmoor Retail Park. Andrew Davie had been known in

the area for busking and begging and was found in a position outside that implied he had been begging. He was found to have taken a cocktail of drugs.

By extending the prohibition area, specifically for prohibitions 1 and 2, we can target vulnerable beggars and drugs users in other areas outside of the town centre where we know them to frequent. This enables us to engage with this cohort and to offer targeted support where it is most needed.

Within the last month the number of incidents involving begging are as follows:

Source of Logs	Period	Number of Logs
Mall Security	September 2019 – October 2019	11
Police – Op Eden	May 2019 – July 2019	35
Total including Police logs	5 Police logs January 2019 - November 2019	51

4 & 5.

4. *No person shall, at any time, use a skateboard, bicycle, kick scooter or other similar wheeled conveyance in an anti-social manner, causing harassment, alarm or distress, and*
5. *No persons shall, at any time, use a skateboard or kick scooter within the area marked blue on the map, namely Cathedral Square.*

We have received verbal complaints from Town Centre Manager, Clare Turner advising that businesses are concerned about the activities of young people in the cathedral square area of the town centre. These complaints relate to young people skateboarding at speed outside of businesses and causing damage to business property. We have received one email as evidence regarding this issue. In the previous 12 months, there have been two police logs regarding bikes causing a nuisance.

Clare has requested that all skateboards be banned from the Cathedral Square area. The area is predominately a public area with seating and open spaces but does contain an office block as well as several restaurants, a hotel, Blackburn Cathedral and the Cathedral grounds. The proposed area for this is marked blue on the draft PSPO

6.

6. *No persons shall act or incite others to act in an anti-social manner likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to any person in a public space within the area marked red.*

Blackburn Town Centre is split into three separate policing area codes ED06, ED09 and ED16.

The police "Morse" data base has been utilised to obtain data regarding all reports of town centre anti-social behaviour reported to the police between the 1st January 2019 and the 1st November 2019.

The three areas have been checked for incidents recorded under the category of Nuisance.

Between the dates searched there have been 341 reports of nuisance behaviour for the 10 month period searched.

Using key words within the nuisance reports the following data has been obtained.

Key Word Referenced	Number of Logs
Drunk	36
Drugs	16
Intoxicated	10
Fight	9
Cycle or Bike	2
Swearing	8
Alcohol	6
Spice	5
Begging	4
Skateboarding	2
Urinating	1

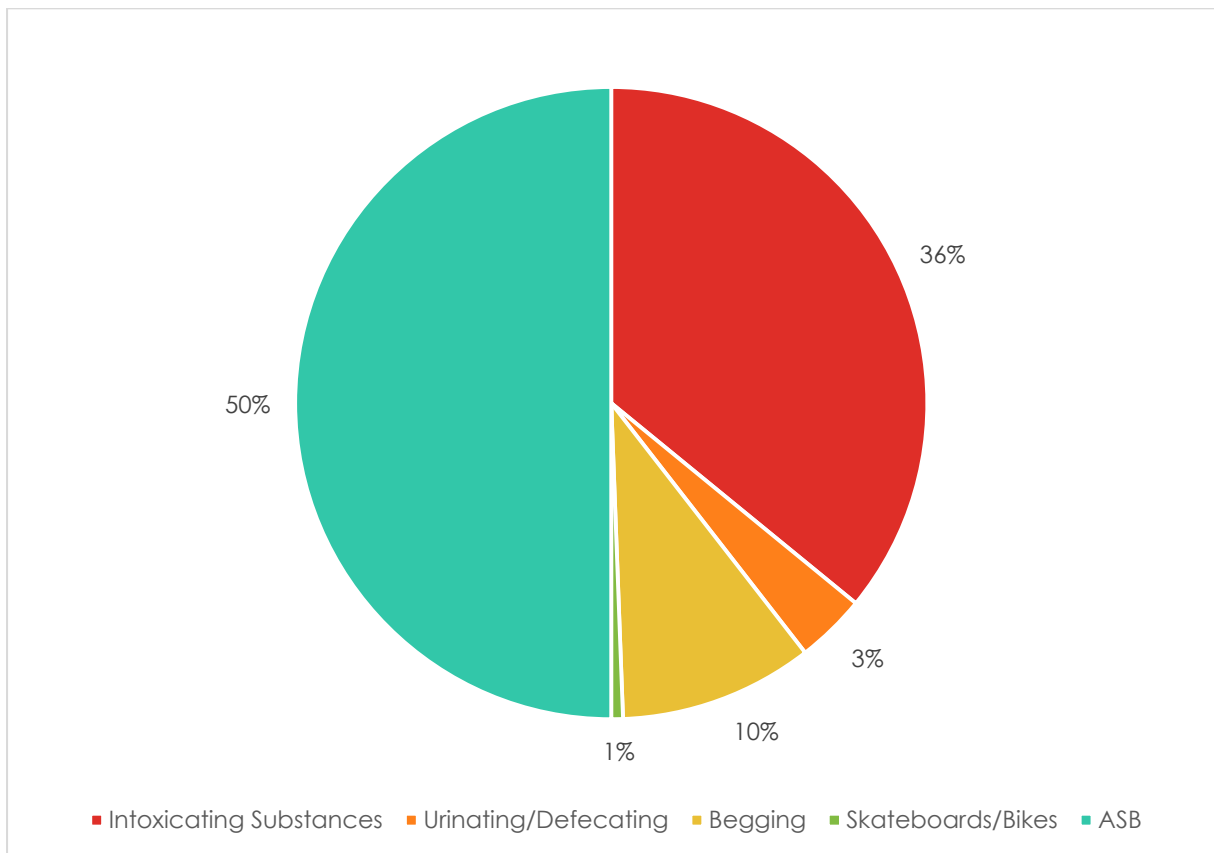
Police Logs ASB	17
Mall Security Logs ASB	153
Op Eden ASB logs	235
Total	401

Gathering the data in total and deduction reports/incidents per category, the total number of ASB reports for the period noted in each

table above is 401.

Total:

This graph demonstrates the total number of incidents reported over the periods noted in each table.



It appears evident from the data that these prohibitions are required to prevent the ongoing anti-social behaviour occurring daily within the Town Centre and Townsmoor areas. In addition to enforcement, the order will allow officers to actively target the most vulnerable with a view to engaging them in positive activities and support mechanisms.