



Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee

Report title: Submissions received by the Committee regarding the proposed Public Spaces Protection order

Date: 27 June 2023

Key decision: No

Class: Part 1

Ward(s) affected: all

Contributors: Benjamin Awkal, Scrutiny Manager, and external bodies.

Note: The Chair of the Committee wrote to a range of organisations and individuals with expertise and interests in respect of the proposed Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO). The responses which the Committee received and has permission to publish are contained in this agenda supplement.

1.1. To obtain expert insights to inform the Committee's scrutiny of the proposed PSPO, the Chair wrote to the following organisations seeking their views on the Council's proposals:

- 999 Club
- Action for Refugees in Lewisham
- Bench Outreach
- Crisis
- Deptford First
- Dr Vicky Heap, Sheffield Hallam University
- Friends of parks groups in Lewisham
- Federation of Small Businesses (Greater London)
- Lewisham Law Centre
- Lewisham Refugee and Migrant Network
- Lewisham Safer Neighbourhood Board
- Lewisham Young Mayor and Advisors
- Liberty
- London Gypsies and Travellers
- New Direction Lewisham
- Probation Service (Lewisham Office)
- Release
- St Mungo's (Spring Gardens)
- South East London Chamber of Commerce
- Tenants and residents associations via Lewisham Homes

1.2. The following organisations and people made responses, which are published in the annexes noted below.

- Chair of the Lewisham Safer Neighbourhood Board (Appendix A)

- Friends of Mountsfield Park (Appendix B)
- Friends of Albion Millennium Green (Appendix C)
- Release (Appendix D)
- Dr Vicky Heap, Reader in Criminology and Fellow of the Sheffield Institute for Policy Studies, and Benjamin Archer, Lecturer in Law, Sheffield Hallam University (Appendix E)
- London Gypsies and Travellers (Appendix F)

Appendix A – Chair of the Lewisham Safer Neighbourhood Board

Thank you for the mail that requested for LSNB opinion regarding the proposed order.

I have not had opportunity to consult and discuss with board members but would like to express my views which others are likely to support.

The issues itemised and areas of concern appear to be in need of some remedial actions which the proposed order could address if properly implemented.

I am however mindful of how additional powers will be monitored to ensure fairness and integrity is maintained.

Also, would the council put in place for instance, available toilets in parks at all times to discourage urination especially when it affects young children when parks are the only places available to those without back gardens to use as recreational space.

I will endeavour to attend the meeting and further contribute if I have other views from my board.

*With Best Wishes-
Tayo Prince | Chair, LSNB*

Appendix B – Friends of Mountsfield Park

I don't think that Friends of Mountsfield Park has been consulted on this to date. Not sure why we are not one of the named parks? We have lots of drug, alcohol and dog related anti-social behaviour at our park. We have let our Rushey Green Councillors know about this and the parks Council Officers. The George Lane park entrance is left open at night which may also be a contributing factor. We would like Mountsfield Park to be included on the Area Specific Measures list, in particular our children's play area and our community garden which we would like to be designated as dog free, no smoking, no drugs and no alcohol areas, to reduce anti social behaviour. Unfortunately the Mountsfield Park community garden is a no go area for most people in the evening because it becomes dominated by groups of men smoking drugs, drinking spirits and other alcoholic drinks. In the morning the leftover empty bottles, cans and plastic cups discourage people from visiting the community garden. We are not able to maintain the space as a family and wildlife friendly area, when it often becomes a hub for antisocial behaviour. If the community garden was included on the Area Specific Measures list, that could help improve the park for more people.

Appendix C – Friends of Albion Millennium Green

I am writing on behalf of the Friends of Albion Millennium Green to support the introduction of a Public Space Protection Order which would apply to the entire Borough of Lewisham.

The Friends of Albion Millennium Green is a group of volunteers who care for Albion Millennium Green which is one of 245 green spaces created in cities, towns and villages across England to celebrate the turn of the Millennium. The Green consists of a hectare of mixed of woodland and meadow, a community orchard, two small ponds and a labyrinth. It has a good range of habitats and species present and offers a place of tranquillity for the enjoyment of the public. We are holders of the Green Flag Community Award which recognises high quality green spaces managed by voluntary and community groups.

Albion Millennium Green is owned by a Charitable Trust and not Lewisham Council. Nevertheless we would hope that a PSPO would also apply to us.

We have ongoing problems with:

- 1. Alcohol consumption in public and related anti-social behaviour such as verbal abuse and littering by leaving cans and broken bottles which are sometimes broken and may injure the public.*
- 2. Consumption of drugs and psychoactive substances, drug dealing and the leaving of drug paraphernalia.*
- 3. Public urination and defecation which is a health hazard.*
- 4. Dog related anti-social behaviour such a dogs being allowed to run free off leads and scaring other users of Green, owners "hanging" dogs from tree branches to strengthen their jaws which causes damage to our trees and not picking up dog faeces which is a health hazard to the public and especially children playing on The Green.*

In the past we have had problems with illegal encampments which were associated with anti-social behaviour, consumption of drugs and urination and defaecation.