Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) FAQs - Citizen Space

1. General and decision making

What is a PSPO?

A Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) is a set of legal powers designed to deal with specific, persistent anti-social behaviours in public places. It gives the police and authorised Council Officers the legal power to challenge behaviour that negatively affects the local community's quality of life.

Why are we doing this now?

Sutton previously had 17 separate PSPOs covering 64 different locations, mostly focusing on alcohol-related problems. These expired on 20 October 2026. Instead of keeping 17 confusing, fragmented orders, we are proposing one single, simplified order to make the restrictions clear, consistent, and easy to understand for everyone.

Has the Council already made up its mind?

No offences or areas have been decided yet; your views will shape whether the order is introduced and what is included. We will consider all feedback received alongside evidence and complaints from the police and partners before making a decision on the PSPO.

How have these proposals been drafted?

The proposals were developed using 18 months of complaints sent to Council teams and police reports. The draft was reviewed and shaped by:

- The police
- Sutton Business Improvement District (BID)
- Council teams (Community Safety, Parks, Waste, and Environmental Health)
- Local councillors

2. Everyday life and "anti-social behaviour"

How do you define "anti-social behaviour" or "nuisance"?

Under the law (the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014), anti-social behaviour is conduct that causes or is likely to cause harassment, alarm, distress, or nuisance to members of the public.

Legally, "nuisance" is based on an objective test: would a sensible, reasonable person feel their peace, comfort, or safety is being troubled or put at risk?

Is this a ban on everyday activities like dog walking or cycling?

No. The proposed order is strictly targeted at actions that cause nuisance or annoyance:

- Cycling/E-bikes: It is not a ban on cycling or using e-bikes responsibly. It targets those who ride in a way that causes nuisance, annoyance, harassment, alarm or distress to others, where walkers are put at risk.

- Dogs: It is not a ban on walking your dog or letting them off-lead in general open park spaces. It targets dog fouling (not picking up waste), walkers who fail to keep dogs under proper control or those who let dogs go in parks which have already been designated as ‘dog free’ spaces.

- Alcohol and picnics: It is not a ban on having a drink or a picnic in a park. It allows officers to step in against those who are behaving in a manner which causes harassment, alarm or distress whilst under the influence of alcohol.

Does this mean all music and noise on streets will be banned?

No. This does not ban everyday music, personal headphones, or town centre life. It only restricts using loudspeakers, megaphones, and amplifiers in Sutton High Street and Beddington Park, specifically targeting amplified music from vehicles, busking, and street preaching. Council-approved events, lawful protests, and emergency services are fully exempt.

Why are some rules borough-wide while others apply only to specific parks?

Issues like dangerous riding, dog fouling, and street drinking can easily shift into quiet residential side streets if restricted in only a few spots. Applying them borough-wide prevents displacement while allowing officers to focus patrols on high-footfall town centres and busy parks. Specific local rules such as BBQs, vehicle access, fishing, and unbooked sports facilities, are applied only to the specific parks experiencing those recurring issues.

3. Fines and enforcement

Who would enforce the order?

The order would be enforced only by authorised officers agreed by the Council, primarily the police and council-appointed enforcement officers. Officers operate under strict

council guidelines and are trained to use professional judgement, proportionality, and discretion.

What happens if someone breaches the order?

Anyone caught breaching the order can be issued a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) but as a first course of action, people breaching the order will be asked to stop doing what they are doing (e.g. turn off their amplifier). Failure to comply will likely result in a FPN being issued.

What will happen to the money earned through the FPNs?

Fixed Penalty Notices are an enforcement tool and deterrent, not a revenue scheme. Any penalty income received will be reinvested into local community safety, park and street maintenance.

4. Taking part

When does the consultation close?

The consultation runs for 8 weeks and closes on Friday 18 December 2026.

How can I share my views?

Complete the survey online via Citizen Space:
https://sutton.citizenspace.com/peoples-services/public-spaces-protection-order-2027/

If you need an accessible format, paper copy, or assistance completing the survey, contact the team at: safersutton@sutton.gov.uk