

Rochdale Public Space Protection Orders for Alcohol

What is it?

In response to ongoing anti-social behaviour and following extensive public consultation that demonstrated strong community support, Rochdale Borough Council implemented a borough-wide Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO). This order prohibits the consumption of alcohol in public areas outside licensed premises and restricts the use of mechanically propelled vehicles, such as off-road bikes and quads. The consultation process was vital in shaping this intervention, ensuring it reflects the community's priorities and helps address local concerns effectively.

What was the timeline?

Work began in early 2023, focusing on gathering information about the proposed PSPO restrictions and engaging with neighbouring local authorities undertaking similar initiatives. This preparatory phase continued for approximately one year. Public consultation on the proposal took place from June to August 2024. Following this, the PSPO was implemented in September 2024 and will remain in effect for three years, at which point it will either be discharged, or extended for a further 3 years until 2030.

How did it happen?

Implementing a PSPO is a lengthy process that requires thorough scrutiny and approval at multiple stages. Initially, a detailed report was presented to full cabinet requesting permission to proceed to the public consultation phase.

The subsequent 12-week public consultation involved a brief questionnaire promoted online, via social media, and in the local paper. We received over 1,000 responses, with approximately 90% of participants expressing strong support for the proposed measures.

This overwhelming community backing was critical. We then returned to cabinet to present the consultation results, ensuring members had full confidence to approve moving forward with the PSPO.

Who was involved?

Throughout this process, strong partnerships were essential to ensure that all relevant stakeholders were well informed and involved. A key partner was Greater Manchester Police, who provided valuable data on reporting patterns and supported us during cabinet meetings, helping members address any questions with confidence. The PSPO was also discussed extensively with partners across our Community Safety Partnership and Drugs and Alcohol Priority Group, ensuring a collaborative approach.

In addition, we engaged with Action Together and several charities in Rochdale representing diverse community groups. This engagement was vital in informing our Equality Impact Assessment, allowing us to carefully evaluate whether the proposed restrictions might disproportionately affect any particular groups within the borough.

How did you involve the community?

During the 12-week consultation period, the Community Safety Team actively engaged with residents through a variety of channels to ensure wide-reaching participation. In addition to making the survey available online and in the local paper, we held multiple in-person engagement events across the borough. These included sessions in all five townships as well as at the town centre (Number One Riverside) on weekends. These face-to-face events provided valuable opportunities for people who might not typically respond to digital surveys to share their views, ask questions, and learn more about the council's proposed actions.

What were the challenges and how were they overcome?

We identified that certain groups within the borough, such as young people, could be disproportionately affected by specific restrictions—like the prohibition on off-road bikes. While this presented a challenge, it did not outweigh the overall need for the prohibition. It was crucial that we communicated transparently and effectively, explaining that the significant public benefits of the PSPO far outweighed the potential negative impacts on these groups. Ensuring this balanced feedback was essential to maintaining public trust and demonstrating that the decision was made in the best interest of the wider community.

What have you learnt?

When asked about whether they supported the introduction of PSPOs to prohibit the drinking of alcohol, 87% of residents surveyed said yes.

Further information

Rochdale Borough Council – [Public Space Protection Orders](#)