

April 2020

PSPO Evidence

Safer Merton

Working Together To Keep Merton Safe & Sound

Background

Robust evidence is essential when considering the implementation of a PSPO. The council need to be satisfied that the evidence demonstrates that the conditions mentioned above, have been met.

Due to the imminent expiration of the PSPO in Merton, a scan of the available alcohol related data and results of relevant public consultations has been undertaken. The results were as follows.

Quantitative Evidence

Available intelligence has been examined to see what the potential requirement for the borough will be going forward. The evidence is not comprehensive; however, the information below seeks to provide some context as to how big the **reported** problem of alcohol related ASB is in the borough. The time periods we will look at, where possible, are calendar years 2018 and 2019.

Safer Merton Alcohol Related ASB Complaints

The Safer Merton ASB Team log all complaints that come into their service. They log the type of incident and the location. Looking at the data supplied by the team for the period identified, there were 967 ASB complaints in 2018, of these 61 had an alcohol element. In comparison in 2019 there were 1198 total complaints, of which 84 had an alcohol element. The top locations in 2018 were Figges Marsh (23%), Graveney (13%) and Longthornton (10%) and in 2019 they were Merton Park (17%), Figges Marsh (16%) and Abbey and Graveney each with 12%. It's important to flag the relatively small numbers, however as the Strategic Assessment points out, the proportion of cases where alcohol is a contributory factor are thought to be much higher than the figures indicate.

FPN's issued for Street Drinking

The Environment Enforcement Team (Kingdom) have been assisting the partnership with the enforcement of the current PSPO. In 2018 there were 24 FPN's issued, 18 of which were in Mitcham Town Centre. In 2019 there were 19 FPN's issued. The highest number was in Graveney with 7.

CCTV Alcohol Related Logs

The CCTV team log any alcohol related concerns on their system as well as a brief description of events and associated behaviours where applicable. The location, time and date of logs are also captured.

In 2018, there were 271 alcohol related logs and the top locations were Wimbledon (48%), Mitcham (24%) and Morden (8%).

In 2019 there were 255 alcohol related logs and the top location was Mitcham (38%), Wimbledon (35%) and Morden (10%).

Police calls related to street drinking

The only Police data that is specifically related to Street Drinking comes in the form of call data to the Police. There is no central collection point of data in relation to action undertaken in relation to the PSPO.

We undertook a search on the Police CAD System which registers the quantity and type of calls that come through to the Police. The search we undertook, with guidance from the Police, looked at the number of calls that came through to the Police with an opening code of Street Drinking (what the public have perceived the problem to be, this may be re-classified after investigation). In 2018 there were 21 calls to the Police with a higher proportion being from the Mitcham area (14). In 2019 there were 29 calls to the Police again with the highest proportion coming from the Mitcham area (16). Again, it is important to flag the low number of calls that were received.

London Ambulance Callouts for Alcohol

As the Strategic Assessment identified through data supplied by SafeStats, the London Ambulance Service data is normally the most reliable dataset to use in relation to alcohol related issues on the borough, however like any data capture system it is reliant upon the flag/field being completed. The most recent 12-month data set available is from September 2018 to August 2019. Figg's Marsh and Ravensbury had the highest levels of calls. 847 alcohol related ambulance callouts were made in Merton a fall of 40% on last year's figures (338 calls). Within that total, only two were classified as directly attributed to some kind of assault and a further 11 related to a police incident.

Summary

The current information available to us around street drinking and associated behaviour is not comprehensive.

The quantitative data around reports to either the ASB Team or the Police are low. Whilst the CCTV data does show more logs in the Wimbledon area in 2018, this has moved to the Mitcham area in 2019 (closely followed by Wimbledon). The other available data does point to more of a problem in the Mitcham area, however the figures again are small.

Enforcement figures for the PSPO have not been high with only 19 FPN's issued in the last year. This would need to be considered if a borough wide PSPO was to remain.

A summary of 2018 and 2019 figures are on the following page

Summary of figures

Data Source	2018	2019
ASB Complaints	61	84
CCTV Logs	271	255
PSPO FPN's Issued	24	19
Ambulance Callouts (Sep 17 – Aug 18 and Sep18 – Aug 19)	1185	847
Street Drinking Police Calls	21	29

Public Perception

In addition to the quantitative data, we felt it was important to consider the views of the public we have therefore look at perception information from the surveys conducted recently on the borough.

London Borough of Merton Annual Residents Survey

Adults Survey

The 2019 Annual Residents Survey provides a representative sample of 1000 residents living in the borough of Merton. A number of community safety questions were included and some comparison to the 2017 survey was possible. Residents remain concerned about people being drunk or rowdy (17% in 2017 to 13% in 2019). Graveney had the highest percentage of residents who saw being drunk or rowdy (39%) as a problem. This was followed by Ravensbury (37%), Abbey (30%) and Figges Marsh (27%). Interestingly Ravensbury (45%) and Graveney (38%) wards were also in the top three wards for residents who felt Anti-Social Behaviour was a problem (alongside Lavender Fields – 41%).

Young People's Survey

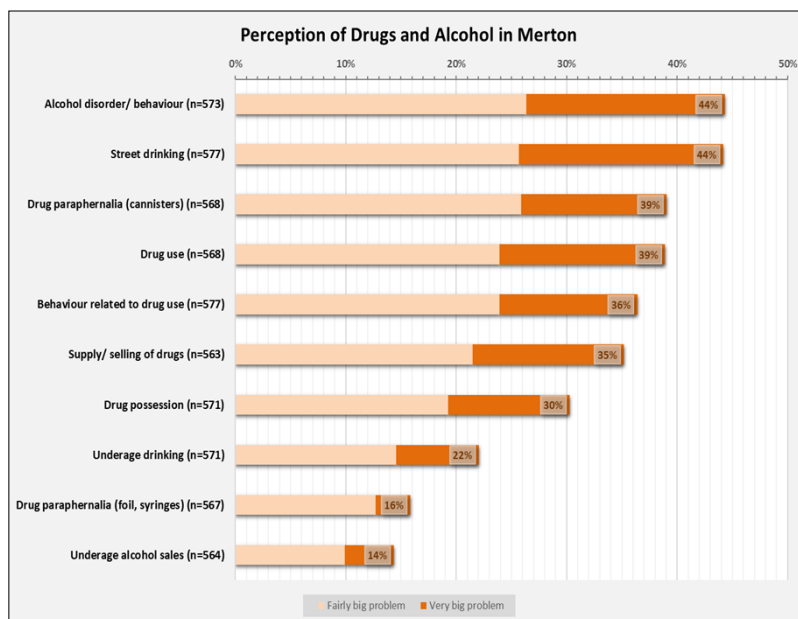
As part of the Annual Residents Survey, the council included young residents aged 11-17. The sample size was 271 young people. In the 2019 survey 10% of the young people surveyed stated that they were personally concerned about substance misuse including drugs and alcohol. This increased the older the young people were, with 23% of 16-17 years old being personally concerned. To put the figures into context, the top personal concerns for young people was bullying (28%) followed by crime (27%).

Young people were also asked to state the top three things that they were personally concerned about in their local area. 14% of young people stated that Anti-Social Behaviour and bad behaviour in public was a concern. This was an increase on the results from the 2017 survey which highlighted that 11% of young people were concerned.

Safer Merton Survey

In mid-2019, the Safer and Stronger Executive Board agreed that a Community Safety Survey should be undertaken to help inform the Strategic Assessment process. The survey opened at the beginning of August and closed in mid-October. There were 634 responses. The survey aimed to ask residents about all aspects of community safety and as such there was a section around Anti-Social Behaviour and another around drugs and alcohol.

Alcohol and Drugs



Residents thought alcohol disorder and street drinking were the biggest problem. 79% of people explained their score by saying they had experienced or seen it.

Residents were given the option to provide a qualitative response to specific ASB issues that they were concerned about. There were 311 free text responses provided. Of these, 51 (16%) were alcohol related and 34 specifically mentioned “drinking”. In relation to the 51 alcohol related responses, 17 comments made reference to a location. The top area was Mitcham with 11 comments.

Residents were then asked if there were any general comments they would like to feedback to the partnership. In total, there were 270 comments provided. Of these, 69 (26%) made reference to alcohol and of these 46 were specifically for “drinking”. In relation to the 69 alcohol related responses, 35 comments made reference to a location. The top area was Mitcham with 23 comments.

Graveney Ward Survey

A survey was undertaken by Councillors in Graveney ward during January/ February 2020 which received 140 responses. The survey was designed to find out about any local concerns or improvements residents would like to see in the area. There were 20 comments from separate households which specifically spoke about alcohol disorder and street drinking in the area.

Summary

When looking at the results of the borough’s surveys. The ward where people saw it as more of a problem was Graveney in the East of the borough. Our survey, however showed that approximately 244 people felt that street drinking was a fairly or very big problem in the borough.

When assessing the data, particularly the public perception information, there is **an indication of an impact on the quality of life of those particularly working and living in the Mitcham area.**

Proposal for Merton

Based on both the quantitative and qualitative data available, we would at this point recommend a smaller geographically focused PSPO in Cricket Green, Figges Marsh, Lavender Fields, Graveney and Ravensbury wards, with a supporting enforcement and engagement plan. We will continue to monitor the data and evidence and should the need arise amend existing and/or apply for additional PSPO's should the evidence suggest that they are required.

We do not feel that there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the current borough wide PSPO remains.