

Response to the Brent Council PSPO proposals for 2026 from the Head of Neighbourhood Management

Introduction:

I submit this response in my capacity as the council's senior manager responsible for developing and delivering tactical operational solutions for major events held in the borough including those held at Wembley National Stadium and the Notting Hill Carnival.

As the council's lead for event operations, my role is to manage the buildup to events as well as any post event activities. I report directly to the council's strategic lead for event management and I also work as the tactical onsite lead for the operational delivery of most medium to high-risk events. After the re-opening of Wembley National Stadium in 2007, this iconic venue has attracted some of the greatest teams and acts to play or perform in Wembley. While for the most part these events have been largely successful and delivered to a high standard, many have been marred by anti-social behaviour (ASB) or general nuisance on the external footprint. This behaviour is usually in the form of alcohol related ASB such as fighting, urination, litter and noise however there are also those who come into external event zone to progress agendas or profit from it. This behaviour often makes conditions unpleasant for residents, businesses and visitors with enforcement officers historically having had limited legal powers to act. The boroughwide PSPO when originally introduced gave officers powers to take immediate action to deter or prevent ASB or nuisance and in 2021, after the 2020 Euro Final, officers began using the PSPO in earnest to effectively tackle ASB and nuisance leading to a much improved position in subsequent years. By not having a PSPO in place with specific prohibitions or requirements related to ASB and nuisance, Brent would quickly fall back into a near unmanageable state especially on event days with significant street drinking both across the wider borough footprint and within the external stadium event footprint as well as event related nuisance.

It is therefore imperative that not only are measures in the current PSPO retained, but that new measures are introduced and existing ones amended to make the PSPO more relevant to current trends for the benefit of all of those who live, work or visit the borough.

Responses to existing general prohibitions or requirements proposed to be retained are as follows:

Consumption of alcohol, urination, defecation, spitting and littering:

The consumption of alcohol, urination, defecation, spitting and littering by mainly arriving visitors coming to attend events often results in drunken antisocial behaviour creating unpleasant conditions for those in the external stadium event zone. Even with the current PSPO prohibitions and requirements, this behaviour continues to present challenges. However, it is significantly reduced as compared to when there was no PSPO. Officers use the PSPO extensively on event days as an effective tool to take on the spot enforcement action against such behaviour and as a deterrent. To not have these measures in place would be a significant failure in the council's duty to ensure the safe and enjoyable arrival of visitors to Brent and Wembley.

Illegal trading, ambush marketing, buying and selling tickets:

Nuisance activities including illegal trading, ambush marketing and buying and selling of tickets have historically attracted large numbers of opportunists looking to cash in on events held at Wembley Stadium. These individuals often behave aggressively, are exceptionally persistent

and usually offer items that are either fake or of poor quality. Visitors to Wembley often have to literally fight their way through lines of nuisance vendors in order to get to the stadium, which makes the experience of coming to Wembley unpleasant and often frightening. By introducing PSPO controls for the nuisance caused by such activities, officers have managed to significantly reduce the numbers of nuisance vendors to a reasonable level which, if it were to be no longer controllable, would quickly rise again.

Amplified sound, aggressive begging, busking, charity collections and litter:

Similarly, activities such as playing amplified sound, aggressive begging, busking, charity collections and pamphleting have all historically made the whole experience of visiting Wembley unpleasant. Individuals will often stand in the main thoroughfares, blocking the path and often step forward and compel people to interact with them. This often causes irritation or distress to those coming to Wembley as well as litter and noise. The current PSPO ensure that officers can quickly move individuals on who are engaged in such behaviour or, if they fail to adhere to warnings, to issue on the spot fixed penalties.

Responses to new or changed prohibitions or requirements are as follows:

Unauthorised access into Wembley Stadium:

While Wembley Stadium is a commercial premises, the space around it is however, open to the public and ASB and nuisance is therefore enforceable by the Metropolitan Police and Brent Council even if not part of the public highway. In recent years there have been many occasions whereby individuals loiter in this space with the aim of entering the stadium without a valid ticket. These individuals often cause crowding of the public space leading to a heightened risk of public safety and often, when they make their attempts to enter the stadium illegally, they do it in a large group and rush at the venue. This behaviour is often dangerous and frightening for persons in this space and makes conditions unpleasant for all who visit Wembley. By introducing measures to prevent this, officers will be able to ensure that open areas around the venue are friendly and pleasant spaces for people to occupy as they make their way to the stadium.

Vehicle Restrictions:

At peak times during events held at Wembley Stadium the roads and pavements around the venue are physically closed for safety. This includes the use of signs, barriers and cones and the use of protective barriers. Unfortunately, this equipment is often circumnavigated by persons on motorcycles, mopeds or bicycles who will then often travel at speed across crowded pedestrianised zones within the external event footprint. This behaviour puts persons safety at risk and with these new measures under the PSPO, officers will be able to reduce this behaviour in future.

Access to the stadium concourse:

The stadium concourse is an openly accessible space where persons awaiting their turn to enter the stadium can congregate and queue. On event days a soft ticket check is undertaken to ensure only valid ticket holders are in this space to prevent crowding and reduce attempts by persons to enter the venue without a ticket. Unfortunately, persons wishing to enter the stadium without a valid ticket will often manage to get past the soft ticket check and cause nuisance by loitering on the concourse and at times rushing the turnstiles. This behaviour can be both dangerous and distressing to visitors. Ensuring that persons who do manage to get into this space without a valid ticket can be quickly and effectively enforced against will enable officers to reduce this behaviour and make the space safer and more enjoyable for visitors.

Parking within the event zone:

Often vehicles – mainly buses or large commercial vehicles will park within the immediate stadium event zone to avoid the higher cost of paid parking or so that they are close enough to the venue to be able to drop off or pick up passengers or goods. Drivers will often risk the lower cost of a parking penalty charge notice as opposed to the higher cost of legally parking on site and therefore wilfully cause obstructions leading to safety risks and congestion. Existing parking legislation has proven to be ineffective in tackling this issue in that it offers little or no deterrent and so what is needed is a stronger deterrent in the form of a PSPO prohibition which can also be applied more than once if a driver repeatedly ignores warnings to move on.

Drones:

The flying of drones near or even over Wembley Stadium can be a regular activity on event days. Having a PSPO prohibition in place to deter or prevent this has helped to reduce this activity and on occasion allow officers to take action. Newer technology means that operators can now launch their drones from further afield and so it is essential that the existing prohibition is extended to a wider area to prevent such activity.

Summary Conclusion:

Not only does the current boroughwide Brent PSPO act as a powerful tool to enable officers to take action against nuisance and ASB both in the area around Wembley Stadium and the borough as a whole, but it also deters those from behaving in an antisocial or nuisance causing manner. In my first hand capacity as the senior council officer who manages the teams responsible for enforcing against such behaviour, I therefore fully support the renewal of existing PSPO measures as well as the introduction of new and revised measures as contained in this email.