

WITNESS STATEMENT

Criminal Procedure Rules, r 27. 2; Criminal Justice Act 1967, s. 9; Magistrates' Courts Act 1980, s.5B

URN

Statement of: [REDACTED]

Age if under 18: Over 18 *(if over 18 insert 'over 18')* Occupation: Police Sergeant

This statement (consisting of 1 page(s) each signed by me) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything which I know to be false, or do not believe to be true.

Witness Signature: [REDACTED] Date: 13/06/2019

This statement refers to the consideration and consultation for a new Public Space Protection Order proposed for Parks, Open Spaces, Graveyards, and Cemeteries within Brent borough.

My current role is Sergeant of the Partnership Tasking Team, a proactive policing team focused on location based problem solving. We are tasked to current community concerns, combined with action to mitigate risks to individuals and the public identified through intelligence.

Gang related offending is a crossover of both. Risk comes from violence associated with gang and drug dealing activity, with rival groups often fighting for drug dealing locations. These groups have a high impact on the communities in which they operate, claiming public areas as their own, acting in anti-social manner by littering, spitting and intimidating local residents who are too fearful to approach such groups. Such groups when falling under the spotlight of police attention have previously taken to local parks as these areas are less likely to be patrolled by police officers passing through on route to other matters. Parks are more challenging to police as these groups often have a clear view of police approaching from a distance, most commonly on foot, giving ample time to dispose of or discard illegal possessions. However an important part of addressing the actions of such groups is to ensure all of their anti social behaviour is addressed. It is common to find such groups stood amongst a large quantity of litter made up of drugs paraphernalia, such as used self seal bags, rizla smoking papers, and discarded wraps of cling film along with used food and drinks containers, and human spit. With groups loitering for hours at a time, it is common to see members urinate in the near vicinity within the public areas.

A frequent cause for concern of local communities comes from street drinking and drinking within local parks and cemeteries. Unfortunately it is not just the act of drinking in the public area that causes the issue but the littering of the drinks containers and the frequent urinating that are a result of consuming large volumes of liquids. Often such activity has been seen in parks such as One Tree Hill, Sudbury, Harrow Road cemetery and throughout the borough of Brent. Some of the groups involved in such activities have been found to be sleeping in illegal encampments in Gladstone Park, Welsh Harp and other green areas and parks. These encampments are also found to be a health risk due to the squalid conditions, the large quantities of litter surrounding them, and often human faeces is found scattered in the close vicinity. This is of higher concern in parks where young children often play.

In my experience, displacement can be a concern when attempting to tackle such problems. An example would be the use of dispersal zones. When a zone is authorised it is common to identify similar issues in neighbouring areas that do not have the same restrictions in place at that time. Whilst thi is an accptable consequence when utilising such a short term

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Continuation of Statement of:

measure as a dispersal zone as it is used for different purposes, a PSPO is often authorised for a period of several years. If there is not a consistent approach to all of the Parks and open spaces it is likely that the activities I have described above will re-locate to an area where there is not a Parks PSPO in place. I believe that the introduction of a Public Space Protection Order to tackle such issues within the parks and open spaces within Brent, would assist in reducing the anti-social behaviour that is detrimental to the communities that wish to lawfully and responsibly use such areas. [REDACTED]

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