

Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO) 2019 – Consultation Feedback

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Introduction

1. Southampton City Council undertook public consultation on proposals to extend controls on street drinking for a further three years, following the expiration of the existing Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) later this year.
2. The consultation took place for 4 weeks between 25 February 2019 and 24 March 2019
3. This report summarises the aims, principles, methodology and results of the public consultation. It provides a summary of the consultation responses both for the consideration of decision makers and any interested individuals and stakeholders.

Aims

4. The aim of this consultation was to:
 - Communicate clearly to residents and stakeholders the proposals for Public Spaces Protection Orders.
 - Ensure any resident, business or stakeholder who wishes to comment on the proposals has the opportunity to do so, enabling them to raise any impacts the proposals may have.
 - Allow participants to propose alternative suggestions for consideration which they feel could achieve the objective in a different way.
 - Provide feedback on the results of the consultation to elected Members to enable them to make informed decisions about how to best progress.
 - Ensure that the results are analysed in a meaningful, timely fashion, so that feedback is taken into account when decisions are made.
5. The consultation was not a vote, it enabled participants to read about the preferred option, answer questions and make comments that will enable the final decision to be made. Decision makers need to consider the representations made during the consultation period but a majority view will not necessarily dictate the final decision. It is also important to note that the consultation is one element that will feed into the final position.

Consultation principles

6. The council takes its duty to consult with residents and stakeholders on changes to services very seriously. The council's consultation principles ensure all consultation is:
 - Inclusive: so that everyone in the city has the opportunity to express their views.
 - Informative: so that people have adequate information about the proposals, what different options mean, and a balanced and fair explanation of the potential impact, particularly the equality and safety impact.
 - Understandable: by ensuring that the language used to communicate is simple and clear and that efforts are made to reach all stakeholders, for example people who are non-English speakers or disabled people.
 - Appropriate: by targeting people who are more likely to be affected and using a more tailored approach to get their feedback, complemented by a general approach to all residents, staff, businesses and partners.
 - Meaningful: by ensuring decision makers have the full consultation feedback information so that they can make informed decisions.
 - Reported: by letting consultees know what was done with their feedback.
7. Southampton City Council is committed to consultations of the highest standard, which are meaningful and comply with the following legal standards:
 - Consultation must take place when the proposal is still at a formative stage
 - Sufficient reasons must be put forward for the proposal to allow for intelligent consideration and response

- Adequate time must be given for consideration and response
- The product of consultation must be carefully taken into account.

Consultation methodology

8. Deciding on the best process for gathering feedback from stakeholders when conducting a consultation requires an understanding of the audience and the focus of the consultation. It is also important to have more than one way for stakeholders to feedback on the consultation, to enable engagement with the widest range of the population. Previous best practice was also considered in the process of developing the consultation methodology.
9. The agreed approach for this consultation was to use an online questionnaire and then issue paper questionnaires upon request. Questionnaires enable an appropriate amount of explanatory and supporting information to be included in a structured questionnaire, helping to ensure respondents were aware of the background and detail of the proposals.
10. In addition to the main questionnaire, the yourcity.yoursay@southampton.gov.uk email address was advertised to provide a channel for people to ask additional questions or provide feedback.

Promotion and communication

11. Throughout the consultation, every effort was made to ensure that as many people as possible were aware of the budget proposals and had every opportunity to have their say.
12. The consultation was promoted in the following ways:
 - A link to the consultation questionnaire and detailed versions of maps were included on the consultation section of the council website.
 - The consultation (with a link to the webpage) was promoted on several council Facebook and Twitter posts.
 - Promotion in a number of Southampton City Council e-alerts:
 - i. Your City Your Say
 - ii. City News
 - iii. Community news and events

Summary of Consultation Feedback

Overall respondents

13. Overall, there were 488 separate responses to the consultation questionnaire. There were no further responses received through emails or letters.

14. All feedback received is summarised within the following sections.

Breakdown of questionnaire respondents

15. A number of questions were asked within the questionnaire to find out a bit more about the respondents to help contextualise their response.

16. The first question asked respondents what their interest in the consultation was. Figure 1 shows the breakdown of responses to this question. Please note percentages add up to more than 100% as respondents could select multiple options. The majority of respondents were interested in the consultation as a resident of Southampton; 455 (94%) respondents in total. The next highest categories were respondents that were interested in the consultation as employees or self-employees of a business or organisation (44 respondents). A further 37 respondents answered as a member of a community group or organisation, 12 respondents as a resident elsewhere in Hampshire and 2 respondents as political members.

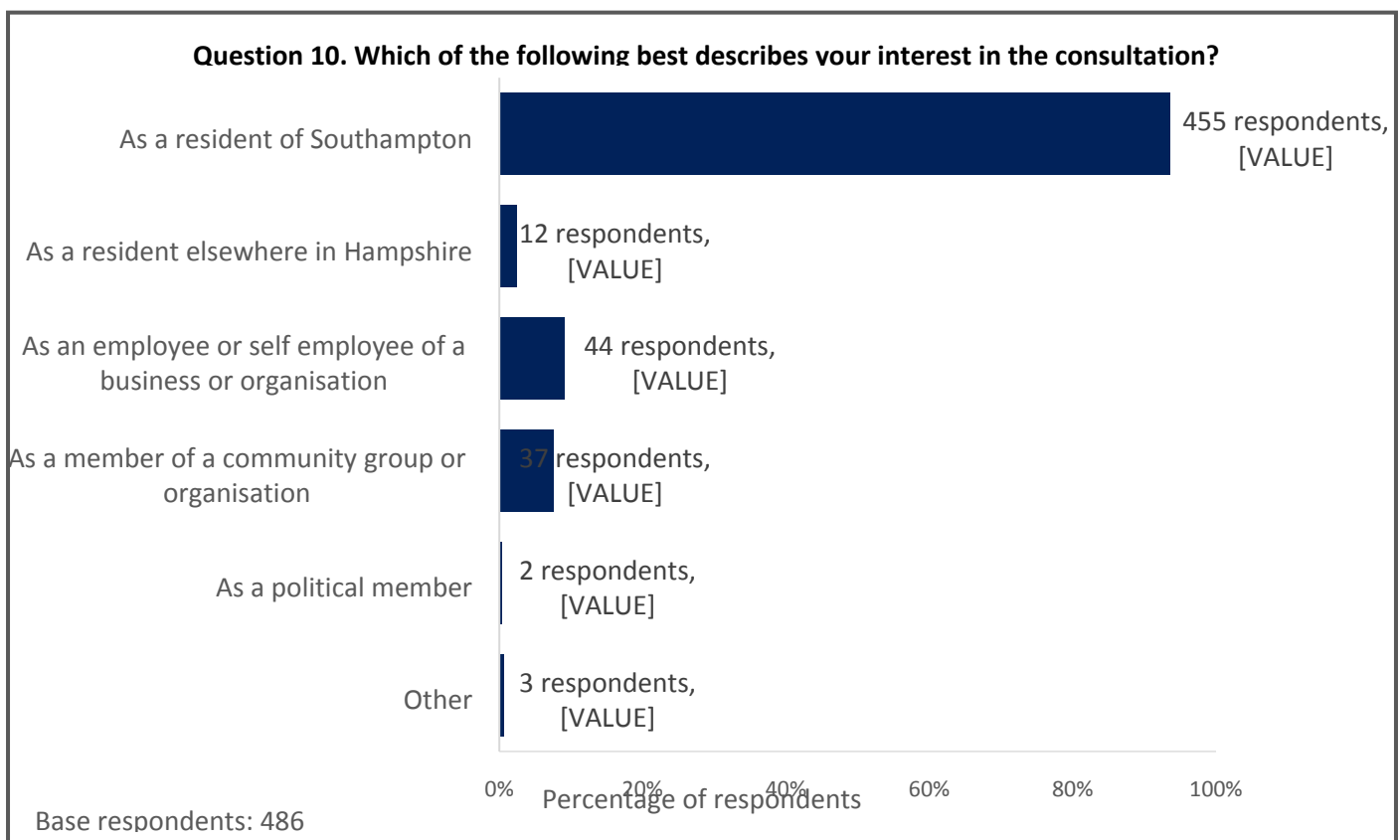


Figure 1

17. Figure 2 shows how respondents to the consultation questionnaire best described their gender. A total of 52% of respondents described themselves as female and 48% as male.

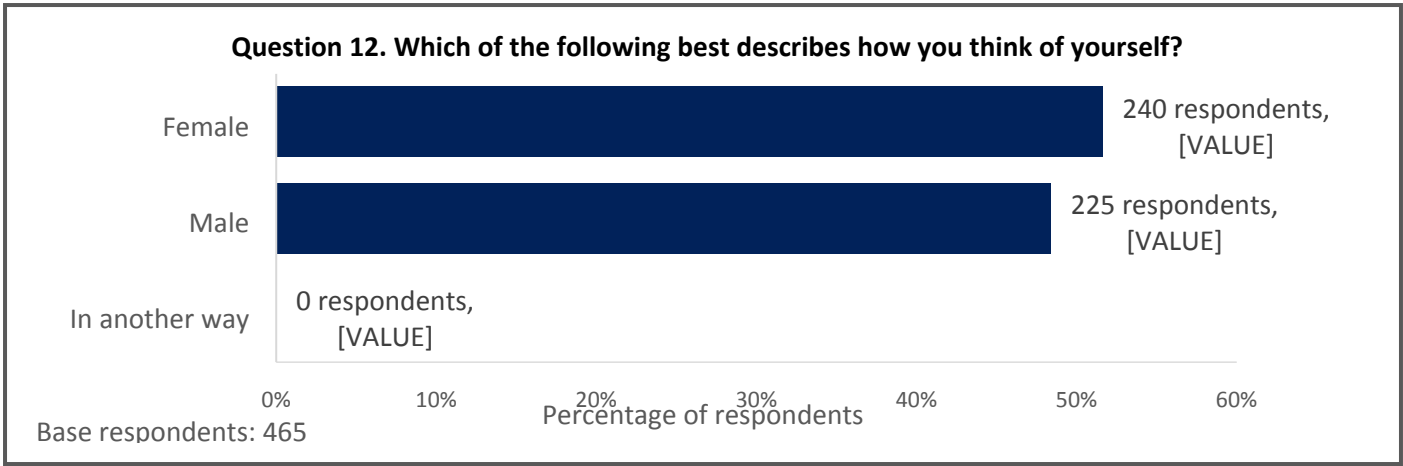


Figure 2

18. Respondents were also asked their age as shown within figure 3. The highest proportion of respondents were between the ages of 55 and 74 which comprised 57% of respondents. Categories with lower numbers of respondents were under the age of 25 and over the age of 85.

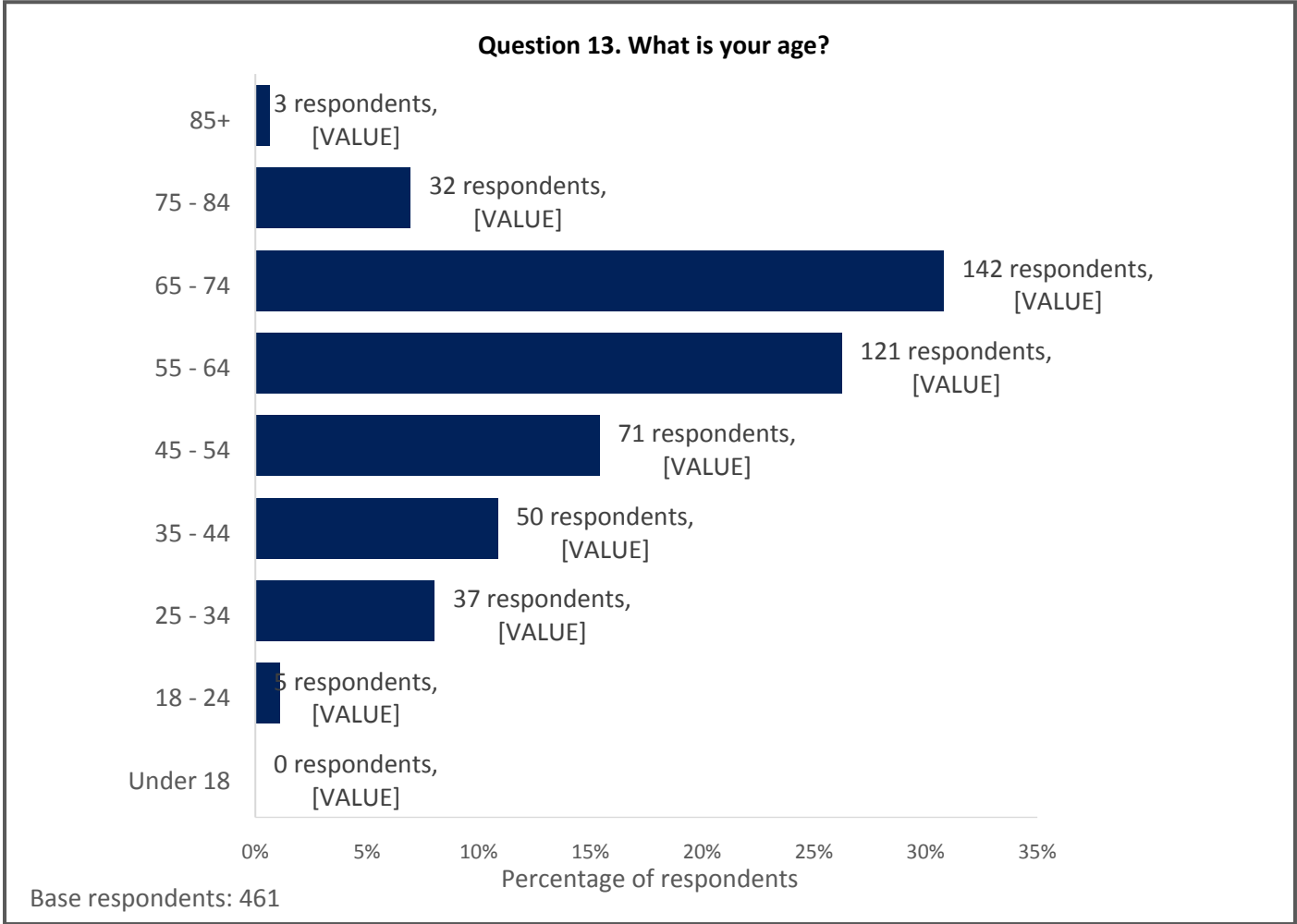


Figure 3

19. The final question asking for more information about the respondents themselves asked them their ethnicity. Figure 4 shows that the highest proportion of respondents (97%) described themselves as White. A further 1% of

respondents described themselves as Asian or Asian British; 0.4% Black, African, Caribbean or Black British; 1% mixed or multiple ethnic groups and 1% as another ethnic group.

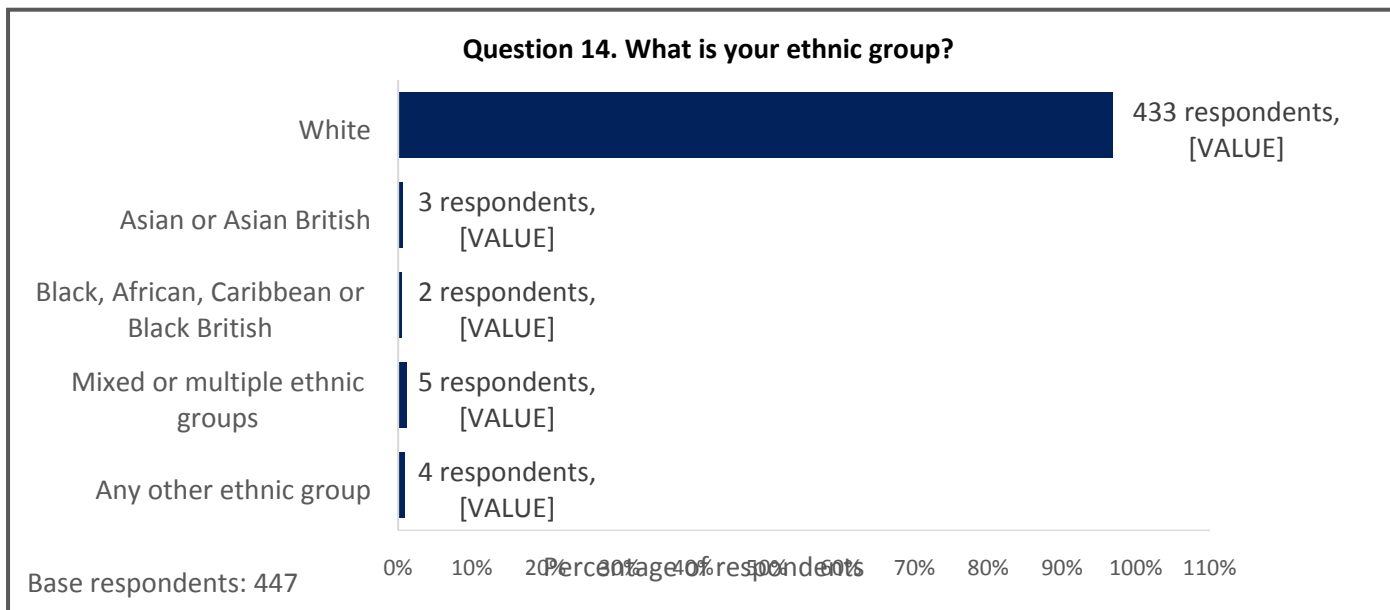


Figure 4

Feedback on the proposed changes to the control of activities

20. Respondents were first asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the proposals to continue PSPO controls over street drinking. Figure 5 shows the results of this question. A total of 94% of respondents expressed overall agreement with the proposal, of which 76% selected strongly agree and 17% selected agree. A further 2% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal. The remaining 4% of respondents expressed overall disagreement. Of this 2% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed.

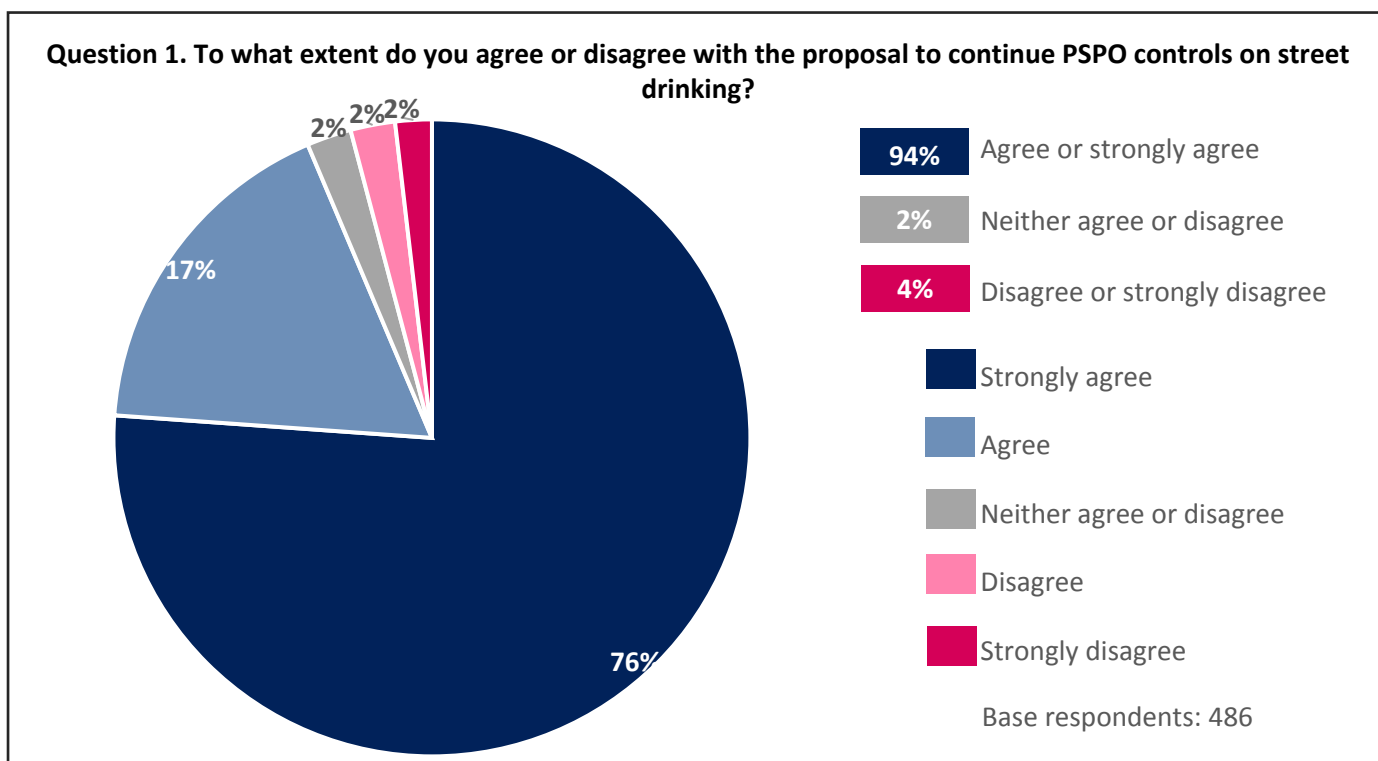


Figure 5

21. Respondents were next asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the proposal to no longer continue PSPO controls on begging. Figure 6 shows that 22% of respondents expressed agreement with this proposal. Of this 13% strongly agreed and 9% agreed. A further 7% neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal. A total of 71% of respondents expressed overall disagreement with the proposal. This was broken down into 19% of respondents that disagreed and 52% of respondents that strongly disagreed.

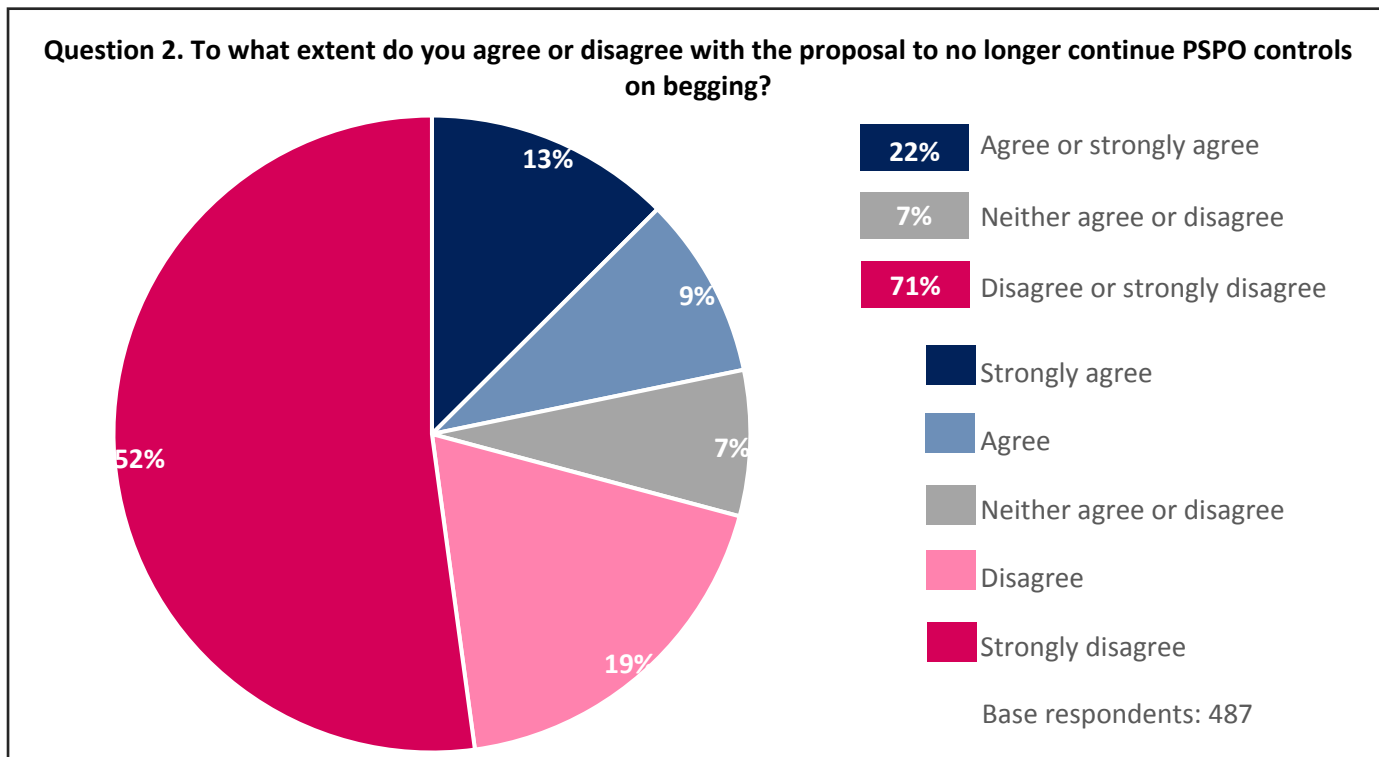


Figure 6

22. Respondents were given an opportunity at the end of the questionnaire to provide written feedback on the proposals. All written responses have been read and then assigned to categories based upon similar sentiment or theme. Figure 7 shows the themes of comments regarding opinions of the proposals generally and specific points regarding the street drinking and begging proposals. The report has also endeavoured to outline all the unique suggestions gathered as a part of the consultation and so the subsequent tables after provides quotes or summaries of the unique comments and suggestions associated with these themes of comment.

Themes of comments on the proposals for PSPOs

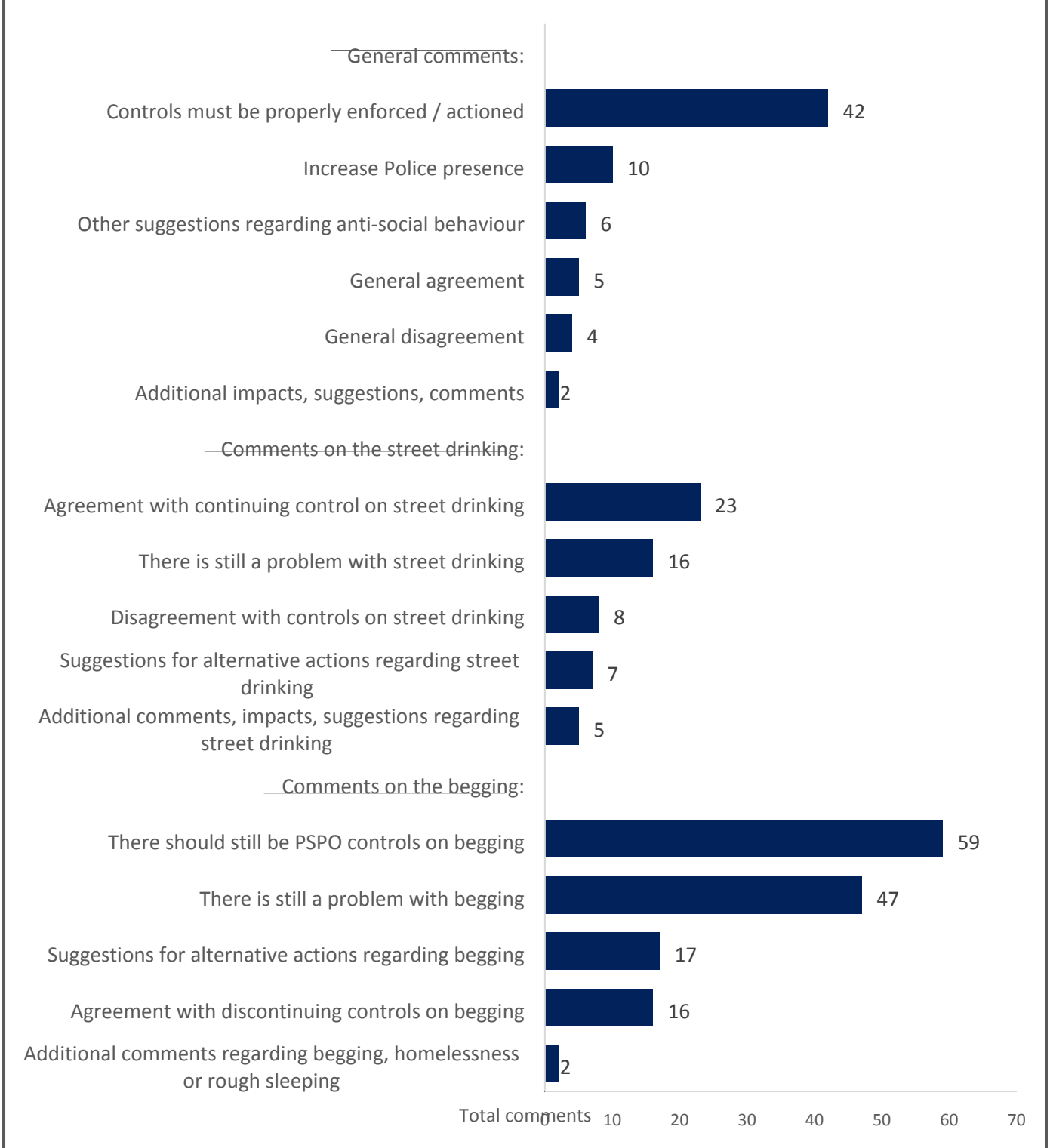


Figure 7

23. Suggestions that controls must be properly enforced and actioned:

<i>Concern over whether the police have sufficient resource to properly enforce / monitor</i>
<i>At the moment, police often ignore street drinking</i>
<i>Proposals only meaningful if properly enforced</i>
<i>There seems to be a lack of enforcement currently</i>

24. Suggestions to increase Police presence:

<i>To discourage anti-social behaviour that may escalate into more crime.</i>
<i>So that incidents can be passed on to them.</i>
<i>Not enough Police Community Support Officers.</i>

25. Additional suggestions regarding anti-social behaviour:

<i>Greater control over drug use</i>
<i>Improve education in schools on antisocial behaviour. / Interact with young people to come to an understanding of what is acceptable</i>
<i>The free kiosks are used for drug users to contact drug dealers.</i>
<i>Sort out cycling on pavements</i>
<i>Make public spaces welcoming: greenery/trees; seating areas; signage to places of interest; remove litter; encouraging a wide range of activities in these spaces; keeping the areas in good conditions.</i>

26. General disagreements with the proposals:

<i>Disagree with criminalizing a behaviour that is not harmful</i>
<i>There are already laws that can be used to tackle this</i>
<i>Damaging for the city centre</i>
<i>People do not have the money to pay the fines.</i>

27. Additional impacts, suggestions and comments on the proposals generally:

<i>Introduce CCTV to subway areas</i>
<i>Promote the online reporting system on the police website</i>

28. Agreements with continuing controls on street drinking:

<i>Street drinking leads to intimidating, threatening, aggressive behaviour.</i>
<i>Specifically for situations where people are drunk or disorderly</i>
<i>Street drinking should not be allowed within 500m of schools or youth centres.</i>

29. Unique comments and suggestions raising the point that there is still a problem with street drinking:

<i>Drinking continues to be a problem in central parks despite being prohibited.</i>
<i>Problem: in City Centre parks; on Millbrook Road East.</i>

30. Disagreement with controls on street drinking:

<i>People should not be penalized if drinking in a responsible way in public.</i>
<i>Does not solve the underlying problem</i>
<i>Disorder occurring as a result of excessive alcohol consumption should be dealt with using existing police powers.</i>
<i>People may be having a picnic in the park and want to have a drink but would be penalised</i>

31. Suggestions for alternative actions regarding street drinking:

<i>Rather than fining them, get them to help with street cleaning.</i>
<i>Public drinking is not always anti-social and may be a coping mechanism. A health approach would be better.</i>
<i>Provide more help and support</i>
<i>Put permanent info all over the zones on where to seek help.</i>

32. Additional comments, impacts and suggestions regarding street drinking:

<i>The sign can be confusing. Incident where person sat drinking underneath sign assuming it meant they were actually allowed to drink in that area.</i>
<i>Within this area there are many licenced establishments which have outdoor seating. Will alcohol consumed in these areas be breaking the rules?</i>
<i>Do these measures prevent non-offensive social drinking in public?</i>
<i>What about events in the parks in town?</i>
<i>Any vendor of alcohol should have some responsibility for ensuring that it is sold appropriately.</i>

33. Reasons why there should still be PSPO controls on begging:

<i>Begging should still be prohibited because: it can be threatening; some begging is fake; increased drug litter; for the safety of residents</i>
<i>It will encourage people to stay away.</i>
<i>Impact: begging increases; crime increases; reduction in people visiting the city centre and subsequently economy; increased drug and alcohol use; more driving into town as people feel intimidated to walk in.</i>
<i>It provides police/enforcement with options to help sort out begging</i>
<i>There have been improvements in Portswood, without the order it could get worse again.</i>
<i>Removal from the PSPO sends a negative message to the business community</i>
<i>The controls should actually be stricter</i>
<i>Begging should not be allowed: within areas of social housing; within 500m of schools or youth centres.</i>

34. Unique comments and suggestions raising the point that there is still a problem with begging:

Current measures had no effect on begging in the city (there is a still a problem because of a lack of enforcement; funding cuts have made the problems worse; begging is still a problem even though it is supposed to be controlled; begging has increased)
Impacts of begging: puts visitors off coming to the city; causes a nuisance to residents
<i>In the last 12 months, 60% of businesses reported having anti-social behaviour issues associated to begging impacting their business.</i>
<i>662 incidents of aggressive begging has been reported since July 2018, with the majority of incidents occurring from London Road, along the QE2 mile to High Street.</i>
<i>There is a big problem with "professional" begging</i>
Places where begging is a problem: London Road, City Centre, Shirley precinct, Portswood, Town Quay, Outside West Quay, Guildhall Square, Central station, Bitterne precinct, The cutway from Church End - Treeside Road, Gypsy Grove in Shirley

35. Suggestions for alternative actions regarding begging:

<i>Should be looking at resolving coordinated begging and "professional" begging</i>
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Continued and better support for those at risk of homelessness and unconditional support for those sleeping rough

The council should have posters up encouraging people to make a text message donation to a food bank or homeless charity instead of giving money to these individuals.

Need to change the public perception of homeless people

Maybe the police could be seen positively interacting with these individual to remove public fear

The council should be spending more money and coming up with solutions to help even if it means putting up council tax and not just moving people on and out of sight.

Hope that the Community Safety Team and Street Homeless teams continue to assist with the problems.

More resources put into support services for addiction (drug and alcohol), poverty and homelessness.

Consult with homeless people themselves.

Give begging people hostel accommodation rather than be given an ASBO.

There must be a permanent info all over the zones on where to seek help.

36. Agreements with discontinuing controls on begging:

May reflect a general change in attitude towards homelessness and rough-sleeping

Do not have a problem with begging unless the begging is aggressive.

The restrictions on begging should never have been linking to street drinking - stigmatised homeless people.

Disagree with moving on or arresting people begging rather than supporting them

Moving people that are begging simply just hides the problem

37. Additional comments regarding begging homelessness or rough sleeping:

Some people think that PSPOs are criminalising poverty

Be aware of Big Issue Sellers also begging whilst selling the magazine

Feedback on the proposed boundaries of the PSPO areas

38. Respondents were also given the opportunity to look at the proposed boundaries of the PSPO areas and express their agreement or disagreement with them. Figure 8 shows the results of these questions.

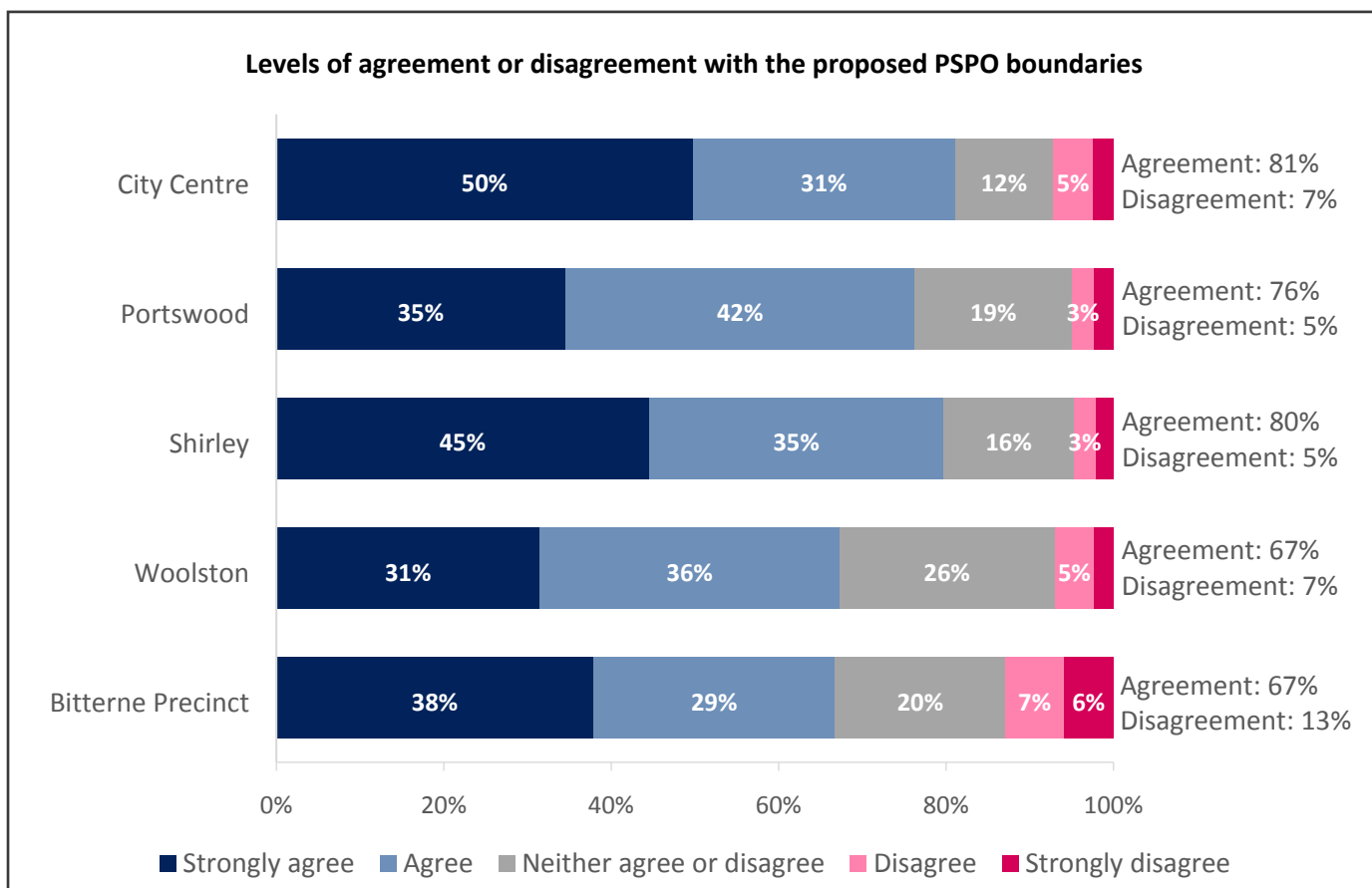


Figure 8

39. Respondents were first asked about the proposed City Centre PSPO boundary. A total of 81% of respondents expressed agreement with the City Centre boundary of which 50% strongly agreed and 31% agreed. This was the highest level of agreement of all proposed boundaries. A further 12% neither agreed nor disagreed and the remaining 7% of respondents expressed disagreement (5% disagreed, 2% strongly disagreed).

40. When asked about the proposed Portswood boundary, 35% of respondents strongly agreed and 42% agreed which totalled 76% of respondents expressing agreement overall. A further 19% neither agreed nor disagreed with the Portswood boundary. Of the remaining 5% of respondents that expressed general disagreement, 3% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed

41. Respondents were next asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the proposed PSPO boundary for Shirley. A total of 80% of respondents agreed overall with the boundary of which 45% strongly agreed and 35% agreed. A further 16% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed. The remaining 5% of respondents expressed a level of disagreement with the boundary of which 3% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed.

42. When asked about the proposed PSPO boundary in Woolston, a total of 67% of respondents expressed agreement (31% strongly agreed and 36% agreed). Just over a quarter of respondents (26%) neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposed boundary. The remaining 7% expressed disagreement of which 5% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed.

43. Lastly, respondents were asked to provide their opinion on the proposed PSPO boundary around Bitterne Precinct. A total of 38% of respondents strongly agreed with the boundary and 29% agreed which meant 67% expressed a level of agreement. Another 20% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed. A total of 13% of respondents expressed disagreement with the Bitterne Precinct PSPO boundary of which 7% disagreed and 6% strongly disagreed. This was the highest level of disagreement of all proposed PSPO boundaries.
44. Respondents were given an opportunity at the end of the questionnaire to provide written feedback on the proposals. All written responses have been read and then assigned to categories based upon similar sentiment or theme. Figure 9 shows the themes of comments regarding the proposed boundaries of the PSPO areas. The report has also endeavoured to outline all the unique suggestions gathered as a part of the consultation and so the subsequent tables after provides quotes or summaries of the unique comments and suggestions associated with these themes of comment.

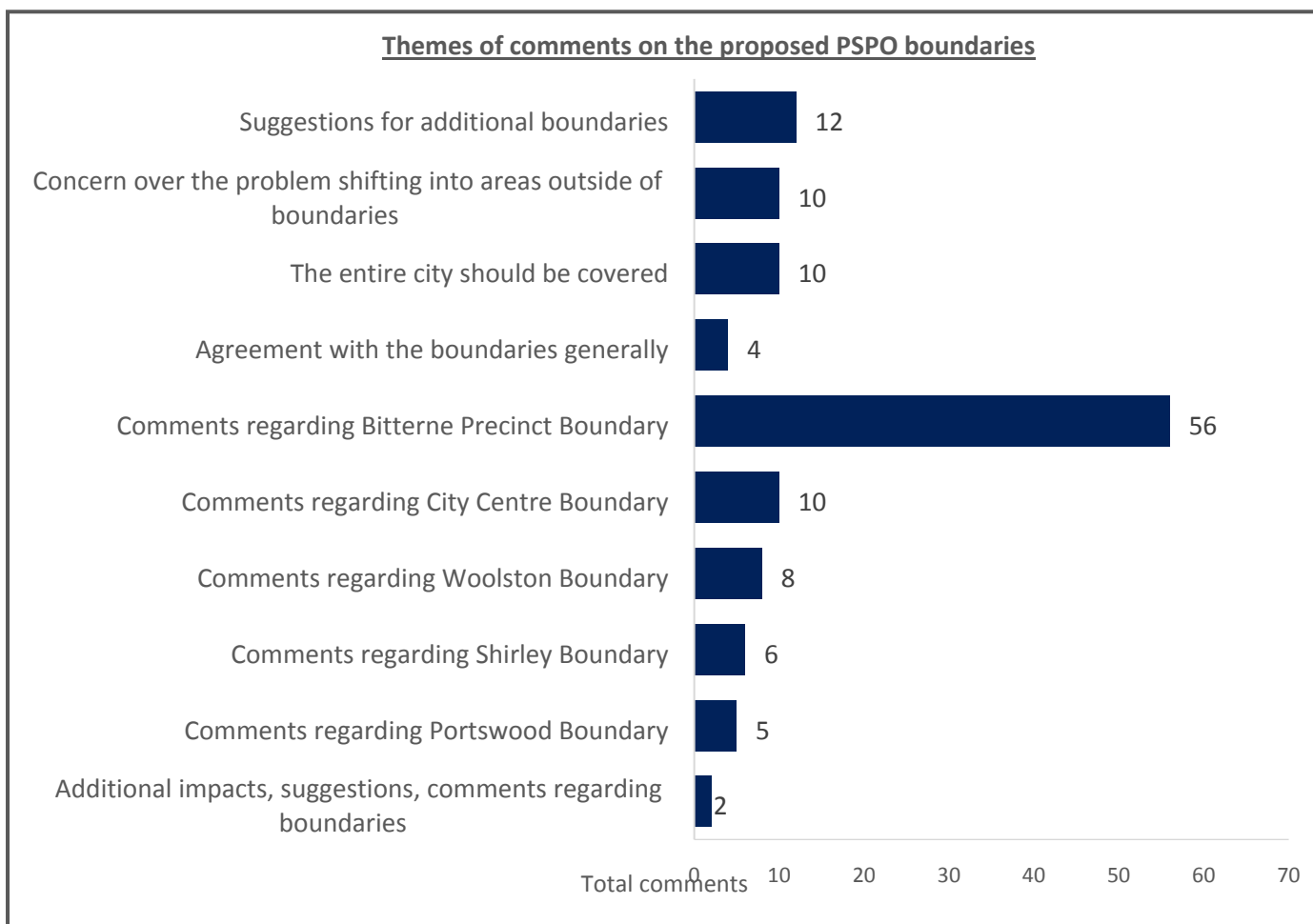


Figure 9

45. Unique suggestions for additional boundaries:

<i>Problems with cans littering in areas not covered</i>
<i>Include the broader areas of: Thornhill; Lordshill; Millbrook; Weston; Shirley Warren; Coxford.</i>
<i>Boundaries to include specific locations: Schools, parks, common areas, the common, the Old Cemetery, all subway areas, car parks, car parking machines, residential areas, large estates; area around Glen Eyre student halls; Henstead Road</i>

46. Concerns over the problems shifting into areas outside of the boundaries:

Should be plans for the potential displacement of activity.

Boundaries may push the problem on to streets not covered

47. Suggestions that the entire city should be covered:

There should be a city-wide boundary

Should not tolerate street drinking anywhere in Southampton

48. Agreements with the boundaries generally:

Agree with increasing the sizes of the areas

Pleased to see the central parks, Queens Park and Mayflower park included

49. Unique comments and suggestions regarding the Bitterne Precinct boundary:

Agree with having more police presence in Bitterne

Area should be extended

Include the following streets / areas: particularly the underpass / subway; both sides of the dual carriageway; Park behind Bitterne Leisure Centre; Park at eastern end of Bitterne underpass; the pathways down the side of the dual carriageway; the area in front of the library; Haynes Road car park; Lances Hill Car Park; West End Road Car Park; wooded areas surrounding the car park; Pound Street; the triangle of land between Bitterne road and Bursledon Road; the school; the grassed area with seating on the right hand side of Lances Hill.

50. Unique comments and suggestions regarding the City Centre boundary:

Do not agree with covering all of Bevois as it is not the city centre.

Agree with including Bevois

Merge with Shirley

Golden Grove doesn't have a problem with street drinking

Area too large to be effectively policed

51. Unique comments and suggestions regarding the Woolston boundary:

Should be extended

Include the following streets / areas: Subways; Woolston station approach; Top of John's Road where the Co-op is; back alleys; side streets.

52. Unique comments and suggestions regarding the Shirley boundary:

Agreements: with covering more of Shirley Road; with the inclusion of area up to St James Road.

Area too large to be effectively policed

Merge with City Centre

Disagree with including upper Shirley as they don't seem to have a problem

Suggest including Shirley Warren where there are problems

53. Unique comments and suggestions regarding the Portswood boundary:

Concern that street drinking may be forced into areas just outside of the boundary

Include the following streets / areas: Westridge road as far as lawn road or horseshoe bridge; include boardwalk between horseshoe bridge and Mountpleasant industrial estate; include the side roads with high density student housing; extend up Highfield Lane and Shaftesbury Avenue.

54. Additional impacts, suggestions, and comments regarding boundaries:

The police and the council should have a better idea on where to put the boundaries

Areas are too large to be effectively policed

Feedback on the impact of the proposals

55. The final question asked respondents what impact they felt the proposals would have on them or their community if they were to be implemented (Figure 10). Overall 80% of respondents felt that the impact would be positive. This was broken down into 35% that felt the impact would be very positive, 31% fairly positive and 14% slightly positive. A total of 7% of respondents felt there would be no impact as a result of the proposals at all. A further 1% of respondents felt they did not know what the impact would be. The remaining 11% of respondents all felt that the impact would be negative. Of this, 1% thought it would be a slightly negative impact, 4% a fairly negative impact and 5% a very negative impact.

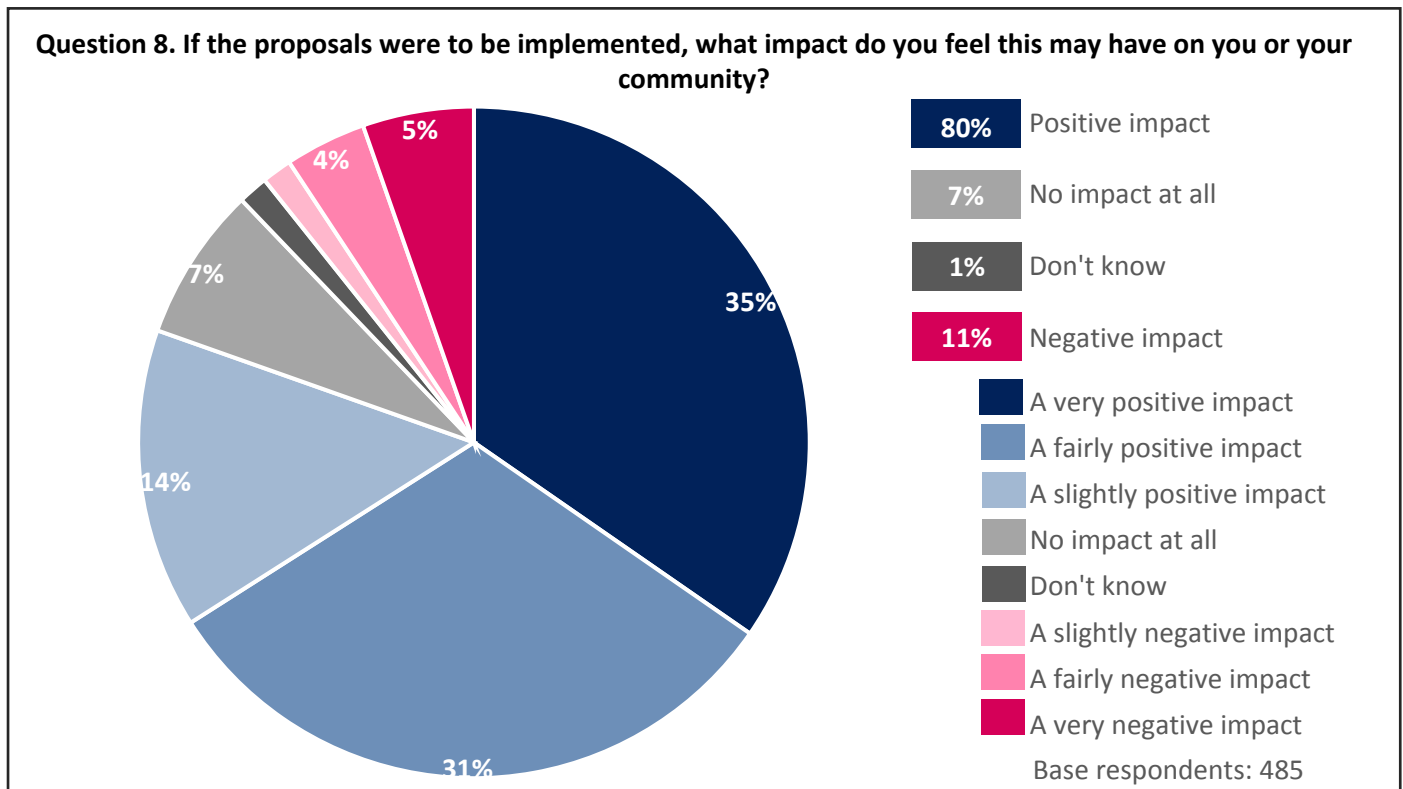


Figure 10

Feedback on the consultation process

56. Southampton City Council are committed to make the whole consultation process as transparent and fair as possible. As a part of this commitment, any feedback on the consultation process itself received during the course of the consultation is gathered together here.

57. A total of 5 respondents commented on the consultation process and questionnaire.

58. Unique comments about the consultation process:

<i>The use of double negatives makes some questions very confusing and some people will answer the opposite of what they intended by mistake</i>
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<i>Survey is a waste of money, pointless exercise</i>

<i>Not enough detail on what the alternative proposals are for begging.</i>

<i>The reasoning behind stopping PSPO controls on begging has not be fully explained</i>
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<i>Question 8 asks for a single response to multiple proposals, some of which may have positive impacts and some negative.</i>
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Conclusion

59. Southampton City Council undertook public consultation on proposals to extend controls on street drinking for a further three years, following the expiration of the existing Public Spaces Protection Orders later this year.
60. The consultation took place for 4 weeks between 25 February 2019 and 24 March 2019.
61. In total, there were 488 responses to the consultation which all responded via the consultation questionnaire.
62. All questionnaire results have been analysed and presented in graphs within the report. In addition all written feedback has been read and assigned to categories based upon similar sentiment or theme and descriptions have been provided of each category within the report.
63. In conclusion, this consultation allows Cabinet to understand the views of residents and stakeholders on the proposals that have been consulted on. It represents the best possible summary and categorisation of all the feedback received through the consultation period.