

London Borough of Lambeth – statement on the outcomes of the consultation on a public spaces protection order (PSPO) for sexual health and reproductive health clinics

In January and February of 2018 the London Borough of Lambeth conducted a public consultation on whether or not it should implement a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO). The purpose of this consultation was to gather views on a proposal to introduce a PSPO to address concerns about the activity of protests/vigils outside the British Pregnancy Advisory Service (BPAS) Clinic in Streatham and the Marie Stopes Clinic in Brixton. The consultation sought the views of those who are or may be affected by the protests/vigils and/or the introduction of a PSPO, and other stakeholders. This included local residents, passers-by, those who work in the area, clients of the respective clinics, protestors/vigil holders, local stakeholders, key partners such as BPAS and Marie Stopes, and all statutory consultees. The outcome of this consultation is now published on our website in conjunction with this statement and can be found here ([hyperlink](#)). It should be noted that there was overwhelming support from local residents in respect of the action proposed.

Since the conclusion of that consultation, we have discussed next steps with both our key partners and those individuals and groups objecting to the introduction of the proposed PSPO, and reflected upon how we might achieve a resolution that was effective, proportionate, and ultimately lawful. The outcome is that the Council has decided not to proceed with making a PSPO at this stage.

The Councils' ability to use Public Spaces Protection Orders is dependent upon whether particular statutory tests have been met, in particular that the effect of the activity which is sought to be prohibited by the PSPO is (or is likely to be) persistent in nature and continuing. Since we began gathering evidence and ran our public consultation, there has been a noticeable reduction in the presence of protest groups outside Lambeth clinics. We acknowledge that there have still been a small number of instances in which there has been a presence from protest groups, at present, however; the council is not satisfied that the level of current activity would justify the introduction of the proposed PSPO at this time.

It should be noted that Lambeth is not removing the possibility of a PSPO in relation to our abortion clinics being sought in the future, should such a step be warranted. We will work with our partners to evidence any unreasonable and detrimental behaviour around them and take such action as appropriate to address those issues.