Somerset Council Dog Control PSPOs

Consolidation and Consultation 2026

FAQs – Members & Parishes version

1. What is Somerset Council doing regarding Dog Control PSPOs?

Somerset Council plans to:

- Consolidate all existing dog control Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) across Somerset.
- Introduce a new dog control PSPO in the Taunton Deane area.
- Ask Members and Parishes to review existing PSPOs in their areas before the official consultation launches.

2. Why are changes to PSPOs needed?

To improve the process and outcomes.

Different areas of the county currently have separate dog control PSPOs, each requiring review every three years. This creates:

- Administrative burdens
- Inconsistent enforcement
- Public confusion
- Reduced effectiveness in addressing dog-related antisocial behaviour

3. What law allows the Council to enforce Dog Control PSPOs?

PSPOs are legal tools available under the **Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014** to tackle behaviours harmful to community quality of life.

4. What will the new proposed PSPOs include?

Somerset Council intends to replace the patchwork of existing orders with **two comprehensive PSPOs**:

1. **Dog fouling & dogs-on-lead by direction:**
    - Offence not to pick up dog faeces anywhere the public has free access
    - Authorised officers may instruct a dog to be put on a lead if needed for safety or nuisance concerns
2. **Dog exclusion zones & mandatory lead areas:**
    - Dogs excluded from enclosed play areas, ornamental gardens, cemeteries, burial grounds
    - Dogs must be on leads at all times in high-footfall places such as Vivary Park, Taunton

5. What is the purpose of consolidating the PSPOs?

Consolidation will:

- Improve consistency
- Simplify public understanding
- Reduce administrative reviews
- Enable better joint working with Members, parishes, communities, police and stakeholders

6. What do Members and Parishes need to do now?

You're asked to:

- Review existing **dog control** PSPO details (not other types of PSPOs)
- Suggest any potential inclusions, such as new burial grounds or play spaces that meet the criteria i.e. enclosed by a continuous fence (barrier) and for children under 5 years
- Inform us of play spaces that are no longer relevant
- Provide any additional relevant information

7. When does this pre-consultation with Members and Parishes end?

Friday 20 March 2026.

8. So where can we review current dog control PSPOs?

You will find full details here: https://www.somerset.gov.uk/environment-and-food-safety/public-spaces-protection-orders/

9. And where do we feedback any comments or suggestions?

All feedback to be sent to: consultations@somerset.gov.uk

10. Can changes be added later than the 20 March deadline, for example during the live public consultation?

No. Any amendments needed to the current dog control listings must be identified and applied before the consultation is published. Once the formal public consultation begins, changes, updates and revisions can no longer be added.

11. When will the public consultation go live?

The public consultation is expected to launch sometime during **summer 2026** and will remain open for **six weeks**. Notice of the confirmed date will be given well in advance.

12. Will maps be available during the consultation?

Yes. Interactive maps will form part of the consultation. They will show all relevant sites and who is responsible for them. These will be accessible online as part of the consultation materials.

13. Who can participate in the consultation?

- Somerset Council Members
- City, town and parish councils
- Residents
- Visitors
- External stakeholders and partners

Everyone will be invited to share their views to ensure the orders reflect local needs.

14. What support is needed from Members and Parishes when the consultation is launched?

It's hoped Members and Parishes will help:

- Promote the consultation
- Encourage community participation
- Ensure a wide representation of views

15. Are there any final points or clarifications Members and Parishes should note?

- Dog fouling applies everywhere the public has free access — no need to list specific areas.
- New PSPOs will override local bylaws where applicable.
- Enforcement will remain with Somerset Council, not parish/town councils.
- All councils, including those newly consulted, should still review details.
- Queries and feedback can be sent to: consultations@somerset.gov.uk. This is a monitored inbox, and you will receive a response.

16. What is the timeline for the PSPO consolidation project?

- **January 2026:** Member and Parish briefings.
- **Jan–20 March 2026:** Pre-consultation review period.
- **Summer 2026:** Public consultation opens for six weeks. Date tbc.
- **Post-consultation:** Results published.