Recommendation to Cabinet 10 November 2026

From Place and Resources Overview Committee on 1 October 2026

Draft Dog Related Public Spaces Order 2027 and associated Consultation Report

For Decision

Cabinet Member and Portfolio:
Cllr M Bell, Public Health, Prevention & Communities

Local Councillor(s):
All wards

Executive Director:
S Crowe - Executive Director, Housing, Communities and Prevention

Report author and job title: Janet Moore – Service Manager Environmental Protection
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Report Status: Public

1. **Recommendation**:

1.1 That the draft Dog-related Public Spaces Protection Order 2027 be approved with the proposed provisions as per the report attached at Appendix 1 (paragraphs 6.1 through to 11.9) with the following amendment to the provision set out at paragraph 10 of the report:

10. Proposed Provisions – beach restrictions

Recommendation from Place and Resources Overview Committee to amend the current restriction in respect of Weymouth Beach

1.2 Subject to legal advice with regard to the wording included in the consultation and confirmation that there is scope to amend the provision,

dogs to be allowed access to Weymouth beach between the hours of 1800 – 0600 to allow evening and early morning dog walking on lead.

1.3 If this cannot be forwarded as a recommendation during this review, officers are requested to undertake a trial to inform the next consultation.

1.4 **In respect of all other beaches included in this provision – Recommended to maintain the current restriction.**

Note – Officer recommendation was 'Recommended to maintain the current restriction.'

(Comments of the Place and Resources Overview Committee are included at Appendix 2).

2. **Information provided by the Service Manager, Environmental Protection**:

2.1. The original officer recommendation was to retain the existing beach restrictions and exclusions as currently operated, rather than introducing further changes. This recommendation was based principally on the consultation findings, which did not demonstrate a clear consensus for change, nor identify any alternative restriction period or access times that attracted majority support. Officers also considered it important to maintain consistency across Dorset beaches to provide clarity for residents and visitors and to support effective enforcement.

2.2 The recommendation put forward to Cabinet by the Place and Resources Overview Committee is that, subject to legal confirmation that the proposed amendment falls within the scope of the consultation, dogs should be permitted on Weymouth Beach between 6.00pm and 6.00am during the summer restriction period, provided they are kept on a lead.

2.3 In reaching this recommendation, Members noted that discussion regarding early morning and evening access for dogs arises whenever the Order is reviewed and considered that the time had come to test an alternative approach. Members highlighted that Weymouth Beach benefits from a significantly higher level of management than many other beaches, including daily mechanical cleaning and raking throughout the restriction period. As a result, any public health risks associated with dog activity can be more effectively managed and mitigated.

2.4 Members also recognised the potential economic benefits of allowing responsible dog owners access to the beach during these periods. Extending access may encourage longer visitor stays, support local businesses and contribute to Dorset's ambition of developing a year-round, or "365-day", visitor economy.

2.5 The requirement for dogs to remain on a lead was considered a proportionate compromise between the interests of beach users who have concerns regarding public health, dog fouling and dogs not being under proper control, and those of dog owners wishing to access the beach. Members considered that dogs on leads would remain under close control and that owners would be more likely to observe and remove any fouling.

2.6 Members further recognised that the impact of any relaxation of restrictions should first be assessed before considering wider changes elsewhere in Dorset. Weymouth Beach is distinctive in terms of visitor numbers, tourism activity, infrastructure, and management arrangements. The introduction of a dogs on lead provision at this location would provide an opportunity to monitor outcomes and gather evidence to inform future reviews of dog control arrangements across Dorset.

2.7 Weymouth Town Council did not submit a response to the consultation, having agreed that councillors would submit their own responses if they wished to do so. One response was received.

2.8 Legal advice has confirmed that the recommendation of the Place and Resources Overview Committee is not fundamentally different from the option presented during the consultation and therefore can be considered by Cabinet without the need for a further consultation exercise.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Report to the Place and Resources Overview Committee on 1 October 2026 – Report on the Draft Dog Related Public Spaces Order 2027 and associated Consultation Report – *The following appendices are included with the report and links are provided below:*

Appendix A - Dog-related PSPO Public Consultation Response Report 2026
Appendix B - Dog-related Public Spaces Protection Order 2027 (draft)
Appendix C - EqIA Dog-related Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) 2026
Appendix D - Public Consultation Findings Infographic 2026

Appendix 2 – Extract from draft minutes of the Place and Resources Overview Committee on 1 October 2026

Background papers

Agenda for Place and Resources Overview Committee on Thursday, 1st October 2026, 3.00 pm - Dorset Council