



## **Dog Control – Public Space Protection Order**

**Report by Consultation & Engagement Team**

**July 2026**

## 1. Background and methodology

Between 28<sup>th</sup> May and 13<sup>th</sup> July 2026, the Council ran a public consultation, seeking to engage residents and stakeholders that have an interest in anti-social behaviour relating to dog control, in sharing their reflections on whether the Public Space Protection Order on '*Dogs Exclusion*', '*Dogs on Leads*', '*Dogs on Leads by Direction*', and '*Fouling of Land by Dogs*' has been effective over the past three years. It also called for consultees to consider whether Bolton Council should extend the Order for a further three years.

During that period, a comprehensive communication plan was implemented to raise awareness of the proposal across the borough, with a strong emphasis on engaging residents. An email was distributed to all stakeholders, including the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector, key equalities groups, the business community (via Business Bolton), as well as Elected Council Members. Supporting documentation was made accessible on the Council's consultation webpages and social media was heavily utilised throughout the period to share key messages about the consultation.

Participants were surveyed using a questionnaire tool made up of open and closed questions over a period of six weeks, providing respondents the opportunity to reflect and share their thoughts on the extension proposal. The questionnaire was made available both digitally and offline, with the questionnaire being accessible on the council's consultation web page, as well as in hard copy format, on request.

A copy of the questionnaire is included at the end of this document, located in Appendix A.

### Analysis notes

- Results are presented in the questionnaire format with 'Don't know' type responses removed unless stated.
- Comments have been categorised where feasible. Unless otherwise stated, categories with five or more responses are shown. Categories may overlap and a comment from one respondent included in multiple categories. A sample of comments [verbatim] are included in the report. Comments may be abbreviated so that only the relevant extract is included. One comment may be coded into multiple categories, and each category may only cover a certain aspect of the comment, for example a respondent may have made both positive and negative comments about the same aspect.
- Base: unless otherwise stated the base is the number of respondents to a particular question.
- Data has been cleansed where appropriate, e.g., comments moved into existing responses.

## 2. Consultation responses

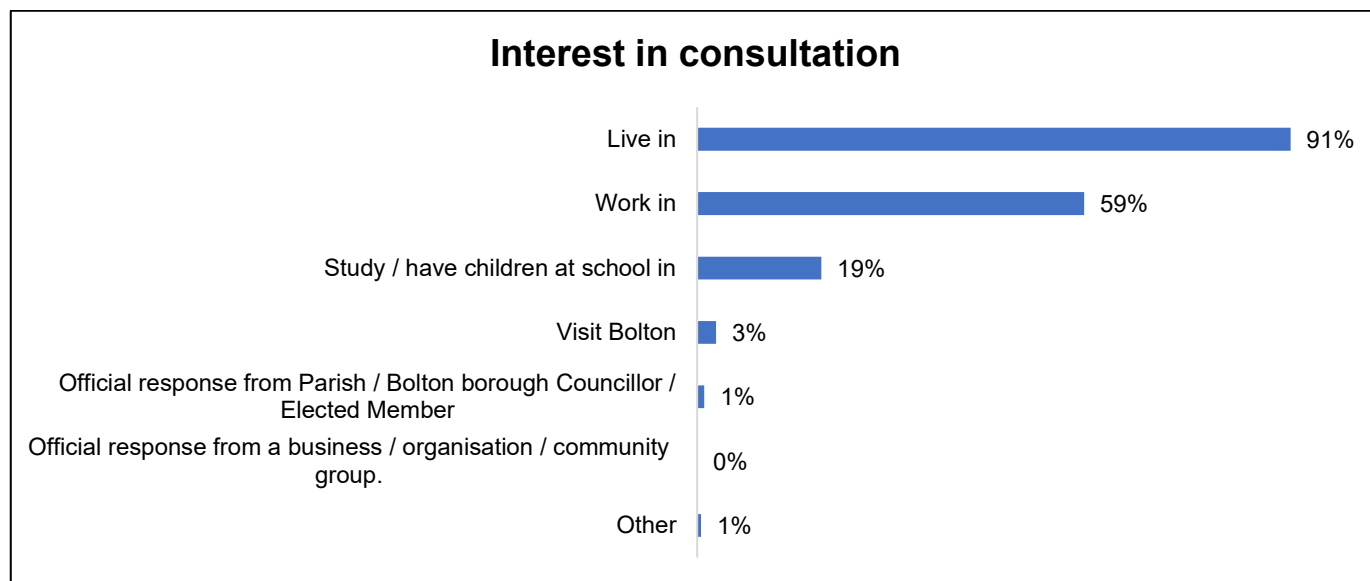
Throughout the consultation period 175 responses were received from residents and stakeholders. In addition, formal responses were received from:

- Public Health (Bolton)
- Greater Manchester Police

- Ward Councillor.

These responses are available to read in full within Appendix B.

Those responding to the digital survey are inclusive of 91% of residents living in the borough, 59% of stakeholders working in the borough, 19% of stakeholders studying in Bolton or have children in educational establishments in the borough, and 3% of respondents visiting the borough. Official responses were received from two elected members from Blackrod Town Council and Great Lever.



**Base: 175**

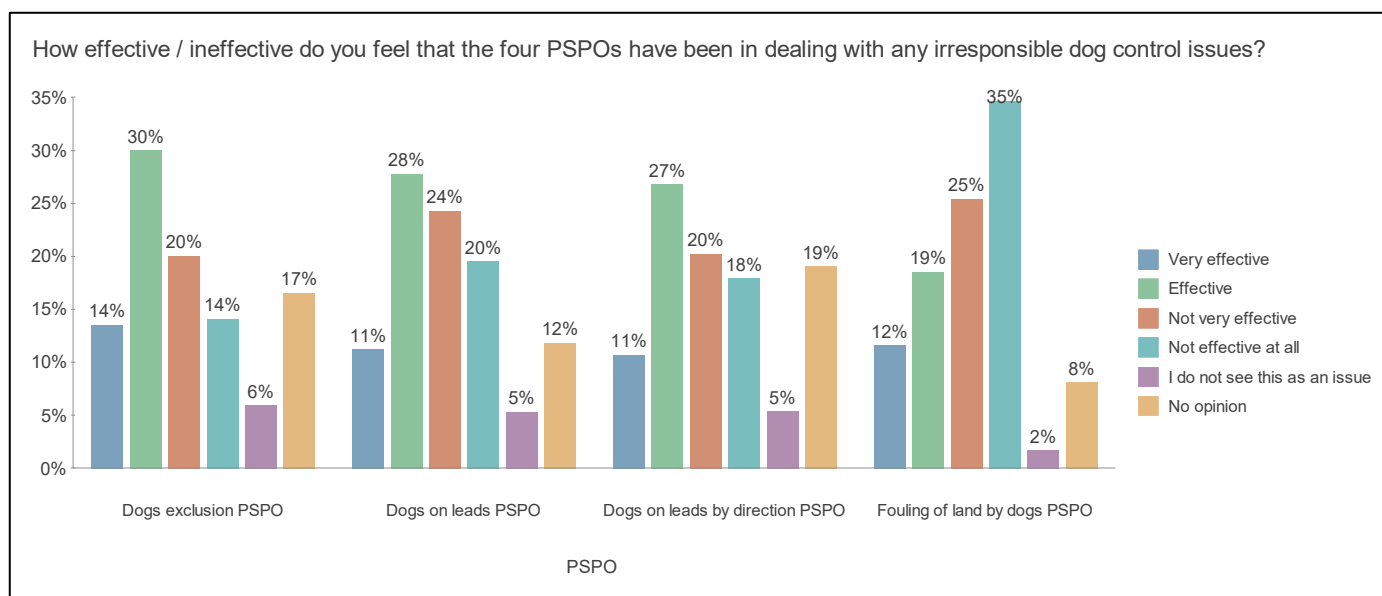
A number of open-ended questions were included within the survey-based questionnaire, to give respondents the opportunity to comment on the proposal to extend the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) for a further three years, as well as suggest alternative approaches to the current PSPO for Dog Control. The following sections highlight the responses to those questions.

### **3. Current Dog Control PSPO**

#### **3a. Effectiveness of Dog Control Public Space Protection Orders**

All respondents were asked to reflect on the current PSPO for Dog Control, across the four areas of '*Dogs Exclusion*', '*Dogs on Leads*', '*Dogs on Leads by Direction*', and '*Fouling of Land by Dogs*'. The current Order has been operational since 2023; however, it was originally granted in 2007 and became a Public Space Protection Order under the anti-social behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. To support residents and stakeholders in their decision-making process, 'Notice of Intention to Extend' documents and the draft document for each of the PSPO areas were made available.

When asked to reflect upon the effectiveness of the ‘Dogs Exclusion’ Order, 44% of residents and stakeholders stated it is effective. 34% stated that it wasn’t effective, which is seven percentage points lower than the response from the previous consultation. The Order of ‘Dogs on Leads’ was found to be ineffective by 44% of respondents (3% lower than the previous consultation). When referring to the ‘Dogs on Leads by Direction’, 38% stated that it is ineffective – a decrease of 4% from 2023 – but 37% felt it is effective. When asked to consider the effectiveness of the ‘Fouling of Land by Dogs’, 60% stated that it is not effective, a decrease of 5% from the previous consultation.



Base average: 170

### 3b. Comments on the current effectiveness of Dog Control Public Space Protection

Residents and stakeholders were provided with the opportunity to comment on how effective the current Public Space Protection (PSPO) order has been on reducing anti-social behaviour in relation to Dog Exclusion, Dogs on Leads, Dogs on Leads by Direction and Fouling of Land by Dogs. 82 comments were received from stakeholders, which have been categorised into the following six key themes.

| Please use this space for any comments about the effectiveness of the current PSPOs and the issues they are designed to tackle. |                                                                                    |                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Rank                                                                                                                            | Category                                                                           | Number of respondents |
| a.                                                                                                                              | Not effective / still issues with dog fouling, including the littering of dog bags | 35                    |
| b.                                                                                                                              | Enforcement / reporting                                                            | 25                    |
| c.                                                                                                                              | Types of dog owners not abiding by the PSPO                                        | 18                    |
| d.                                                                                                                              | Locations                                                                          | 17                    |
| e.                                                                                                                              | Dogs off leads / extendable leads                                                  | 14                    |
| f.                                                                                                                              | Advisory signs / messaging / awareness of PSPO                                     | 11                    |

#### a. Not effective / still issues with dog fouling, including the littering of dog bags

35 respondents discussed persisting challenges with dog fouling and mentioned that the PSPO has not fully curtailed the issues it aims to address. Dog fouling was mentioned by many respondents as an issue in their area, with a minority of respondents discussing it is *“better than it was”* previously. Overall, there were sentiments of frustration with the scale of the challenges of dog control.

- *“Don’t see any evidence of dog owners taking on board more control”*
- *“I’ve not seen any evidence of a PSPO being used although do see streets full of dog mess and dogs running around off lead out of control”*
- *“I think there is less fouling, but some people then drop the bagged up poo or throw it into hedges/trees”*
- *“Fouling the biggest issue.”*
- *“I’ve seen dog owners with dogs in the specified designated enclosed areas so I can’t say it’s been effective. I’ve also encountered dog mess on a daily basis on Bolton streets and parks so I’m not sure this is effective either”*
- *“I live in a terraced street & dogs continually foul the pavement - No PSPO’s around, so they will continue to do it”*
- *“Not all are 100% effective, but it’s a lot better than it was”*
- *“There is still some evidence of dog fouling.”*

## **b. Enforcement / reporting**

25 respondents discussed the enforcement of the PSPO. Several shared that they have not seen any enforcement since the PSPO was introduced, and some noted that the PSPO *“depends”* on enforcement or a *“deterrent”* to anti-social behaviour. One person shared that easy access to reporting could support with fines being issued and another shared the risks to health and safety from dog fouling.

- *“The effectiveness of the PSPOs depends not only on enforcement powers but on whether the conditions that lead to irresponsible behaviour are being addressed.”*
- *“The Dogs on Leads and Dogs on Leads by Direction PSPOs are harder to assess. I have not personally witnessed an officer directing someone to put their dog on a lead, and there is little visible signage explaining this requirement. Awareness appears much lower than for fouling, which limits how effective these orders can be in practice.”*
- *“Dog fouling on pavements and public places is very much on the increase and nothing is done about it.”*
- *“The reason I have answered not very effective is that there simply aren’t enough officers on the ground to fully enforce Dogs on Leads and the Fouling of land by dogs PSPO’s. More funding is required to employ more officers.”*
- *“There is no deterrent to people in parks or public spaces to pick up mess. There are also not enough bins to dispose of mess.”*
- *“It’s fine to have a PSPO but there is no enforcement. There aren’t enough enforcement green space staff caring for our green spaces. There isn’t any signage so all parks should have a uniform sign from BMBC re dog numbers, control, fouling, alcohol, fires, vandalism, maximum speed on wheeled vehicles, pedestrian priority, dismount or stop if unsure, litter clearance. It would be easy to do but a generation have no idea about behaviour in open public spaces”*
- *“There does not seem to be any effective punishment”*
- *“Dog fouling however is a massive issue- it would be useful to have an resource where evidence could be sent in so that fines could be issued (ie if there is a video of someone letting their dog foul and walking off it can be acted on)”*
- *“More that just one dog warden to deal with the growing problems.”*
- *“Whilst theres signs and notices and people are made aware of them, there are still people who ignore this and proceed to do as they wish anyway. Especially fouling, it’s very unsafe, given the*

rise in animals going untreated I.e. *Campylobacter*. Not good for wheelchair users, visually impaired people and children.”

- “I have never seen anyone around to challenge people breaking the PSPO. However I think its important they are in place.”

### c. Types of dog owners not abiding by the PSPO

18 respondents discussed dog owners not abiding by the PSPO and the impacts this can have on the public realm. Challenges with dog walkers walking multiple dogs at once were raised: “they do not have control with more”. One person noted that refusal to put a dog on the lead is not covered by the PSPO.

- “Irresponsible dog owners ignore all rules”
- “People seem to think they can just walk their dogs off the lead anywhere they please regardless of other dog owners having their dogs on leads”
- “There are still a lot of dogs of lead every where in public spaces, parks, etc i have seen them running up to other dogs that are afraid, children or people that don't like dogs. Dogs should be kept on leads in my opinion on any public open space and to only be allowed free in gardens, paid for private spaces or private land.”
- “Many dogs are still walked on an extendable, 5m lead on designated roads. There is still lots of dog fouling occurring. Dogs on Leads by direction: I have reported a dog walker for failing to control their dogs, refusing to put them on leads. But this is not covered by the PSPO. The dog walker routinely has 10 dogs in their group.”
- “Dog walkers often have 4 to 6 dogs at one time, majority off the lead. How can they possibly be in control of them all Attitude of dog walkers is their dogs can do no wrong, and make excuses for unruly behaviour.”
- “I often get dog walkers leaving there dogs to foul whilst pretending to be busy on there handset device. I have recording of the action. I was not aware of this that I could complain directly.”
- “Dog walkers should be allowed to walk a maximum of 4 dogs as one time as they do not have control with more and therefore cannot pick up their poo.”
- “People are still bringing dogs into children's areas There seems to be a pattern of dog fouling near schools for god knows what reason There is always poo around.”

### d. Locations

17 respondents outlined the specific areas that they have found evidence of the PSPO being breached. Several discussed issues with dog control in different types of areas in regard to the PSPO:

- “Personally see dogs in Playparks a lot”
- “The PSPO does not seem to cover dog fouling on private land where an irresponsible dog owner lets their dog roam. This is a significant issue.”
- “I do not personally see why dogs are not allowed to walk in cemetery as long as owner is close to dog”
- “Dogs should be on a lead in nature reserves, SSSI and SBI's as they may damage flora”

Others focused on specific areas within the borough in relation to dog control. Blackrod was mentioned twice as having challenges with dog waste.

- “Harwood has an issue with dog poo on pavements and although most owners seem to pick up after them, there is often a mess left... close to garden walls and driveways.”
- “Lots of dog mess all over blackrod”

- *"I still see instances of people having dogs off their lead and not being under control, even in parks such as Queens park outside of the children's play areas and feel that this is an issue in itself that may not be being addressed by the exclusion PSPO."*
- *"In Bromley Cross/ Entwistle/ Wayoh I find most walkers very respectful about dogs on and off leads. Most if they see a dog on lead will put theirs on or ask the walker."*
- *"Dogs run loose in Ridgemont Cemetery, fouling is really bad in blackrod"*
- *"I have never seen 1 PSPO in moss bank park or around Doffcocker lodge"*
- *"You don't appear to be doing much about fouling on public footpaths in Breightmet"*
- *"I do find that there are a lot of problems with dog fouling in Barlow Park and there seems to be little done to stop it."*
- *"Connaught Square inn Tonge moor The postcode there is BL2 2JA... Some of the dogs owners walk round with dog poohbags, but they do not pick the dog waste up and put it in a bag "*
- *"I have seen men take dogs through the kids play park on Queen's Park knowing there are no dogs allowed on there People walk round with dogs off the lead There's dog poo everywhere in Tonge moor and when I went onto the field at sever acres my daughter was looking forward to running around it but wanted to leave straight away when she saw dog poo. Fields are not dog toilets It's a public hazard"*

#### **e. Dogs off leads / extendable leads**

14 respondents discussed dogs being off leads and dog walkers using extendable leads. Some respondents shared they see dogs off leads in graveyards, on public footpaths running *"through farmland"*, and parks. One respondent shared their view that *"dogs shouldn't have to remain on leads on the field areas of parks"*.

- *"I constantly see aggressive breeds more so small dogs off leads with owners not bothering to get their dogs under control they allow them to chase bark and bite other dogs that are on leads they let them run around grave yards and foul everywhere and on graves (Farnworth) they say I don't have bags, when offered, scoff and walk off"*
- *"I feel that more needs to be done in terms of dogs should be n leads where livestock on public footpaths run through farmland. sadly we still see livestock attacked with no repercussions for their owners."*
- *"I had to inform a couple not to take their dog into the park at astley bridge across near Thornleigh school. Not many people adhere to dogs on leads which is really intimidating for young children and families."*
- *"Nobody enforces it. Dogs should remain on leads in public spaces like parks as some people are afraid of dogs and having them on leads would give owners more control."*
- *"Dogs shouldn't have to remain on leads on the field areas of parks e.c.t unless deemed an aggressive dog and XI bullies shouldn't have to be muzzled it's cruel"*

#### **f. Advisory signs / messaging / awareness of PSPO**

11 respondents discussed that advisory signs and messaging can impact the effectiveness of the PSPO and ensuring that people are aware of the prohibited behaviours. One respondent shared their perspective that the Fouling of Land PSPO is *"the most effective"* as it is *"universally recognised"*. However, some respondents expressed doubt that the PSPO makes a difference, with several expressing the need to share *"consequences of breaching them"*.

- *"The Fouling of Land PSPO is clearly the most effective of the four. Awareness is generally high, likely due to widespread signage, and it addresses a harm that is visible and universally recognised."*

- *"I think the reasons for the orders are valid, but dog owners need to be made more aware of them and the consequences of breaching them. They also need to be enforced properly."*
- *"I wasn't aware that they existed"*
- *"Our streets should be free of dog waste and the council should provide bins and adequate signage."*
- *"I don't honestly know if these measures have made any difference. I would be helpful to see some examples of the work that has been done within these powers."*

Other responses included suggestions on further measures to tackle issues with dog control, for example *"more bins especially on the streets"*: one respondent shared how the lack of waste infrastructure has resulted in dog waste: *"temple road (new side) is crying out for a bin either end of the road. We have hundreds of people walking dogs through our estate and they leave the bags at the top of the road."*

Several respondents advocated for a limit to the number of dogs that can be walked at a time: *"there should be a maximum of 2 per person"*: *"Bury and Wigan MBC have a limit of 4 dogs that may be walked at one time, as Bolton do not have a limit, Professional Dog walkers come to Longsight park in Harwood with... far too many for them to control or be able to see which or where they are defecating. Bolton's policy should be in line with neighbouring councils"*.

Furthermore, a comment about the Dogs Exclusion PSPO notes that this is the *"least effective, because it addresses a symptom rather than the cause. The near-total absence of safe, enclosed public spaces where dogs can exercise freely is a significant driver of irresponsible off-lead behaviour. There are no fenced or gated public areas in Bolton suitable for this purpose"*

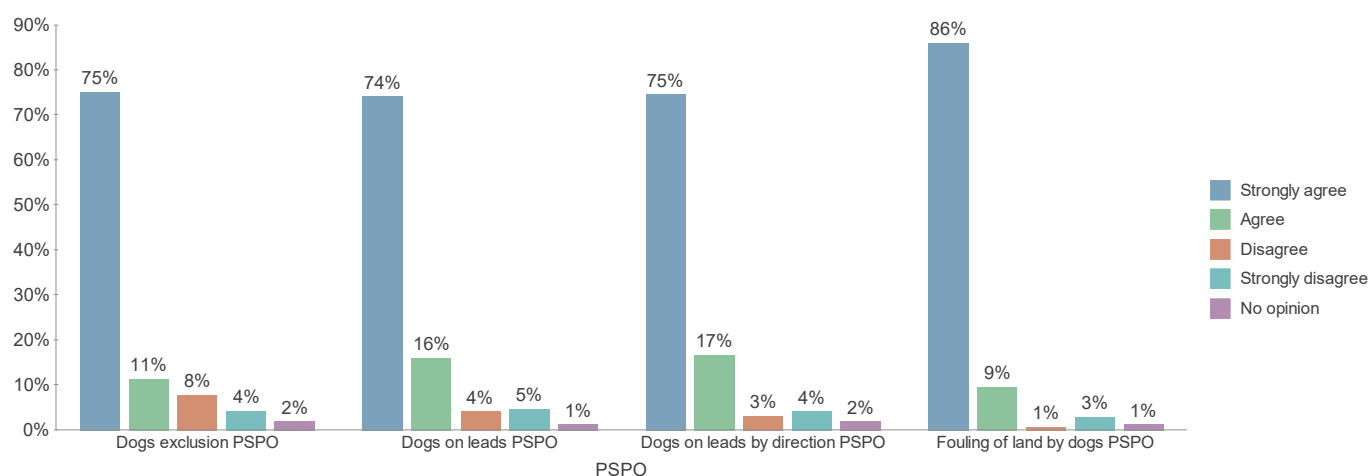
A comment, repeated in Appendix B as an email response, discussed assistance dogs: *"Articles 2 and 3 in the Dogs exclusion PSPO do not cover all support dogs and prescribed charities. Please see Assistance Dogs UK for info on registered charities such as Dogs for Autism, Medical Detection dogs and Service Dogs UK and others"*.

#### **4. Dog Control PSPO: 3-year extension**

##### **4a. Extending the Dog Control for a further three years**

All residents and stakeholders taking part in the consultation were asked to reflect on their experience of the current PSPO and consider whether Bolton Council should extend the order for a further three years. An average of 170 responses were received, outlining a significant majority being in favour of extending the PSPO across all four dog control areas. 95% of respondents agree that the 'Fouling of Land by Dogs' should be extended; 92% agree that 'Dogs on Leads by Direction' should be extended; 90% agree that 'Dogs on Leads' should be extended; and 86% also agree that 'Dog Exclusion' be extended. This response was similar to the 2023 consultation, whereby a significant majority agreed that the PSPOs should be extended.

How strongly do you agree / disagree that the dog control PSPOs, which are due to expire in October 2026, should be renewed for another three years?



Base average: 170

#### 4b. Comments on PSPO extension

All residents and stakeholders were provided the opportunity to comment further and provide their feedback on the Council extending the order for a further three years, as well as offer alternative approaches and considerations for tackling anti-social behaviour around dog control. 63 comments were made, with cross cutting themes. These have been categorised into the following five themes.

**Please use this space for any comments about the proposal to renew the PSPOs for another three years, or to suggest any alternatives that we should consider.**

| Rank | Category                                    | Number of respondents |
|------|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| a.   | Enforcement and reporting measures          | 28                    |
| b.   | General agreement / dog control is an issue | 25                    |
| c.   | Better signage / bins / messaging           | 9                     |
| d.   | Suggestions for the PSPO                    | 7                     |

##### a. Enforcement and reporting measures

28 comments discussed enforcing the PSPOs, reporting and security measures that could be put in place to curtail dog owner behaviour. There were many comments focusing on stronger consequences for offenders and increasing the capacity for enforcement.

- *"I think it is needed but my reservation on dogs on leads on pspo is because well behaved dogs should be allowed with responsible owners. However, i know it is hard to police this."*
- *"There needs to be more policing of dogs on leads in public places"*
- *"The fine of £100 should be increased to £500. As it is not a deterrent to some people."*
- *"More patrols of wardens and people fined for not abiding by the rules"*

- *"More owners need to be punished and publically named and shamed"*
- *"More work needs to be done to support local communities with dog behaviours and waste."*
- *"I think the rules should continue, and harsher rules for dog owners bot picking up after themselves. I also think fines should be given to people taking their dogs out in severe heat"*
- *"Staffing is required to enforce these powers, otherwise I can't see them being a deterrent."*
- *"Cameras need to capturing faces and issuing them fines with facial recongnition if they do not pick up their dogs poo"*

#### **b. General agreement / dog control is an issue**

25 respondents shared their agreement for the extension of the PSPO and elaborated on dog control being an issue for them. Several mentioned that *"without these things would only get worse"*, but some expressed doubt that the PSPO would be effective: *"at present it is a paper exercise"*.

- *"I strongly support renewing the Fouling of Land PSPO and agree the Dogs on Leads orders should continue"*
- *"I would like the regulations to be extended. It helps to prevent dogs being a public nuisance."*
- *"Without these things would only get worse"*
- *"Dog fouling continues to be a minor issue in summer but more in winter."*
- *"Better to have it than not but at present it is a paper exercise"*
- *"It benefits everyone across the borough and stops irresponsible dog owners"*
- *"I think these are really sensible rules and should be extended."*
- *"Dog control needs to be in place. Many places i visit in the UK have poo bags like maybe in public places like Rivington it could be an idea? Silverdale is an example where they are available from a metal container screwed to a fence post."*
- *"I have no problems keeping my dog out of sport/play areas. Although I assume people with a dog in their family may have an issue with this. They cant take kids and the family dog to the play area."*
- *"Major problem in Bolton, bus stops are used to foul and litter."*

#### **c. Better signage / bins / messaging**

Nine respondents discussed that there is a need for signage and messaging about the PSPOs as well as the correct infrastructure so that dog owners can comply, such as dog waste facilities.

- *"More signage on play areas and public areas. More community bins"*
- *"Greater public awareness through signage would improve their effectiveness considerably."*
- *"More bins and cctv would help"*
- *"More signage about these PSPOs and warnings of offences"*
- *"The bins need to be emptied regularly as all the bins are surrounded by poo bags."*
- *"Could the signs be bigger?"*

#### **d. Suggestions for the PSPO**

Seven comments discussed suggestions for the PSPO, with a focus on limiting the number of dogs being walked, providing adequate green spaces for dogs and clarifying lead lengths.

- *"I disagree with renewing the Dogs Exclusion PSPO in its current form... renewing blanket exclusions without addressing the lack of safe exercise space for dogs is counterproductive. Dogs that cannot exercise adequately are more likely to become difficult to manage, which contributes directly to the irresponsible behaviour these orders are designed to prevent. Sports pitches and similar enclosed spaces are often unoccupied, particularly in poor weather, and could serve as*

*informal off-lead areas without meaningfully conflicting with other users. I would ask the council to consider whether existing spaces could be designated for this purpose alongside any renewal, so that the orders tackle the root cause rather than simply extending powers that are currently underused."*

- *"The two dogs on leads PSPOs should be rewritten to have metric measurement, not imperial. There should be provisions written into the PSPOs to limit the number of dogs walked by any one person at a time. In the case of professional dog walkers, most insurances are limited to 6 (in line with current dog home boarding regulations), but many local authorities are now limiting the number to 4, due to safety concerns including the ability to control all dogs in public spaces (especially narrow footpaths) and the issues around fouling."*
- *"I see professional dog walkers in my area sometimes with 6 dogs or more, both off lead and on lead... They cannot control the large numbers of dogs they walk especially off lead which is dangerous .... Restrictions to 4 or 5 dogs should be made"*
- *"There should be clarification on the use of very long extending leads as the dog will not be under proper control if it is on a very long extending lead. There should also be a dogs on leads requirement on shared walking/ cycling routes where the width is below recommended widths. E.g. middlebrook trail as dogs cannot be effectively separated from each other & other users where it is so narrow"*

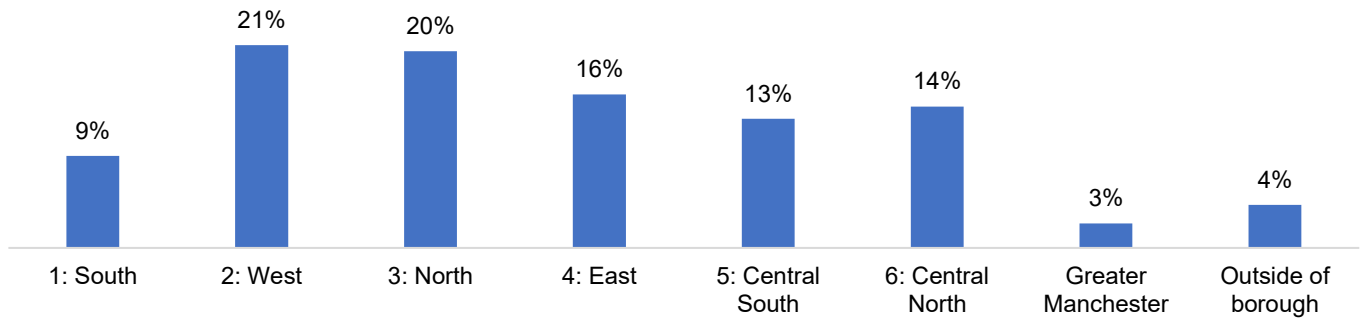
Other comments included comments that the PSPO is *"discriminatory against dog owners"*. One parent shared their view on the restrictions: *"I can't take my 4year old to the park with the dog on my own because the dog isn't allowed in the playarea. If she is on a lead and sits by me on the bench, i dont see how that's a problem."* Another respondent shared an encounter they had with a *"dangerous dog"*: *"I've also witnessed a dangerous dog (XL Bully) with no muzzle and off lead around a rural, isolated spot ... I reported to police but very concerned about dogs being unpredictable... any protective orders are needed, especially when we know some can be unpredictable and deadly."*

## **5. Stakeholder demographics**

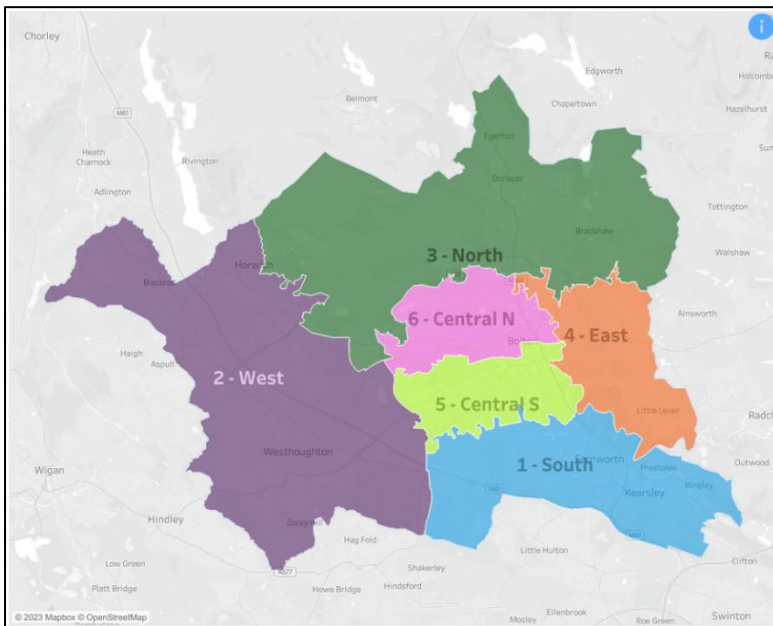
### **5a. Interest by geographical area**

The chart below outlines the demographics of respondents by geographical neighbourhood. A total of 160 respondents provided their full postcode. The greatest number of respondents are from the West of the borough (21%); the North of the borough are represented by one-fifth of respondents (20%) and the East of the borough is represented by 16% of respondents. 7% of replies are from respondents outside of the borough, including 3% from other locations in Greater Manchester.

## Geographic distribution of responses

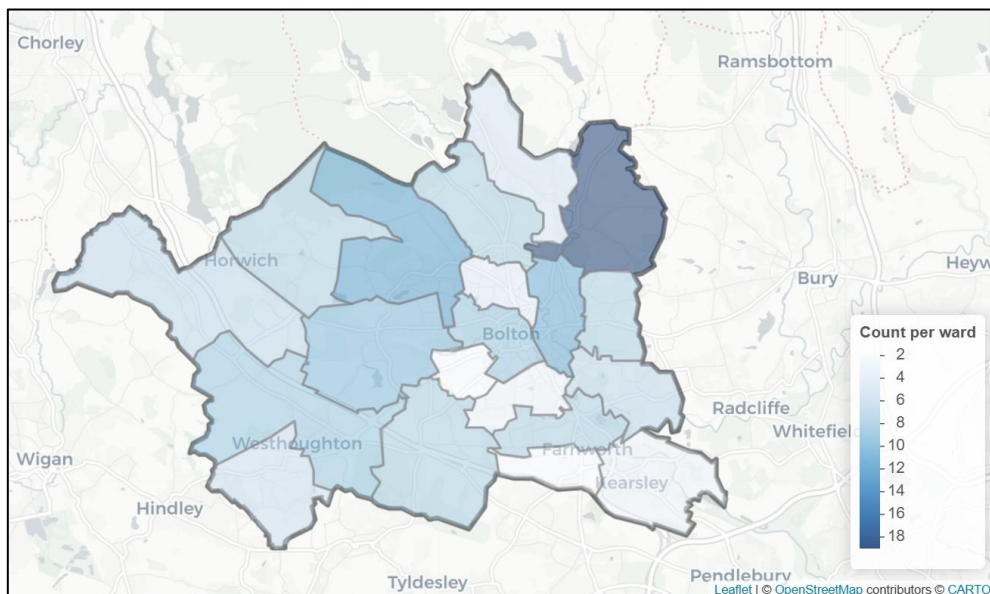


Base: 160



\*Neighbourhoods are a local geography for integrated health and social care; all have a population of around 50,000 residents.

## Choropleth of responses by ward



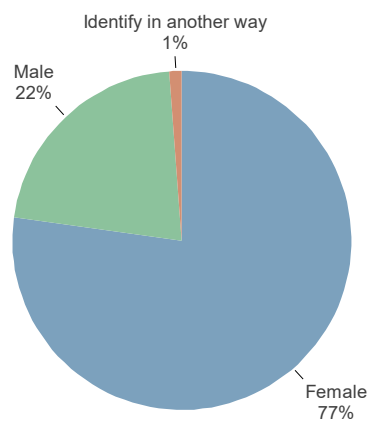
| Ward                               | Number of responses |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Astley Bridge                      | 8                   |
| Bradshaw                           | 19                  |
| Brightmet                          | 8                   |
| Bromley Cross                      | 5                   |
| Farnworth North                    | 8                   |
| Farnworth South                    | 2                   |
| Great Lever                        | 3                   |
| Halliwel                           | 4                   |
| Heaton, Lostock and Chew Moor      | 10                  |
| Horwich North                      | 8                   |
| Horwich South and Blackrod         | 7                   |
| Hulton                             | 8                   |
| Kearsley                           | 3                   |
| Little Lever and Darcy Lever       | 7                   |
| Queens Park and Central            | 9                   |
| Rumworth                           | 2                   |
| Smithills                          | 12                  |
| Tonge with the Haulgh              | 11                  |
| Westhoughton North and Hunger Hill | 9                   |
| Westhoughton South                 | 6                   |

As shown above, there was a significantly higher response rate in Bradshaw, with 19 responses received. This could be due to the circulation of the consultation by a local Ward Councillor on a local social media page. Both Rumworth and Farnworth South had the lowest response with only two responses.

#### **5b. Gender**

166 responses were received providing the respondent's gender. 77% of respondent's identity as being female, 22% as male and 1% of respondents identify as 'other'.

Gender of respondents

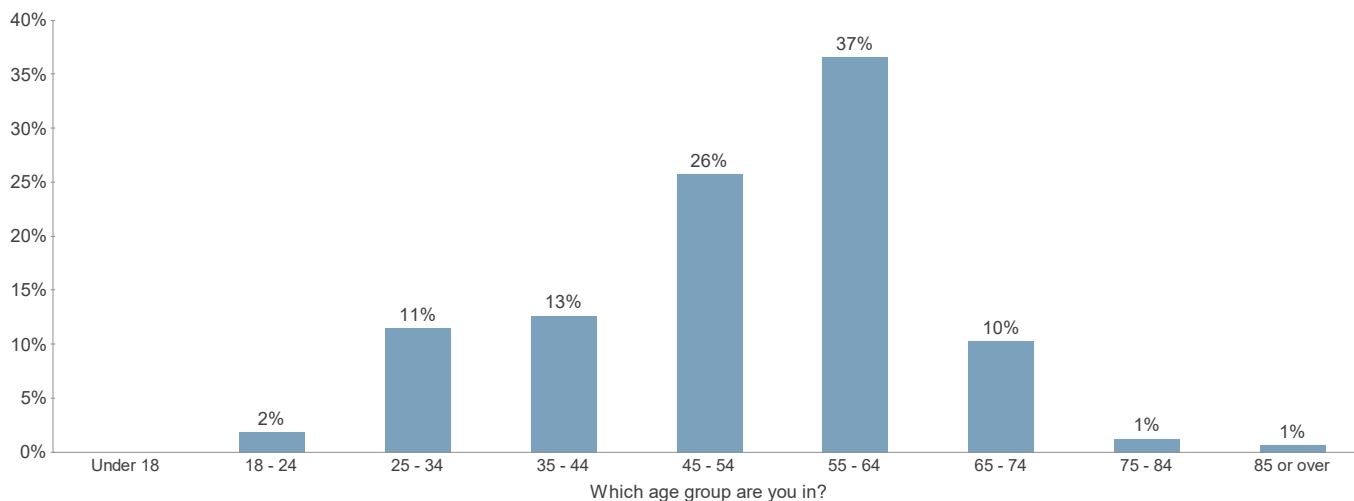


Base: 166

### 5c Age

Of the 167 respondents, all were 18 or above. 13% of respondents are under the age of 34 years. 76% of respondents are aged between 35 – 64 years. 12% of responses were received from individuals above the age of 65 years.

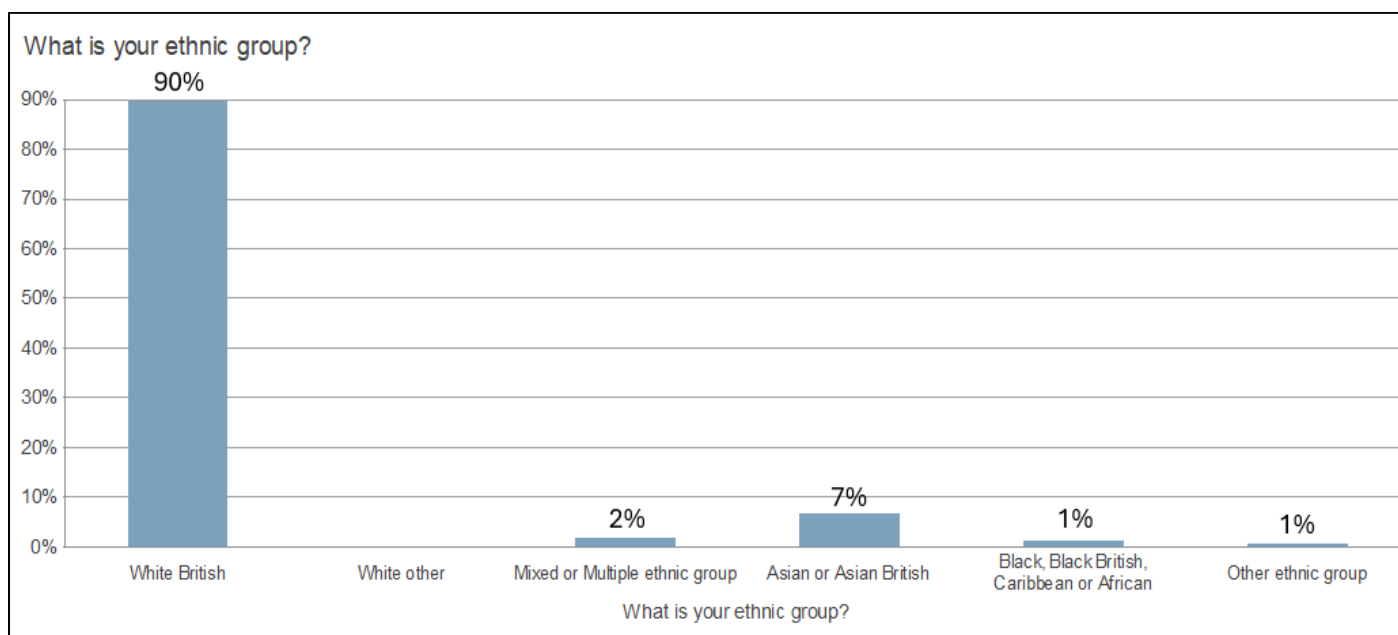
Which age group are you in?



Base: 167

### 5d. Ethnicity

164 respondents provided their ethnicity when undertaking the consultation. 90% report as being White British. 10% report as being from other ethnically diverse communities, including 7% from the Asian / Asian British community.



Base: 164

### 5e. Social media sentiment

The consultation was promoted through social media platforms throughout the consultation period. 22 comments were received during this period on Facebook, with comments overwhelmingly in agreement with the PSPO. Several respondents made suggestions about waste bins and dogs on leads and suitable dog owner behaviour. Other comments included concerns about maintenance of grassland and how to complete the survey. Although these comments are not formally submitted as part of the consultation, they provide a snapshot of the public response.

## 6. Summary

Between the 28<sup>th</sup> May and the 13<sup>th</sup> July 2026, Bolton Council ran a six-week consultation reviewing the effectiveness of the current Dog Control Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) and consideration of whether the Council should extend the Order for a further three years. 175 responses were received, as well as three formal email responses from Public Health (Bolton), Greater Manchester Police and a local Ward Councillor. 91% of respondents taking part in the survey are residents in the Bolton borough.

Reflecting on the effectiveness of the current PSPO and the four areas within the Order, none of the orders had overall agreement that the order was effective (<45%). Fouling on Land by Dogs was deemed as the most ineffective, with 60% of respondents stating it was an ineffective area within the Order.

Respondents who commented further were particularly concerned by the increase in dog fouling, dogs being off leads, particularly where there are more than four dogs per owner; the locations where offences take place; and the challenges around the lack of enforcement.



When asked to reflect upon Bolton Council extending the Dog Control PSPO for a further three years, stakeholders were in majority agreement that all four areas should be extended. However, residents and stakeholders felt that the Council needed to implement more effective reporting and enforcement measures for the Order to be fully effective, as well as improved provisions such as bins. In addition to general agreement comments, residents felt that there needed to be greater measures in place for dogs on leads, as well as restricting the numbers of dogs being walked by one owner, and consideration made to extendable leads. It should be noted that some comments called for the Council to consider designated zones for dogs to exercise off lead to counteract the Dogs Exclusion PSPO.

## **Dog Control Public Space Protection Orders Review 2026**

### **Consultation closes on 13th July 2026**

Bolton Council currently has four Dog Control Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) which are due to expire in October 2026.

They give the police and authorised officers of Bolton Council additional powers aimed at preventing nuisance caused by irresponsible dog owners or dog walkers.

### **Background**

Four Designated Public Protection Orders were originally granted in 2007 and became Public Spaces Protection Orders under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

**The four orders are:**

- The Dogs Exclusion PSPO
- The Dogs on Leads PSPO
- The Dogs on Leads by Direction PSPO
- The Fouling of Land by Dogs PSPO.

The four dog control PSPOs were all renewed in 2023 and are due to expire on 25th October 2026.

A PSPO can last up to three years, after which it must be reviewed. Following a review, the PSPO can be extended for a further three years. There is no limit to the number of times a PSPO may be renewed.

We invite you to give your views on the proposal to renew all four dog control PSPOs.

Please read the documents on the 'Active consultations' page of Bolton Council's website for full details of the PSPOs:

[www.bolton.gov.uk/directory/13/consultations/category/195](http://www.bolton.gov.uk/directory/13/consultations/category/195)

Your views will be considered alongside other information to help Bolton Council decide whether or not to renew the dog control PSPOs.

### **Your response - keeping your data safe**

Most questions are optional; just miss out any that you do not want to answer.

The results of this consultation may be made public. If you are responding as an individual you will not be identified in any report as your responses will be anonymised and grouped with those from other people. If you are responding in an official capacity, your response may be published but no personal details will be included.

Any personal data you provide will be held securely, in line with our retention schedule and privacy policy: [www.bolton.gov.uk/data-protection-freedom-information/privacy-notices](http://www.bolton.gov.uk/data-protection-freedom-information/privacy-notices)  
We use Snap Surveys professional software to collect and process your data. Their privacy policy can be found here: [www.snapsurveys.com/survey-software/privacy-policy-uk/](http://www.snapsurveys.com/survey-software/privacy-policy-uk/). Snap Surveys Ltd. follow the UK General Data Protection Regulation.

## Area and behaviour covered

The PSPOs are summarised below, but full details of the behaviour and specific areas covered can be found on the 'Active Consultations' page of Bolton Council's website: [www.bolton.gov.uk/directory/13/consultations/category/195](http://www.bolton.gov.uk/directory/13/consultations/category/195)

### General summary

All four dog control PSPOs relate to the Borough of Bolton.



If renewed, the four dog control PSPOs would allow Greater Manchester [GM] Police or any authorised officer of Bolton Council to prevent / tackle issues caused by irresponsible dog owners and dog walkers.

Anyone who fails to comply with a request from GM Police or other authorised persons under one of the PSPOs could be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice fine of £100 or a fine of up to £1,000, if taken to court.

## Summary of each dog control PSPO

### The Dogs Exclusion PSPO

If renewed, the Dogs Exclusion PSPO would mean that dogs could not be taken into enclosed areas in our borough that are set aside as play areas or youth sports areas.

It would cover all enclosed (fenced and gated) play areas / youth sports areas which have public access and signs indicating that dogs are not allowed.

There would be exemptions for anyone who was registered blind or had certain disabilities.

### The Dogs on Leads PSPO

If renewed, the Dogs on Leads PSPO would apply to Class A and B roads, adjoining footpaths and verges, all cemeteries, and all closed graveyards maintained by Bolton Council. It would be an offence to walk a dog off a lead in these areas.

The PSPO would apply on all land covered by the PSPO, unless the person had a reasonable excuse for not complying, or where they had permission from the land-owner / person in charge of the land.

#### **The Dogs on Leads by Direction PSPO**

If renewed, the Dogs on leads by direction PSPO would mean that anyone in charge of a dog would be guilty of an offence if they refuse to put the dog on a short lead (no more than six foot) when instructed to do so by an authorised officer of the council or police.

This PSPO would apply on all land covered by the PSPO, unless the person had a reasonable excuse for not complying, or where they had permission from the person in charge of the land.

#### **The Fouling of Land by Dogs PSPO**

If renewed, the Fouling of Land by Dog PSPO would mean that anyone in charge of a dog that defecates on land covered by the PSPO would be guilty of an offence if they did not clear up the faeces.

The PSPO would apply unless the person had a reasonable excuse for not complying, or where they had permission from the person in charge of the land.

There would be exemptions for anyone who was registered blind or where they had certain disabilities and the dog was an assistance dog provided by a charity named in the PSPO.

### **Effectiveness of the current dog control PSPOs**

**How effective / ineffective do you feel that the four PSPOs have been in dealing with any irresponsible dog control issues?**

|                                 | Very effective        | Effective             | Not very effective    | Not effective at all  | I do not see this as an issue | No opinion            |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Dogs exclusion PSPO             | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>         | <input type="radio"/> |
| Dogs on leads PSPO              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>         | <input type="radio"/> |
| Dogs on leads by direction PSPO | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>         | <input type="radio"/> |
| Fouling of land by dogs PSPO    | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>         | <input type="radio"/> |

**Please use this space for any comments about the effectiveness of the current PSPOs and the issues they are designed to tackle.**

### **Renewal and implementation of dog control PSPOs**

**How strongly do you agree / disagree that the dog control PSPOs, which are due to expire in October 2026, should be renewed for another three years?**

|                                 | Strongly agree        | Agree                 | Disagree              | Strongly disagree     | No opinion            |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Dogs exclusion PSPO             | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Dogs on leads PSPO              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Dogs on leads by direction PSPO | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Fouling of land by dogs PSPO    | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

**Please use this space for any comments about the proposal to renew the PSPOs for another three years, or to suggest any alternatives that we should consider.**

## Your interest

**Which of the following describes you / your family's interest in this consultation?**

- ☐ Live in Bolton borough (Bolton Council area)
- ☐ Work in Bolton borough
- ☐ Study / have children at school in Bolton borough
- ☐ Visitor to Bolton
- ☐ Official response from Parish / Bolton borough Councillor / Elected Member
- ☐ Official response from a business / organisation / community group. You must have their permission to submit an official response on their behalf
- ☐ None of the above {Q5.a}

**Please say what your interest is.**

**Please say which ward, business organisation or community group you represent.**

**Please say what your role is - in what official capacity do you represent the business, organisation or community group?**

## About you

Your answers in this section help us to make sure we are getting views from different types of people. They will not be used to contact or identify you.

Please give your full  
postcode.

Are you...?

☐ Female

☐ Male

☐ Identify in another way

Which age group are you in?

☐ Under 18

☐ 35 - 44

☐ 65 - 74

☐ 18 - 24

☐ 45 - 54

☐ 75 - 84

☐ 25 - 34

☐ 55 - 64

☐ 85 or over

What is your ethnic group?

☐ White British

☐ Asian or Asian British

☐ White other

☐ Black, Black British, Caribbean or African

☐ Mixed or Multiple ethnic group

☐ Other ethnic group

**Thanks! Please click 'submit' to send your response through to us.**

## Appendix B – Formal responses

Response from Greater Manchester Police:

Has discussed earlier, given this is a extension to an existing PSPO which is expiring & no changes I have no issues.

I would just request that the PSPO does not apply to police dogs in operational use or training.

Regards

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Bolton District

Greater Manchester Police

### Response from Elected Member:

Hi All

Sorry for the late reply it went into draft .. sorry

I like the fact that we have PSPOs that do want to protect our public spaces, however, I have asked a few residents in my ward and no one has ever seen them around.

The state of our public spaces has a large amount of Dog waste on various areas and especially on public footpaths.

Do you have a schedule of works/walks that they do ie what times and dates they are in areas ?

I do appreciate 4 PSPOs around Bolton – they must have a vast area to work with, but many homes are dog lovers (many are responsible with their dogs) however we just dont seem to see them in Horwich North ? I cant say for other areas.

Best wishes



Horwich North Ward

### Response from Public Health officer, Bolton Council:

*“Hi I have completed the above survey with a comment that Articles 2 and 3 in the Dogs exclusion PSPO do not cover all support dogs and prescribed charities. Please see Assistance Dogs UK for info on registered charities such as Dogs for Autism, Medical Detection dogs and Service Dogs UK and others”*