

PSPO Dog Control Consultation Analysis. - draft

Summary

A total of 4,073 people accessed the campaign which ran from 9th November to 7th December 2020 of that 929 responded online, 5 emailed a response, 2 letters and 2,838 people were aware, informed but chose not to comment. The consultation include a survey with questions and a free text box for further comments, 3 quick polls requesting feedback on certain elements of the whole project and the Public Space Protection Order which was available to download or view online, which 110 used that option.

The consultation was promoted across social media and was available on the Councils interactive consultation portal <https://yoursay.southend.gov.uk/> it was also made available in a hardcopy format if requested.

The overall consensus from those responding is that they strongly support and understand what the Council is trying to achieve and do see that a PSPO is required to cover existing provisions for dog control with some amendments. Dog Fouling was the biggest issue throughout the town with over 84% stating they have come across it, with a high percentage stating it had a detrimental impact on the quality of life around the town. Question 17 referred to a petition the Council has received requesting an area of beach specifically for dogs to use all year and 58% strongly support this move.

Some of the individual comments received identified the challenge on how it is to be enforced and monitored once the PSPO is adopted. There was a concern that the lack of cleaning the beaches would impact those coming to the town with families, there was also a worry of the amount a dogs at any one time on the beach in the nice weather with children playing and families sitting, eating etc.

Following on from Q17, Question 18 asked where in the borough a suitable area could be designated

The areas were grouped together as the following

- Cinder path to Gypsy Bridge
- City Beach/ Pier
- Jocelyn Beach/ Chalkwell
- Leigh/ Old Leigh
- Shoebury Common
- Shoebury East Beach
- Southend/ Southchurch
- Southend (excluding City Beach) Westcliff Arches
- Thorpe Bay Stretch
- Two Tree Island
- Westcliff / Crowstone
- All of the Foreshore
- Any area of the Foreshore
- Away from populated beaches
- No area

There was no clear consensus on a specific beach area that could be used for dogs throughout the year.

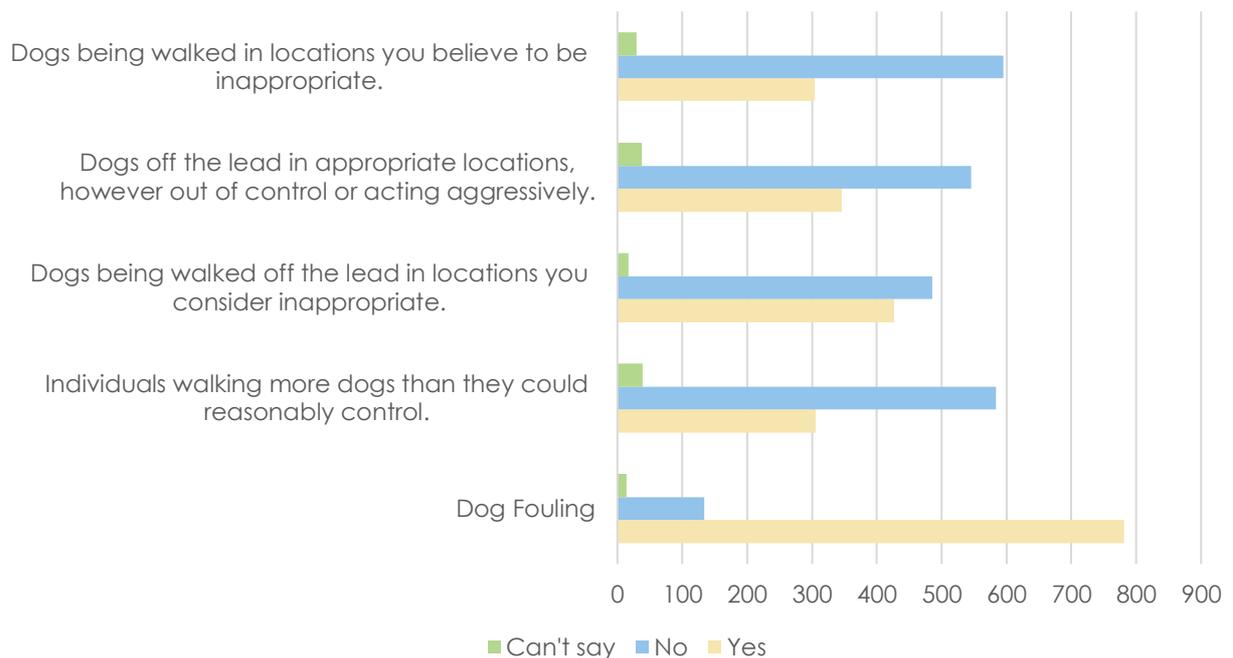
Comments can be found in Appendix one.

Full Breakdown of questions

1. Have you come across any of the following activities within Southend-on-Sea?

- Dog Fouling
- Individuals walking more dogs than they could reasonably control.
- Dogs being walked off the lead in locations you consider inappropriate.
- Dogs off the lead in appropriate locations, however out of control or acting aggressively.
- Dogs being walked in locations you believe to be inappropriate.

Have you come across any of the following activities within Southend-on-Sea?



This was a multi-response question and of those responding Dog fouling seem to be the biggest issue with 84% having come across dog fouling on the street, 64% of respondents didn't think that dogs were being walked in inappropriate locations and 63% didn't think that individuals were walking more dogs than they could reasonable control.

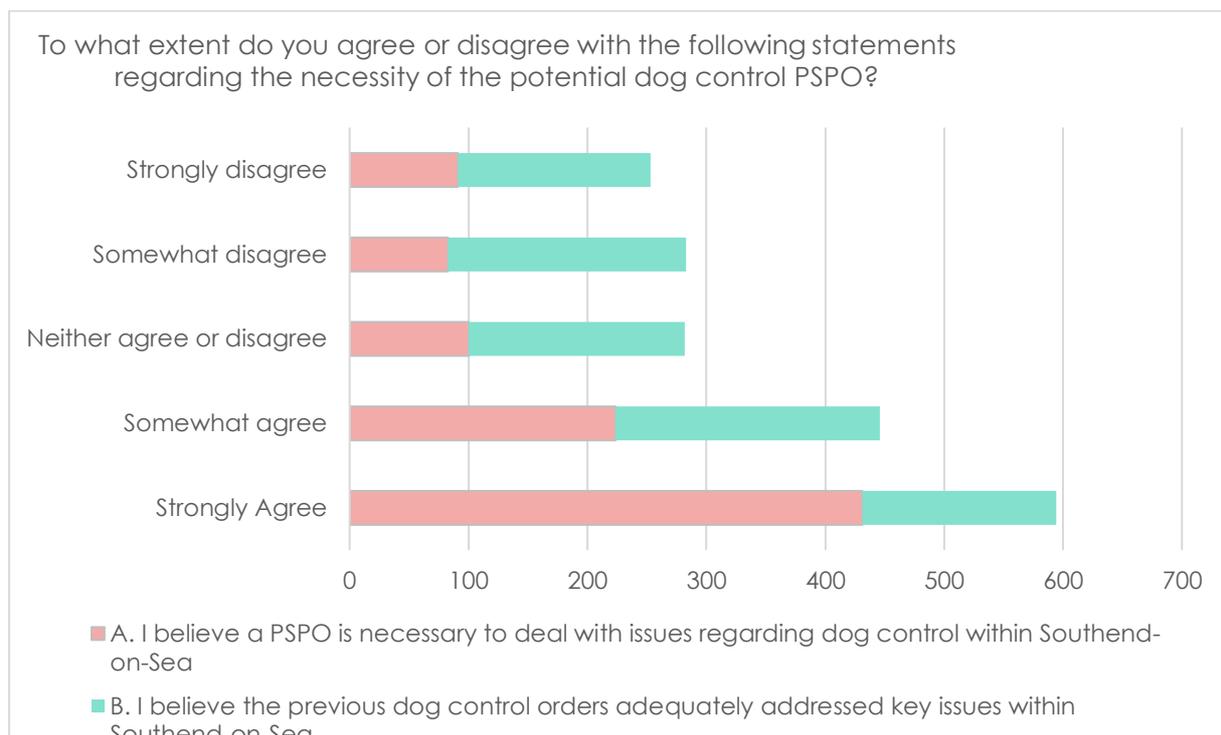
2. If you have experienced any other issues regarding the behaviour of dogs and dog owners in public areas within Southend-on-Sea

This was an open text response with 295 individuals responding, majority of experienced dogs off the lead in parks and where children play, flouting the beach ban during the summer months and not enough Dog Waste Bins around the town. **Please see Appendix one for a full list of responses*

3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding the necessity of the potential dog control PSPO?

- A. I believe a PSPO is necessary to deal with issues regarding dog control within Southend-on-Sea

- B. I believe the previous dog control orders adequately addressed key issues within Southend-on-Sea.



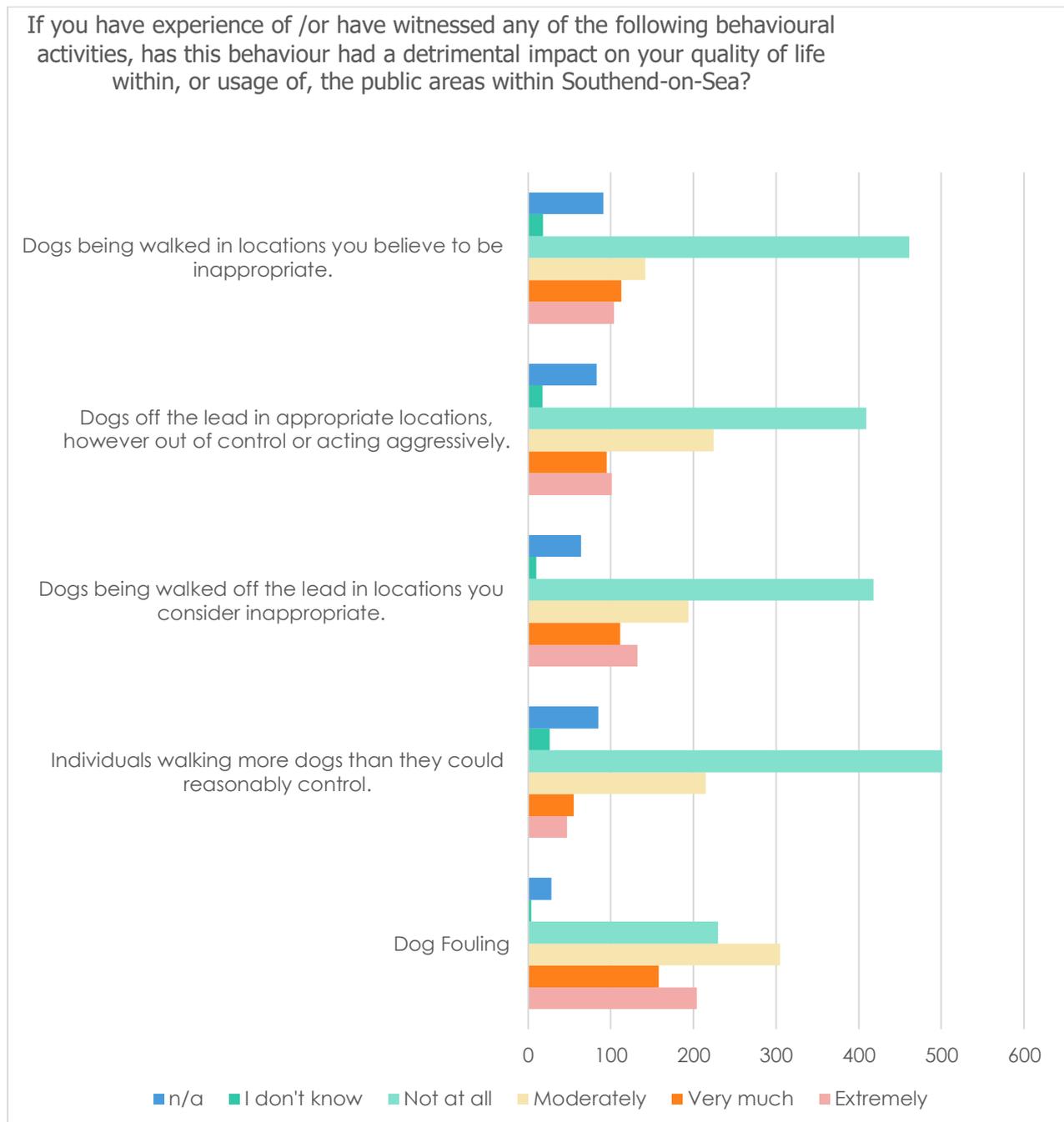
This was a single response question the overall majority agreed with the statement A with 46% strongly agreeing, but only 18% strongly agreeing with statement B. Most responses disagreed with Statement B.

4. Please explain your response* to question 3

This was an open text response with 824 individuals responding, the main comments identified were lack of monitoring and enforcement and not enough deterrent. **Please see Appendix one for a full list of comments received.*

5. If you have experience of /or have witnessed any of the following behavioural activities, has this behaviour had a detrimental impact on your quality of life within, or usage of, the public areas within Southend-on-Sea?

- Dog Fouling
- Individuals walking more dogs than they could reasonably control.
- Dogs being walked off the lead in locations you consider inappropriate.
- Dogs off the lead in appropriate locations, however out of control or acting aggressively.
- Dogs being walked in locations you believe to be inappropriate.



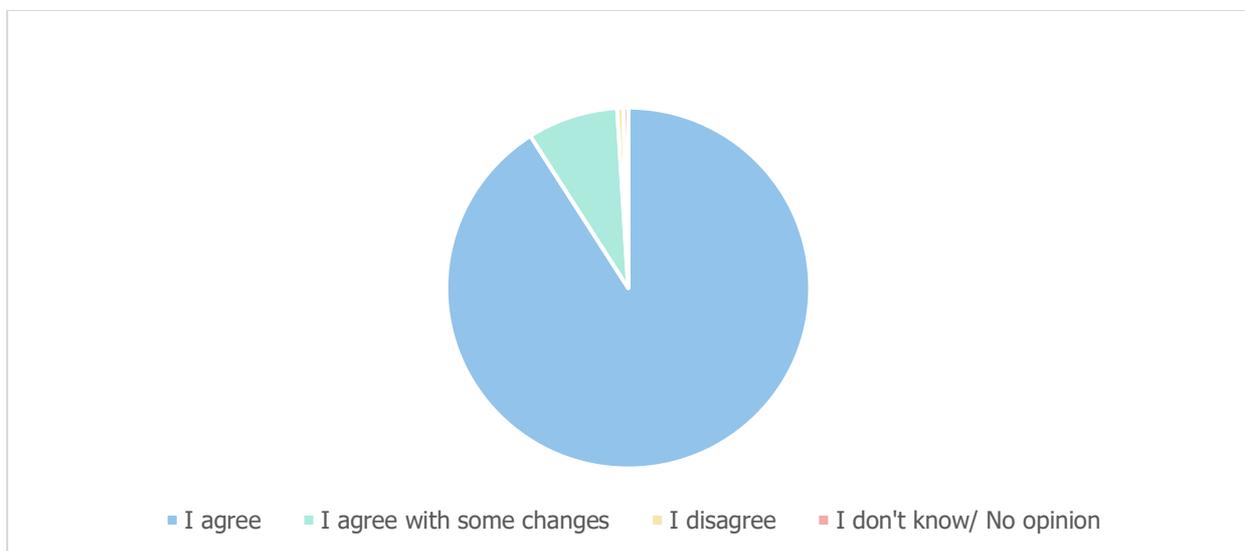
This was a single response to each statement 22% stated that dog fouling had a moderate detrimental impact on quality of life. Of the other statements most identified that it had not a detrimental impact in public areas around the town.

6. Do you have an additional comments* in relation to question 5

This was an open text response with 291 individuals responding, most had witnessed lack of responsibility from dog owners, allowing their dogs to run off the lead and 'jump up' at people wherever they are. Other responses referred to the amount of dog waste just left and not cleaned up and some had been abused by the dog owner when challenged about their unruly dog. **Please see Appendix one for a full list of comments received.*

7. The following restriction was included in the previous dog control order. To what extent would you agree or disagree with this being included in any potential future orders?

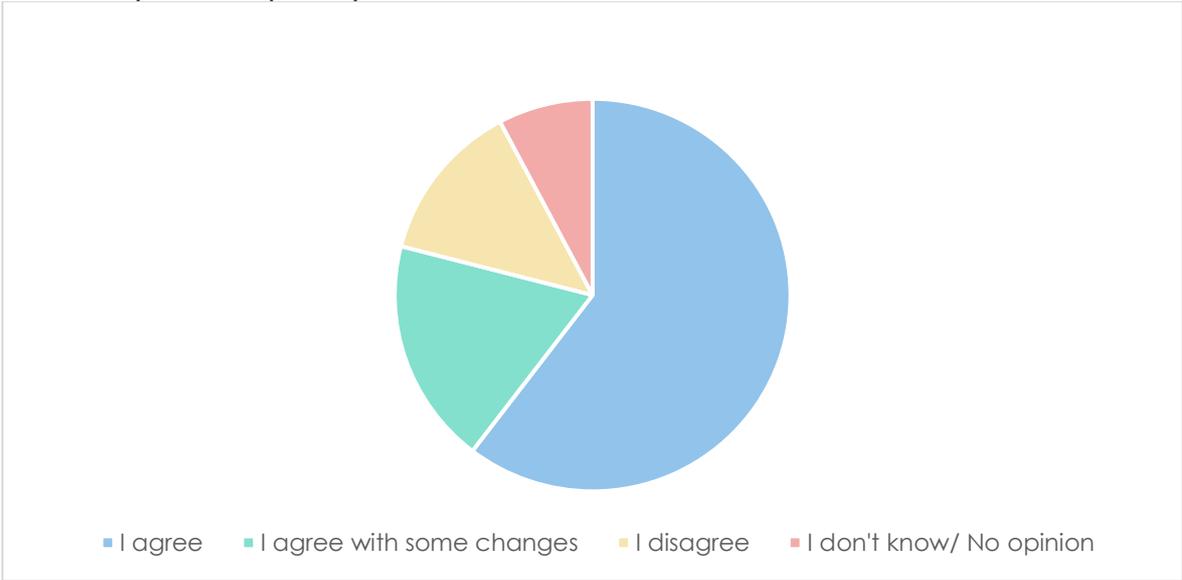
- a. Any person in charge of a dog that fails to clean up immediately after the dog defecates shall be guilty of an offence.



This is a single response question, overall 91% agree that anyone who fails to clean up after their dog should be guilty of a criminal offence

8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the area the previous order covered?

b. Any outdoor publicly accessible area within Southend-on-Sea.



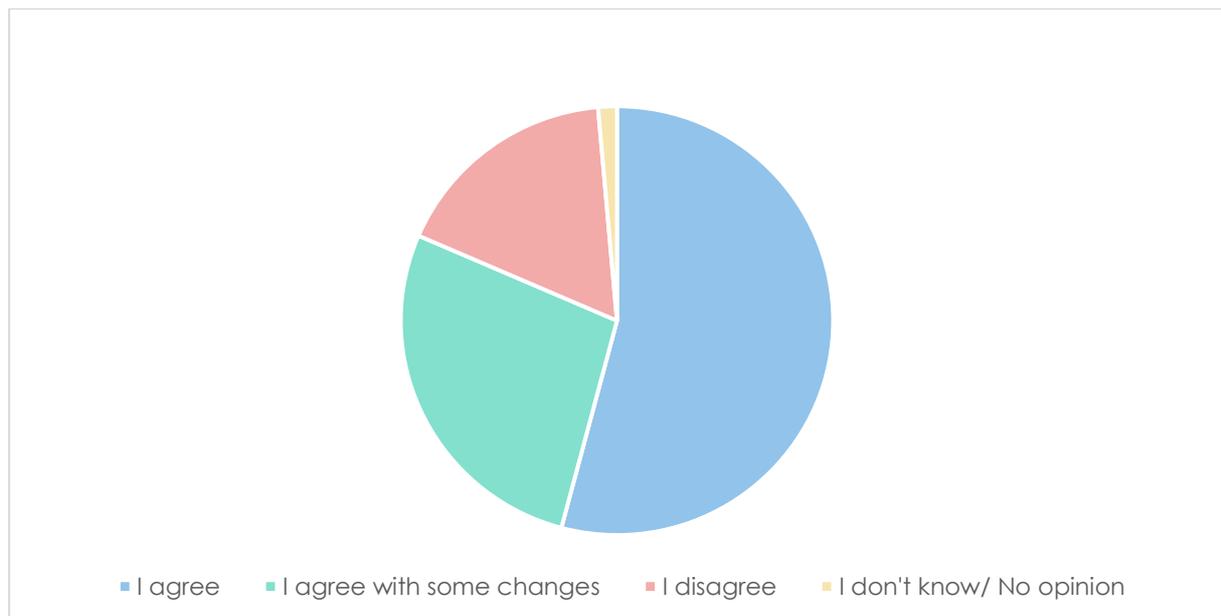
60% agreed with the previous area covered with 19% agreeing but with some changes

9. Do you have any additional comments* or suggested changes to these areas

This was an open response question which related to Q8, 242 individuals responded, most of those responding feel that a PSPO will not change the behaviour of irresponsible dog owners. There was a mixed response with those agreeing that dogs should be allowed on an area of the beach, with others requesting that there should be no changes to the current PSPO. Another key comment was about the lack of dog bins and dog owners clearing up after their dog. **Please see Appendix one for a full list of comments received).*

10. The following restriction was included in the previous dog control order. To what extent would you agree or disagree with this being included in any potential future orders?

in the locations set out below* a person in charge of a dog will be guilty of an offence if they do not keep the dog on a lead. *Areas Included - All roads and adjacent pavements and verges All allotments All promenades. The following formal gardens: Chalkwell Park Formal Gardens, Southchurch Park Formal Gardens, Churchill Gardens, Leigh Library Gardens, Prittlewell Square, Southchurch Hall Gardens, The Shrubbery, Priory Park Foundation area, walled garden and Centenary garden. The following bowling greens: Belfairs Park Bowling Greens, Chalkwell Esplanade Bowling Greens, Cavendish Bowling Green, Eastwood Park Bowling Green, Priory Bowling Greens, Southchurch Park Bowling Green, Shoebury Park Bowling Green, Green Areas along beaches (during 1st May to 30th September). The following cemeteries and church yards: Sutton Road Cemetery, North Road Burial Ground, Leigh Cemetery, London Road, Crematorium and memorial grounds, St. Mary's Church Holy Trinity Church, St. Clements Churchyard, St. John's Churchyard.

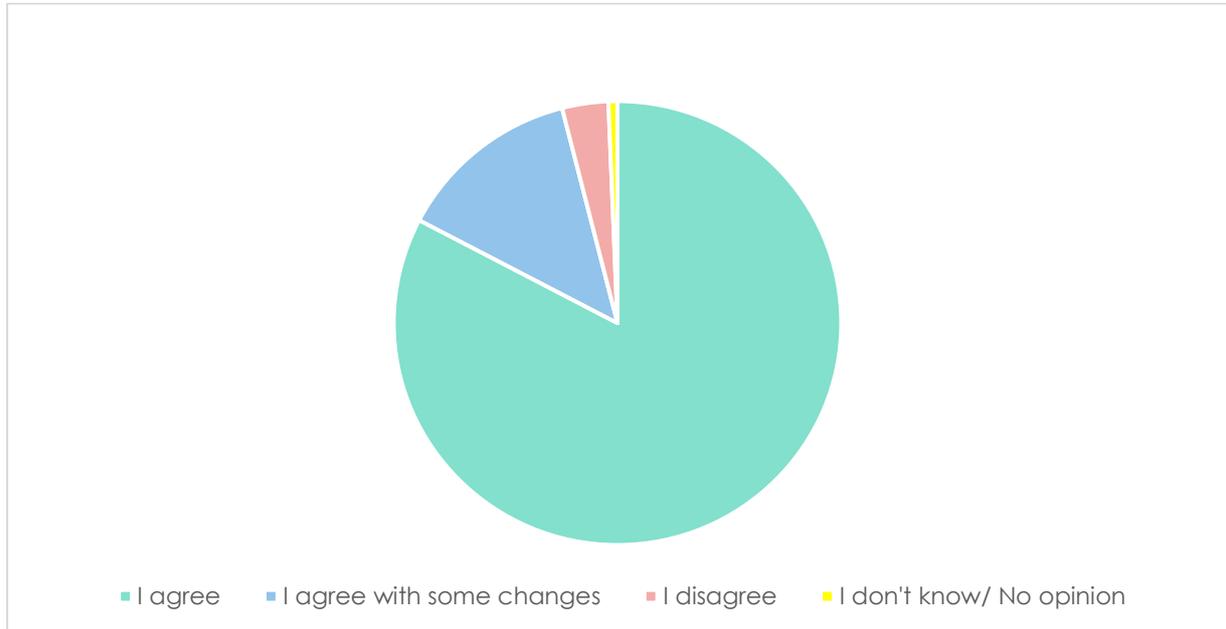


Of the 929 people responding overall 54% of those agree with the area covered by the previous order, with 27% would like some changes only 17% disagreed with the restriction.

11. If you have any additional comments or suggested changes to these areas, please tell Us

This was an open response that requested additional comments in relation to question 10. There was a list giving details of the areas identified. 255 individual comments were received and most agreed with the areas identified with some additional changes to the times of day and/or times of year. Some also requested this this was not criminalised as some dogs are well enough behaved to be off the lead. Additional areas were requested which included beaches/ seafront area and some additional golf courses and cricket field.

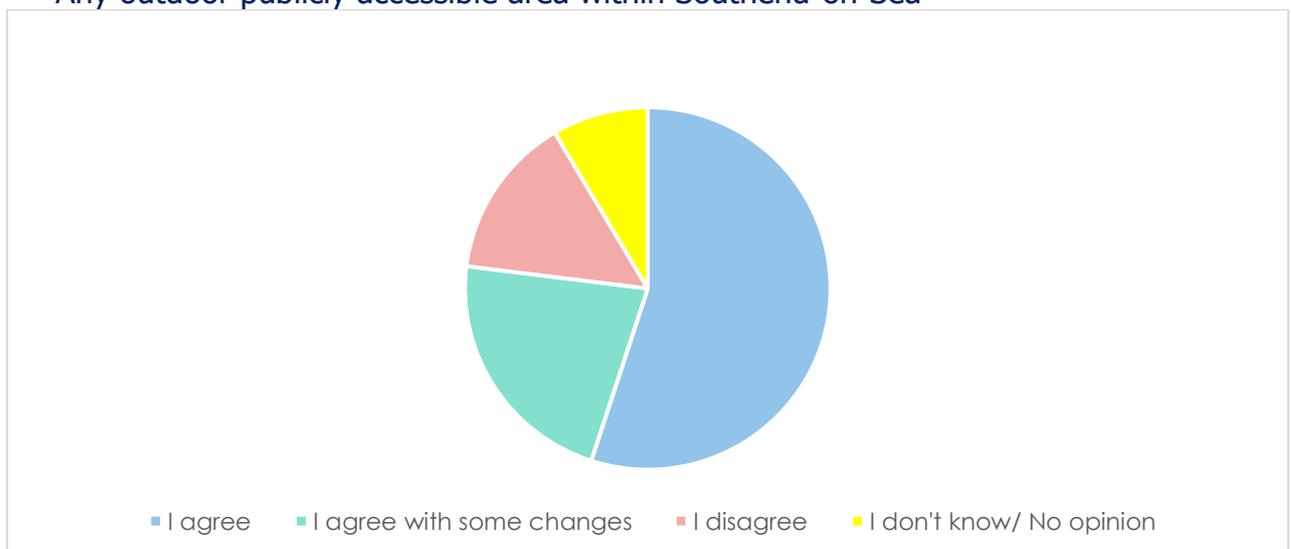
12. The following restriction was included in the previous dog control order. To what extent would you agree or disagree with this being included in any potential future orders? A person in charge of a dog shall be guilty of an offence if they fail to comply with a direction to put and keep a dog on a lead from an authorised officer**. **Authorised officer refers to any police officer, community safety officer, or any other officer authorised by the Council for this purpose.



Of those responding the overall majority agreed that a person should be guilty of an offence if they fail to put a dog on the lead if requested to do so by a Community Safety Officer, Police Officer or authorised officer of the Borough Council. Only 3% of those responded disagreed with 13% agreeing with some changes.

13. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the area the order previously covered?

Any outdoor publicly accessible area within Southend-on-Sea



55% agree with the area the order previously covered with 22% agreeing with some changes closely followed by 15% of respondents disagreeing with the area.

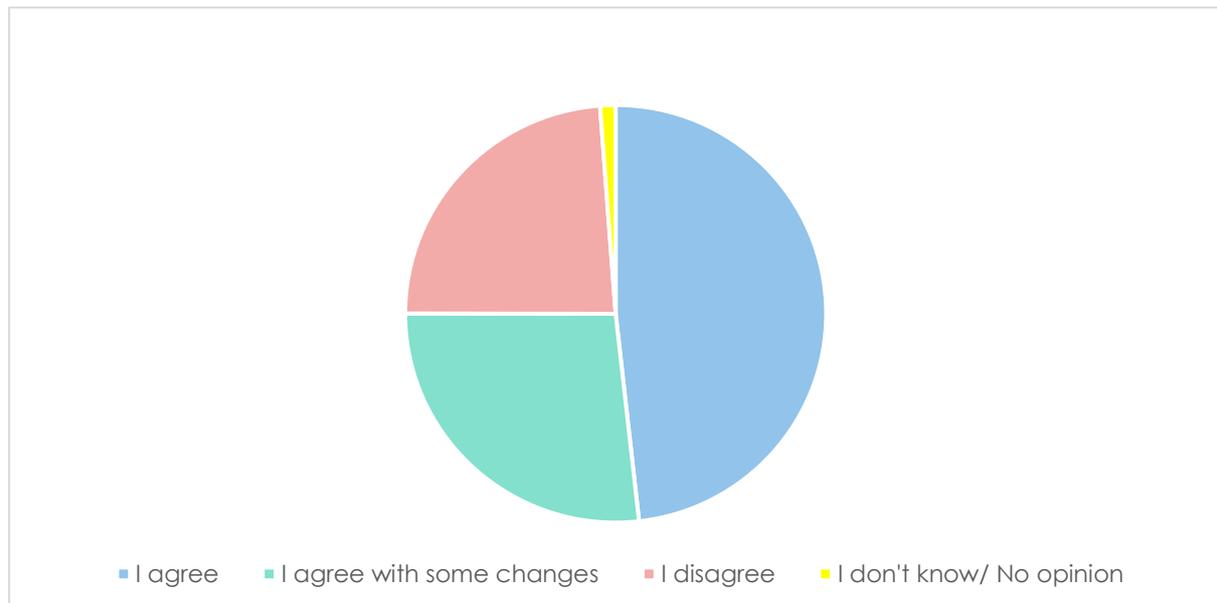
14. Any additional comments* or changes, please tell us

139 people responded to this with the consensus that there should be a dog friendly beach identified somewhere along the foreshore as long as they are on a lead and dog waste is cleared up after them. And more monitoring and enforcement for those that ignore the rules.

** Please see Appendix one for all comments received*

15. The following restriction was included in the previous dog control order. To what extent would you agree or disagree with this being included in any potential future orders?

A person will be guilty of an offence if they take onto, or permit a dog to enter and remain on, any of the land set out below. **All children's play areas within public parks within Southend-on-Sea. The following sports areas: Belfairs Park Tennis Courts, Bonchurch Park Tennis Courts, Chalkwell Park Tennis Courts, Cavendish Park Tennis and Basketball Courts, Priory Park Tennis Courts, Southchurch Park Tennis Courts, Shoebury Park Tennis Courts, Warner's Park- All Weather Pitch, Milton Road Gardens Tennis Courts, Cluny Square 5 a side pitch. All beaches out to the mean low water mark between 1st May and 30th September.*

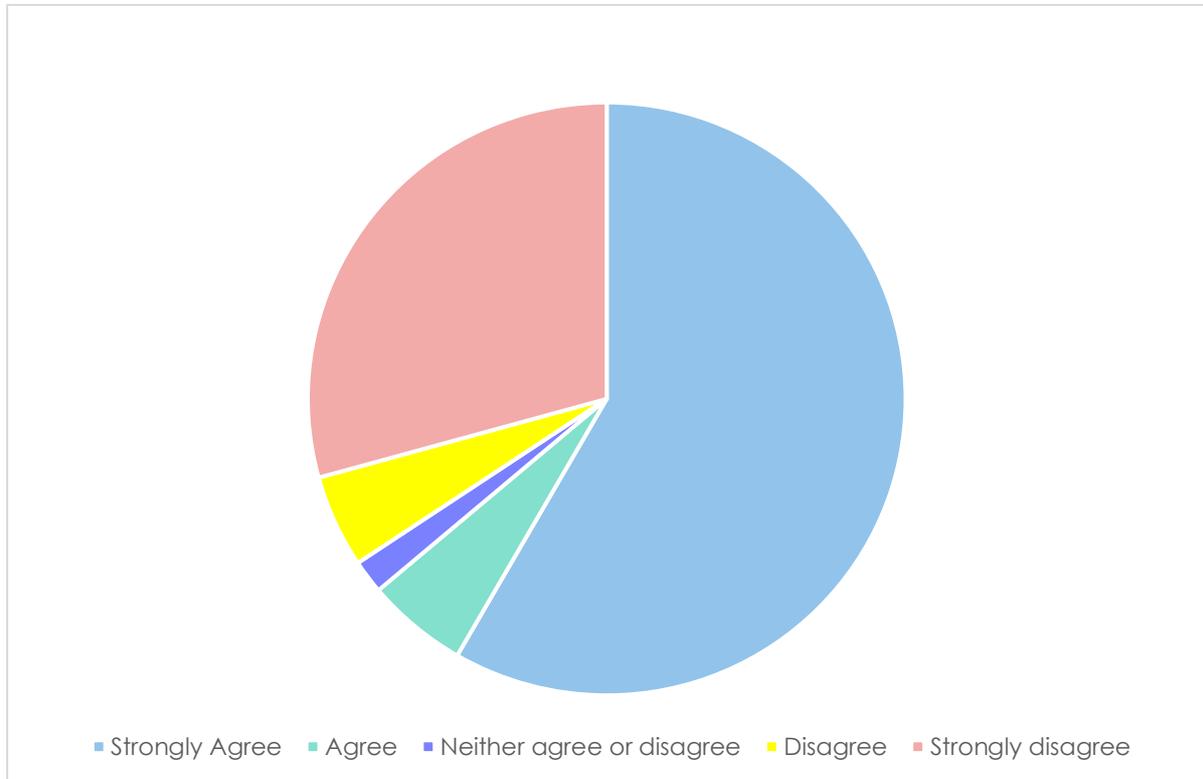


48% agreed with this statement with 27% agreeing with some changes, closely followed by 24% disagreeing completely.

16. If you have any additional changes to the areas please tell us

338 people commented on this with most people strongly disagreeing that all beaches should be included, some also identified that all beaches should be dog friendly all year round if they were on a lead, but again monitoring and enforcement needed to be improved. Other comments included dogs should be allowed on the beach during the summer months early morning and late evening. **Please see Appendix one for full comments*

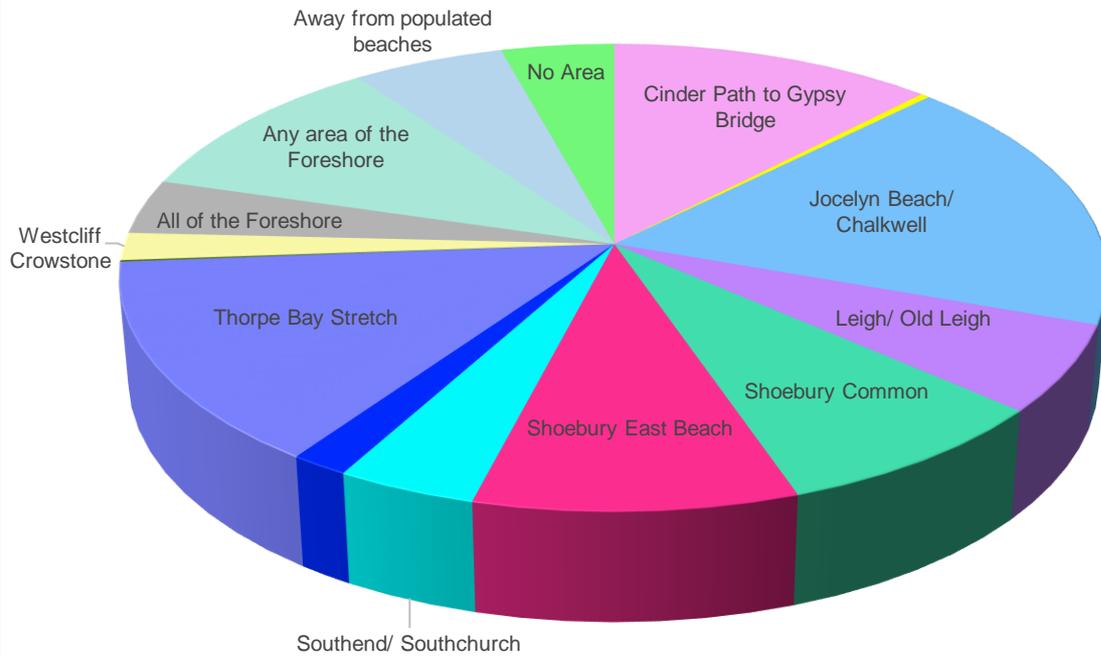
17. A petition has been submitted to Southend-on-Sea Borough Council requesting that a section of beach is kept available to those walking dogs all year round. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this request



Overall 58% of those responding strongly agree that there should be an area of foreshore allocated as a Dog Friendly Area, 29% strongly disagreed with the suggestion.

18. If you agree with this request, please let us know in the space below where within Southend-on-Sea you think may be suitable and why, for the location of this section of beach.

Within Southend-on-Sea you think may be suitable and why, for the location of this section of beach.



- Cinder Path to Gypsy Bridge
- City Beach/ Pier
- Jocelyn Beach/ Chalkwell
- Leigh/ Old Leigh
- Shoebury Common
- Shoebury East Beach
- Southend/ Southchurch
- Southend (excluding City Beach) / Westcliff Arches
- Thorpe Bay Stretch
- Two Tree Island
- Westcliff Crowstone
- All of the Foreshore
- Any area of the Foreshore
- Away from populated beaches
- No Area

19. If you have any additional comments* regarding the PSPO - Dog Control please let us know in the space below

264 people added their comments to this area most thanking the Council for consulting and allowing people to provide opinions. With others reiterating the issues of irresponsible dog ownership, the benefits of dog friendly beaches and more monitoring and enforcement.

**Please see Appendix one for full list of comments*

We also received 7 emails and 2 letters with comments these are included below, the comments.

| Emails | |
|--------|--|
| 1. | Can we have a section of the beach in Southend or Chalkwell that dogs are allowed on all year round. Most coastal areas allocate a section for this but not Southend. |
| 2. | <p>As a senior resident of the borough, I believe the council is wrong to refuse local dog owners the opportunity to use the public beaches throughout the year.</p> <p>From my travels around this country, it has become quite obvious that Southend is one of very few councils which ban both dogs and their owners from walking the beaches all year, despite contributing to the councils income. Does seem somewhat biased and unfair. Especially when many residents keep pet dogs as security, to protect both themselves and their property.</p> <p>The great majority of dog walkers do instinctively clear up after their dogs, which is far better than many visitors did when visiting our beaches earlier this year. What on earth did our council think they were doing closing all the public toilets during the initial lockdown, after all , people were allowed to go to work, the shops and to exercise, but without access to such essential facilities. Absolutely ridiculous!</p> <p>Whilst considering the length of available beaches in Southend, I think there should be at least 4 all year round dog beaches ,with adequate dog poo bins. Some authorities actively encourage the use of any available rubbish bins for dog waste disposal, very sensible.</p> |
| 3. | <p>This idea is obviously doomed to fail !!!</p> <p>A few times having read about it in the Echo , I have looked several times for an easy Yes/No survey ,to allow dogs on a selected part of beach year round ??</p> <p>No such thing , you have a long winded process to sign in , then pages of everything you are not allowed to do with a dog !!!!</p> <p>No detailed information about allowing dogs on beaches at all!!</p> <p>Personally YES I'm all for it !!</p> <p>Having visited Walton on the Naze last year in the summer, it was a joy to see families and *dogs* (a lot of them) on every beach . Everyone appeared to be having a brilliant time . Personally I think us humans can make a hell of a lot more mess with no dog , than a responsible dog owner , armed with a poo bag . Southend take note</p> |
| 4. | <p>Re the proposal to open part of the beach to dogs all year round.</p> <p>I am a beach hut owner and am opposed to this unless the Council are prepared to enact stricter controls over dog owners generally. I have often asked dog owners to control their dogs who urinate and defecate on the beach and received</p> |

a torrent of abuse from some- admittedly a minority but those are the people causing the problem. I know I'm not the only person to have witnessed this. Most owners I agree are responsible but we often come across people who are just completely irresponsible. The other day I was eating my lunch at our hut, a dog pooped directly in front of me and the owner tried to ignore it. I called her back and tbf she did respond then but she hadn't been taking any notice of what the dog was doing and clearly didn't think it necessary.

I sometimes think owners assume the beach somehow naturally cleans itself? I personally don't have a problem with a small area being designated for dogs all year round BUT it would need to be policed properly with staff put in place to monitor it and I really don't trust the Council to do that adequately.

I realise there is a strong lobby to change the current rules but I sincerely hope that if this is agreed the Council are going to fund the cost of proper staffing of the areas and boundaries where dogs will be allowed to use the beach.

5. I was unable to get into the survey on your web site (yoursay.southend.gov.uk/pspo-dog-control). This may be due to my somewhat dated notebook. I also could not answer if the need to sign in would preclude me from taking the survey (the answer is YES).

I have found, that substantial majority of dog owners are NOT responsible, do NOT properly control their dogs and do NOT clean up after their dogs! Therefore, I would prefer the following changes:

* A limit of walking no more than 3 dogs to ensure that dogs are kept under control.

(anybody owning > 3 dogs will undoubtedly have yard space for them)

* A Dog should ALWAYS be on a Lead, when in public spaces. Larger dogs should also have a muzzle.

* Dogs (or other animals, except guide dogs) should NOT be allowed at all in any designated children's play areas.

* Dogs (or other animals, except guide dogs) should NOT be allowed on beaches at any time (even in winter).

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1. Do there need to be any changes to the previous restrictions? YES

2. Do there need to be any changes to the areas that were included? YES

3. Should any of the previous restrictions be excluded? NO

4. Are there any additional disruptive behaviours that were not previously included? YES

Dogs should not be allowed to pee (or poop) on any property. I have seen (too many times) people walk their dog, even on a lead, who let it pee on every shop front they are walking along (sometimes even letting it run into the store itself), on fences, cars, ... [obviously, never their own!]

6. As a local resident I strongly object to dogs using any Leigh or Chalkwell Beach during the summer months. I have swum and still do at Jocelyn Beach since I was a baby and now do with my sons and daughters over a long period from April to November.

7. I write to you as Chairman of the Leigh Seafront Action Group and the group that fought against the beach to the west and to protect old Leigh and Joscelynes Beach – a much used and loved beach in general for children, parents and grandchildren.

On behalf of our members we totally oppose the idea that dogs should be allowed on Leigh and Chalkwell beaches in the summer periods. It is a health issue especially for children and an issue that if implemented would cause major issues between people – packed beaches and those with dogs who would feel

that their right to these beaches (i.e loose dogs) were sacrosanct no matter what the size or behaviour of their dog (or most likely dogs) might be. Lots of children are terrified of large dogs and even small yapping and nipping dogs.

Southend has 7 miles of beaches and the small beaches of old Leigh and Chalkwell residents are the only non car backed beaches – should not be sacrificed. Thousands of local families love, used and still do use these beaches regularly even in cold weather i.e 20 swimming in November. Therefore I wish to express my total opposition to this idea on behalf of all those Leigh and Chalkwell Residents who have supported us since the 1970s.