

Dispersal Order Protocol – Cheltenham Town Centre

The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 gives the police powers in designated areas to disperse groups of two or more where their presence or behaviour has resulted, or is likely to result, in a member of the public being harassed, intimidated, alarmed or distressed.

The basis of this application is supported by numerous complaints of crime and disorder within the designated area and it is anticipated that the introduction of a 'dispersal order' will provide a suitable tool to deal with minority element of youths or other persons responsible for the current issues.

Individuals who do not reside within the designated area can be directed to leave the locality and may be excluded for up to 24 hours. A person does not commit an offence because an officer has chosen to use the power to disperse, but failure to follow the officer's direction is an offence. The 2003 Act also creates a power to remove to their home any young person under 16 who is out on the streets in a dispersal zone between 9pm and 6am and not accompanied by an adult.

The Protocol

This power will only be used against 'known individuals' by Cheltenham South Neighbourhood Area Staff. Where police or Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) attend an incident of anti-social behaviour or disorder within the designated area they will engage with those to establish identity.

In addition any children and young people who become involved in this process will be subject to the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) via the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit based within Cheltenham Borough Council, in delivery of frontline services that are integrated and focused around the needs of children and young people.

Inspector Tim Waterhouse
Cheltenham South Neighbourhood Policing Area
1 November 2012