

Public Consultation - Website	Responses	SBC Reply and Action
<p>1. Transparency</p> <p>The policies have completely omitted to have a specific section on transparency in these policies. The people of Slough should be easily able to see who is collecting money from the public, for whom, and how much is collected and when, for public transparency but also to prevent crime and fraud.</p> <p>The council should publish this information on their website as open data in a CSV file containing the following :-</p> <p>Organisation collecting Charity (if different) Registered Charity number Collection type - street or house Collection date start Collection date finish Collection location Amount Collected Amount received by charity</p> <p>It is totally unacceptable for the policy to make a mention of FOI as if this helps - why should the public have to go through a very lengthy process to find something out the council already records and could publish on the Internet with a click of a button ? What's it hiding ? What's wrong with true transparency ?</p>	<p>This can be looked into as an option for publication on the Slough Borough Council Licensing web pages. Being a procedural change for the Licensing Team it is unnecessary to include it in the policy document.</p>	
<p>2. Collection of Direct debit details in the streets should be explicitly banned. Let's be clear, this is not collecting a bit of loose change, this is preying upon the weak willed in society under duress for thousands of pounds, much of which goes to the collection company rather than the charity. This is exploiting the poor in Slough and should be banned outright.</p>	<p>Charity collection by direct debit is not covered by current legislation and therefore falls outside of the Local Authority remit. In 2011 Slough Borough Council Licensing and the Public Fundraising Association (PFRA) entered into a Site Management Agreement (SMA) which is a co-regulatory voluntary agreement for charity collections on Slough High Street. PFRA are the membership body for charities and agencies carrying out street and doorstep Direct Debit fundraising.</p>	
<p>3. The frequency of collections in the high street should be halved. For those of us that live near the high street to be constantly harassed by street collectors is distressing and unpleasant. Long gone are the days of collectors standing quietly, make no doubt about it there is a new breed of professional chugger on commission designed to make locals that live near the high street lives hell.</p>	<p>The SMA was implemented to reduce the amount of charities collecting on our High Street and offer greater degree of collector regulation with the PFRA provided at no cost to the Council. Since implementation of the SMA in 2011 we have received one complaint against a direct debit collector which was dealt with by the PFRA.</p>	

<p>4. Places of leisure ban. Organised collectors should be banned from entering places of leisure. No one goes out to relax only to be harassed by collectors using subtle forms of social coercion to collect money, again it's preying on the weak. What's wrong with collecting at the door and then leaving people to enjoy their night out without being hassled ?</p>	<p>Collections on private premises are subject to authorisation by the premises owner, not the Local Authority whose regulatory powers are restricted by current legislation to street or house to house collections.</p>	
<p>5. Social enterprises listed as charities should be explicitly banned from collecting. These organisations seem to manage to be limited companies whilst at the same time registered as charities. This is a very shadowy area that to me is being exploited and should therefore be stopped. In Slough we have a volunteering service registered as a charity, but when you check the details about the organisation it says 'no one in our organisation is paid over £60,000 per annum' Are you kidding !!! Why are they paid so much ? Couldn't use a volunteer then ? ;-)</p>	<p>The concerns you raise in point 5 would need to be addressed by the Charities Commission.</p>	
<p>6. Professional collectors should be banned. If a charity really is a good cause then volunteers will be prepared to collect for it without any personal gain whatsoever. Most collections are now done by people who profit personally from doing it, which is why in recent times the number of collections in Slough high street has spiralled totally out of control. It's not a big deal to people in the council who don't live near Slough high street, don't visit it often, and drive in and out from the motorway to their offices on the edge of town, but it's a very different if you live near the high street and you are harassed all the time !</p>	<p>It is beyond the Local Authority's remit to dictate how any particular charity chooses to conduct their fundraising activities and your concerns in respect of any individual collection agency would need to be addressed by that agency or perhaps, the charity employing them.</p>	<p>It is hoped that the proposed charity collections policies you have commented on will assist the Local Authority to ensure any permits or licenses granted will enable only genuine local charitable causes to reap the greatest benefit from conducting their collections within Slough Borough; although there is a strong argument that any amount donated is better than none however I'm sure we all wish all charities received 100% of donations every time.</p>