

Summary of comments received during Responsible Busking Code of Conduct consultation – broken down into key themes

Do you enjoy buskers in Perth city centre?

Key themes:

1. Positive impact on atmosphere

- Many respondents value buskers for adding vibrancy, life and enjoyment to an otherwise “quiet” or “run-down” city centre.

2. Mixed quality of performers

- Strong distinction between “good talent” (welcomed) and “poor quality/repetitive acts” (criticised).

3. Noise concerns (especially amplification)

- Frequent complaints about volume levels, particularly amplified music being intrusive and unavoidable.

4. Impact on daily activities

- Negative effects highlighted for workers, residents and shoppers (e.g. difficulty concentrating, holding conversations, or relaxing).

5. Conditional support

- A common middle-ground: support for busking if it is controlled, especially around volume, duration and authenticity.

Views on introducing a Code of Conduct

Key themes:

1. Broad support for regulation

- Many agree that some structure is needed to manage noise, behaviour and fairness.

2. Desire for balance (not over-regulation)

- Significant concern from others that rules could be too restrictive and deter performers.

3. Focus on noise control

- Strong demand for limits on amplification and clearer expectations on acceptable volume levels.

4. Fairness and consistency

- Seen as a way to ensure equal opportunities for buskers and prevent individuals dominating spaces.

5. Scepticism about necessity / priorities

- Some feel this is not a major issue compared to other city centre concerns (e.g. antisocial behaviour, cleanliness).

Views on proposed busking zones

Key themes

1. Zones too close together

- Repeated concern that locations are adjacent, leading to overlapping sound and poor experience.

2. Need for more / alternative locations

- Suggestions for additional sites (e.g. further along High Street, near cultural venues, other streets).

3. Concerns about impact on businesses

- Zones located near shops/cafés seen as problematic due to noise for staff and customers.

4. Flexibility preferred over fixed zones

- Many respondents favour allowing buskers to choose locations rather than strict zoning.

5. Support for zoning in principle

- Some agree zones are helpful for organisation, as long as spacing and selection are improved.

Views on permitted days and times

Key themes

1. Hours seen as too long

- Many feel current proposals (especially 10–6) are excessive, leading to “all day” exposure.
2. Preference for shorter or staggered periods
 - Suggestions include shorter daily windows, split times, or fewer days.
 3. Need to protect residents and workers
 - Emphasis on providing “quiet periods”, especially mornings, evenings and Sundays.
 4. Diverging views on timing
 - Some want later hours (for evening economy), others earlier cut-offs (for peace and quiet).
 5. General acceptance of time controls
 - Despite disagreements on specifics, most accept the principle of time restrictions.
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Views on other restrictions (time limits, rotation)

Key themes:

1. Support for limiting duration
 - Seen as a way to prevent repetition, reduce nuisance, and improve variety.
 2. Debate over appropriate length
 - Opinions vary widely (some say 1 hour, others 2–4 hours, some no limit).
 3. Fairness and access
 - Time limits viewed positively for ensuring more performers can participate.
 4. Concerns about practicality
 - Questions about how limits will be monitored, enforced, and communicated.
 5. Risk of unintended consequences
 - Some worry limits could reduce income for buskers or discourage participation.
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Challenges of implementing the Code

Key themes:

1. Enforcement concerns (dominant theme)

- Widespread doubt about who will enforce rules and whether resources exist.

2. Compliance issues

- Expectation that some buskers will ignore rules without meaningful consequences.

3. Resourcing and cost

- Concerns about staff time, funding, and impact on council services.

4. Potential for conflict

- Risks of disputes between buskers (e.g. timekeeping, space allocation).

5. Clarity and communication

- Need for clear guidance, signage, and mechanisms for reporting breaches.

Perceived positives of the Code

Key themes

1. Reduced noise and nuisance

- Strong expectation that controls will create a more pleasant environment.

2. Improved experience for residents and businesses

- Better working conditions and quality of life frequently mentioned.

3. Greater fairness and balance

- More equitable access to space and opportunities for performers.

4. Enhanced city centre atmosphere

- Potential to retain positive aspects of busking while reducing negatives.

5. Better quality and variety

- Anticipation that regulation may encourage more diverse and higher-quality acts.