

Agenda Item No.

REPORT TO: Cabinet Member for Housing & Safer Communities

DATE: 2nd August 2022

SERVICE AREA: Safer Communities

REPORTING OFFICER: Community Safety Officer
(*Helen Richardson*)

SUBJECT: **HARROGATE DISTRICT STREET AID: AN UPDATE OF THE INITIATIVE TO ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF STREET SLEEPERS AND BEGGING IN THE HARROGATE DISTRICT.**

WARD/S AFFECTED: All District

FORWARD PLAN REF: N/A

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide information to the Cabinet Member for Housing & Safer Communities regarding the second year of 'Harrogate Street Aid'.
- 1.2 To approve updating the name to 'Harrogate District Street Aid' reflecting it is a district wide project.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Cabinet Member for Housing & Safer Communities:

- 2.1 approves the review of the second year of the 'Harrogate Street Aid' initiative
- 2.2 agrees to the continuation/adoption of the initiative renamed 'Harrogate District Street Aid' to reflect it is district wide
- 2.3 agrees to the commissioning of research into the possibility of additional for terminals across the District with a focus on Ripon and Knaresborough in particular.
- 2.4 agrees to the continued development of the Publicity and Communications plan for Street Aid.

3.0 RECOMMENDED REASONS FOR DECISION/S

- 3.1 Harrogate District Street Aid continues to give a focus for agencies to work together to support those street sleeping and begging, and a reduction has been visible – particularly with regard to associated ASB in Harrogate town centre.
- 3.2 Street aid is having a positive impact supporting vulnerable people with a history of street sleeping in the district.
- 3.3 Harrogate District Street Aid continues to enhance working relationships between the organisations involved in supporting vulnerable individuals. There has been much positive feedback and we can continue to work together to support those on the street or with a history of street sleeping.

4.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND RECOMMENDED FOR REJECTION

- 4.1 To not continue with the initiative – this is recommended for rejection as Street Aid has proven to be a successful support for those street sleeping and begging in the district. It has also heightened multi-agency work around those street sleeping and begging.
- 4.2 To not agree to the re-name ‘Harrogate District Street Aid’ – this is recommended to be rejected. It is recognised that there are people in need across the district – it would not be possible to set up further separate Street Aids for areas – eg Ripon Street Aid.

5.0 BACKGROUND

- 5.1 Harrogate Street Aid was launched 28th October 2019 – a tap terminal in Marks and Spencer’s Oxford Street, Harrogate window and online donations. In January 2020 applications were opened for agencies to apply for grants. In August 2021 a second tap terminal was launched in Victoria Shopping Centre Piazza entrance window. Harrogate BID have worked with HSBC to locate a third terminal in the Cambridge Street branch – this is funded by HSBC Community Fund.
- 5.2 The number of reported incidents of street sleepers and begging has reduced in the time Harrogate Street Aid has been in existence. There are still some incidents of anti-social behaviour (ASB) from those street sleeping and begging which have caused complaints from the public and businesses. This still requires a multi-agency approach as the individuals involved in begging can be vulnerable.
- 5.3 The key aims of the initiative:
- work towards addressing the issue of street sleepers and begging
 - educate the public regarding the issue of street sleepers and begging
 - to raise funds centrally to disseminate to individuals via organisations involved with homeless/street sleepers and those begging.

- 5.4 Harrogate District Street Aid continues to support multi-agency working and is now increasing business and public support via marketing materials, communication and links with Harrogate Business Improvement District (Harrogate BID).
- 5.5 A Working Group, made up of professionals including HBC Community Safety, Housing, Partnership & Engagement, Communications and Elected Members, North Yorkshire Police and Harrogate Homeless Project, continues to liaise re begging and street sleepers in the Harrogate district. This includes finding out who they are, their residential status, begging locations hotspots used and the impact on the local community and businesses.
- 5.6 Two Ridings Community Foundation (TRCF) continue to administer Harrogate Street Aid donations, grant applications and funding. This partnership is strong. TRCF are able to reclaim gift aid which increases the funds available.
- 5.7 The Working Group identified 'Harrogate Street Aid' - a contactless tap terminal and 'on-line' donation scheme tailored for the Harrogate district working in partnership to create positive change.
- 5.8 Geography: the pilot focused on one terminal in Marks and Spencer's Foodhall window Oxford St Harrogate, with the funds being available to support street sleepers and those with a history of rough sleeping in the Harrogate district.

6.0 THE REVIEW

- 6.1 Harrogate District Street Aid has raised valuable funds to support those street sleeping and begging in the district. During the second year £9,830.98 was donated via the tap terminals, online and reclaimed via gift aid. (Appendix A – Two Ridings Statement 21-22 and Appendix B – Overview of Income, grants and expenditure).
- 6.2 In the second year Harrogate District Street Aid had 17 applications for grants which have benefitted 17 individuals. £7000.11 was given in grants to those with a history of rough sleeping in the district. (Appendix A – Two Ridings Statement 21-22)
- 6.3 Harrogate District Street Aid has helped inform partners and the wider community regarding how to support street sleepers and those begging. It has collated information and provided literature in several forms (paper, pdf, jpeg for examples) to educate all. (Appendix C)
- 6.4 A second tap terminal was launched August 2021 in the Victoria Shopping Centre Piazza entrance window, and plans for further possibilities in Ripon and Knaresborough are being researched. This terminal was moved inside the shopping centre in March 2022 as it was felt there was better footfall.
- 6.5 A third tap terminal was funded by HSBC Community fund with support from Harrogate BID, this will be located inside HSBC Cambridge Street branch.
- 6.6 Links with local businesses and Harrogate BID have been made.

- 6.7 Since the launch an increase in donations has been seen month on month. Even through the Covid19 lockdown we have seen an upward trend in donations. Appendix A gives the TRCF fund updates from March 2021 to March 2022.
- 6.8 Applications for grants opened in January 2020 enabling organisations supporting the homeless to apply for grants of up to £500 for individuals where other funding is not available. Cash is not given directly to individuals nor is funding available for anything that may encourage an individual to go back onto the streets e.g. sleeping bag, tent. Harrogate Street Aid is raising valuable funds to be used to help get people off, and keep them off, the streets. The framework for Harrogate Street Aid outlines the application process, criteria and timeframe for a grant from Harrogate Street Aid. This is accessed on Two Ridings Community Foundation (TRCF) website via www.harrogatestreetaid.co.uk
- 6.9 Key Achievements:
- Awarding of 17 grants in the second year reflecting an increase in grants awarded. 27 grants supporting 28 people with a history of street sleeping have now been awarded from the beginning of the initiative.
 - Continuation of the multi-agency working group
 - Identification of the location and installation of the tap terminal in Marks and Spencer's Foodhall window, Oxford Street, Harrogate
 - Marks and Spencer continue to be a supportive partner and ambassador for the Street Aid Project
 - A second window tap terminal located in Victoria Shopping Centre Piazza window due to good working relationship with businesses and the shopping centre, now moved inside the shopping centre
 - Continuation and development of the agreement with TRCF
 - A website domain www.harrogatestreetaid.co.uk directly links to TRCF Harrogate Street Aid page
 - Specific streetaid@harrogate.gov.uk email address
 - An external designer continues to produce all marketing designs – Appendix C contains a selection of designs
 - Harrogate Town Neighbourhood Policing Team carry information cards to give to the public and those begging or sleeping on the street (included in Appendix C). This is extended to Harrogate BID ambassadors and Harrogate Borough Council (HBC) staff
 - Marketing information distributed to Harrogate Town businesses – this continues and widens to businesses in the Harrogate district (included in Appendix C)
 - Coordinated activities between the police and agencies involved with street sleepers to ensure support is given
 - HBC Housing Options teams continue to offer outreach to those on the streets. In April 2022 two Rough Sleeper Coordinators were appointed within the HBC Housing Options team plus a homeless prevention officer
 - Streamlining of the reporting process of street sleeping and begging ensuring action continues to be taken immediately including other HBC teams, for example street cleansing
 - Other HBC teams continue to support the initiative – organising fund-raising activities in aid of Street Aid, sharing promotional materials

- The Community Safety Hub discuss those known to be street sleeping and begging, linking in with police and CCTV to ensure support is available
- Harrogate Town businesses have been contacted directly regarding Street Aid and are very supportive
- Harrogate BID is very supportive – sponsoring promotional activity on bollard covers and leading with a third terminal in HSBC Cambridge Street branch
- The application and grant processes have been developed and promoted
- Delivery of a publicity campaign with further scope to develop
- Cambridge Street Aid won the prestigious LA Award with the judges commenting all LAs should adopt the initiative. York, Lancaster District and Lichfield have also adopted Street Aid and we continue to receive many enquiries from other local authorities
- Harrogate Town Football team chose Street Aid as their chosen cause for the last game of the season 2021 – against Cambridge City football club so a great ‘Street Aid’ game
- Harrogate BID invited the Street Aid working group to speak to their members
- A successful Street Aid workshop was held via Teams (March 2022) involving Harrogate, Cambridge, Lancaster and York partners along with many local agencies including IDAS, Harrogate Homeless Project, Probation, North Yorkshire Horizons
- Two new HBC staff appointed specifically to work with those with a history of street sleeping and facing exclusion, plus a homeless prevention officer.
- The introduction of a weekly multi-agency Homeless meeting looking at those rough sleeping and begging, and working with them to secure accommodation. This is attended by various agencies including HBC officers, Harrogate Homeless Project staff, police, probation, NY Horizons

7.0. COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

- 7.1 Raising awareness about the Street Aid project has been crucial. This has included the development of a series of leaflets and point of sale materials for shops and for use on various media platforms using a clear Street Aid branding. (Appendix C)
- 7.2 The Council’s Communications Team have been responsible for the development and implementation of the Street Aid communications activity. This has included the use of press releases, social media, contributions in the residents’ news and the hire of a bill board.
- 7.3 The continued use of an external designer allowed for the creative design and quick turnaround of the artwork and marketing designs – samples of Harrogate District Street Aid materials can be found in Appendix C.
- 7.4 A Street Aid Consultation was undertaken in April 2022 by the HBC Partnership and Engagement Team (Appendix D) which showed of those that responded: 37% had heard of Harrogate Street Aid

7% had donated
72% had seen people street sleeping and begging
30% were aware of agencies that supported those street sleeping.

This was originally undertaken in 2019 when responses reflected: 39% had heard of Harrogate Street Aid largely via local media, and 5% had donated via the tap terminal. None had used the online donation facility, 79% had seen people street sleeping/begging in the district and knew of organisations available to help.

8.0 LESSONS LEARNED

8.1 Street Aid was launched on October 28th 2019. A second terminal was launched August 2021, there are still difficulties in securing terminal locations.

8.2 Tap terminal location difficulties encountered include:

- liaising with large retailer head offices
- shop windows varying in size and depth
- large retailers have set guidelines regarding their window dressing
- electricity supply for the terminal
- the terminal metal stand height needed altering to fit the window
- wifi connectivity issues
- large retailer internet firewall security prevents wired ethernet.

These are considered for any future terminal locations.

8.3 There is a need to continually promote the application for grants process to encourage partners to apply. A workshop was held in March 2022 to encourage applications.

9.0 REQUIRED ASSESSMENTS AND IMPLICATIONS

The following were considered

9.1 Financial Implications

9.1.1 Costs of the hire of the tap terminal, TRCF administration and grant awarding could be met via reclaimed gift-aid however all costs are covered by the £5k allocated by HBC for Street Aid.

9.1.2 HBC allocated £10k specifying £5k is to cover further terminals and £5k for PR support

9.2 HR Implications

9.2.1 The scheme is administered and operated by TRCF. Lead responsibility for the overall project is with the Community Safety Team and therefore within existing resources.

9.3 Legal Implications

9.3.1 Legal Services were consulted in relation to the preparation of this report and have provided advice with regards to TRCF contract and terminal locations.

9.4 Risk Assessment

- 9.4.1 A risk assessment was completed for the pilot project. This has been reviewed for this report and updated (Appendix E). There is minimal risk associated with this initiative. It should be noted that this initiative will not remove street begging/street sleepers completely.

9.5 Equality and Diversity

- 9.5.1 An equality impact assessment has been completed to support this report (Appendix F). The initiative has a positive impact on many of those who fall within a protected characteristic and who may end up homeless, usually vulnerable individuals due to their circumstances.

10.0 CONCLUSION

- 10.1 Harrogate Street Aid pilot was officially launched 28th October 2019. It has raised over £20,000 (31.3.2022) and has received positive support from the community and businesses across the Harrogate District.
- 10.2 17 grants have been awarded in the second year. 27 grants have been awarded supporting 28 individuals since Street Aid was launched (31.3.2022).
- 10.3 The Working Group identified the initiative tailored for the Harrogate District, working in partnership to create positive change with a strong brand being established. Partner agencies continue to engage well and support the project.
- 10.4 Harrogate Street Aid is raising valuable funds for those street sleeping and begging in the area; it also informs partners and the wider community regarding partnership working involving street sleepers and begging.
- 10.5 The Cabinet Member will continue to receive regular updates regarding progress of the Street Aid initiative.
- 10.6 The pilot was focused on the tap terminal in Harrogate, the pilot was successful and we have now incorporated the District into the brand – Harrogate District Street Aid With the future focus being on terminals across the district
- 10.7 Applications for grants are increasing and good news stories (anonymised) are created for publishing once grants awarded. The scheme continues to be promoted regarding grant applications.

OFFICER CONTACT: Please contact Helen Richardson, Community Safety Officer, if you require any further information on the contents of this report.

The officer can be contacted at the Community Safety Team, Safer Communities, Civic Centre, St Luke's Mount, Harrogate, HG1 2AE, telephone – 01423 500600 Ext 58131; e-mail – helen.richardson@harrogate.gov.uk

Papers attached:

Appendix A – TRCF Yearly Report 2021-22

Appendix B – Overview of Income, Grants and Expenditure

Appendix C – Harrogate District Branded Marketing Examples
Appendix D – Street Aid Consultation
Appendix E – Risk Assessment 2022
Appendix F – Equality Impact Assessment 2022