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<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Cabinet Member Housing & Safer Communities
<b>DATE:</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> August 2022
<b>SERVICE AREA:</b>	Safer Communities
<b>REPORTING OFFICERS:</b>	HBC Community Safety Officer: Helen Richardson North Yorkshire Police: Inspector Dave Barf North Yorkshire Police: Sergeant Andy Graham
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>A 12 month pilot scheme to place a secure knife bin on Harrogate Borough Council (HBC) land to facilitate and complement North Yorkshire Police (NYP) operations and amnesties.</b>
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>	[Ward]High Harrogate
<b>FORWARD PLAN REF:</b>	Key Decision No. or N/A

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## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To seek endorsement from the Cabinet Member for Housing & Safer Communities to position a knife bin on HBC land for an initial pilot period of 12 months.
- 1.2 To outline and highlight a multi-agency approach encouraging safe disposal of blades and reduce the associated risk of knives/blades in the Harrogate district.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 2.1 The Cabinet Member for Housing & Safer Communities supports the 12 month pilot project for the location of a knife amnesty bin on Dragon Road Car Park which is HBC land.

## **3.0 RECOMMENDED REASON/S FOR DECISION/S**

- 3.1 To reduce the availability of knives and support tackling the issue of knife crime in the district by placing a secure knife amnesty bin which is accessible at all times. NYP are to meet in full the cost of the provision and there are no initial or ongoing financial implications for HBC.

- 3.2 The Council is a named Responsible Authority under the Crime & Disorder Act 1998. This report demonstrates how as an agency they contribute to meeting their statutory duties under the Act.
- 3.3 A Community Safety Hub Priority is to consider early intervention and prevention approaches in the Harrogate district.
- 3.4 HBC Corporate Plan 2018-24 includes taking responsibility and working together with agencies.
- 3.5 NYP undertake a week of action with Operation Disarm which has shown there is a need for a permanent facility to safely dispose of knives.

#### **4.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTION/S CONSIDERED AND RECOMMENDED FOR REJECTION**

- 4.1 To not accept or endorse having a knife bin on HBC land in the Harrogate district. This is recommended for rejection as the purpose of the knife amnesty bin is to enable access at all times, which placing on HBC land facilitates. HBC work in partnership with NYP and this would facilitate an accessible knife amnesty bin at all times to complement NYP knife amnesty weeks.

#### **5.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

- 5.1 Nationally knife crime is increasing. Police forces hold week-long campaigns for knife amnesties which have proven successful in having many knives handed in.
- 5.2 Operation Sceptre is a coordinated week of activity where police forces across the country help keep knives off the streets and deter people from carrying them. Through information and intelligence police forces proactively target knife related offences.
  - 5.2.1 As part of the week long campaign NYP ask the public to dispose of any unwanted knives in their knife amnesty bins, which are in a number of stations across the county:
    - York
    - Scarborough
    - Malton
    - Harrogate
    - Skipton
    - Northallerton
    - Richmond
- 5.3 There is an increasing need for an all year round facility to enable people to safely, and anonymously, discard any knives/weapons found, not just during police campaigns at police stations.
- 5.4 Whilst NYP participate in knife amnesty weeks, there is currently no permanent provision for a knife bin across North Yorkshire.

- 5.5 There has been an 80% rise in North Yorkshire reported knife incidents in 2021 compared with 2020. (NYP statistics) This rise can be linked with complex social trends, a more violent society with a disregard for consequences, peer pressure and gang culture, County Lines and cross border criminals moving into the area.
- 5.6 In the Harrogate District there were over 2700 recorded incidents where a knife or bladed article was involved, or mentioned, between 01/01/2020 – June 2022.  
There were also 176 intelligence reports in relation to knives or bladed articles in the same period (NYP statistics).  
This accounts for 53% of reported knife related incidents out of the whole command area, which includes Craven, Harrogate, Hambleton and Richmondshire, and is why Harrogate was chosen for the pilot.
- 5.7 It has been well reported in local and national media that knife related incidents, and sadly deaths, are on the increase. Many of these are related to gang culture and County Lines drugs trade, primarily impacting on the lives of young people but also their families and the wider local community.

Some links to knife related incidents locally:

<https://www.harrogateadvertiser.co.uk/news/crime/man-who-whipped-out-murderous-machete-in-wetherby-service-station-in-front-of-terrified-young-burger-king-worker-jailed-for-22-months-3703276?fbclid=IwAR0CKhKpv8VL6YR76L09c1LTDWWSI-i-8hk-dvERmQdcPUCW1g5Bsuo6fs>

[Knaresborough teen had knife in Harrogate's Mojo bar - The Stray Ferret](#)

[Knife and class-A drugs seized by police in Harrogate | The Northern Echo](#)

[Man arrested on Harrogate street after reports he threatened neighbours with a knife | Yorkshire Post](#)

[Nine arrested and 'cuckooing' teens held in Harrogate following four-day police operation - YorkshireLive \(examinerlive.co.uk\)](#)

<https://thestrayferret.co.uk/man-arrested-after-police-seize-sword-knives-and-drugs-in-harrogate/>

- 5.8 The vast majority of police intelligence submissions are in relation to young people carrying knives for protection from other young people with whom they are 'feuding', to protect themselves from being attacked whilst carrying drugs and also to 'tax' known drug dealers or those in debt to drug dealers.
- 5.9 Knife carrying has resulted in incidents where weapons have been used to injure.
- 5.10 Examples of Knife Incidents in the Harrogate District:

Date	Details
Jan 2020	A male sustained life changing injuries in an attack near the Victoria shopping Centre
April 2020	A knife found concealed in Library Gardens Harrogate
March 2021	Murder due to multiple stab wounds in Mayfield Grove Harrogate
October 2021	3 young people pulled a knife on a milk man in Knaresborough

November 2021	12 arrests/incidents of note re knives, 3 knife related intelligence reports and 1 young person intervention
December 2021	Murder due to stabbing Mayfield Grove Harrogate
January 2022	19 arrests/incidents of note re knives, 3 knife related intelligence reports
February 2022	Arrest of man with 10 knives and a sword Skipton Road Harrogate plus 4 other incidents/arrests involving knives.
March 2022	11 arrests/incidents of note re knives
April 2022	7 arrests/incidents of note re knives
May 2022	9 arrests/incidents re knives
June 2022	4 arrests/incidents of note re knives, plus 2 incidents of severe injury and charges of attempted murder.

- 5.11 Details of NYP knife incidents for Jan 2021-June 2022 are listed in Appendix A – names, addresses, incident numbers and officer details have been redacted.
- 5.12 Appendix B shows an example of knives handed into Harrogate district police stations in 2022 supporting there is a need for a bin.
- 5.13 There are currently no permanent knife amnesty bins in the Harrogate district, or North Yorkshire. NYP have amnesty bins at certain stations during their amnesty weeks of action, approximately 4 per year, and people can hand in knives at police stations for destruction.

## **6.0 THE PROPOSAL:**

- 6.1 The main aim of the bin is to provide a safe deposit for knives all year round in the Harrogate district. The amnesty facility will allow unwanted or found knives and other prohibited offensive weapons, for example found or confiscated by parents from their children who do not want to directly hand them to the police, can be deposited in the bin. Every knife deposited in the bin is one less that could cause injury to others, early prevention is key.
- 6.2 There will also be a number of habitual knife carriers who, with an ongoing media and educational campaign, may well surrender weapons.
- 6.3 It is proposed to place 1 knife/article amnesty bin in HBC Dragon Road Car Park Harrogate for the pilot period.
- 6.4 This project will be a pilot scheme for 12 months in the Harrogate district. NYP aim is to rollout the bins across the entire force area subject to their evaluation of the pilot project.
- 6.5 The proposed pilot location is land owned by HBC. It was chosen as can be accessed at all times and is in a fairly central location. There are other recycling bins at this location.
- 6.6 A knife amnesty bin (See Appendix C for photo) will be branded with added relevant livery. The Wybone Knife Amnesty Bin is an example of the proposed bin. It is manufactured from strong and durable, premium galvanised steel.

The 2mm hot dipped galvanised steel ensures a secure manufacture and makes the bin difficult to damage.

- 6.7 The Wybone Knife Amnesty Bin is manufactured with universal, anti-vandal padlock hasps to the door of the unit. This is so that a secure padlock can be fitted to the bin with no unwanted access. This system prevents break-ins using bolt croppers and the stainless steel rod hinges have five point welded tie sections and an anti-crowbar return to prevent unwanted access.
- 6.8 An internal baffle system and one way chute prevents anyone from removing items once inside.
- 6.9 Once an item is surrendered and deposited inside, it cannot be retrieved without secure access to the chosen method of locking. Internal steel panels (baffle system) ensure the items fall securely into the waiting galvanised steel liner.
- 6.10 The internal liner is fitted with a handle to the front, to make emptying easy and convenient, whilst ensuring no need to touch the contents. A sloping top is built in to the design of this unit to prevent anti-social behaviours such as sitting or standing on the top of the unit or any unwanted items, such as litter, being left on the lid.
- 6.11 The Wybone Knife Amnesty Bin comes as standard with pre-drilled holes for ground fixing. Bolts will be used to fix it to the ground. HBC have given permission for this to be done and is included in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) (Appendix H)
- 6.12 This bin is used by police forces nationwide. In preparation of this report the NYP Designing Out Crime Officer (DOCO) was consulted and his comments are noted in Appendix D.

## **7.0 NYP RESPONSIBILITY:**

- 7.1 The day to day management of the knife amnesty bin, including clear protocols and risk assessments, will be the responsibility of NYP including regular site inspection, emptying, health and safety, PPE and disposal of contents.
- 7.2 Police staff will require initial H&S training and PPE – this will be funded by NYP.
- 7.3 The knives will be disposed of as per existing police policies for surrendered weapons. (See Appendix E)

## **8.0 FUNDING:**

- 8.1 NYP will fund the bin and arrange for it to be installed. There are no costs to HBC, who have given staff time in kind.

## **9.0 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:**

- 9.1 Joint HBC and NYP engagement has taken place in regards to the location of a knife amnesty bin:

- 9.2 Asda were contacted regarding the proposal to position a bin in the adjacent car park to their land with the other recycling bins. They are fully supportive and will ask their security to include this in daily inspections. Asda no longer sell single knives and have a policy of questioning anyone who buys a pack of knives after 10pm or appears under the influence of alcohol/drugs.
- 9.3 KD Carpets and The Rink were visited as neighbouring businesses – both were supportive to the pilot scheme.
- 9.4 Residents in nearby streets were visited regarding the proposal. This was done jointly between HBC and NYP officers. Those spoken to were positive to the project, letters were left at properties where no one was in.
- 9.5 The other recycle bin providers were contacted regarding the possibility that knives may be put into their bins – this is a risk they already have regarding other items eg needles.
- 9.6 HBC Planning were consulted and shared that whilst the land is part of the Local Plan there are no plans for development in the next year. They also confirmed that no planning permission is needed for the bin to be fixed to the ground. HBC Estates team are happy for the bin to be fixed to the ground with wording in the MoU for the area to be made good when/if the bin is removed.

## **10.0 COMMUNICATIONS PLAN**

- 10.1 A joint media campaign is to be planned with HBC and NYP with regular feedback to community.

## **11.0. REPORTING AND REVIEW**

- 11.1 NYP will be responsible for producing Quarterly statistics during the pilot period. This will assist to establish whether the project can be extended. A number of KPIs will be agreed and reported on a regular basis to the Cabinet Member for Housing and Safer Communities.
- 11.2 It is proposed to review the knife bin in 9 months post installation and reported to the Cabinet Member for a decision on whether to continue with the knife bin on HBC land.

## **12.0 REQUIRED ASSESSMENTS AND IMPLICATIONS:**

- 12.1 The following were considered:

### **12.2 Financial Implications:**

The cost and installation of the bin will be met by NYP.  
HBC staff time has been given in kind.

### **12.3 Human Resources Implications:**

There are no implications for this report – no HBC staff will be involved in the emptying of the bins. As per the operational procedures NYP are responsible for the day to day management of the bin.

- 12.4 **Legal Implications:**  
HBC Liability Insurers have confirmed they are happy with the arrangements of the knife bin on HBC land.  
The Legal Team were consulted and have provided information and advice throughout development of the project.
- 12.5 **ICT Implications:**  
There are no ICT implications associated with this report.
- 12.6 **Strategic Property/Asset Management Considerations:**  
The knife amnesty bin is not an asset of HBC, it remains under the ownership of NYP.
- 12.7 **Risk Assessment:**  
A risk assessment has been discussed – please see Appendix F. The day to day risk assessment is the responsibility of NYP.
- 12.8 **Equality and Diversity** (the Public Sector Equality Duty and impact upon people with protected characteristics).  
This is a report for information. The relevant assessments would form part of any agreed delivery, activity of project only. The bin is an accessible to all location.
- 12.9 **Planning implications**  
Planning were consulted regarding the Local Plan and whether permission was needed to fix the bin to the ground. Whilst the car park is part of the Local Plan there are no plans during the pilot phase for this land to be built on. They confirmed that permission is not needed to fix the bin to the ground. (Appendix G)
- 13.0 CONCLUSIONS**
- 13.1 It has been identified that knife crime is an increasing issue nationally and early intervention and prevention is key. Harrogate District Community Safety Hub and NYP work closely together to respond to community safety issues that affect individuals and communities.
- 13.2 This 12 month pilot project will aim to provide an accessible location for people to responsibly and safely dispose of knives and associated items at all times, not just during police operations and amnesty weeks.
- 13.3 Regular reporting during the pilot phase will be provided to determine whether the project is viable for further roll-out by NYP.
- 13.4 Regular communication and awareness-raising will take place jointly by HBC and NYP.

## **Background Papers –**

- Appendix A - NYP logs re knife incidents-OpDisarm
- Appendix B - Evidence of knives handed into a local police station 2022
- Appendix C - Wybone Knife Amnesty Bin
- Appendix D - NYP-DOCO Response

Appendix E - NYP Knife Bin Procedure  
Appendix F - HBC Risk Assessment  
Appendix G - HBC Planning Permission Letter  
Appendix H – Memorandum of Understanding

**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 via: *Safer Communities, PO Box 787, Harrogate, HG1 9RW*  
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