

**BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL AND SURREY
COUNTY COUNCIL**

TRADING STANDARDS JOINT COMMITTEE

DATE: 25 SEPTEMBER 2019

LEAD OFFICER: DAVID PICKERING

**SUBJECT: EMERGING ISSUES FOR TRADING STANDARDS
A) SALES OF KNIVES TO UNDER 18S**

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

The Criminal Justice Act 1988 makes it an offence to sell to a person under 18 any knife or knife blade. The legislation can be enforced by Trading Standards and the police.

The increase in knife related deaths has made the prevention of the sale of knives to under 18s a higher priority

We have in the past carried out joint operations with the police to test trader's ability to prevent such sales and found that sales have been made.

A recently published survey of attempted purchases nationwide found a 15% failure rate: <https://www.tradingstandards.uk/news-policy/news-room/2019/retailers-urged-to-do-more-to-stop-the-sale-of-knives-to-under-18s>

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that:

The Joint Committee endorses Trading Standards working with the police on this issue and to carry out the test purchase operations suggested in this report.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION:

Knife crime is a life changing and serious issue which is increasing. By working in partnership with the police to prevent sales we are reducing and making the supply of knives more difficult.

DETAILS:

1. We propose to carry out joint test purchase operations with the police in both Buckinghamshire and Surrey before April 2020 from a variety of premises. We will use information and intelligence gathered by us and the police to target these visits. We will liaise with Surrey Police to attempt a minimum of 15 test purchases and Thames Valley Police to attempt a minimum of 10 test purchases.

2. We propose to carry out 10 attempts to test purchase knives online from a variety of sources.
3. Working in partnership with the police and driven by intelligence, we will carry out visits to local independent businesses selling knives who have not had test purchases attempted to provide information about their legal obligations.
4. We will develop our website to include advice and training materials for businesses on this topic and will raise awareness of these through social media platforms and our fortnightly newsletter.

CONSULTATION:

5. No external consultation has occurred.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

6. Working in partnership we are helping to reduce the supply of knives to under 18s and the potential harm that may result.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

7. The work in this area is carried out by a number of officers as a small part of their wider role. At times work in this area, such as advice to businesses, is combined with other visits that officers are carrying out to the same premises or area to maximise efficiency. This report is suggesting that the Service increases the work with regard to advisory visits so there will be an increase in resource, but this will be from existing resources.

Legal Implications

8. The legal implications are as set out in the main body of this report.

Equalities and Diversity

9. There is no likely negative disproportionate impact arising from the work described in this report on people with protected characteristics.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

10. If the Committee approves the recommendation we will progress the arrangements with the police and prioritise workload for the advisory visits.

Contact Officer:

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