

REPORT TO FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 9 - Annual Review of the Council's Health & Safety Policy Risk Assessments.

Meeting Date 4th March 2024

Released to Council on 29th February 2024

Prepared by Town Clerk

Employers have a general duty under section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of their employees at work and others on the premises.

Workplace health and safety is an essential strategy and framework for all businesses, and it is governed by a range of legislation and regulations.

These are in place to make sure correct health and safety procedures are carried out in order to protect those in the Council's workplace.

Whilst accidents will always occur, by implementing health and safety legislation and regulations, it will reduce the amount of people getting hurt.

Health and safety is a responsibility for both employers and employees. However, employers have additional responsibilities under UK law to enforce and manage workplace health and safety, and there can be severe consequences for any failure to fulfil their legal requirements.

Ways of managing risk include having a Signed Health and Safety Policy which is shared with employees and public and carrying out suitable risk assessments, and enforcing any necessary controls and procedures. These are also legal requirements.

(ii) Health & Safety Policy

A copy of the current policy is enclosed with proposed amendments in blue.

A large number of amendments have been proposed the reasons for these proposed changes include:

- To ensure that policy is compliant with the regulations eg. needs to be signed (wasn't previously)
- So it is very clear who is responsible and for what.
- Includes requirements set out in the Fire Risk Assessment i.e. now detail the rules re staff bringing electrical equipment onto the premises.
- To address all of the Town Council owned properties including those let out.
- To include all hazards the Town Council is legally required to deal with including Legionella and Asbestos.

- Ensuring the policy doesn't conflict with existing documents eg. the staff handbook.
- Simplifying/shortening paragraphs
- Including items that should have been included eg. contractors
- Referring to appropriate Risk Assessment and policies.
- NB: The Appendix on Fire Precautions may need further amendments once the GEEP has been created (It is hoped this will be drafted by Monday's meeting).

Action required: Resolve (if agreed) to approve and adopt the policy with the proposed amendments. If any further changes are required please state these.

(i) Risk Assessments

The following documents are attached:

1. **Town Council Functions Risk Assessment** - This covers the general hazards and risks of running the Town Council. Including the following topics: public money/finances, expenditure, security, lack of financial control, council properties/assets, employees, IT, Legal and reputational.

The High Risks include:

- a. **Damage and security of all Council buildings/property** - This risk is controlled as best as it can be by the methods detailed. Although your attention is drawn to a few incidents of the front door of the Market House being left unlocked overnight. It is not always clear which party is doing this given the number of users. However it has been brought to the attention of all of the potential culprits to try and ensure it is not repeated. A possible further measure of control could be to add a yale lock to the front door.
- b. **Health and Safety of Council owned properties** - Whilst there are some controls already in place to ensure compliance of the Town Council's Health & Safety duties in respect of both the property they occupy and the commercial properties let to tenants it is prudent to bring it to your attention that further action has recently been taken and some is still required to ensure full compliance. A separate new risk assessment is therefore proposed which contains further details, identifies the hazards faced, the risks arising & methods to eliminate/control these.
- c. **Under insurance of council assets so level of cover is inadequate** - This risk is controlled as best as it can be by the methods detailed.

Actions required are highlighted in red on the document and minor amendments proposed in blue on the document. They mainly relate to updated procedures relating to internet banking, updated actions or corrections.

2. **General Office Work Risk Assessment** - This covers potential hazards identified in the Market House, the risk arising, actions already being taken and proposed further actions needed. In the main, the staff need reminding of the rules together with urgent

staff training on health & safety matters and a COSHH assessment. The Town Clerk has already signed herself up and the staff for a number of relevant short training sessions and the actions on the risk assessment will be worked through.

Proposed amendments to this risk assessment are in blue on the document.

3. **Outside Workers Risk Assessment** - This merges the previous two existing policies Mowing/Strimming/Street Vacuuming and litter picking (with any amendments in blue.) Other hazards have also been included in the same policy including Lone Working- This has all been done in consultation with the Town Warden.

New Risk Assessments Required:

- Health & Safety Requirements as commercial Landlord
- Homeworking

These will be ready shortly and uploaded to the google drive and paper copies available at Monday's meeting.

- COSHH

This will be carried out once the training has taken place.

Action required: Resolve (if agreed) to approve and adopt the above risk assessments with the proposed changes and if any further changes are required please state these. Note any risks highlighted and confirm you are happy with the proposed measures.