

Health and Safety Risk Assessments Resources Committee 4 September 2018

RECOMMENDED

- (i) that the report is noted
- (ii) that it is noted that the full risk assessment documents are available for inspection by Town Councillors at the Town Council Offices
- (iii) that staff undertake appropriate training / update training by using the British Safety Council on-line learning courses

Introduction

1. Operational risk assessments are carried out and recorded in a number of ways; this report aims to provide Councillors with information about the various “inspection” practices and an overview of findings.

Assessing Risk

2. It should always be borne in mind that a risk assessment is subjective and based on a snapshot of the information available at the time – the level of risk can therefore vary depending upon who is making the assessment and the situation at the time e.g. weather, number of members of the public in the vicinity, many things therefore require “dynamic” assessment which is not formally recorded.

A) Open Spaces

3. The Health and Safety risks relating to the Town Council’s management of open spaces can be broadly divided into 2 categories places / equipment and tasks. Blank Assessment Forms are attached to this report as follows:
 - Appendix 1 Assessment form for Places / Equipment
 - Appendix 2 Assessment form for tasks
4. The Open Spaces Team also have vehicle check sheets and equipment check sheets which should be completed regularly, and any concerns / defects recorded and reported to the Town Clerk, via the Senior Open Spaces Warden so that replacement parts etc can be ordered
5. In 2017 the Town Council, for the first time, paid for a company to test the relevant Open Spaces equipment and provide a written report regarding Hand-Arm Vibration Testing; the Open Spaces team were given a tool-box talk and provided with personal log books to record the length of time spent using relevant equipment. 5 items of equipment were listed as having the potential to produce higher than expected vibrations levels:
 - Hand breaker
 - 2 X combi units – these were not actually tested as they were away for service
 - 2 X rotary mowers

The hand breaker and the rotary mowers are not used frequently or for long, continuous periods of time.

The 2018 testing took place on 31 August and the written report has not yet been received.

Agenda No 8

6. The 2 Open Spaces Wardens successfully undertook play equipment routine inspection training at the start of 2018 and checks of the play equipment are scheduled every Friday.
7. In addition to the weekly inspections by Town Council staff there is an independent annual inspection – this was undertaken on 14 May 2018. The report covers all the play areas and equipment owned / managed by the Town Council; the findings were:
 - 36 very low risk items
 - 112 low risk items
 - 2 moderate risk items

The risk score is achieved using a matrix approach of probability and severity using a score for each on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is a very low probability e.g. no significant probability; lightning strike and very low severity of injury e.g. no injury likely e.g. damaged or soiled clothing, minor bruising and 5 is a very high probability e.g. if the situation is not addressed an accident is almost certain. Severely worn chains / shackles. Severely damaged surfacing within the impact area and severe injury and the severity would be a severe injury involving the potential for permanent disability e.g. amputation, loss of sight, spinal injury, fatality.
8. The 2 moderate ratings relate to the activity trail in the Wharf Lane Rec and require
 - treatment of corroded metal,
 - reinstatement of the surface
 - replacement of worn and / or missing components
 - monitoring for further deterioration
9. Following a breakage on a swing at the Wharf Lane Rec the independent company was asked to do an inspection of all the swings in Town council play areas - this was done on 20 August 2018 and the findings remained as low or very low risk.
10. Basic health & safety, including fire awareness and manual handling have been identified in risk assessments and 1-2-1 staff meetings as being required

B) Office

11. The office risk assessment - which is for the areas used by the Town Council at the North Street premises - is done using the Health & Safety Executive On-line Office Assessment Tool. The most recent assessment was done on 29 August 2018. The main actions identified are training – including use of fire extinguishers, provision of screen risers and amendments to the lone worker procedures.

Training

12. The British Safety Council provide on-line courses on a variety of topics e.g. general health & safety awareness, fire safety awareness, stress awareness, manual handling and display screen equipment. The courses provide the participant with a certificate and some include a basic on-line assessment of learning. Course costs are usually £15.00 per person but some have discount if over 5 or more people are “enrolled” from the same workplace.

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For Further Information contact the Town Clerk: Tel 01460 52149 or email town.council@ilminster.gov.uk